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FOLA

NEWS UPDATE

Junior Friends @ FOLA Seminar



Keynote speaker
– *Libby Kotchet,*
Alexandra Library (Vic)

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Daniel Ferguson

Executive Director FOLA



Two Special Friends



Honourable Michael Kirby AC, CMG and Daniel Ferguson

“During the past 16 years Michael has provided distinguished service to friends, libraries and FOLA..”

Sadly FOLA has lost two of our greatest contributors to the work of Friends of Libraries in Australia.

Our Patron, the Honourable Michael Kirby AC, CMG has decided to retire as FOLA patron.

Michael launched FOLA on 9 December 1994, at a function in Queen’s Hall, State Library of Victoria. During the past 16 years he has provided distinguished service to friends, libraries and FOLA. This is despite his exhaustive legal commitments in Australia as High Court judge and extensive worldwide activities, for the United Nations and other bodies. With his retirement from the High Court of Australia in 2010, Michael has considered it time to commence retirement from some of these commitments.

FOLA president, Dr Alan Bundy AM conveyed to Michael our sincere thanks, for a life time of dedication to the Australian library world. I had the pleasure of also thanking Michael personally, at his Sydney chambers in January.

Another great contributor to Friends was Helen Williams, who died on 3 September in Adelaide.

From 1994 (the year FOLA was established) until mid 2008, Helen was the Executive Officer for the Friends of the State Library of South Australia, our oldest Friends body. I had the opportunity of meeting Helen on numerous occasions in Adelaide. In particular, during our 1998 FOLA Conference in Adelaide, when she assisted greatly in providing facilities and speakers at the State Library of South Australia. She helped numerous presidents of the Friends at the State Library over those years, providing wise counsel and valuable knowledge, making the FSLSA one of the outstanding Friends groups worldwide. She put in many more hours than she was paid for. A great loss to the world-wide body of Friends of Libraries.

“Helen helped numerous presidents of the Friends at the State Library over those years, providing wise counsel and valuable knowledge.”

Better, more accessible, libraries for all in Australia

Dr Alan Bundy AM FOLA President

But who should pay for them?

The vision of Friends of Libraries Australia is *Better, more accessible, libraries for all in Australia*. It is a vision implicitly shared by a number of other library-support organizations around Australia, such as the Australian Library and Information Association and Public Libraries Australia.

The need for that vision is because, as the latest edition of the *Directory of Australian Public Libraries* shows, although Australia now has a national public library system of some 1520 public libraries, at only 9c per Australian per day it still invests sparingly and very unevenly in that system. This is despite its very high existence value, use by 60% of people of all ages, and its demonstrable return on investment in meeting a wide range of educational, literacy, cultural, community engagement, social agendas and government policies. Countries such as Denmark invest three times as much per capita in their public library systems.

Australia should now be setting as a target an investment in its public library system to at least to at least match that of best practice countries such as Denmark. This would be a total of about \$2.4 billion, rather than the current meager \$800million. If that seems a very hard 'ask', bear in mind that in national fiscal terms it is 'a drop in the ocean'. It would be the equivalent of 2% of the national, sometimes wasted, expenditures on education.

FOLA will continue to assert that the main reason for the underinvestment in the Australian public library system has been the failure of the states to maintain the funding partnership with local government which has underpinned the achievement of a comprehensive national public library system in not much more than 30 years. It has raised this point in recent correspondence with the State Government of Western Australia urging it to increase its public library funding, which it is now doing.

If state governments had maintained their partnership with local government, the

annual investment in public libraries would now be \$1.5billion. But they have not, with most now contributing only about 10% of library funding, and local government 90%. Just as two examples, in 1975 the State of Victoria contributed 0.21% of its operating expenses to its public library system. In 2009 that percentage had shrunk to 0.09%. In Queensland in 2000 the percentage was only 0.173%, but by 2006 it was much less, at 0.06%.

