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It's been a fun day's night

On the edge and inching forward

This could be my last Frontline because we are endeavouring to have a guest author for December. So I will take this opportunity to thank you all most sincerely for your feedback and support during the year.

This month's issue of *inCite* and its variety in content has a particular emphasis on workplace issues. Phil Teece in his column, *Work watch*, does well at keeping us informed of the changing workplace landscape. As well your Association has produced a number of very useful pamphlets on workplace reform and how it might affect us. The latest of these publications is *Employment contracts for library workers: a guide to formalising rights and obligations at work*.

It is publications like this which also bring to our attention the issues that we might confront with the advent of our 'new association', the one that I and other members of the Leadership Committee are coming to grips with as I type. I mention this because it is foremost in our discussions that the new association will address the issues of personal and individual membership as well as institutional membership. In the area of industrial advice such as that which ALIA currently offers, one could envisage (for example) potential conflicts between the needs and rights of the employee and the employer. These are issues which those at the helm of the new association may need to consider.

Since I last wrote to you, I have attended a locally-enjoyed Western Australian event: the New Norcia Library Lecture. This was mostly a duty of my real job, but as a panel member in the final session of the day, I recall that more than once I was able to speak with my ALIA president's hat on.

It was then straight into the National Local Studies Conference, held in South Perth, Western Australia. It was from all accounts a lively and well-regarded gathering. It is interesting to meet so many different people from all walks of life, all hav-

ing a common interest in local history and studies of their local area.

The first of the leadership committee meetings was held in the new board room of the State Library of Victoria on 25 September and Derek Whitehead, president of ACLIS, and I signed the 'Memorandum of Understanding' at the commencement of this meeting. The day was spent in lively and fruitful discussion and I look forward to our next meeting soon where the committee hopes to finalise its first thoughts on a way forward for the new association, to present to each of our national councils in November.

The beginning of October saw me in Canberra for the Education Forum held by the Association's Board of Education. I took advantage of being over on that side of the continent to scoot down to Hobart for a visit which was far too brief, but which gave me the opportunity to meet with a very enthusiastic group of members. It was then back to Canberra for the final day of the Board of Education meeting where the Board paid considerable attention to much of the deliberations from the previous two-day forum, where some interesting scenarios had been presented on the role of an association in education for library and information studies.

I am now recovering from what has been a very successful *On the edge*: 7th Asian Pacific, Specials, Health and Law Librarians Conference here in Perth. My roles were minor compared to the activity of the conference committee who put together a very useful program, a wonderful dinner (I can't remember the last time I spent most of the night singing Beatles songs) and other enjoyable events.

Our time ahead will be challenging and most interesting and if there was one theme which came from the *On the edge* conference, it was, life and the workplace are going to be challenging, interesting and varied, so please count me in! I hope you will all be with us on the exciting journeys we have in store for us. ■

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