

# LIBRARY BUILDINGS

Signage is minimal, and there are three silk screened black and white photographic print ceiling banners by Richard Stringer, matching his mural in the main entry foyer overlaid by Judith Wright's poem 'At Cooloola'.



**Sunshine Coast TAFE Noosa  
centre at Tewantin**

*Photo by Helen Martyn and Joy Paul*

For the third year in a row, the Cert. IV and Diploma Visual Arts art students have claimed the top spot on Sunshine Coast TAFE library's statistics for the subject group who average the most loans from any of the four campus libraries. Students say that it's a very nice place to be—restful and full of light.

The library may have benefited from a closer consultation process with the project team when it came to the circulation desk and workstation design. The front desk is a large expanse of stainless steel with limited functionality—a case of form over function here.

This is a library with its face to nature and its soul in the arts, and is certainly a delight to work in every day.

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## New Logan North Library—the library everybody loves

"I LOVE the new library. It is so spacious and roomy. I love the lounges and coffee and TVs and study rooms and meeting rooms..."

*(A customer's comments regarding the new library at Logan North)*

Community response to the new Logan North Library has been overwhelmingly positive since it opened on Monday 4 August 2008. Boasting state-of-the-art facilities, customers have been especially impressed by the library's welcoming and comfortable ambiance. In less than two months since opening, over 838 new members have joined and 75 000 loans have been issued.

Logan City Council Libraries (LCCL) began the monumental task of relocating its Logan North Branch in October 2006. The lease on the existing premises was due to expire in 2008, opening the way for LCCL to purchase a site to accommodate the new library. Designed by Wilson Architects, key considerations for the construction of the new library included taking best advantage of the site for energy efficiency, minimising wasted or 'dead' spaces, keeping the design to one level whilst elevated over an existing car park, and finding space for an extra 40 car parks.

New or expanded services include:

- 18 public access PCs
- an Accessibility Centre including 5 PCs with adaptive technology for customers with special needs
- a drive through 'stop and drop' for book returns

- a meeting room and a community workspace available to non-profit community organisations
- self serve coffee and drink machines
- quiet study rooms
- plasma TV with Foxtel
- dedicated areas for storytimes, young adults, reading and relaxation.

Another key feature of this library includes a trial of shelving some of the non-fiction collection by genre. Genres include Crafts, Careers, Health, Computing, House and Garden and Parenting. The aim of creating these collections is to assist borrowers find items that the Dewey Decimal System would traditionally separate. To date, the trial has proved a resounding success and very popular with borrowers.

Opening celebrations included a breakfast with author Marcus Zusak, who also facilitated two writing workshops on the day for both teen and adult participants. Over 250 children and adults also enjoyed a Kids Fun Day which included a superhero show, face painting, balloon twisting, give-aways and a very special visit from the Vegie Man!

Library staff have also embraced their new workspace with great enthusiasm and love sharing all the library has to offer with customers. In particular, the staff enjoy using the innovative ergonomic returns area with electronic dump bin and combined re-sensitiser and check in facility.

This is Logan City Council Libraries fourth major building project in the last decade and is an outstanding accomplishment considering that Logan City's geographical size and population almost doubled overnight as a result of the recent Queensland Local Government Reform.

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## Big changes in the Top End

Exciting news for Darwin libraries! Casuarina Library, the main library in the Northern Territory's largest public library service, is in the middle of a major upgrade which will transform the library into a more streamlined and welcoming environment. The refurbishment is all part of Darwin City Council's (DCC) continued support and commitment to public library services in the Top End.

DCC libraries have over 37 000 registered members across their four libraries—Casuarina, Darwin City, Karama and Nightcliff, and circulation of over 48,000 per month (July 2008). Casuarina Library has been in its current location for 28 years. The close proximity to Darwin's biggest shopping centre makes the library all the more appealing.

The library closed its doors on 12 September 2008 for the expected ten-week project, and hopes to reopen by the end of November 2008. Services will continue at the three other branches with extra staffing so there is minimal impact on the community.

