



Term 3, 2011

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Collected

on the wave



SLANZA 2011

Conference round-up

We have interviews, session reports, and calls to action

Writers in schools

Emma Gallagher tells us about the NZ Book Council programme

The Kids Lit Quiz turns 20

Pauline McCowan reports on the celebrations

Barbara Murison

Meet the power pack behind Marigold Enterprises

Web 2.0 and Social Media

Maintaining "intelligent connections" post-conference

Editorial

Donna Watt, SLANZA Communications Leader

Welcome to Collected #4, the issue in which we will primarily be celebrating the learning and networking achieved at our wonderful SLANZA Conference, 2011.

So let's take a moment to offer thanks that we belong to a strong professional organisation peopled by willing volunteers who expend personal time and energy in supporting our professional learning. To thank the Auckland conveners for the extraordinary effort that they devoted to pulling together the tableau of speakers, who challenged us, made us think, ask and answer some really hard questions, and who helped to light the path that we must take. To the presenters who shared their knowledge and passions so eloquently, and gave so willingly of their expertise – we thank you and urge you to continue the conversations begun at conference.

To the attendees, we acknowledge that you come, unpaid and giving up precious, unpaid holiday hours with family and friends, and sometimes at a significant personal financial cost, in order to support your own professional development. That is what makes you professionals, and it is that dedication, passion, and commitment to life-long learning that sets you apart. Make sure that you are loud in your commentary on the benefits of conference, of professional learning, and use the opportunity to advocate for your professionalism in every forum that you can find.

We also wish to take the opportunity to welcome our new President, Fiona Mackie. Fiona has officially begun working in the role, leading her first National Executive meeting on the day after conference. The footsteps Fiona follows have left a clear and well signposted direction, with many doors opened and strong connections made by her predecessor, Senga White. It was a powerful experience to see the two seated together at the NE meeting, shoulder to shoulder, as Senga moves into a supporting role. We are truly in good hands as an organisation and I look forward to seeing where this powerful team will take us.

To those who missed conference, read on and gather as much second-hand wisdom as you can. Search the Twitter hashtag #slanza11 to find and follow ongoing conference chatter. Visit the website to read the presentation materials uploaded by presenters, and follow the links to tools, websites and great learning opportunities. Consider this issue of Collected to be but the trail of breadcrumbs, leading you on to extraordinary things.

In a final note, we must also give thanks to EBSCOhost who have examined us and found us to be of sufficient interest and worth to invite Collected magazine to be part of their database collections. This is a huge coup for our organization, and a nod of approval to all of the contributors and people who work, again voluntarily, to put out a magazine worth reading. And it appears that we are not the only ones who think it is!

Donna
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President's column

Celebrating the value of conference

by Fiona Mackie

SLANZA Conference 2011 – all I can say is “Wow!” I’ve never been to a conference that has stimulated and challenged me so much, leaving me with the desire to evaluate my practice and programmes, check my assumptions, and implement new strategies to support student learning. It really was that valuable to me, and I am sure everyone else who attended felt the same.

This edition of Collected will share with you many of the ideas, tools, concepts and strategies that were shared at conference. There was so much to see, hear, digest, and talk about with friends new and old, that it was easy to feel overwhelmed and succumb to that old ‘I can’t do that’ mindset.

So how do you stop feeling overwhelmed or out of touch, if you were unable to attend the conference? By identifying one aspect you want to work on, planning how you are going to do it, and then implementing it. There is nothing stopping us from developing just one thing that will improve our services and support student learning.

What am I going to do as a result of conference? I am going to use Donna Watt’s process from her session to devise a strategic plan that will be presented to our Board, and I’m now using Twitter to keep up to date with developments in the library, literary, education and ICT worlds. I’m also slowly going through the amazing resources referred to by [Joyce](#) and [Judy](#), and am trying to restrain myself from wanting to use them all!

Next week our library team is meeting to discuss what excited us and what we want to implement together. I can see it being a bun fight, as we’ve all been excited by so many different things. How about...

Creating wonderful displays

Try [Carel Press](#)

Identifying the direction for your library

Donna Watt’s presentation on strategic planning will get you on the right track, find three linked Slideshares at [Half pint of wisdom blog](#), [Saving school libraries](#) (the why of strategic planning), the [wickedly difficult parts of strategic planning](#), and how to plan for success, and how to envision your future library – [strategic planning using environmental scanning and scenario building](#).

Starting a Personal Learning Network (PLN)

Follow Joyce Valenza’s [Neverending search](#) blog or Judy O’Connell’s [Learning in an online world](#) blog or follow them via [Twitter](#) @joycevalenza and @heyjudeonline. (But heed a warning from editor – beware of the [mania](#) of a newly-developed PLN!)

Once you’ve started implementing your one thing, publicise it! Be explicit and tell your TLR, your Principal and your Board what you’ve done as a result of attending conference. Share your personal learning with colleagues via the listserv and contribute to the learning of others. Let’s celebrate and recognise the benefit students gain from the changes we’ve made, and support each other too!

Sancta Maria College students performing at the powhiri



John Carr



The conference committee



Judy O’Connell



Joyce Valenza



Paul Little



Carol Hirschfeld



Fleur Beale

Our outgoing President

On digital opportunities, contributing, and connecting

by Senga White

What a ride! Can I just say that the last two years as SLANZA President have been in turns and sometimes all at once: busy, rewarding, full-on, frightening, stressful, exciting, challenging, satisfying ... (and more!)

I vividly remember my first SLANZA National Executive meeting, straight after the very successful Nelson mini-conference in 2006. I was so nervous! I had incredibly big Bridget-Schaumann-shoes to fill and was questioning what on earth I had to offer. I was also a little daunted at who I was sitting round the table with: Liz Probert, Adaire Hannah, Johann Williams, Di Eastwood, Joyce Richards, Kaaren Hirst and Jan Matthews. Heather Manning was the LIANZA Rep and Dyane Hosler was the National Library Rep. I can't imagine a better group of mentors. The Dream Team of education-focused librarians.

I was astonished at the range of projects and the amount of work we managed to juggle and just how hard everyone worked. SLANZA is a fantastic organisation which punches above its weight as we do our best to meet the needs of the members, advocate for the changes we know are vital for our profession and represent our interests at every available opportunity. And that is one of the only things that remain unchanged in the ensuing six years. The face of National Executive has had a complete change. I'm the only one still there from that group in 2006. Fresh blood is good – necessary even, but so is continuity and it's encouraging to see the new team building and developing.

One of our challenges ahead as an Executive will be to harness the myriad of digital opportunities available to us. This work has already begun with the SLANZA Wiki and the first stage of the SLANZA website redevelopment completed. We need to work smarter in providing support to our members and the wider library community and I see the key to this is what we can deliver and how we interact in our growing digital environment.

For all of that and the can of worms that it is, for me our real strength as an organisation is our people. What a wealth of knowledge, experience, enthusiasm, strengths and ideas we have and my personal vision has always been to attempt to connect all of this together for our collective benefit. Every one of us has something to offer, some skill we can share, or some wonderfully wacky or massive or daunting idea brewing away. To scoop all of this up and have every person contribute in whatever way they are able is our ideal. So people, talk to each other, dream together, don't assume someone else will do it or do it better. You are all awesome and if we flock together we will achieve amazing things. Let's keep the discussions going that developed at conference, let's begin the new discussions as our brains open up to even more possibilities. Don't think it can't be done – instead, discuss it with your flock-mates, talk to your local SLANZA representative, email Fiona or myself, post your idea to the School Library email list and be an active part of the excitement that is school libraries in the 21st century.

Happiness is a conference that's buzzing!

