Happy Birthday!

Celebrating 10 Years 2000 - 2010
Editorial

Donna Watt, SLANZA Communications Leader

Welcome to the second issue of Collected. The feedback for our first issue was overwhelmingly positive, and each member of the team received numerous emails and messages of congratulations. Some of you made excellent and constructive suggestions for future issues, and a small number of you have offered future contributions — we will be in touch!

I do have to make one correction to the article in the first issue about the new National Library website — we inadvertently used the old link to the curriculum information service. The correct link can be found here http://bit.ly/CISOnlineRequest (the old one will redirect you, but this is the quick link).

I have to confess to feeling a little disconnected from this issue! Ironic, don’t you think? Given the title and its connotations! A recent family bereavement forced me to renge on helping with the editing functions for this issue, and with a move to a new position outside the school library sector imminent — I have been just a little distracted...

Saving my bacon, in her inimitable fashion, has been Miriam Tuohy. Thank heavens for the Miriams of the world, who just get on, put in unbelievable hours, and produce amazing work.

This issue has two primary foci — our 10 Year Celebration, just held in Auckland, and review and feedback from the SLAQ IASL Conference held in Brisbane during the first week of our school holidays. We also get to meet Bob Docherty, bibliographic raconteur, and avid matchmaker of books to readers.

As this issue comes to fruition, our thoughts are already beginning to turn to 2011. Two themes being considered for upcoming issues are eBooks, eReaders and associated issues, and Guided Inquiry. We will be guided by your input and suggestions, however, so do give us feedback on what you want to read (and write) about. As indicated, we are very keen to publish your contributions, and I am happy to work with you if you need any guidance, or just want someone to brainstorm a potential idea with. As my place of work is about to change, please note my new email contact below.

Thanks again to our contributors — you are amazing, and we all appreciate the time and effort you have taken in putting your pieces together. Happy reading, and best wishes for a smooth end to 2010.

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School Librarians are a PR disaster!

Sometimes I think that as school librarians we are our own worst enemies. At a time when librarians in other sectors are embracing the challenge of professionalism and asserting their right to be recognized as knowledge and information specialists, too many school librarians are allowing themselves and their profession to continue to be silenced.

I read with interest the first online issue of Collected magazine, but what immediately struck me was how many of the articles were written by Teacher Librarians not Librarians. Now I have nothing against Teacher Librarians, in fact, I’d love to see more of them. From time to time I even consider training as a teacher because am frustrated by how few opportunities I have to genuinely engage with student learning in a planned and organized, rather than ad hoc and last minute, way (and also, let’s face it, because I’d quite like to earn twice as much and be paid in the holidays).

But Teacher Librarians already have professional recognition – they are professional teachers. Those of us who are Librarians and not teachers have a much more difficult job persuading our colleagues and peers that what we do is professional work.

So what does it say about us as School Librarians that the publication of our professional organization, SLANZA, is dominated by articles written by those in the teaching, public library, and tertiary sectors, and not by School Librarians themselves?

I am not being critical of the editors of Collected, nor do I mean to be disparaging about the articles written by Annie Coppell of Auckland City Libraries, Liz Probert of the University of Auckland’s Faculty of Education, or Bharathi Char, a Teacher Librarian at Henderson High School – they were well written, interesting and informative. But why is it that those of us who are support staff in schools, but none-the-less professional librarians, cannot speak for ourselves in our own professional publication unless we are part of the SLANZA committee?

As School Librarians we need to find our voice, both collectively and individually, and we need to start speaking up and speaking out to other librarians, to teachers and to the public. We must stop isolating ourselves from our colleagues in other library sectors, and should not only contribute our thoughts, our views and our research to Collected, but also write for the publications of our broader profession, such as the New Zealand Library & Information Management Journal and Library Life. It is time we stopped locating ourselves outside and separate from the rest of the library profession and asserted our status and our place within it.

If we continue to allow our teaching colleagues at school and our library peers in other sectors to think of us as less professional, we will continue to be looked down upon, marginalized, under-valued and under-paid. We need to work harder at making sure people understand what we do, and that our work has value. Let me make this perfectly clear: I am not a library assistant, or a teacher aide, just because I work in a school. I am a professional librarian and my skills, my knowledge, and my work is just as valid and just as significant as that of public, tertiary, law or special librarians. And if you are a School Librarian, so is yours!

J. Dawn Marsh
Librarian, Te Kuiti High School

Reply from the Editor

Thank you for taking the time to pen a letter to the editor, and for having read the content of our first issue. I would like to join Dawn in urging all of our members to consider contributing to the magazine – it is a fabulous way to develop a positive digital footprint, enhance your professional skill set, contribute to a growing body of professional knowledge, and establish your reputation in the field.

Our first issue was put together by shoulder tapping likely candidates simply because we had no response to calls for contributions. The response since has been a little better, but we are still somewhat underwhelmed! Be brave, put pen to paper with an idea for an article – we would love to hear from you.

Please also note that in the interests of managing our space, printing of letters to the editor will be limited to 150 words or less, per submission.

Donna Watt

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President's column
by Senga White

Report to the Annual General Meeting of the School Library Association of New Zealand Aotearoa

I would like to welcome members to the 10th annual general meeting of the School Library Association of New Zealand Aotearoa, and I would like to say what an honour and privilege it is to be the president in our celebration year. I would like to thank the organising committee led by Dyane Hosler, who has created a very special event for us to mark our first decade as an association.

The first year of my presidency has been marked by transition and change. In the past twelve months I have welcomed eight new National Executive members onto our team and look forward to welcoming a further two new regional representatives and our newly appointed president-elect at tomorrow’s National Executive meeting. We also appointed Frances Gibbons to the role of Administration Officer at the end of 2009 so Frances and I have been learning on the job together. It has been wonderful to welcome so much fresh enthusiasm, ideas, expertise and energy to the team. We are a diverse group which is made up of library managers, primary and secondary librarians, a teacher librarian, a public librarian and a principal. We could be the poster-child for how effective collaboration works!

The current SLANZA strategic plan, set out and developed by our national executive has four key areas of focus; Promotion of school libraries to improve student achievement, Representation of and advocacy for library staff, Professional Development to improve the quality of librarianship, teaching and support to students and Communication and visibility. We have made progress on all four fronts, however, it is a work in progress and specific goals have been set within each of these areas.

Promotion
We continue to promote and support the work done by local committees in regions, while investigating new ways to reach other important groups in the education community, including Principals’ groups.

Work also continues at a national level through the support and impetus of the Strategic Advisory Forum to forge strong links with the Ministry of Education and others working in implementing the new national standards.

We are also nearing the end of the first stage of work undertaken by a sub-committee looking at a draft of library standards for New Zealand schools.

Representation
We strive to ensure SLANZA members represent us in as many ways and as many places as we possibly can. This year it was my privilege and delight to attend the recent International Association for School Libraries Conference in Brisbane. There were many highlights and I appreciated the opportunity to present a workshop as part of the conference programme together with my colleague from Southland, Donna Watt. It was also encouraging to have so many of our New Zealand fraternity also attending this conference.

SLANZA made a submission as part of the on-going government Inquiry into Libraries and Teacher Librarianship in Australia and will follow with great interest the outcome of this. The select committee had travelled to various places throughout the country to hear oral submissions but progress was halted as a change of leadership for the government and an early election affected the process.

We have also made progress on our own national front as the long-awaited discussion document, commissioned by the Strategic Advisory Forum, into the state of school libraries in New Zealand was finally tabled and discussed at the last meeting. Discussion took place with the acting group manager of schooling policy for the Ministry of Education in attendance. A very productive conversation took place around aspects of the report and it was agreed that a joint working party be established to look at ‘best practice’ and share some examples with a view to being able to communicate these to schools across the country.

This is at the very least a beginning of dialogue directly with the Ministry of Education with school libraries as the focus. National Librarian and National Library of New Zealand CEO Penny Carnaby made it clear during this discussion that the state of school libraries in New Zealand is the No 1 priority for SAF.

