



## COLIN S. WATSON ORATION GIVEN BY THE HON BARRY JONES AO

*Tuesday 16 May 2000 in Melbourne*

*He is sadly missed, an unsung hero whose life was dedicated to public service, without thought of reward or recognition, with a deep commitment to democratic ideals, to the social good, and the conviction that education - especially reading - was the central instrument to personal understanding and human freedom generally. - Barry Jones*

Flaubert wrote: 'Read in order to live'. That is a sentiment that Colin lived by and I share. - Barry Jones

Colin Stanley Watson, who died on August 6, 1999, left an outstanding legacy of service to public libraries in Australia and in Victoria in particular.

He was an advocate, innovator and high achiever who, in a number of areas, laid the foundation for many of the services offered by public libraries today.

Colin Watson established the first Friends of a Library group in an Australian public library in 1971, and went on to encourage and guide the development of the Friends movement in libraries across the country.

As foundation Vice-President of FOLA (1994-1999) he made a significant contribution to the development of Friends of Libraries Australia. (continued page 3)



*The Hon. Barry Jones*



*(L to R) Mrs Hayton (Bayside), Daniel Ferguson (FOLA), Mr & Mrs Roberts (Altona)*



*Daniel Ferguson, Marie Dowling (widow of Colin Watson)*

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## FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**C**CT and the compulsory nature of competitive tendering were a controversial part of local government and libraries in Victoria. The new Victorian government has scrapped this process and replaced it with "Best Value", something which is more in context with the Blair government's philosophy in the UK.



It is interesting, after the past turmoil in local government, that CEO's are starting to speak out. Ian Wilson, the new CEO of Bayside City Council (Vic) has returned to Victoria after five years interstate. His assessment - "Victorian local government now has far less resources than it used to and that limits its options. My exposure to the rural sector of Victoria has really cemented in my mind the view that amalgamations and attendant things like CCT (compulsory competitive tendering) were disastrous overall."

As a person who questioned some of the fundamental tenets of economic rationalism and their impact on individuals, Wilson believes the politicians and advisors driving the restructure of councils wanted to avoid intellectual debate.

The message for Friends groups is that intellectual debate is good for your library and good for a healthy democracy. Across the border in South Australia, the new Local Government Act allows for this - community participation, intellectual debate and discussion.

Gerry Harant reminds us that Friends groups should always remain vigilant.

**Daniel Ferguson**



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Helena Kirkwood  
Peter McInnes  
Michael Skeldon

# **Colin S Watson Oration**

## **given by the Hon Barry Jones AO**

(cont'd from p1)

It is, therefore, not surprising that the members of the committee of FOLA were affected deeply by his loss and, in consequence felt strongly the need to honour his memory.

A number of options was considered, but unanimous support was given to a suggestion made by Agnes Gregory, a FOLA committee member from the Friends group at Kew Library (Vic), namely; that an event to be known as the Colin S. Watson Oration should be established.

A number of criteria were determined during the planning process, three of which were: (i) the Oration will be given, when possible, during Australian Library Week, (ii) the Oration should be given by an outstanding Australian, (iii) the invitation to give the Oration shall be extended to an individual who is deemed to advance the ideals and spirit of Colin's achievements in librarianship.

Thus, the inaugural Colin S. Watson Oration was given at the Melbourne Unitarian Peace Memorial Church, East Melbourne, on Tuesday 16 May 2000.

The event took place during Library Week, and there was no doubt that our distinguished speaker met, admirably, the terms of the remaining criteria.

The inaugural Oration was given by The Honourable Barry Jones, AO; polymath, politician, author, activist and National President of the Australian Labour Party.

Barry Jones gave first an outline of his forty five year association with Colin Watson, an association linked to membership of the Labour Party and enhanced by a shared passion for books and music.

His reflection in summary on Colin's career revealed aspects of his life which not all of his friends and associates were familiar:

**"I was always concerned that librarians (like scientists in another, earlier context) were not particularly effective lobbyists, either as professionals or citizens. There should have been more Colin Watsons - and we need them now more than ever."**

"He was both dreamer and realist, a practitioner of the arts, a pianist who loved Chopin and played jazz and boogie-woogie, an enthusiast for science fiction and Sherlock Holmes, a theatre and opera lover. He was long-sighted, tenacious and fiercely loyal."

