

# Biennial Victorian Public Libraries Planning Retreat

April 1-4, 2003

Glen Erin Vineyard Retreat  
and Conference Centre,  
Lancefield

## SPONSORS:

- Library Board of Victoria
- Department for Victorian Communities
- VICLINK
- Country Public Libraries Group

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## Introduction

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The 2003 Biennial Victorian Public Libraries Planning Retreat was held at the Glen Erin Vineyard Retreat and Conference Centre, Lancefield, in the Macedon Ranges, between 1-4 April, and was attended by 84 delegates.

The retreat was sponsored by the Library Board of Victoria (LBV), the Department for Victorian Communities (DVC), Viclink and the Country Public Libraries Group (CPLG). It was co-ordinated by the State Library of Victoria's Library Network Unit (LNU).

The 2003 retreat built on the foundation of the three previous biennial retreats to further enhance and progress the role of libraries in the Victorian community. The retreat focused on four main themes. These are:

- **What has changed** since the 2001 Retreat and the impacts of this on the findings outlined in the 2001 conference proceedings, *Library Odyssey 2001-2010*
- **What is important for public libraries**, eg: social capital; establishment of a business arm for Viclink; funding; provision of services ([CLMS/@yourlibrary](#))
- **Public libraries and partnerships**, eg: Library Board of Victoria; State Library of Victoria (SLV); Ministerial Advisory Council on Public Libraries(MAC); Multimedia Victoria (MMV); Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV); Public Libraries Australia; programs such as '@yourlibrary' and Collaborative Library Management Systems (CLMS)
- **Where to from here....**

Anne-Marie Schwirtlich, CEO and State Librarian and Joanne Duncan, MP jointly opened the conference. Anne-Marie spoke about the co-operative relationships between library sectors. Joanne Duncan, a former librarian and member for the seat of Macedon, talked about the relationship between public libraries and government.

Key sessions were delivered by speakers from the public sector including Christine Kilmartin, from the Department of Infrastructure, who fascinated delegates with her session on demographic trends in Victorian communities. Prue Digby, from the Department for Victorian Communities, outlined the State Government's thinking behind the establishment of the new Department for Victorian Communities and the underlying objectives of community strengthening and 'joined-up' government.

Clare Hargreaves, from the Municipal Association of Victoria presented a session on the role of public libraries in our local community.

Public Library Service Managers John Binnion, Anne Holmes, Barbara Horn and John Murrell led workshop sessions on key strategic priorities: Recruitment and Training, Shaping Political Perceptions, Leading the Demand and Business Initiatives: Building the Capacity.

The conference was facilitated by Greg Cook, Centre for Leadership and Management, who has extensive knowledge of the Victorian public library network. Greg developed the program for the retreat with Lynne Makin and Craig Anderson representing Viclink, Graham Dudley from the Department for Victorian Communities and Debra Rosenfeldt from the State Library of Victoria.

Delegates left Glen Erin feeling that they had been brought up to speed on important issues impacting on public libraries. They were well satisfied with having made decisions on key strategic initiatives, and developed proposals to advance the Victorian public network over the next two years.

## Summary

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This document is a summary of proceedings at the Biennial Victorian Public Libraries Planning Retreat, 2003, held at the Glen Erin Retreat and Conference Centre, Lancefield.

The presentations of key speakers including Anne-Marie Schwirtlich, Joanne Duncan and Prue Digby, are included in full.

Where available and practicable, copies of speaker's Powerpoint presentations have been included. Christine Kilmartin's Powerpoint presentation on Victorian Communities in Transition and Fiona Lange's presentation on @yourlibrary were too large to include in this document and can be found on Victoria's Virtual Library Infonet.

Notes provided by the leaders of the workshops on Recruitment and Training, Leading the Demand and Shaping Political Perceptions are also included. Notes from the workshop on Business Initiatives: Building the Capacity were not available at the time of compiling these proceedings.

The key items for action emerging from the Retreat are summarised at the conclusion of these proceedings.

