

A year in the life of NZLIA (New Zealand Library and Information Association)

Lesley Utting

This is a brief synopsis of events which overtook the NZLIA in the past year. I thought you would be interested to hear how an Association such as ours survived such a disaster. It's always good to hear positive results, isn't it?

At our AGM in Queenstown, October 1996, the members were alerted to the fact that our accountant had been defrauding us over the past five years to the amount of \$142,512.13. He is now residing at Her Majesty's pleasure, you'll be pleased to know.

As you can imagine many hours of blood, toil, sweat and tears went into unraveling the mess. As in all Associations such as NZLIA and ANZTLA, the office bearers carry out their duties mainly in their own time and this requires considerable commitment on their part.

At the AGM at Wanganui, October 1997, a completely different scenario was portrayed to the members. Stringent policies and procedures have been set in place to ensure that this sort of thing can never happen again. We still have problems and membership numbers are down, but there is light at the end of the tunnel. As well as surviving a financial disaster, we have changed direction and focus on many issues, which are the positive outcomes of having to re-evaluate our core business. I hate to admit that at the Conference Dinner at Wanganui, a song made popular in an Aussie movie was used to betray feelings about the last year - "I will survive" from *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, presented by a group of very sassy librarians!

In the Auckland Region we are planning a strong emphasis on professional development or continuing education. We plan to uplift courses being run by providers outside the library profession, as well as using those from other library studies providers throughout the country. We, of course, will initiate some of our own, but do not want to fall into the trap of unnecessary duplication.

For the first time in New Zealand an undergraduate degree in librarianship is being offered, by distance, from the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand. This is preceded by two national diplomas at two different levels. A Masters in Librarianship is already being offered by distance as well as outside by Victoria University of Wellington.

Librarianship is alive and well in New Zealand!

Lesley Utting
Librarian, Carey Baptist College
Chair, NZLIA Auckland Region