This is an encouraging next step in our battle to bring to the attention of the Ministry the high standard of work being carried out in many of our school libraries and the benefits to having this level of professional school library service in every school across New Zealand. The fight will continue, but we are no longer fighting alone. We have strong support from other library sector colleagues who now have a fresh appreciation and true understanding of the issues facing our sector.

Professional Development
We are delighted to have formed a three year sponsorship partnership with Book Protection Products. Warick and his team have generously agreed to sponsor professional development in the regions to the tune of $5,000 a year. This has enabled a number of key events in some of our regions to go ahead this year and will allow for more planning to go into events and opportunities for 2011 and 2012. The new Web 2.0 environment is also something national executive is considering when planning for professional development opportunities in the future, so watch this space!
Last year saw a fantastic conference in Christchurch and planning is well underway for the 2011 conference in Auckland during the July school holidays. I have participated in almost every SLANZA Conference since the first one held in Christchurch in 2002 and I know personally how much we all gain from these rich opportunities. Now having attended my first international conference I have a new-found level of respect for all the teams of people who have worked on conference committees for SLANZA. We are producing and offering world-class, professional conferences that would be the envy of many outside of New Zealand. We may be a small country but on the world stage we can hold our heads up and be assured that we are working at the forefront of many areas of our profession.

Communication
This is an area we have focused hard on developing during the past twelve months, particularly in communicating with our membership. To this end, and due to the countless hours of work by Bridget Schaumann and Miriam Tuohy we have a brand new website. This is just the first phase of development, with work on the second stage being developed and improved in line with the growing needs of the membership.

As president I’ve attempted to post to our new SLANZA blog as a way of providing a more immediate and relaxed form of communication with you all. This blog will continue to grow in the coming months. The same team of Miriam and Bridget has also been the ‘brainchildren’ who created and developed the SLANZA wiki which has already celebrated its first year milestone. Thanks to these two human dynamos and the team who worked with them in the formative phase, we have an amazing online resource for all members.

National Executive became acutely aware of the need for a facilitator in the realm of communications and so appointed the very capable Donna Watt as our leader in this area at our March meeting. One of Donna’s achievements has been to lead the team who has revamped our SLANZA magazine, and “Collected” was born. Donna, as editor is responsible for content, while the attractive new-look design is the domain of our technical guru Miriam. Our first edition was very well received with many positive comments being sent in feedback. Our second edition is well into planning and should be published within the next two weeks.

The last twelve months has seen the new reality of the changes at National Library Services to Young New Zealanders start to take some shape. I was pleased to be able to attend the opening of this fantastic new facility here in Auckland in July and it has been wonderful to be able to use it as the venue for our 10 year celebration.

There are still many questions surrounding what form some of the professional development opportunities to be offered through National Library in the future will take, but we see evidence of some new initiatives such as the website and the 0800 line which can be viewed as a positive start. Geraldine Howell and her team have kept SLANZA informed of developments as much as possible though changes continue for National Library as they work through the phase of integration with Archives New Zealand and Department of Internal Affairs.

Our professional landscape continues to shift and alter and this shows no sign of abating. In fact, it would seem our reality is that the one constant thing is change. I am certain that the first 10 years has set a solid foundation and perhaps even the benchmark for the next 10 years and beyond. SLANZA is in good heart and is well placed to continue to build and expand into the next decades of the 21st century.

Senga White
President SLANZA
29/10/2010

Recipients of SLANZA Study Grants for 2011
Congratulations to the successful recipients of the next round of study grants. It is fantastic to be able to support members in their endeavours to continue with their education in our profession!

Best wishes for their study for next year to:

Helen Muxlow - Karori West Normal School, Wellington
Deborah Walsh - Takapuna Grammar School, Auckland
Linda Lamb - Wanganui High School
Jayne Downes - Kaikorai Valley College, Dunedin
Pamela Lilley - Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate, Auckland
Kirsten Nicholas - Diocesan School for Girls, Auckland
Until 2000 there was no unifying voice for school libraries in New Zealand but rather a range of groups and associations representing different interests and perspectives. There was the long-established Auckland School Library Association (ASLA), the School Library Network in the South Island, LIANZA’s special interest group representing children, young people and schools (CHYPS) and the Trained Teacher Librarians TTL group. The only nationwide support to school libraries lay with the National Library and, as a central government agency, this necessarily operated within different parameters to a professional association.

It had long been recognised that the lack of a national school library association was a particular weakness in the professional library infrastructure in New Zealand, hampering effective efforts in advocacy, professional capability and the recognition and profile of school libraries. It was also recognised that, given the long-standing challenges around staffing of school libraries in New Zealand, it was even more critical that energy and focus be channelled nationally.

In 1999, a number of factors, including developments within the existing interest groups, came together to provide the necessary impetus to move the idea of a national association closer to reality. This meant disbanding those existing groups and associations in order to build a new body, able to speak with one voice. The willingness on the part of those sometimes long-standing groups to join the steering committee and re-direct their time and energy (and, in some cases, existing funds) was incredibly important to achieving a national association and reflects the commitment generated across the country for this goal.

At the National Library we were particularly keen to support the establishment and development of SLANZA. Among other benefits, it enabled a school library voice and perspective to be formally represented on both National Library and wider library sector developments. Indeed, at the same time as SLANZA was being established, our project to develop national guidelines for school libraries was getting underway with the Ministry of Education and Learning Media, and the project provided the first opportunity for SLANZA to participate as a key stakeholder, through the Guidelines advisory group. This has been followed by representation on many other national developments and initiatives such as the ERO national evaluation on the information landscape for learning, EPIC, AnyQuestions and the Multiple Literacies Working Group.

A decade on - What shape are school libraries in? And are they more or less relevant than 10 years ago? I have no doubt that our collective response would mirror the recent headline of the Centre for International Scholarship in School libraries (CISSL) - “School libraries, now more than ever before are integral to quality teaching and learning in 21st century schools”. These are exciting times for school libraries and the opportunities are limitless but the ground is shifting in unprecedented ways and the challenges to school libraries are also significant and increasing. It seems very likely that this next decade will decide the fate of school libraries in New Zealand.

In 1958, Gaver said “With the school library literally the heart of the educational programme, students have their best chance to become capable and enthusiastic readers, informed about the world about them and alive to the limitless possibilities of tomorrow”. Fifty years later, this remains true as a statement of purpose and demonstrates what is so powerfully enduring about the value of school libraries... yet everything about the learning and knowledge landscape in which school libraries fulfil this mission is undergoing transformation. And that does makes the world of difference.

Stephen Heppell, world-renowned digital learning pioneer, who was in New Zealand as the keynote speaker at the 2010 ULEARN conference, wrote recently (and gratifyingly) “The evidence continues to accumulate that libraries – and their staff – lie absolutely at the heart of 3rd millennium learning organisations – a place for scholarship, a place to escape into adventures, a place of discovery, a place to share and explore, a place for deep thought, a place for surprise and, above all else, a place absolutely without limits. The best schools have libraries at their centres, not as some sad throwback to an earlier age, but as a clear and evocative prototype of what ambitious learning might look like in this century of learning”.

Achieving such a powerful and central role in learning for New Zealand school libraries will not be realised without concerted and collaborative effort. This must include a strategic focus on creating opportunities to work with others across the education sector to build greater ownership and wider engagement in the potential and actual contribution of school libraries to learning. As Ross Todd has often said, the focus must be on the "actions and evidences that show they make a real difference to student learning and to the development of human understanding and knowledge”.

At National Library we are committed to working with SLANZA on the ongoing development and transformation of school libraries to play a central role in the learning of all young New Zealanders, enriching and improving their life chances and strengthening their ability to flourish, learn and contribute, to think critically and creatively and to engage with all the challenges and opportunities of the 3rd millennium.

