

INCITE



NOV/DEC
2021

Vol 42
Issue 6

DIGITAL ONLY EDITION

**AN IMMERSIVE
EXPERIENCE:
IPSWICH CHILDREN'S LIBRARY**

**TAKING RISKS
IT'S WHAT WE DO**

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An immersive experience

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FROM THE EDITOR

As an avid library user (sorry City of Melbourne Libraries, that's me constantly suggesting purchases and clogging up the reservations shelf!), I have come to realise that even though I haven't been able to access library spaces in person, being able to keep borrowing books—through the library's click and collect service, and excellent new app—has helped get me through Melbourne's interminable lockdown. For my first issue of *INCITE* as Editor, it has been an absolute pleasure learning about the experiences of library and information professionals during the pandemic as they worked hard to keep these integral library services functioning. As the country begins to reopen, I am convinced that we need libraries now more than ever, not only as places to access reliable information, but also as safe spaces for the most vulnerable people in the community. I'd like to thank the outgoing Editor of *INCITE*, Andrew Finegan, for his guidance and support for this issue of the magazine, and I wish him well in all his future endeavours. It is a privilege to share the stories of the people and communities that make up the vibrant and important library and information sector. 🌱



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MITIGATING RISK

Welcome to the November/December issue of *INCITE*, themed 'risk', which seems timely considering the events of the last two years across Australia. From the 2019–20 Black Summer bushfires to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, from floods and earthquakes to other disruptions to library services in Australia, this has been a time when libraries have had to examine risk at a minute level in order to offer ongoing library and information services in a safe way for all.

Does this mean libraries and librarians have become risk management experts? Risk management in library and information services involves identifying potential hazards – which may harm or damage building occupants as well as collections, library and archive materials – and ensuring measures to mitigate such risks are regularly assessed.

Filling out COVID-19 Safety Management Plans for the phased reintroduction of services has certainly made me a better navigator of the risk matrix. I am now able to articulate potential and perceived risks in a more substantial and useful way than I could prior to the events of the last two years. And who knew that we would become experts in QR codes, face masks, social distancing rules, queuing standards, the quarantining of returned items, and the sourcing and installation of sneeze screens?

Libraries have long been considered safe places and sources of

credible information during difficult times. I would say the hardest part of managing risk over the last two years has been restricting face-to-face access to the library service. This has left the most vulnerable sections of our community without their usual safety net of somewhere that provides daily human interaction and a place to ask questions and receive reliable, impartial and well researched answers. Although this time has been challenging, I would like to commend all library staff on their foresight, planning and resilience, which have definitely been bolstered by responding to uncertainty and constantly changing regulations.

In order to minimise the risk of spreading COVID-19 to communities and library staff, we have seen the innovative implementation of 'click and collect' or 'click and drop' services, remote online services via email, digital service desks, and remote communication via online chat and Zoom. Wi-fi has been expanded to outdoor areas to remove the need to enter the library to use it, while, indoors, the spaces between computers have been increased, single lounge chairs have been installed, and shorter timeframes to use library facilities have been implemented. All this shows that library staff are willing to do the risk assessment and mitigation for a successful outcome. What innovative ideas have your library or information

service put in place in order to keep providing services to your clients? I am very interested to hear from you, and I know this will continue to be a topic of conversation for the foreseeable future as restrictions are rolled back across Australia.

We are all responsible for ensuring our own safety, and we encourage our library users to do the same. To this end, I do hope that the respectful social distancing behaviours that we have adopted towards each other will remain as we continue to live with COVID-19.

The ALIA Board has issued a COVID-19 statement. We want to make sure that members and library users provide services in the safest way possible, while continuing to offer access to accurate information and work against the spread of mis- and disinformation. You can find further information on the ALIA website.

I want to thank all our Members for continuing to provide information and resources about all library and information services to your users during this time. 🌸

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VOTE LITERACY

The third quarter of 2021 has been all about literacy – digital literacy, information literacy, adult literacy and early literacy have all featured strongly in ALIA's work.

In September, we joined with nine other members of the National Early Language and Literacy Coalition to launch the Proposed National Strategy for Early Language and Literacy. In October, as part of the Australian Media Literacy Alliance, we helped develop a National Media Literacy Consultation Report, based on six workshops – three online, one in Brisbane, one hosted by the State Library of Western Australia and another by Libraries Tasmania. This report was launched during Media Literacy Week at the end of the month.

Further developments include a new ALIA Adult Literacy Group, formed by Members in Tasmania; a media literacy and libraries research project with the University of Canberra; and conversations at the national level with federal government agencies about digital inclusion.

It used to be so simple. When someone spoke about literacy, nine times out of 10 they meant reading and writing. Now, we've moved to that other definition of

literacy – competence or knowledge in a specified area – and we are surrounded by literacies: cultural literacy, financial literacy, even, with a mention in the December edition of the *Journal of the Australian Library and Information Association*, scholarly publishing literacy.

There are two ways of looking at this. One is to think that the word has been hijacked by the intelligentsia and that the proliferation of literacies takes the focus away from reading and writing to the detriment of people who struggle with these foundational skills. The other is to think that in a society of multiple literacies, we will all experience the discomfort of illiteracy in some aspect of our lives, and to hope that this insight will help remove some of the stigma associated with low levels of reading and writing ability.

At the same time as ALIA has been involved in these various literacy initiatives, *Lost for Words*, a documentary series featuring eight people undertaking a nine-week intensive adult literacy course, has been airing on SBS. This high-profile media coverage exposes the reality of living with low levels of literacy and giving the topic mainstream attention

helps normalise what has often been a hidden shame. A practical benefit of the increased visibility has been significant growth in the number of people stepping forward and offering their services as volunteer tutors for adult literacy programs in libraries and in other community programs.

Libraries have always been a place where people have been able to go for literacy support, in all its various forms, but this role has not necessarily been on the radar for Australian Government. We are now in discussions with several federal departments about early literacy, digital literacy and media literacy, and these issues feature strongly in our Vote Library agenda for the next federal election, with four of our policy asks directly related to literacy.

When the election is announced, there will be opportunities for you to add your voice to our Vote Library campaign – and in the interests of improved literacy in all its forms, we hope you will be able to join us in this advocacy. You will find everything you need on the ALIA website and if you have other ideas we would love to hear from you advocacy@alia.org.au. ✨

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Australian Library and
Information Association

YOUR ASSOCIATION. YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO LEAD.

**NOMINATIONS FOR THE ALIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS OPEN
MONDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2021**

What does being a Director involve?

As a Board member you will help shape ALIA's future direction. You will bring your knowledge, skills and experience to the table to provide strategic guidance to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Association. You will be responsible for setting the core activities of ALIA, for reflecting the views of the Members and for strong governance, risk and financial management.

Being a Director provides a unique opportunity to make a significant contribution to the library and information sector and ensure that your professional association is one that you will continue to be proud of.

The Board meets approximately four times a year. In 2022 we anticipate that these will be a combination of online and in-person meetings. Generally, the in-person meetings are held in Canberra at ALIA House. The format of the meetings will be influenced by the most recent COVID-19 guidelines.

We are seeking nominations for:

- Institutional Director
- Three general Directors

The successful candidates will take office following our Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 16 May 2022 and serve on the Board for two years.

They will be part of a seven-member Board comprising the President, Institutional Director and five general Directors. The Board will appoint one of their members to serve as the Vice President.

Nomination for the Board is open to all personal financial Members of ALIA.

Further information

Details about the role of a Director and how to nominate can be found on the ALIA website alia.org.au/elections.

Nominate
yourself or
encourage one
of your peers to
nominate

Nominations close Monday 31 January 2022
alia.org.au/elections

ALIA BOARD COMMITS TO CARBON NEUTRALITY BY 2030



On 13 October, for the International Day of Disaster Risk Reduction, the ALIA Board went on record with a climate change statement and made a commitment for the Association to play its part in reducing damage to the environment.

There is a lot hanging on 2030, with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals targeting that as their end date. Now, the ALIA Board has set a target for the Association to be 'carbon neutral by 2030' and has endorsed the ALIA Environmental Sustainability Policy, with strategies for minimising ALIA's impact on the environment and maximising its use of sustainable resources.

The ALIA Board is clear in its statement, recognising that 'climate change is a dangerous reality and that its effects pose an increasing threat to libraries and the communities they serve'.

The statement continues: 'Living in a country that is particularly vulnerable to environmental extremes, it is critical that all Australians have access to the information they need to make informed decisions about climate change and how it affects their lives. Our global goal of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 can only be met by government, industry and civil society, if leaders have the grass roots support of individuals, families and community groups.'

