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SPECIAL CONFERENCE EDITION

FOLA

NEWS UPDATE

Friends of Libraries



Australia

FOLA



CELEBRATING

5



5th biennial national conference

Adelaide 14-15 October 2005

State Library of South Australia

(Location of Australia's first Friends group in 1932)



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Celebrating

Celebrating

Daniel Ferguson
Executive Director



Community Power

According to Philanthropy Australia, there are as many as 700,000 nonprofit organisations in Australia alone, the vast majority of which depend on voluntary engagement of their members. In the year 2000, the more than 700 million hours of volunteer work performed by some 4.4 million Australians (not including the Sydney Olympics) produced the equivalent of nearly \$9 billion in income to nonprofit sector organizations.

Voluntary organizations that are willing to take a risk and innovate their approach will discover a new world of possibilities in the 21st Century. Yes, the world is changing, and in profound and irreversible ways. Where we place *Friends* in this environment will mark our success.

Another important factor in our environment is the role played by philanthropy. Australia holds no real culture of philanthropy, unlike America. Extraordinary figures are often quoted to emphasise this difference - the capital base of the Harvard University Foundation, for instance, is \$20 billion – which is more than our Federal Government spends on tertiary education annually.

However, in Victoria and South Australia, we have witnessed the impact of philanthropy more than elsewhere in Australia. Since the

goldrush there have been far sighted people who wanted to give back, to contribute to the common good. We have benefited inestimably from their generosity and vision. The Felton Bequest, which celebrated its centenary last year, has contributed to the National Gallery of Victoria, making Felton as great a benefactor to the arts as Andrew Mellon in the USA (\$1.5 billion). Increasingly Philanthropy is being seen as venture capital for the community – the common good.

Another way of viewing this changing environment is in terms of 'hard power' versus 'soft power'. 'Soft power' refers to the ability to attract and influence – one of the primary roles of a *Friends* group.

The understanding of these issues was recognized in South Australia in the 19th century. Leaders in community life and the arts, viewed the 'common good' of the citizenry of South Australia in terms of 'soft power'.

The Friends of the State Library of South Australia, established in 1932 bear the hallmarks of both, a past and present understanding in enhancing the philanthropic drive of the community. All Friends groups in Australia need to share this understanding in the 21st century. If they do, our community infrastructure and libraries can only benefit.

Consider the role your *Friends* group can perform in the 'soft power' of your community.

"Voluntary organizations that are willing to take a risk and innovate their approach will discover a new world of possibilities in the 21st Century."

Daniel Ferguson
Executive Director



Launceston Family Album

"Family and local history enthusiasts have been very excited by the potential of the website."



Launceston Library has, in its Local Studies Collection, an album of photographs of more than 1100 people who had admission "passports" (season tickets) to the Tasmanian Exhibition of 1891, held in the Albert Hall. The Tasmanian Exhibition of 1891-92 drew a quarter of a million people. Amazingly of all, the Launceston City Council had been persuaded to spend almost 12,000 pounds (something like \$1.2 million in today's money) on building the Albert Hall for the purpose.

Earlier this year the Friends of the Library Launceston was successful in obtaining a grant of \$16,000 from the Tasmanian Community Fund to construct a website featuring the photographs. The website is now operational and users can access the photos and any information available about them. They can also add information they might have about those featured.



Launceston's local daily newspaper *The Examiner* recently organized a colour supplement about the Exhibition and the Friends project.

Family and local history enthusiasts have been very excited by the potential of the website. A weekly article is being published in *The Examiner* featuring one of the individuals in the album. Members of Friends will be involved in checking the accuracy of information provided and in adding the verified information to the website.

The project has also been endorsed by Launceston City Council as part of *It's about Us 2006*, a celebration of the 200th anniversary of the establishment of launceston.

