## WINTER/SPRING 2009

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## **OLLA** NEWS UPDATE

# SUCCESSFUL FREENDS



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### www.fola.org.au

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### **Canberra Summit**

ne of the workshop groups at the Summit stated that "the main aim of a national framework should be to reframe public libraries for the 21st century and put them higher on the public agenda".

The Australian Library and Information Association Public Libraries Summit, held at the National Library in Canberra on 16 July 2009, clearly demonstrated the desire among public library managers and practitioners for a national vision and framework for public libraries.

ALIA, Public Libraries Australia, National and State Libraries Australasia, state and territory based associations and FOLA have developed a draft paper in response to the Summit, which can be found at www.alia.org.au/governance/ committees/public.libraries/summit09/

As the draft document notes, Friends of Libraries Australia made a powerful case for the need for a strategic framework in its paper 'Investing in Australia's future through its public library system – why, who, how' www.fola.org. au/pdfs/Investing\_in\_Australias\_future.pdf

ALIA will receive feedback on the draft until 11 December.

Friends groups and those interested in the future of our public library system have a unique opportunity to respond. They also have an opportunity to inform their members of parliament, state and federal on this important issue and how the lack of funding and a national framework is limiting our capacity as a nation.



A key focus of the Summit for FOLA, is engaging with all three levels of government to develop a framework that supports libraries across Australia. Without such a partnership, the Australian public library system will continue to be impoverished, inadequate and inequitable.

Every Friends group and community across the nation needs to respond to this 11 December deadline. **Your library needs you. And FOLA needs your support.** 

#### BE INFORMED — PUBLIC LIBRARIES THE FACTS

Every Friends group and member should have a copy of this informative and attractive booklet published by the Australian Library and Information Association. The Little Book of Public Libraries is based on a publication produced in the UK. It gives an overview of the facts and features of public libraries and is a source of information and inspiration to those who love and value the public library.

For copies of the book, contact ALIA: 02 6215 8222 enquiry@alia.org.au www.alia.org.au

## FOLA @ Port Macquarie



"The building and services offered to the community are a fine example of library management and Friends in partnership."  he 15th Annual General Meeting of FOLA was held at Port Macquarie Library, NSW on Thursday 27 August 2009.

Prior to the AGM, a Friends Seminar was held at the library for groups in the area. Speaker was FOLA executive director, Daniel Ferguson, who gave a presentation on – *Successful Friends, and what makes for success.* Later in the evening at the AGM, Dr Alan Bundy AM, FOLA president gave an address on *Public Libraries, Friends and Older Adults.* Among those attending were, Rob Oakeshott, Federal Member for Lyne and Peter Besseling, State Member for Port Macquarie.

FOLA thanks the Friends of Port Macquarie and library management for providing wonderful hospitality in a magnificent new library building. The building and services offered to the community are a fine example of library management and Friends in partnership.

Full details of the FOLA President's Report for 2009 can be found at: http://www.fola.org.au/

### UK AUTHOR HELPS SAVE LIBRARY

"The author believes li that key elements of b the campaign could re be adopted by other T communities to save c their libraries." b

hildren's author Nick Arnold has helped save his local library from closure in Appledore, Devon, after a four-year community campaign that raised thousands of pounds to help cover its cost. Arnold believes that it could act as a blueprint for other communities trying to save their libraries. A review by Devon County Council has recommended that the council should both fund the existing library and investigate relocating the library to larger premises.

The author believes that key elements of the campaign could be adopted by other communities to save their libraries. Arnold believes that the library was eventually saved by increasing library usage, and by the launch of the Appledore Book Festival, which helps attract 5 million pounds of spending into the areas at the end of each summer.

#### Welcome to Appledore Book Festival



Author Alan Gibbons, who heads the Campaign for the Book in support of library services, is launching an initiative later this month to encourage other authors to adopt libraries and school library services. He said: "Many authors are already acting as ambassadors for their local library services and this campaign hopes to galvanise those activities. Authors can often lend celebrity status to community activities and can help raise the profile of local libraries."

