



Suzette Boyd
SLANZA Turning Heads
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Christchurch



Are YOU plugged in
and switched on?



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In recent years libraries have been undergoing rapid change. In school libraries we now have staff who may specialise in:

- technology
- curriculum
- literature
- web development
- resource experts
- Online learning providers

Library staff in schools are expected to be knowledgeable and up-to-date with developments in educational pedagogy and adolescent psychology.

We are expected to be human dynamos, to possess a huge capacity to absorb new information, to have the imagination to deliver exciting new programs, while at the same time to have the proven ability to maintain an efficient and relevant library service. This is probably still not enough to turn heads!



Most of those big changes are out of your control.

So, let's have a look at what is within your control

- Do you smile, are you friendly, do you care about your users?
- Are you a confident communicator?
- Do you embrace change?
- Are you full of enthusiasm and energy?
- Are you a can-do, positive ,upbeat type of person?
- Do your colleagues look to you to get things done?
- Do you love learning new skills and accepting new challenges?
- Do you enjoy sharing your ideas and listening to the ideas of others?
- Do the teachers enjoy collaborating with you?
- How would your students describe you?

Which one are you?

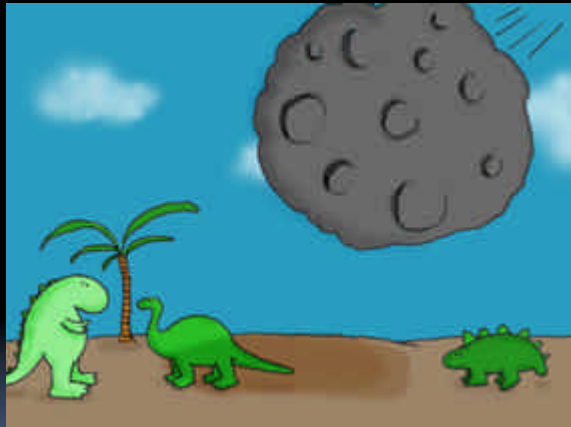
Someone who
makes things
happen

Someone who
watches things
happen

Or

Someone who
says,

"What the hell
happened!!!!"



www.grumblebee.com/.../surprise-760811.jpg

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Even today at the start of the 21st century, many libraries are not as switched on and plugged in with their users as they might be. They are evolutionary rather than Revolutionary By this I mean they are comfortable with the status quo.

The staff in these libraries:

- Focus on the daily routine, rather than long-term planning and goal-setting
- Have a wait and see attitude
- Usually have a comfortable profile
- Resistant to or uncomfortable with change
- Engage in little or no risk-taking
- Have a “*steady as she goes*” approach
- Can be complacent and the users are often NOT central to what happens in the library

I hope that after this conference you will be the one making things happen and turning heads.....if you are not already!!!

“You see, I don’t believe that libraries should be drab places where people sit in silence, and that’s been the main reason for our policy of employing wild animals as librarians” *Monty Python skit*



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SO, the sort of people I would look to as head turners would have these attitudes:

- Know how to have fun
- Are imaginative and full of surprises and adventures
- Believe that the user is the primary reason for being there
- Are efficient, flexible and **professional**
- Are always looking for a better way of doing things
- Are people-focused and **service-centred**
- Would treat every student as a VIP and expect the best, not the worst
- **Know the students’ interests**
- Focus on what students can do, not on what they can’t do
- Are “can do” sorts of people, responding to students’ expectations
- Believe in the significance and importance of their role



www.fahamu.org/images/sharing_big.jpg

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Be people of ACTION

As library staff we need to try anything and everything, here there and everywhere.

We need to be confident, imaginative, enthusiastic, positive and upbeat. We need to be passionate about our role and about our users.

Being well read, open-minded, flexible and highly motivated is vital when building a connected and head turning culture in a library .

If you want to be viewed as a serious and invaluable resource, this perception must be confirmed by ACTION.