## Retreat Program

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### Tuesday 1 April

- 5.00pm Delegates arrive and check-in at Glen Erin Vineyard Retreat and Conference Centre
- 5.30 – 6.30pm Pre-dinner drinks
- 6.30 – 9.30pm **Dinner with guest speaker –**  
*Anne-Marie Schwirtlich (CEO & State Librarian, State Library Victoria)*

### Wednesday 2 April

7.30 – 8.45am	Breakfast
9.00 – 9.10am	<b>Welcome and introduction to the retreat –</b> <i>Gregory Cook (Facilitator, Centre for Leadership and Management)</i>
9.10 – 9.30am	<b>Opening</b> <i>Anne-Marie Schwirtlich, (CEO &amp; State Librarian, State Library Victoria)</i> <i>Joanne Duncan, MP (Member for Macedon)</i>
9.30 – 10.30am	<b>Victorian Public Library Services 2001 – 2003</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Review of the 2001 Library Odyssey retreat <i>Gregory Cook (Facilitator)</i></li><li>Viclink overview since 2001: Secretariat and current projects <i>Lynne Makin (Viclink President / CEO &amp; Manager Libraries, Upper Murray Regional Library)</i></li></ul>
10.30 – 10.50am	Morning tea
10.50 – 12.00pm	<b>Victorian Communities in Transition – demographic trends and outcomes in Victoria</b> <i>Christine Kilmartin (Manager, Mobility &amp; Access Research, Department of Infrastructure)</i>
12.00 – 1.00pm	Lunch
1.00 – 1.40pm	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Plenary – Stories and Adventures from the Journey</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>Jenny Ruffy (Manager, Community Information &amp; Arts Monash Public Library)</i></li><li><i>Jan Penney (CEO &amp; Regional Librarian, Goldfields Library Corp)</i></li><li><i>Russ Elwin (CEO &amp; Regional Librarian, Wimmera Regional Library Corp)</i></li><li><i>Barbara Horn (CEO, Yarra-Melbourne Regional Library Corp)</i></li></ul>
1.40 – 3.00pm	<b>Stories from Fellow Travellers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Playback Theatre Company will re-tell the stories of conference delegates, using a unique form of improvisational theatre</li></ul>
3.00 – 3.30pm	Afternoon tea

## Retreat Program

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3.30 – 4.00pm	<b>Public Libraries – a part of our local community</b> <i>Clare Hargreaves (Senior Policy Advisor, Municipal Association of Victoria)</i>
4.00 – 5.00pm	<b>Changes in the Industry</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patterns of use and demand <i>Craig Anderson (CEO &amp; Regional Library Manager, Yarra Plenty Regional Library Service)</i></li> <li>• Public Libraries Australia Ltd <i>Lynne Makin (CEO &amp; Manager Libraries, Upper Murray Regional Library)</i></li> </ul>
5.00 – 5.45pm	Break
5.45 – 6.30pm	Pre-dinner drinks
6.30 – 10.00pm	Dinner with the local patron/winemaker

### Thursday 3 April

7.30 – 8.45am	Breakfast
9.00 – 10.00am	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Plenary – Key Strategic Themes and Issues for Public Libraries</b> <i>Small group workshops</i>
10.00 – 10.30am	<b>The Changing Public Sector</b> <i>Prue Digby (Executive Director, Local Government &amp; Regional Services, Department for Victorian Communities)</i>
10.30 – 10.50am	Morning tea
10.50 – 12.15pm	<p><b>'Seamless Service' – The SWIFT Initiative: a future library system</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction <i>John Binnion (Project Advisory Committee Convenor)</i></li> <li>• The Business Case for a Collaborative Library Management System <i>David Cochrane (Director Corporate Finance, PricewaterhouseCoopers)</i></li> </ul> <p><b>'Moving out of the Square' – Marketing Your Library</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction and review of the Statewide Marketing Project <i>Anna Cook (Project Advisory Committee Convenor)</i></li> <li>• @yourlibrary – Campaign overview and strategy recommendations <i>Fiona Lange (Consultant, Lange Hill Marketing, SA)</i></li> </ul> <p><b>'Social Engagement' - Libraries Building Communities Research and Development Project</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction <i>Neville Humphris (Project Advisory Committee Convenor)</i></li> <li>• Summary and review of issues <i>Dr Catherine Palmer (Research Consultant, New Focus)</i></li> </ul>
12.15 – 1.15pm	Lunch
1.15 – 2.30pm	<p><b>'Seamless Service' – The SWIFT Initiative (repeat)</b></p> <p><b>'Moving out of the Square' – Marketing Your Library (repeat)</b></p> <p><b>'Social Engagement' – Libraries Building Communities, Research and Development Project (repeat)</b></p>
2.30 – 2.45pm	Break and regroup