The statement (<https://bit.ly/3j6tUSz>) highlights the work of libraries in promoting awareness of environmental issues, providing access to the latest scientific findings and mitigating the impacts of climate change on the most vulnerable in society. It also summarises ALIA's actions in this area.

ALIA has been an active member of Blue Shield Australia since 2005, part of the international movement to protect cultural heritage at risk from conflict and disaster. Most recently, in July this year ALIA initiated the Greening Libraries project, commissioning research into how libraries internationally and in Australia are responding to environmental issues. This will lead to the development of a best practice report in 2022 against which libraries can assess their own performance and set goals for improvement, with further project outputs to follow. Interested Members should check out ALIA Sustainable Libraries Group (ALIA Green) for more updates and activities. 🌱

STRETCHING TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

ALIA's International Relations Advisory Committee (IRAC) has published stretch targets for the library and information sector aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

The stretch targets were launched in September as part of Global Goals Week and in the lead-up to the ALIA SDG Roundtable, to take place online on 1 November.

The targets have taken two years to finalise and have the support of the ALIA Australian Public Library Alliance, the Council of Australian University Librarians, and National and State Libraries Australasia. They will be monitored by IRAC and will help track progress across 10 areas of development, from literacy levels through to engagement with the Asia Pacific region.

'This work began with an SDG roundtable at ALIA House in September 2019,' said IRAC Chair Vicki McDonald. 'It was strengthened through consultation with ALIA Members and other peak bodies, and we now have the confirmed targets. If we can achieve these targets for literacy, open access, copyright reform, access to services, cultural respect, climate change, wellbeing, diversity, learning and international engagement, by 2030 we will have made an important contribution to a better future for all Australians.' 🌱

ONLINE STORYTIME BIGGER AND BETTER THAN EVER IN 2022

Once upon a COVID time, libraries, publishers, authors and illustrators set out on a quest to bring the joy of library storytimes to families cut off by the evil pandemic. There is no happy ending in sight for COVID-19, but Online Storytime is going from strength to strength, with exciting new elements in play for 2022.



When public libraries had to close their doors in 2020, borrowing moved to ebooks and click and collect, and home library services could continue in some places as essential services. However, library staff were most concerned about setting families with young children adrift without the option of library storytimes.

In a non-COVID year, more than three million participants are welcomed to over 121,000 storytimes in libraries across Australia. For states in lockdown, these much-loved in-person events simply stopped. Publishers, authors and illustrators offered free access to children's picture books for public library storytime recordings as a temporary measure, as the pandemic stretched on it was clear the emergency measures needed replacing with a more structured scheme.

ALIA, in partnership with the ALIA Australian Public Library Alliance, Australian Publishers Association, Australian Society of Authors and Small Press Network, stepped up to

create a new program called Online Storytime. The program is based on libraries paying a modest subscription fee for access to a list of children's picture books nominated by publishers for storytime recordings. The one-year pilot scheme kicked off in January 2021.

More than 320 storytime recordings later, with at least 29,000 views, Online Storytime has been so successful that ALIA has received grants from the Australian government, through the Restart Investment to Sustain and Expand (RISE) Fund initiative, and from the Australian Council for the Arts to make the program even bigger and better in 2022.

A major focus will be on a grants scheme for public libraries, putting \$100,000 back into the sector, and a further \$80,000 will go towards commissioning two new children's picture books from Indigenous creators. The RISE grant will also be used for soft infrastructure such as marketing collateral and a new website, and for a full evaluation of



the pilot program to identify further opportunities and improvements. The Australia Council for the Arts funding supports online workshops and newsletters, which help to build a community of libraries, publishers, authors and illustrators participating in the program.

ALIA CEO Sue McKerracher said, 'We are grateful for this generous funding from the Australian Government and for the continued support of our book industry colleagues. We know that Online Storytimes have not only kept libraries connected with their regular users, but have also introduced families living out of town, or with working parents, to the learning and fun experience of library storytimes.'

More than 140 library services, with 573 branches, have already subscribed to Online Storytime and all are welcome. To become a participant in 2022, contact the ALIA team storytime@alia.org.au.

APPLY FOR YOUR STORYTIME GRANT

Applications are open now for the first round of Online Storytime grants, worth \$80,000, with a closing date of 17 December. Any public library service subscribing to the program can apply for grant funding from \$1 to \$10,000 through a simple application form (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/OnlineStorytimegrant>).



Australian Government
RISE Fund



AN IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE

*Ipswich Children's Library is the country's newest – and only – standalone public children's library. Library Coordinator **Lisa Harth** discusses how this groundbreaking new space represents a new service model and customer experience initiative for Ipswich Libraries.*

Specially designed for children up to the age of 12, Ipswich Children's Library, which opened on 28 June this year, is focused on engaging young people and providing a natural environment where they feel comfortable to explore and learn. A strong desire in the planning of the library was to increase information literacy in Ipswich's youngest

generation. We wanted to help them learn, in a fun and engaging way, how to find the information they need with ease.

Wayfinding with simple text, engaging images and QR codes assists our young members to easily navigate the services and technology offerings with limited help from adults. A bespoke children's public catalogue

interface was designed in-house to deliver an easy, child-friendly browsing experience where popular subjects and authors are packaged and presented with engaging images that can be clicked or tapped on. Kids are gaining skills, feeling confident and capable of doing it themselves, creating a positive user experience, which keeps them coming back.

We have a specially designed interactive table with various games and experiences for little ones. The older kids can choose from unique, multi-reality interactive experiences. Popular across all ages are the





... the purpose-built facility is about providing learning opportunities fit for the digital age and offering a library experience unlike any other in the country



Augmented Reality stations. Children colour in a fish, scan it, then watch it appear and move across two large screens with an ocean backdrop. There is lots of excitement when they see their fish come to life. The Magic Mirror catches kids' interest as they see themselves live on-screen, then get to watch butterflies swarm around them, even land – if they stand still long enough.

One of the biggest – literally and figuratively – features of the new library is an exciting, interactive pneumatic pipe experience that allows children to 'feed' two life-sized plesiosaurs. The mother and baby, together measuring

over eight metres in length, are both suspended from the ceiling, with an intricate system of suspended pneumatic pipes allowing children to feed the pair 'food' (shiny fabric squares), watch it zip around, and then drop from the ceiling for them to catch and do all over again.

All this technology complements a collection of over 35,000 items that has been carefully curated for everyone, from those looking for their child's first read to 12-year-olds, who can browse our Top Reads section, where there is no shortage of the latest titles. Cushioned nooks entice young readers to sit and immerse themselves

in the treasures they've found on the bookshelves. We also have dedicated children's library programs and specially trained teams who deliver new customer experiences and service offerings, extending the library's reach into the community.

Adults haven't entirely been left out – we have a curated parenting collection and a beautifully designed, fully equipped parents' room. Mayor Teresa Harding said the purpose-built facility is about providing learning opportunities fit for the digital age and offering a library experience unlike any other in the country. 'This is not like the libraries of yesteryear, the focus is very much on interactivity and engaging our young people as they learn, explore and play.' 🌟

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RISK

In every decision we make – big or small, in our personal lives and in our work lives – there is always an element of risk. Should you drive to work or take the train? Would it be better to try a new idea or stick to a tried-and-true course of action? We are constantly doing cost–benefit analyses to determine whether the potential for success outweighs the risk of failure.

In the pages that follow you will find stories of how library and information professionals have handled making decisions in order to minimise negative outcomes and keep their patrons, staff and collections safe. Our contributors discuss a wide variety of risks, from bodily harm caused by disasters such as bushfires and pandemics to the risk of damage

to physical and digital collections from floods and cyberattacks. They explore the different degrees of risk: one article looks at how a goal of ALIA's Online Storytime program is to mitigate the risk of copyright infringement, while another considers how moving a library into a smaller space was a risk that paid off in unexpected ways.

We should keep in mind that that the term 'risk' should not always have negative connotations. School librarians Shahada Selamat, Bridget Hiho and Edward Kostraby argue that taking risks when selecting books for their collections has the potential to change the course of young peoples' lives, while Nicole Johnston shares how Edith Cowan University's healthy

culture of risk-taking and innovation enabled the university to quickly pivot to online learning during the pandemic.

An in-depth examination of risk wouldn't be complete without considering of the all-encompassing risks associated with climate change. As Deborah Miles from Moreton Bay Regional Council writes in her piece on greening libraries, while 'all libraries are flat-out doing as much as they can with their limited resources ... sustainable library practices shouldn't be an add-on, they should be part of our core business'. Managing risk involves taking risks. What risks have you recently taken in your work? 🌱

IN THE NEXT ISSUE...

