

Controversy in Perth

Town crier causes a stir during Australian Library Week

The Perth City Library wanted publicity for Australian Library Week, and that is just what they got. The City of Perth mounted a multi-faceted campaign during Australian Library Week which included hiring a town crier to 'call' on behalf of the library.

A very professional gentleman with a loud, clear voice and a ringing bell created more attention than expected. He strolled through the main central shopping area informing shoppers of the new location of the library, the library opening hours, the range of stock, and encouraging everyone to discover the library. He also handed out library bookmarks and chatted with passers-by. Local bookshop managers were not impressed, claiming that he was driving their customers away by suggesting that they visit the library instead.

The story made the front page of the *West Australian*, was the subject of talk-back radio on two local stations — and the location of the library was mentioned at every turn. The instant reaction from the public was quite positive with several people discovering the library immediately!

Other events included involving children in a special storytime at which they discovered that libraries have cuddly baby rabbits as well as stories and fun with cotton wool balls.

City of Perth council staff were invited to find out what happens behind the security doors, and a display stand in the Alexander Library Building (the State Reference Library and headquarters of the Library and Information Service of Western Australia) urged people to 'Discover your public library in the City'.



Town crier, Sid Plummer, in the City of Perth Library preparing for his role during Australian Library Week

A busy week for the State Library of Tasmania

Juliet Scaife State Library of Tasmania

The State Library of Tasmania was busy during Australian Library Week promoting existing library services and launching several new services. Some of the highlights included:

- The launch of a lending CD-ROM collection;
 - The launch of supported-learning CD-ROMs, enabling students to access school-based CDs in their local library;
 - The launch of *Our digital island*, a website for the preservation of selected Tasmanian websites;
 - The presentation of 'baby bundles' to babies born in the major centres during ALW; and
 - The visits of award-winning children's author and illustrator, John Nicholson, to Hobart, Launceston and Devonport.
- There were activities to celebrate ALW in each of the city libraries around the state.
- The hosting of the ABC Radio 7ZR 'Breakfast show' from the State Reference Service. The public was invited to phone and ask 'anything you always wanted to know';
 - Radio and newspaper interviews, and talk-back programs with library staff;
 - Newspaper features on technological developments in library services;
 - A display of political ephemera in the Tasmaniana and the Launceston Libraries to coincide with the launch of *Our digital island*;
 - State Reference Service presentations for library clients on how to find a job on the internet, a genealogy information session, and researching the history of your house;
 - Official launch of the lending CD-ROM collection by the minister of education, Paula Wriedt at the Rosny Library;
 - Celebration of the twentieth birthday of the Glenorchy Library;
 - The Big Friendly Giant display and competition at the Launceston Library;
 - A book review competition and 'The Mayor is telling stories again' storytelling session by the mayor of Devonport, Mary Binks, at the Devonport Library; and
 - 'Meet your local authors at the library' at the Kingston Library.

Libraries around the state also scheduled internet demonstrations and drawing sessions, children's story-telling sessions, tours of libraries and sessions on how to use your library. ■