(source: Bookseller)

## Successful Friends

#### **Daniel Ferguson**

o have friends can be hard work. As in personal life, friends require nurturing and understanding. The relationship is not a one-way process. The same can be identified with Friends associated with libraries. Some clear messages remain timeless.

The most successful Friends groups worldwide approach the relationship as a partnership. Key to the successful partnership are some characteristics that can be stated by:

- A basic understanding of goals and objectives
- An appreciation of each other's individual potential for achievement
- The shared enjoyment of ultimate success.

Apart from the United States, home to the Friends movement, one country from which Australia can learn is New Zealand. They appear to have found a successful model for sustainable Friends development, and no place more so than at Dunedin Public Library. Another clear winner has been Christchurch City Libraries, who this year celebrates 150 years of library services. Christchurch Friends are relatively new, formed in 1988. Dunedin has longevity, having its origins dating back to 1890, making it one of the oldest 'modern' day Friends of Library groups worldwide. Both these groups have individual memberships of over 300.

Key to the success of these two groups, and many groups, both in Australia and worldwide are some guiding principles.

All parties must clearly understand their respective roles in order to work together towards common goals. The primary responsibility for bringing about this favourable state of affairs rests, in large measure with the library manager. And, although Friends can exist without the strong support and direction the of the library administration, it will not sustain a *culture of enhancement*. To bring about this 'culture of enhancement' nine guiding principles must be nurtured and sustained. They are:

- The library manager's desire for a Friends group and a belief in the benefits of having such a group. Unless the library administration really wants a Friends group, it is less than fair to encourage citizens to form one. Well intentioned motives may lead to the formation of a group and successful goals achieved in the short term. But sustainable development of a *culture of enhancement* is unlikely to be evident for the long term benefit of the library service.
- 2. Availability of time to work with Friends. Continuous communication, information, and encouragement are needed to sustain interest on the part of volunteers; the library manager must be available for such leadership.
- Willingness to assist Friends in understanding the legal and organisational structure of the library. If Friends are not told how they fit into the organisation, chaos can result. Effectively, not a path for sustainable growth.
- 4. Necessary staff leadership in helping the Friends formulate long-term goals and short-term objectives. The Friends program is most valuable when it moves the total library program forward. The Friends group should be challenged to think and plan on a broad scale, beyond the facilitation of regular events ie. Book sales, author visits, assistance with programmes and funding provision. They need to be incorporated into a culture of improvement.

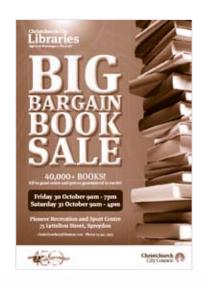
'Continuous communication, information, and encouragement are needed to sustain interest on the part of volunteers."

### **CREATING A CULTURE OF ENHANCEMENT**

- Honest appraisals by both parties as to whether the library's program is worthy of a Friends group. If library programs do not meet community needs, a Friends group will be useless.
- 6. Time to attend all Friends meetings, whether they be executive committee or general membership gatherings. The Friends must be made to feel that the library manager is an important and indispensable part of its endeavours.
  - 7. Praise and publicity for the achievements of the Friends. All appropriate governing bodies should learn of their achievements. An exemplary role model in Australia, is Chris Jones, Library Manager at Great Lakes (NSW), and Bernie Hawke (Dunedin, NZ), not only do they give time and knowledge on the subject of Friends, they are above all, passionate. Managers who are 'passionate' about Friends help create the culture in which Friends groups survive. They are helping to build more sustainable libraries.
  - 8. Awareness of how the community views the Friends. A group that becomes elitist, overspecialised, or simply social may antagonise voters in local elections. The library manager should see that Friends activities are broad-based and varied.
  - Most importantly, the realisation that the library manager's performance can and should inspire faith in the library program and, therefore, increase and inspire the Friends' willingness to work for the program.

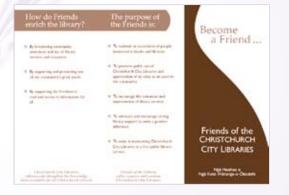
Cooperation is vital for creating a *culture of enhancement*. Without it, the longer term success of the Friends can be limited.