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2022

The beginning can be a particularly vital stage for any venture. Whether it be pursuing a new career, creating an initiative, or getting a project off the ground, this issue will explore how things get started in the library and information sector. As 2022 is ALIA's 85th anniversary, it is also an opportunity to reflect on the Association's beginnings and look at its ongoing journey as new opportunities arise.

Submissions are due on 16 November. Be sure to consult our submission guidelines, and if you have any questions or want to pitch an idea to us, email us at incite@alia.org.au. 🌱

Beginnings



KEEPING COMMUNITIES CONNECTED

RISK

Launched in January 2021 as a response to the growing need for online content during the pandemic, ALIA's Online Storytime pilot program was established to help mitigate copyright infringement, provide a return for publishers and help keep communities connected. **Phoebe Weston-Evans** speaks to **Elizabeth Khater** and **Coralie Kouvelas** about the program's success so far.

Ten months in, the Online Storytime pilot program is tracking well. Uptake is surpassing initial estimates and libraries are reporting excellent feedback from their communities, who, through the program, can continue to connect with their local library, explore Australian children's literature and develop early literacy skills. Publishers, authors and illustrators too are showing their support for the pilot, and funding from the Federal Government's RISE Fund and the Australia Council for the Arts will support the scheme's growth. In the next 12 months there will be \$100,000 available in grants for participating libraries and creators in addition to new works from First Nations authors, and more resources and events for the thriving Online Storytime community.

Elizabeth (Liz) Khater in City of Canada Bay, New South Wales and Coralie Kouvelas in Yarra Plenty, Victoria, have been making recordings of their libraries' storytime sessions for their communities during lockdown. They describe how the Online Storytime agreement has enabled them to stay connected and has equipped them with a clear, copyright-safe process for creating recordings.

During the pandemic Liz started in her role as Children's Librarian at City of Canada Bay Libraries, where early literacy programs are a popular part of programming. For her team, having the Online Storytime agreement in place was a 'saving grace' and a significant – if not the – deciding factor in maintaining their online presence during lockdowns, particularly once the former agreement between ALIA, the Australian Publishers Association and the Australian Society of Authors expired at the end of 2020.

City of Canada Bay hosted storytimes online in 2020 but it was difficult to meet different copyright requirements and reporting for publishers, and to ensure only approved content was used. Liz says that navigating copyright was a trial but they had to avoid breaching copyright – a risk they would never knowingly take. 'The Online Storytime agreement has basically negated that risk so that we can get on with our job and do what we do best – spreading the love and joy of books and reading!'

Similarly, digital storytimes were already part of Yarra Plenty Regional Library's core business before the



Coralie Kouvelas

Online Storytime program was established. Copyright negotiations took significant work and energy, but data showed that having a digital presence was worth it. For Coralie, being part of the pilot program 'took the stress out of it' and has meant that they are able to concentrate on the content rather than focusing their energy on ensuring they are complying with copyright law.

Coralie describes connecting with new audiences online and reaching people across Victoria and interstate, people that her team hadn't known pre-COVID. Closer to home, Yarra Plenty Regional Library has connected with local authors, successfully encouraging them to add their picture books to library lists. The Online Storytime program has also been a channel through which to raise awareness of other programs and services they offer such as family bundles and food boxes.

ALIA will be extending the pilot program into 2022 with a full external review of the impact and uptake at the beginning of 2022. 🌱

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Liz Khater



Artlab Australia Disaster Management Workshop with History Trust of South Australia.

ALIA's new disaster management resources are one practical outcome of research that shows there is an urgent need for effective and coordinated library disaster management. Artlab Australia's Heather Brown discusses the increasing necessity of safeguarding library collections from both digital and physical risks.

From bushfires to cyclones, dust storms to floods, over the years disasters have damaged and destroyed many of Australia's unique physical and digital collections across a wide range of libraries, large and small. Threats have only increased with climate change, with the world entering into a new era of extreme weather and cascading major disasters. Converging with this are new threats to collections posed specifically by the COVID-19 pandemic, including undetected leaks and pest infestations in unmonitored physical collections, and cyber attacks on digital collections resulting from security vulnerabilities being exposed while staff are working from home.

It is crucial we safeguard library collections through disaster management. Indeed, without sound disaster management practices in place, all other library functions have the potential to be completely devastated in an instance of destruction. Effective disaster management plays a critical role in reducing disruption, damage and loss. It also helps to rebuild organisational and community resilience after disaster events.

A major research project on disaster management in Australia's

national, state and territory libraries provides useful insights into how library disaster management can be effectively coordinated. Despite the majority of libraries containing digital and physical collections, the research uncovered that the disaster management of these collections is largely divided and uncoordinated. Typically, library collection disaster plans focus on physical collections, while digital disaster plans are separate – frequently undocumented, locked away in the heads of IT staff.

The research highlighted the benefits of integrating disaster management across all collection formats in providing a 'one stop shop' coordinated approach. Risk management and the four stages of disaster management (prevent, prepare, respond and recover) are key areas common to disaster management of physical and digital collections. In both domains the emphasis is on the early stages of prevention and preparation, which can reduce the risk of damage to collections. The research also identified some barriers that need to be addressed in an effective integrated disaster plan – including the risk of the plan becoming too complex, and the need for specialist

physical and digital skills to be represented in the disaster teams and resources. Further details of the research are discussed in the article 'Interconnected Disaster Management – bridging the physical and digital divide.' (<https://bit.ly/3p5ecLq>)

The new ALIA disaster management resources are a practical outcome of the research. They were jointly developed with Christine Ianna from State Library of Queensland with support from Sue Hutley from Blue Shield Australia. The disaster resources incorporate an integrated approach and are designed to be flexible, so they can be tailored to individual library needs. They feature icons to help with quick navigation and include specialist digital and physical staff and resources. The *Guide* (<https://bit.ly/2YOWUMJ>) sets the scene, giving an overview and context. The *Disaster Plan Template* (<https://bit.ly/3vcof2l>) provides further details and a template for libraries to develop their own integrated disaster plan. *Scenarios* (<https://bit.ly/3BLVFHh>) are provided for training purposes. Check them out – and safeguard all your library's collections! 🌟

HEATHER BROWN AALIA (CP)

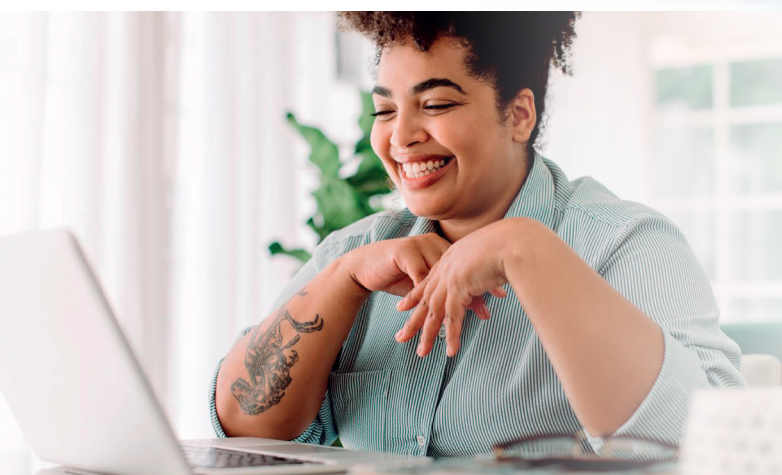
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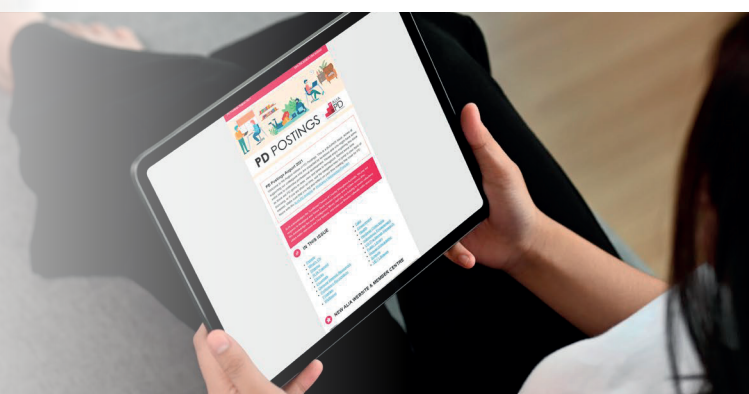
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The ALIA CPD Scheme supports you as a professional Associate, Library Technician or Allied Field Member to build a body of evidence around your commitment to professional growth.

Record your CPD with the new CPD logbook and track your progress towards Certified Professional (CP) and Distinguished Certified Professional (DCP) status.