Check out the website at :

www.launcestonfamilyalbum.org.au

GREAT IDEAS

FOR FRIENDS

The Membership Drive

Make new Friends, but keep the old. The following tips for membership drives were compiled by Jane Rutledge with Friends of Indiana Libraries (FOIL):

- Celebrate the past. Begin with a thank you for the past support, and be sure to mention all the great things that the members past support has made possible for the library.
- Look to the future. Give a hint of plans for the new year, stressing that “your support will make it happen!”
- Make it easy. Use a mail merge program to preprint membership forms so that members don’t need to write all their address information again.
- Include a preaddressed return envelope. If all they have to do is write the cheque and find a stamp, its more likely to get done!
- Follow up. After a month or two, follow up with the nonrenewing members-perhaps with a postcard, second mailing, phone call, or even a handwritten note.
- Follow up with those who do renew, too, by sending a thank-you or a membership card (easy to print on business card stock).
- Make membership appealing and fun. Be sure your members know how much you and the library appreciate their help and support.

Looking for New Members is essential too. A few quick tips:

- People join because they are asked-and the more direct the asking, the greater the response.
- Some places to find prospects: friends of Friends (ask your members to suggest names), library supporters (staff may be able to identify possibilities), in other community organizations, and at the library (set up a table in the entrance and staff it with welcoming Friends).

- Show off! Be sure that your print materials are good looking and that your mailings and other solicitations are done in an attractive manner.
- Brag a little-be sure prospective members get to know your group’s activities and accomplishments. People like to be part of a success story.
- “What’s in it for ME?” may be the unspoken question when you ask people to join. Have your answers ready. Benefits of membership may include such things as a newsletter, invitations to special events, shop early at the book sale. Some groups offer premiums-a calendar, a coffee mug, or a bookmark. Of course, one benefit is always the opportunity to help support and enhance the library.
- Don’t let depositing the cheque be your last contact. Send membership card, an information letter, a personal welcome or thank you. It’s the Friendly thing to do!

“What’s in it for ME?’ may be the unspoken question when you ask people to join. Have your answers ready.”

Revitalising Your Friends Group

It often seems that sustaining and growing Friends groups can be even harder than establishing such a group in the first place. Understanding what went wrong or why interest in your group has waned will help you to develop an action plan for renewed membership and activity.

- An agenda of issues for discussion should include:
- Why was the group initially established?
- What have been the “golden” years of your organization when membership and activity was high?
- Are there characteristics about your group that were different then than now?
- Are the library’s needs different now than then?

GREAT IDEAS FOR FRIENDS

(Continued)

- Are the members different now?
- Who are potential members today?
- How can the Friends be more responsive to the changing characteristics of potential members?
- How can the current needs of the Library be used to make a compelling case for membership?
- What is your greatest need from membership-is it funding or is it a need to attract more volunteers to assist Friends with their activities or both?
- Is the membership fee right for today's potential members?
- How can a renewed membership campaign be designed to attract new members in today's environment.
- Looking back - one danger in looking back at the "good old days" may be a temptation by some to hand on to what worked then. The environment is constantly changing, it's important for your Friends group to key into the realities of a new environment.
- Looking forward – it's a good idea to consider just who is likely to become a Friend as well as whom should be targeted for membership. You should also determine what you need new members for. Consider the time of day when meetings are held, does this attract younger members? Very often a well-established group has difficulty in recruiting new members because they are perceived by the community as a closed organisation. The most important ingredient for membership is promotion.

"The environment is constantly changing, its important for your Friends group to key into the realities of a new environment."

Library boss reads riot act to council

The 11th Annual General Meeting of FOLA was held on Thursday 26 August at the Toowoomba City Library. During the visit of the executive, FOLA President, Dr Alan Bundy AM addressed a public meeting and the local media.

The visit was reported in the local paper – *The Chronicle*, under the heading 'library boss read riot act to council! The paper reported: "Dr Bundy has a challenge for Toowoomba City Council: look seriously into building a new library and stop fobbing people off".

"The Friends of Libraries Australia (FOLA) president visited Toowoomba this week for the group's AGM and has decreed that the local council is making excuses for putting a new library on the backburner."

"Too many councils are dominated by middle-aged men who don't directly use libraries," Dr Bundy said.