As I took a moment to look at the librarian soup that was bubbling around me during the final lunch break during conference, I knew I'd made the right decision in September 2009, when I was asked if it was possible that the 2011 SLANZA conference could be held at St Cuthbert's.

I said that if it was to be at St Cuthbert's, I should be part of the conference committee but *all* I was going to do was look after the venue. Famous last words...

Soon I was engrossed in discussions about the theme, keynotes, strands, venue requirements and became co-convenor.

The committee spent months getting the best possible keynote speakers and there were celebrations as each were confirmed.

It took 4 months to confirm Judy O'Connell and 5 months to confirm Joyce Valenza, and that included the committee deciding to move the conference forward by a week. I think all who heard and met Judy and Joyce agree it was the right decision to make.

All too quickly it was the week before conference, with last minute decisions, emails and phone calls flying, running up and down the infamous stairs and accepting delivery after delivery to St Cuthbert's. I'm incredibly grateful to our IT department and our ground staff, who worked with me for two solid days before conference, making sure everything was set up, in place, working and generally sussed! I didn't sleep much before conference started – too much stressing about all the little things – but when I saw everyone assembled for the powhiri, I knew it was going to be all right. Conference memories which will always stay with me – Joyce's amazement at the standing ovation you gave her, Judy running upskilling sessions at lunchtimes, the laughter and hugs, everyone dancing at the conference dinner. And the best one – as I was locking up on Monday night, a colleague was leaving and she asked "Fiona, I thought this was a conference for librarians?" "Yes Robbie, it's our bi-annual SLANZA conference." "I didn't realise that librarians were so noisy!"

Thank you for breaking the stereotype and see you in Wellington 2013!

Fiona Mackie

Inspiration and insight

An interview with Joyce Valenza and Judy O’Connell

by Lisa Oldham, Development Specialist, School Library Futures at the National Library

At the SLANZA 2011 Conference, I had the privilege of chatting with Joyce Valenza and Judy O’Connell about school libraries. Esther Casey and Elizabeth Jones, both from National Library, joined us as well.

Our discussion was wide-ranging and interesting. Judy and Joyce talked about issues relating to school libraries, from the visionary to the practical. As Joyce says, “There has never been a more exciting time to be a librarian.”

Attributes

Throughout the SLANZA conference, we saw great examples of excellence in school librarianship; from keynotes to local colleagues sharing their knowledge. Esther asked, “What are the attributes required to be a great school librarian?”

“Have an enquiring mind!” Judy quickly replied, and identified a number of other critical attributes. A great school librarian is curious and is passionate about information and education. She (or he) is willing to continuously pursue her own professional development in a variety of formats, including “PD in PJ’s”, for example participating in a webinar delivered from US one week, and a Twitter-based chat with global participants the next.

A great school librarian is fun and friendly, the sort of person that teachers *want* to work with and students *want* to learn from. She is playful, exploring new ideas and new ways to integrate them into the students’ learning. She learns new tools and incorporates them into her library practice, happy in perpetual Beta – refining and revising, dropping and adding tools as she evolves her skills.

*“In my life there is no ‘Yeah, but...’
There are things that really matter.
When I hear ‘no’, I work to getting to yes.”*

“Yes, but” is anathema to a great school librarian. Joyce commented “In my life there is no ‘Yeah, but...’ There are things that really matter. When I hear ‘no’, I work to getting to yes.” “You can do magical things with nothing.” It is not money or resources that create a great school library. They help, of course. It is ideas, creating a welcoming environment, a commitment to learning (our own and the students), working to get to “yes” for the things that matter, ensuring access for all our students, all the time, ensuring their intellectual freedom. It is about creating positive relationships with principals, teachers, and others in school.

We can make a difference from wherever we are. We can aspire to be the best and lead from anywhere.

To be effective in the school library, we need to see ourselves as effectively supporting learning. How do you see yourself? What are your core professional values?

Actions

If we’ve got the personal qualities that we need to be great, then what can we *do* to make sure that our school libraries are providing excellent support for our learning communities? Here are some basics. Know the curriculum! To effectively engage and partner with teachers, we need to understand the curriculum and be prepared to contribute. On a practical level, Judy noted that in secondary schools, focusing our efforts on working with years 9 & 10 is a strategic choice as these teachers are less constrained by the demands of senior school exams.

The school librarian is uniquely positioned to take a “bird’s eye view” of learning in a school. Joyce asserted “Librarians should know what is happening in the curriculum, across the grade levels, across the ability levels, across the disciplines.” Foster creativity; scaffold learning so that students have multiple, alternate methods for producing or publishing their work (video, Presentation Zen, VoiceThread.) Information is messy; model and teach information curation and critical analysis of information so that students learn to navigate successfully through the sea of data.

Joyce and Judy are focused entirely on supporting student learning. I note that neither of them has talked about operational tasks such as covering books or spine labels. Without reservation, Joyce says, “I don’t make the beds!” It is clear from our conversation that these functions, which can be outsourced or delegated, are definitely not the high value tasks that are the real, substantive work of supporting learning in great school libraries. How does each component of your work support learning and teaching?

Opportunities

So what are the opportunities for school librarians over the next 12–18 months? Both Judy and Joyce immediately respond “Curation! [...] this curation thing is *huge!* We need to teach kids to manage their own information landscape.”

Other key opportunities are fostering creativity, developing whole school initiatives to foster and celebrate creativity, such as leading your school to participate in [Mix&Mash](#). Leading the learning around production and publishing is another great opportunity. Teach VoiceThread, video, and other media as vehicles for publishing student created content. Look for opportunities to partner with others – teachers, coaches, IT colleagues, to create great learning experiences for students.

Intellectual Freedom

Intellectual freedom was a recurring theme throughout our discussion. For clarity here is the ALA definition of intellectual freedom:

“Intellectual freedom is the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. It provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause or movement may be explored.”

While we often think about intellectual freedom in the context of censorship, our discussion focused on the “*Right to seek and receive information without restriction*” and “*Free access to all expressions of ideas*” and the role the school library plays in ensuring the intellectual freedom of its learning community. What happens, or fails to happen, if the school library enables or restricts students’ intellectual freedom?

Here is an anecdote highlighting issues of intellectual freedom in two neighbouring schools. Both schools receive free access to a range of digital content, paid for by the state (like EPIC). In school A, access to the digital content is enabled through a library interface. The content is vast and rich and supports the curriculum. It is promoted by the library staff, who work to ensure that staff and students know about the content, how it supports their learning, and how to access it. At school B, there is no access point for the digital content. The library staff have created no pathway to the digital content. They have not told the staff or students that it is available.

When some senior students from school B visit school A, they learn of the digital content. They’re really impressed as they hear how their counterparts have made use of the great content to support their work over the years. They want to know more and wonder aloud why their school doesn’t have this great resource. Then they learn that, in fact, their school does have this tool, but no one has made it available to them. The students are furious. Their right to seek and access information, their intellectual freedom, has been restricted by the failure of their library to create a simple pathway to the content or to share this information with the school community.

Joyce Valenza is the teacher-librarian at Springfield Township High School, Philadelphia. Her innovative and practical advice to guide learners in new and emerging information and communications landscapes has received global attention and acclaim across the international education community. Her Virtual Library won the IASL School Library Web Page of the Year Award in 2005.

Joyce is an active member of several professional organisations, a blogger for School Library Journal, a former columnist for the Philadelphia Inquirer and a regular speaker and lecturer on education issues and technology.

Joyce recently published *14 ways K-12 Libraries Can Teach Social Media* and her own *Manifesto for 21st Century School Librarians*.

