



I ♥ LIBRARY

Just why do we love our libraries?

We (as in library professionals) can be expected to be pretty enthusiastic about libraries in general – after all, it's where we spend our working days and, if we weren't happy about that, those days would seem very long indeed.

Our contributors in this issue come from every walk of library life and they are very excited about their libraries and their jobs. Prepare, then, to be enthused all over again in the following pages. You are about to be introduced to fancy new libraries and old favourites and take a peek into your colleagues' professional passions for their buildings, collections, fellow staff and their patrons.

We've also had a word with a few library fans who don't actually spend their days tending the information needs of their communities, though it sounds like they wouldn't mind doing what we do.

May these pages inspire us all to set out to make this month of library and information awareness and celebration truly one we all enjoy. Happy LIW to all!

Lee Welch

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PENRITH LIBRARY IS A GEM

My library, Penrith City Council Library, is an absolute gem! Why do I love it? Because it is a hub of learning, engagement, development and expansion.

I see my library like a giant garden. There are all sorts of different plants in here, but they're all thriving and growing because there is SO MUCH FOOD!!! The library is a brilliant resource for the community whether you're looking to meet your entertainment and recreation needs, your information needs for school or work, or your own personal and professional development needs.

Which leads me to my next point – I love my library, not just because it's a pleasure to be in an environment where you're fostering the growth and advancement of others, but because it is an environment conducive to my own development too. There is always something new to challenge, interest and excite me, each day that I come to the library to work.

My most recent project has been to individually review each of the online resources that we have catalogued or provided a link to through our FreeNet websites (selected websites that are viewable in the library free of charge with no time limit restrictions). As I review each site, I am familiarising myself with the information the site provides and how to navigate it for maximum advantage, and I'm also considering who these resources could be useful for and how. I'm putting all my notes into a searchable word document, in part to help me remember more easily, and in part because I know I'm bound to forget when there are so many different resources available.

When I'm finished with this project, I'm considering using the HSC Board of Studies syllabus documents to create a database to list library resources relevant to each subject or study area. My personal interest lies with English and History subjects so I will probably start with those and see where I end up. The journey is interesting for me, and hopefully will help to make my library an even more dynamic and relevant place for students, teachers and parents.

But, no matter what my next project, there's always something stimulating to think about, learn, or do at my library. And the best bit is, everybody wins - the more I learn and grow, the more my library develops, the better we meet the needs of our community – it's no wonder the library is such a loveable place, really.

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I love my library because...

"My first experience of libraries was of my junior school library back when I was in grade one. If my memory serves correctly, the librarian was a magnificent woman named Mrs Lewenberg. Twice a week we would visit her, sit in the sunken carpeted area called the reading pit, and listen to her read us a story from a book plucked from the shelves.

Early on it was picture books, later it would be short stories until finally, by about grade four, she would read full novels to us as our imaginations ran wild. I remember sitting there and thinking 'if this is just one book from the library, imagine how many thousands of great stories there are filling up all these shelves'.

At the end of story time, we would have ten minutes to look around the library and pick out something to take home and read. Initially I was overly ambitious (a grade three boy is probably not ready for a John Le Carre spy thriller), but with Mrs Lewenberg's help I was soon on a path to making my way through those thousands of stories. Thankfully, I'm still working my way through them."

Charlie Pickering