"it's easy then for local government to prioritise other things over a new library, but it's just not good enough." "The are just making excuses." Dr Bundy praised the current library for its programs (especially for young children), resources and seven-day-a-week opening hours, but said it was "deficient" in its size, lighting, technology and meeting rooms.

"A library is the very best investment a community can make – they are new village greens", Dr Bundy said.

11th AGM of FOLA

The following were elected to the committee for 2005/06: Chris Awcock (Vic), Margaret Broeks (Vic), Dr Alan Bundy AM (SA), Elaine Chippendale (Qld), Dr Peter Chippendale (Qld), Judith Field (NSW), Peter McInnes (Vic), Gerrit Stafford (SA).

Special business item of changes to the Constitution was approved. Matthew Pinnuck was reappointed FOLA auditor.

SUPPORTING GREAT LIBRARIES

The Friends of the Minneapolis Public Library help make our public libraries thriving community centers of intellectual discovery and lifelong learning for our diverse communities. Over the fiscal year 2003-2004, the Friends provided \$4.8 million in direct financial and programmatic support for Minneapolis Public Library. In addition, advocacy efforts in partnership with MPL Trustees helped restore \$4.6 million to the City's budget for capital improvements in 2006-2008. MPL also received \$27 million for capital improvements from the 2000 Library Referendum, which the Friends helped to pass.

The Friends of the Minneapolis Public Library is one of the largest library support groups in the United States. They have twice received the Award of Excellence from Friends of Libraries USA for the best large Friends group in America.

Highlights

In the 54th year, the Friends of the Minneapolis Public Library provided a number of forms of library support, ranging from volunteer coordination to public advocacy, from fundraising to the operation of The Friends Book Store. A few of the achievements were:

- Raising \$3.8 million for the New Central Library Capital Campaign.
- Increasing membership by 45%, to more than 3,500 individuals.
- Receiving contributions from 2,234 individuals to the \$12 Campaign, which raised \$87,000 to offset library cuts.
- Provided major funding for the citywide Summer Reading Program and Homework Helper tutors at 10 libraries, while continuing to support story times, the Franklin Learning Centre and new book purchases.

- Helped organize 559 volunteers who contributed 20,405 service hours to the library system.

Homework Helper

When she immigrated to America alone four years ago, 16 year old Amino Ahmed was placed in 9th grade. School was an immediate hardship. "I didn't know any English, and it was hard to take the same classes as American students. I didn't understand the teacher."

Then she discovered the Homework Helper program at Northeast Library and became a regular in the after school and early evening hours. "I have improved a lot," Amino says. "I can speak, read and write in English now. When I need to know something, I come here to the library to ask. The library has helped me find my new life."

"When I need to know something, I come here to the library to ask. The library has helped me find my new life."

Other Highlights

- The Read to Me program received the Minnesota Association of Library Friends' Evy Nordley Award for Best Project by a Friends group. Sixty-four volunteers led 303 reading sessions at four sites.
- Seventy-four Friends volunteers made more than 1,500 visits and book deliveries to individuals, primarily seniors and people with disabilities.
- The Friends sponsored 70 cultural programs attended by over 7,800 individuals.
- Friends volunteers provided on-on-one and small group internet tutorials for more than 300 individuals at 10 community libraries.
- The Friends opened a new branch book store at Wasburn Community Library. Collectively, the two stores sold \$66,105 in used books, raising funds for volunteer programs.



The Friends of the Minneapolis Public Library



In the coming year, the Friends will:

- Advocate at the State and City level for improved public funding for the entire library system.
- Provide funding for new book purchases, 10 Homework Helper sites, the citywide - Summer Reading Program, storytimes at 14 libraries and other library-based initiatives.
- Sponsor more than 100 free cultural programs featuring artists, authors and scholars.
- Coordinate hundreds of volunteers, who mentor children, tutor adults, deliver library materials to seniors, operate our bookstore, and perform many other services.
- Raise the capital funds necessary to build an enduring Central Library.