## Retreat Program

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2.45 – 3.45pm

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Plenary – Next Steps for Key Projects

- The Swift Initiative
- Statewide Marketing

3.45 – 4.00pm

Afternoon tea

4.00 – 5.00pm

*Choose one of four  
small group workshops.*

### Other Priorities and Issues

- **'Recruitment and Training'**  
*Anne Holmes (Manager, City of Boroondara Library Service)*
- **'Shaping Political Perceptions'**  
*Barbara Horn (CEO, Yarra-Melbourne Regional Library Corp)*
- **'Leading the Demand'**  
*John Murrell (CEO, West Gippsland Regional Library Corp)*
- **'Business Initiatives: Building the Capacity'**  
*John Binnion (CEO, Eastern Regional Libraries Corp)*

5.30 – 6.30pm

Pre-dinner drinks

6.30pm -

Dinner followed by 'at leisure gathering' with open bar

## Friday 4 April

7.30 – 8.45am

Breakfast

9.00 – 10.00am

*Choose one of four  
small group workshops.*

### Other Priorities and Issues

- **'Recruitment and Training' (repeat)**  
*Anne Holmes (Manager, City of Boroondara Library Service)*
- **'Shaping Political Perceptions' (repeat)**  
*Barbara Horn (CEO, Yarra-Melbourne Regional Library Corp)*
- **'Leading the Demand' (repeat)**  
*John Murrell (CEO, West Gippsland Regional Library Corp)*
- **'Business Initiatives: Building the Capacity' (repeat)**  
*John Binnion (CEO, Eastern Regional Libraries Corp)*

10.00am – 11.30am

### 4<sup>th</sup> Plenary - Priorities for Action

- Ideas emerging from small group workshops
- Statewide Projects Planning, 2003/2004

11.30 – 11.45am

Break

11.45 - 12.45pm

### Final Plenary

- Summary of key outcomes and actions

12.45pm

### Close of Conference

1.15pm

Lunch

# Key speeches

**Anne-Marie Schwirtlich, CEO and State Librarian, State Library Victoria**  
**Tuesday 1 April 2003**  
**Opening dinner speech**

The first time I spoke at a dinner function the organisers looked me firmly in the eye and reminded me that both the drinks and the speaker need to provide some fizz. Your drinks will not disappoint you and I hope that I don't come too poor a second.

Good evening everyone! I am very pleased to be with you and to have the chance to meet you and learn more about the work of Viclink and the Country Public Libraries Group. I thought I might use this evening to introduce myself.

My family is an immigrant family. In the curious way that the Commonwealth Government categorised its employees I was classified as an NESB 2, that is, someone born overseas for whom English is not a first language.

We first came to Australia aboard the P&O liner, the *Chusan*, in December 1969. We were here for a holiday as my mother had two sisters who had emigrated to Australia. My father was from the Sudetenland, my mother was French Mauritian. My father operated a business in India, which is where I was born and where my siblings and I grew up. We settled in Australia in 1972, I completed my last two years of school in Turramurra in Sydney and then began university. It had been my hope to study Sanskrit and ancient Indian history at ANU with Professor Basham but for various reasons I studied the ancient history of Greece and Rome at Macquarie University instead.

I had a wonderful time at university. However, as I worked my way through a diet of the Hellenistic Age, prosopography, and the Roman empire my mother became increasingly alarmed. When I decided I would do my honours work on the representation of India in Roman literature she was aghast. Mum gave me her finest bit of career counselling towards the end of my honours year when she remarked 'The public service employs people like you'. I have to tell you that this advice represented magnanimity of spirit difficult to convey because my mother had taken most Australian bureaucracy into a pretty unyielding dislike.

Suffice it to say that acting on her advice I applied for admission to the graduate programs of many NSW and Commonwealth agencies. As I very much enjoyed my interview with the then Commonwealth Archives Office, I accepted its offer, and so the unlikelyst of archival recruits began work.

I joined the Commonwealth Archives in 1978 and found the work so diverse and so enjoyable, the collection astonishing and the people I came into contact with so interesting that I decided an archivist I had to become. So, in 1981 and 1982, I enrolled as a part-time student at the University of New South Wales to do the post-graduate Diploma in Information Management in Archives Administration.

