



AWESOME FROM START TO FINISH: LIBTECH 2011

Back to Basics Conference Convenor Susan Courtland shares her personal highlights.

In the Nyoongar language, 'Moorditj' means awesome. The 'Moorditj Mob Dancers' from Wesley College accompanied by Olman Walley on the didgeridoo, welcomed LibTech delegates with an awesome dance, setting the tone for an amazing conference opening exuding warmth and humour; a buzz that carried through the entire conference. I acknowledge too our wonderful emcee Grant Stone, radio personality Russell Woolf for his inspiring words in opening the conference and ALIA President Margaret Allen for her welcome address.

Back to Basics – Perth 2011 offered a forum to explore our fundamental skills and share how we meet the needs of clients. As a service-based industry with skills, visions and professional values, we are specialists in the management of information and the use of tools and technology inter-connected with our clients. Hence each presenter for *Back to Basics* was chosen to reflect the three dynamics of the conference: personal development, professional development and client services. I thank all of our wonderful speakers for sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm towards an excellent program.

My personal highlights included magician Rob Townsend's performance at the reception and our opening keynote speaker, Rachel Green, who added energy to the room, inspiring confidence in delegates to deal with difficult clients and to network with ease. A skilled educator and presenter, Rachel's sessions were informative and made learning so much fun.

Plenary speaker Andy Wright delivered 60 minutes of pure pleasure in the art of storytelling titled, *Telling Tall Tales and True: The Art of Successful Storytelling*. All enjoyed a very entertaining session, interspersed with audience participation, including ALIA President Margaret Allen performing a series of star jumps on stage.

Elaina Norlin from Broward County Florida delivered an insightful keynote presentation on the state of libraries in America and the importance of marketing in keeping the library and information industry alive, while Sarah Garnett's moving and inspirational presentation on

the *Benjamin Andrew Footpath Library* received a standing ovation from the audience, many of whom were moved to tears.

The superb conference dinner and dance at the Hyatt will long be remembered, as will the *Back to the Future* open forum panel discussion, a joint event with the NLS5 conference delegates. And finally, the announcement of Judy Allan as the Library Technician of the Year 2011 was a very special highlight- the best kept secret leading into the awards.

I acknowledge and thank our wonderful sponsors, including Ulverscroft, Innovation and Business Skills Australia, Murdoch University, Curtin University, Envisionware, the University of WA, and Perth Convention Bureau, and our exhibitors for their generous investment in the profession by supporting our conference, and thank our magnificent delegates for their participation, sharing in the excitement and embracing all that *Back to Basics* had to offer.

In closing the 2011 conference, I invited the 15 members of the LibTech Committee to join me on stage to complete what has been an incredible journey of learning, self-discovery and friendship. It has been a privilege working alongside such a wonderful group of library and information professionals. Leading such a dynamic team has been a very rewarding experience and I have benefited immensely in the areas of leadership, events management and decision-making. It has also been a wonderful experience working in partnership with ALIA on this event and I thank them for the opportunity.

Perth 2011 is being acclaimed by delegates as the best National Library Technician Conference to date. We are very proud of what we have achieved; it was an awesome Conference.

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The best-kept secret of Libtech 2011: Judy Allan, Library Technician of the Year



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