Advocacy

A feature of many large American FOLs is the role they perform in educating the population about Library Advocacy and Funding. Although private funding can enhance the public library, the majority of library funding should come from public sources. Here, the role of the Friends in Advocacy can be critical.

Lessons for Australian Friends

Provide information on how the library is funded and who controls the budget.

For example

- The Friends of MPL give a brief description of 'Who controls MPL's operating budget'
- The Minneapolis Public Library Trustees set library policy and have discretion over the use of available funds, but they are not empowered to independently increase library funding
- The Minneapolis City Council influences library funding through its role on the Board of Estimate & Taxation
- The Mayor influences library funding through his participation on the board of Estimate & Taxation
- The State Legislature and Governor determine how much operating budget the City will receive
- **You.** As a voter, you help elect people to each of these offices.
- Friends make a real difference at the Minneapolis Public Library.

"Although private funding can enhance the public library, the majority of library funding should come from public sources. Here, the role of the Friends in Advocacy can be critical."

Friends around Australia



News, Events & Ideas...

Altona (Vic)

To celebrate the 40th year of the Altona Library, the Friends have given \$1500 for more talking books, tapes and CDs. The Annual Big Booksale was held on 29 September to 1 October, with a preview for Friends on the 29th. Always a great way to make money and increase our membership.

National Gallery of Victoria (Vic)

28th AGM of the Gallery Friends was held on 25 August followed with guest speaker, Professor Jaynie Anderson, Herald Professor of Fine Arts, University of Melbourne.

Geraldton (WA)

FOGL recently purchased a 'Pro-Fix' disc repair machine for the library. The machine cleans and repairs discs (DVDs, CDs and CDRoms). FOGL volunteers will be repairing these discs and only a small fee is charged.

Brighton (SA)

The group is considering the advantages of becoming an incorporated group. The first disadvantage, as stated in the July Newsletter, is the cost of \$500 a year! – Perhaps groups who are incorporated can contact Brighton. The October meeting will be a wine and cheese tasting afternoon with Geoff Patrilli, who will talk about his family's local winery.

Albury (NSW)

Friends of Albury Libraries again sponsored the Young Writers and Junior Category prize for the annual Albury Libraries Short Story competition and fund the publication of an anthology of prize winners. In July a number of Friends attended a consultation with a marketing consultant, who has been employed by Albury City Council to recommend a model for the Friends group for a new co-joined Library and museum which will be completed in 2007. The model to date proposes a membership strand with an annual fee and a volunteer strand with no fees.

Balmain (NSW)

A Book Group Seminar was held on 3 September. Session 1 had speakers covering topics such as the Library's role in supporting reading groups, genre in literature, and some guidelines toward a better understanding of text. After a break for morning tea, Session 2 had a panel of representatives from some of Balmain's many reading groups discussing "all you'll ever need to know about book groups". The cost was \$20.

Playford (SA)

On 12 July Playford invited Friends' groups from around SA to visit two new libraries, one at Munno Para and the other at the Playford Civic Centre at Elizabeth. Although it was a very wet and cold day, over 50 Friends attended and morning tea was served, and later a tour of the Civic Centre and Shedley Theatre.

Barossa (SA)

The AGM in August gave an ideal opportunity to put forward ideas about which part of the library should benefit from the efforts of the Friends. A 'bumper book sale' will be held on 20-21 October in the Mall of the Regional Shopping Centre in Nuriootpa.

Thuringowa (Qld)

Year of the Friends 10th Anniversary – the September newsletter outlines many activities: Booksales, CPR sessions, Membership card benefits, including 10% discount at the local bookshop, "Friends" Polo Shirts on sale for \$25.30.

Wagga Wagga (NSW)

The Bumper Book sale on 14 May raised \$1500. Thanks go to the library staff who did a lot of sorting and unpacking of the boxes of donated material. Rollup banners for promotional purposes have been ordered, the Friends committing funds, with art work being supplied by a local business, Jam Media.

"Although it was a very wet and cold day, over 50 Friends attended and morning tea was served."

