

---

## The President's Page

From time to time, at conferences, meetings and in simple conversations with one another, we talk of the need to promote ourselves. I would like to suggest that such self-promotion can and should occur at three levels.

First, each of us should (with due modesty, of course) promote ourselves personally. In any organisation it can be said that the most valuable asset of the organisation is its people. This is just as true for theological libraries as it is for any other enterprise. One of the dangers of working in isolation as many theological librarians do is the loss or scarcity of peer support and recognition. Without such support and recognition, it is possible to undervalue the role we play as individuals in the communities we serve.

On the next level, the library and information services we provide are worthy of promotion. In many cases, the library can become so much a part of the fabric of the institution that it fades into the background and is taken for granted. Like the physical plant of the place, it may not become the focus of attention until something goes wrong. We need sometimes to be the focus of attention when things go right!

Similarly, at Association level, a certain amount of self-promotion is not only desirable - it is actually necessary.

We should publicise and promote ANZTLA within the ranks of theological librarians. ANZTLA can and does provide a forum in which individuals can find and in turn offer peer support. Be it at conference, chapter or on a one-to-one basis the Association enables communication between librarians in a specialist field. While not all librarians in theological libraries belong to ANZTLA, the existence of the Association should be drawn to their attention and they should be encouraged to join and participate in ANZTLA activities.

It became apparent at this year's conference in Perth that a number of people within the Association itself were unfamiliar with the publications ARI and AULOTS. Products such as these are a major contribution on the part of the Association to the theological circles of the region. Other products such as the 'ANZTLA membership directory', the 'New Zealand bibliography of religion and theology', the website, and the 'ANZTLA standards for theological libraries' are also worthy of promotion.

We should publicise and promote ANZTLA within the general theological community. Mindful of the sometimes delicate relationships that exist between our various libraries/institutions, the Association can afford institutions the opportunity to access resources that may otherwise be unattainable. The emerging consortium approach to purchasing online products is a fine example of a co-operative endeavour managed by members of the Association.

The Association's Standing Committee on Library Closures is certainly worth recognition and mention within the theological community. Again, while respecting library ownership and autonomy, the Association can provide invaluable assistance when the future of a particular collection is being considered.

Rhonda Barry, Secretary of the Association, is currently working on the development of promotional material (one or more brochures) for the Association. If you have any ideas on what should be promoted or how ANZTLA products and services can best be presented you can email Rhonda directly - [rhonda.barry@moore.edu.au](mailto:rhonda.barry@moore.edu.au)

*Tony McCumstie*