2013 ALIA National Advisory Congress
Western Australia
State Library of Western Australia
Perth, 19 July 2013

Attendance

Chair:	Julie Rae, ALIA President
Minute Taker:	Noreen Kirkman
Attendance:	47

For Twitter conversation, see Storify.

The Future of the Profession project

A brief history of the ALIA Futures project was outlined by Julie Rae.
There was acknowledgement that some of the scenarios in the Future *of the Profession Discussion Paper* already existed, especially within the special library sector.

Guest Speaker Kathryn Greenhill

Kathryn Greenhill is an author, presenter and facilitator. For the last twenty years, she has been helping others learn about new technologies and the future of libraries. She currently works as Associate Lecturer in Information Studies at Curtin University in Perth Western Australia. She produces a regular blog, *Librarians Matter*. Kathryn has been a member of the Australian Library and Information Association for 23 years.

Library Futures: Taking a punt on 10 things to think about!

The following is a summary of her talk. The pervading message throughout Kathryn Greenhill's talk was: 'Libraries Connect People and Information.'

Introduction: Librarians connect people and information better than anyone else. But both the 'connection' and 'information' have

changed, so libraries need to change in relation to connections and information. What has not changed is the need for people.

Kathryn's ten things to think about:

1. Open Access and Information Platform Neutrality 'If the only way you can get digital information is to have a particular device, product or access a particular platform then you are artificially placing print-like restrictions on the digital.'
2. Linked Open Data, for example WWW Consortia.
3. Big Data including social metadata – 90% data created in the last few years!
4. Application Programming Interfaces (APIs)
5. The Internet of Things
6. Copyright and Privacy
7. Funding, Indicators and Evidence
8. Marketing – 'Sausages are gone' misconception that librarians are there to tend books. Librarians need to market different services, egdigital lending.
9. Services not physical resources. 'I have long contended that a room full of books is simply a closet, but that an empty room with a librarian in it is a library.' (R. David Lankes)
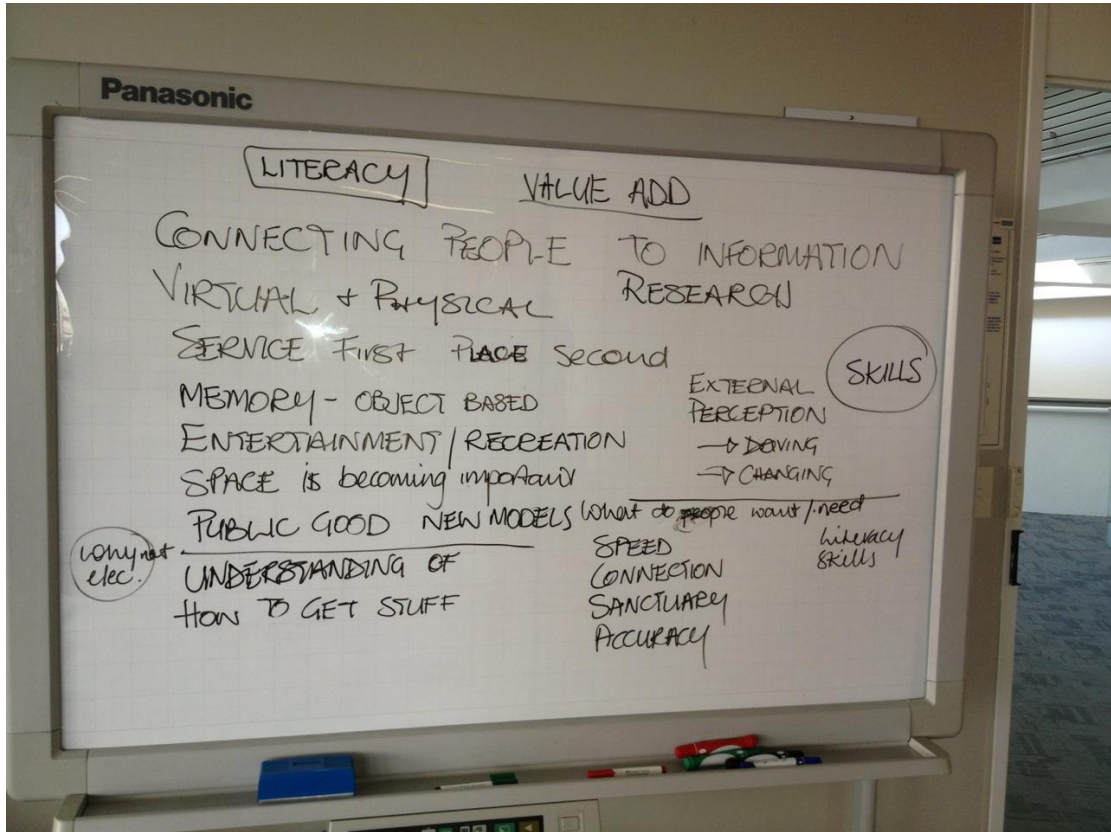10. Platforms for innovation.