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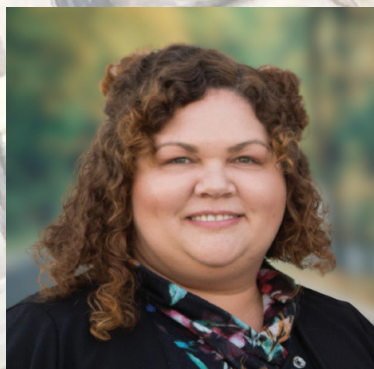
LET'S TALK SPECIAL AND CULTURAL COLLECTIONS

This month we approached library workers across the cultural sector and asked them what they feel are the most important risk management considerations when acquiring or providing access to special and cultural collections.



DANIEL ROZAS NUNEZ
MANAGER COLLECTION CARE
STATE LIBRARY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

When acquiring cultural materials, the library must exercise due diligence prior to accessioning new items. A risk assessment is conducted and embedded in our acquisition practices, as part of the significance assessment process. The library ensures that collections are accessioned along with relevant documentation about provenance or chain of ownership to prevent dissociation of collections. Undocumented collections that are orphaned from context and paperwork are considered dissociated. These collections may lead to legal, ethical, and reputational risks. The library also conducts additional research to identify risks related to copyright and potential legal or privacy issues around collections containing culturally sensitive information.



NICOLE LOCKWOOD
COORDINATOR, INDIGENOUS CURATORIAL AND COLLECTIONS
NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA

Providing access to cultural material carries various risks. As coordinator of Indigenous curatorial and collections, I ensure the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities are considered when access to Indigenous cultural material is sought. Balancing preservation and accessibility in a national legal deposit library is complex and layered with cultural considerations. We work to embed understanding of Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) rights into our processes to minimise negative outcomes. Analysing requests from Indigenous standpoints and educating stakeholders of ICIP's importance ensures Indigenous voices are at the heart of our decisions and cultural integrity is upheld.



JU PHAN
LIBRARY TECHNICIAN
ART GALLERY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

One of the biggest risks to providing access to special or cultural collections is the risk of damaging or losing them. Therefore, it is imperative that the primary documents of the institution history are preserved. Over the past few years we have digitised several volumes of our old Accession Registers and documents such as correspondences and Fine Arts Committee minutes. In addition, we have just completed digitising and transcribing our audiocassette collection. This will not only preserve what we have now, but will also be beneficial for future research as it provides greater accessibility to these important collections.

JENNIE RAYNER AALIA**LIBRARY TECHNICIAN
CAROLINE SIMPSON LIBRARY & RESEARCH
COLLECTION**

As a specialist resource on the history of the Australian home, our library holds historic material in a wide range of formats, including trade ephemera, sample books, paint charts, textiles and more. We are continually working to digitise; however, we also recognise the importance of maintaining physical access, of allowing users to experience the tangible qualities of original materials. As a relatively small institution, we're able to mitigate the risk this poses to these rare and often fragile items, not only through conservation and storage, but also in the high level of supervision we can provide to our users.

**JILL ROGERS AALIA****DIGITAL COLLECTIONS
LIBRARIAN
QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY**

Queensland University of Technology (QUT) Digital Collections bring together digitised and born digital collections for dissemination to, and reuse by, the global community. Whenever we create a new collection or add to an existing collection, we rely on our excellent checklist (<https://bit.ly/3oZalzs>) to establish value and to mitigate risk. Where possible, items are made open access, available via a Creative Commons licence. Some collections hold historical/cultural heritage value with external QUT content, for example Asia-Pacific Images and Digital Yarning. QUT teaching and learning/institutional heritage collections include: QUT Dance, QUT Technical Production and QUT Film Screen and Animation.

**GEMMA STEELE
LIBRARIAN
MUSEUMS VICTORIA**

Security and preservation of our special collections are fundamental responsibilities of stewardship, and the risks are many and varied. The museum's library is housed in temperature and humidity-controlled stores and rare books have additional protection through locked cabinets and archival housing, such as specially made boxes. Handling materials can be a risk due to fragility or potential for human error, but objects may also pose a risk to us if they contain hazardous materials. Digitisation is great in terms of access and can help to prevent unnecessary handling of objects, but copyright and IP is another risk here.

**PAIGE WRIGHT AALIA
SPECIAL COLLECTIONS LIBRARIAN
UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE LIBRARY**

In special collections, there are risks to the objects as well as risks to the institution and individuals to consider. With our digital special collections, copyright and privacy are key risk factors. There are also cultural risks around materials related to Traditional Knowledge, which should never be shared without consent and consultation with Indigenous communities. Environmental scanning is key to learning about risks, which can change over time. For example, digital preservation has become essential to risk management as our digital collections grow. Policies, frameworks and expert colleagues are all resources I consult in my role for risk management. 🌟



THE REWARDS OF RISK



Nicole Johnston explains how a healthy culture of innovation and risk-taking at Edith Cowan University meant the library was able to quickly pivot to online learning and support during the pandemic.

Libraries are not traditionally seen as risk-takers or innovators, but recent disruptions such as COVID-19 have shown that risk-taking and innovation are necessary for libraries to adapt and respond to ongoing, sometimes unexpected change.

At the start of the COVID-19 crisis, university leaders at Edith Cowan University (ECU) in Perth asked student support managers to come up with innovative ways to support students who needed to quickly transition to learning online. Within a short turnaround time, the library and Centre for Learning and Teaching implemented peer-to-peer virtual support services for online learning, video conference appointment options with learning advisers and librarians, and a series of self-access resources and videos for preparing to learn online.

Several articles written in the past five years by Jason Martin, Shea-Tinn Yeh and Zhiping Walter on the topic of innovation and leadership in college and research libraries discuss how cultivating a risk-taking strategy in a university library is an important part


ECU peer assistants provide a new innovative online chat support service for learning technologies during the COVID-19 crisis.

of leadership roles. Leaders need to be flexible, open-minded and unafraid of taking risks. They must also foster a culture supportive of innovation and tie performance evaluations to innovation. ECU Library had been well prepared to pivot to online learning and support during the pandemic due to a leadership decision to focus on digital literacy in 2019. This led to the development of a digital literacy framework and a focus on embedding digital literacy skills in the curriculum. This leadership approach to thinking ahead, taking risks and responding to change resulted in librarians becoming an integral part of the university's response to COVID-19 through their support of staff and students transitioning to online learning environments.

Ronald Jantz outlines in a 2012 article a number of strategies that university libraries can undertake to encourage a culture of risk-taking and innovation. These include regularly discussing future roles, creating or changing roles to focus on innovation, allocating budgets to innovative projects, being willing to open the door to innovation, and a need for staff to use failures as an opportunity to learn. Another way to encourage innovation and change is to foster a culture of learning and research in an

organisation, so that library leaders and staff can learn about new practices and ideas, experiment with these new ideas, and then disseminate the results of practice-based research to others.

In a 2021 article in *Library Management* about transforming a university library into a learning organisation, Clare Thorpe writes about how the leadership at the University of Southern Queensland encouraged library staff to view learning as a natural part of their roles. Staff were also encouraged to share their experiences and knowledge through conference presentations and journal articles to contribute to the evidence base of the library profession.

Recent events have necessitated the need for universities to be innovative in their response to COVID-19. University libraries that cultivate innovative, risk-taking, learning and research cultures in their organisations make them more well prepared for disruptive change. 

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#National22



NATIONAL 2022
CONFERENCE
Monday 16 to Thursday 19 May 2022

DIVERSity

Join your peers at the National Convention Centre Canberra, from Monday 16 May to Thursday 19 May 2022 as we celebrate the many layers of diversity within our sector, recognise the work to support greater diversity, equity and inclusion, and acknowledge the work that still needs to be done.

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THE NEXT REGENERATION

Catherine Ryan talked to Naomi Barr, Library Operations Coordinator at East Gippsland Shire Library, about the changing role of the main Bairnsdale library during the 2019–20 Black Summer bushfires and subsequent COVID-19 restrictions.

In early 2020 Bairnsdale in Gippsland, eastern Victoria took a double hit. Just prior to the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the East Gippsland Shire Library swung into action to become a key community space during the Black Summer bushfires. As the disaster unfolded across the east coast, ALIA encouraged local libraries to inform their communities that libraries were open as places to charge phones or escape smoke. Libraries also became donation points, library staff assisted people navigating government websites, and books were automatically renewed for people in affected areas.

