

# Another year draws to a close

'Tis the festive season, and warm greetings to all members

I love Christmas, and the opportunities to get together with family and friends to eat, drink and be merry. The end of another year gives us the opportunity to look back, and celebrate success.

2003 has been a good year for ALIA. There is a strong sense of enthusiasm and revitalisation that came through at the National Policy Congress (NPC), and that others have reported on at regional meetings. I think that this is because a lot of work that has been going on in the background is now bearing fruit, and the new structure is not so new any more and people are feeling more comfortable working with it. The NPC was a great opportunity to identify priorities for future directions, and share successes. Delegates always find it most helpful to meet with ALIA National Office staff and to get an overview of what is happening around the country.

The Research Exchange and Partnership (REAP) project launched at the AGM in May has been interesting. REAP is about promoting and valuing research in practice, and about acknowledging that while a lot of research goes on, it could be much better disseminated and promoted. There is an e-list and an e-print repository, where people are starting to lodge items. NPC delegates suggested potential areas of research to be incorporated, and this information has been forwarded to the Research Committee so that they can consider this in their planning [<http://alia.org.au/research/>].

The web-accessible membership database was also launched at the AGM in May — Ivan Trundle and his team did a great job with this major refresh of the ALIA website. There are lots of benefits to the members-only area — and there are more coming, including online payments.

ALIA's response to the Senate Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts References Committee Report on the Inquiry into *Libraries in the Online Environment* is detailed in full in this edition of *inCite*. The committee's endorsement of the fundamental role of libraries in the Australian community and its recognition of the need for greater support for connectivity, access to online content and for national leadership in information provision is very pleasing. The Board of Directors will be working with ALIA members and groups, Public Libraries Australia and other peak sector bodies over the next few months to develop responses to the recommendations.

Local liaison officers are now in place in Western Australia, Queensland, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia. Strategies that they are working on to increase recruitment and retention include developing a presentation to take to regional areas and looking at ways to forge links with library schools. These officers will also liaise with groups to help co-ordinate CPD activities.

We have had a special push to encourage new graduates to join and participate in ALIA. We have a new generations advisory group and there are some core people in Queensland who are driving the 'Bright and funky' conferences and doing a great job in engaging the newcomers to our sector. Another great initiative in Queensland is the mentoring program run by QUT and Gill Hallam.

The ALIA Education Framework (formerly known as LISEKA) was endorsed at the September Board meeting. The aim of the project was to look at library and information education and to make it relevant to the future. We all know that the education sector is changing — when I did my qualifications, it was all 'cut and dried'. You finished school and if your marks were good enough you undertook an undergraduate degree at university, and then — if you were lucky — you got into a library course for a one-year full time or two-year part-time diploma. You were then recognised as a librarian. And there was no RPL (recognition of prior learning). Now people can apply to have their life or career or other qualifications recognised, and institutions will accept that there is more than one way to achieve professional status. The two major things that came out of our consultation about the education framework was firstly that members wanted ALIA to remain as the standards body, and secondly that we offer a good continuing professional development program. The Board has been very conscious of that and made sure that these two things are kept at the forefront. The new membership database will allow us to do much smarter things with the CPD program, and the new-look CPD site allows people to keep track of their activities and points much more easily.

The ALIA 2010 planning document was endorsed at the NPC, and was signed-off at the November Board meeting. It has been a very positive experience working on this project, as it has reaffirmed that the Board, National Office and members have similar aspirations for the Association. The aim of the document is to articulate how, in 2010, ALIA will be the association of choice for information professionals and the library and information sector.

So that is the year that was — roll on, 2004! ■



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## Feedback to your Board of Directors

Do you have an idea, compliment or concern about your Association? Contact any director below on personal issues and ideas will be reviewed at each meeting of the Board.

E-mail to [feedback@alia.org.au](mailto:feedback@alia.org.au) will be automatically forwarded to all Board members.

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