



# *ANZTLA Keynote Address* *ANZTLA, 25 Years:* *A Sterling Achievement*

*by Kim Robinson*

**W**e meet here in Perth in 2010 to hold the Association's 25th annual conference and celebrate its 25th birthday.


Although ANZTLA was formed in 1986 it did not spring suddenly into being. Its origins go back another nine years to 1977. It was then that a group of theological librarians in New South Wales met and formed the Association of Theological and Religious Studies Libraries. The chief initiators of this association were Dr Robert Withycombe of St Mark's Library, Canberra and Hans Arns of St Patrick's College Library, Manly. The group was to meet regularly up until 1986 when it became the NSW chapter of ANZTLA. It managed to produce a newsletter *Syndesmos* for five issues from 1977-1979.

In 1978, mainly through the work of Dr Withycombe, a library consultation was held in conjunction with the ANZSTS (Australian and New Zealand Society for Theological Studies), ANZATS (Australian and New Zealand Association of Theological Schools) and AASR (Australian Association for the Study of Religions) conferences. This occurred on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> August at Chisholm College, La Trobe University. Twenty-eight people attended with twelve being professional librarians. After sessions on resource sharing and classification schemes the afternoon was set aside for discussion on the ways and means of national cooperation among theological and religious studies libraries and the formation of a national network of such libraries. The representatives from each state met together to discuss whether they could set up state groups like the one in New South Wales. During the final session South Australia, Victoria and Queensland reported that they would form groups to continue cooperation in their states. It was hoped that the individual state groups would be formed and that a kind of federation of them would form a national association.

South Australia was the only State to form a continuing group – the Association of Theological Libraries (South Australia).

A second consultation was held on 24<sup>th</sup> August 1979 in Sydney, again in conjunction with the ANZSTS, ANZATS, and AASR joint conference. Eight Sydney librarians and one each from Victoria and South Australia attended but no further progress was made towards a national association.

The ANZATS executive was keen that another library consultation be held similar to that of 1978. It was not until 1983 that the third consultation was arranged, after a push from the South Australian group led by Trevor Zweck, Librarian of the Luther Seminary, Adelaide. It was held at St Francis College, Milton, Qld, on 3<sup>rd</sup> September. Forty librarians and heads of theological colleges attended. Hans Arns presented a survey of the current



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condition of theological libraries in some Australian states and Trevor Zweck gave a paper on proposals for the adoption of standards for ANZATS libraries. These proposals were enthusiastically supported by the meeting and a resolution was passed to form a task force. The task force’s job would be to draw up a set of policy standards, a set of guidelines for interpreting and implementing them, and an instrument and procedure for gathering and disseminating relevant statistical information. Two further proposals were endorsed: (1) the undertaking of a survey of theological libraries and other libraries with theological collections, major holdings, and areas of strength; and (2) the development of a special collection on theological education to be housed in one of the member libraries. There was also a request to develop ways and means (e.g. a workshop and/or a manual) to help unqualified staff to become more professional in their work. Edmund Perrin, librarian of the United Theological College, Enfield, NSW, presented a paper on library buildings and equipment and a demonstration of the new technology of searching the DIALOG database using a telecommunications link, a technology which had only recently been introduced into Australia.

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Despite the enthusiasm little had been achieved by the time of the next consultation held in Sydney on 26<sup>th</sup> August 1984. The task force had not been appointed and this lack of official activity led Trevor Zweck to bring to the consultation a proposal for the establishment of a theological library association. There were twenty-five delegates at the consultation with only one a non-librarian. The morning was taken up with discussions on union cataloguing, led by Margaret Baggott of the National Library of Australia, encouraging the use of the Australian Bibliographic Network and local libraries sharing their experiences of the CLANN network. In the afternoon Trevor Zweck firstly presented a preliminary draft of a set of library standards, which was tabled and referred to the yet to be appointed task force and then he presented the proposal for the establishment of a theological library association. As Trevor wrote in his 1995 article “the proposal ...was endorsed with mixed feelings of enthusiasm and trepidation and forwarded to the Annual General Meeting of ANZATS, which was to be held two years later”. I think he meant two days later because on the 28<sup>th</sup> August he and Professor Bruce Upham headed a delegation to the ANZATS meeting and presented them with the proposal and a battery of consultation resolutions. They were cordially received and the matter was referred to the next meeting of the ANZATS Council.