Space

So, we’ve got the qualities we need and have identified our opportunities. We’ve got an action plan. We are committed to ensuring our students and teachers have great access to all manner of information and data. We are giving them the tools they need to curate the information, to critically analyse it, to create new knowledge and publish it in interesting ways. Where do we do all this?

As the containers of knowledge, information and story change from print on paper to digital objects and, as we access digital content in a variety of media, we focus a new lens on the physical space of the library. We talk about the “high touch environment in a high tech world” that [Doug Johnson](#) writes about. Joyce tells about a project she did with students. They created video essays about what their school library meant to them. The responses were varied, ranging from tributes to a favourite area of the print collection, to the inclusive and welcoming atmosphere, to the concept of creation space. Each student responded differently, highlighting the importance of the library space to them.

Library spaces need to be welcoming and comfortable. They need to be the “knowledge production areas” described by Johnson or, as Joyce says, “Not the grocery store but the kitchen.” It’s a place to create new things, not just to get stuff. They need to be as flexible as possible with furniture and shelving that can be moved easily to create social learning spaces, performance areas, book discussion areas, as well as areas for quiet reading and reflection.

Judy and Joyce, as they do in the virtual world, shared their knowledge happily and without hesitation. Our time together went very quickly and we ended with a few short summary statements. Great school libraries are about access and intellectual freedom. They are about ideas. Joyce reiterated, “You can do magical things with nothing.” We need to lead and support each other to do great things for all our learners. We need to be people that others want to work with.

Judy O’Connell is an e-learning lecturer in Library and Information Management in the Faculty of Education, Charles Sturt University. Prior to taking up this position in 2011 she was Head of Library and Information Services at St Joseph’s College, Hunters Hill for three years, following her work as consultant for Libraries and Web 2.0 developments for 80 primary and secondary schools in the Western Region of Sydney. Judy’s professional leadership experience spans primary, secondary and tertiary education, at school and system level, with a focus on pedagogy, curriculum, libraries and professional development in a technology-enriched learning environment.

Judy is passionate about global participation and collaboration. Her ongoing commitment to global projects, including being an Australian Board member of the New Media Consortium’s Horizon Report: K-12 edition, and Board member of the international journal *School Libraries Worldwide*, ensures that she remains at the forefront of 21st century learning innovation in schools.

First impressions

Conference registration winners share their thoughts

by Jude Cosson, and Colleen Shipley

Jude Cosson is the Librarian at Bethlehem College in Tauranga. She is the SLANZA National Executive representative for the Waikato / Bay of Plenty region.

On the wave was the theme for the 2011 SLANZA Conference held at St Cuthbert's College Auckland 17–20th July. The conference was made up of delegates from all over New Zealand with a few from overseas who all gathered together to learn about new trends in libraries, network with colleagues and to check out that latest products and services offered by the exhibitors.

I had been listening to bits and pieces about the conference via the School Library email list and through our regional SLANZA committee but I never really started to take a real interest until they confirmed Judy O'Connell as a keynote speaker. Then the committee announced Joyce Valenza, another keynote speaker and that really got my attention. I have been following these two people for a long time now and knew that I would benefit from their knowledge and experience. I applied for and received the SLANZA sponsorship so I was able to go to my first SLANZA Conference.

The conference kicked off on the Sunday night with keynote speaker John Carr entertaining us with his rapping on the theme of *Cold ducks, old and the never-ending wave*.

Monday morning the keynote speaker was Judy O'Connell on the topic of *Do you have the keys to tomorrow?*

Tuesday morning the keynote speaker was Joyce Valenza with *The Wizard of Apps* followed by Paul Little in the afternoon speaking on *Future Imperfect*, and suggesting we shouldn't make Google a verb! On Wednesday morning the keynote speaker was Carol Hirschfeld on *Feel the Fear*. Fleur Beale was the final keynote speaker rounding up the conference on the topic of *The usefulness of boundaries*.

The conference offered an excellent choice of workshops which made selection very hard. I attended Judy O'Connell's workshop *Find it fast and get things done - Knowledge 2.0*. Joyce Valenza's workshop *Library 3.0? Virtual and physical practice: creating new information landscapes for learners* had a parallel thread of connect, communicate and collaborate. These workshops were very informative, and you walked away with your mind buzzing with new information and ideas.

SLANZA Conference registration winners

These reports are from two recipients of the SLANZA-sponsored free registration packages awarded in support of SLANZA Conference 2011. Each conference year, SLANZA offers a number of free registrations to members wishing to attend conference. This year we resolved to hand out more free registrations than ever before, with extra packages directed to support library team members adversely affected by the earthquakes and their aftermath in Christchurch. It is one of our greatest pleasures, as members of the National Executive Committee, to offer this privilege to our regional members, and the following reports clearly show why. The benefits of attending a national conference are great, and the ripples continue long after the conference closing ceremony.

Congratulations to Jude and Colleen for taking the journey and reaping the rewards.

Of the other workshops I attended, two that were particularly good were those presented by Donna Watt – It starts with you: A strategic approach to saving school libraries, one library at a time and Strategic planning for school libraries: Choosing a destination and planning the journey. I came away motivated to re-brand myself and our library so that we have a future in the school community. Not only did Donna encourage this she also gave us the tools and strategies to start us along the road. Her second workshop really built on the previous one where she shared the principles of strategic planning, goals for libraries and identifying critical success factors. I am still learning about 'wicked problems' and dialogue mapping.

I came away from the conference energised and inspired about my future as a librarian. I also came away understanding that **knowing** is not enough – we need to be **doing**. After watching so many people tweeting I realised that I'm not using all of the tools available to me and at times I felt 'unconnected'. So I intend to change that.

Thank you all of those who contributed to this fantastic event, and we look all forward to the next SLANZA Conference in Wellington 2013.

Jude Cosson

From geographic isolation...

to immersion, inspiration & networking opportunities

Colleen Shipley is the Librarian at Marlborough Girls' College in Blenheim.

A rousing powhiri on Sunday afternoon officially launched the conference, and we were suitably loosened up with some entertainment from comedian, poet, and rapper, John Carr.

Monday morning began with an address by Judy O'Connell titled "[Do you have the keys to Tomorrow.](#)" As Judy inspired us with the information revolution, where we have come from, where we are today, and how we as librarians should be embracing the new information environment, my brain went into overload. As I spoke to colleagues during the break I realised others were feeling as overwhelmed as I, and the best course of action was to take one gem of an idea (no matter how small) from each session and put it into action on the return home.

So from Judy's talk I need to plan time to investigate some of the sites she mentioned, such as the New Zealand [creative commons](#) website and [Trove](#), the Australian National Library site. I also plan to spend time exploring [Google scholar](#).

Donna Watt took us on a strategic approach to self-advocacy. This included an eye-opening self-examination of the perception of school librarians. With lots of tips for improving your profile, the tip that appealed to me was one of the evidence-based practice ideas. I will offer to spend some time with classes gathering data about their research skills. This will enable me to provide evidence that they need help.

Professional revalidation is something I will face soon but had been wondering whether it is worth it. I have often felt my geographical isolation and lack of funding are hindrances to gaining revalidation. After a couple of workshops on the topic, one by Sanya Baker and the other by the [Canterbury Registered Librarians Network](#), I now feel armed with knowledge to help me with the task. I am hoping to tap into the collective wisdom of librarian networks through the groups on the [National Library Services to Schools website](#).

In the next workshop session I did my bit and presented a workshop on *Hosting a Living Library*. I was glad I had taken up the challenge to deliver a presentation and felt it went well. This was another BOK covered for my professional registration revalidation.

Tuesday morning began with a journey down the Yellow Brick Road with Joyce Valenza, in order to meet the [Wizard of Apps](#). Joyce's [Down under wiki](#) is on my list of sites to visit, and I am particularly keen to check out her [Spartan Guides](#) for information literacy.