Congratulations to SLANZA for all it has achieved in the last ten years and we look forward to working together in the future.
Celebrating 10 years
Past and current Presidents' speeches

Jill Stotter, July 2001 – July 2002

January 1999

Picture this: An ASLA conference in Geelong, Victoria, Australia. Liz Probert, Judi Hancock, Margaret Forbes, and Jill Stotter all sitting around munching on pizza. All NZ trained Teacher Librarians and all working in New Zealand secondary schools at the time. Our main topic of conversation was, ‘Why haven’t we got a school library association in New Zealand?’ We agreed to do something about this when we got home.

March 1999

I discussed the concept with other colleagues and Elizabeth Jones from National Library. All were extremely positive and a small group of Aucklanders started meeting for breakfast on Sunday mornings, about once a month, to brainstorm ideas for how a professional association for all school library staff might work in our fractured professional world. There had been previous attempts to establish a Teacher Librarian Association but this was seen as exclusive to TLs only. There was already in existence the School Librarians’ Association, run out of the South Island, but again this was exclusive to school librarians only. These were the days when TLRs were still the fashion. A teacher plucked at random to take responsibility for the library. Maybe they were seen to enjoy reading or maybe the accompanying management unit and one less class was attractive, but whatever the reason, these teachers were untrained and inexperienced in the whole area of school librarianship and the role served only to highlight the ignorance of linking school libraries to learning and teaching. The role also infuriated many qualified library staff who did all the work but were paid only at teacher aide level. This did vary from school to school but this was how it was in most schools at this time.

Anyway, we jotted notes and flung out ideas both amidst the Eggs Benedict and long blacks, held many after-school meetings at National Library and gradually developed a strategic plan for our fledgling organisation. Hours were spent thinking of a name, working out a draft vision statement, discussing funding and regional access to the organisation. It needs to be said here, that SLANZA would never have got off the ground without the support and expertise of many from National Library. This unwavering professionalism always enabled a sense of security and support for our endeavours.

At this time the Auckland School Library Association (ASLA), founded in the 1950s, was still a very active and lively professional group, holding several really strong professional development sessions each year. The New & Notable book review magazine was also active. This was run by Karen du Fresne out of National Library and involved a group of dedicated secondary English teachers who read and reviewed selected texts for secondary school libraries.

After several months, we began to come up with a plan. It was now time to appoint a national steering committee which would involve more than Auckland people and which would set the path for a fully fledged national organisation. The national Steering Committee was appointed, and the planning continued. Regular teleconferences were established. The first SLANZA bank account was set up on October 1999, using the $7000 given from the coffers of New and Notable which closed and became part of SLANZA. Dave Speedy and Raeco offered generous funding for the regional groups and this continued for many years. What a godsend this was to a brand new organisation.

A date for the launch of SLANZA was made in early 2000. The newly appointed minister for National Library, the Honourable Marion Hobbs would do the deed and the event would be held at the National Library Wellington, on Friday 10 May 2000 at 5pm. A one-day conference would follow on the Saturday and this was to be led by Gary Hartzell, a school library researcher from the States and a powerful advocate for school libraries and learning. The whole event was wonderful. We all had such a great time. The months and months of planning had really come together, and baby SLANZA was born.

Right at this time, Penny Moore, an independent educational researcher in Wellington, was heavily involved with the International Association of School Libraries (IASL). Now that the New Zealand school library sector had an official professional body, Penny really pushed for SLANZA to host the next annual IASL conference in Auckland, New Zealand in July 2001. Our bid which was prepared and submitted by Penny, was accepted by IASL, and in preparation for our conference the next year, Maureen Trebilcock and I travelled to Sweden to attend the 2000 IASL conference.

The IASL 2001 conference in Auckland was a highly successful event. The conference committee was headed by two leading academics, Linda Selby from the then Auckland College of Education, and Penny Moore from Wellington. Penny’s knowledge and experience of IASL and its culture proved invaluable to us, and the running of that conference set a benchmark for future SLANZA conferences.

During those rather heady few years, huge strides were made to begin the move towards the provision of a body of well trained and professional school library staff. This continues to be a major challenge for SLANZA, along with the task of continuing to promote the relevance of the school library as a catalyst for teaching and learning in a technology-driven 21st century.
Judi Hancock July 2002 — September 2003

The opening line of one of my favourite Owen Marshall stories, The Ace of Diamonds Gang, is “As our past recedes we can see only occasional pennons on the high ground, which represent the territory traversed between.” But when I think of that territory I traversed as SLANZA President, I hear rather than see the pennons because it is the sound of talking that is at the heart of my most vivid memories.

So it will come as no surprise that the 2003 conference in Christchurch is top of my list. The rising sound of voices in the courtyard as people gathered outside for the powhiri was so heart warming, I remember saying to someone, “They’ve come, they’ve actually come!” And what a time we had of it. Building on the Wellington conference we confirmed that we didn’t have to go off shore to find expertise in the information world and we were more than capable of sharing our own experiences to very good effect, and with considerable good humour.

And then there was that infamous day when word spread that Alison Annan, Principal of Cambridge High, was going to close the library and replace books with computers. I think it says it all really, that Alison is no longer Principal of Cambridge High and a new library lives on, complete with books and computers.

Underpinning these vivid memories are the less distinct ones of all those National Executive meetings we held in Wellington, Auckland and Christchurch – when I think back to all the meaty issues we covered, no wonder talking features so much in my memories!

Connecting with library teams throughout NZ was a huge task – from large, modern secondary schools to tiny, remote rural schools – we wanted to reach out to them all. And we wanted to raise our heads above the parapet and take on those big “names” face to face. SLANZA became recognized as an entity representing school libraries and slowly but surely we were invited to meetings – with the National Library, with LIANZA, with principals. And slowly but surely we began to address issues of real concern to school library teams.

Looking back, it is my fellow National Exec members who really stand out for me. I may have been President but everything I did was underpinned by a group of women and men who were prepared to give their time, share their vision, and exhibit sheer grit and determination to ensure that the school kids and school library teams of New Zealand got the best deal possible. Did we work miracles? Sometimes it felt like we did. Do things still need to change? Of course.

Liz Probert, September 2003 — July 2005

I have thoroughly enjoyed my connections with school libraries, first with ASLA (Auckland School Library Association) and then with SLANZA committees and as president. I remember many meetings at National Library in Newmarket and in Wellington, then regular weekend journeys to Christchurch for meetings which were held in the Rangi Ruru School for Girls library (wonderful morning teas) and occasionally at the National Library there. We had dinners in the city on the Saturday evening with lots of laughter - and planning as well.

Looking back through archived SLANZA newsletters I see there were 700 members in 2004 and I remember someone in LIANZA, during the Remuneration meetings, seriously suggesting that we should join forces. I think LIANZA had not realised before that just how many members SLANZA had and I am pleased we stayed independent.

The archives reminded me too of the performance involved in getting the newsletter out before it was dispatched electronically. At one stage, Adaire Hannah would send the final publication to Auckland in boxes and a group of us would do the mail out once we had received the address labels. What a different newsletter now – colourful, attractive and technologically exciting. All this change in such a short time – ten years.

Planning national conferences always involves huge effort and preparing for the 2005 conference in Auckland was no different. I was recently talking with work colleagues who have been involved in planning various conferences over the years and realised that no one ever seems to forget such an experience. I even found my green/blue shot taffeta waistcoat the other day lurking at the back of a wardrobe shelf and I couldn’t bring myself to throw it away – yet.

Looking back through more recent newsletters and at Collected I can see that fine work is being carried out in school libraries. I would like to urge all those working in school libraries, though, to take care. The survival of the school library depends on the school’s perception of its worth – we must be able to demonstrate, with evidence, that the school library makes a difference to student learning. If our libraries don’t make a difference then why are they there, taking funding from other more worthy areas in a school.

I strongly believe that we need to be accountable, to show that the school library plays a vital role in teaching and learning, actively developing lifelong learners.

Good luck for the next ten years - and beyond.
Johnann Williams, July 2005 — July 2007

My time with the SLANZA National Executive was bounded by SLANZA Conferences.