Barry Jones enthralled his audience with reflections about the future of the book culture, descriptions of some of the great libraries of the world, past and present, and some fascinating insights into reading habits of the past.

His positive comments and reservations about the potential of the Communications Revolution and his reflections on action and inaction on Australian Parliamentary enquiries into libraries led to his concluding remark. It merits quotation.

"I was always concerned that librarians (like scientists in another, earlier context) were not particularly effective lobbyists, either as professionals or citizens. There should have been more Colin Watsons - and we need them now more than ever."

Most members of the audience remained after the address to enjoy the refreshments and the company of kindred spirits.

I watched them, listened to them, talked with them; librarians, bibliophiles, library suppliers, book collectors, members of Friends groups, booksellers, members of the Sherlock Holmes Society and friends of Colin and his widow, Marie Dowling, all of whom enthused about the evening's program.

That enthusiasm was gratifying, for it confirmed beyond doubt that the inaugural Colin S. Watson Oration was an outstanding success.

Peter McInnes  
**President**

**Note:** The text of the Honourable Barry Jones Address will be published by the committee of FOLA to coincide with the 3rd biennial Conference of FOLA in Canberra in October.

## **FOLA Annual General Meeting**

Wednesday 16 August 2000  
at 5.00 pm

Australian Retired Persons  
Association

290 Collins Street Melbourne

## Compulsory Competitive Tendering, “Best Value” and Libraries

*Gerry Harant, Secretary of the Friends of Nunawading Libraries*

In replacing Competitive Tendering with notions of “Best Value” one has to first analyse what was objectionable about competitive tendering. Here is a partial list:

- ◆ Competition is not an appropriate way to operate libraries, which must be based on co-operation. The “top down, steers and rowers” managerial style is particularly inappropriate for libraries, and arguably inappropriate for any enterprise other than building the Burma railway during World War II.
- ◆ CCT was based on the notion that good practice can be imposed from the outside by a simplistic set of specifications and input-output parameters which are inapplicable to libraries. This was accurately predicted in the U.K. 1995 KPMG report “Contracting out Public Libraries” which advised against CCT.
- ◆ CCT created a new tier of infrastructure, ostensibly “at arms length” from previous management’s, but often intrusive and always expensive.
- ◆ CCT being quantitatively based, almost invariably concerned itself with financial aspects rather than quality issues.
- ◆ Reliance on simplistic performance indicators leads to cooking the books to improve figures (e.g. shortening loan periods in order to increase numbers of transactions).

- ◆ Staff policies went in the direction of cheaper casual staff, leading to low staff morale, loss of corporate memory and high turnover.
- ◆ Inappropriate attempts to make librarians participate in ways of raising cash-flows designed to convince them that their librarianship is worthless (such as using libraries to collect rates and dog-licence fees).
- ◆ Centralisation of management produces inappropriate structures in multi-branch and regional libraries.

As in other Council activities, there is little or no cost saving to justify the disruption caused by the paradigm shift (if indeed such a paradigm shift could ever be justified by economic considerations).

**Library “Best Value”,  
as written by Tony Blair,  
has virtually all the  
bureaucratic control  
features of CCT.**



Although the system is ostensibly concerned with evaluating efficiency, comparisons with its non-competitive pre-cursor are largely impossible because there was little or no data collection in the areas now considered decisive. In Victoria, large-scale coun-

cil amalgamations have exacerbated this situation. Bureaucrats in the system make use of this by claiming extravagant advantages for CCT.

Library “Best Value”, as written by Tony Blair, has virtually all the bureaucratic control features of CCT. It is built around a mission statement “Quality and cost standards are to be developed for each area that Council provides, demonstrating value for money together with yearly performance targets and achievements.”

While this may be regarded as the usual example of mind-blowing bureaucratic profundity, it clearly demonstrates the ongoing economic rationalist ideology. It is all about

**“Quality and cost standards are to be developed for each area that Council provides, demonstrating value for money together with yearly performance targets and achievements.”**

some entrenched system of standards, preferably developed by consultants, which can be entered into spreadsheets and presented as a true picture of economic reality (no other reality can be easily represented in spreadsheets). There is no provision for specifying or minimising the direct costs of running this overhead apparatus, let alone its impact on the library function. Nothing has changed from CCT.