Julia Smith's presentation on blogging helped us define the purposes of a blog and how to convince management we need one.

A blog is something I have been thinking about for a while and this presentation helped me to define what I would use it for. Now I need to investigate further how to start!

I then went on another journey with Joyce Valenza to explore Library 3.0. Joyce described libraries as kitchens for making things, and asserted that one of the doorways to your library needs to be a virtual one. Once again she gave us lots of [sites](#) to explore.

Karen Leahy from Kelston Boys offered sound budgeting advice, and Martin Neyland's talk on eBooks was very enlightening. The language of eBooks now makes a lot more sense. Martin gave us some websites for downloading eBooks, and when my management team asks questions about eBooks I will now feel better equipped to answer.

After lunch Fleur Beale talked to us about changes in writing for the young adult market. She left us with a couple of suggestions for writing competitions and the one I would particularly like to try is writing your life story in six words. I enjoyed her Margaret Atwood example "Longed for him, got him, shit!"

Prior to the closing I attended Senga White's presentation on information literacy. It was gratifying to realise I had been doing some things right at a junior level but I was inspired by Senga's plans for her seniors. She talked about her intention to run tutorials around note-taking, mind mapping, advanced search skills using both search engines and databases, citations, reference lists, study skills and study groups, and how to get the best out of your academic library.

Of course a major highlight of the conference was the dinner at the Yacht Squadron which fitted nicely with our *On the Wave* theme. The band was fabulous, dressed as schoolboys to make us feel at home!

The networking that a conference provides is invaluable, especially for those as geographically isolated as me, as is the opportunity to visit trade stalls.

Well done to the organising team and let's hope the tasks I have set myself bear fruit before the Wellington conference is upon us.

Colleen Shipley

A post-conference to-do list

Inspiring ideas to follow up on

By Corinne Hinton

- Teach students how to manage their academic footprint.
- Teach students about digital citizenship.
- Give students cool tools to use with their work, so that they can work more effectively.
- Have a catalogue that is available 24/7 - where needed, in the classroom, at home, any time.
- Have a catalogue that can link to eBooks, URLs and YouTube clips in order to add value to a search.
- Attract more girls to the library.
- Try and get the library being used more productively before school.
- Have a plan for the library - what we want to happen in the next few years so that we don't stagnate and become irrelevant to the rest of the college.
- Decide why King's College needs a library and what this means in terms of future plans.
- Add a link to the library blog on the library web page.
- Create a Facebook page in order to communicate with the librarians.
- Remind parents about the library blog in the e-letter.
- Make a bookmark to advertise the blog and other sites.
- Collect author blogs/book trailers etc in a suitable online environment.
- Use an electronic photo frame on the counter to display material on a continual loop.
- Put a poll on the blog to encourage participation.
- Find out how many first languages there are amongst students in the college and buy books in their mother tongue.
- Create a foreign languages policy for the library.
- Build a virtual library with a gateway from the intranet? website? it's own stand-alone site?

Corinne Hinton of King's College in Auckland left conference with these ideas to follow up on when she got back to school.

It's quite a list, and an excellent example of the inspiration to be found at a SLANZA conference.

More first impressions

An exhilarating experience for a first-time presenter

By Julia Smith, Librarian at Kerikeri High School

[Blogging: A Tool for Every Librarian's Tool Box](#)

Firstly, a huge thank-you to Jeannie Skinner, National Library Advisor for Northland, who suggested I present and cajoled me. I wouldn't have stepped forward without her assurance that I was capable. I was ready for a challenge, and to me, presenting at a national conference fell squarely within "challenge" territory. I was quietly terrified.

But as I spent the hours (honestly, I spent *many* weeks) preparing my presentation I learned so much myself, and slowly became quietly confident.

Perhaps the biggest factor to help me through was the comradeship – the positive vibes, energy and friendship that the conference personified. You were in front of friends and fellow workers, they had chosen to attend and they wanted to learn. The auditorium was an awesome venue, everything ready to go, no problems.

Yet even though I knew my work well, and had practised extensively, with nerves on the morning I ended up reading more of my presentation than I would have liked [sigh]. After it was over it was like, OMG, *all* that time preparing and it is finished. But alongside that comes the exhilaration of having achieved something outside your comfort zone. Forget quiet, I was positively elated.

What I was hoping to achieve with my presentation was by sharing my blogging experience and knowledge I would give librarians the support, information, and confidence to approach and implement this particular type of social media. Thanks to all those who gave me such positive feedback, and those that took the time to approach me between workshops to thank me, that was so rewarding.

Personally and professionally, presenting at conference has given me inner confidence and empowered me to seek further challenges. Would I recommend it? Absolutely. Go for it.

Julia's school library blog is [Cover to Cover](#)



Fiona Mackie presenting Julia with her Certificate of Merit for literacy and enjoyment of reading

No question – the AnyQuestions presentation was a hit!

by Mary-Jane Revington, Librarian at Gisborne Boys' High School

Robert Baigent is wasted in the anonymity of [AnyQuestions](#), judging by his performance in the 90-minute workshop he delivered with his colleagues Anne Morgan and Lisa Oldham at the SLANZA conference. Actually the three of them were pretty enthusiastic but Robert is the manager of the service and he is a fine advocate for it. Their topic was *The Fearless Librarian: lessons that can be learned from the virtual librarian*.

They had our attention right from the start, with a role play taken verbatim from a transcript of a “conversation”, involving quite a bit of “shouting” – a frustrated customer waiting for an operator to help, venting imaginatively in capital letters. Other lively role plays gave us an indication of the variety of inquiries and “clients” the service deals with.

AnyQuestions has 120 operators round the country, working out of libraries from one end of the country to the other. They are online between 1pm and 6pm, answering questions from students needing help with homework questions. The operators are trained to deal with all sorts of situations, and in particular to react to the information need rather than any obnoxious behaviour. Inappropriate inquiries have dwindled to “negligible”, according to Robert. Touchy subjects like evolution or birth control are dealt with carefully. If an operator becomes aware of such issues as potential suicide or abuse, the service has a number of agencies it can refer students to.

Rush hour for the service is 2–3pm, but increasingly the operators are finding themselves busy from 5–6pm. Students are led through the information literacy process, rather than just given the answers to their questions. Some more challenging inquiries have taken 90 minutes to resolve.

The abstract for this workshop asked the question, Do we respond differently in a virtual environment than we would in a face to face situation – and if so, why? In break-out discussions, it was agreed that our response is different, because we usually know the person asking the question. This and our knowledge of curriculum subjects in our schools, shortcuts the process in a face to face encounter.

Robert Baigent is the service manager of AnyQuestions, UiaNgaPatai and ManyAnswers.

Anne Morgan has been with the National library for nearly 10 years. She has worked as a reference librarian, AnyQuestions operator, selector for fiction and language resources and as a school library adviser. She is the national programme development co-ordinator now, working with the Services to Schools Learning Futures team.

Lisa Oldham is that marvellous person who keeps us up to date on the listserv with latest blog posts. I love the service she provides. Lisa is the development specialist in the Learning Futures team in Auckland. She has worked in a variety of library environments including schools, corporate, special and public libraries in New Zealand and overseas.

Robert Baigent, Lisa Oldham and Anne Morgan



Sharks or dolphins?

Using evidence-based practice to build relationships

by Mary-Jane Revington

Prove your value. Be reasonable and responsible. Keep up with trends. Always ask for more.

That is what Dr Hilary Greenebaum told us in Session 10, in a presentation called *Do You Swim with Sharks or Dolphins?* She was talking about how to build and maintain a mutually beneficial relationship with your principal.