When I joined the SLANZA National Executive team as secretary at the Annual General Meeting at the 2003 Conference in Christchurch, Jill and Judi had finished their one year terms as President and Liz was just starting the first of the two year terms.

SLANZA had structure and presence. There were a number of original members of the National Executive still serving and a great many projects in train. National Executive members brought passion, skill and experience to the work they were doing to promote school libraries in New Zealand. They had developed this work and grown with it, but I was completely new and thrown in at the deep end.

SLANZA was represented in discussions for what was to become EPIC and AnyQuestions/Uia Nga Patai and on the Te Puna Advisory Committee and the PPTA/ICT Task Force. Work on the SLANZA awards was far advanced as was policy on archives and record keeping. SLANZA was making submissions, running biennial conferences and mini conferences, a website, and producing a regular magazine.

Somehow, while trying to keep my head above water, I didn’t duck fast enough and unexpectedly found myself as President-elect. My time as secretary was a busy apprenticeship.

The momentum continued and the SLANZA National Executive took on more projects.

- NZEI recognized that library staff had formed their own professional association, and met with SLANZA representatives and attended National Executive meetings to discuss pay and equity issues.
- LIANZA invited SLANZA to be part of an industry wide remuneration survey which gave the first hard evidence of how far school library remuneration fell below that of the wider library community.
- SLANZA introduced study grants to encourage members to improve qualifications.
- LIANZA set up a task-force to explore a Professional Registration scheme for library and information professionals and invited SLANZA to participate.
- To enable the National Executive to work more strategically a three year SLANZA Development Plan was formulated.
- A part time administration position was established; this was a significant aid to the work of the National Executive and the President.

Auckland planned for and hosted the 2005 Conference and I stepped into the role of President at the Annual General Meeting at the 2005 Conference in Christchurch, and had set a high standard. The 2005 Conference was another great SLANZA conference, but our least financially successful. The Top of the South organized a very successful mini-conference in Nelson in 2006 but the National Executive made the decision to concentrate conferences in Wellington, Auckland and Christchurch to relieve the stress on the smaller centres and to prevent sponsor fatigue. The pressure was on Wellington to not only run a great Conference in 2007, but to have it break even financially. Adaire Hannah and the Wellington team more than rose to the occasion.

A significant focus for me in my time as President was work with the LIANZA Taskforce towards a scheme of Professional Registration for the Library and Information Profession in New Zealand. I saw it as part of the thrust to have the librarians working in schools recognized as professionals and able to stand alongside the rest of the industry. Some 150 school librarians are now professionally registered. I saw the Study Grants as another way of raising confidence and standards, and the SLANZA Awards as a way of acknowledging excellence in work in school library practice.

SLANZA had tried to be heard by the Ministry of Education first in correspondence with the Minister of Education, and then with a rapidly changing raft of ministry personnel, but it was a source of frustration to me that despite our passionate advocacy for literacy standards, school libraries and school library personnel, and acknowledgement from groups such as LIANZA and NZEI, the Ministry of Education seemed to have little regard for school libraries. Little progress was made on pay and conditions for school library staff. Membership of SLANZA was rising, although the Strategic Plan identified a number of issues such as pay and conditions, geographical distance and lower population density that made it difficult for members to meet regularly. There was great variation in Internet capability in some areas that made communication difficult.

SLANZA continued to establish itself as a credible voice for school libraries. In this period we were fortunate to have sponsorship from RAECO for professional development, and the ongoing support of the National Library with a new National Librarian. Our relationship with LIANZA strengthened and we were invited to contribute to Informing New Zealand, a text used by The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand.

It is difficult to condense into a few words what for me was an intense and totally absorbing period. The President is responsible for maintaining focus and keeping the momentum going, but the work is a team effort that depends on the members of the National Executive and the Regional Committees. Relationships and communication are at the heart of SLANZA’s work, and the achievements of the organization as a whole are extraordinary when one considers that the work done by so many has been almost entirely voluntary. None of it would have been possible without the support of our schools and colleagues and the synergy generated by a group with the aim to strengthen and promote the role of school libraries, to enable all school communities to become information literate.

Presidents come and go, but the work of the National Executive and SLANZA goes on. I handed over the Taonga to Joyce Richards at the Annual General Meeting at the Wellington Conference and continued on the National Executive until the Christchurch Conference in 2009.
Joyce Richards, July 2007 — September 2009

It was a great honour to become the President of SLANZA on 4 July 2007, albeit with some trepidation! Having been an ardent school library user myself, a parent, a NLNZ School Services Reference Librarian, a NLNZ School Library Advisor and now a school librarian, I passionately believed in the value of school libraries and wished to do all I could to strengthen and support our NZ school libraries and school library staff.

By mid-2007, SLANZA had been through very successful 'start-up' and 'growth' stages of development in organizational life-cycle terms. The basic infrastructure had been developed by that time and its resources had grown dramatically during the previous 8 years. Membership was around 700. It had reached what could be considered to be a stage of 'maturity'. Typically in this stage, organizations, for many reasons, experience a slow down in growth or can even stagnate. It was obvious that in order to avoid a 'decline' stage, one of the things we had to do as a lobby group was to develop even greater collaboration with those organizations best able to support us in our efforts to advocate for school libraries and school library team members.

To this end, the National Library’s Director of Services to Young New Zealanders and a representative from the national office of the NZEI were invited to begin regular attendance at our National Executive meetings; we were represented on the Ministry of Education ‘Multiple Literacies Working Group and importantly we gained representation on the NZ Libraries Strategic Advisory Forum. This Forum has a 2-fold purpose. Firstly, to provide all-of-sector advice to the National Librarian/CEO on current and emerging issues affecting the NZ library sector, to subsequently inform NLNZ policy advice to government, and secondly, to provide LIANZA with opportunity for consultation with all-of-the-sector to enable it to represent professional interests.

At these meetings I strongly highlighted the critical issues of our sector. These included the fact that there is no mandate for schools to have a library, the low profile of NZ school libraries and their staff, our poor remuneration, terms and conditions of employment (e.g. I attended one meeting during school holidays and fellow SAF members were aghast when I informed them that I was not being paid that day as it was school holidays!); the low standard of information literacy education in NZ schools and colleges of education and the need for the inclusion of a teaching module in Librarianship education. This has subsequently led to the development of a Discussion Paper that has been presented to the Ministry of Education. I consider this to be a real break through as the Ministry of Education was proving to be a very “hard nut for us to crack” on our own. Our requests for meetings had come to nought and we were simply told that “school boards will decide, in consultation with their communities, whether to have a school library and to what standard that library is resourced”.

Another issue needing to be dealt with at this stage was our communication with our members. Our newsletters and website needed updating. Emerging Web 2.0 technologies provided new and exciting opportunities for us and we were fortunate to have some enthusiastic and able members to help us with this at this time.

The provision of professional development for our members was another focus. Training in the use of the EPIC databases, an increase in the number of Study Grants and funding to assist regional professional development all provided further positive support of our members.

I did find my time as President interesting and am grateful to have had this opportunity to try to make a difference. I did however find it a huge workload on top of being a sole-charge secondary school librarian. This may have to be something for us to consider in these next 10 years.
I feel a real affinity to - and find I have a lot in common with SLANZA. I too, have just celebrated my 10 year mile-stone. I began working as a librarian at James Hargest College in Invercargill 10 years ago this month, and so while I was not an inaugural member I have been a continuing member since 2001.

I vividly remember attending my first SLANZA conference in Christchurch in 2002. I was completely blown away by the volumes of knowledge I soaked up and by the amazing people I met. I knew from that moment on that I had begun my love affair with school libraries. That love affair has not faded, but has actually grown and the flames from it have been fanned by subsequent conferences and professional development opportunities over the ensuing years.

