



# Eric Flynn

## a Friend indeed

*A personal reflection by  
Daniel Ferguson*

**E**ric Flynn (1917-2002) founding member of the Friends of Kew Library in Victoria died in October 2002. Eric was also influential in the formation of FOLA and worked tirelessly for the interests of the Friends movement in this country.

My first meeting with Eric was in 1984 at St Kilda Library in Victoria during a Library Promotion Committee of Victoria seminar on Council amalgamations. From that moment we became friends and Eric assisted and supported me personally over the next 18 years in pursuing our passion - the development of Friends of Libraries in Australia.

**“Eric’s great personal strengths [were] wisdom, support and considered advice”**

One particular reason may have been his personal knowledge of and experience with Friends in the United States, as Eric’s daughter, a librarian was living in the US and Eric made frequent visits to that country over many years. As an engineer by profession, Eric had considerable skills in analysis and judgement on a given situation.

Eric assisted me in establishing the precursor to FOLA, with the establishment in 1987 of the

LPCV Friends sub-committee, together with Mary Kelleher, Jellie Wyckelsma and Helen Hayes. Over the next five years the promotion of Friends in Victoria developed, conducting seminars and workshops (an annual event at Albert Park Library), providing a Resource File (edited by Eric in 1989, 1990), distributing publicity and supporting the development with a small LPCV grant to newly established groups. These were exciting times.



On my return from a visit to the USA in 1990, and meetings with various Friends groups and FOLUSA in New York, Eric supported my intention to pursue a national body similar to FOLUSA. And this was pursued over the next few years. This was one of Eric’s great personal strengths – wisdom, support and considered advice.

As a resident of the suburb of Kew, Eric will long be remembered for his contribution to Friends of Kew Library. As a founding mem-

ber of FOKL he worked tirelessly on behalf of Kew citizens. Along with Clive Brinsmead he initiated a “Save the Library” group in the mid 1980s when it appeared the library would remain in its cramped conditions. Eric and Clive organised a petition which was signed by over 600 residents in only a few days. Eventually Council gave approval for the library to be relocated to the old Town Hall building and later refurbishment resulted in the present excellent facility. From these beginnings, the Friends of Kew Library was formed, with Eric being the first President, and for some years he and Clive Brinsmead alternated in the position of President and Secretary.

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## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# FOLA'S STRATEGIC MISSION 2002-2006

Included in this *NewsUpdate* is a copy of FOLA's new Strategic Plan.

FOLA has commenced acting on a number of these directions. Two key areas are: putting the organization on a better foundation, financially, and Jim Lowden is heading a team who have prepared a report for our March meeting. Again, Kay Craddock and Judith Field have detailed positive action for more effective publicity, and actions are following already in this area.

FOLA has commenced the year with two State events: a Workshop for Friends in SA in April and taking part in the NSW Country Public Libraries Conference in July. Also, in a move to be seen as – *out and about*, FOLA will be holding our AGM in August in suburban Melbourne with a local Friends group as host.

A major thrust of the Strategic Plan is to support action, and take action on issues relating to government funding for library services. To this end FOLA has strengthened its relations with the Australian Library and Information Association and will support and play a role in campaigning for awareness to be increased amongst all stakeholders.

The campaign taking place in New South Wales, prior to the State Election is both supported and welcomed by



FOLA. The initiative – *A fair go for libraries*, with high profile figures – Nicole Kidman and Thomas Keneally, displays the hallmark of effective PR.

FOLA begins 2003 with many positive plans. We can only succeed with your continued support and the ability to strengthen our library services and Friends organizations.

In December 2004 we celebrate our 10<sup>th</sup> birthday. Let's have something to celebrate!



Daniel Ferguson



**A fair go for libraries...**  
 Public libraries need more State funding

*"Our free libraries and mother-tongued public libraries, as institutions which could lead citizenship, progress and ideas amongst the community. They are still at the same time one of the cornerstones of our democracy and centres of enlightenment and delight for adults and, above all, children. They should be maintained as a heritage."*

**A fair go for libraries...**

*"When I was growing up, the local library was my window on the world. Today, with high speed internet links it is more so and it is there for everyone to use and enjoy"*

**Nicole Kidman**

**Thomas Keneally**

FEATURE

# a real COUP!



Friends of the Great Lakes Library Service (FOGLLS) have had a real coup. They are the only FOL group in NSW to successfully attract funding (over \$31,000) from the Department of Disability Ageing and Home Care (DADHC). The grant is to provide training courses for seniors in basic IT and the Internet.



*l-r Chris Jones, Chief Librarian and Keith O'Leary, Council General Manager talking to a very interested senior citizen at the launch.*

**“FOGLLS are an amazing group and the benefits they attract to the local community are outstanding”**

Great Lakes Chief Librarian, Chris Jones declared it a great achievement “FOGLLS are an amazing group and the benefits they attract to the local community are outstanding”. The FOGLLS committee pay tribute to the co-operation from Chris Jones and all the library staff, and acknowledge significant assistance from Council. Without Chris’s expertise in preparing submissions, we may not have been so fortunate. Another force behind the success is Sonia Higgs, a member of the library staff and webmaster for Council.

As a result of the funding, FOGLLS is running a series of courses over a 12 month period, aimed at bringing seniors up to speed in using the net and basic computing. The demand for the classes has been overwhelming. Classes number 10 students, each with a computer enabled with broadband access to the Internet. Each student receives a set of course notes.

