

Vantage point

Library and information professionals facing the challenge of change

The question on everyone's lips these days is what is the future for our profession? At the Information Online & On Disc 95 conference in January, some were even heard to mutter that we didn't have one. This column is part of the answer to that question. ALIA takes pride in sharing the news of new professionals biting the bullet in a constantly changing information sector, and forming the future as they do it.

With only two years working experience as a professional librarian, Lisa Smith is already an achiever in the information world.

Lisa is in charge of urgent cataloguing in the Technical Services Department of the Monash University Library. She is also a key player in the introduction of Total Quality Management to the library and participates in the University-wide Quality Forum program. That work got Lisa nominated to be the 1994 Australian participant in the Snowbird Leadership Development Institute, held annually in the mountain resort of Snowbird, Utah.

Lisa says she learnt a great deal at the Institute, particularly about the value of a broad approach to her work. The high-profile figures in the

profession that took part as mentors often seem as though they were born that way. 'By and large', Lisa says, 'that's not so. Some had taken time out or had done other things. They had all sorts of experience and that in turn led to a more-rounded approach.'

Lisa's own work experience is a case in point. She started out as a medical records administrator, moved on to a First Class Honours degree in Fine Arts and English and then added a Master of Arts in Librarianship at Monash University, a qualification she felt would 'gel' with her previous studies.

While studying for her Master of Arts, Lisa won the Monash University Graduate Department of Librarianship, Archives and Records Award and spent a month in Oxford work-



Lisa Smith

ing for the joint sponsors, Blackwells Ltd, developing screens for the Connect software.

Now Lisa is considering a short trip to the South Sea islands to help a colleague establish a law library.

While Lisa claims an ingredient of 'right time, right place' luck has played a part in her career to date, it is obviously luck backed by an innovative mind and an appetite for challenge.

Lee Welch

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