

# Your voice

Dear Editor,

On Thursday 17 December 2009 I attended the aliaWest-Kanopy screening of the film "The Hollywood Librarian". For me the topic had long been of interest: It formed my Honours thesis (2005) and led to an article in *inCite* (2007, December). The significance of image to fellow professionals was shown by the large turn-out for this 2007 documentary, which covered the history of cinema's portrayals of the LIS profession. The cliché of the bun, prim clothes, and 'shushing' was prominent, provoking much laughter from the audience.

Fortunately, not all movie depictions were unflattering – for instance librarians and their supporters were shown crusading against censorship, book destruction, and narrow-mindedness in *Storm Center* (1956), *Cleopatra* (1963), *Fahrenheit 451* (1966), and *Soylent Green* (1973).

Importantly, fictional characters were countered by interviews with real librarians like the vibrant Nancy Pearl and the powerful Eugenie Prime. Recent librarian activism, dedication, and selflessness were shown, such as a small-town librarian battling inadequate resources and others trying to reopen libraries in Salinas, California. Other segments featured a range of citizens – including prison inmates – speaking of the positive influences of libraries and their staff on their lives. (Perhaps in Australia we could film something similar?)

Though some progress has been made, the issue of the image of librarians remains relevant in 2010, with the public and media's ideas lagging behind our current profile. There is danger in inaccuracy, as the subsequent undermining of our respect and the demeaning of our skills threatens the sustainability of our sector. I urge all of us to continue proving our diversity and rebutting the stereotype.

Here's to a more accurate New Year!

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## Note to Members

We welcome letters on any issue of relevance to the library and information sector. It is important to note that the opinions expressed in Letters to the Editor are those of the authors and not necessarily the official policy of the Australian Library and Information Association.

Deadline for letters is available on the website and they should be no longer than 250 words. Please include your name and postal address as anonymous correspondence will not be reproduced.

# Professional development

In 2010 ALIA is offering more Professional Development opportunities for everyone in the sector. We have already introduced our members-only eCourse 'Writing to Selection Criteria' by Dr Ann Villiers and had an excellent response.

Dr Irena Yashin-Shaw who delivered an excellent presentation at the 2009 Library Technicians conference in Adelaide is developing a teleconference course on building confidence in public speaking. This unique course includes analysis with individual feedback of a 1–2 minute speech.

ALIA has negotiated easy access to selected online courses provided by WebJunction. The topics cover a broad range from 'Weeding your Library Collection', 'Planning Story Time for Children' and 'Introduction to Power Point'.

Library managers, provide your staff with easy, anytime access to the training they need. With online courses from WebJunction, you can deliver effective, relevant training right now.

We are also developing face-to-face workshops with Adam Le Good in 'Managing Challenging Clients', 'Leading Others through Change', and 'Stepping up to Supervision'.

## Introducing...

### ...the new New South Wales Local Liaison Officer: Alyson Dalby

Alyson has a background in medical and business libraries, and has seven years experience working for member-driven professional associations. She has been active in ALIA since her time at library school, and was the NSW Coordinator for the New Graduates Group where she organised many events for ALIA members in Sydney. In 2006 she was the Co-Convenor of the New Librarians' Symposium in Sydney, and was named as the Special Libraries Association Information Professional of the Year for Australia / New Zealand. She is currently a member of the New Generation Advisory Committee, and received an ALIA Silver Pin earlier this year.

Alyson is looking forward to helping members get the best out of their ALIA membership. She can be contacted anytime on 0404 655 319 or at [alyson.dalby@alia.org.au](mailto:alyson.dalby@alia.org.au)



### ...Carol Newton-Smith, the new Western Australia Local Liaison Officer

Carol has worked in a range of positions in her librarian career. She is currently library manager at The University of Western Australia Medical and Dental Library in Perth. Previous to that her librarian positions have included outreach reference librarian, database trainer, online search consultant, academic teacher, and special librarian in Perth, Brisbane, and Darwin. Carol has been a member of ALIA since she graduated with her professional qualifications and has served in many capacities (in several states) including two years as an ALIA Director. Her professional passions are evidence based practice, staff development, and mentoring. Carol is excited to become the ALIA Local Liaison Officer (LLO) for Western Australia and can be contacted on 08 9381 5674 or [carol.newton-smith@alia.org.au](mailto:carol.newton-smith@alia.org.au).



### OCLC is pleased to announce the appointment of Susie Thorpe as Product Manager, Amlib.

Susie will be based at the OCLC office in Perth, WA. Susie comes to OCLC with over 22 years experience working in and with public, school, special, academic, state, and national libraries, throughout Australia, New Zealand, and South East Asia. OCLC is thrilled to have Susie on our team to provide expert knowledge on library systems.



FOLIOz will be back again with courses covering lobbying and advocacy, management skills, and evidence based practice.

We are also developing two new online courses with an Australian provider on library budgeting and promoting client access to a wide range of literature.

We are maintaining our library partner competitions with ARK, PICS, and Lyrasis. They are offering new and relevant topics in 2010.

2010 is shaping up to be an exciting year in PD! With our new logo and broader program we hope to support your professional development goals. Keep up to date with PD postings and our webpage <http://www.alia.org.au/education/pd/pd.services/>

For questions, please contact

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