

Te Rau Herenga

Sue Cooper, New Zealand Library and Information Association

The New Zealand Library and Information Association, Te Rau Herenga, has gone back to basics and focused on a new strategic plan this year.

Members have identified three key areas for the Association to act upon: continuing professional development; advocacy and employment information; and policy creation and lobbying. The Association and its membership are facing constant new professional challenges in the workplace.

Some of the key issues faced by the Association and its members:

Accountability: funding cuts in the public sector are the result of the public demanding less taxes and more accountability from politicians. Accordingly the government wants more user-pays, more entrepreneurialism and cost recoveries amongst libraries. Traditional sources of funding are disappearing — libraries are expected to generate more of their own funding while at the same time reducing their overheads by leasing or outsourcing resources and services.

Public good versus private good: new legislation for local government aims at financial reform. Councils are required to analyse their activities by using economic principles so that their

public and private benefits match funding sources; that is, costs should be allocated where the greatest benefit falls. Public libraries now have to identify whether services benefit the public good or the private individual: current ranges for public versus private benefits are from 95:5 per cent through to 10:90 per cent.

Each council then exercises its political discretion as to how much, and by which method, it will fund that service — through taxes or direct user charges. This raises issues such as equity of access: how to fund and provide services to those who can not afford it in a free market, and intellectual property rights: should the creators of information receive a royalty when libraries charge for loans?

Re-engineering: flatter management structures have lead to a loss of library management and frontline positions, many of them professional librarians, while the rate-paying public expect a certain level of quality of professional expert service in an increasingly user-pays world. Competition from both the private sector and other libraries for funds and customers is increasing.

Information technology versus information literacy and distance learning mean librarians need to develop new skills.

New Zealand Library and Information Association

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Vision

To be a vibrant, vital professional association delivering benefits to an active membership.

Mission

To be the pre-eminent professional body in Aotearoa New Zealand for those engaged in librarianship and information management and to be actively committed to the recognition and implementation of the Treaty of Waitangi.

The NZLIA aims to provide opportunities for the delivery of professional education, continuing professional development and networking for library and information members; promote advocacy and lobbying for members, by developing information packages and skills for members; and provide leadership in the identification of national issues, creation of policies which are unique or important to the profession of library and information management.

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THE METCALFE MEDALLION

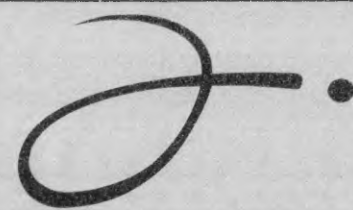
Nominations are now being called for the 1998 award

John Metcalfe, and his contribution to librarianship and library education, are commemorated by the Australian Library and Information Association through the Metcalfe Medallion.

The Metcalfe Medallion is awarded for the most outstanding essay or other piece of work on any topic in the area of library and information science or archives administration. To be eligible nominees must be a student undertaking an entry-level course in these fields.

Entries should be sent to ALIA National Office, PO Box E441, Kingston ACT 2600
phone 02 6285 1877, fax 02 6282 2249
e-mail awards@alia.org.au
URL <http://www.alia.org.au/awards.html>

Entries close 15 December 1997



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