Speaking from an extensive background in education, Dr Greenebaum said that being a school principal is a lonely job. “It’s very complex. There are so many things you can’t talk about.” Principals were over-worked, over-scheduled and distracted, she said. Also, they were clueless about librarians – “there’s no training for principals about librarians”.

Dr Greenebaum grew up in the United States and described herself as an avid reader, the library her sanctuary in a life where changing schools every two years was the norm. She became a teacher with a focus on literacy, and rose to become Principal of a 900-student middle school where students ranged in age from eleven to fourteen.

A key focus for librarians in building a good relationship with the Principal was to use evidence, she said. “It takes away from personality.” Information, and not just your stock-take or end of year reports, was a powerful tool. Collect as much information as you can, she said. Aim for evidence-based decision making.

“Make plans to share what you have learned here. Get to know your principal and colleagues on a deeper level; share your passion.”

“Share your knowledge; focus on student reading and learning. Show that yours is a responsive library. Does your collection support specific learners and readers? What is the rate of specific student borrowing?” She talked about professional expertise, reflected in an ability to plan, do, reflect, evaluate, learn, share, focus on students, advocate and strategise.

Energy was another factor Dr Greenebaum said. A healthy lifestyle – exercise, good food, good company – were critical components in maintaining good energy levels. “We’ve all worked with toxic people, but in your work, focus on the upside, the nice people.”

How to prove our value? “Share your evidence; continue to step up your technical skills; take risks; celebrate your successes – and your failures.” And make sure you have fidelity of process – whatever you start, make sure you can maintain it.

Dr Greenebaum was born in Boston and grew up in San Francisco. She has been a primary school teacher, a literacy resource teacher, a teacher librarian, middle school principal, university lecturer and a technology training consultant for a publishing company. She has been in New Zealand just a year, and is the educational training and sales consultant for Softlink Pacific, providers of the Oliver and Alice library management system.

Dr Hilary Greenebaum – “Use your evidence”



School libraries and blue skies

Opportunities, potential and possibilities

by Donna Watt



At conference this year there was much talk about the future of school libraries, discussion that focused not just on the potential threats that abound, but that also highlighted the opportunities available to us, should we dare to choose them.

As a sector, we need to understand that the stars have never been aligned in a more favourable position for school libraries. We have a new curriculum document that implicitly provides a mandate to library teams to contribute to teaching and learning. The vision in the document states that New Zealand children will become connected, effective users of communication tools; be lifelong learners who are critical and creative thinkers, and active seekers, users and creators of knowledge. The values express a picture of students who will think critically, creatively, and reflectively, and who will demonstrate integrity by being honest, responsible, and who will act ethically. All of these ideas connect explicitly with the core business of libraries.

The key competencies go on to describe capabilities for living and lifelong learning as encompassing:

Thinking – to use creative, critical, and metacognitive processes to make sense of information, experiences and ideas and construct knowledge. Is a library or information centre a place to facilitate this?

Using language, symbols and text – to use, access, make, decode texts, of all kinds, (implying information literacy, multiliteracy and transliteracy). Is this an opportunity for library teams?

Managing self – to establish personal goals, make plans, manage projects and set high standards. Develop strategies for meeting challenges... Does the structure of guided inquiry support this competency? Can we help to grow students who are resilient, don't give up at the first obstacle, know where to go to seek information or help... yes, yes, and yes.

Relating to others – to actively listen, recognize other points of view, and work together. Can we work this way in the library, modelling these dispositions, supporting teachers in expecting them of students? Do we have the resources on hand to showcase alternative points of view? Does our workspace invite a variety of flexible student groupings? Why yes, I do believe we can, we have and it does!

Participating and contributing – to be actively involved in and contribute to communities, local, family, school and global. Can libraries facilitate that through online communities, helping to develop an understanding of the etiquette, social boundaries, risks and opportunities for social good in the online community environment? Again, that's a definitive yes.

Of course, the subject areas and individual strands within the curriculum itself provide a myriad of ways in which library teams can support teaching and learning, and our familiarity with the language of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment will allow us to read those opportunities accurately and respond to them appropriately.

One final note on the curriculum and its relevance to the library and information worlds. Learning areas (p16.) makes particular note of the need to make use of the natural connections that occur between subject areas. "While the learning areas are presented as distinct, this should not limit the ways in which schools structure the learning experiences offered to students. All learning should make use of the natural connections that exist between learning areas and that link learning areas to the values and key competencies." Library professionals are perfectly placed to see the big picture and to help teachers and students to make those connections. As we hear the conversations happening across the wider school, we see the commonalities and, if we are properly tuned in, we can help to facilitate this connection making.

The curriculum itself is the first star to fall into alignment. The second is the Government's rollout of high speed broadband. This is an initiative that is costing Government and taxpayers a huge amount of money. There is an imperative that it will succeed in connecting New Zealanders (read students in schools) to the information world, and presumably that it will improve student learning outcomes. As information professionals we know students will not become critically literate users and creators of information simply by having access to superfast broadband. We must work with teachers to create opportunities for learning that allow students to engage with the information world in a range of contexts, and which employ assessment models that measure their critical and information literacy skills, and their ability to create new knowledge and personal understanding, (skills which are transferable), rather than measuring content found and regurgitated.

The final star in this magical alignment is social media and the proliferation of Web 2.0 tools themselves. School librarians can and should leverage this technology to lead the way in their schools. Opportunities to lead the way in our schools abound in this environment: by being an early adopter; facilitating professional development for teaching staff; creating an online presence for the library; being socially connected and networking with other professionals to stay ahead of the game.

Now is the time to leverage these technologies, and create opportunities to lead, model, and advocate for our position as the hub of learning within our school communities.

We have much to do as a professional community to position ourselves to seize these opportunities. We must engage in professional development in our local, regional, and national communities. We need to engage with social media, develop an online presence, and grow the confidence and ability to lead with these tools to engage our school communities. We must use them for advocacy, measuring and documenting the contribution that we make. We must show ourselves to be an essential link in the learning continuum. If this digital revolution happens without us, we risk being left behind.

So, let me take you back to the Wordle at the beginning, and explain its significance. The vision for school libraries shown in the Wordle came from the passionate and professional librarians who engaged with me in a workshop at conference. After being ruthless in our assessment of the current perception of school libraries, we moved on to blue-sky thinking and worked together to envision what school libraries could, and should, be. This is their vision, and it is filled with hope, potential, possibilities – and almost all of them are within our own power to effect.

And that's what it's all about – do we dare to envision a positive future for school libraries, and then perform the actions that will bring that vision to fruition? Are we going to wait for someone else to save us, or can we set about saving ourselves? These are questions that only you can answer.

On happenstance, and a conversation with a bard

by Donna Watt

I knew it was going to be a great conference from the moment I was forced from my seat on the Auckland leg of the flight in order to make way for Sam Hunt to take the seat next to mine. At least, I hoped it was a good omen. One can never be sure that a fellow passenger on a busy flight will make a good travelling companion, and I guess there is probably even less certainty when the traveller is likely to be weary of planes and equally weary of unknown folk making familiar advances. Sam, however, allayed my concerns as soon as he was seated, by commenting on the relative expanse of leg-room, and laughing at me when I said I didn't usually find that to be a problem. According to him, some of us are just "born like that". And so it began.

Sam quickly identified that we were travelling to a school library conference, and were well acquainted with a dear friend of his. Having established that we were all practically family, as so often happens to Kiwis on any journey, we commenced the sharing of world views and experiences that can be easier with strangers than friends. It was, of course, logical to ask this man if he had been working in Invercargill, having first spotted him serenading a local netball team at our point of departure. And this very tall teller-of-tales, a man with a memory so prodigious it is the subject of research, proceeded to take us on a delightful journey woven through with quotes from his own poems and the words and lyrics of others.