Beginning anew in an organisation is always a fascinating, exhausting and daunting experience. Quite early in my employment at the Archives, before I had met all of my colleagues, I was working in the repository arranging and describing some records. I became aware that I was not alone and that whoever was in that repository area was actually watching me. When I located my colleague and introduced myself his response was 'Anne-Marie, is it

wrong to want to kill someone?' As an introduction to full-time work, and a workplace, it was arresting and memorable.

Between 1988 and 1994 I was at the Australian War Memorial where I was responsible for the Printed and Written Records collections and, for one year, the Art collection.

I then returned to the Archives to run the Access and Information Services area. In 1998 I went to the National Library where I was responsible for reference services, the Australiana and South East Asian collections, and for establishing the *Bringing Them Home Oral History Project*.

I was back at the Archives in 1999 running the Public and Reader Services Branch which included information services, public programs, marketing, publishing, the digitising program and making access decisions about Commonwealth records.

At the end of 2000 when the Archives' Chief Executive Officer retired I began acting as Director-General, the position from which I came to the State Library.

I am here because I believe passionately in the importance and relevance of libraries, their staff, collections and buildings, and the learning, enjoyment and connections that they enable. I hope that as individuals and as institutions we continue to see a good deal of each other and to work together on behalf of Victorians.

**Anne-Marie Schwirtlich, CEO and State Librarian, State Library Victoria**  
**Wednesday 2 April 2003**  
**Conference opening speech**

Amongst the cultural institutions libraries stand out, nationally and internationally, as exemplars of cooperative and collaborative practice. Obviously the catalyst for such practices is the result of hard economic reality: it is a means of doing more with less – a means of sharing around costs, effort, expertise and opportunity. As our operating environment continues to change, due for example to shifting demographics trends, increasing competition<sup>1</sup> and emerging technologies - cooperation, collaboration and advocacy between library sectors will become essential to our ongoing relevance for the Australian community.

While the strength behind collaboration within the library industry has been the ability to build on commonalities while recognising differences, it is also true that the principle of collaboration is one that is firmly embedded in the ethical base of librarianship. Australia has developed some outstanding national collaborative initiatives: these include the national bibliographic database, document delivery and interlibrary lending system, consortia purchasing, digitising projects such as PictureAustralia and most recently the AskNow real-time reference service.

Within Victoria collaborative initiatives between the public library network and the State Library of Victoria have evolved over a long period, gaining particular momentum during the late 1990s. At this time the challenges and opportunities of a rapidly changing political<sup>2</sup> and technological environment encouraged both sectors to form a number of specific but broad ranging collaborative partnerships.

The successes of these partnerships are worth noting, they include the provision of:

- Internet connectivity across the public library network: Victoria was the first Australian state to have a “fully wired” public library system. This network provides 1000 Public Access Internet Terminals free of charge to the Victorian community.<sup>3</sup>
- The Virtual Library portal [www.libraries.vic.gov.au](http://www.libraries.vic.gov.au) which gives access to online services provided by Victorian public libraries. This site provides links to library catalogues and Web sites as well as to online databases and online reference resources such as the *Gulliver* databases.  
Victorian libraries have been pioneers in the development of consortia purchasing and licensing agreements to provide users with Internet access to a broad range of quality information resources. Some of these agreements allow users to access databases from

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<sup>1</sup> For example, only last Tuesday 25 March The Age reported on Google’s new online research facility opening with the following comment “Business are increasingly taking advantage of what may be the world’s cheapest research department.”

<sup>2</sup> The former Office of Library Services was integrated into the State Library of Victoria in September 1996; the work of this unit – monitoring library development grants and providing support to various sub-committees of the LBV- was continued by the Library Network Unit. In 1997 public library managers agreed that the development grants should move from submission based to statewide projects as a means of providing broader benefits across the library network.

<sup>3</sup> 2 projects running out of VICNET were responsible for this: Libraries online and Rural Libraries online (Libraries online was funded by MMV and Rural Libraries Online through NTN funds – projects were managed by Steering Committees made up of SLV staff and public library managers). Following implementation of basic connectivity these projects moved on to new initiatives such as provision of wireless and satellite links.

remote locations, such as home or office, in addition to public library branches. Major information databases provided to the Victorian public cover a broad range of subjects, including government and statistical information, health, education, science and current events.

