



My father found children disconcerting. He thought of them as adults in smaller bodies and wondered why they didn't laugh at his jokes. Having a child of his own was particularly unsettling, but he didn't let it interfere with his life. During the week, he would head off to work; every weekend,

he would head off to the Welsh mountains, to pursue his passion for climbing.

I quickly discovered there were only two ways to connect with my father. The first was to rope up and join him on some perilous ascent of Snowdon (not an option); the second was to read. During the week, he would spend every evening with his nose in a book.

With this incentive, a new tradition started ... the Saturday morning trip to the library. My father would plough through the Len Deightons and the Peter Simples, and I would delve into the *Children of the New Forest*, *Anne of Green Gables*, and *The Hobbit*. We would spend a happy hour in each other's company, then take our finds home, where there was a sense of quiet companionship as we sat reading at opposite ends of the sofa.

Our library was in a converted Victorian school building. There were fixed rows of high shelving taking up most of the floor space. There was crude fluorescent strip lighting down the centre. It was freezing cold in winter and not much warmer in summer. There was an unwritten rule that you didn't enter the place unless you had a library card.

Track forward 40 years and the ethos behind public libraries – indeed, all libraries – has rotated 180-degrees from exclusive to inclusive; from closed to open; from what you can't do, to what you can do, and from isolation to collaboration with a wide range of partners. We loved libraries then. We love them even more now.

Today's libraries are inclusive, open, positive, and collaborative. And if libraries are all these things, our association needs to be too. ALIA is already heading down this road, and we can do even more to embrace the philosophy of our members.

We believe strongly in the importance of library and information qualifications and we will always promote the value of employing professionals in

positions that require this expertise. At the same time, our sector employs people from many other disciplines, who make a significant contribution to the success of our libraries and information services. It is important that they too have a voice.

An important part of my role with ALIA will be to advocate for library and information professionals, and to help develop that voice for everyone employed in the sector. Collaboration with other organisations will be essential, and I am looking forward to working with other associations, vendors, not-for-profits, government, and commercial partners over the coming months.

Must stop writing now ... it's Saturday morning and my son James is itching for me to take him out. We're going to the library. It's a family tradition!

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## ALIA SNAPSHOT

ALIA thanks the ALIA Biennial Organising Committee and the sponsors, exhibitors, speakers, chairs, delegates, and volunteers for their hard work and support in bringing together the success that was ALIA Biennial 2012. Watch for follow up in upcoming INCITEs.

LW 2013 Theme announced! Turn to page 11 to read up on some 2012 success stories, and start your planning for next year.

ALIA Board of Directors are pleased to award the distinction of Fellow to two exceptional members, Helen Partridge and Carol Newton-Smith. More details in October's INCITE.

ALIA Information Online 2013 conference website and the ALIA New Librarian Symposium 6 website are now live. Get your latest information at [www.information-online.com.au](http://www.information-online.com.au) and [www.newlibrariansymposium.com.au](http://www.newlibrariansymposium.com.au) respectively.