At a cost of \$1.2 million, the upgrade will provide a more modern facility with services such as self check-out, and a dedicated returns room. It is all part of making the library more user friendly for customers and staff alike. Included in the upgrade will be new carpets, all new shelving, furniture and improved air conditioning—a necessity for the Top End!

A major focus of the refurbishment will be in the general layout of the library. In keeping with John Stanley's retail concept, the library will comprise four 'living rooms' covering Parenting, Language & Travel, Health & Wellness, and Home & Garden. This will make the collection more appealing and easier for customers to locate books on their subject interest.

This is an exciting development for Darwin library services and a chance to improve not only customer services but to offer great advancements in the use of technology and keep up with growing library trends across Australia. Though using the existing building, it will be like a brand new library. We cannot wait!

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## Libraries are for everyone

Starting as a dream many years ago for the original librarians, Mary Anderson and Ann O'Brien, the new Bellingen Branch Library is now a physical entity. However, it did not come easily or quickly as numerous sites were investigated and dismissed until it was realised that the current western end of the Council building was the perfect floorspace to renovate. This site was chosen because of its close proximity to the CBD, the availability of adequate parking and the 'People place' is within the existing community and cultural precinct of Bellingen.

Opened on Saturday 16th August 2008 during the town's annual Jazz & Blues Festival, the new library well exceeds its predecessor with over 400 metres square of floor space compared to the former library space of 155 square metres. The new library includes new shelving and furniture, vibrant paint colours, a large customer service area, and space for civic functions and exhibitions. The internet access machines have doubled from five to ten and the installation of solar panels on the roof of the library combined with the use of natural lighting will result in energy efficiencies of around 30% annually. A system monitor and display inside the library will serve to educate the community about the performance of the system and solar energy.

Accessibility and layout is a major component of the design. The practical adaptation of the space creates a workable and attractive library with large open space to make it easier for staff supervision and provides greater long term flexibility. The library is more accessible for people with disabilities and those who are mobility impaired and incorporates on-site accessible toilet facilities.

Young people have also been specifically catered for in the design with separate areas for junior and young adult reading, together with space to host special activities such as story telling.

It is important to acknowledge that the new library would never have been built had it not been for the State Library of NSW providing a Library Development Grant of \$200,000 in 2006.

It is exciting to have such a welcoming space, filled with natural light and it is hoped that the new building raises the profile of libraries within the community.

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## Darwin Magistrates library reorganisation project

In 1992, the Supreme Court Library took over responsibility for the Magistrates Library and since then many improvements have been made. Until recently, these have been almost exclusively in the provision of services and staffing. In 2004-2006, there was a major review of the collection, in particular the subscriptions; the back holdings of the cancelled items were removed which meant, although it could be spaced out, the collection became unevenly arranged.

The physical layout of the library had not altered since its establishment. The inherited shelving had been purchased at several different points in time and in a couple of different widths and depths. There



*The moving process*

was nowhere within the library area for magistrates to browse or to look at items. Nor was there anywhere to properly display new material.

A major part of the first stage was the removal of the door and part of the wall of the small office at the back of the library which previously had effectively cut the library area into two separate areas and severely limited our flexibility in how we could arrange the shelving near it. A compactus was installed in what was the back room area to house some lesser used materials. A glass-topped oval table and two leather chairs were purchased for the magistrates to sit at while doing research in the library.

In the second stage we purchased new shelving and relocated some existing shelving within the area. Instead of two long double-sided banks of bays running down the library area which turned the library into three long tunnel areas, we broke these up into shorter banks running across the library. This fitted in better with the ceiling lighting and also made it easier to navigate round the library. We managed to find a journal display unit which was being discarded by another library in Darwin; this has been placed in the corridor outside the library where the material on it is eye catching for the magistrates going down to court.

By making these changes to the physical layout of the library, it enabled us to make the resources of the library more accessible to the magistrates, make the library a more attractive place to visit, maximise the use of the floor space and arrange the materials more logically. We have noticed an increase in the use of the library materials and the table has now become the centrepiece of the library—it is well used, particularly when 2-3 magistrates want to discuss something in a relaxed setting.

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