

Editorial

I recently had the opportunity to attend the International Association of School Librarianship's (IASL) annual conference. Delegates from 33 countries were present – a diverse and varied group of professionals from a range of very different school libraries. It is always inspiring to meet and share ideas and views with such a disparate group and this conference experience was no different. As in the past, I came away realising that, despite the difficulties we might face within Australia in maintaining good school library services, we are indeed lucky to have services and systems in place that are worth fighting for. Many other professionals around the world work in appalling conditions to bring basic services to their communities. As a leading country within our profession, we have a role to play in assisting in the growth and development of school library services not only within our own state or country but across the wider world.

With this collegiate attitude in mind, there will be changes to the way *Synergy* is provided in 2014. From the first issue of 2014, back issues of *Synergy* will be open on the website for access by all. Only the newest edition of the journal will be on restricted access, available only to members. This new policy retains the most recent edition of the journal for immediate access by SLAV members, whilst simultaneously extending the benefit of our members' good work to our fellow professionals around the world. This collegiate gesture by SLAV acknowledges the importance of sharing information and recognises the contribution our association can make to the development of our profession beyond our shores.

In this issue, our *Interactions* piece explores another initiative of the International Association of School Librarianship. While their major initiative is the annual conference, the association also runs a range of other projects and enterprises, one of which is the **International School Libraries Month (ISLM) Bookmark exchange project**. This is an excellent example of a program that initiates interaction amongst the profession worldwide. Breege O'Brien, a new contributor to *Synergy* from Ireland, outlines the project and its benefits and invites all of us to participate in an easy, fun project that can build international connections.

The remainder of the journal contains a range of articles that will, I hope, inform and enrich our readers professionally. In our *Perspectives: Local* section we take a look at two organisations that also offer us opportunities to extend our professional participation. We have articles on the **Australian chapter of IBBY** (International Board on Books for Young People) and the **Indigenous Literacy Foundation**. Also in the local section, we have a very thoughtful opinion piece by **Karin Gilbert**, a school library professional with an interest in our role as knowledge managers and an excellent piece from David Feighan on selecting an integrated library management system.

Our regular contributors continue to offer us insight and reflection in their areas of interest. **Associate Professor Ross Todd** outlines recent research at the Center for International Scholarship in School Libraries (CISSL) at Rutgers University that explores how student teams work together to build a shared representation of knowledge. Ross is an extraordinary champion of our profession and his articles always offers us professional reading not to be missed.

Our two local regular contributors also continue to offer us stimulating reading. Anne Whisken, in her **Learning Landscape section**, continues her exploration of learning spaces and, in particular, the concept of a learning commons and what this might look like for her community. Tania Sheko, our **Technophilia section** author, explores our role as content curators in an online world offering a range of fantastic ideas and examples that are both useful and inspiring.

In our global section, we publish a piece on **metacognition** by two academics, one now at Charles Sturt University, Dr Kasey Garrison, the other from the United States, Dr Robin S. Spruce. Our other piece in this section looks at the digitisation of rare books. **Dr Janet Gertz** has very kindly shared this article with us and, though it is an area many of us do not have to deal with in our school libraries, it nevertheless explores interesting issues that relate to many areas that often are our concern – historic holdings or archives for example. It is also interesting to read about the issues facing other areas of the broader profession of librarianship.

Our **Strategies** piece in this edition is a very practical article by Christine Wilson on how she is using iPads in the teaching of information literacy in her school's program for years five and six. Christine clearly demonstrates the power of this platform to engage and enrich the learning opportunities of our students.

In this edition, our refereed research article is a report on **recent research into school libraries, teacher-librarians and literacy in Queensland**. A strong research piece, this article demonstrates the power of evidence within our profession to both explore and explain the relevance of the role of school libraries and teacher-librarians in learning.

I would also, in this editorial, like to take the opportunity to acknowledge a significant milestone in the profession of an important and influential academic, a section contributor of *Synergy* who has been with us for many years. Associate Professor Carol Gordon, the author of our **Research into Practice section**, has retired from her academic role, bringing to a close an outstanding career as an academic whose focus was always on school libraries and their role in learning and on the importance of evidence. Carol is an important member of our team and, on behalf of the association, I would like to thank her for her ongoing contribution to SLAV at this time of change. I know Carol remains active in the profession and I hope that she continues to take pleasure in this involvement while enjoying the space retirement from academia will bring.

Do let us know your thoughts on this edition of the journal. We value your feedback as it helps us to create a relevant reading experience that we all can value.

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