Figure 1: Whiteboard used for WA ALIA Futures Workshop, 19 July 2013

Challenges

Political   Demand for accuracy and quality in information clients require.

- People require some resources/information to be publically available and not subscription (eg digital newspapers for research, gov documents, health info etc)
- Emergence of new models of public access in terms of access to publically funded spaces, resource and research (open access)

There is less and less physical space in many special libraries yet public/community access is being encouraged.

Contradictory and competing demands to continue what we do owing to legal frameworks, current funding, publishers,

copyright and our own skills

Economic	The growth in more subscription based resources (digital, newspapers, magazine, ebook packages). These have funding and copyright implications.
Social	Emerging needs of clients:

- The need for speed in accessing information
- Less concerned about sharing

Workplaces are requiring wide-ranging skills (eg information technology and computing, knowledge management, digitization experience, media expertise etc)

Workforce and skills

The rise of non-librarian and library technicians within the profession who already have a different range of skills

Providing 24/7 services

The Opportunities:

The main role of the library professional is to connect people to information. Services and resources come first and the place second. Opportunities are found in providing services and resources which:

- Are both virtual & physical
- Create an environment where people can connect with information.
- Provide research support
- Promote literacy
- Promote and preserve memory base objects which have significant cultural relevance
- Promote recreational, entertainment and social well-being and may include a space or a number of spaces
- May include collaborative physical spaces
- Are often sanctuaries for families and various members of the community

Opportunities also exist in the range of other roles such as:
- Digital creation(for example digitisation projects)
- Content creation
- Repository management
- Data management

Opportunities exist for changing mind-sets and this can be facilitated using to professional development and lifelong learning. We should:
- Become more skilled through professional development and other training especially in digitisation, data management, management of open access repositories.
- Create our own content
- Manage our own future
- Market special projects that no one can do better.
- Market spaces as learning centres
- Collaborate on tasks such as online tutorials
- Seek opportunities to value add
- Be continually undergoing critical analysis

For ALIA, it needs to:

- Survey clients of libraries about the future of libraries, and track developments and trends
- Undertake more evidence-based research
- Involve the wider community

Challenges

Trend/Issue	Impact	Likelihood	Opportunity	Challenge
Open Access (space & resources)	High	High	Yes	Yes
Linked Open Data	Medium	High	Yes	Yes
Big Data	High	High	Yes	Yes
APIs	High	High	Yes	Yes
Internet	High	High	Yes	Yes
Copyright	High	High	Yes	Yes
Funding (ROI)	High	High	Yes	Yes
Marketing	High	High	Yes	Yes
Indicators & Evidence (Research into trends, tracking)	High	High	Yes	Yes
Promotion of different services not physical resources	High	High	Yes	Yes
Marketing	High	High	Yes	Yes
Speed of access	High	High	No	Yes
More subscription based resources (ebook packages)	High	High	Yes	Yes
Digitisation	High	High	Yes	Yes
Data Management	High	High	Yes	Yes

Repository Management	Medium	High	Yes	Yes
Media expertise	Medium Low	Medium/Low	Yes	Yes
Multi skills set	High	High	Yes	Yes
24/7	High	High	No	Yes
Technology(especially multiple devices – Internet)	High	High	Yes	Yes
Preservation of memory based objects	High	High	Yes	Yes

Main Opportunities

Trend/issue	Individuals	Institutions	ALIA	Other Stakeholders
Open Access		Yes	Yes	ANDS, ARC, NHMRC AOASG
Internet	Yes	Yes	Yes	Many
Copyright	Yes	Yes	Yes	Copyright Council, publishers
Indicators & Evidence (Surveys, research into trends, tracking)	Yes	Yes	Yes	All library sectors
Promotion of different services not physical resources	Yes	Yes	Yes	Training providers
Marketing	Yes	Yes	Yes	Training/education providers
Create own content/projects		Yes	Yes	NLA, SLs