

the last word

MEMORIES ARE MADE OF THIS

Do you remember your first ALIA Biennial Conference? Jan Richards, a past President of ALIA and now on the committee for the 2012 ALIA Biennial does.

"Do you remember your first Biennial?" was yesterday's question as I began writing this column. The discussion topic was cause for a good deal of reminiscing about locations and their chronological order, speakers, colleagues, the social program, accommodation, food, weather, shopping, and wardrobe. In fact all the things which taken together make a Biennial – at least in my workplace! I'm sure you'll have some additions or subtractions of your own.

The ALIA Biennial Conference has been held since 1990, although the ALIA Conference, in one form or another has been held since the 1950s and has always been recognised as the flagship conference in our industry's calendar. They have been held across the breadth of the country. In the 'only' stakes we can list Perth as the only city (to date) to host the event twice, and Albury on the NSW/Victorian border as the only regional location. Wellington New Zealand certainly wins the offshore prize from when ALIA teamed with LIANZA to deliver a joint conference there in 1994.

My first Biennial was in Albury in 1992 and I still remember the collegiate atmosphere as people milled about in the large marquee discussing the day, long after the formal proceedings had concluded. After that I became what some may describe as a Biennial groupie, having missed only one (and I can't for the life of me think how I could have let Wellington pass me by!).

Adelaide (1998) was the first Biennial at which I delivered a paper, *Competition or Collaboration*, in partnership with my colleagues Robert Knight and Marion Bannister, Canberra (2000) the first at which I was an exhibitor, and Sydney (2002) the first time I contributed as a member of the Organising Committee and the first time I chaired a session.

Why the fixation on my personal Biennial 'pioneer' moments? To me they demonstrate the many facets of an ALIA Biennial Conference and the ways in which each of us can contribute. Experience has shown me the benefits of being involved are huge. Not only can you expand your horizons through stimulating presentations, discussions and exhibitions, you will profit from the unlimited networking opportunities and experience of just being there.

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The theme for Sydney 2012 is *Discovery* – I know this as once again I find myself on the Organising Committee! I challenge you to take the theme of this conference to heart and discover how you can contribute to your professional and personal development and to your industry as a participant, as a presenter, as an exhibitor or as a volunteer. Our 2012 theme offers enormous scope and the Organising Committee is developing an exciting program which also pays tribute to those other 2012 milestones, ALIA's 75th birthday and the *National Year of Reading*. Elsewhere in this edition of *INCITE* you'll find the Call for Abstracts which is your chance to contribute. So mark the dates in your diary Tuesday 10 – Friday 13 July 2012 in the Emerald City.

And if Sydney 2012 will be your first Biennial - trust me, it will be an experience to remember.

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Pssst! Got a secret?

TOP SECRET

Go on, tell – you know you want to!

December *INCITE* will be featuring our best kept secrets and library treasures. It's time to share your library's stories of your very special collections, hidden treasures, precious things and precious people.

Check the guidelines for contributions at <http://www.alia.org.au/publishing/incite/guidelines.html> and email your stories and images to incite@alia.org.au. Please note all images must be high resolution (at least 100Kb) and sent separately as jpg files. Images may be reproduced in print and online.

Deadline for stories is November 1, 2011.