The Friends of the Christchurch City Libraries have strengthened their charter by enunciating clear strategic directions which sustain a partnership and enhance the library.



#### Key among the strategic goals are:

- Making voluntary contributions through, for example: promoting activities of the Friends to other members of the community informally; and participating in any new library initiatives that will benefit from an involvement of the Friends.
- Advocating the value of libraries and exerting political influence, through: making submissions to the Christchurch City Council Annual Plan and other local government documentation requiring feedback.
- · Highlighting literacy and reading
- Enhancing the library experience through: providing a social connection for people to interact and discuss the value of reading, books and libraries at meetings and other activities.



"Praise and publicity for the achievements of the Friends. All appropriate governing bodies should learn of their

achievements."

#### SUCCESSFUL FRIENDS: CREATING A CULTURE OF ENHANCEMENT

- Contributing to the financial well-being of the Friends by developing a list of potential sponsors from the local businesses and exploring opportunities for sponsorship.
- Promoting and extending membership by sharing information and strengthening relationships.
- Planning for future growth and development through: gaining feedback from members and library staff on a regular basis.

These are by no means casual goals. They are about connecting and developing a sustaining culture that shares and values the library user and non user as an asset in the development of the library. Often, the library manager is unable to undertake actions, either being restricted by council as an employee or by implication, as being seen to be involved in political decision-making. Also, managers must often abide by a code of conduct that restricts engagement with sponsors and the business community. This is where the Friends can be of value. They can perform a role as part of the community, deciding what is and is not seen to justify a 'community of interest'. The library manager cannot display a political role, and the elected representatives may have an agenda not favourable to the library. The Friends group can transcend these debates.

If the Friends have a purely 'partisan' objective, this may at times conflict with the library management. Conversely, the library manager needs to reflect views and aspirations of the community. The power to elect representatives, vote and provide budgets comes from the community and a library administration that undervalues this, provides no service at all.

Dunedin Friends illustrious history is both witness to longevity and the creation of a culture where both parties are enhanced. The Friends are valued for their voice and library management listen. For the Friends, it is about examining issues and being a watchdog. A concerned citizenry and a manager who has the interests of the community are the core of the free public library movement.

Dunedin Council is committed to the principle of consultation, even when it is not required by law, for it believes it helps build positive relationships with stakeholders and the wider community and it encourages public involvement in decision-making (*DCC Consultation Policy adopted in 2000*). Council's Consultative Framework on Participation in fact mentions — 'Libraries' community surveys and consultation on options for service participation', which in fact gives the opportunity for the Friends to make regular submissions on budget and planning.

Local government in New Zealand has provided for a community voice through legislation (*Local Government Act 2002* and other legislation), requiring citizens to vote on strategic planning, this has created the opportunity for Friends and concerned citizens to argue a case for support of the library. A well developed Friends of the Library group is the perfect conduit for supporting and expressing concern for the library.

Great libraries have Friends -The British Library, New York Public Library, National Library of Australia. To sustain and value the friendship, library management need to explore opportunities with their communities. This includes creating a partnership which has been the success of many library-Friends over the decades. But to truly value and enhance the library movement we must provide the opportunities to create a culture that enhances Friends. When we do this, we shall truly value our libraries for the next generation.

#### -Daniel Ferguson

## MARKETING **SUCCESS:** Friends of Christchurch City Libraries

"Friends have assisted in customer testing, program delivery and the provision of resources and a range of social activities for members" Since 1988 this group has been providing a valued service to the development of Christchurch City Libraries. Early in the history of the Friends, they opposed a proposal to charge customers for every book taken out, and reducing expenditure on new stock. Friends organised a petition opposing the proposal and 7500 people signed the petition. Councillors later withdrew the proposal and restored the reduced book vote.

Friends have assisted in customer testing, program delivery and the provision of resources and a range of social activities for members. The current membership is 342 members.

This is a group of people who are passionate about the role of public libraries in our community and who realise libraries are not something that should be taken for granted.\*



Friends of the Christchurch City Libraries – Strategic Directions

#### Purpose

Why are we here?

- Supporting the work of libraries
- Advocating the value of libraries
- Encouraging the use of libraries
- · Promoting the visibility of libraries as a community asset
- Providing social connections

#### Values

What is really important to us?

