

Directline

Like our President, Jan Richards, developing and reading this December issue of *inCite* has enabled me to recall many of my own experiences of regional libraries. Thanks to Alison M (page 34) of reminding me of the memorable experiences I have had in the region I also grew up – in the Toowoomba, Gatton, and South-east Queensland area. Those libraries and librarians of our past (Thanks, Mrs Cook) served us well. All of us have had good mentors and librarian-influencers that have made a difference. The current staff in these smaller libraries continue to change and enhance the lives of so many in their communities. We thank them, and all like them, as they spread the word of the benefits of libraries into their local and regional communities.

New ALIA committees and connections

I am very pleased to be inviting all the Chairs and Presidents of the state Public Library Associations and PLA to become a newly formed ALIA Public Libraries Advisory Committee in 2010 and to play an even greater role in the work of ALIA from next year. The Chairs of the ALIA Sectoral Advisory Committees (TAFE, Special, & Public) will be joining board members at meetings next year – and will be delivering their updates and perspectives directly to the board. The school and academic sectors will also be joining with us via the newly formed ALIA National Partnerships Standing Committee. As an ALIA member I encourage you to contact the chairs of our committees with your suggestions and views along the way <http://www.alia.org.au/governance/committees>

Rural & Regional member engagement

For a number of years we have been engaging with regional and rural members through our National Advisory Congress teleconference for these members. This year we also conducted 2 regional NAC meetings in Gawler in SA & Townsville in QLD. We also have many overseas member (about 120 actually). It was great to speak to SLQ's indigenous regional director, Terena Hopkins recently about the developments for broadband access for far-flung communities. ALIA will be represented at the Government's Broadband Forum on 10&11th December gathering in Sydney. There are lots

Regional vs isolated

ALIA involves many sectors and this issue has reminded me that many of our members say that they feel 'remote' even if they work in a city or large town. One person library staff find it difficult to network and share resources. Our OPAL groups such as the National OPAL group as well as QLD OPALs and ACT OPALs help by providing a network between sole professionals and a forum for support and knowledge creation, sharing and dissemination, these groups also run many activities including events on current trends and skills in LIS employment, visits to the State library for training in databases (often OPALs rely on free or inexpensive resources) and sharing experiences of conferences with other group members.

This is also why ALIA has introduced a number of initiatives so that it doesn't matter where in

the Australia you are, you can still be with us – through our online courses, teleconferences, online journals, members-only website resources, and of course our still-in-print via post (as you read this) *inCite*.

2009 Thank yous

It's the end of another year – a lucky number 9 year, if some follow the Chinese calendar – and I wanted to take the opportunity to thank all of our volunteers, supporters, and staff for another year of superb contributions. A special thanks to ALIA Board, Standing Committee, and Advisory Committee members who contributed so much of their time, energy, and expertise this year – it is unquantifiable. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all. To the wonderful staff at ALIA National Office who keep the operations of ALIA ticking along – my sincere thanks as well.

I also got the chance recently to personally thank the Yarra Plenty team who have co-ordinated such great work on the ALIA Disaster Recovery project. Thank you to Jane Grace, Carolyn Jury, and Christine Mackenzie.



2010 – what will it bring...

The year of 2010 will be somewhat different to what we first planned. We look forward to seeing you all at VALA 2010 (visit us at the ALIA booth) and of course ALIA Access 2010 in Brisbane on 2nd & 3rd September. Program details are now going up on the wiki, linked under 'Events' from our home page. We hope that the next year will bring you all joy and prosperity, and we would like to thank you for your continued support. You, our member, ensure a strong library association into its 73rd year.



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