You need to make things happen. The library MUST be seen as a “can do” sort of place

For example you may only have one chance to get a book into the hands of a reader who comes to the library with a particular request. Make it a winning move. If the book is not on the shelves, buy one and promise that it will be in their hands the minute it arrives in the library. Be helpful, knowledgeable and a person of ACTION. Show you care and that getting that book for them is the most important and urgent thing you could do. They will return. They will also tell their friends about “the staff member in the library who made it happen

Let's Reflect on some Research about -

STUDENTS.....

- 1. Believe teachers 'don't ask, don't listen and don't care' (Slade and Kent, 2000)**
- 2. Need possibilities for expressing their energy (Delfos)**
- 3. Need choices (Driessen)**
- 4. Need to feel valued and liked**
- 5. Want to be trusted, respected and treated seriously**
- 6. Do not respect "old fashioned" boring teachers (librarians??)**
- 7. Believe that libraries and librarians try to keep them out (Peter West)**

You need to turn the heads of your students

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WE have talked about library staff so now let's look at our users

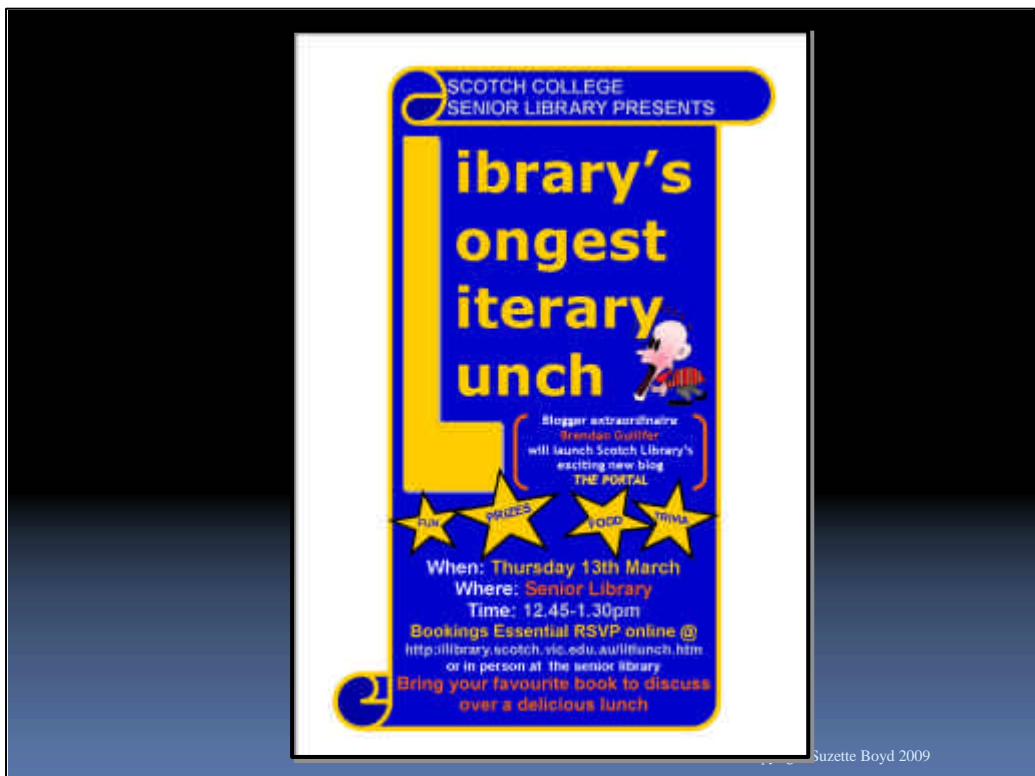
When working with young people I would like to see you:

- Involve them in planning and decision-making
- Minimise "do this don't do that", but rather "what do YOU think"
- Offer a variety of programs/opportunities
- Get to know them and hope they want to get to know you
- Be CAREful communicators
- Listen to them and act on what they say
- Do not use negative signage, instead make up poems, limericks, use humour