(continued on page 11)

# Friends of Wingecarribee Shire Libraries

## Ten Years of Service

On Wednesday 25 October 1989 in the Bowral Memorial Hall a meeting was held to discuss the formation of a "Friends of Wingecarribee Library" group. The primary purpose of the Friends organisation was to be of assistance to the library in providing an excellent service to the community.

Ten years on, the group undertakes: Fund Raising, Donating Books, Talks by Authors, Printing of Brochures, Sponsoring Prizes for Children's Book Week, Donating Hear-A-Books, Supporting Local History and Supporting the Mobile Library Service.

Perhaps one of the group's most memorable ventures, was in campaigning for a new library building, part of a \$5.2 million Library and Health Centre complex opened in 1999. A feature of the building was the donation by the Friends of a \$19,085 microfiche reader printer installed in the Local Studies Room.

Wingecarribee were the recipient of a FOLA Best of Friends Award for 1999.



*Site for future Wingecarribee Library. Despite problems with the local water table and the size and shape of the site, the building was completed on time.*



*The original Wingecarribee Library - a crowded and poorly lit space.*



*The new and improved Library nears completion. After the dark and gloomy atmosphere of the old library building, staff are very impressed by the light and space.*



*The \$19,085 Microfiche Reader Printer (\$12,000 of which was provided by the Friends of Wingecarribee Shire Libraries)*

# why I'm for FOLA

*improving our performance*

## Invitation from FOLA President

May I extend to you a warm invitation to the **3rd Biennial Friends of Libraries Australia Conference**. The program is an exciting one, in which friends of libraries will share both ideas and

experiences with an audience which is devoted to the development and maintenance of excellent library services. Please join us, and thus help to make our conference an outstanding success.

  
Peter McInnes  
President, FOLA

## Conference Program

### Friday 20 October

**6 - 8 pm** Welcome Reception hosted by the Friends of the National Library of Australia  
Welcome to NLA - Jan Fullerton, Director-General  
**Official opening** - Hon Peter McGauran MP, Minister for the Arts in the presence of Hon Justice Michael Kirby, Patron, FOLA  
Presentation of FOLA  
Best of Friends Awards for 2010

### Saturday 21 October

**8.30 am** Conference registration

#### Session 1) REPORTS IN 2000

**9.00 am** Chair: Chris Awcock  
Welcome: Peter McInnes, President, FOLA  
Conference Agenda: Daniel Ferguson, Executive Officer, FOLA

**9.15 am** Issues from 2nd Biennial Conference

**9.45 am** Friends Resource Book & Publicity

**10.00am** Friends in 2000  
Daniel Ferguson, Executive Officer, FOLA

**10.30am-10.45am** Morning tea

#### Session 2) DISCUSSION: Working Together

**10.45am** Chair: Bill Tully  
Keynote speaker  
Mary Porter, Executive Director, Volunteering ACT

**11.15am** Library - Edgar Crook 'Public Libraries and Political Ideologies'

**11.35am** Management - Elaine Kennedy 'Keeping Everybody Happy'

**11.55am** Friends: Peter Hatfield 'Pushing the Envelope'

**12.15pm** Questions

**12.30pm** Lunch

**-1.30pm**

#### Session 3) KEYS TO SUCCESS: Friends Groups around Australia

Chair: John Bradenall

**1.30pm** Keynote speaker  
Dr Alan Brissenden AM, President, FSLSA

**2.15pm** Peter McInnes, Baillieu Library Friends

**2.30pm** Bill Tully, ACTLS Friends

**2.40pm** Yvonne Cramer, NLA Friends

**3.00pm** Friends and their priorities - discussion

**3.15pm** Afternoon tea

**-3.30pm**

#### Session 4) FRIENDS & THE GLOBAL VILLAGE

Chair: Phil Walsh

**3.30pm** Colin Dunnett, Friends of Willunga & Aldinga SA

**4.00pm** Erica Ryan, ALG Manager, Co-ordination Support, National Library of Australia

**4.30pm** Daniel Ferguson USA/UK/Canada

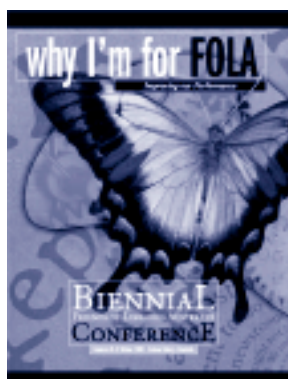
(Continued at right)