We of course spoke of poetry in the curriculum, and Sam did express open disgust that children are not simply exposed to spoken poetry, and allowed to fall in love with it. As he did, with a poem recited by a Hungarian woman in her own language, heard as a child and loved immediately and forever, even though not at first understood in any way. Sadly, we bring our young people to poetry by force, and analyze the language to the point of rigor mortis. I have always been uncomfortable with this, but it was a thought never clearly articulated until Sam made this comparison: How can we expect a poem to be appreciated, unheard, any more than we can hear the beauty of a sonata by looking at it, written, on the page?

Sam quoted Dylan Thomas as having described poetry as "what makes me laugh or cry or yawn, what makes my toenails twinkle, what makes me want to do this or that or nothing." And when I enquired after Sam's Muse, he recalled Hone Tuwhare having compared the process of finding inspiration to being exposed to high-flying seagulls, and the potential to be splattered with the 'fruit' of their labours – Sam actually used an earthier description. One can seek to find more seagulls, and thereby hope to receive more 'inspiration', but it still remains a matter of serendipity. A wonderful metaphor and only one of many shared on a journey that ended up being far too short. A bit like Sam Hunt's travelling companion.



Writers in schools

The NZ Book Council's education programme

by Emma Gallagher, Education Co-ordinator for the New Zealand Book Council

*“One of the best days in my life was last week,
sitting in the library. I know.
Who would have the best day of their life
in a library? Well, I did.
But it wasn't what I was reading.
It was who I was listening to.”*

An Upper Hutt Primary School student
on author David Hill's Writers in Schools visit.

It's hard to quantify the effect meeting of a New Zealand author (someone who is just like us, our voices, and our stories) on a young reader. Hosting an author at school brings ideas and worlds to life, it creates vibrant and dynamic links to learning and creativity. Perhaps now more than ever, as books and information are becoming digital, librarians are finding new ways to become vital to, and enhance, the reading experience. Books are just the beginning.

The New Zealand Book Council's *Writers in Schools* programme has been running for over thirty-five years, working with school librarians, teachers and some of the country's best loved and award winning authors, including Margaret Mahy, Dame Fiona Kidman, Kate de Goldi and Albert Wendt. We provide free author visits to around 50,000 students a year in over 200 schools across the country.

Poets and picture book writers, illustrators and novelists, graphic novelists, non-fiction writers, reviewers, essayists, and marine photographers. *Writers in Schools* authors relate not only to English and literature, but to other school subjects: the sciences, social sciences, arts and the environment. They're as far-reaching and diverse as the books in your library or on your eReader.

While the choice of authors on the programme may be wide, our online booking form helps to find ones that fit your requirements. You can choose target age groups, what kind of writer you want, and what you would like the writer to do. Librarians and teachers then work with the writer before the visit to tailor sessions to each particular school and class – authors can speak about their work, their inspirations, and read from their books. They can give creative writing workshops to students, and help teachers hone their own creative teaching skills.

Last year we took the *Writers in Schools* format a step further with *Creative Coaching* writer residencies, a curriculum targeted programme funded by the Ministry of Education.

The author spent six or seven sessions working with a small group of students and their teacher on a specific literary project, with the focus being on the finished product. The schools produced poetry posters, school magazines, short story anthologies, picture books, and play scripts – all the creative genius of the students, but edited, directed and honed by author. The idea was to allow a deepening of the *Writers in Schools* experience, to have the writer, teacher and students working together over a number of workshops, focusing on specific curriculum criteria, and for this to be documented digitally so other schools can learn and follow the process. Check out our [Creative Coaching blog](#), created by teachers, writers and students, or watch out for a segment on the Ministry of Education's Digistore.

In contrast, our popular *Speed Date an Author* workshops are fast paced and energetic. Each event features six leading authors, working with five groups of ten students for 15 minutes each. Authors focus on a particular aspect of writing such as building believable characters, top tips for sounds in poetry, and writing dialogue. Students can then use their new skills in the creative fiction short story competition.

We run regular creative writing and book review competitions for students on our website, offering great prizes. To get the latest information, competition deadlines, and reviews on children's and YA fiction, sign up to our mailing list for our quarterly ePublication *The School Library*. For further reading ideas, visit our website for an archive of children's book reviews dating back to 2000 – search by title, book category or age group to find the perfect fit.

At the Book Council we are always working on new ways to support school librarians and teachers, to create engaging and lasting experiences for young readers, and to inspire our future writers. *Writers in Schools* poet and storyteller Apirana Taylor still remembers the effect of a high school poetry reading by Hone Tuwhare: 'It's hard to explain what actually having the writer there means. You feel someone thinks you're important because you've got a writer there.'

The Book Council is a not-for-profit organization promoting the love of reading, inspiring more New Zealanders to read more, particularly New Zealand writers and writing – our own artists and our own points of view. If your school is interested in becoming a Book Council member and taking part in *Writers in Schools* or other programmes, please call us on 04 801 5546 or visit our website: bookcouncil.org.nz



Images l to r

St Georges' students listen to
Api Taylor

Kate de Goldi at Horeke School

Tracey Duncan at Waitetuna School

Why not make reading a sport?

The Kid's Lit Quiz turns 20

by Pauline McCowan, Programme Advisor, National Library of NZ

Wayne Mills has made reading a sport with the establishment of the Kid's Lit Quiz twenty years ago. At that time Wayne was a lecturer at Waikato University. He is now a senior lecturer at the Faculty of Education, University of Auckland School of Arts, Languages and Literacies. Wayne is widely recognised as one of New Zealand's foremost authorities on children's and young adult fiction having been awarded the Storylines Margaret Mahy Medal in 2008 and the Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit in the Queen's New Year Honours list in 2011. His Margaret Mahy Award lecture highlighted the importance and pleasure of reading aloud to children and the joy of being read to, no matter your age or stage as a reader. Wayne's advocacy for children's books and reading over 25 years has included chairing roles in both the Hawkes Bay and Waikato Children's Literature Associations, and working with the New Zealand Children Books Foundation, now the Storylines Children's Literature Trust.

In the winter of 1991 fourteen teams of intermediate students met at the Teachers' College in Hamilton for the first Kids' Lit Quiz. The quiz became international in 2003, going to England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, China, and South Africa. Canada entered the quiz this year.

In the beginning teams of four intermediate students competed and now the competitors are 10–13 year olds. Teams can be all boys, all girls or mixed, from public, private or church schools so catering for all kinds of students who have one thing in common, they are passionate about reading. Teachers and school librarians select the competitors, looking for students who are widely read, have good general knowledge and are avid readers.

The sport of reading particularly suits boys. Wayne Mills says, "The quiz is about rewarding kids who love reading and who are good at it. For decades in schools we've recognised achievements in other arenas – through science fairs, Mathex and, above all, in sport. There is nothing for our passionate young readers. The competitive side to the quiz is a real draw and I believe it is specifically benefiting boys as a result."

Students 'train' by reading widely. On quiz day teams are asked 10 questions in 10 categories, with one of those categories covering visual literacy, as a third of the New Zealand Language curriculum covers this aspect of learning. Teams can choose the category they like best as their strong category and so double their points. Regional winners compete to represent New Zealand in the international final.

This year's international final week was held on July 19th organised by the Waikato Children's Literature Association and hosted by Southwell School, Hamilton followed by a Gala Dinner to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the quiz. The quiz is heavily reliant on sponsorship that comes from a variety of sources one of these being SLANZA.