I knew when Bridget Schaumann approached me about the possibility of taking on the Otago/Southland regional representative role on National Exec in 2006 that, in spite of my misgivings of actually having anything worthwhile to contribute - it was time for me to start giving back to the organisation I had gained so much from. So began my tenure on National Executive at the meeting held after the superb Nelson mini conference. Little did I think then that I would be standing here in front of you all this afternoon at SLANZA’s 10 year celebration as your current president. It is a real mixture of responsibility and honour representing such an amazing and diverse group of professionals - a responsibility I don’t underestimate. I pinch myself when I look at the illustrious group of women who have previously held this role – all of them true mentors and leaders - and so generous with their time and knowledge.

When I attended my first International Association for School Libraries conference in Brisbane at the beginning of this month, one of the strongest impressions that has stayed with me is just what an awesome group of people make up the SLANZA family. Every single one of you who has contributed to a SLANZA event over the past 10 years can hold your head up and be justifiably proud - as you have helped produce a world-class event.

We may be a small nation but what we create and achieve is right up there with the best in the world.

The landscape of libraries both here in New Zealand and around the world continues to shift and alter - and this trend shows no sign of abating. In fact, one of the most constant things in our profession is change. I know beyond doubt that these first 10 years have set the foundation and indeed the benchmark for SLANZA’s next 10 years and beyond. SLANZA is in good heart and well placed to continue to build and grow into the 21st Century.

SLANZA is proud to present the Conference for 2011

On the Wave: There is a wave that breaks; there is a wave that swells.

Get ready for yet another stimulating Conference from SLANZA. Come join your colleagues and feel the force created by our collective drive, enthusiasm and knowledge. Come learn new and exciting strategies and techniques, with thought-provoking and challenging keynote speakers.

When: 24-27 July 2011
Venue: St Cuthbert’s College, Epsom, Auckland
Cost: approx. $400
Accommodation: at the College - anticipate $60 per night including breakfast

As always there will be a fabulous conference dinner.

For further information please contact:
Kaaren Hirst,
Conference Convenor,
SLANZA Auckland 2011
Phone: 09 376 6568
Email: khirst@stmaryak.school.nz
2000, the start of a new century and there was a buzz in the air – and a new decade of change, both personally and professionally. I had idly thought of retirement and travel. I considered what we had – the Children’s and Young People’s SIG had left LIANZA and was largely replaced by SLANZA – an organisation devoted to us. It was being driven by Teacher Librarians, hopefully bringing the two professions closer together. The Ministry of Education was about to publish The School Library and Learning in the Information Landscape (2002), the power of the internet was beginning to take hold, qualified librarians were becoming more common in school libraries. With the greater understanding of technology, I changed my mind. Exciting things were ahead.

Our core values of librarianship are very important to me and I suspect to the future of school libraries. Knowing our stock (paper and electronic) and our clientèle (students and staff) is at the heart of our work. Our specialist knowledge enables us to promote and foster a love of reading as a life skill, and to teach our students how to navigate the information mire.

Our new web-based library systems have sped everything up; life has sped up and there is an expectation that answers will be instant. Much time is now spent assessing what will work for our own libraries and what won’t. There are positives and negatives in all cases:

- the internet is affecting collection development as well as the new skills required by our students, but there is a world of information at our finger tips;
- information literacy seems to have fallen on a variety of teaching shoulders - not necessarily ours, which is fine as long as it is being done and taught effectively;
- SCIS is a fantastic online tool, but are we losing the ability to provide a collection relevant to our clientèle while providing generic access to our catalogue ?
- the management of textbooks and e-textbooks - a time-saving service for academic staff;
- professional registration is growing and needs to be continuously revalidated;
- National Library is re-structuring and we have an online approach to our advisors;
- there is a new curriculum to be grappled with;
- fiction is challenging us with new controversial subjects;
- there are e-books, e-readers, web 2.0 ... which all mean we need to be open to new opportunities, and so much more, changing at a speed we would not have imagined in 2000. Are we ready for them?

In most senses, yes we are. We are highly professional, but is this evident to those outside our profession? To some extent we are hidden in our schools and it is up to us to show that we are experts. We must go out of our offices and ask questions and make suggestions, offer our skills (diverse as they are); search out our own PD, be ahead of the IT team in new technology but know about copyright, the Privacy Act, and the Official Information Act.

Regardless of what is said in public forums, I believe there is a future for school libraries, but we have to make it happen; we need to drive the technology and find ways to use it all successfully, not be led by it, continuing to learn to adapt our core professional skills so we can utilise the technology to benefit ourselves and our clientèle rather than being led by blind innovation.
10 Year Celebrations at the National Library Services to Schools Auckland Centre
29 October 2010
Fiona Mackie, St Cuthbert’s College, Auckland
I returned from IASL with my head buzzing, and a long list of what I wanted to do - devising an information literacy and skills continuum from Y0-13, creating a recognisable brand for the senior library, sharing information and resources to support our International Baccalaureate students, critically evaluating the appearance of the library, and the list goes on!

One strong message which came from Barbara Combes’ session, ‘Razzle dazzle spaces’, was to ‘Choose one thing to do and do it well’. This fitted in with an idea from last year’s SLANZA conference, when Suzette Boyd told us that she changes something in the appearance of her library at the beginning of each term, and which I’ve been doing since then.

I returned to school, had a good look around and decided that the large cushions which were not being used in the reading room could be moved into the main library and spread amongst the shelves. We now find students sprawled on the cushions throughout the day, and as some are in the non-fiction, I’ve noticed books moving from that area. A simple thing to do, but it has been very effective.

Susan Marshall, Chilton St James School, Wellington
Best workshop and why
“How much do traditional literacy skills count?” Presented by Barbara Combes.

Why? Barbara was a brilliant presenter. She talked about the technology revolution and how the advent of these new devices presented new issues.

The first innovation, link or contact you followed up
Kate Shepherd at Austral Ed. Austral Ed had a trade stand at the conference. She is a supplier of IB books. I ordered from them a supply of PYP books for our Primary school and some PD books for the teachers. I added their lists of suitable books relating to the learner profile, the PYP attitudes, the PYP concepts, and fiction and non-fiction suitable for the PYP to the ones I already have onto the Primary school shared drive.

At the first Primary school teacher meeting of the term I pointed these out to the teachers – and also pointed out to them some aspects of Encyclopaedia Britannica that they might not have known about.

Websites worth visiting
www.cybersmart.gov.au

Resources worth sharing
“Understanding by design” by McTighe and Wiggins;
“Thinking strategies for the inquiry classroom” by Darryn Kruse.

Overall comment
I loved getting together with the New Zealand contingent to the conference. There was such a buzz, so much sharing of ideas, such enthusiasm and generally getting to know the other wonderful delegates. The keynotes were all brilliant – hugely entertaining and giving us lots to think about. I particularly enjoyed Professor Erica McWilliam.
Anne Keenan, Sacred Heart College, Auckland

Best workshop

“Calibrating the Learning Engine” presented by Greg Howes, Teacher Librarian at Brisbane Grammar School.

Their new amazing library
The Lilley Centre (which opened February 2010) has been built with the emphasis on student learning and how they learn, not subject learning. With this in mind Greg and his library team produced "an information literacy pit stop for senior students" where 5 key information literacy sessions were built in the timetable: Deep Research, Efficient Search Strategies, Using Online Databases, Getting Organised using Web 2.0 tools, and Digital Citizenship.

1st Innovation I followed up back at work
Attending Cathy Oxley’s “Creating a positive digital footprint” session enabled me to create new posters around the library and computer labs alerting girls to the danger of posting personal issues on social networking sites with the 'Think Before You Post' that she distributed (see websites worth visiting).

Cathy’s “Watchful, Wary and Wise - Be Smart Online” library guide from Brisbane Grammar is now up on our school Intranet as well in our useful websites.

Websites worth visiting
www.cybertipline.com
includes Think before you post Poster
www.21cif.com 21st century information fluency

Resources worth sharing
http://bit.ly/BeSmartOnline
Watchful, Wary and Wise - Be smart online. Check out Andy's digital dossier.