Naomi Barr, Library Operations Coordinator at East Gippsland Shire Library, reflected on the role of the main Bairnsdale library during that time of crisis. The Bairnsdale library is located a couple of blocks from the football ground that was being used as an evacuation point. According to Naomi, when the evacuation hub was set up the library service immediately increased its opening hours to seven days a week, remaining open each evening 'until people didn't need us anymore'. The library's main role

during the bushfires was to provide a place of respite from the smoke, the noise and the anxious feeling at the evacuation centre. It provided a quiet spot for families, with refreshments, games and movies for children. Each day the CFA organised a talk at the library, providing up-to-date information about the fires.

After the initial emergency passed, the library allocated space for insurance companies to set up in meeting rooms for a few weeks. In the weeks following the main fire events the East Gippsland Shire Library partnered with the local art gallery to provide art sessions, partly as a distraction from the fires, but with an art therapist present at each session. Post-fires, the libraries still had a role to play in assisting with the wellbeing of the community. More than 12 months later the East Gippsland Shire Library was still running events related to resilience and overcoming adversity.

The bushfires ran straight into the start of COVID-19 restrictions, and the East Gippsland Library Service had to change tack completely, this time closing its doors for the safety of the community. It began offering click-and-collect borrowing, ebooks and

online storytime. The library's mobile service could not run due to distance and quarantine restrictions. As this service usually delivered items to very remote areas, many of which had been impacted by fires, the library chose to post items to some users. It also put books on the bus to the town of Buchan to be collected by patrons at the general store.

COVID-19 was not in anyone's planning responses for 2020; the rules and protocols for dealing with COVID emerged as the pandemic unfolded. The key recommendation during these times was to provide support services for the most vulnerable people in the community and to assist the public in staying informed. Public libraries run an essential community service in good times but also in times of disaster. Even in testing times, these services can still deliver. How they do that is up to the needs of each community and the pressures of the prevailing crisis. 🚫

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NAOMI BARR

Library Operations Coordinator
East Gippsland Shire Library

SMALL SPACE, BIG IDEAS

When the opportunity arose to reduce the footprint of Queensland Medical Laboratories' corporate healthcare library, it became clear to librarian **Deborah Cronau** that little had been written about the positive attributes of library downsizing. She examines how philosophies of the small house movement could be considered for the foundations of a special library.

In 2019 I was approached with the proposition of moving the Queensland Medical Laboratories (QML) company library to a smaller – much, much smaller – room. The selling point? It had a window... natural light! The proposed new space for the library was a small meeting room in a prominent location. While moving would be challenging due to the reduced space, it could promote the library and make it a 'location' rather than a room among many. This made relocating the library, despite the potential risks associated with the footprint downsize, certainly worthwhile.



After playing with measurements it was time to do a bit of reading on library downsizing and small library design to get up to date with what was

working, or not, from the experiences of others. There turned out to be very little written about the benefits that come with redesigning libraries into smaller spaces. There were articles written about detrimental and mostly unwanted downsizing, much of which involved staff reduction. Most articles dealt with emotion and personnel management rather than the design challenges and rewards.



The small house movement offers a more positive take on downsizing. It sees reducing the architectural footprint of a space as a simple and effective way to achieve functionality and style for multipurpose activities. Additionally, small houses are often more environmentally friendly through the space-saving benefits of reduced resource and power consumption. The concept is that items for living are carefully selected to be multifunctional or chosen for their compact and/or clever design to reduce the need for larger spaces. The theory behind the small house movement can be successfully applied to a professional environment for the same purpose, achieving the same greener, space-saving results.

The QML company library is the physical hub for an information service with corporate users across Australia. The physical space has seldom been used by more than one or two people at a time. The old library room had desks but no separated space for the library office and this reduced its appeal, particularly when groups wanted to use the area. In the new library, a large half-wall window lets in natural light and is shared by the main

library room and the separate small library office.

The new room, although small, feels open and inviting by adhering to small house design colour and style recommendations. We chose crisp white paint for the shelves and walls, with the cooling green trees outside the window providing movement at one end. Small pieces of art, made with little effort and expense by using

old pathology calendar pages placed in brightly coloured Ikea frames, make the space feel larger than it is by drawing the eye along the length of the room. To maximise space, shelves fit along the two long walls, also adhering to the small house design principle of drawing the eye longways down the room. The library room has one large table suitable for one or two people to work at comfortably but it may also be used for small meetings.

Increasingly, corporate libraries are struggling retain their share of office real estate. The needs of library users also continue to change, with many physical resources being substituted for online access resources and more library users working remotely due to COVID. Part of securing the place of libraries in the corporate world and ensuring their continued physical existence may involve librarians adopting the small house movement's smart space techniques. It has worked at QML! 🌱

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ALWAYS GREENER

With a rich history of providing environmentally friendly programs, Moreton Bay Regional Council has big plans to make its libraries even greener. **Deborah Miles** outlines what the council's libraries are doing to expand their commitment to sustainability, from library gardens and mobile phone recycling to long-term plans for sustainable building developments.



Deb with beeswax wraps she made at Albany Creek Library.

All libraries are flat out doing as much as they can with their limited resources, and Moreton Bay Regional Council (MBRC) libraries are no different. Through our 10 branches and mobile service we are uniquely positioned to build sustainable and regenerative communities by supporting sustainability literacy and cultivating awareness of sustainable practices. Our collections, resources, spaces and programs can ensure our communities have the knowledge and skills to commit to and advocate for building a future with resilient social, economic, cultural and environmental systems.

MBRC libraries have a rich history of providing diverse sustainable programs – from clothes swaps and permaculture workshops to hands-on activities like making beeswax wraps. Our next steps include reaching out to environmental/gardening community organisations and establishing green

book clubs with add-ons including film screenings and cutting or seed swaps. We will also continue to build on our excellent relationship with the council's waste and environment teams.

We recently established our first library garden at one branch and will develop more pending land suitability, library capacity and community interest. We will also include rainwater tanks and native beehives. Library gardens provide excellent opportunities for diverse programs and the curation and showcasing of relevant collections. Libraries with or without gardens can establish seed libraries where patrons can 'borrow' seeds or save their own and donate them. Seed libraries form an integral part of a library garden, enabling the development of other programs such as making and decorating seed bags, and collecting, sorting and bagging seeds.

Our first steps towards more sustainable library services arose from council interest in libraries as recycling hubs. We will explore this further, potentially offering mobile phone recycling, which supports uptake of our library app and links with our digital literacy goals. MBRC libraries participate in a green collection initiative through James Bennett and The Sustainability Project, which collects, recycles or disposes our unwanted weeded books. We are now exploring how to dispose of CDs, DVDs and magazines in a more sustainable and creative way. This year we will commence loaning laptops

and robotics, supporting preliminary concepts of a tool library, while exploration of a creator space initiative will bring together people with skills and tech to work on environmental solutions such as reducing consumption and the amount of waste going to landfill.

In the future, having recently established a sewing studio that provides access to sewing machines, we will consider sewing pattern swap-meets, sewing machine maintenance workshops, fabric swaps and make your own sewing pattern sessions. We will also explore how our gifts, prizes and awards can be more sustainable. On a larger scale, future MBRC library developments will incorporate more sustainable designs such as grey water in toilets. From site planning to effective use of materials and resources to ensuring high environmental standards are met, future library designs could reduce waste, energy and water.

We have started on a risky new path which will make us change our practices – but for the better! Sustainable library practices shouldn't be an add-on, they should be part of our core business – and I am proud to be supporting some of our first steps in the right direction. ✨

DEBORAH MILES

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A CURATED APPROACH

Shahada Selamat joined Green Valley Islamic College in Greater Western Sydney as the Teacher Librarian in early 2021. During her time there so far, she has already implemented several creative new programs to keep students engaged with reading and the library while learning remotely during COVID-19 lockdown. Here she shares her approach to curating content across the three key areas of library, literature and information literacy.



Similarly, I curated a 'Print to Screen' lesson with my high school students, in which they compared a book to its movie adaption.

In terms of information literacy, I created activities such as 'Library Trivia', which empowered students to revise information about the library and reference tools, and 'Poster Review', which immersed students in the exploration and interpretation of a visual primary source. We live in the information age, when any piece of knowledge is just a click or swipe away. As a Teacher Librarian, I integrated inquiry and literacy skills to impart to students a whole new library vocabulary during periods of remote learning. Armed with these skills, students were guided to navigate digital library databases and ebooks during the COVID-19 lockdown. My ultimate goal is to elevate students' awareness of the library's physical and digital resources and to boost their confidence in using them.