Teams participating were: Bristol Grammar, England; Cockermouth School, United Kingdom; Manor Gardens School, South Africa; Southwell School, Hamilton, New Zealand; Tahuna Intermediate, Dunedin, New Zealand; Summit Heights Public School, Canada. Each team arrived with a group of supporters consisting of teachers, parents and siblings.

Watching the participants relating to each other, watching the score board and watching Wayne working as Quiz Master is very exciting. Think of an electrifying sporting event and you are on the way to understanding what the afternoon is like. Buzzers ringing as teams answer questions, high fives as participants congratulate and encourage each other, whoops of joy and amazement as the questions are so competitively and competently answered. The knowledge displayed is astonishing and there is obviously only one thing each team wants to do and that is to win!

The afternoon and the dinner were attended by Lady Susan Satyanand, wife of the Governor General of New Zealand, the Mayor of Hamilton and the local members of Parliament. The Gala Dinner was a glittering occasion hosted at Southwell School. Children's author Alison Robinson and Southwell Librarian Gerri Judkins entertained and informed the dinner guests with readings by David Hill, Tessa Duder, and Jenny Hessel. Brian Falkner was the highlight speaker and during the afternoon he had written a rap about the Kids' Lit Quiz so he donned dark glasses, a hat and with the addition of a boom box rhythm, he had the dinner guests 'rolling in the aisles' with his take of the quiz and the participants.

Thank you SLANZA for the chance to attend this fabulous occasion and have the privilege of being of being in the company of so many well read young people. This year's winners were the team from Manor Gardens, South Africa. Check the results and become informed further by visiting www.kidslitquiz.com. My challenge to people in school libraries is to become involved in the sport of reading!



Left: Brian Falkner (with poster of Wayne Mills)
Pauline McCowan, Beatrice Traub, Jenny Hessel, Rose MacMillan



Below: Quiz tension
Lady Susan Satyanand and Louise Clark

A back story

From Library Advisor to publisher and editor

by Barbara Murison

I live my life surrounded by books. They are stuffed into the bookshelves in my sitting room, they are piled beside my bed (some possibly have fallen down *behind* the bed), overdue books for the public library are in a carrier bag by the garage door, and wonderful, new, fresh-from-the-publisher books have just been left at the front door by the courier – all waiting to be read.



When I left my National Library job as School Library Adviser to the schools and colleges in Wellington, the Kapiti Coast and the Wairarapa in 1993 I had really made very few plans for what I was going to do over the next couple of decades. My first feeling was one of immense freedom – no more having to be anywhere at a time prescribed by someone else. I could sit/lie about all day reading, visiting friends, going to movies in the daytime, maybe even (just to keep my mind trim) learning to play bridge.

It sounded good as I wandered home after my last farewell party but as the first week went by I discovered I simply was not programmed for that sort of life style. My life style was with books – preferably putting them into other people's hands saying 'I think this is something you would like'. I had done that in some way or another for the past 40 plus years. I began to suffer serious withdrawal symptoms. More than anything I knew I was going to miss the heady feeling of going into a school or college library, looking at the shelves with the TLR and Librarian, establishing the gaps and then, even headier, sometimes going off to the bookshops to help spend part of the budget and try to fill the gaps – I am sure it doesn't work like this very often now and I am looking back to 20 years ago. However, it was this that led me to the establishment of my bulletin – *Around the Bookshops*. If I couldn't physically put the book in someone's hand at least I could suggest something they might like and try to share a little of my passion for the whole genre of children's literature. The first issue, looking very small and limp, went out on November 15th 1997 to 50 clients. How did I have the temerity to put it in the mail?

But that was then and this is now. *Around the Bookshops* has expanded and now has a stiff, shiny cover which for the past couple of years has been printed in full colour (if only I could do that for the whole 56 to 62 pages *inside* the cover).

Unlike its 1993 parent which was really just a list of good books to buy for the school library it now includes interviews (mainly with writers), articles, comments on books by young readers and a couple of pages of book news. Early in its life it was joined by another publication *Too Good to Miss* which comes out annually in May and this usually is a list of books. However, in 2009 and in May this year I published the first two of a 'trilogy' which I hope will by 2013 have covered all the major New Zealand writers and illustrators for children and young people. It seemed to take forever to do this by the time I had gathered the biographical notes written by the authors and illustrators, their advice to young writers, photos, and many, many emails back and forth.

Some of the wonderful spinoffs to the job like this is if I had decided to learn to play bridge in that fateful week after I 'retired' from National Library I would have been involved in learning how to bid and call and finding out who

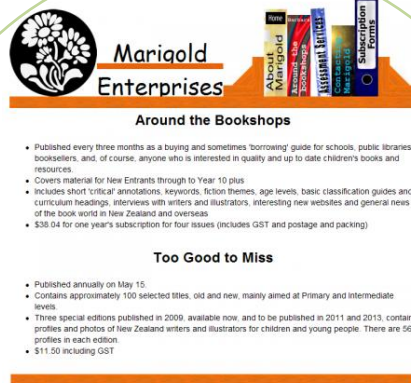
Ely Culbertson was and how you follow suit. I

know, without being deep in the children's literature culture I would never have had that contact with so many writers for the *Too Good To Miss* series, never gone to Melbourne to stay on

John Marsden's amazing Tye Estate and be part of one of his writing courses. I wouldn't have been involved in the annual Storylines Free Family Day or continued to go to every NZ Post Children's Book Award evening. I wouldn't have the privilege of going into schools and talking to children about

books they might like to comment on for me. I wouldn't be woken early in the morning by that magical 'thump' on the front doorstep as yet another parcel of brand new books arrives for me to look at. I wouldn't have been involved in putting a team together to do the preliminary judging for the NZ Post Children's Writing Competition.

I count myself incredibly lucky that at a time when so many of my friends are starting to definitely show signs of wanting to slow down I am still able to be involved in the colourful, magical, ever-changing, wonderful world of children's books.

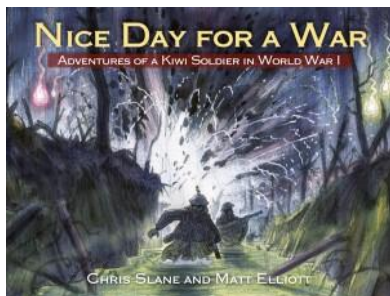


To find out more, visit marigold.co.nz
or search the web for "Barbara Murison"

Book Reviews

Two New Zealand graphic novels

Reviewed by Greig Daniels, Librarian at Tokomairiro High School, Milton



Nice Day for a War: Adventures of a Kiwi Soldier in World War One

by Chris Slane and Mark Elliot

Harper Collins New Zealand, 2011

ISBN 978 1 86950 901 9

Shaolin Burning

by Ant Sang

Harper Collins, New Zealand, 2011

ISBN 978 1 86950 813 5

As a long time comics fan it is always a real pleasure to see the work of New Zealand cartoonists and graphic artists. This year has seen the publication of two major graphic works in New Zealand.

Ant Sang has published *Shaolin Burning* a tale of kung fu and the Shaolin monks. I first became acquainted with Sang's work in the 90s through his self published comic, *Filth*. He attempted a long form work in *Dharma Punks* which was an examination of the 80s punk scene. He also gained prominence as the main character design artist for the New Zealand animated comedy, *Bro Town*.

Shaolin Burning is sombre in tone, telling the story of the aftermath of the destruction of the Shaolin temple in the mid 1600s. A young orphan girl, Deadly Plum Blossom, born on this day grows up under a Shaolin nun's tutelage to be an impressive warrior. An embittered monk, Monk Who Doubts, escapes the fire and becomes an engine of vengeance. He seeks to destroy the emperor who destroyed the temple and killed his lover.