The real issue behind the failure of the state governments to invest in their public library systems is not lack of funds to do so – governments always find money for what they consider important, and the amounts needed for much better library-investment would require a very small shift in state budgets. Rather it is their lack of recognition of their constitutional responsibility for the performance of their public library systems. They recognize that responsibility in other community-critical systems such as health, education, aged care, family and community services. Why not their public library systems, the performance of which impact on all of those areas, and more? It is this which needs to be the focus of advocacy for better, more accessible, libraries for all in Australia.

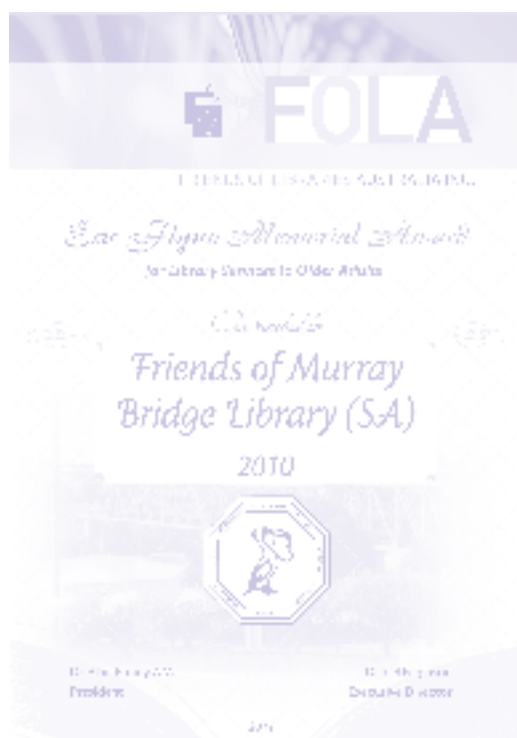
Although councils usually have local operational and part-funding responsibility for the public library system, they do not have responsibility for the system. Nor do they usually have much capacity to increase their investment in public libraries to the levels needed, although some can certainly do better than at present. Similarly, the federal government does not constitutionally have the primary responsibility for each state/territory public library system. It does, however – as it accepts with health, education, aged care and other areas – have a key responsibility to hold the states and territories to account for their investment in, and performance, of their parts of Australia's public library system. It is time it did so.

Directory of Australian Public Libraries 8th edition 2010-2012 Adelaide, Auslib Press 2010

"Countries such as Denmark invest three times as much per capita in their public library systems."

"Australia should now be setting as a target an investment in its public library system to at least to at least match that of best practice countries."

2010 FOLA Eric Flynn Award for Library Services for Older Adults was awarded to



- Oral history project initiated and led by the Friends of a small rural library, contained a number of attractive aspects:
- Well publicized, recognized that volunteers would need training to improve their skills and confidence as interviewers, and later in using new technologies, and addressed these needs.
- Program coordinator provided by the Friends
- Elderly residents were interviewed where they were comfortable, ie. At home or in the library.
- Used resources of the State Library network to supplement local resources, eg. Technical and human.
- Outcomes published in CD and print form.
- Thoughtful evaluation both quantitative and qualitative.

2010 FOLA Colin Watson Award for Advocacy was awarded to



- The entry provided an outstanding model of how a small, determined community group won a battle against a large regional bureaucracy.
- In July 2010 Council called for tenders for construction of a new library building, estimated at \$5.6million.
- Friends action for a new library commenced in 1994.
- Support and questions even came from, author Di Morrissey and ABC presenter, Kerry O'Brien.

"The entry provided an outstanding model of how a small, determined community group won a battle against a large regional bureaucracy.."

FRIENDS SEMINAR

STATE LIBRARY OF NEW SOUTH WALES



“The keynote speaker was Libby Kotschet from Murrindindi Library in Victoria, and the person who founded the Junior Friends of Alexandra Library, one of the most successful groups in the country”

The first FOLA NSW Friends Seminar was held at the State Library of NSW in the beautiful Friends Room of the Mitchell Wing on Friday 29 October 2010. The focus of the event was on ‘How to rejuvenate our Friends’ with an emphasis on Young Friends. The keynote speaker was Libby Kotschet from Murrindindi Library in Victoria, and the person who founded the Junior Friends of Alexandra Library, one of the most successful groups in the country. Other speakers included two young people – Rosie Everingham and Lara Chapman from Balmain, interviewed by Herma Sieper from Balmain Friends. Maryellen Galbally from FOBL, spoke on the partnership with the Bendigo Community Bank and a Youth Project established by the Balmain Friends.