# BIENNIAL

FRIENDS OF LIBRARIES AUSTRALIA

# CONFERENCE

Canberra 20-22 October 2000 National Library of Australia



## Conference Sponsors



### Sunday 22 October

#### Session 5) THE NEXT STEP: Tomorrow

- 9.00am** Chair: Peter McInnes
- 9.15am** Keynote speaker: Jennifer Nicholson,  
Executive Director, ALIA  
*'You've got to have Friends'*
- 10.00am** Morning tea  
**-10.15am**

#### Session 6) A NATIONAL FOCUS

- Chair: Peter McInnes
- 10.15am** Keynote speaker  
Dr Alan Bundy, President elect,  
Australian Library & Information Association
- 11.00am** 4th Biennial FOLA Conference Sydney 2002
- 11.30am** Conference Overview & Highlights
- 12.15pm** Session close  
Peter McInnes, President, FOLA
- 12.30pm** Conference concludes

(See Page 11 for  
additional information)

## Willunga & Aldinga (SA)

At the AGM a new committee was elected with Brian Middlemiss as President. The group is organised into 3 sub-committee's: Library Resources, Fund Raising and Special Events. Another successful Bloomsday 2000 was held on 16 June with a Dinner and readings from James Joyce's novel *Ulysses*.

## Altona (VIC)

Monthly booksales continue in the Booksale Room between 10 am and 2 pm. The Big 2 day Booksale will be held on 22-23 September.

Is Altona the only Friends group in Australia to have a permanent Booksale Room for Friends use exclusively?

## Baillieu (VIC)

The Annual Friends Dinner will be held on 15 August when Nancy Flanagan, editor of a recent book about the love letters of Mawson, *This Everlasting Silence will speak*. The Friends recently presented to the University of Melbourne a rare 1925 edition of *Yingzao Fashi*, and influential 12th century Chinese building manual.

**F**riends OF THE  
BAILLIEU LIBRARY

## Erindale (ACT)

Every week a core of dedicated members called the Wednesday Workers, spend two hours performing tasks to help the library. Once a month a group discuss books read on a specific theme, while another group meets to discuss poetry. The fourth activity is the enjoyment of a guest speaker – a successful vehicle for raising the awareness of the community to the existence of the Friends and the library.

# FOCUS on FRIENDS



*Erindale Friends' Christmas party entertainment, Kate Jones being a Bunyip*



*Martin and Robin Ward talked about their treks to Nepal on 18 May 2000*



*The audience for Andrew Curry (speaking on Feng Shui, 16 March 2000)*

## Balmain (NSW)

In June the Friends welcomed local author Kate Grenville. Kate read from her latest bestselling novel *The Idea of Perfection*.

## Kew (VIC)

Recent donations to the library by the Friends included - 2 childrens tables and 6 chairs, a new beanbag, 2 paperback stands. Dr Pitt and Dr Parkin are starting a listing of a further selection of videos to the value of \$1000.

## Geraldton (WA)

A chance remark from a FOGL member about seniors learning about computers has really started something. From a small band of seniors teaching each other some computer basics and about e-mail, there are now about 50 seniors forming a formal group that is about to become incorporated. The group will be known as "midwest.seniors.online.inc."

## Barossa (SA)

The May meeting was held at the Langmeil Winery, Tanunda. The speaker(s) were five authors who wrote and published *Enter Without Knocking*. These semi-professional local writers from the Barossa have actually even made a profit on their book.

## National Library (ACT)

Following the success of the Mid Winter Dinner last year, the Friends decided to repeat the occasion this year - on Friday 21 July. The witty and able scientist, Ben Selinger with give the address. In August, The Kenneth Myer Lecture will be presented by Professor Emeritus Sir Gustav Nossal, Australian of the Year.





## Frankston (VIC)

On Thursday 9 March FOFLS welcomed members of the Peninsular Library Association, the Friends of Cranbourne Library and the Friends of Doveton Library to a coffee morning. Mike Skeldon, President of FOFLS welcomed members. Members from other groups spoke of their activities and it became apparent that we had common interests. A great deal of information was exchanged and future meetings are envisaged.



## State Library of SA

To celebrate the presence of the Book of Kells at the National Gallery in Canberra, and the State Library's facsimile edition, the Friends arranged an illustrated talk on the Book of Kells by Vincent Megaw, Professor of Visual Arts and Archaeology at Flinders University (and a Celtic specialist) in the Institute Building in May.