The two protagonists are destined to meet, and they do only after a great deal of battle and bloodshed.

Sang tells the story well and manages some nice moments of characterization for both the girl warrior and the revenge obsessed monk.

No kung fu story would be complete without action sequences and Sang's artistic strengths are well used in both portraying individual conflict as well as large scale battles.



The overall plot is well laid out, but occasionally slips up in the panel to panel story telling. Passages of time are sometimes poorly handled visually. The decision to produce the story in black and white makes the story seem stark and adds to its gravitas. However, the decision to use half tones on some pages makes the story telling murky and obscures Sang's fine line work.

In general I thought this was a good reading experience and an exciting story and feel it would appeal to senior readers and fans of graphic novels.

In the opening paragraph I mentioned graphic works and that comment covers "Nice day for A War". This book is both diary and history as well as graphic novel. I saw four pages of this in the Book Council's Book Notes and liked them immediately.

Chris Slane is a well known New Zealand graphic artist, and was co-author of the ground breaking graphic novel *Mau: Legends of the Outcast*.

The book presents the diaries of World War One soldier Cyril Elliot. The book is made up of expository text by his grandson Matt, diary entries, illustrations and comic sections by Chris Slane.

Slane's art is incredibly appealing; his craggy style has always been a favourite of mine. The decision to illustrate some of the more outstanding entries in a comic format is a good one. Slane uses a landscape page style, and his drawing line is very impressive. He captures the grime; mud and dust of the setting and his soldier's faces and poses are very expressive. He illustrates the action clearly and uses a subdued colour palette to convey atmosphere and mood.

The strength of this book is not just in the graphic excerpts but in its overall presentation and content. To supplement the diary excerpts, there is great deal of background material in text and illustrations and there is a very good glossary of World War One slang. The design and layout is reader friendly and the text, diary excerpts and graphic sections make the whole work visually appealing.

I could have really used this book effectively in my library around Anzac Day and it will be a major resource in 2012.

It might also be a useful class resource for Year 7-9 students and will appeal to younger male readers.

The Future of Bookselling?
Tony Parker – Director of Southern Sky Books



My first SLANZA conference was a very enjoyable experience. As a bookseller for over 33 years (some of those years with my father’s business, Jay Books) and having called on many school libraries over this time it was great to see some familiar faces and catch up with many of you.

The decision here at Southern Sky Books to do most of our business via our website was based on a number of factors, but one major reason was the range and variety of titles we can now offer libraries by effectively having millions of titles in our “book display”. Buying from websites such as ours is of course particularly useful when replacing worn out or missing books or tracking down other books by a popular author or series or just to see what’s new and recommended.

As long as the site is easy to navigate and relevant to its customers, (hopefully Southern Sky has accomplished this) buying books this way should be an efficient and enjoyable experience.

With the emergence of eBooks there are some considerable unknowns in how the structure of the book industry will change in the future and where booksellers will “fit”, but the one thing I do know is that to be a successful bookseller it will come back to what has always made successful booksellers, service, service and more service; especially by presenting books to our customers that are relevant, appropriate and above all interesting.

I would like to invite those of you who are not familiar with our website to come and take a look.

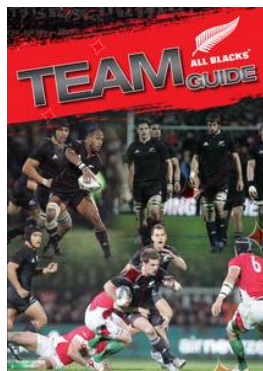
We only sell to schools and libraries and have been receiving some wonderful feedback since we launched our site last year. We pride ourselves on great service, competitive prices and a comprehensive selection tailored to schools.

Tony
tony@southernsky.co.nz southernsky.co.nz

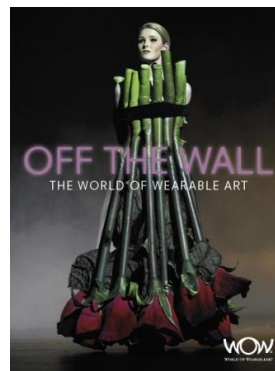
New and recommended titles from Southern Sky



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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.

This year's conference was a very connected one. St Cuthbert's network initially allowed us 30 ports – but we soon discovered that this wasn't nearly enough, so it was increased dramatically to 150! There certainly were a lot of devices in evidence: lots of laptops, iPads, iPods and various smart phones, as well as the computers available to all in the library.

So what are SLANZA people using online?



Twitter

All in all, about 30 people were tweeting from or about the event, using the Twitter hashtag #SLANZA11.

Although you can search Twitter, unfortunately tweets don't hang around long – just a couple of weeks. So [we've made an archive using Keepstream](#) that starts with the opening of conference on Sunday 16th July, and extends about a week after conference.

We hope that if you were at conference, this archive will help you remember and find some of the great stuff that was shared by various presenters and speakers. If you couldn't be there, reading through the archive will give you an idea of what went on, a taste of the fantastically positive conference vibe, and point you in the direction of some great readings, resources, and connections.

Now that conference is over, we plan to continue the conversation on Twitter using the hashtag [#SLANZA](#). Those of us who tweet will use this hashtag on items of interest to SLANZA members such as links to blog posts, library-related articles, useful applications and ideas for school libraries, so it is worth checking regularly. A 'Tweetup' is in the pipeline too, details will be on the School Library email list soon!



Blogs

As a result of prodding from Judy and Joyce at conference, many people have begun blogs of various types. Some are personal, some are for professional reading, some for their schools, and some linky goodness. Some recently launched blogs are [Serious Fun](#) (a collaborative effort from Bridget Schaumann, Miriam Tuohy and Julia Smith), Donna Watt's blog [Halfpint of Wisdom](#), [Cover to cover](#) by Julia Smith, Senga White's blog [Senga's Space](#), Desna Wallace's blog featuring [Book Trailers for Kids and YA](#), and Lisa Salter's [Ruawai library blog](#).

If you have a new blog and you want to get it 'out there', pass it on via the School Library email list and tell everyone about it – after all, social media is all about networking.



The SLANZA website

Our website now has [links to many of the presentations and documents from the conference](#). While you're there, remember to check [the SLANZA blog](#), or better yet – [subscribe to the RSS feed](#) so you never miss an update. [The SLANZA wiki](#) has some photos from conference, and could be a good place to start a discussion about the flow-on effects of conference.



Facebook

It's true what they say, Facebook can help you connect and share with people. Okay, so it's probably not something you'd do at work! But many of us spend time continuing our professional learning online after school hours. If Facebook is somewhere you hang out, you might consider joining the [SLANZA group](#). Anyone who joins the group can post links to the page. If you find cool things that you'd like others to know about this is a great place to post them. Judy O'Connell regularly updates the group with her latest finds!



Goodreads

Interested in social reading? Try [Goodreads](#). Share the books you read with your colleagues, and your friends, set up an account for your library, link that to your blog or Facebook account, maybe even your library software. You can enter reading challenges, connect with fellow readers in book groups and participate in author interviews. It's fun, but it is also very useful. You can look at what others are reading, read their reviews and see their book ratings. Think of it as another selection or readers advisory tool, both for school and your own reading. There is a [SLANZA group](#) on there if you'd like to join us.



Flickr

We are in the process of uploading conference photos to [our new Flickr account](#). SLANZA members in the [Waikato / Bay of Plenty region](#) also have a Flickr account to share photos of professional development workshops and other events. If you have photos from conference that you'd like to share, please contact [Miriam @ Russell Street School](#) – or you can always upload them directly to the SLANZA wiki!

Thanks to [www.blogperfume.com](#) for the lovely Social Media icons.