- Internet access for Victoria's multilingual and disabled communities.  
The Open Road Web site <http://www.openroad.vic.gov.au> gives access to a selection of quality online resources in 12 Victorian community languages and scripts along with instructions on how to format PCs to display languages in their correct fonts. In a number of these languages only a very limited amount of printed material is available making the online resources provided through Open Road the best source of information available to the communities in their native language.

Each public library service also has specific hardware and software for disabled users these include a suite of adaptive technologies and software, such as Trackballs, JAWS, EIA and touch-screen browsing.

There is also a wide range of initiatives funded since 1998 by the Library Board of Victoria through the Statewide Public Library Development Projects valued at \$1.1million annually. These include ongoing training for all levels of public library staff across the State; a marketing project; the Writers on the Road touring literary program in which every public library service has participated; development of guidelines and manuals for public libraries in areas such as multicultural services, disability services and digitisation of local history resources; studies and preparation of plans for the public library network in areas ranging from development of performance indicators to measure the contribution of public libraries to social capital through to the exploration of the idea of implementing a statewide library management system. The State Library is an enthusiastic partner in each of these projects designed to help public libraries across the state to deliver more and better services and to position the network for the future.

There can be little doubt that both the State Library of Victoria and the public library network value efforts aimed at strengthening the statewide collaborative framework, and within this context three partnership projects are being raised for further discussion during this retreat –

- The PricewaterhouseCoopers Business Case Analysis to establish a statewide collaborative library management system, the SWIFT initiative.
- Statewide Marketing Project and,
- Libraries Building Communities Research and Development Project

I believe that these projects have the potential to further inform the development of the statewide collaborative framework.

In addition to these projects, and as a final point, it is important to note the role of advocacy, which has emerged as a core activity for collaborative efforts for the library industry as a whole. Recent opportunities have included the Senate Inquiry into the role of libraries in the online environment, and the State Government's Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee's inquiry into electronic democracy (October 2002). Appropriate recognition and funding for the role of libraries in lifelong learning remains a hindrance to the benefits libraries are able to currently deliver to the broad community, but it is a hindrance that may be reversed through combined advocacy and collaboration.

**Joanne Duncan, MP (Member for Macedon)**  
**Wednesday 2 April 2003**  
**Conference opening speech**

As a former teacher/librarian with nine years service – which included five years as head librarian – and, now, as the member for the new seat of Macedon, I can say with absolute conviction that it is a great pleasure to be here today representing Candy Broad, the Minister for Local Government, to officially open the Public Libraries Planning Retreat for 2003 at Glen Erin Vineyard and Conference Centre.

Many of you will have attended the last retreat which was held two years ago at Kalorama and which was extremely productive and successful. It generated a very useful analysis of the emerging social, political, economic and local community needs in Victoria and their impact on the likely role and services of public libraries 2001-2010.

This led to the development of a number of key initiatives for public libraries especially for state-wide projects, with significant outcomes including the establishment of the Gulliver online database consortium, the Capacity Building project looking at libraries and social capital and the development of a business case for a state-wide library management system.

The Kalorama retreat in 2001 also gave rise to some of the key items which are to be examined over the next three days here in Lancefield; in particular the business case being developed for a state-wide, shared library management system and the research project on public libraries and social capital.

Kalorama also helped define local libraries' on-going relationships with the Local Government Division and the State Library. And it contributed to the Government's decision to transfer responsibility for public library policy to the Minister for Local Government.

As part of that policy transfer, the Government established the Ministerial Advisory Council on Public Libraries. This represented another major State Government initiative and a strong indication of the Bracks Government's support for local public libraries.

The new Department for Victorian Communities is continuing to support this planning retreat in partnership with the State Library of Victoria and the two peak public library bodies, Viclink and the Country Public Libraries Group. You don't really need me to tell you how much Victorian communities value their public libraries, and the extent to which they use the facilities which their libraries provide.

But just to put the statistics up there in front of you before you start your planning days it is good to know that every second person in Victoria is a member of a local public library.

There are now 238 branch libraries throughout the State. There are also 31 mobile library services which stop at 566 sites, mostly, as you'd expect, in rural and regional areas.

When you add up the figures, libraries deliver some extraordinary service results.

For example, when you total the branch service hours, local libraries are open for about 11,000 hours per week. They lend over forty six and a half million items per year; receive more than

twenty five and a half million visitors. Plus they provide free access to the Internet for all Victorians.

And you are the people who are responsible for providing that exceptional level of service.