Resources from Britannica Online, accessed through EPIC, that I hadn’t used before: Country Comparison, Creating a Timeline, ABC & BBC News, This Day in History. Media Library will go live sometime in next two weeks. I found this Trade Presentation valuable as I realised I had not been using all Britannica's resources and have now added a new task in Year 9 & 10s Library Investigation for Term 1, 2011.

Overall Comment
Great experience and well worth giving up a weeks holiday. I was impressed with wide selection of sessions and trade presentations. The lively author discussion "Page to Screen" with John Marsden, Wendy Orr, David McRobbie, chaired by Christine Bongers on last morning just capped off a great week. How does one save to go to IASL Conference in Jamaica next year on a Librarian's wage??

Sandra Woodward, Viscount School, Manukau

Best workshop

“Razzle Dazzle: creating interactive library spaces” presented by Barbara Combes (Australia).

This workshop gave me lots of fabulous ideas for promoting the library and how to use spaces in the library creatively.

The first innovation, link or contact you followed upon?
I am trialling a book-covering machine I saw demonstrated at the conference to see if it saves me time (and money) as I prepare books for the library.

Websites worth visiting

Overall comment
As this was my first conference, I found it inspiring and highly informative. From the keynotes and authors to the presenters & other delegates... I learnt heaps of new ideas and met some very interesting people.

Fran Mes, Director of Learning: Library/Information Studies, Viscount School, Manukau

Best workshop

I went to Professor Michael Hough’s session “Role of the teacher-librarian in developing leadership capabilities in staff”. He suggested some action strategies for librarians to use in the school iCentre for effective staff development and support of ICT based learning and activities. He talked about the key iCentre related roles - the librarian as chief information officer (CIO) and the library as being a staff development centre. I recommend going onto the IASL website to watch to his keynote. “In schools that face the future: libraries matter". I really enjoyed Philippa Ashbey’s talk on being a resilient librarian.

The first innovation, link or contact you followed up when you got back to school?
I went onto the IASL website and watched Michael Hough and Professor Erica McQueen again.

They were inspiring speakers.

Websites worth visiting
http://slav.globalteacher.org.au
I get updates everyday from the ‘Bright Ideas’ page, it’s great!

Overall comment
The conference was OK. I came back to work very inspired to use Web2 tools with greater focus and purpose in library programmes.
Bharathi Char, Henderson High School, Auckland

Best workshop

The Plato Program: an innovative information skills continuum by John Stanton; I found it very valuable as it provided a clear picture of the development of the PLATO program with its flaws and successes. Realistic and practical!

Creating a positive digital footprint presented by Cathy Oxley. Simple but brilliant! We need to be aware of digital citizenship and the digital footprints our students leave.

The first innovation that I followed up on

Working towards creating an engaging and interactive library space.

Resources worth sharing

There were many, but here are a couple:
1. Dr. Michael Hough’s keynote “In schools that face the future: libraries matter”
   http://slidesha.re/LibrariesMatter

2. Cathy Oxley “Creating a positive digital footprint”

Overall

The conference was valuable and inspiring. I feel energised and motivated with ideas, tips, new networks and a greater sense of pride in my role.

Also, a reaffirmation that here in New Zealand, we school librarians are doing the right thing and we are up there amongst our colleagues from around the world.

Gerri Judkins, Southwell School, Hamilton

Best workshop

Being unashamedly besotted by children’s literature and those who create it, I found the 2½ hour breakfast with sixteen Australian authors and illustrators intoxicating. I kept returning to the bookstore for “just one more” to be signed.

Wendy Orr shared her new picture book The Princess and her Panther on the big screen, Michael Gerard Bauer read a hilarious chapter from Just a Dog, Peter Carnavas treated us with his not yet released The Last Tree in the City and Richard Newsome talked about The Billionaire’s Curse. Clare McFadden’s The Flying Orchestra, a celebration of the 30th anniversary of Hazel Edward’s There’s a Hippopotamus on Our Roof Eating Cake, Narelle Oliver’s linocut print in the award winning Fox and Fine Feathers and more...

Friday morning John Marsden did make sense of his keynote title: Notes from a long-term resident in the home of the perpetually bewildered. He read excerpts from So Much to Tell You and Hamlet, explaining how sometimes the author writes to the reader’s conscious self and sometimes to their subconscious. At times he has no idea where a sentence came from, in other words from his subconscious.

Next up was John, and Wendy talking about Page to Movie with David McRobbie. John and Wendy both have brief cameos in Tomorrow When the War Began and Nim’s Island – look out for them.

The first week of Term 4 our library theme was Australia – Fetching Fiction. I read The Princess and her Panther with Wendy’s pauses and inflection, Peter’s earlier book, Important Things (caused some tears) and Clare’s The Flying Orchestra, such a whimsical picture book.

The Year 8s I told about John Marsden. They lined up to reserve So Much to Tell and are looking forward to Hamlet at High School next year.

I also directed the children to a variety of Australian author and illustrator websites:

www.narelleoliver.com
www.petercarnavas.com
www.wendyorr.com
www.richardnewsome.com/richardnewsome/Home.html
johnmarsden.com.au/home.html
www.hazeledwards.com/page/picture_books.html
I am Bob Docherty and many of you out there may remember me working for the National Library in Christchurch. I have moved on, and since then have taken my knowledge of children's fiction into schools to promote reading and novels of interest to students.

Since the beginning of 2010 I have visited 32 schools all over the South Island talking mainly to High School students and children from school years 5/6 and 7/8. In most cases I use titles from the school's own library collection and a few recent titles that I think the students will like. Always I send a resource list in advance so that schools are aware of what I will talk about and get the chance to purchase the novels in question. I also have access, with teachers permission, to the National Library Collection which I select and leave at the school for use by students. Whenever I talk to a class I try to do 3 things. Firstly, I want to support those students who are good readers and at the same time get them to widen their reading and not get hooked on one genre. Secondly, I want to motivate reluctant readers to see the value of reading by presenting in my own fashion a variety of texts that I know will have the students interested. Thirdly, for those who dislike reading I want them to understand the power of story with the hope that they will aspire to read. Feedback suggests that I am successful with all three goals.

I have a blog at bobsbooksnz.wordpress.com on which I review novels that I read and at present there are 71 novels reviewed. To mention a couple that you might like to know about, try this novel for secondary school students:

*Last Night I Sang to the Monster* by Benjamin Alire Saenz

For younger students:

*Monster Republic* by Ben Norton
*The Time Pirate* by Ted Bell, A Nick McIver Time Adventure

And for years 5/6/7/8

*The Last Days of Summer* by Valerie Hobbs

All these are fully reviewed on my blog. If you want to contact me I can be reached via my blog or at email bobsbooks@clear.net.nz

Lately I have been traveling all over New Zealand from West Coast to Whangarei from Timaru to Napier/Hastings, talking to kids about reading and books. The response has been fantastic and there are a couple of stories I would like to share with you all.

Firstly in collaboration with that wonderful school librarian at Whangarei Boys' High, Dee Brooker, and a unique English teacher from the same school, Robert Pollock, we had a Lads'n'Dads evening, attended by over 50 boys and their fathers. The subject was, of course, reading and books, and I spoke of the relationships between fathers and sons as portrayed in current teenage literature. If you want the list of books I used, email me at bobsbooks@clear.net.nz

Robert Pollock, dressed as ex All Black "coach Bob" ensured the evening was lively and gave spot prizes to boys who could answer a question related to my review. The Principal at Whangarei Boys, Al Kirk, described the evening as the most successful they had ever had. It was a pleasure.

Secondly, I had a surprise when I talked to the year 9/10 students at Karamu College in Hastings. I had reviewed the novel *Ebony Hill* by Anna MacKenzie which was the sequel to that excellent novel *Sea-Wrecked Stranger* only to find that Anna's son and daughter had attended my session and that Anna had been writer in residence at Karamu High school. I found out that the two teenagers on the cover of *Ebony Hill* were Anna's son and daughter and that Anna was working on the third part of the trilogy. This pleased me as I felt there were loose ends that needed further development particularly in the relationship between Ness and Ronan.