## Salisbury (SA)

Australia's Biggest Morning Tea Party - After last years successful effort when \$300 was raised for Cancer Research, the Friends are organising another event this year. Cath Kerry, Adelaide's acclaimed catering personality was the guest speaker at the Friends Literary Luncheon held in May.

## Liverpool (NSW)

Renowned author Edgar Penzig, an authority on colonial history, especially the bushranger period, presented a talk in May. He also displayed samples of his weapon collection.

## Stirling (SA)

20th Anniversary celebrations were held in June with Poetry Readings by Barbara Preston and Geoff Kemp, along with cake and champagne.

## Brighton (SA)

The June meeting was a Movie Nostalgia with coffee and cake. The guest speaker was Ian Black, former cinema manager and movie buff. During the past 12 months the Friends have sponsored items in the library to the value of \$3303 as a result of fund raising.



## FRIENDS

### AND THE BALLOT BOX

Friends of the Library Stirling (SA) embarked on a high profile campaign during the local government elections in South Australia.

Flyers were sent to all friends members - to bring to their attention the vital part played by our public libraries and the high regard the community have for this service we ask you to send as many enclosed flyers as possible to all candidates. Ring them, ask questions and voice your concerns.

They sent out a letter to all Council candidates bring to their attention the vital part played by our public libraries and the high regard the community have for this service.

To this letter was attached a questionnaire asking all Council candidates to indicate their support for our libraries.

The Friends of Woodside Library and the Friends of Gumeracha Library were also connected with this campaign on behalf of the Friends of the Adelaide Hills Council Library Service.

Contact the Friends of Stirling Library, President, Christi Markovic, C/- PO Box 44, Woodside SA 5244 for further information on this proactive campaign.

### From librarian to legislator

In Victoria, three librarians were recently elected to parliament. They were Judy Maddigan (ALP) Deputy Speaker, Andrea Coote (Liberal) and Jo Duncan (ALP).



## FOLUSA NEWS

- ◆ Friends of the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, distributed their first candidate questionnaire to each of the 116 candidates running for Mayor, City Council President, Comptroller, and 18 City Council seats. The Friends asked: In 100 words or fewer, please state what you as a public officeholder would do regarding Baltimore's public library ... If your statement runs longer than 100 words, the Friends will print the first 100 words.

Thirty-four candidates responded. The Friends printed 400 copies of the responses and distributed them to the main library and all of the branches. They made it clear that they did not endorse any candidate, but put out the questionnaire to educate readers about the various candidates' positions on library issues.



## NEWS FROM INTERNATIONAL FRIENDS GROUPS



### UK NEWS

- ◆ The Library Association recently convened a meeting of Friends groups at the Library and Information Show 2000. The meeting was chaired by Trevor Knight. There was general support for the idea of a Federation of Friends groups and a steering group is to be formed.
- ◆ Approximately 100 members attended the AGM of the Friends of the British Library in January when Chairman, Colin Tite pointed to the ever increasing membership, now rising at the rate of 40 a month.
- ◆ Lynne Brindley has been appointed as the new Chief Executive of the British Library. Brindley is currently Pro-Vice-Chancellor and University Librarian at the University of Leeds, where she has been since 1997.

### FOCAL NEWS

- ◆ The Friends of the Winnipeg Public Library have established a "Friends Cafe" in the foyer of their main Centennial Library. Their percentage of sales from this successful venture goes towards a fund for special library projects.
- ◆ The opening plenary session at the Ontario Library Association covered the topic of Funding and Gaming in Ontario. Tina Tucker

a member of the Thunder Bay Friends group and the library's staff liaison with the Friends. She outlined how their Friends group has raised money through various forms of gaming for a portion of their annual revenue the last several years. This includes about \$25,000 from Bingos, between \$6,000 and \$8,000 annually from Nevada ticket sales and \$3,000 - \$7,000 from an annual computer raffle. They also raise funds through booksales, silent auctions and a variety of other activities.