FOLA President, Dr Alan Bundy, travelled from Adelaide for the day, gave a brief welcome and addressed the gathering. Unfortunately,

representation from country FOL groups was small, with only Wollongong, Kiama and Wentworth Falls present, the remainder were from metropolitan libraries and Friends.

Given the time limit of the half-day, feedback given by those attending suggested more time for questions, however, they all stated they would like to see another such event in 2011.

Thanks for the event should be extended to Dr Mariella Totaro-Genevois (FOLA), who undertook most of the preparation and planning of the event, including the speakers, and consultation with the State Library Foundation. FOLA is appreciative of the SLNSW for allowing us to use such a beautiful room, free of charge. Thanks is extended to our 3 sponsors – Tutoring Australasia, NSW Library Suppliers Association and Friends of Balmain Library.

(Continued overleaf)



Friends enjoying the Seminar

FRIENDS SEMINAR

(CONTINUED)



*Libby Kotschet, Dr Alan Bundy,
Sarah Crossing (Tutoring
Australasia, Sponsor)*



*Hazel Labra, Deb Neyle,
Dr Alan Bundy*



*Rosie Everingham, Herma
Sieper, Lara Chapman*



*Dr Mariella Totaro-Genevois,
Maryellen Galbally, Herma
Sieper, Rosie Everingham,
Annette Waterworth*

AUSTRALIA'S NO1 JUNIOR FOL

**See the amazing success story at Alexandra Library (Vic)
and what attracts young members after more than 20 years.**

**A fantastic resource book covers all
topics needed for success:**

- First night
- What's in it for me
- Rules and roles
- Alexandra experience
- Media tips
- Keeping it alive
- Problems
- Food
- Games
- Themes
- Planning
- Programs
- Big ideas
- Fundraising
- Author nights
- Trivia nights
- Halloween nights
- Library themes
- Great reads
- Bibliography

*"Be reliable and
punctual – Respect
everyone's ideas."*

*"Encourage everyone
to keep a notebook/
diary to record
what they have
promised for the
next meeting."*

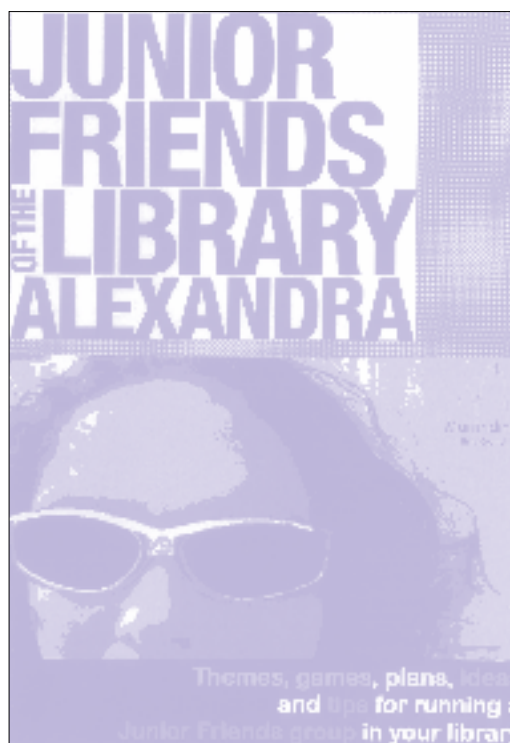


Key message:

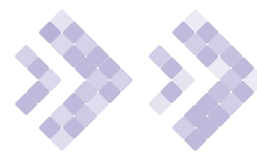
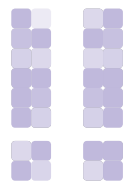
- Start and end on time - don't alter dates
- Stick to the published program – never cancel ever ever
- Be reliable and punctual – Respect everyone's ideas
- Encourage everyone to keep a notebook/ diary to record what they have promised for the next meeting
- Create a welcoming atmosphere

Want more:

- Libby Kotschet
ekotschet@murrindindi.vic.gov.au
- Purchase their book @ \$30 JFOL Alexandra Library, 49 Grant Street Alexandra Vic 3714



The Power of Friends



State or local government elections coming soon?