At the May 1985 council meeting Hans Arns represented the librarians. It passed a five point resolution on the structure and operation of the proposed association, without formally resolving whether the association be established.



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From the beginning of talk of a separate library association there was strong agreement that it would work closely with ANZATS, but even from this May meeting some areas of disagreement were beginning to appear.

The fifth library consultation was held at Luther Seminary, North Adelaide on 26<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> August 1985, with twenty-two librarians and eleven others in attendance. This was the first consultation to extend to two days, with sessions on the first day and a collection development workshop the second. Lawrence McIntosh, of the Joint Theological Library, Parkville, Vic., gave the keynote address on professionalism in theological librarianship, discussion was held on the Australian Bibliographic Network, and Hans Arns reported on European theological libraries. Most importantly the delegates approved the formation of an association of theological librarians. To be called the Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association it would automatically include the fifty-seven libraries of ANZATS schools and provide for the involvement of libraries and/or individuals with similar interests in the field of theology and religious studies. A provisional executive was appointed consisting of Trevor Zweck (President), Hans Arns (Secretary/Treasurer) and Robert Withycombe. The second day workshop was cut short because leftover business of the previous day concerning the formation of the association had to be dealt with as no representatives of ANZATS had been in attendance. Questions at issue between the ANZATS executive and the librarians consisted mainly of the name of the association, its membership (which the librarians wanted to be wider than just the ANZATS schools) and financial issues. These issues were not resolved that day.

This now brings us to Canberra on the 25<sup>th</sup>- 27<sup>th</sup> August 1986 where 26 librarians from Australia and New Zealand met together primarily to consider a constitution which had been drawn up by the interim executive. The keynote address was delivered by Averill M.B. Edwards, Principal Librarian (Planning), National Library of Australia, on *Theological librarians: an undervalued asset*. Workshops were conducted by Gary Gorman on collection development; Marika Simpson (Canberra College of Advanced Education) on user education; and Cheryl Pye (ABN) on standard subject headings.

The choice of the date was an unfortunate one. The decision had been made to tie the conferences to the ANZATS conference, as had been done with the previous three consultations, but as the ANZATS conference was being held in New Zealand it was considered that a central Australian location be chosen to ensure as great a number of librarians as possible could attend. This meant that ANZATS members were unable to attend thus causing a further step of separation between the association and ANZATS.

The provisional executive presented a proposed constitution. It had worked hard at trying to draw up a constitution which would be acceptable both to the ANZATS executive and the librarians. The

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main sticking point was the issue of membership – with ANZATS wanting it restricted to its own members and the librarians wanting it to be more broadly based. Agreement also had to be reached by the librarians as to whether membership was of libraries or librarians or a combination of both. The issue of membership took up several hours of discussion and finally an amendment was passed providing four categories of membership:

- Libraries of the member schools of ANZATS;
- Libraries of other tertiary institutions offering courses in theological education or religious studies;
- Institutions or organizations associated with theological education or religious studies;
- Individuals interested in or concerned with theological education or religious studies.

A major consideration of these categories was to open membership to institutions and individuals who were not specifically Christian.

After much debate the constitution was approved for presentation to the ANZATS Council. Office bearers were elected with Trevor Zweck as President, Hans Arns as Secretary/Treasurer, Barbara Darling of Ridley College, Parkville, Vic., as executive member from the region of the next conference, Kim Robinson, of Moore Theological College, as editor of the newsletter and Edmund Perrin as statistician.

