

# Regrets, I've had a few, but then again, too few to mention...



**Christine Mackenzie**

ALIA president  
christine.mackenzie@alia.org.au

## 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.

**Christine Mackenzie** [president]  
ph 03 9401 0710,  
fx 03 9408 8231,  
[christine.mackenzie@alia.org.au](mailto:christine.mackenzie@alia.org.au)

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

**Deanne Barrett**, ph 08 9268 7138,  
fx 08 9221 3261,  
[deanne.barrett@alia.org.au](mailto:deanne.barrett@alia.org.au)

**Angela Bridgland**,  
ph 03 8344 7257,  
fx 03 8344 0042,  
[angela.bridgland@alia.org.au](mailto:angela.bridgland@alia.org.au)

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

**Vicki McDonald**, ph 07 3842 9405,  
fx 07 3840 7860,  
[vicki.mcdonald@alia.org.au](mailto:vicki.mcdonald@alia.org.au)

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

It is a sad fact of the human condition that it is only when we get to the end of something we realise what we could of/should have done, and that it has all gone so fast. That is how I feel anyway, writing this last Frontline as president of our association.

It has been a good year, and a wonderful experience to meet some of you, and be present at conferences and other activities that I would not otherwise have had the opportunity to attend. There have been some terrific conferences throughout 2003 and 2004, particularly the Technician's conference in Brisbane and the Special, Health and Law Librarians' conference in Adelaide. Other highlights have been the interlending symposium at the National Library of Australia and the very successful co-operative purchasing seminar held as a satellite of VALA in February in Melbourne. Another highlight was attending IFLA in Berlin, and realising the universality of our profession and our values as librarians.

There have been fellowships and awards — we have recognised the significant contributions of David Jones and Moyra McAllister (see p19) with fellowships, the Redmond Barry was awarded to Jim Soorley and the Excellence Award to Janine Schmidt and the University of Queensland. It was a sad year too, losing eminent members of our profession — Warren Horton, Allen Horton and Ena Noël.

The National Policy Congress was generally considered the best yet — an indication I think of the maturing of the structure of ALIA and therefore the greater confidence that members feel in working within it to get the best outcomes. The celebration of the many varied and interesting programs and events that the different groups have undertaken set the scene for a positive and productive congress that looked optimistically to the future.

It is pleasing that the Association is in such good shape financially, and that is a tribute to past Board and General Council members as well as the staff at ALIA National Office. I have just been reading the special festschrift issue of the *Australian Library Journal* devoted to Margaret Trask,

and one of the many significant contributions that Margaret made to the profession was as president of the then Library Association of Australia. John Levett describes how 'In 1977 she held the office of president and in conjunction with Allan Horton, then the general treasurer she rescued the Association from a parlous financial situation. She lived one of her touchstones: when being pressed on an issue she would challenge its advocate by asking "Well: what *difference* will it make?" The difference here was between having a viable professional association or a bankrupt one.' (*Australian Library Journal*, February 2004 p13–14) I think that these days we take for granted that the Association is well run and well resourced, but it takes careful and responsible action by the Board and the executive director to ensure that ALIA does remain financially viable.

'What difference will it make' indeed — the theme of ALIA's plan for 2003–2004 is *ALIA: making the difference*. It is very satisfying to see the culmination of that plan, especially as when it was presented to delegates at the National Policy Congress in 2002, they wondered if it was all achievable. It was ambitious, and it is a tribute to the ALIA National Office staff and the Board that there has been such progress made on a wide range of objectives and strategies. I would recommend that you read the review of the year in the *Annual report* (see the April edition or visit <http://alia.org.au/publishing/annual.reports/>), for often members are not aware of the wide range of activities that are undertaken on our behalf.

I would like to thank my predecessor Joyce Kirk, president to May 2003, who provided wise counsel, and to my fellow board members for their commitment and dedication in their service to ALIA. Special thanks to Deanne Barrett and Vicki McDonald who step down from the Board at the May AGM, their contribution has made a difference. Thanks also to the ALIA National Office staff who are always helpful and obliging, and to Jennefer Nicholson, who steers the Association competently and ably. It has been an honour for me to have had this opportunity, and I offer Imogen Garner, the incoming president, every good wish. ■