FOLA encourages Friends groups to ask all candidates for – and then publicise – their support for better public libraries for all. Here’s a very recent example from the Adelaide Hills Council (ADH), Friends of Stirling Library (FOLS) in South Australia for the SA local government elections on 12 November 2010. At the last SA local Government elections FOLS succeeded in ensuring the election of councilors in favour of its much needed new library (now built) and the reelection of mayor Bill Cooksley.

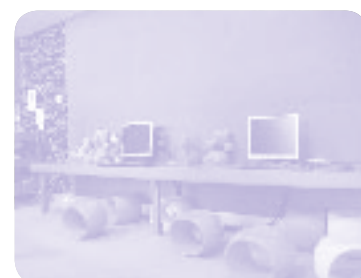
The following questions were forwarded to the candidates for Mayor and Councillors to canvas ongoing support by the new Adelaide Hills Council for Library Services.

- Q. 1** How do you see the role of the modern library in our AHC community?
- Q. 2** How do you see yourself, as a councilor, enhancing the library’s role in the community?

Responses received from all candidates were printed by the Friends and circulated.

Bill Cooksley, standing for Mayor, stated (here’s an extract)...

My role is to be the Library Service’s champion, to resist budget cuts and consequent service reduction. It is to lobby, argue and convince others at all levels that it is one of the most important functions of Council, eliciting our community’s highest satisfaction level. It was this personal commitment that supported my casting vote to progress the new Coventry (Library) and to fight and win the last Mayoral election on the question of the new library. I am immensely proud of what I achieved. My enthusiasm for the Library Service continues strongly.



In a recent Coventry Library survey:

- 89% of respondents identified the Library as a valuable asset to the community
- 95% saw the Library as an important place for themselves and others
- 88% believed the Library offers access to knowledge and ideas which benefits them in their daily lives

An information leaflet from the Friends gives valuable information:

- The Library as a Community
- Library Services
- A Community of Library Users
- Community Expectations Increasing
- Community Support for the Library
- The Challenge to Maintain the Quality of Services

The Friends of the Library, Stirling is the second oldest Library Friends group in South Australia. In the year to May 2010 they contributed \$30,000 to the Library. They have 43 volunteers who over the same period contributed 1,261 hours of unpaid labour.



“FOLS succeeded in ensuring the election of councilors in favour of its much needed new library.”



“88% believed the Library offers access to knowledge and ideas which benefits them in their daily lives.”

Friends around Australia

News, Events & Ideas...



LaTrobe - Gippsland (Vic)

A small but active group, the FOLCL supports a wide variety of events held across the four branches of the Latrobe City Library Service. Funds are raised by biannual book sales of library stock discards and excess donated material. The last book sale, in February 2010, raised \$2800. This was after the cost of using professional carriers to transport the large volume of material was deducted from total sales. \$3,000 has been given to the Library Service to fund activities during 2010 school holiday periods. These activities have included Circus Dogs and An African adventure in April, 2 performances by Paul Jamieson, the Music Man, during July, and a session during Science Week by Captain Hanky the Pirate. The purchase of two book trolleys to support the book lending program in local aged care facilities has also been funded. As a very small group of mostly retired people FOLCL have raised nearly \$23,000 since 2003 via the Book Sales.

The Friends group has also been involved in reviewing the Library Service Strategy Plan, and the Moe Activity Centre Plan proposal to redevelop the railway precinct in Moe including a new library.