- Being a non-profit organisation
- · Having excellent library services for Christchurch
- · Having libraries available for people of all ages to access
- Having a free public library
- Being involved in library activities
- Being part of a literate community

#### .\* http://library150.com/Articles/Friends/

\*\* This is an abbreviated format of the Reviewed 30 September 2008 doc Friends of the Christchurch City Libraries Strategic Review

#### MARKETING SUCCESS:

#### Friends of Christchurch City Libraries

#### Friends of the Christchurch City Libraries – Strategic Directions \*

#### Goals

• What can we do to make a difference?

#### Making a voluntary contribution through:

- Promoting activities of the Friends to other members of the community informally
- Participating in any new library initiatives that will benefit from an involvement of the Friends

Taking an active role on the committee

### Advocating the value of libraries and exerting political influence through:

- Making submissions to the CCC Annual Plan and any other local government documentation requiring feedback
- Supporting groups with similar philosophies

#### Highlighting literacy and reading through:

• Promoting Friends' activities through brochures and fliers in libraries and via the library website

#### Enhancing the library experience through:

- Supplying libraries with extra equipment or resources to make it easier for customers to access of use facilities. Friends will tell the library when they have money to distribute
- Providing a social connection for people to interact and discuss

### Contributing to the financial well-being of the Friends through:

- Developing a list of potential sponsors from the local businesses community who could benefit from being associated with the Friends
- Exploring opportunities for sponsorship

#### Promoting and extending our membership through

• Sharing information and strengthening relationships with other similar groups

## Planning for future growth and development through:

- Gaining feedback from members and library staff on a regular basis
- Reviewing goals regularly
- Encouraging the involvement of members in the various activities

#### FRIENDS NEWSLETTERS — MAKING THAT DIFFERENCE!

The production of a Friends newsletter is one aspect of communicating with your membership and a wider market. It can indicate the tone, style and displays some of the characteristics of the group. Newsletters take many forms and do not have to be commercially produced and designed; however, costs have decreased markedly in recent years, when information is electronically supplied along with quality photographs. The end result can also be made available electronically for emailing to members. A couple of excellent examples are from Balmain (NSW) and Toowoomba (Qld) Friends groups, and the Friends of the Glendale Public Library (USA).



"Supplying libraries with extra equipment or resources to make it easier for customers to access of use facilities. Friends will tell the library when they have money to distribute."

"The production of a Friends newsletter is one aspect of communicating with your membership and a wider market."

## Friends around Australia

#### News, Events & Ideas...

#### National Library of Australia (ACT)

Friends Chairman, Gary Kent has mentioned in the September Newsletter of the Friends, reports on functions, including the Kenneth Myer Lecture, the *Birds, Beasts and Botanics* White Gloves evening and the Max Burke Lecture on Charles Darwin's garden, along with details of the Spring Day Tour of the Southern Highlands in October, and a celebration with Ita Buttrose. In November. Executive Officer of the FNLA, Sharyn O'Brien is presently on maternity leave.

The Friends AGM will be held on 7 December 2009, in the National Library Theatre.

The Friends Book Club continues to meet on the last Tuesday in the month.

#### Benalla (Vic)

An intensive membership campaign has achieved a membership of 220. Intensive campaigning for a new library has not stopped this group from numerous activities – sorting books, assisting with children's activities and author talks, book sales and raffles, providing vouchers for children's activities, producing a newsletter and hosting a series of "book chat" groups once a month. The group has been lobbying to achieve a new library facility by attending council meetings, letterbox drops, petitions and attending markets.

Good news was recently received, when council informed the group that a site had been chosen for a new library building.



#### **National Gallery Library (Vic)** Friends continues to provide support to the Library and the NGV. Apart from the social interaction provided at lectures by prominent

experts in a variety of art, history, philosophy fields, the Friends have contributed in recent times by donating to assist with the scanning of the Felton Bequest documentation and digitising of the Ephemera Collection with over \$17,000, as well as donating items to the Library.