"The newsletter also mentions birthdays and anniversaries of members of the Friends – an idea!"

Willunga & Aldinga (SA)

During August the Knee High Puppeteers visited Southern Vales Christian College for a workshop sponsored by FOWAL. They brought all sorts of wonderful equipment and costumes with them and the Friends are looking forward to seeing the College's shadow puppet production of Hans Christian Andersen's 'The Little Mermaid'.

Salisbury (SA)

The September newsletter enclosed the latest financial statement, including mention of the Shop, with book sales over \$21,000. Due to the hard work of Derrick and May and their willing band of volunteers. The newsletter also mentions birthdays and anniversaries of members of the Friends – an idea!

Wingecarribee (NSW)

The Friends executive monitors Council Business Papers and advises the membership when issues arise that may adversely affect our libraries. At the Council meeting in July the following was reported: Organisational Review 2005-Detailed Review of Functions, Services and Costings with each branch of Council, was to be undertaken, this included "(4) Library outlets needs to be reviewed in a non-political and objective manner to assess their sustainability". The Executive of the Friends believes that the community needs to stand up and be counted, and have organized to let Councillors know that they value the library and arranged the following response:

"It is important that Council conduct a full and unbiased community consultation prior to any decision to reduce service levels or funding for our libraries."

"I, the undersigned, wish to make Councillors aware of the importance of Wingecarribee Library Services in providing for the recreational and informational needs of our community. It is important that Council conduct a full and unbiased community consultation prior to any decision to reduce service levels or funding for our libraries".

State Library (SA)

Membership continues to expand with 38 new members since January. Friends were recently informed of the Jean Whyte Bequest of \$63,000 to the Friends. The Acquisition Sub-committee decided that the money should be put towards some major gifts to the Library in areas of known interest to Jean. Amongst her notable positions, Jean was foundation professor of Librarianship at Monash University and contributed to the profession for well over 60 years.

Kew (Vic)

September speaker was FOLA President, Dr Alan Bundy AM. He spoke on 'The modern public library: the best investment a community can make'. Monthly speakers and booksales continue to be successful activity for Kew, despite questions about future committee membership.

National Library (ACT)

For the month of September, *Rarified* is offering all Friends of the National Library \$20 credit with any purchase of custom art framing, or framed prints to the value of \$100 or more.

Tim Costello AO, advocate of human rights and CEO of World Vision, is gave the 2005 Kenneth Myer Lecture, 'The Seeds of Change: Serendipity and Social Movements' at the National Library on 6 October.

Ballina (NSW)

During a visit to Norfolk Island, Janelle, a member of the Friends group procured



Australian author, Colleen McCulloch's autograph for a donated *Thorn Bird Country* book which was later auctioned. Some 9000 books from Ballina library and the Richmond-

Tweed Regional Library were sorted and packed into 500 boxes, selling for 50cents a book.

Over the past 20 years, the Ballina Friends have donated more than \$140,000 to the library for the purchase of books, materials and equipment. No other support group in the district has come close to making such a significant contribution to readers in the area.

Friends member, Jim Gasteen has just published a book *Under the Mulga: A Bush Memoir* – set amidst the challenges of virgin mulga country in the 1920s, Jim recounts a colourful



childhood of prickly pear, bullockies and bore drains; hawkers, governesses and wanderers; kangaroo shooting and buckjumping; and of shearing, ringbarking and scrub-cutting. Humorous, touching and enlightening. – a speaker for Friends groups!

Sharing Ideas

THAT WORKED

WHAT WE DO

- sponsor the development of special collections
- promote the library's commitment to new technology
- campaign for expanded services
- help acquire important materials beyond the confines of the operating budget
- sponsor exhibits, speakers, film programs, book reviews, literary awards
- library on wheels service to seniors' residences
- book sales
- bus tour of interesting small town libraries
- book stores
- sponsor authors and illustrators in for children's programs
- letters to the editor
- newspaper columns
- donations for renovation of the branch.
- publish a cookbook as a fund-raiser in time for Christmas.
- conduct architectural tours of the new branch
- promote the library in the community.
- provide a forum where members can meet and, if they wish, volunteer for Friends activities.
- guided tours of the Library collection, computer catalogues and other services
- flower arrangement, floral displays, seasonal arrangements
- indexing newspapers
- outings to the theatre and to places of interest - travel group
- produce a regular newsletter, both in print format and connected to this Web Page.
- tours of the library for new patrons
- repair books
- help in fund-raising
- book delivery service to home bound patrons
- Internet training