Many curated initiatives are aimed at preventing/combating low literacy and conserving library culture. During the pandemic I saw firsthand the

Reflecting on my teaching during the unprecedented challenges of this year so far has led me to think about the active engagement of our learners through our student-centred school library. As we recover from the pandemic, especially as a school in a low SES area, we must think of creative ways to keep students connected with the library and voluntary reading. During lockdown, without hesitation, I took the risk of implementing an unconventional curated approach to teaching in order to better support hybrid learning. I concentrated on curating content and sustaining improvement in the three key areas of library, literature and information literacy.

The majority of my students were unaware that there is a lot more to the library than just borrowing books, so I went back to basics in introducing them to a whole suite of library literacy skills. Our school also participated in ALIA National Simultaneous Storytime for the very first time in 2021. There, I saw an opportunity to enrich the library with digital resources and swiftly contacted Softlink Overdrive and Britannica. Additionally, I introduced ebooks on Epic as a temporary alternative to physical books during lockdown. I actively liaised with

classroom teachers to schedule library lessons with students via Microsoft Teams, in addition to a weekly designated library homework activity.

Cultivating a love for reading among students in a low SES suburb comes with its own set of challenges.

I am determined to continue promoting and advocating for literature and literacy by introducing students to children's and young adult literature

In terms of literature literacy, I implemented an online 'Reader's Profile' strategy to determine students' reading interests and then proceeded to tailor book recommendations accordingly. I am determined to continue promoting and advocating for literature and literacy by introducing students to children's and young adult literature, especially realistic fiction. For younger students, alongside the usual storytime sessions I also showcased 'Reading with the Stars', which involved engaging with picture books read by famous people.

benefits of using this curated approach to improve the visibility of the library, which connects teachers, students and parents not only to library resources but also to the resource of the Teacher Librarian. 🌟

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TIME FOR PURSUITS OF CHOICE

Retirement is something that many of us will need to start considering at some point in our careers, and it comes with its own risks and rewards. **Andrew Finegan** spoke to **Gulcin Cribb**, **Michele Gaca** and **Jan Richards** about their recent transition into retirement, what influenced their decisions, and what they have planned for the future.

‘When you get to a “certain age”, retirement is certainly something that you think about,’ explains Jan Richards, who retired in October 2020 after 26 years as Manager of Central West Libraries. Similarly, Gulcin Cribb had been planning her retirement for several years before leaving her position as University Librarian at Singapore Management University. Michele Gaca’s plan was to retire from her role as the Chief Librarian at Austin Health and Mercy Hospital for Women when she turned 60, to focus more on achieving a work-life balance.

However, Michele’s retirement plans were interrupted by the onset of the pandemic. ‘Retirement didn’t seem practical given the immediate and daily need for health information in our hospital sector. Succinct, easily accessible curation of current and validated information resources became paramount. Leaving my team being shorthanded, at a time when librarians were considered part of the support structure for front-line clinicians, was a risk.’

For Gulcin, the pandemic arrived at a coincidental moment. ‘My last day at work was 13 March 2020 and I flew out of Singapore on 14 March. The Australian government began the COVID restrictions on 15 March, I think. So, it was amazing timing; it couldn’t have been planned better.’

On the other hand, Jan had still planned to work for a little while beyond 2020 before, in her words, ‘fate in the form of COVID-19 stepped in’. During lockdown, she and her husband bought a house on Bruny Island and decided to make the sea change from Orange, NSW. ‘Together with our much-loved black Labrador, Ruby, and two shipping containers full of possessions, we made the move across Bass Strait in October 2020. As Tasmania’s borders were still closed it was quite a logistical exercise.’

While some organisations provide options for gradually transition to retirement, these can be limited, especially during lockdown, which was the case when Michele retired in August 2021. ‘My approach to

retirement involved four key steps: funds, friends, hobbies and intellectual stimulation,’ she explains. ‘It was the latter of these that caused me some concern, as going cold turkey would be difficult.’ Leaving a role where there is constant social interaction with work colleagues has been the hardest for Michele to navigate. ‘All in-person gatherings, coffees, and farewells were cancelled. Zoom is wonderful, but not the same as raising a glass to a long career.’

Gulcin acknowledges that, prior to retirement, she was considering all possible future scenarios, from feeling



Gulcin Cribb



lost or bored to being always busy with worthwhile activities. 'I always knew that I would have a full life and would continue with my professional involvement, partly to support the profession and to give back to the profession from which I benefited so much.'

Describing retirement as 'time for pursuits of choice', Michele has plans to follow her passion for research, writing and dancing, and looks forward to future travel plans beyond lockdown to spend time with her grandkids and visit her holiday home. For now, she explores all the parks within her five-kilometre zone with her dog Ivy. 'I feel very fortunate that we live in such a green part of Melbourne during a major lockdown – there are still many things to smile about as we break into spring.'

These sentiments are echoed by Gulcin and Jan, who enjoy being able to manage their own time to accommodate their interests and set their own agenda, whether it be reading more books, going for long walks on the beach, staying in touch with friends, or dreaming of more travel beyond the pandemic.

Furthermore, while Gulcin, Jan and Michele have officially retired, none of them have any intention of staying idle. Jan has established Jan Richards Consulting, which had been a long-term plan, but the reality of working for, and by, herself has been challenging at times – especially where technology is concerned. 'Thankfully in our connected world help is only an email/phone call away and I now have a network of support that I can turn to. I also worried about how I would find work but in fact it has usually found

me.' And, unsurprisingly, Jan continues to be connected to the library world through her involvement in ALIA and IFLA. 'I am a member of ALIA Island here in Tasmania and it is a delight to meet up with LIS professionals here in my new state. Plus, I finally have the time to be an ALIA Mentor. I find that now I'm not as engaged at an operational level the view is a little clearer and I have more time to follow up and explore issues that interest me.'

Gulcin has also continued her professional involvement in the sector. 'You can't just stop doing these things suddenly. I am pleased to say that I have been invited to give presentations and contribute to various professional organisations quite frequently since I left my position in Singapore. I have been involved in the mentorship program for ALIA. I also mentor colleagues in Singapore and Turkey. Being the Chair of IFLA Academic and Research Libraries keeps me very busy. I have been asked to review articles, papers,



these pursuits during daylight hours as it is now a seven-day weekend!'

Ultimately, retirement has provided Jan, Gulcin and Michele with the opportunity to continue to maintain these connections. 'I look back at my career to date with great happiness and humility,' says Jan. 'I have been fortunate to work with some amazing, supportive people and to have been


My approach to retirement involved four key steps: funds, friends, hobbies and intellectual stimulation

—MICHELE GACA

book chapters and help organise seminars virtually ever since I returned to Australia.'

Michele considers retirement as a new beginning and a long-term plan. 'I am still an active member of ALIA and have several projects on the go in the health sector. I have accepted an Honorary Informationist role with Austin Health, Data Analytics and Research Evaluation (DARE) Centre team and Honorary Researcher role University of Melbourne, Centre for Research and Education in Diabetes and Obesity (CREDO) so will continue to stay in touch with my organisation in a different volunteer capacity and building on the activities I engaged in prior to stepping down from the Chief Librarian role – I will have time for

given some outstanding opportunities. I hope to work alongside my colleagues in some of my voluntary roles for a little longer helping to shape the future.'

In fact, Gulcin does not consider herself to be a retired person. 'I have always been proud of being a librarian and our profession. I feel fortunate that I chose this profession many, many years ago. I will always be an advocate for the profession and libraries.' 

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THE ROAD LESS TRAVELLED

As a librarian, there are many different career paths on offer. Some are more traditional, others less so. **Andrew Finegan** spoke with **Dr Lara Cain Gray** about her role as Specialist Librarian at Library For All.

Library For All (LFA) is an international organisation focused on improving the lives of children in remote communities through the delivery of digital books and education resources. It started out as a grassroots project in Haiti, when CEO and founder Rebecca McDonald witnessed firsthand the devastation in the wake of the 2010 earthquake.

'School after school was operating out of tents, with little or no teaching resources at all. I naively thought that it was because of the earthquake, but I later realised they had not had books before,' Rebecca remembers. 'As an avid reader, I thought to myself, how do you learn to read with no access to books? Unfortunately, this situation is all too common. There are hundreds of millions of children with no access to books.'

Lara Cain Gray was attracted to LFA by the potential to make international connections. 'In Australia, there are limited opportunities to work as a librarian that engage with international communities,' she explains. Having worked at the British Library as curator of the Australia and New Zealand collection, she was keen to find ways to use her skills in curating cross-cultural collections. At Library For All she was able to do this in a way that made a difference. 'I believe in the empowering nature of literacy. The communities that we work with are places where they have had almost no local publishing industry or library access.'