Corowa (NSW)

Corowa Library is just a small community Library. As part of the Upper Murray Regional Library, Corowa services areas from Howlong to the east; Mulwala to the west; Daysdale, Coreen and Oakdale to the north. The Corowa Friends of the Library was established in 1993; and Roslyn Bock and Virginia Conroy, two remaining Friends of the inaugural Committee were amongst a group of Friends to receive a 10 year award from Corowa Shire Council for their services to the Library. Other friends to receive the award were Mauread Conroy, Robert Dickins, Barry Fuhrman, Joyce Kelly, Kate Roberts and Mike Roberts.

The Friends assist the Librarian, Louise Parr in the Library, record the community

paper "The Free Press" on CD and deliver it to housebound residents; they also visit and deliver books to the housebound, and assist with various children's programs.

With the support of the Friends, the library sponsors visiting authors including Peter Watt, Rosalie Ham and Phil Kettle. This very active group also supports community events such as holding the Biggest Morning Tea; assisting the community to celebrate the town's recent 150 year anniversary.

The library is currently housed in one of the original Bank buildings in New South Wales but will be moving to new premises adjacent to the Murray River shortly as part of the Corowa Shire's upgrade of its offices and community activities.

National Library (ACT)

On Sunday 31 October the FNLA celebrated the contribution to Australian publishing and culture of Peter Cundall AM, Australia's best-loved gardener. Nearly 300 Friends came to this lively and amusing event. On a sad note, the Friends held a Farewell for Jan Fullerton, retiring Director-General of the NLA in their new Friends Lounge on the 4th floor of the Library. Elizabeth Kennedy retired from her three year term as Chairperson in December.

National Gallery (Vic)

December meeting celebrated the *Science of Landscape: Paintings of Eugene von Guerard*, Australia's most sophisticated colonial landscape painter. Michael Varcoe-Cocks, Conservator of Paintings 1850-1950 was the guest speaker. In April 2011 the NGV will hold the first exhibition to celebrate this artist's work in more than 20 years.

Port Macquarie (NSW)

Each year the Friends send vouchers, \$25 each, from Angus & Robertson to all 24 primary schools in the district. This is part of an ongoing commitment to promoting

LaTrobe:

"The purchase of two book trolleys to support the book lending program in local aged care facilities has also been funded."

Corowa:

"The Friends assist the Librarian, Louise Parr in the Library, record the community paper "The Free Press" on CD and deliver it to housebound residents."

Friends around Australia

News, Events & Ideas...

literacy in the community. This year, Westport Public School Awards Ceremony was attended by Judith Hansen, President and Deb Sommers, Publicity/Correspondence committee member. The Friends receive many letters of thanks and even certificates of appreciation from the many schools.

Wingecarribee (NSW)

The committee has been discussing a new membership form for the friends, and has now approved a final draft, a A4 page document, folded into three. It included the benefits of joining, appropriate for obtaining new members. It comes with the marketing tag line "Helping our libraries reach new heights".

Balmain (NSW)

FOBL organized an event where \$10,000 from its funds were allocated to buying new books for the library, and the Balmain community was invited to select what they wanted. It was a very successful event – among other things, it gave the FOBL committee an opportunity to exchange ideas with the many people who participated. The library later reported back on what kinds of books were selected.

Wagga Wagga (NSW)

Christmas Brunch was held on 13 December. This is a celebration when library staff, the Regional Library staff and Friends gather together. The Farmer's Market Booksale raised \$1200 in just 3 hours. Several library staff are researching items that could be sold in a mini-shop promoting the Friends.

State Library (SA)

The Friends held their AGM on 24 November in the Imperial Room of the Naval, military & Air Force Club of SA. The guest speaker was Michael Talbot, who worked at the State Library from 1973 until 2009 in areas ranging from Reference Services to Marketing and Development. He also runs his own imprint business, the Ad Hoc Press.

Salisbury (SA)

On Saturday 6 November the Salisbury Library celebrated its 50th year. The celebration was held in the John Street Civic Square with many activities, including a Friends booksale, which sold 700 items for \$309. At 2 pm the Friends Basket Raffle was drawn by Library Manager, Bernie McSwain. Also as part of the celebrations, at Para Hills Library a time capsule was opened, being in the wall for 25 years.

