

Celebrating a library of old

Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE

In keeping with the theme 'Libraries: here for the long run', the Library of Alexandria was the focus of celebrations for Australian Library Week at the Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE this year.

The BRIT Library entrance was transformed into the Great Library with marble walls and a tiled floor, Grecian pots and columns, potted palms and papyrus scrolls. The exit was guarded by two huge jackals with glowing red eyes, and a life-size gold sarcophagus pointed BRIT staff and other invited guests from local libraries to the Seminar Room for a morning tea on Thursday 18 May. Library staff wore colourful Egyptian and Grecian costumes for the day and the Egyptian/Greek theme was carried through to the food with a gold pyramid forming the centrepiece. Many BRIT staff lent Egyptian and Greek artifacts to the library for displays and the Hospitality, Carpentry, Media and Art Departments of the Institute also assisted with materials.

Students were encouraged to participate in Australian Library Week by completing a short library quiz and were rewarded with chocolate 'pyramids' and jelly 'asps' for their efforts. Local media covered the events of the week.

Narelle Stone, Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE



Kathryn Launer, serials librarian, gets into the spirit of celebrations...

Are you being saved?

Information Science Section (South Australia) Australian Library Week

'Are you being saved?' A discussion of internet filtering software, practices and legislation was presented by the ALIA Information Science Section (SA) for Australian Library Week 2000. Four guest speakers outlined their experiences in 'saving' customers, students, themselves or their organisations from the dangers of the internet and the very scary consequences of not complying with the broadcasting services legislation.

Mark Newton from the internet service provider, Internode, started the discussion with an overview of the framework of the *Broadcasting Services Act* and the implications for internet service providers. Mark explained the difficulties and the financial penalties of failure to comply with the conditions of an 'Access Prevention Notice' if served on a provider under the Act. As a consequence Mark stressed the importance of developing an Industry Code of Conduct for libraries that would afford some protection.

Sylvana Jenkins from Annesley College explained that her school does not

use internet filtering practices but chooses to educate students to use the internet appropriately. All students are obliged to sign a 'conditions of use' form before being provided with internet access, and access is terminated if the students do not comply with the conditions. Sylvana pointed out that different sectors of the education system have their own approaches to handling the difficult issue of ensuring appropriate internet usage in schools.

Ian Hildebrand of the Charles Sturt Library outlined the positive impact of the legislation with regards to public libraries. Public libraries employ a range of procedures to ensure appropriate use of the internet by customers. These include upgrading previous 'conditions of use' guidelines to policy statements passed through the various councils, and placing restrictions on internet access to users under eighteen years of age. Ian concluded that the Act has placed pressure on public libraries to develop stronger procedures regarding internet access that result in public library staff being more diligent in their responsibilities to customers.

Steve Thomas from Adelaide University explained that the Barr Smith Library limits access to the library workstations to members of the University's immediate circle with a user authentication program. In addition, two methods are used to control access to sites: the first prevents students accessing e-mail accounts on workstations dedicated to internet access. The second employs proxy server filtering based on URL pattern matching that creates a block list of undesirable sites with a complimentary unblock list that allows for fine tuning of the block list.

Overall discussion of commercial filtering software was limited given that none of the speakers' organisations actually used it to restrict users' access to internet sites. However, Mark Newton did suggest that a major problem with most filtering software available tends to be that it is ineffective in blocking the sites intended while preventing access to obviously innocuous sites.

Paul Martin, ALIA Information Science Section, South Australian Branch