

DIRECTLINE

HONOURING OUR MEMBERS

In January, it was wonderful to see Australia Day honours awarded to library consultant Janine Schmidt, formerly of the University of Queensland and State Library of NSW, and Robert Thomas, President of the Library Council of NSW. It made us think about all the other library and information professionals, especially ALIA members, who are so deserving of recognition.

At a recent ALIA Sydney event, the group talked about the importance of recognising the contribution of volunteers to the success of ALIA – indeed, without volunteers, the Association would be a shadow of its current self – and we bounced around some ideas for how this might look.

This connects closely with the feedback we received through the National Advisory Congress (see page 8) and we have come up with three initial responses.

WEBSITE

We are looking at introducing a special section for our new website, as the next stage of its development in the second half of 2013. Under About Us, we intend to create a section devoted to the people who have helped make Australian libraries and information services, and the Association great.

How might it look? We are thinking in terms of an A-Z index with each alphabetical page carrying short profiles of the individuals, with an image where there is one available. There could be feature pages for the giants of our sector – Margaret Trask, Warren Horton, Twila Herr, and so on – longer pieces, with images, comments from colleagues, and references to papers.

In order to make this section a true and accurate picture of the sector, we would need your help. Who do you think we should recognise in this way? This could be big names – people who have national or statewide recognition. It might also be 'unsung heroes' who have worked steadily in a community for decades without wider recognition.

This is not exclusively about people who have retired, it is also about people who are still working in the profession. If you have a colleague you would like to put forward, please send me their details (email to sue.mckerracher@alia.org.au) – we will need their name, place of work, contact email, and up to 100 words about why they should be recognised in this way. The final decision about who will

be included on the site will rest with the ALIA Board.

Of course, the section will need to be constantly updated and we will be asking for your recommendations on an ongoing basis.

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

National Volunteer Week will take place from 13 to 19 May this year, the week before Library and Information Week, and we will be taking advantage of the opportunity to provide our volunteers with peer recognition of their commitment.

We will be following up names through our Board, Advisory Committees, Groups, and silver pin recipients, but we would hate to miss anyone, so if you, or someone you know, has volunteered for ALIA and should be included on our role-call of honour, again, please send me an email with name, place of work, contact email, and brief details about activities and achievements.

AUSTRALIA DAY 2014

In the special section of our website, we will be including library and information professionals who have received Australia Day honours in the past, but what about the opportunity to nominate colleagues for future awards?

If there is someone you feel deserves the recognition of their community – and the nation – please let us know, by close of business on 26 April. The ALIA Board will include Australia Day honour nominations as an agenda item for its May board meeting.

You might also like to nominate someone yourself. If so, take a look at the website, itsanhonour.gov.au and you will find all the information you need, including nomination forms.

These are three ways in which ALIA can honour our members, in addition to personal letters from the President and our Certificates of Appreciation. There will be other ways we haven't thought about and if you have ideas, we would love to hear about them. Please give me a call or drop me an email.

Sue McKerracher
ALIA Executive Director
sue.mckerracher@alia.org.au

**Our thoughts with Queensland**

Sadly, Laidley Library has been flooded once again. It took more than 18 months for the repairs and renovations to be completed after the 2011 flood of 200mm. Now, six months after moving back into the new-look premises, 400mm of water has gone through. Water reached the roof of Fraser Coast's Maryborough toy library which had only just been renovated after the 2011 floods. The toys were evacuated and Maryborough library had water "at its toes". Reports indicate that most other libraries in affected areas have been very fortunate, either escaping damage or suffering only minor damage, mainly from leaks. Sunshine Coast libraries plan to revisit public information sessions on storm preparation. In the Gladstone region, Miriam Vale Library has had an influx of people visiting from the adjacent evacuation centre. Our thoughts are with all affected communities.

Janette Wright
State Librarian