Thirdly, a book of short stories that I have just read called *Losing It* edited by Keith Gray on the topic of virginity and the loss thereof. They say that you always remember the first time you had sex, and eight excellent British writers comprising Patrick Ness, Keith Gray, Melvin Burgess, Mary Hooper, Sophie McKenzie, Bali Rai, Anne Fine and Jenny Valentine, contribute contrasting stories. These stories are funny, embarrassing, shocking, culturally and sexually different, but always right on the nail. An essential purchase for High School libraries. For a fuller review, check out my blog at bobsbooksnz.wordpress.com

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If you are ever given the chance to hear Bob talk about books, take it! His enthusiasm is contagious. He teases and taunts students with snippets of stories leaving them hungry to hear more. At one time Bob regularly read over 300 books a year. That’s a lot to review and a lot to remember but he does. Having witnessed Bob in action on many occasions it never ceases to amaze me how he can remember so much about so many books. He does it because he is passionate about reading and engaging children with books. He admits he does it mostly for the boys but that doesn’t mean he leaves the girls out. Indeed everyone, no matter what their reading ability, is catered for and it is all based around the books in your own school library. What more can you want than to have someone promote the books in your library.

Recently, I watched a young boy of eight listen intently as Bob read a passage from Love that dog. You know the poem where the dog Sky, is run over. The young boy’s face began to crumple as he realized what was about to happen next. And just at that pivotal moment, he slapped his hand over his face in horror and I knew Bob had hit the mark. He was hooking kids and it was absolutely magic to watch.

The morning after Bob’s visit to our school I had children queuing up in the library, eager for the books he had discussed. Most are issued now, many are on reserve and the kids are reading. Brilliant!

Travelling so much now, as demand for his talks is high, leaves a little less time to read but he is still an avid reader. Very highly recommended!

Desna Wallace, Fendalton School
Donna Watt is the current Southland representative for SLANZA and is the communications leader. Donna was the Information Centre Manager at Aurora College in Invercargill until mid-November, when she took up a position as Manager of Technical Services at Invercargill Public Library.

On the topic of qualifications and experience, Donna says...
I hold a Diploma in Children’s Literature, and have earned my LIANZA registration again this year, as one of the first batch to revalidate under the scheme. I worked at the School Library Service centre for National Library in the early 1980s, and returned to library work in 1996 after having a family. Other jobs which have added to the skill set included work in accounting, legal and administrative roles.

Donna’s vision for libraries in the 21st century?
My thinking encompasses ubiquitous use of technology, working to claim our place as experts in the fields of technology and transliteracy, and in librarians becoming co-creators and collaborators with their patrons. We can no longer see ourselves as the storage place for information – our patrons can get that anywhere, anytime. We need to find ways to inform them about the added value we can bring to their interactions with information.

On professional development Donna is something of a PD geek!
I love it, enjoy the new ideas, the challenges to dearly held notions, and the opportunities it brings for improving practice, networking with like-minded professionals, the doors it opens, and the ongoing conversations. It cannot be undervalued, and should be pursued with vigour and passion in whatever form it takes that is of value to you.

On the subject of books, Donna says...
I enjoy thrillers and suspense novels, some fantasy, and some historical fiction – and endeavour to knock off one or two when on holiday. The sad fact of the matter, though, is that bouts of reading for pleasure have become few and far between in recent times. I read prodigiously, but most of that is done online, and is of a professional nature.

If we were to ask her Principal or students about her, Donna thinks...
They might talk about professionalism, good humour, a relaxed style, and a welcoming presence. It was heart warming to hear that when my resignation letter was read to the BOT, several of the parents knew me well through their children's dealings with the library, and expressed some sadness at my departure.

And what about the personal stuff, Donna? Who are you, really?
Well, I’m the librarian who has her guitars at school for the kids to use in the library, I have the radio set to The Rock all day in my office, and I host folk club in the library on Fridays at lunchtime.

I am the middle aged woman who battles her weight with sporadic exercise and by usually eating healthily – the exceptions being chocolate and red wine in varying amounts.

I am the mother of two beautiful grown boys now working, and will celebrate my 30th wedding anniversary next year, if luck and fate play nicely.

My German wire-haired pointer is too big for me to take walkies, and my two cats prefer to sleep, and unaware that she is singing aloud, thereby growing my reputation for eccentricity!

I garden in our bush section, enjoy writing, painting and I am possessed of a stunning collection of interior design magazines gathered over the last ten years. They sit alongside my small collection of special picture books, overlooking rooms yet to be decorated!
Trash
by Andy Mulligan

I am always keen to get my hands on a good book which is about another culture, and will appeal to my junior students. This is that book!

Trash is set in an unnamed poor country, on the rubbish heaps which many people may have seen in documentaries. The particular one in the story is fictional but it is based on the real deal which the author observed while in Manila. Children work in the dump making a living selling the things they find. There is no future outside of this hard life; they have little education and are so poor they cannot escape the cycle of poverty.

Trash is the story of three boys who are on the run from the police and the bad guys, after one of them, Raphael, finds a wallet containing cash, a map, and a secret code. He and his friend Gardo hide the treasure with Rat, a boy who has lived amongst the street kids and who knows the ways of the world outside the rubbish dump where the boys live.

The narrative in the book is split between all the characters. Each character has a distinctive voice, and tells the story from his or her point of view. Some characters have a lot to say and take a major part in the action, some are only minor players but they are all important. The book isn’t quite perfect for the adult reader, you need to transform yourself into a reader of the age it is pitched at, but the action is fast paced, the characters loveable and the story engaging and it would work for both boys and girls.

I loved it and read it one big gulp. It is being purchased as a Year 9 set text in our school and I think it will be really popular with the students. Show it to Social Studies teachers as well as English teachers: the themes of poverty, identity, friendship, loyalty, struggle, good vs evil, mean it fits the curriculum beautifully. Suitable for students in Year 9 – 10, and it is a jolly good read.

Book trailers and teacher notes are available from Random House.

Bridget Schaumann RLIANZA
Librarian/Careers Advisor
King’s High School

Sugar Sugar
by Carole Wilkinson

Before anyone gets any ideas about the sweetness of the title, "Sugar!" is our heroine, Jackie’s, way of swearing.

This book isn’t sweet; it is so much more interesting than that. It’s 1972 and Jackie, from Australia but now living in London, takes a weekend off from her work as a shop assistant to head to Paris and show her portfolio to famous French fashion designer Andre Courreges.

She’s optimistic, stubborn and creative, yet two or three careless mistakes later and she’s on her way to Vichy, then Verona, trying to track down two Virginians in a black London cab called Gertrude. She meets up with two Dutch brothers on a mission to find a secret Led Zeppelin concert, falls asleep at the wrong time and ends up in Yugoslavia. The weekend away rapidly spirals out of control, but Jackie refuses to panic, even though she can no longer place exactly where she is on the map. Even though she cannot speak any of the languages of the places she ends up, or has any idea how to get home. In fact, she begins to question where exactly home is now...

This exciting, beautiful, fast paced book captures the chaos of spontaneous travel, the vibe of the seventies (open-toed platform soled shoes and floral slacks!) and, of course, the frustration of falling in love. Through it all, and despite her naivety, Jackie is clever, capable and surprising; you wouldn’t expect a fashion-designer wannabe to know what to do when a worn bit on a flywheel means her bus in Afghanistan won’t start.

There are a few drug and sexual references, so I’d recommend this book for ages 13+.

Alison Rodgers
Curriculum Services Librarian, Christchurch Centre School Services, National Library of New Zealand
Happy as Larry
by Scot Gardner
I’ve been a Scot Gardner fan for many years now. He often writes of country kids without much entertainment in their towns, who are up to dodgy stuff behind the backs of their parents. When I heard he had a new book out I grabbed it quickly, but this one is very different in nature to his other books.