Talks between ANZTLA and ANZATS continued after the conference and came to a head at a meeting at Hunter’s Hill, NSW on 15<sup>th</sup> May, 1987 between the President of ANZTLA and the Secretary of ANZATS. The decision was made to effectively sever the organizational tie-up between the two associations.

Ridley College, Parkville, Vic. was the host of the 1987 conference on 23<sup>rd</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> August with forty-four delegates. At this meeting the formal link with ANZATS was ended. The keynote address was presented by Fran Awcock, Director, Technical Services, State Library of Victoria on *Technology and theological libraries*, Hal Cain led a workshop on cataloguing, automation and interlibrary loans, Patrick Lambe (visiting from the United Kingdom) spoke about the Association of British Theological and Philosophical Libraries (ABTAPL) and Kim Robinson reported on the American Theological Library Association’s 1987 conference. It was at this conference that the proposal for the *Australasian Religion Index* was presented by Gary Gorman and approval was given for a 12 month pilot project to be conducted. This project was discussed at the 1988 conference and approval was given for its commencement. 1989 saw the publication of volume 1. This publication is one of the glories of the association and one of which we can be very proud. Association members have produced the data for this index and the editorial teams have polished it to create an invaluable resource for researchers in the theological and religious periodical literature of our region.

In 1988 the conference returned to Canberra. Burghmann College,

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Australian National University hosted the conference on 8<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> September. It began with a joint session with ANZATS/ANZSTS delegates where Dr John Henley (Melbourne College of Divinity) and Dr William Dumbrell (Moore Theological College) spoke on the provision of facilities for research students in Australia and New Zealand. This was followed by the keynote address by Trevor Zweck on *The future of theological libraries in Australia and New Zealand*. The conference, as well as deciding to proceed with the publication of *ARI*, finalised the standards document which had first been raised at the 1983 library consultation in Brisbane. Over the five years it had been revised by both Trevor Zweck and Lawrence McIntosh. The 1987 conference had referred a final draft to the ANZTLA chapters for further study and comment and the final document was approved. The standards were revised in 2000 and are currently being looked at for further revision.

The first conference in New Zealand was held in Auckland on 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> July 1989. Nine Australian and fourteen New Zealand librarians gathered to a conference with the theme *reference works*. This conference created a great boost for theological librarianship in New Zealand and resulted in the formation of the New Zealand chapter.

Brisbane hosted its first conference on 5<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> July 1990 at Pius XII Provincial Seminary, Banyo. At this conference the first delegates from Western Australia and the Pacific (Suva, Fiji) attended, together with thirty-four other librarians. The theme was the practicalities of theological librarianship with the keynote address given by The Rev. Coralie Jenkin. The Western Australian chapter was inaugurated as a result of the enthusiasm of the Western Australian delegates.

The minutes of the 1990 annual meeting have a resolution passed encouraging the distribution and use of the Australasian Union List of Serials In Theological Collections (AULOTS). The origin of AULOTS was *Union list of periodicals in theological libraries in South Australia* compiled by John W. O'Rourke in 1972. This list was revised in 1976 to include Australia, Papua New Guinea and New Zealand. In 1983 the National Catholic Research Council published a further revision, the first under the present title. It was compiled by Hans Arns. In 1987 he agreed to produce a second edition and it is this publication, published by the Catholic Institute of Sydney in association with the Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association that the 1990 resolution commends. The Association published the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> editions, both edited by Tony McCumstie, in 1997 and 2002. It is now produced online on the Association's website. The value of this publication cannot be over-estimated. It provides an invaluable resource for the location of periodicals in theological collections, most of which are not included in any other national/international union list.

Sydney had its first time as host in 1991. Held at Morling College, Eastwood it attracted fifty-two delegates with the theme of *user*

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*information literacy and user education*. A proposal was made for the production of a style manual for research and writing in the fields of theology and religion. The writing took a few years to be completed. *A style manual for the presentation of papers and theses in religion and theology*, compiled by Lawrence D. McIntosh was published in 1994 by the Centre for Information Studies in association with ANZTLA and the Australian and New Zealand Association of Theological Schools.

