

NOTES FROM THE SA PUBLIC LIBRARIES CONFERENCE



Geoff Strempel, State Library SA, and Anne Rundle, City of Adelaide libraries.



Patti Manolis, Geelong Regional Library (left) and ALIA President Julie Rae

Todd Sampson, Bernard Salt and The Gadget Guy – when Public Libraries South Australia (PLSA) run a conference, they don't do things by half. The 'Libraries: Culture of Change' conference at the Adelaide Entertainment Centre, from 9–10 September, sent all the delegates and exhibitors away with a pocketful of ideas to put into practice. ALIA Executive Director Sue McKerracher reports.

The NZ National Librarian Bill Macnaught knows how to lobby effectively. He says 'relevance is everything' and talked about how libraries drive the knowledge economy and support digital literacy, items which are firmly on the political agenda.

Patti Manolis, from Geelong Regional Library, and Marian Morgan-Bindon, from Gold Coast libraries, both spoke about investment in new libraries. Within a very short space of time, they have, between them, opened seven new public libraries. There is some doom and gloom around, but stories such as these about new libraries being part of major regeneration projects, the anchor for cultural precincts, and breathing new life into smaller communities tell a different story.

The Gadget Guy, Peter Blasina, wowed us all with talk of wearable technology; everything living in the cloud; QWERTY keyboards taking a backseat to gestures, touch and voice; surface computing (think Mission Impossible); graphical paper and biometrical ID.

Our ALIA President Julie Rae was invited to speak about the Future of the Profession, which she did, with gusto, drawing on evidence from other industries to help illustrate our situation.

The SBS's Mandi Wicks was keen to work with libraries to reach diverse audiences – there are now four million people in Australia whose first language is not English, an increase of 40% in 10 years.

There were many more presentations, and many more discussions away from the main stage. Congratulations to PLSA President Lindy Burford, Conference Convenor Judi Cameron, Conference Organiser Julie Kerr, the conference committee and the volunteers, who made this such a thought-provoking and engaging two days. Find out more on the website www.plsacon.blogspot.com.au/.



Paul du Temple, Wheelers NZ, and Patricia Genat, ALIA.



Conference overview.



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