



New Graduates Group – committee changes

Back in 2003 the New Generation Policy and Advisory Group (NGPAG) had a dream — a dream that was to take ALIA into uncharted waters. Those brave and hardy NGPAG souls dared to believe in forming an ALIA group for recent library graduates that would bring new librarians from around Australia together as one. It was bold, ambitious and rather daunting.

What became the New Graduates Group started with a secretary (Kate Watson), a convenor (myself) and a determination to sign up colleagues and friends in order to establish the group. The next step was the creation of an e-list, a website (<http://www.alia.org.au/groups/newgrad/>) and regional groups which would conduct social activities and professional development meetings specifically targeted at new graduates. There is still a long way to go, but the vision is slowly becoming a reality.

In February this year I attended a meeting of the IFLA Section on Management of Library Associations, the section that sponsors the IFLA New Professionals Discussion Group. The IFLA committee members were extremely interested in the structure of the ALIA New Graduates Group (NGG), what activities have been taking place, and generally the enthusiasm that has been generated through the group and activities such as the New Librarians Symposiums. In many respects we are ahead of the pack in terms of our initiatives and the Association's support of new librarians.

This year Simone Hys from Griffith University will be taking over the reigns as convenor of the New Graduates Group. Simone was previously the South East Queensland NGG co-ordinator. The group also has a new secretary, Claire Swift, who will be working closely with Simone on NGG developments.

As I step aside, I am disappointed that

we haven't been able to achieve all we set out to do, but at the same time Simone and the committee have a fantastic base to build on. The New Graduates Group receives a great deal of support from ALIA, and from senior figures in the profession.

The next couple of years promise to be exciting for the NGG group. The group now has over 500 people signed up for the group's e-list, and is becoming a thriving virtual community. Preparations for NLS 3 (New Librarians Symposium) are underway for the Sydney group.

There are also a number of new group co-ordinators, who are organising great social events and interesting professional development sessions for students and recent graduates. I recently attended an excellent session organised by the Victorian group co-ordinator, Michelle Thomason, presented by Susannah Vaughan from One Umbrella. The presentation covered everything from your application, how to dress, how to act in the reception area before an interview, what to drink during the interview, how to answer the 'give me an example' questions, to tips for moving into different library sectors.

Through the New Graduates Group I have been fortunate to meet many enthusiastic and dynamic new librarians. Some of the highlights of the past year include the new graduates session at the ALIA 2004 Biennial Conference, the dinner organised with IFLA president Kay Raseroka, and the energy of the New Librarian Symposiums.

Although no longer formally involved in the group, I'll still be popping along to events and watching with great interest the next stage of development for the group. I know Simone would love to hear from anyone who is keen to get involved. If you have any suggestions for the group, don't hesitate to contact your local group co-ordinator or s.hys@griffith.edu.au. ■

Alison O'Connor

Founding convenor, ALIA New Graduates Group

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...gives a voice to the new generation of library and information professionals. If you have any suggestions or topics for this column, please contact the column co-ordinator, Kate Watson, k.watson@cqu.edu.au.



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