Happy as Larry is the story of Larry Rainbow, born in 1990 in Melbourne, Australia, the son of a very ordinary family: Dad is a postman and Mum stays at home battling internally, yet Larry is far from ordinary. He is cheerful, beloved by many and though at times benighted by troubles, he is loyal and true.

All goes well until Larry is implicated in wrongdoing by a friend, and he loses the trust of all around him. Suspicion and mistrust get stirred up and relationships are altered irreparably. As world disasters start to influence the family’s views of the world Larry becomes increasingly torn between his parents, and takes refuge in his relationship with an elderly neighbour and running. Larry learns about relationships of many kinds and how easy it is to be led into trouble despite your good intentions.

This is a story of family, the trials that families go through and the joy and heartache that come just through living in fast changing times and trying to hold it together.

Every year in Larry’s life is marked with a list of major world events, and which leave an imprint on our psyche.

This book has big issues to discuss, and in a year of stories of zombies and the supernatural it is a refreshing change. The publishers have an age recommendation of 12–16 years, but I don’t think under 16s would ‘get it’. I’m passing it to my Year 13s who have been reading Mandy Hagar and John Green.

Read it to understand how your life has been influenced by world events, and read it for its inherent good humour, sadness and discussion of big issues within ordinary lives.

Bridget Schaumann RLIANZA
Librarian/Careers Advisor
King’s High School

And Baby makes Two
by Dyan Sheldon
If you are a pregnant teenager odds are someone will tell you that you have ruined your life. If you are an American pregnant teenager on TV, friends and family rally round and it is all beautiful and easy and the best thing you have ever done. Real life is not like that.

At 15 Lana Spriggs is fed up with everyone telling her what to do. She wants freedom and a happy home with an adoring husband and cooing baby. After all, taking care of a baby is easy on the TV, everyone helps and tells you how clever you have been. The reality is that the boyfriend does not want a relationship, let alone to be a father. You have to drop out of school to take care of a demanding child, who constantly screams like a train whistle and makes all your former friends suddenly and hurriedly remember previous appointments. You can’t go out, have no money, are facing life in a grotty council flat alone, with no qualifications and therefore no hope of a job and you come to the conclusion that mother (otherwise known as the wicked witch) was absolutely right; you have ruined your life.

This story is told in the first person by Lana who, while not being intellectually handicapped is, well, just plain stupid. Get this for any naïve girl who thinks getting knocked up will mean life on easy street. I am campaigning for a class set.

Dyan Sheldon is also the author of Confessions of a Teenage Drama Queen.

Maree Pavletich
Library Manager
James Cook High School
Beholders Eye
by Julie E. Czerneda
Meet Esen. Sometimes Es. Otherwise known as Esen-alit-Quar. The adorable blue blob. Esen’s kind can manipulate their mass into that of other intelligent species. Their purpose in life is to be a living repository of the biology and culture of all other shorter-lived intelligent species. It takes years of living in secret on each world, ingesting and assimilating the biology of each ephemeral form, learning languages, arts, histories, beliefs, and sciences, all while travelling the limits of known space. Esen doesn’t always get it right and when she loses her web-siblings and discovers a threat to the galaxy’s very existence, she believes she is totally inadequate to the task.

However she has one thing that others of her kind did not – she has friends. This is very good, very traditional and satisfying, hard science fiction, bordering on space opera. A fun protagonist who actually “becomes” whichever species she takes the form of and a universe that makes sense without a lot of scientific technobabble.

I met Julie when she was Guest of Honour at the 2009 National SF Convention in Auckland. In the course of her very busy life, she is a former scientific author/editor and a biologist, having researched the evolution of animal communication and behaviour, which must come in useful as she also edits and mentors young authors, while maintaining her multi-series of books.

Maree Pavletich
Library Manager
James Cook High School

Angel Cake
by Cathy Cassidy
When Polish teen Anya and her family pack up and move to Liverpool, her dreams of a better life are instantly shattered. Instead of the cute cottage and pink cheeked schoolgirls described in her books, Anya is faced with a miserable flat and a swirling mass of students treating her like a zoo exhibit when they realise she doesn’t speak their language. How can she possibly cope?

This story is about the power of friendship, and how just by hanging out with someone who is on their own you can improve their life. I think that this is an important message for young people, especially those that don't believe that one person can make a difference. Something else I really liked about this book is the quirkiness of the characters, and the way they develop during the story and end up better people at the end of the book.

Although the characters weren't entirely believable – for example, Anya's proficiency with English – they were fun to read about. I enjoyed reading this book, and would recommend it to tween and teen girls who like stories with a little drama, a little romance, and a happily ever after!

Phoebe Fordyce
Year 9 student
Ruawai College
Web 2.0 & Social Media

In this regular column, we feature a Web 2.0 tool or application, or highlight the use of social media in school libraries.

What is RSS?
RSS (Really Simple Syndication) is a way of publishing web content such as blog posts, news, audio, and video, in a standardised way.

An RSS feed contains content (it could be full text or a summary depending on the publisher), and metadata about the item, such as publishing dates and authorship.

An RSS Reader brings feeds from all over the web together into one place, making keeping up with the latest news and information so much easier!

For a quick introduction to RSS, watch this video from Commoncraft:
http://commoncraft.com/rss_plain_english

What do I need?
An RSS Reader - there are several options:

Google Reader - great if you're already signed up with Google, just add Reader

A web service - try Bloglines.com/register or Feedbucket.com/register

Your browser - Microsoft Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox (Live Bookmarks)

Your email software - Microsoft Outlook 2007, or Mozilla Thunderbird for example

Some subscriptions!

Blogs and Podcasts - when you visit a site, look for an RSS or XML feed button, or the word "Subscribe". Depending on your browser, you may be able to simply click the button to subscribe. Otherwise, just copy the link URL and add that to your Reader. Subscribe to your school's class blogs!

You can subscribe to blog posts and to comments as well, that way you won't miss the conversation on your favourite blogs.

Wikis - check the "Updates", "Recent changes" or "Latest activity" page for a feed button or link

If you can't find an RSS or XML button, just add a website's URL to your Reader - if a feed exists, your Reader should find it!
Let's get started!

We've put together a starter bundle, containing a selection of RSS feeds we highly recommend to all school library teams.

To subscribe to this bundle, open your Reader, and add a subscription using this URL: http://bit.ly/9b9miM

To access the feed via a mobile device, you can use this QR code:

What's in the feed bundle?

100 Scope Notes
Information Literacy meets Library 2.0
Kids Lit
Libraries and Transliteracy
Library Grits
Library Zest
NeverEnding Search
Skerricks
SLA Weblog
SLANZA Blog
SLANZA collaborative wiki - what's new
The Unquiet Librarian
YALSA blog

To access all the links in this article, use this URL: http://bit.ly/SLANZA-RSS

What else can you do with RSS?

RSS feed widgets are a great way to put the useful content you've found around the web into a convenient place for your library users.

Here are a couple of examples.

Use a link roll for a feed from Delicious (in this case, websites tagged 'authors' and 'books') to add content to a page on your library blog.

Build a portal website

Website applications such as Pageflakes.com and Netvibes.com help you build a portal site based on RSS feeds for all sorts of content.

You might build a portal to support a subject or unit of inquiry in your school.

Using RSS you can bring together news feeds, sites you've bookmarked on Delicious, and related blog feeds, all into one convenient web portal.

For an example, take a look at this school library's portal on Netvibes:
http://www.netvibes.com/library-online#Library

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SLANZA Conference 2011
School Library Association of New Zealand Aotearoa

St Cuthbert’s College, Auckland
Sunday 17 - Wednesday 20 July 2011

Heading for the horizon
Life savers
Navigating the big waves
Getting your feet wet

Tēnā te ngaru whati, tēnā te ngaru puku
There is a wave that breaks, there is a wave that swells

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