With the move to LFA, Lara needed to develop skills in publishing. 'We are part library, part publisher, and create about 70% of our collections. That is where my skill set has needed



Children in Laos with their Library For All tablets.

to expand. In a library role, I'd go and find a book to fill a collection gap. Here, we make the book.' Key to this is the ability to work with locals to meet their needs. 'We want to give children books they can relate to. There are clear literacy benefits when kids can make meaningful associations with words. We're not supplying our readers in Papua New Guinea with books about bears in the snow, for example.'

Lara sees her background in librarianship as fundamental to her work, particularly in curating collections. 'In many remote communities, mobile phones are ubiquitous, and people might have access to online books, but the quality is wildly variable. Our library is a carefully selected, age appropriate and diverse book collection.' Furthermore, she sees herself as an advocate for the library and information profession. As the lead librarian in a multi-faceted organisation, she can be that person in the room to remind her colleagues

of the need to keep rethinking how they address the visual and information literacy needs of their communities.

Ultimately, it's the ability to apply these professional skills in this way that Lara finds most rewarding. 'It's exciting to curate materials that ensure that people are getting a collection that is tailored to their needs. Some might say that if they've got no books, they should be grateful for what they're given. I say that if they've got no books, then why not give them amazing, beautiful books that are really going to inspire them to learn to read – and learn to love to read?' 🌟

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A RADICAL ACT

Library and information professionals regularly manage a degree of risk just by deciding which books a library will stock. **Bridget Hiho** and **Edward Kostraby** from **St Monica's College Epping** argue that even the seemingly straightforward process of curating a library – especially a school library – can have serious implications for young minds.

Libraries are arguably purveyors of social trends through their careful curation of book collections – performed within constraints imposed by budgets and the goals and vision of their parent organisations. In a school library book selection poses a particularly serious degree of risk.

At St Monica's Epping, Teacher Librarian Bridget Hiho constantly scans book reviews and publisher materials to ensure the library's collection provides as many language levels, reading experiences and ideas to students as possible. 'I have always thought of libraries as places of radical change and therefore places of risk due to the selection of books that populate the shelves and are on display to patrons,' Bridget says.

'I have always sought new ideas from books on library shelves, as we all do from many sources, including the internet. Library and information professionals, through their selection and promotion of certain books, have the potential to be innovators and changemakers through the books they curate for their patrons.'

Ideas have the potential to incite radical change, and librarians often contribute book selections to curriculums, an act which has the potential to influence teaching and promote new perspectives. In a high school setting, where Bridget works, young minds are exposed not only to

the changing world in which they live but also to ideas that help set them up to navigate the society and workforce they will contribute to when they leave school.

The reputation of a school is paramount to its success, as reputation can be a driving force for enrolment

and new ideas. Just some examples of hot-button political issues being addressed in the new millennium include climate change, truth-telling and Indigenous history, quotas of female politicians and the gender imbalance in the fields of science and business.

Library and information professionals, through their selection and promotion of certain books, have the potential to be innovators and changemakers through the books they curate for their patrons

—BRIDGET HIHO

numbers. Young people looking to succeed in life after high school, at work and at university, need to draw on up-to-date sources of knowledge. They need to be innovative and adaptable to radically changing notions of work. If the high school library collection doesn't reflect this, then it loses its relevance.

Books that, for example, contain queer stories, narratives about mixed-race relationships and that centre on people of colour never used to be found on school library shelves but are now integral to the diverse collection we have today. Furthermore, books and other resources held by school libraries hold the key to not only our past but also to the present

So next time you're thinking about the importance of school library professionals selecting books for the future generation, ask yourself: Might they potentially choose a book that could be a radical game-changer for someone? 🌟

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BRIDGET HIHO

Teacher Librarian
St Monica's College Epping



At Civica, I'm fortunate to work with an incredibly diverse community of libraries across the globe who use our Spydus solution, and who frequently involve us in their latest projects. These projects can range from patron engagement, digital transformation or data curation to discovery, community services or even community building. However, before we commence any project, we must take the time to ask: 'What's the most important thing for your library community?' Once we understand this, we can work together to drive change for a better library service.

'What's the most important thing for your library community?' Once we understand this, we can work together to drive change for a better library service

Asking this question led us to start working with highly experienced library consultant Brendan Fitzgerald (founder of consultancy 641 DI). Brendan is reaching out to his global network on Civica's behalf to find out what

THE ONE THING


What's the most important thing for libraries at the moment? This is a question Civica's Iain Finlayson is often asked, and from this idea emerged a new information sharing project. 'The One Thing' is a series of articles by leaders in the library sector in which they share what they believe is the single most impactful positive change maker for any library. Here, Iain shares some of the articles and contributors in the pipeline for the series.

leaders within the library ecosystem believe to be the single most impactful positive change maker for any library. To keep things simple, and on topic, we have called our series of articles 'The One Thing', and the only brief we give contributors to the project is a single question: What is the one thing your library could implement to make the most significant difference to your community?

Brendan has used his expertise to curate an amazing group of library knowledge champions, including locals such as Jane Cowell, CEO of Yarra Plenty Regional Library and Trish Hepworth from ALIA. Articles from the New Zealand library sector are also in the pipeline for the series. Not far away in Singapore we have secured

who will provide her insights into how libraries can contribute to improving mental health for their community.

Further afield, Stephanie Chase, Executive Director of the Libraries of Eastern Oregon, has already sent us her thoroughly researched article about how libraries need to move away from bureaucracy towards a more flexible library structure that's ready for anything. Dr Matt Finch, based in the UK at the Said Oxford Business School and founder of Mechanical Dolphin, has also contributed with a submission on scenario planning. Matt's work encompasses an extensive list of projects with GLAM organisations globally as well as planning insights from other sectors.

We'll be continuing to work with more, great library thought leaders who are seeking the one thing that will change libraries for the better. We'll share their thoughts and experiences and add them to our growing repository of articles – now completely at home on the Civica website and ready to be used by all who wish to be inspired by these innovators. 



Dr Gene Tan, Director of the National Library Board, who will be discussing his recent research into using libraries as a collaborative platform, and Dr Sadie-Jane Nunis, President of the Library Association of Singapore,

IAIN FINLAYSON

Managing Director, Library and Education
Civica

THE LATEST FROM THE STATES AND TERRITORIES



QLD

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Risk is a constant factor in libraries and, as such, information professionals plan and respond to disaster with vigilance. We are faced with natural risks, technological risks and security risks just to name a few. As a nation, while we open up post-COVID, we should take the opportunity to assess what risks may arise and mitigate them, so our future is sustained. Hence, I encourage members to get together at the upcoming ALIA QLD Mini Conference, 'Hack to the Future', on 10 November. There, we can exchange ideas and discuss what risks we have taken during the past year, and how we have discovered new ways of engaging with our communities and building a stronger information world. I look forward to catching up with members and speakers at The Edge, State Library of Queensland.



WA

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The theme for this issue of *INCITE* is 'risk' and I'm sure it's a topic we are all familiar with from the government COVID-19 roadmaps and vaccine passports. As library professionals, we are all thinking about how risk will impact libraries and library users going forward. I always feel that libraries and library staff are experts at adapting to situations and excel at providing the necessary services to their users – either in person or remotely. Here in WA I am very pleased to announce we have a new ALIA New Grads Regional Coordinator – Emily Paull. Emily is joined on the team by Sarah Hugo, who has agreed to take on the role of New Grads Social Coordinator. A big welcome to Emily and Sara and we look forward to the great work they'll do in these roles.



VIC

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I recently had the great delight of awarding ALIA Silver Star pins to several Victorian members in recognition of their service to ALIA and their peers. I was so proud of these new professionals who took a risk early in their careers to step up and contribute to the association, providing CPD opportunities and leadership. I know their commitment often moved them into new areas and out of their comfort zone but they have pushed through to learn new skills for themselves and others, supporting each other along the way. This is one of the great benefits of ALIA membership, having a network of colleagues to share the load of navigating your career, minimising the risks and maximising the rewards.



NSW

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As I write this, I am one day out from engaging with delegates (virtually) at the Australian Disaster Recovery Conference run by Resilience NSW in partnership with AFAC21 powered by INTERSCHUTZ, Australasia's largest and most comprehensive emergency management conference and exhibition. I got to do this by

taking a risk. Back at the ALIA National Conference in February, I tweeted, 'Libraries as resilience centres!' during Eric Klingenberg's wonderful keynote presentation. Someone asked if anyone in libraries was talking to Resilience NSW; I then checked their website and saw that there was a call for papers. I submitted an abstract

and was offered an opportunity to present a poster and so, here I am, about to engage with an audience who we may not normally engage with, to talk about libraries as a vital part of social infrastructure and as valuable community resilience builders. A risky strategy that takes me out of my comfort zone!