MEMBER BENEFITS

- a membership certificate
- a gold label for your library card identifying you as a Friend
- a handsome gold-printed bookmark
- the "Friends of the Library newsletter"
- a chance to meet other community minded people and work on interesting projects
- a tax receipt for the full amount of your membership
- Invitations to Friends of the Library special events, including "Book Sale Preview Night"
- Public Library newsletters/calendars
- Reduced rates for special events
- "Early Bird" access to booksales
- give totebags, mugs
- lunch with the library manager
- behind-the-scenes tour
- invitation to a special event for big donors only.
- bookplate a book - benefactors
- Two free entries to the Friends' Annual Book Sale Preview & Silent Auction
- Early notification of the annual Literary Lecture Series/discounts on series tickets
- Personalized membership card
- 10% discount at the Friends' Library Store/booksales
- Invitation to Meet the Writer event

These ideas came from:
Friends of Canadian Libraries



Confessions of a Garage Sale Junkie



Clues in the newspaper advertisements tell Keith whether a particular place is worth visiting and also whether he might be able to purchase any of his beloved musical instruments, computer parts or books.

Armed with his paperwork of that day's selections Keith and his daughter then set off early (about 7.30 am) to begin searching. Positioning of signs and general accessibility decide whether a listed place actually gets a visit or not. Once inside, the layout is also most important and here,



Keith and his daughter split up to mount a pincer movement.

Next, the audience learned the finer touches of how – and when to bargain, and when to walk away. Potential sale holders also learned how to price items and how to maximize their displays and their sales. Keith did some short role plays to illustrate his perfected techniques and soon had his audience laughing and learning.

Finally, Keith showed some of his more extraordinary purchases and told their stories, eg. An Hawaiian steel guitar and some rare sheet music. By this stage the audience were convulsed at some of the anecdotes. They continued to enjoy Keith's style of story-telling through the following question time.

Over a sociable afternoon tea break to finish the afternoon the audience members agreed they had gained some valuable insights for their own forays into the home selling world and had loved doing it!

TIP: Don't expect to save money although you may be lucky!

In March this year the Friends of the Wollongong City Library celebrated Seniors Citizens Week with a delightful talk by one of the area's more energetic and colourful octogenarians – Keith Brooks. Keith has several in-depth hobbies, one of which is attending garage sales. He shared his skills and wit on this topic as a special feature talk to begin the activities of Seniors' Week in the Illawarra. His recollections about his visits over 30 years included some extremely useful tips as well as providing a most entertaining afternoon for more than 100 people who came to hear him.

Keith approaches his garage sale hobby in a very methodical way. Firstly he scours the local papers each Saturday morning just after sunrise. Likely prospects are highlighted and next Keith works out a feasible traveling route.

TIP: No use going after 10 am as all the bargains and items of interest are gone.



"The audience learned the finer touches of how – and when to bargain, and when to walk away."

Friends of Libraries Resource Book (2005)

**Daniel Ferguson, Friends of Libraries
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New format with updated and new information including: Establishing a successful Friends group, Keeping your Friends 'active, Incorporation, Public liability, Library management issues, How to, Latest and best ideas and much more...

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Secretary/Treasurer Margaret Broeks (Vic)

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Chris Awcock (Vic), Elaine Chippendale (Qld) Dr Peter Chippendale (Qld), Judith Field (NSW) Gerrit Stafford (SA)

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



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Individual	\$18	<input type="checkbox"/>
FOL Group – 0-25 Members	\$30	<input type="checkbox"/>
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FOLA COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2005

14 December - Melbourne