A movie loan for one night
Will probably bring you delight
If you keep it for longer
Our conviction grows stronger
A penalty charge is our right

S. Boyd 2005

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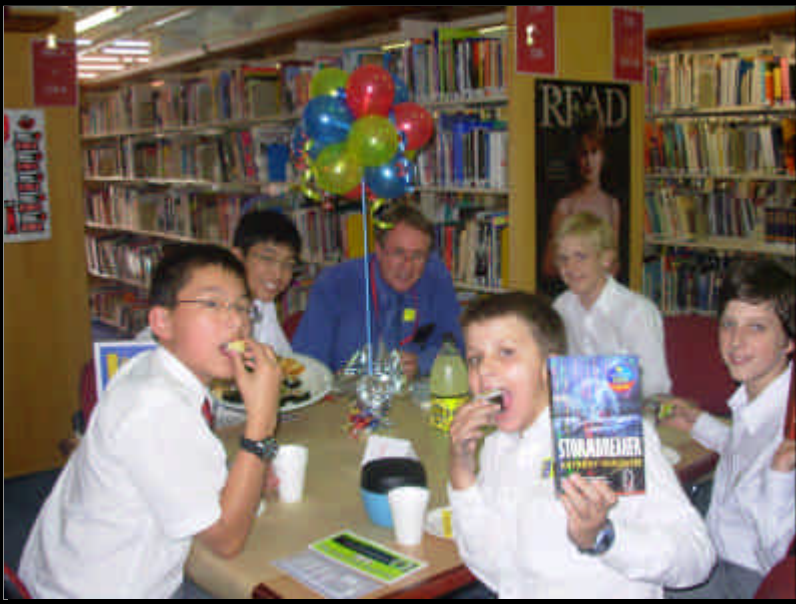
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Engage them in head turning activities

This is a flyer for one of our Library's Longest Literary Lunches

The next slide was taken at our first LLLL

Sponsored by the **Library Auxiliary**



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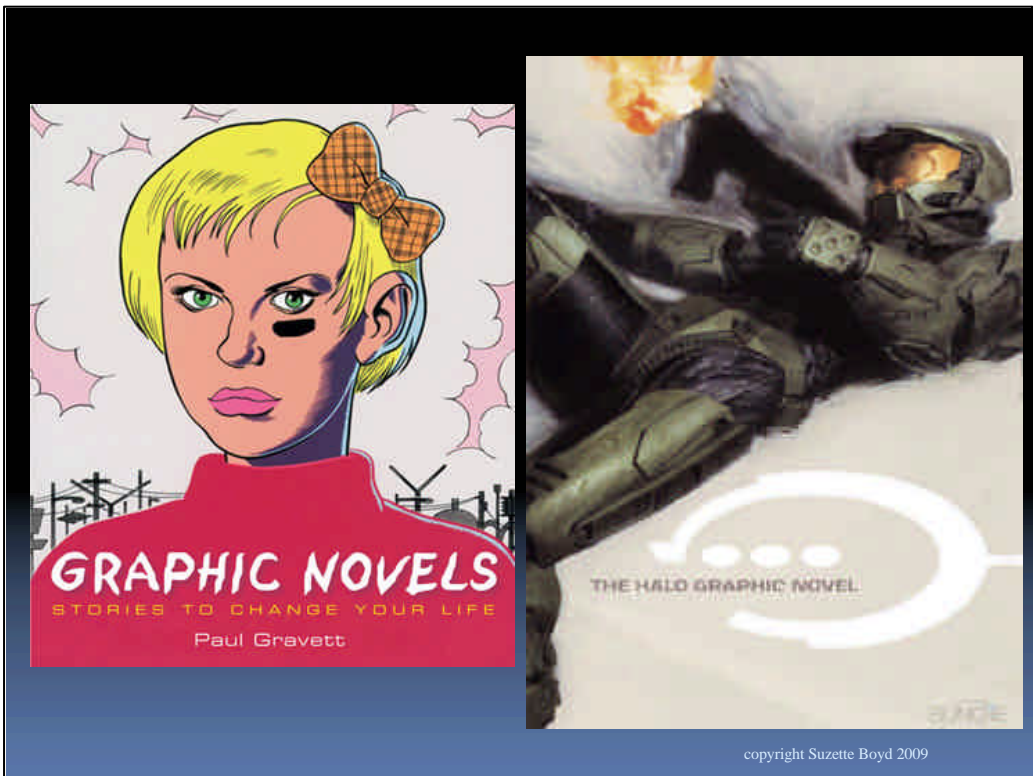
Turning student heads through ACTION

