



Report on New Librarians' Symposium 8

By Rika Wright and Sumiko Kanazawa

Japanese Librarians at the National Library of Australia

Rika and Sumiko attended the New Librarians' Symposium 8 from Friday 23rd to Sunday 25th June. The theme was "DIY Library Career." Over the three days, we attended a lot of talks and workshops as well as a library tour.

Before the symposium began, we were invited to the ALIA Historical Photo Recreation at Albert Hall. The Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) will be celebrating its 80th anniversary in August 2017. The anniversary marks the inaugural gathering of the Australian Institute of Librarians outside Albert Hall in Canberra on 21 August 1937. Around 50 delegates gathered at the venue at 8am on a very cold Canberra morning and took some fun photos as well as serious ones.



Report from Rika

I attended the Symposium and found that "How to deal with change ... like a boss", a paper by Katrina Williams, was very interesting and informative.

The presenter displayed the following words by George E. P. Box:

"All models are wrong but some are useful"

She then introduced the book "Who moved my cheese?" This work is a motivational business fable. The text describes change in one's work and life, and four typical reactions to those changes by two mice and two "little people," during their hunt for cheese.

I have learnt how to deal with change positively and effectively from the quotation, the book and her experience.

- How do I react to change? Stick to old ways or change to new ways? It is totally up to myself.

- Know yourself. It is important to know oneself in order to confront new things confidently.
- Think what the change means to me.

After the talk, I had a question. If the change is so big and I am not very confident but must still deal with it, what should I do? Fortunately, I was able to meet the presenter at a social event in the evening and asked her the question. Her answer was "Chop it into small pieces and try one by one."

Things do not always go as planned. Katrina's talk made me positive!

The workshops were very popular and many were almost full when I tried to register. Luckily, I was able to put my name on the list for "Project management fun and games!" The reason why I chose this workshop was that I was interested in engaging more with projects and project management. I am also involved in projects in my current work and would like to help to plan and run projects more effectively. The workshop was presented by Krista Meulengracht and 20 delegates attended. The librarians sitting at our table were from Western Australia, Queensland, the Hunter Valley and Canberra. Some of them were experienced librarians, so I was able to learn a lot from them, as well through the activities. At the workshop, I have learnt important elements of project management through fun games. For example, we learned some basic concepts from "Project management bingo." Some words were totally new to me, however after listening to the definitions of the words and other explanations, I gradually understood what the words mean to project management. (And incidentally, our team won the game!)

The "PM's deal or no deal" game was most interesting to me. We were given a scenario of a project and were asked to investigate the risks in the management of the project. We suggested as many risks as we could, and discussed the levels of the risks. We agreed on some risks and their levels easily, but there were some on which we did not. To make our decision, we discussed the subject at length, both positively and respectfully. Through the game I learned about risk management and the importance of teamwork.

Lastly, we experienced the difference between team styles with the "Positive and negative game." From this game I learned that a positive environment is important for normal work as well as for projects.

Report from Sumiko

On Day 1, I attended the bus tour and visited three libraries with 19 other delegates: GeoScience Australia Library, Telopea Park School Library and Chifley Library at the ANU.

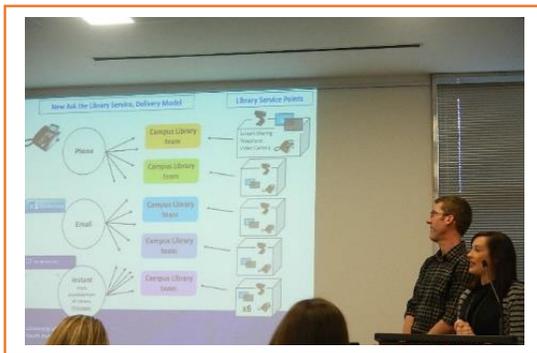
The Librarians at the three libraries were very enthusiastic and friendly. They explained their library's features, changes and challenges.

The project which the GeoScience Library is currently undertaking was especially interesting. The project is to present and link all data such as field notes (manuscript), geographical data and quarry samples. The project enables a search across all relevant information from one key name or number. For example, if you put the number on a quarry sample into the database, you can find the related different types of materials such as handwritten diaries, maps and photographs. The includes over 10,000 aerial photographs, so one imagine how huge the project is.



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I also found some short presentations (20-25 minutes) were very practical and interesting and all the presenters were passionate.



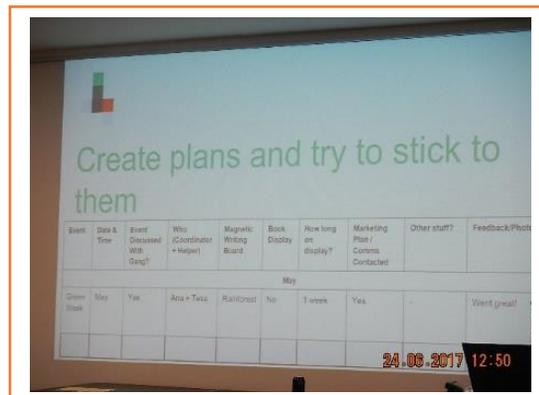
The presentation from the University of South Australia Library showed us their change of the reference enquiry service delivery method to an online system (centralised and multi-functional, including online chat). They organised and undertook several training sessions to gain the IT literacy skills necessary for the new system.

Amy McKenzie from the State Library of New South Wales talked about her journey to becoming a specialist in acquisitions in the Collection Strategy and

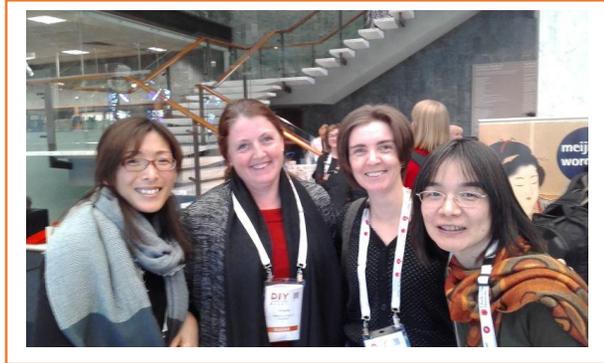
Development branch. Without any instruction manual because the branch was newly created after a restructure, she dealt with coordination and decision making for the acquisition of published and unpublished materials by using her past experience.

Lastly, The University of Technology Sydney Library Engagement Gang demonstrated their various activities and how they have been developing their skills such as event management and designing and leading a team. Their example of an event planning flowchart would be useful when we need to develop a project or event from scratch.

Our projects and events can be huge challenges, but I realised that they would also big opportunities to develop our knowledge, skills and experience.



This symposium was a great opportunity to meet librarians from other libraries and catch up with former/current NLA colleagues.



Rika and Sumiko really appreciate having this opportunity. We will apply everything what we learned at the symposium to our current and future work.