The classes are being conducted in the Forster Library and are totally free. In addition, over the twelve month period, a tutor will be available in the library each morning to help people as they netsurf. There is even a provision for people in outlying areas to attend courses through a special bus service.

In recent weeks DADHC has made another addition to the funding. The Library has been given access to the LearnFast Program which provides flexible, tailored e-learning programs via the Internet.

It has been a very fulfilling year for the Friends of Great Lakes Library Service.



*Wallis Lake*

## FOLA IN ACTION – AROUND AUSTRALIA

### ADELAIDE (SA)

12 April 2003

A Workshop for Friends and Libraries to be held at Unley Civic Centre, 181 Unley Road, Unley, from 9.15-12.30 am. Topics include: 10 Steps to Success, Creating Effective Partnerships, Networking for more effective Friends in SA and Panel Discussion.

Contacts: RSVP – Jill Miller 08 8372 5140, further information Gerrit Stafford 08 8278 4372.



### TWEED HEADS (NSW)

2-4 July 2003

FOLA will be holding a 'Friends Day' to coincide with the NSW Country Public Libraries Conference to be held in Tweed Heads from 2-4 July. We will be presenting a workshop for Librarians and Councillors on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> and a Trade Exhibition. On Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> we will hold a day of talks, presentations, workshops and opportunities

#### Country Public Libraries Association of New South Wales



The cover of the 2002 NSW CPLC program

for networking and socialising for FOL group members on both sides of the border.

Contact Judith Field (FOLA Committee) on 02 6624 7807 or email on [judithlib@bigpond.com](mailto:judithlib@bigpond.com) if your group is interested in being part of this Day, especially if you have suggestions for presentations, discussion topics etc. There will be more details in the next *NewsUpdate*.

## CELEBRATING 20 YEARS!

Ballina Friends of the Library (NSW) recently celebrated 20 years of service. In recognition, the Shire Council acknowledged ... "the enormous financial contribution made to the Ballina Shire Library and the cultural enhancement of this shire during the last twenty years."

The Ballina Friends' fund raising efforts are centred on its highly popular annual sale of used books. The Friends pioneered such sales in northern New South Wales, the first sale being held in 1983.

#### Among other fund raising activities:

The year round sale of used books and periodicals from a table in the library foyer.

The sale of local merchants advertising space on date-due slips.

The sponsorship of an in-memoriam plan whereby residents can donate books to the library remembering departed loved ones.

The group's biggest fund-raising effort preceded the opening of Ballina's new library in 1993. A "Thousand Books" campaign was mounted to add books to the new library shelves. In less than two months financial contributions from local book lovers plus the donation of books from national publishers added far more than the hoped for thousand new books to the library.

- *Well done Ballina, a great success story*

calling  
**WWW**  
friends...

**FOLA is compiling a list of Friends groups who have a web site or have a link to their Friends group or are mentioned on the library's web address. Send us details (URL and name of FOL Group).**

**FOLA Locked Bag 1315  
Tullamarine VIC 3043**



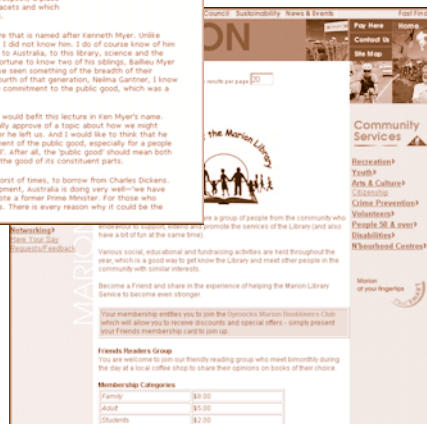
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[www.marion.sa.gov.au/Web/webmar.nsf/Lookup/Friends-of-the-Library](http://www.marion.sa.gov.au/Web/webmar.nsf/Lookup/Friends-of-the-Library)

Writing in the December edition of Australian Bookseller & Publisher, Tracy Crisp took a look at the internet's potential. In her review of hundreds of web sites she made mention of libraries and Friends. If you are looking to rejuvenate your friends' group, start a new one or just get a few new ideas, get in touch with Friends of Libraries Australia (FOLA) at [www.fola.org.au](http://www.fola.org.au). Another reason why FOLA asks Friends groups around the country to inform us of your web address details.



## Eric Flynn a Friend indeed

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Eric started a bi-monthly book review, got the monthly newsletter started, arranged rosters for booksales and was always useful in confronting Council. Monthly meetings with excellent speakers became a hallmark of FOKL.

The Friends of Kew Library are undoubtedly one of the most successful FOLA's in the country today. Much of this 17 years of success must rest with Eric and the strong and spirited group of friends that survive his legacy.

FOLA can continue to record his contribution from his writings in our present Resource Book.

Eric was unable to join the inaugural committee of FOLA in 1994 and thereby continue his work from 1987, due to concern for his wife's health. He would most likely have been one of our foundation Vice-Presidents.

Eric was a quiet, well-spoken gentleman with a sustainable ability to pursue the goals of Friends and the betterment of our communities. He will be greatly missed by many friends and colleagues. We acknowledge his outstanding contribution to the Friends movement in this country.

FOLA was represented at a memorial service held in Kew by Vice-President, Chris Awcock.

*(Thanks to Pam Richards and Agnes Gregory from FOKL for additional information)*