#### **Bendigo** (Vic)

The Project – *Wise Older Women* entertained members recently. The women spoke at a recent morning tea. The Friends also assisted during Library Week with the Biggest Morning Tea.

#### Altona (Vic)

A new membership form invites members to be a part of a group which was established in 1987 and who: are a member of FOLA, has its own Bookroom for selling items, publishes a quarterly newsletter, invites members to special library functions and Friends events, provides previews of books prior to public booksales, and gives the opportunity to make new Friends.

#### Thuringowa (Qld)

End of the financial year provided the opportunity to invite members of the library staff to join the Friends for drinks and to thank them for their co-operation during the past year.

#### Willunga & Aldinga (SA)

The June meeting had a visit from a Malacologist. Barbara Rowsell of the South Australian Malacological Society. This is someone interested in shells and the occupants thereof. In July, Julie Taylor from the National Trust gave an account of the Spar of Greece and other relics from the wreck and thanked Council for enabling its restoration. The shipwreck occurred in July 1888.

#### Salisbury (SA)

The Friends Literary Lunch was held at the Mawson Lakes Hotel in August when Tom Keneally was guest speaker. He spoke on his recent book — *The widow and her hero*, amongst other titles. Numerous speakers recently have been — Paul Bartlett, Antiques and Collectables and Coralie Marshall on the Silk Road Odyssey from Beijing to St Petersburg.

#### Port Macquarie:

"At the recent AGM it was reported that book trolley sales and book sales had raised \$10,474 in the past year."

## Friends around Australia

#### News, Events & Ideas...

#### Barossa (SA)

The AGM was held in August in the new library at Nuriootpa when Jill Stevens, Chairman, reported along with Paddy Carter, Treasurer, and mentioned the figures were higher than last year, income had increased and more funds raised. Friends assisted in helping to purchase self-check machines for Nuriootpa and Tanunda libraries and furnishings for the new Nurioopta library. The guest speaker for the AGM was Anne Morooney, CEO of the Barossa & Light Regional Development Board. It stimulated lively discussion and some concern too.

#### Stirling (SA)

At the AGM, members voted to abolish membership fees for 2009-2010. With the introduction of a new electronic newsletter later in the year, and an arrangement with the Library whereby new and renewing members will be given the opportunity to join the Friends at no cost, the committee believes there is good reason to think the membership base will expand considerably over the years to come. This give the Friends greater opportunity to raise funds on behalf of the Library, potentially a greater number of attendees at talks and other events, and a more powerful voice in representing the interests of the community.

#### State Library (SA)

AGM will be held on 19 November at the Naval, Military and Air Force Club of SA when the guest speaker will be Professor Mike Young from Adelaide University. Prof Young has played a key role in the development of water policy in Australia.

In July the Friends visited the Coventry Memorial Library at Stirling and viewed the impressive new library, which resulted from the campaign of the local Friends groups.

Friends President, David Bright gave an interesting account of the reasons for the work of the present group by stating:

I expect the mainstay of the Friends will continue to be book lovers, rather than computer lovers, who are already massively catered for elsewhere. We will not be the main fundraiser for the Library — that is the task of The Foundation. We will continue to publish books for book lovers and we will attract more members from among the buyers of our books. We will buy rare books for the Library. We will promote talks about books and organise other activities for Friends. And ... We must remain alert to the changing nature of the Library and be sure that our support remains relevant.

#### Wingecarribbee (NSW)

Friends recently provided donations towards furnishing the Young Adult area and towards a new display area for DVDs and music CDs and furniture. A talk was held recently by Richard O'Brien on the American author, John Updike.

#### Port Macquarie (NSW)

The 20th Anniversary Lunch was held in September at the Village Café in Port Macquarie. The Friends supplied the wine. Souper Sounds was held in July. Seventy five people came and were entertained with some great sounds from Hi Falootin flute choir, 'elby' (the library's own Brendan McDonald and friend Laura) and the big sounds of Robbie Butler's Three's Company. All performers donated their talents. The night raised \$910 for the *Bookstart* program.

#### Wagga Wagga (NSW)

Monthly newsletters report on a variety of activities, supported by the Friends.

