



**Imogen Garner**

ALIA president  
imogen.garner@alia.org.au

## ALIA: a star organisation

At my first official engagement as ALIA president, an award ceremony to present the Sharr medal, I proudly wore my collection of ALIA stars — the red identifying me as an ALIA member, the silver acknowledging my contribution to ALIA committees over a period of time, and the gold awarded as a member of the ALIA Board. The stars caused much comment and I realised that although I see the ALIA logo displayed on our publications, letterhead and website, I had not really given much thought to its meaning. I thought that if I am going to wear my stars to events I should at least understand the symbolism behind the ALIA star.

However, information on the ALIA logo is not as easy to find as I had imagined, and only after contacting Ivan Trundle was I able to discover the story of the star — so I thought that I would share it with you. The star has quite a long history and its presentation as the logo has changed over time. The initial logo was a representation of two-way information transfer based on a paper-clip with two opposing arrows. Over time the shape of a 6-pointed star emerged reflecting the relationship between information transfer and a wheel of information. It started to appear in issues of the *Australian Library Journal* in 1976. The star was refined in 1992 with a warm red colour and bolder design. The star has now become closely-linked with the Association and although it has been remodelled and refined, it remains the enduring symbol of ALIA.

The FA Sharr Medal presentation was organised by the ALIAWest group as part of the ALIA celebrations for Library and Information Week. This award is named after Ali Sharr, a former state librarian, and is given to the graduand who exhibits the most potential to have a positive impact on their preferred stream of the library profession. My best wishes go to the winner, Andrew Rayner, from Curtin University of Technology, the 2003 Sharr Medalist, who is now working at the National Library of Australia. The program also included presentations by two former Sharr Medal winners Vicki Tkacz and Eilishia Bardoe who spoke with passion about their careers since becoming Sharr Medal winners. It was also fitting that the first recipient of the Sharr Medal, Jean Ryding was present. Jean received her award in 1976.

The presentation of ALIA awards is a powerful way for the Association to recognise and honour the wonderful contributions made by our members and friends. There are awards such as the HCL Anderson Award honouring outstanding achievement by an associate member and the Redmond Barry Award honouring an outstanding contribution by an individual who is not eligible for associate membership.

Fellowships are peer-nominated awards that recognise the high standards and distinguished contribution made by members. I was honoured to attend the presentation of an ALIA Fellowship to Moyra McAllister at an ALIA Victoria event held in March and listen to her citation and marvel at her contribution to our profession. This is written up in the March issue of *inCite* and provides a wonderful example of what the fellowship award is all about. ALIA hopes to be able to present all available FALIA citations on the website in the near future.

There are also study grants and research awards, excellence awards, merit awards and student awards available to members and the details are all available on the ALIA website [<http://alia.org.au/awards/>].

However if these awards seem too far from our reach, there is the ALIA silver pin, a self- or peer-nominated award that recognises a member's contribution to ALIA through work on ALIA group committees. I have attended several silver pin award presentations, and indeed received a pin myself, and I know that members really appreciate the recognition that ALIA now gives to its army of volunteer workers. I commend the role that my fellow board member Kevin Dudeney played in the introduction of the silver pin award.

So if you know someone who should be recognised by ALIA, take the time to nominate them for an award so that their contribution and achievements can be celebrated.

Observable symbols such as the star pins and events and celebrations such as award presentations make an important contribution to the culture of ALIA as an organisation. Stories told by members reinforce our values and confirm our shared understandings of what it means to be a part of our profession. They reflect the mutual support of members on which ALIA relies to achieve its Objects. ■

### Feedback to your Board of Directors

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

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

**Imogen Garner [president]**  
ph 08 9266 7205,  
fx 08 9266 3213,  
[imogen.garner@alia.org.au](mailto:imogen.garner@alia.org.au)

**Gillian Hallam [vice-president]**  
ph 08 9266 7205,  
fx 08 9266 3213,  
[gillian.hallam@alia.org.au](mailto:gillian.hallam@alia.org.au)

**Kevin Dudeney, ph 02 9804 5448,**  
fx 02 9804 5460,  
[kevin.dudeney@alia.org.au](mailto:kevin.dudeney@alia.org.au)

**Ann Ritchie, ph 08 8999 7364,**  
fx 08 8999 6927,  
[ann.ritchie@alia.org.au](mailto:ann.ritchie@alia.org.au)

**Meredith Martinelli, ph**  
02 7850 7509, fx 02 9850 6517  
[meredith.martinelli@alia.org.au](mailto:meredith.martinelli@alia.org.au)

**Roxanne Missingham, ph**  
02 6260 1143, fx 02 6273 1180,  
[roxanne.missingham@alia.org.au](mailto:roxanne.missingham@alia.org.au)

**Carol Newton-Smith, ph**  
0893467569, fx 08 9346 7588,  
[carol.newton-smith@alia.org.au](mailto:carol.newton-smith@alia.org.au)