Willunga & Aldinga (SA)

Thirty people came to the November meeting to hear a presentation from Simon Woodley, general manager of ALS Library Services. Simon talked about ebooks and brought several readers for people to try. He demonstrated the Kindle and Sony readers, as well as an iPad which also has many other computing functions. Simon told of the rapidly increasing numbers for production and sales from major overseas book selling agents like Amazon, and the new developments expected by Google in 2011.

Holdfast Bay (SA)

Recent monies raised by the Friends from Author/Book Presentations, raffles, sales of Entertainment Books plus membership fees and donations, has enabled the group to contribute to the following: Book in the Sky Navigators, International English Language Testing, Express Loans (Bestsellers), Large Print One Act Plays for Play Reading Group, Spoken Word items, Entertainment Publications Australia.

Toowoomba (Qld)

The 50th Anniversary Booksale was a booksale with a difference. Two anniversary cakes, one donated by the President, Linda and the other provided by her husband Ron. They raised over \$1300 and made new friends.

The BEST Friends newsletter Toowoomba must surely be in the running for the best Friends of Libraries newsletter in Australia – 12 glossy pages full of photographs and information.

Balmain:

"FOBL organized an event where \$10,000 from its funds were allocated to buying new books for the library, and the Balmain community was invited to select what they wanted."

Leave the libraries alone

You don't understand their value

Best-selling author Philip Pullman spoke to a packed meeting on 20 January 2011, called to defend Oxfordshire libraries. He gave this inspirational speech, which can be found at: <http://falseeconomy.org.uk/blog/save-oxfordshire-libraries-speech-philip-pullman>.

You don't need me to give you the facts. Everyone here is aware of the situation. The government, in the Dickensian person of Mr Eric Pickles, has cut the money it gives to local government, and passed on the responsibility for making the savings to local authorities. Some of them have responded enthusiastically, some less so; some have decided to protect their library service, others have hacked into theirs like the fanatical Bishop Theophilus in the year 391 laying waste to the Library of Alexandria and its hundreds of thousands of books of learning and scholarship.

Here in Oxfordshire we are threatened with the closure of 20 out of our 43 public libraries. Mr Keith Mitchell, the leader of the county council, said in the Oxford Times last week that the cuts are inevitable, and invites us to suggest what we would do instead. What would we cut? Would we sacrifice care for the elderly? Or would youth services feel the axe?

I don't think we should accept his invitation. It's not our job to cut services. It's his job to protect them.

Friends groups and others have rallied

The present crisis throughout the UK displays how important Friends of Library groups can be. 407 libraries plus 53 mobiles are currently under threat or recently closed in the UK.

Ian Anstice, who blogs at Public Library News, has provided a brilliant – if sobering – public service by mapping cuts and proposed cuts to libraries around the UK.



Library closures, the full, infuriating picture, can be seen at <http://publiclibrariesnews.blogspot.com/2011/01/save-your-libraries-on-february-5th.html>

People power empties threatened library

The residents of a small town in Britain have borrowed every single book from their local library in an attempt to stop it from being closed. The campaign, called 'Wot No Books', was organized on Facebook by the Friends of Stony Stratford Library.

At one stage during the week, nearly 380 books were being stamped out on loan every hour. The group says the protest aims to show the void that would be left in the community if the library closed.

The Stony Stratford Council has backed the campaign against the Milton Keynes Council, because like many of the town's groups, it holds its meetings in the library.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2011/01/16/3113825.htm>

"I don't think we should accept his invitation. It's not our job to cut services. It's his job to protect 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
- Library management issues
- How to
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The authoritative guide and source book for Friends of Library groups in Australasia

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FOL Group – 25+ Members	\$60	<input type="checkbox"/>
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FOLA COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2010/2011

8 December – Melbourne
9 March – Melbourne
25 August – Adelaide (AGM)
14 December – Melbourne

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