Booksales at the Farmers's Market Day, SLAM Poetry Competition, School Holiday events, purchasing items from Book City and Angus & Robertson bookstores, Book Clubs, Children's Book Week, annual Knit In Day, History Week.



State Library of South Australia "I expect the mainstay of the Friends will continue to be book lovers, rather than computer lovers, who are already massively catered for elsewhere."

#### Barossa

"Friends assisted in helping to purchase self-check machines for Nuriootpa and Tanunda libraries and furnishings for the new Nurioopta library."

## **FOLA KEYS TO SUCCESS**



#### Library Advocacy

Following are ways you can support your library. As a member of library staff, as a Friend, as a library user, every day is an opportunity to confirm and communicate how important your library is to the entire community.

#### Talk, talk, talk!

Look around you. There are people everywhere who could use their library, and who don't know about the resources waiting for them. Talk to people and tell them why you love and value the library. Help them see what they could learn. It doesn't take much more than friendly conversation with a friend.

#### **Keep informed**

Stay up to date with information about your library, with Council information, Library information, newsletters, local newspapers, Council/Library web site, talk with your library staff. Get to know your Friends committee members.

#### Get to know your elected representatives

You've elected your Councillors; get to know them. Learn from their web sites about what the issues are in your community. Let them know what you think about your library. Let them know you want them to support library-friendly policies. Make an appointment to see them, and invite them to library events. Let them see how you are using the services provided by the library. Remind them that you vote.

### Work on your library's print or online newsletter

Many libraries have a newsletter for patrons. Volunteer to write an advocacy column for the newsletter, highlighting ways that patrons and advocates can help the library.

#### Make and distribute handouts

Important information about the library, its services, and needs can be distributed in writing, for people to read later or pass on to others. If you have desktop publishing skills, or know someone who does, work to build materials that can be passed to others. May be it can be a "wish list" of things the library needs or "ideas for action" on issues facing the library.

#### **Plan a library event**

Any event during the year is an opportunity



to showcase your library. Create an event or promotion that will get your Friends and other volunteers involved.

#### Staff can be advocates

Many who work in libraries forget that they have a built-in army: the library staff. Staff behind the desk at your library can be the best advocates you have. No one knows the library better than the staff. Friends should get to know the staff at your library.

#### Lobby

Learn what has been successful with other Friends groups. Visit and talk with other groups. Follow the issues on the FOLA web site www.fola.org.au.

#### **Offer Internet tours**

For those without a computer at home, the library is the number one point of Internet access. Your library can be the window to the Internet for many people in your community. Offer to show patrons how to use it. Friends groups can offer support to new library members.

#### Get press

Speaking publicly and writing about the specific value of your library. Are you good at public speaking? Write a letter to your local newspaper, but make sure you have the facts correct and have developed a key message. Ask the library or Friends group for some statistics to support your message.

#### Be your library's ambassador

Go out into your community and do public appearances to advocate for your library. Visit your local service clubs and neighbourhood organisations and schools. Offer to speak about the things your library offers and why your Friends are important. Build a network into the community.

#### **Build your network**

You are a powerful agent for change on your own, but involving more people makes your message even stronger. Developing a network of library advocated in your community is a great way to add voices of support. Keep an email list.

#### Add your idea

You have an idea – send it to FOLA so we can display it to others via www.fola.org.au

"Look around you. There are people everywhere who could use their library, and who don't know about the resources waiting for them.."

> There are people everywhere who could use their library, and who don't know about

"Look around you.

the resources waiting

for them.."

## Friends **RESOURCE BOOK**

#### **Daniel Ferguson**

Due to demand — reprinted with new reduced price!

## New format with updated and new information including:

- Establishing a successful Friends group
- Keeping your Friends active
- Incorporation
- Public liability
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- How to
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#### FOLA NEWS UPDATE

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#### FOLA COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2009/2010

9 December - Melbourne 10 March - Melbourne

#### 2009/2010 FOLA Executive, Committee and Sponsors

FOLA Patron Hon Michael Kirby AC, CMG President Dr Alan Bundy AM (SA)

Vice President Peter McInnes (Vic)

#### Secretary/Treasurer Kristina Barnett (SA)

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