

STORY WON'T HOLD WATER

I hesitate to spoil a good story with the facts, but Sue Reynolds' statement that the Librarian of Harvard's Widener Library must be able to swim because Harry Widener (for whom the library is a memorial) drowned in the Titanic, is a very hoary urban myth (*INCITE* August 2011).

A colleague who is a Harvard graduate and a former senior member of the Widener staff tells me that, like many American colleges, Harvard has a swimming test for all undergraduates. Over the years an urban myth grew up that this was a condition of the gift of the library, imposed by Mrs Widener who survived the Titanic sinking in a lifeboat and was convinced that son Harry would not have drowned if he had been able to swim. Never mind that he would have frozen to death in minutes in the icy waters of the North Atlantic. Then, by extension, the myth moved on to the holder of the Librarianship of Widener. It's a nice story, but I'm afraid it holds no water.

Neil Radford, FALIA
neil.radford@bigpond.com

Ed's note: We broke the bad news to Sue and she had this to say:

According to snopes.com, the rumor research site, the swimming test is not the only apocryphal story related to Mrs Widener's munificence to Harvard. It has been claimed that she made it a condition of her donation that icecream had to be served in the Freshman Union every day. Icecream is apparently served every day - "because kids like it". No swimming test, icecream every day and you get to see inside the WidenerLibrary - the Harvard librarian's job sounds great!

THE ALIA NATIONAL ADVISORY CONGRESS 2011

This year's National Advisory Congress (NAC) regional meetings will continue with a focus on one of ALIA's 2010-2015 Strategic Plan outcomes

- The Future of the Profession.

The topics for this year's program for the regional meetings include:

1. The Future of the Profession
2. Review of the outcomes of the 2010 topic - *Making a Contribution: Volunteering for ALIA*
3. Local issues

Members are encouraged to visit the website and read the available resources. Comments are welcome at a regional meeting beginning in early October.

In 2011 ALIA will continue with the two-tier model for the NAC. All regional meetings are invited to select someone from the meeting to attend the national gathering of the ALIA NAC. The national meeting will be held via teleconference.

How to get involved

- Participate in a National Advisory Congress regional meeting (see www.alia.org.au/governance/nac/2011/ for the locations and dates of regional meetings)
- Phone 02 6215 8222 or 1800 020 071
- Fax 02 6282 2249

OUR MOST IMPORTANT CLIENT IS YOU



Redeemer Baptist School N.F. Cannon Library



Sydney Customs House Library



St Joseph's College Library - CK Design

ABAX SYSTEMS IS THRILLED TO ANNOUNCE THE LAUNCH OF OUR NEW WEBSITE!

Discover our complete range of exciting products. Including Genuine Kingfisher(TM) Library Solutions, EnviroLife Filing Systems, Clever Storage Ideas and much more.

You can shop online, request a quote, download product information, view projects we've had the privilege to be chosen for or simply enjoy a browse.

We'll have news and resources to help keep you informed, connected and up to date with changes in the industry and new products and services from Abax.



t. 1300 300 369 | f. 1300 300 676 | info@abax.com.au | www.abax.com.au