

# It's all happening @your library in 2003

Since May 2001 representatives of the various library services in South Australia have been meeting to develop a year-long program to promote the libraries of South Australia.

The sector is vast, with more than 120 public libraries. In addition, the majority of the state's 900 primary and secondary schools and tertiary institutions also have libraries. A range of specialist libraries are located within various government departments and institutions and industry sectors.

The concept for the year is to have activities and a media campaign that keeps libraries in the minds of people — users, funders and policy makers. It is broad enough for all libraries — school, TAFE, specialist, academic, public and the State, small and large — to participate.

The 2003 program received a welcome boost with the Council of Australian State Libraries recently finalising the agreement with the American Library Association for the use of their '@your library' promotional campaign. This campaign has been highly successful in raising the profile of libraries throughout the United States and offers an excellent platform for a program of activities.

The objectives of the program are to increase awareness and support for libraries by communicating clearly and strongly why libraries are both unique and valuable; and to update the image of libraries and library staff for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, sustaining and strengthening their relevance.

The expected outcomes are increased library usage; stronger commitment to funding, sponsorship and partnerships; a higher profile for the sector amongst policy makers; and positive recruitment impact.

## What's on and when!

Every month there will be something happening during '2003@your library' with the emphasis on participation by as many libraries as possible. In April the themes are 'Doing business@your library' and 'National Youth Week@your library'.

## Searching for information? The answer is just a click away!

On Tuesday 18 February 2003, The Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts, the Honourable Mr John Hill, officially launched the new public library network website [<http://www.libraries.sa.gov.au>].

'Libraries are places of education, recreation and self-help. And because they offer free access to all, they bring

opportunity to all', said Minister Hill. 'The new website links all South Australians to public libraries across the state providing access and online information twenty four hours a day, seven days a week.'

Libraries.sa provides topical, and up-to-date web links and databases that are relevant to the questions asked every day in the 138 South Australian Public Libraries. It strengthens the range of subject knowledge available in each library and reduces duplication of web pages across libraries.

Three key words summarise the opportunities that the website offers — search, locate and explore.

- *Search* for information.
- *Locate* your local library.
- *Explore* what's on at your library.

The many great innovations included on the site are:

The 24-hour library: an alphabetical list of popular topics with links added and maintained by library staff across the state to bring users the best information sources on the web.

Online databases: access to two online magazine databases — The Australian and New Zealand Reference centre and the Health & Wellness Resource Centre — giving access to thousands of online articles.

Ask a librarian: users can either contact their local library or just click on *ask a librarian* for an online librarian to help find what they are looking for.

Subscription service: the easy-to-follow subscription facility enables users to receive, via e-mail, the latest information on new web links, services and events from their local library.

Locate a library: looking for a library? This comprehensive facility makes it very easy. Details include the full address, phone and fax numbers, e-mail address, website, opening hours and information on the services provided at each library.

The Council of Library Administrators of South Australia, PLAIN Central Services and the Electronic Information Committee worked together to develop this valuable extension to existing library services.

Collaboration between local and state governments was essential to the success of this project that aimed to provide



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## Who gets the Benefits?

### Students

collect references to cite in papers.

### Librarians

direct students to library's subscription content.

### Professors

help to reinforce the principles of citing sources.



Jenny Paradiso, the holiday fun fairy from the West Torrens Libraries

the best information tool for South Australians.

#### **Holiday fun@your library**

The 'Holiday fun@your library' campaign was launched in Rundle Mall on 7 December 2002. It was a fantastic morning with continuous storytime sessions featuring public library staff and some media celebrities. More than 700 promotional bookmarks were handed out to Christmas shoppers during the launch. You can see pictures from the event at <http://www.plain.sa.gov.au/PCSnews/dec02/dec02launch.htm>.

Media support was exceptional with radio spots on MIX 102.3 and 5AA, TV advertisements on Channel 9 and editorial, advertisements and articles in the *Advertiser* and the *Sunday Mail*, editorial and listings in *Adelaide's Child* and press and radio coverage across the regional centres.

Fifty-three public libraries participated in 'Holiday fun@your library', with more than 200 hours of activities. To help with local promotions and publicity, full-colour posters and t-shirts were distributed to all libraries. Comments from participating librarians included:

'...I've had lots and lots of comments about the commercials from family and friends, plus library customers. Must say, wasn't expecting them to show the ads during the cricket! And not only did they show during the Sunday match, but I had people informing me they saw the ads every day from new years day onwards!' Jenny Paradiso, West Torrens.

'Quite a few people in the Barossa have commented on seeing the advertisement on the television, including some non-library users who I have chatted to at other functions — and we have one regular customer out here at Mt Pleasant who was disappointed to find that the library staff weren't wearing fairy wings like he expected!' Vicki Hutchinson, library services manager, Barossa Council Public Library.

Goolwa Library reported that a very burly builder working on the site of their new building asked why they weren't all wearing wings. Mitcham Library decided to be proactive and went out and bought wings for staff. ■

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