- ◆ The President of Friends of Canadian Libraries, Val Marshall recently addressed the AGM of FOCL in Toronto.
- ◆ New groups are flourishing around Canada with individual success stories - Advocacy in Action from the Oshawa Friends, Ajax Friends half-way with their million dollar fundraiser for a new main library, tiny Atikokan amazing their community with their march to the Council Chambers in support of better funding. Friends groups in general working hard in their communities to enhance their libraries. Volunteers running book sales, selling raffle tickets, running and sponsoring events, enjoying authors visits, reading groups, organizing children's programs and, most importantly having fun and celebrating their successes.
- ◆ FOCL also report on plans to present an International Friends Day with Friends of Libraries USA. The new President of FOCL will be Jami van Haften, the current Vice President.

## Compulsory Competitive Tendering, “Best Value” and Libraries

(continued from page 4)

Libraries were generated by community needs and preferences. Currently, the average weekly cost of libraries per rate-payer is about the same as two local telephone calls; there is no demand on the ground for “more efficient” (read cheaper) public libraries as determined by politicians and consultants.

What we need in libraries are professionals throughout the library whose experience, devotion and confidence on the ground allows them to make and implement policies and decisions to meet the specific demands made on each library as determined by demographics, local preferences and ultimately, individual users. And, unless you were very unlucky, this is the sort of place your library was until the econo-rats in state and federal spheres used their clout to spread the gospel of phony efficiency.

It is not sufficient to merely change the name of the policies applying to libraries, given the by now entrenched nature of the bureaucracy which administered the CCT in-house expertise in all major areas of council involvement at all organisational levels. The “new” Best Value prescriptions do the precise reverse.

To paraphrase Bertolt Brecht:

*We don't want different  
bureaucratic structures,  
we want none!*

## ‘I’m for FOLA Conference’ -

(continued from page 6&7)

### Additional Information

#### Venue

The National Library of Australia, Theatre LG1  
Parkes Place, Canberra

Full directions will be included in registration material sent to delegates

#### Registration

Delegates are encouraged to complete the Registration Form and return it to FOLA prior to the closing date 8 September 2000

Payment must be received to complete registration

#### Cancellation

Full refund of registration fee is available only prior to 8 September 2000

No refunds are available after that date

#### Accommodation

Delegates should make their own arrangements, however, the following motels are convenient to the conference venue and will provide delegates with a special rate

#### Forrest Inn & Albany Apartments

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#### Barton Cottage Bed & Breakfast

9 Belmore Gardens  
Barton ACT 2600  
Ph 02 6273 2205  
Rate offered: \$200 for 2 persons, GST free (standard rate \$235)  
*Delegates must mention when booking  
they are attending FOLA Conference at NLA*

#### Acknowledgements

Completed registration will be acknowledged by mail and further details advised

#### Further details

For further information regarding the Conference, contact  
Daniel Ferguson, Executive Officer  
Friends of Libraries Australia Inc.

**Phone:** 03 9338 0666

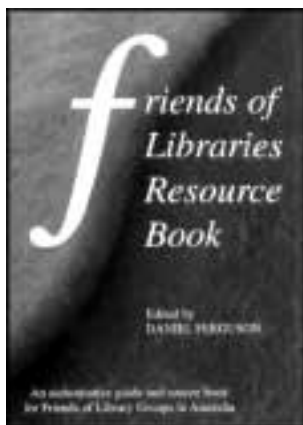
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## IMPORTANT DATES

### 2000

- 16 August FOLA Annual General Meeting - Melbourne  
20-22 Oct FOLA biennial Conference - Canberra  
23-26 Oct ALIA biennial Conference - Canberra



### Friends of Libraries Resource Book

edited by  
*Daniel Ferguson*

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Saturday 24 October 1998

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### Fola News Update

is published four times a year by  
**Friends of Libraries Australia.**

Locked Bag 1315, Tullamarine Vic. 3043  
For membership information:  
Ph: 03 9338 0666 Fax: 03 9335 1903  
<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~fola.main.html>  
Editor: Daniel Ferguson  
Production/Design: Alias Design  
Editorial contributions, articles,  
newsletters and news releases  
should be sent to:  
Locked Bag 1315, Tullamarine, Vic. 3043

**FOLA Committee meetings  
for 2000 are as follows:**

Committee meets on April 19,  
June 21, August 16, October  
18, December 20.

Executive meets on March 15,  
May 17, July 19, September 20,  
November 15.

Committee meetings are held in  
the Baillieu Library, University  
of Melbourne, Parkville.

## Membership Application

### Categories

**Membership fee  
includes News Update**

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Extra copies of News Update	\$10 per annum	<input type="checkbox"/>

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