

# Helen Tait visits Northern Territory

Robin Hempel and Chris Gissing



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## VIC

**1/11-1/12 Internet Training Institute.** Training sessions each week designed specifically for librarians by librarians. Choose from 4 courses including Train the Trainer, from \$79. For more information contact: Ph: (03) 9349 4994 (City); (03) 9791 6400 (Dandenong — introductory courses only), e-mail: [elsep@informit.com.au](mailto:elsep@informit.com.au) or Richard Siegersma, Ph: (03) 9804 000; Fax: (03) 9822 0278; e-mail: [rsiegers@ozemail.com.au](mailto:rsiegers@ozemail.com.au).

• **14/11 Geelong Regional Group:** Workshop on interviews/job applications. Woolstores Campus (Deakin Uni), Library room, 1 Geringhap Street, Geelong. 5.30pm for 6pm. Contact: Sue McKnight, ph (052) 271 352 (bh), fax (052) 272 000, e-mail: [suemck@deakin.edu.au](mailto:suemck@deakin.edu.au).

**19/11 FLIS Training Pty Ltd.** Supervision Skills for Team Leaders. Monash Uni Conference Centre, Level 7, 30 Collins Street, Melbourne. 9.15-5pm, \$170. Contact: Elizabeth Yates, ph (03) 9813 1925.

• **26/11 Vic UCRLS Section.** *New libraries in old buildings.* Adapting old buildings to the needs of the modern library. Followed by the end of year dinner — Corio Bay. 6pm for 6.30pm. Woolstores Campus (Deakin Uni), Library room. Contact: Colin Bates, ph (052) 272 713, e-mail: [colinb@deakin.edu.au](mailto:colinb@deakin.edu.au).

• **29/11 Geelong Regional Group:** Christmas Cocktail Party. Woolstores Campus (Deakin Uni), Library room, 1 Geringhap Street, Geelong. 5.30pm, \$5 (pay at the door). Contact: Darren Ryan, ph (052) 272 203 (bh), fax (052) 272 000, e-mail: [darren@deakin.edu.au](mailto:darren@deakin.edu.au).

**2-3/12 Insearch/Knight-Ridder Information Seminar.** Asia/Pacific Intelligence (2/12 am); Introductory DI-ALOG (3/12). Melbourne contact: ph (02) 9212 2867, e-mail: [krinfo.uts@uts.edu.au](mailto:krinfo.uts@uts.edu.au).

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One of the highlights of the year for members of ALIA Northern Territory Branch was the visit to Alice Springs and Darwin by National President, Helen Tait from 22-26 August. Helen's busy and varied itinerary enabled her to participate in both business and social activities, visit a variety of libraries and, most importantly, meet as many local members as possible in a short time.

Alice Springs was Helen's first stop. There was much enthusiasm to hear her thoughts on the development of the profession, the challenges posed by the Internet, the effects of technology on the information industry and the development of ALIA's mentoring program. The audience of twenty included nearly all of the ALIA Centralian Group members and other interested community members, a strong indication of the eagerness of this group to receive guest speakers. With over a dozen libraries in Alice Springs it was not possible for Helen to visit them all, however she was most impressed with tours of the Institute of Aboriginal Development, Alice Springs Town Council and Centralian College libraries.

In Darwin, Helen was a special guest at the Branch Council meeting. Here she helped bring closer issues of importance including development of the ALIA Strategic Plan 1996-2001; ALIA's competency workshops and the review of the co-ordination and representation needs of the library industry for the next century. Helen urged us to think positively about what ALIA and the

industry can do for the profession at both national and local levels. Inspiring us with her experiences as president, Helen spoke of the richness and diversity of our profession Australia-wide and the vigorous nature of both large and small branches of the Association.

At a breakfast in Darwin (attended by thirty-five members) the topic for discussion was issues and challenges for the 21st century. Helen advocated an entrepreneurial approach and the need to be creative and proactive. She highlighted also the benefit of developing close and strong links with other agencies and bodies. The key message overall though was 'never lose sight of the big picture'. For the information profession this means keeping up with the changing needs of our clients and ensuring that we are focused on the 'why' not just the 'how' we do what we do so very well.

Whilst in Darwin, Helen visited the Northern Territory Library and Parliament House, Darwin and Palmerston Public libraries, Power and Water Authority Library, Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries Library and the Taminmin Community Library where she received a large and warm reception from the school and local community.

We appreciate Helen making the trek to the Northern Territory and hope that news of the hospitality and enthusiastic response she received will encourage other speakers to visit our Branch. After all, 'you'll never never know, if you never never go'.