ACT, NT, SA and TAS

The team at ALIA House

02 6215 8222

membership@alia.org.au | [@ALIANational](https://www.alia.org.au)

In Tasmania, the new ALIA Island Group celebrated Australian Reading Hour on 14 September with a Zoom discussion on the theme 'Stories that Matter': life-changing books, favourites, or the book people were currently reading. Special guest and librarian Ruairi Murphy spoke about his newly published short story collection *Two Sets of Books*, which is set in Hobart Public Library. It looks like a wonderful read and profits from the book sales will be used to purchase

books and resources for Libraries Tasmania Literacy Service and 26TEN.

The ACT was in lockdown from the end of August, which meant a special libraries and publishers roundtable planned to take place at the National Library had to move online. As the territory began to open up at the end of October, Kippax library became a vaccination hub.

The judging panel has been busy assessing the eight excellent entries submitted to the ALIA NT Recognition

Awards. The annual awards celebrate and recognise the work of a team or individual working in any sector of the library and information profession in the NT, with two categories, urban and regional & remote. The winners will be announced at a ceremony in Darwin at the Northern Territory Library, Parliament House on 18 November and published on the ALIA website.

ALIA will be recruiting a new South Australian State Manager for 2022. Please watch this space. 🌟

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

On Saturday, 28 August, library and information professionals and special guests joined the ALIAWest committee for a professional development event, GLAMR Opportunities: Cultivating Your Career. Guests were treated to an array of speakers as they discussed different opportunities available to boost their careers, including volunteering, joining committees, and applying for awards and scholarships.

ALIAWest convenor Taylor Coventry opened the event and spoke about the committee and how to apply for the F A Sharr Award. Tamara Capper from ALIA Academic and Research Libraries (WA) then took to the stage to discuss the wonderful work her team are undertaking. Next, Inger Thompson from WA Museum Boola Bardip inspired the crowd with stories of the WA museum and ran through what it is like to volunteer for her team. Samantha Hay from Libraries, Archives, Records and Information Studies Alumni (LARISA) then followed. She spoke about what it is like to volunteer with the Curtin University team.

Ian Simon from Family History WA then finished up the first half of the event, speaking to the importance of the work his team does and the volunteer opportunities available.

After a short break, which involved networking and some great food provided by ALIA, the second half of the event kicked off. ALIA superstars Helen Balfour (ALIA WA State Manager) and Alissa Sputore (Director, ALIA Board) shared their journeys and career advice with the eager audience and presented the 2019 and 2020 F A Sharr awards to winners Taylor Coventry and Maranne Purnell. The award winners then took to the stage to speak on their specialist subjects, both speaking to their shared passion for community learning and literacy. The event then concluded with afternoon tea and more networking opportunities. 🌟

ALIAWEST

aliainwa@gmail.com



Members of the ALIAWest committee.
Back row, L – R: Lori Mansell,
Camille Peters, Georgia Winacott,
Noreen Kirkman, Helen Balfour,
Elena Smirnova.
Front row, L – R: Monique Aviso,
Taylor Coventry.

A GREAT OPPORTUNITY

Study visits are an essential part of LIS education, as a way for students to experience different library sectors, visit a range of library work environments and get a feel for the kinds of work that they do. When COVID-19 struck, universities had to move quickly to replace the face-to-face option with a COVID-safe virtual experience. We spoke to **Nathan Hunkin**, studying the Master of Information Studies at Charles Sturt University, who shared his experience of undertaking his study visit online.



How did you come to do an online study visit?

We had all discussed as a group what would happen if lockdowns were in effect, and one of the first questions was what would happen with study visits. As the COVID-19 situation continued, Charles Sturt University (CSU) moved to make arrangements for us to do the study visits virtually.

How did the virtual study visits work?

The university organised a series of virtual study visits with libraries and archives and sent the list around to students. We needed to attend at least three but we could attend more. I went to more because they were interesting.

The visits were all different – we went to a TAFE library that did a great walkthrough, with a staff member taking us through the space with her phone camera. We got to see everything from furniture and signage through to the special collections, including their special collection of

historical recipe books. Others were more presentation-based. One was given by an archivist who looked after a number of collections working from home. All of them were interactive with the options to ask questions verbally and via chat. The Q&A was facilitated by a CSU staff member, and it felt similar to one that would happen physically.

Were there any perks to virtual study visits?

It meant that we got to visit a wider range of institutions than if we were just in our place of residence. There was a pretty cool line-up of libraries and archives, from MONA in Tasmania to the Mitsubishi archives.

They were in different time zones and all recorded so you could watch them later, which helped. The assessment was to write three blog posts. Reading other peoples' blog posts meant you could get extra information that they saw and you might have missed out on.

Were there any drawbacks?

There was a lack of in-person meeting and we didn't get the full experience of getting to see the architecture and get a sense of the space. I think that meant we didn't ask some questions that we would have if we were in the space absorbing everything; this felt more like a presentation.

Scheduling worked out really well, though.

Did you have a favourite visit?

My most memorable visit was MONA – they talked about how they don't turn away donations, and that they had 17,000 items catalogued in the collections, and about the same amount waiting to be catalogued.

It was great that I was in Queensland, with borders locked, and still had the opportunity to attend and talk to prominent figures... the people who know what they are talking about and who may not ordinarily be available. It was a great opportunity. 🌟



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A WHO'S WHO OF LIBRARY GREATS

Published in four volumes, the ALIA Honours Board tells the stories of 233 outstanding individuals who have helped shaped the profession and the Association over its 84 years, with entries from the 1930s right through to the present.

On 29 September this year, ALIA launched a new publication bringing together the lives and careers of the 'library greats' who have made the library and information profession in Australia what it is today.

ALIA President Vicki Edmunds said, 'It's important to honour the people who have gone before us, and we can still learn so much from their experiences. These are people who lived adventurous lives, persuaded governments to invest in libraries where there were none, and demonstrated intense personal commitment to literacy and access to information for all Australians. I would recommend ALIA Members take a look at the Honours Board and read about some of the extraordinary leaders in whose steps we are following. Their stories are truly inspiring.'

One exceptional example is Ena Noël OAM (1910 – 2003):

Inspired by the first Bodenwieser Ballet performed in Sydney in 1939, she trained in ballet under Gertrud Bodenwieser, winning the modern creative dance, solo and duo section in the eisteddfod. After dancing with the Bodenwieser Group for some years, Ena conducted a dance studio at Rose Bay for some 20 years. In 1952–53 she toured Britain and Europe with a solo lecture-dance program entitled

'The life cycle of an Australian Aboriginal woman,' dancing to John Antill's music for Corroboree. She performed, representing Australia, in the festivities for the royal coronation in 1953. Her interest in flamenco dancing led her to study that form in Barcelona, Spain ...

There would be few individuals to have done more to promote internationally the quality and riches of Australian children's literature than Ena Noël. It has been said of her that, 'It is given to very few to become a legend in their own time. Ena Noël is one of the few.' A diminutive but commanding figure, Ena on several occasions swept onto the dais of the University of Sydney's Great Hall in step with the then Chancellor, Sir Hermann Black. Her carefully selected gown and copious flowing cloak complemented the Chancellor's equally resplendent academic attire. As she stepped forward to the microphone Ena captured the fixed attention of the vast audience packed into that seat of learning ...

Her interests were vast; but her major passions in life were first to her family... then to dance and, as a teacher and librarian, to the promotion of literacy and the love of reading among the youth of the world, believing as she did that true literature is a potent force in promoting international understanding and good

HOW TO NOMINATE FOR ALIA AWARDS

If you would like to see someone receive an honour, details are on the ALIA website (<https://bit.ly/ALIAawards>), or email awards@alia.org.au for advice about which award might be most appropriate.

Fellowship nominations can be made at any time. The next opportunity to submit nominations for the ALIA HCL Anderson, Redmond Barry and Metcalfe Awards is early next year, with a closing date of 25 February 2022.

will. Michael says of her, 'She was never still, either physically or mentally. She tried almost any physical activity. In recent years she tried sailboarding, drove an open four-wheel drive jeep, and continued to drive a car through the centre of Sydney – one of the few people over ninety years of age still holding a full driver's licence.'

The ALIA Honours Board includes award recipients, past Presidents, Honorary Members and Fellows, and provides inspirational examples of leadership over nine decades. It has been compiled from ALIA records and with the assistance of ALIA Retirees, with special thanks to Dr Kerry Smith AM, who was ALIA President in 1997, awarded a fellowship in 2001 and received the highest honour of the Association, the HCL Anderson Award, in 2017.

The ALIA Honours Board volumes are free to download from the website (<https://bit.ly/ALIAawards>). *



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