

# EEI... ENERGISE, ENTHUSE, INSPIRE

EEI 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 Lesa Maclean at [maclea.lesa@gmail.com](mailto:maclea.lesa@gmail.com)

## On the road again

*Nova Watson grew up in Coffs Harbour on the mid-north coast and, if you had asked her ten or even five years ago, she had no idea that she would one day become a librarian, let alone travel as a library intern to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Ohio.*

I grew up loving music, history and movies and decided to do an arts degree in history at the University of Queensland in Brisbane. Once I had finished, I simply had no idea what I wanted to do. After researching and thinking long and hard about the meaning of it all, I decided I wanted to be a librarian, so I started my masters in library and information science.

A year in I got my big break with an interview for a Library Adviser position at Queensland University of Technology and it became my first library job. In this position I work under a new model which has me interacting with clients and helping with, but not limited to reference questions, lending, and study skills. During my short time as a student and a professional in the information industry I have been lucky enough to visit other libraries and to partake in professional development in a library overseas.

Twice this year I have had the pleasure to work at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Museum Library and Archives in Cleveland, Ohio. When I tell people about my experience at the Rock Hall Library they tend to be a little amazed that I did it and curious how it came about. I wanted to mix my love of music, my interest in archiving, and my eagerness to travel and find somewhere that would accommodate all three. On a whim I looked up the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and saw that they were opening a library. A few emails, an application and a phone interview later, I was accepted as an intern. My time there initially was as a part of my fieldwork for my studies but I returned again in June as a professional development opportunity for my degree and for work.

My time as an intern was amazing. Not only was I in a different country but I was working in an area that was completely new to me. One of the most valuable things I have taken from the experience is that I was able to see a library in its developing stages and contribute to that development. I was also able to organise and process some amazing archival material. Some of the items I came across were music magazines from the 50s, signed contracts of recording artists, concert advertisements dating back to the beginnings of rock and roll, blueprints for lighting and stage plans for major touring artists, and so much more amazing memorabilia. For me, it was great to get some hands on archival experience, as at some point in my career I would like to move into this area.

While I was overseas I also took the opportunity to visit some other libraries. Of these the most well-known were the Library of Congress and the New York Public Library. One of my main motivations for visiting other libraries is curiosity - I am interested to see what the major differences were in libraries in another country.

I think as professionals we are genuinely interested in how other states and countries operate their libraries and in what we can take away from the experience to improve our own work place. In the cases of the New York Library and Library of Congress I was surprised at how they functioned as tourist destinations. The Library of Congress only has a certain area open to the public, an area which feels more like a museum than it does a library.

Being able to work and interact with other librarians in different contexts is an amazing opportunity and can be invaluable in terms of experience and the knowledge that can be gained. Making it happen can be the difficult part. Travelling overseas can be expensive and the idea of a working holiday may not appeal to everyone. For those that are willing it is a great personal and professional development opportunity and great for networking and gaining overseas contacts. For me, visiting and working in overseas libraries is now a must for professional development.

### Nova Watson

[n5.watson@qut.edu.au](mailto:n5.watson@qut.edu.au)

**Nova Watson** is studying Library and Information Science and is currently working as a Library Adviser at the Queensland University of Technology at Kelvin Grove.



Meet EEI Coordinator, Lesa Maclean at NLS5 Lesa will be presenting at the NLS5 conference in Perth in September. If you would like to meet with Lesa, leave a message at the ALIA stand in the exhibition area. Ideas for columns always welcome!