
Reflections on Canberra conference

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This is the second of our "First Impressions", contributions sought from members attending their first conference. The previous article in Newsletter No. 47, was by Pauline Redman. Many thanks to these two for sharing their initial experience of an ANZTLA Conference. Ed.

I was a little anxious about going to Canberra for the ANZTLA Conference. After all, I was new to the whole thing and had heard some great things about the people I would meet and the work they were doing.

My anxiety was short lived. The welcome was very warm and I soon began to feel quite special in my newness as people took an interest in me and our stories were exchanged. Common ground was soon established and I began to really enjoy the different speakers and events arranged.

Although we share so much and have so much in common I was interested to see the various faith traditions evident in the way people see and do things. I loved our differences. Indeed, I have thought about our different paths and ways of worship often since. It really was a wonderful, enlightening, educational and inspiring opportunity to see through others' eyes and to delight in new expression.

The conference was a fine balance between the beautiful and fun bits with the technical and practical things. My favourite two 'beauty' bits were the opening welcome of song that made my heart sing and the keynote address by Rev. Canon Dr. Graeme Garrett where the imagery painted by his words and the message delivered made a lasting impression.

Indeed I have related parts of Dr. Garrett's talk several times and it has been the foundation of many great conversations I have had with others.

On the more practical side of things I found plenty to think about and some really good examples on the "how to" of things. Nina Waters' talk on being brave and dealing with the big issues, although not practical for many smaller libraries, was a total breath of fresh air and I was encouraged by the "can do" attitude she espoused.

As one often frustrated by the constant need for repair of old texts and musical scores the trip to the National Library was especially interesting. Fascinating to see old and fragile things successfully restored and conserved by professionals.

News of happenings in other libraries was of special interest. Many of the talks really hit on the current issues we all seem to face. The topics of technology, reader education, training, storage and space limitations, and of course how to do more with less were all of interest to me.

The little snapshots of other libraries were inspiring, sometimes comforting in their familiarity and at times very funny. Good to know we are not alone in our work and we all have our own "special" clients who challenge us and our stressful times when things go wrong.

I especially loved being with other theological librarians. As one who sometimes doubts the value and quality of my work I found it of great comfort to be among other theological librarians. Not having to explain the 'what and why' of what we do is a great thing. The common bond held and shared is of great comfort to me.

The conference allowed me some time out from the "doing" of work to think and to take stock. It gave me the time and encouragement to challenge the way we do things and ask can they be done better? .

I have been enriched by meeting so many charming and intelligent people and look

Building Cooperation between Theological Libraries

This is a collection of contributions on the topic of Co-operation presented at the recent Canberra Conference by:

- *Jocelyn Morris, Löhe Library, Luther Seminary, North Adelaide, S.A.*
- *Tony McCumstie, Mannix Library, Catholic Theological College, East Melbourne, Vic.*
- *Nancy Clarke, Library Manager, Signadou Campus, Australian Catholic University, Canberra, A.C.T.*

forward to meeting many new and old friends next time. *Trish*

Cooperation : I

There are some key aspects of the topic of library co-operation among theological libraries.

Communication

Chapter meetings and annual conferences provide significant opportunities for discussion and mutual support. The ANZTLA Newsletter presents conference papers regularly in addition to other material. In recent years the introduction of electronic mail and discussion groups such as the ANZTLA-Forum has been beneficial.

Commitment

Commitment is a prerequisite for effective co-operation. This involves individual library staff, libraries and institutional support.

Collaboration

Theological libraries have been involved in collaborative projects, large and small, between libraries and through the Association. These include staff collaborations, which draw on the skills and

knowledge base of experienced theological librarians.

Collection Development has been a significant area of collaboration as budgets are limited and rationalisation of collections has occurred. Major collaborative activities have resulted in publication of joint policy documents from several consortia.

ANZTLA member libraries using the Union Theological Classification undertake regular revision of the scheme. This annual conference workshop is important for each librarian involved.

Within metropolitan areas, theological libraries have developed a variety of reciprocal borrowing arrangements which benefit users of all participating institutions.

Recently ANZTLA member libraries have been involved in developing consortial arrangements for provision of electronic Information services. Expansion of these arrangements is currently under consideration, particularly for electronic access to ATLA Religion Database.

Formal co-operative agreements have been developed among some member libraries. These arrangements bring benefits for library users and can be cost-effective for member libraries.

ANZTLA has a long history of support for theological libraries within Asia and the Pacific, including staff training, collection development and maintenance. This is another area which will require ongoing commitment from ANZTLA libraries and librarians.

Successful library co-operation depends on the commitment of institutions, not just libraries.

Celebration

Pastor Trevor Zweck has documented the story of ANZTLA's formation and initial