

Introducing library technician groups

This month we feature the first of a number of articles profiling the ALIA Library Technician groups. In future issues we also plan to profile library technicians from the various groups. This will give everyone a chance to learn of specific activities that groups are organising and of the careers of some of our members.

Rebecca Evans, convenor, ALIA National Library Technician Group

Queensland Library Technician Group

Formed in 1978, the Queensland Library Technician Group has gone from strength to strength. The original members laid the foundation for the group to continue planning events and seminars of interest to the library technician community of Queensland.

Reflecting on the last twelve months, Queensland library technicians have been a busy bunch. Current committee members (Jennifer Parker (convenor), Trish D'Arcy (deputy convenor), Anne Collins (secretary), Helen Trochoulis (treasurer), Robyn Carlile, Lyn Boggarts, Anna Drew, Anna Johnson, Megan Maguire, Margaret Mowberry, Sue Sawyer and myself) have organised library tours, guest speakers, the annual Library Technician dinner during LIW, and the annual Christmas breakfast.

Highlights include:

- Ipswich library tour — visits to Ipswich Library and Information Service, Ipswich Hospital Library and University of Queensland Ipswich Library
- Marian Moyle visit — experiences of working in the United Arab Emirates
- National Library Technicians Day Annual Dinner — including presentation of the Queensland Library Technician of the Year (Recent Graduate) Award to Anna Drew

- Toowoomba library tour — visits to Toowoomba City Library, Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery and Toowoomba Local History Library, with a pit-stop at a winery on the way home
- Annual Christmas Breakfast at the Watt Café, New Farm
- Free Trade Agreement Seminar — Tom Joyce (UQ copyright officer) spoke of the implications of the FTA on libraries
- Asking the right questions workshop — Angela Vilkins shared her skills and knowledge on how to conduct better reference interviews.

2004 also saw the development and launch of the Queensland Library Technician Group Social Page on the ALIA website (<http://alia.org.au/groups/libtqlld/social/>), allowing us to publicise our events and seminars to ALIA members and potential members.

Our current activities include our annual dinner on 24 May during LIW 2005 with the presentation of the Queensland Library Technician of the Year (Recent Graduate) Award, with guest speaker Barb Ewers, QUT Library communications and external relations manager. The next function, on 14 June, is our Annual General Meeting and election of office bearers, at QUT Law Library. Hope to see you at one of our events/seminars in the future!

Sharon Uthmann, QUT Library, ALIA Qld Library Technician committee member

ACT Library Technician Group

The ACT group was formed in 1982. Both the 3rd National Library Technicians Conference, held in 1985, and the 9th National Library Technicians Conference, held in 1997, were convened in Canberra.

During the last year, the ACT group has organised and attended a number of activities, including:

- Rivers of Opportunity III held in Wagga Wagga in May (organised by the Vic and NSW Techs), with seven Canberra members attending
- a mid-year dinner with a turnout of 25 people
- a presentation dinner in August for Beth Clary, being the joint dinner for ALIA 2004 National Library Technician of the Year Award.

The end of the year saw another dinner, again with a good turnout, with Board member and fellow NSW technician Kevin Dudeney attending. He briefed the group and answered questions on the upcoming *neXt* conference in Sydney, 2005.

Representatives attended the NPC Canberra regional forum.

A breakfast meeting was held with Rebecca Evans (Convenor, National Library Technician Group) with fifteen Canberra members and representatives from Sydney also in attendance.

Canberra Institute of Technology continues to be a focus with the group. The group was represented at their Awards night and also at an industry support gathering. Several technicians are currently involved with teaching units in the library studies program at CIT. We regularly advertise our activities (mainly dinners) and also forward the Canberra employment positions from Libtec which are then posted on their notice board and WebCT.

Beth Clary, convenor, ACT Library Technician Group

Book detectives at *neXt* 2005

In a world where sometimes books on loan from libraries are 'delayed' and take forever to return to the original lending library, something obviously needs to be done. Reuniting long-lost books with their original lending institutions is the role of the Library Book Recovery Agency (LiBRA), a new service based in Ultimo, Sydney, and owned and operated by Winston MacArthur Leeds and Victoria Follows.

'We're really book detectives,' says Winston Leeds, 'a bit like *CSI* for books, I guess, where we need to undertake some serious investigations and trace the missing books by whatever means possible.'

'We can end up checking through secondhand bookshops, op shops and church fairs as we try to locate that missing book,' adds Victoria Follows.

Some of these books have been missing for years and sometimes the trail goes cold, but each case holds the promise of

enormous pleasure for Follows and Leeds when they reunite an overdue book with its grateful library.

LiBRA will be making an appearance at *neXt 2005*: ALIA National Library and Information Technicians Conference, 6–9 September, at the Sydney Convention Centre, Darling Harbour. Participants at the conference will have the opportunity to join in one of Victoria and Winston's Cold Book Cases as they search for clues to the whereabouts of a long-lost book. Using clues located throughout the exhibition and conference location, participants will have a great time assisting the book detectives in their search for the lost tome and in reuniting it with its library.

If you want to discover the secret — you have to play the game!

Rob Thomson, organising committee member, neXt 2005,
<http://conferences.alia.org.au/libtec2005/>