- **Stay up-to-date with their interests**
- **Involve them** – lib assistants, prefects on duty, rewards, celebrations, prizes, awards
- **Listen to them and value them** – ask their opinion Suggestion Book, library reviews, surveys of classes, lit festival, lit club
- Homework Help – brain food
- Research guides – for debates, current information
- Lunchtime activities – movies, bands, cartooning
- Book-buying – tutor groups, lit circles, lit club



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- **Surprise them** – Cardboard stand-ups, DVDs, valentine’s day, “Have you been seen in the library lately?”
- Acknowledge and play to their interests – quizzes, displays, talk to them
- Orientation programs – big impact early, booklets, games
- Generous borrowing rights
- Provide opportunities for online interaction – suggestions, online reviews, “ask a librarian” a BLOG



Promote your collection

Choose a part of your collection that may be new and that has plenty of street cred.....like Graphic novels

OR a part of the collection that is under-utilised

- Organise a speaker**
- Run a quiz/competition of some sort with prizes**
- Launch the collection with a guest writer, designer, illustrator**
- Send out invitations to the regular graphic novel borrowers for instance**

Make sure your collection reflects your users interests. Make it a just in time collection rather than a just-in case one.



**Don't be afraid of letting your users
Get To Know YOU
This is a vital part of making connections.**

SUZETTE BOYD
HEAD OF THE LIBRARY

Place of birth - Campendown in The Western

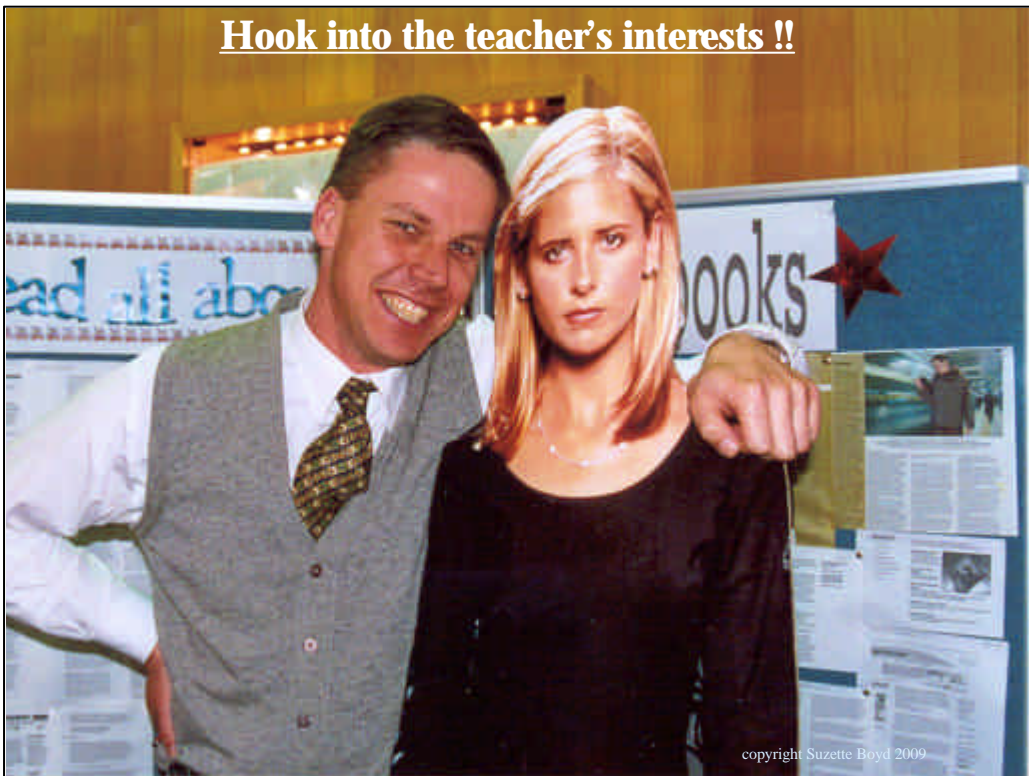
Ms Boyd in Venice **A few of my Favourite things**