The 1992 conference was held 26<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> June at Luther Campus, North Adelaide. The theme was *working together*.

The 1993 conference was back in New Zealand at Mt St Mary’s Seminary, Greenmeadows, near Napier. It was held on 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> July the theme being *acquisitions* emphasising Asian and South Pacific resources and the libraries in these regions.

1994 and the conference was back in Melbourne. Ormond College, Parkville was the host on 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> July, with the theme being *the principles and practicalities of theological librarianship*. The keynote address was given by Helen Hayes, Librarian, University of Melbourne, on *Managing change in libraries for achieving quality outcomes*. It was at the annual meeting that the motion was passed to inaugurate *The Trevor Zweck Award* for a significant contribution to the development of theological libraries in Australia or New Zealand in any way during the preceding twelve months.

The 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary conference was held on 21<sup>st</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> September 1995 again at Burghmann College, Canberra. Al Hurd, Executive Director of the American Theological Library Association was the special guest. Honorary Life membership was introduced and Lawrence McIntosh was granted the first such membership. He was also the recipient of the first Trevor Zweck Award for his work on *A style manual for the presentation of papers and theses in religion and theology*. Lawrence McIntosh had recently retired from his position as Librarian of the Joint Theological Library and, as well as the two honours mentioned above, was honoured with a festschrift published by the Association, entitled *So great a cloud of witnesses: libraries and theologies: festschrift in honour of Lawrence D. McIntosh*, edited by Philip Harvey and Lynn Pryor.

Plans were well advanced for the 1996 conference to be held in Perth on 10<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> October when on the 13<sup>th</sup> September the Association members were shocked to learn of the sudden death of Trevor Zweck. He had been the President of the Association since its inception and a major force in the promotion of theological librarianship in not only Australia and New Zealand but also the rest of the world. It was with very mixed emotions that the thirty-six delegates met at Perth College – sorrow and sadness and also excitement at being in Perth for the first time and expectation of what the conference would be without the leadership of Trevor Zweck. A great sense of purpose and determination to continue forward combined with a series of excellent papers and workshops

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on the conference theme of *tradition and technology* produced an exceptional conference. Wendy Davis was elected as President.

The following conferences were:

1997 Brisbane – *Strictly theological: research trends and methodology, postgraduate demands, client expectations*

1998 Sydney – *Theological libraries: new fields in a changing landscape*  
ANZTLA Archive established; ANZTLA Forum established

1999 Adelaide – *Oral, print and digital cultures: bound together in theological libraries*

Pacific sponsorship programme established

2000 Melbourne – *Printed page, documents, discs, websites, downloads: embracing the environment of the new millennium*

ANZTLA website established

2001 Auckland – *Promoting ourselves, or, Shameless opportunity*

Two-day South Pacific Association of Theological Schools consultation was conducted after the conference with the seven Pacific librarians who had attended the conference

2002 Canberra – *Building theological libraries*

ANZTLA becomes ANZTLA Ltd. with a new constitution; *ARI* rights bought from Charles Sturt University; ANZTLA Consortia Working Group formed

2003 Perth – *Nurturing theological education*

After the death of Jeanette Little the Pacific Scholarship Fund is renamed in her honour

2004 Brisbane – *New horizons: developing strategies for the 21st century*

Jeanette Little Scholarship Fund established

2005 Sydney – *Putting the pieces together: picture perfect or still a puzzle?*

2006 Adelaide – *Keyed in or locked out*

2007 Melbourne – *Treasures old and new*


2008 Wellington – *Ko te kai rapu ko ia te kite = One who seeks will find*

*ARI* indexing and editing commences as an online index

2009 Canberra – *Voyages of discovery*

2010 Perth – *A sterling achievement*

In just listing the later conferences there is no thought that they are of any less importance than the early ones. Each conference has built on those of the past and always presented the delegates with food for thought and ways to approach the future with greater knowledge and confidence. Through the yearly conference we have continually looked both at the past and present and have also focused on what might happen in the future. The planners of the conferences have managed to maintain a valuable balance between practical issues and “future gazing”. The introduction of the pre-conference cataloguing workshop enhanced the practical side of the meetings. As I have looked through the *ANZTLA Newsletter* and my own archive of past conferences it has become clear that the association