- Being with my grandson – Having him cuddle up to me to hear a story or chasing him all over the place, playing peek-a-boo and hearing him squeal with delight.
- Talking to my 92 year old dad, who is still as sharp as he ever was and grows wonderful vegies.
- Spending time with my daughter and enjoying her beautiful smile
- Breakfasting at Richmond Hill Café and Larder every weekend with my man John
- Reading about other places and times
- Listening to James Taylor, KD Lang, Harry Belafonte and Pablo Neruda's poetry
- Exploring new places, meeting new people
- Eating organic food
- Watching my 2 Australian Terriers play together
- Travelling to France – I love the country, food, fashion, people and the language
- Visiting beautiful gardens
- Learning to be a better photographer

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Describe the importance of this type of display and the professionalism with which they have been put together.

Hook into the teacher's interests !!



Include teachers in the

- Promote the suggestion book to new staff and at staff briefings. Mention travel books and the latest adult fiction, and they will sit up and listen. Hook into **their** interests, and take them book buying with you
- Use them to help you promote reading to the students

Demonstrate a positive can-do attitude at all times

Make it easy for teachers to access library resources eg catalogue from laptops, online databases from home, IL handbook on Intranet, 'ASK a Librarian'

- Joint ventures – lit festival, literature circles, debating, tours

Engage in lit promotion to and with teachers – reading challenges, displays in staff room, staff reviews, desert Island reads. **Book review inducements at start of each term**

Debates – for special weeks. e.g mission week, science week, English week

Use library spaces for displays on subject areas

Reflect for a moment

- **What** do your users like/dislike about the library?
- **How** do you know this?
- **How** do the users find out about new library services?
- **How much positive interaction is there** between library staff and users?
- **How** do you make the library student-centred?

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I invite you to reflect for a moment on a couple of questions.

Be alert to the danger of becoming complacent and subscribing to the myth that “everybody knows libraries are valuable”. Don’t succumb to the temptation to wait for others to notice what a great job you are doing. That’s not the way the world works! You need to draw attention to yourself and to your library, and to what it has to offer your users.

School Libraries...the excitement is building



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- Create connections wherever possible with your users
- Encourage your users to **expect exceptional customer service, then over-deliver !!**
- Engage their interests, value their ideas and harness their energy
- Let your users know that they are important people and their needs are central to all decisions made about the delivery of library services
- Demonstrate professionalism in everything you say and do
- Show you are excited and committed by the concept of engaging users
- Build connections and credibility with the whole school community



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Take risks, embrace change and go where others haven't gone before you.

Good Luck.....turning heads!!!

“The Connected Library: A handbook
for engaging users”

Order forms available from Suzette
at the end of the presentation

\$NZD75.00 + \$NZD18.00 postage
and handling

www.theconnectedlibrary.com.au
utopia.press@yahoo.com.au



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