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has constantly been looking at what the future might bring and how it can help members face it with confidence. I was more than a little surprised to find how many of the papers and workshops presented at the conferences had dealt with the cutting edge of the world of librarianship. For instance it was only months after the technology of electronic searching of databases was introduced in Australia that our conference delegates were being shown it. Our libraries may take time to adopt these new technologies or other innovations in librarianship but the Association has brought them before the conference delegates for consideration and usually in a very timely manner.

Our influence has not only been felt in the region we encompass but throughout the rest of the theological library world. There has been representation by our members at the conferences of the Association of British Theological and Philosophical Libraries (ABTAPL), the American Theological Library Association (ATLA), the Bibliothèques Européennes de Théologie European Theological Libraries (BETH) and the Forum of Asian Theological Librarians (FORATL) and some representatives from these associations have attended our conferences.

The fact of our maintaining an annual conference despite our relatively small membership and the vast geographic area we cover is truly remarkable. This has enabled us to keep the aims of the association “to foster the study of theology and religion by enhancing the development of theological and religious libraries and librarianship” clearly before us and help the membership in practical and highly professional ways. It is not only the workshops and addresses given at conferences that have helped. We cannot understate the value of the personal relationships and friendship that have developed over the past twenty-five years. The talk amongst delegates at morning and afternoon teas, meals and late night sessions enables us to feel confident with each other and understand that our problems are common ones and give us confidence to approach each other for suggestions and solutions.

Through the conferences, chapter meetings, ANZTLA-forum, *ANZTLA Newsletter*, *ARI*, *AULOTS*, other publications and personal contact the Association continues to support and encourage all its members in their task as theological librarians. With the knowledge of the past twenty-five years I can say with assurance that the Association will face the future challenges and changes fearlessly and with confidence.

### Sources

*Syndesmos*, nos. 1-5 (1977-1979)

*ANZTLA Newsletter*, no. 1+ (1987+)

Personal archive of conference papers and chapter meeting minutes.



*“The mission of the Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association Limited is to foster the study of theology and religion by enhancing the development of theological and religious libraries and librarianship.”*

## Mission statement

The mission of the Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association Limited is to foster the study of theology and religion by enhancing the development of theological and religious libraries and librarianship. In pursuit of this mission, the Association undertakes:

- to provide a framework whereby librarians and other people and groups interested in theological and religious libraries and librarianship can interact, learn and work towards the development and improvement of theological and religious libraries and the role and function of such libraries in theological education;
- to educate persons on acceptable standards of librarianship among theological and religious libraries, and to support the implementation and development of such standards;
- to promote information services in support of teaching, learning and research in theology, religion and related disciplines, and to create such tools and aids as may be helpful in accomplishing this;
- to foster, as part of an education program, inter-library cooperation at both regional and national levels; and
- to publish and disseminate literature and information in respect of theological and religious librarianship.

## Presidents

Trevor Zweck	1986-1996
Wendy Davis	1996-1997
Kim Robinson	1997-2001
Judith Bright	2001-2003
Tony McCumstie	2003-2007
Philip Harvey	2007-

## Trevor Zweck Award Recipients

Lawrence McIntosh	1995	( <i>A style manual</i> )
Tony McCumstie	1997	( <i>AULOTS</i> )
Ruth Millard	2004	( <i>Consortia</i> )
Kathryn Duncan	2008	( <i>Website</i> )

## Honorary Life Members

Lawrence McIntosh	1995
Hans Arns	1997
Pam Carswell	1998
Kim Robinson	2005
Lynn Pryor	2008
Val Canty	2009
Carolyn Willadsen	2009