The Bracks Government certainly recognises the importance and the value of local public libraries to Victorian communities. We are committed to maintaining and improving that level of service.

At present Government funding for public libraries administered through the Department for Victorian Communities is at a record \$25,165,000.

On top of this the Government has committed \$12 million across a three year program for the Living Libraries initiative funded from the Community Support Fund.

This is a significant program that has provided practical assistance and financial incentives to local councils to improve library buildings and services to their communities.

As you know, in some cases the funds are being directed towards the construction of replacement library buildings and in others, extending, renovating or refurbishing existing library buildings.

The new Minister for Local Government, Candy Broad, has recently endorsed the final Round 3 recommendations for the Living Libraries Funding and referred them to the Minister for Victorian Communities for his approval.

Once that approval has been formalised, it will mean that the entire \$12 million in program funds will have been committed.

It is useful, in this forum, as you are about to begin an intensive three day planning session, to recap just what the Living Libraries program has meant to local government and to their communities in Victoria:

The program will have contributed to funding 45 projects with a total capital value of over \$46 million;

- By the time all projects are complete, in a little over two years' time, 20 percent of the State's library branches will have been upgraded;
- More than half of the State's 79 councils will have had at least one project funded in their city or shire;
- To date, 10 projects are complete, four are in various stages of construction and seven are expected to begin construction shortly.

As part of the election campaign, the Government also promised an additional \$5 million for library resources on top of recurrent funding. This follows on from the additional \$1,276,000 which the Government made available last year for books and resources.

The Minister has asked me to tell you that she is considering recommendations that have come from the recent review of the three year Funding and Service Agreements for public library funding. She was impressed by the range and depth of the submissions to the review.

The Minister has also resolved to reappoint the Ministerial Advisory Council and ensure it continues to serve as the main contact point between the Department for Victorian Communities and key stakeholders involved with public libraries. These include the councils and regional library corporations; the libraries themselves, as well as the Municipal Association of Victoria and the State Library of Victoria.

Viclink itself has taken on a more prominent role within the sector through co-operative and collaborative projects. An outstanding example is the Gulliver consortium which manages the selection and cooperative purchasing of online databases for Victorian Public Libraries.

The Government has recognised the importance of Gulliver by providing a grant of \$200,000 to acquire additional online databases for public libraries through consortium purchasing arrangements.

This, again, is a very tangible example of how highly the Bracks Government values libraries and how we are keen to encourage the use of on-line resources to make libraries more accessible and relevant to their communities.

Gulliver is not only cost effective because of the co-operative purchasing arrangements, it is also incredibly flexible and allows each library to choose which of the databases have the greatest relevance and appeal to your communities.

Added to that is the power of tapping into a range of full-text databases from home via computer – it's like having a library on your desktop and all your users need to do is join the library.

On that note and in conclusion, let me say on behalf of the Minister and as a former librarian that it is very encouraging to see that Viclink is tackling other important large-scale issues, such as the feasibility of a state-wide library management system and fundamental research into public libraries' place in their communities and the social capital this engenders.

As the Kalorama retreat did two years ago, I am sure that these three days in Lancefield will develop initiatives that will set the agenda for local public libraries for at least the next two years.

I wish everyone a profitable and stimulating three days.

**Prue Digby, Executive Director, Local Government and Regional Services,  
Department for Victorian Communities  
Thursday 3 April 2003  
The Changing Public Sector**

Thankyou for the invitation to speak to the 2003 Libraries Planning Retreat.

The Department for Victorian Communities is delighted to be a co-sponsor again in 2003.

Much has changed in the last two years, not the least of which is the re-election of the Bracks Government for a second term and the creation of the Department for Victorian Communities of which the Local Government and Regional Services Division is a part.

Two broad points in my presentation:

1. The Government's thinking behind the establishment of the new Department for Victorian Communities - based on the two objectives of strengthening communities and more effective service delivery through 'joining-up' agencies involved in planning, funding and delivering services to individuals and communities.
2. The challenges and opportunities we face (both State government agencies and councils) in delivering on these objectives to Victorian communities. These objectives underpin the concept 'partnerships' which Minister Broad outlined in her speech to Mayors and CEOs at a forum on February. The Minister said that Government's intent was to develop practical ways of working in partnership with councils around specific issues consistent with the policy objectives on which the Government was elected.

### **The thinking behind the creation of DVC**

If I can start by saying a few things about the creation of the Department for Victorian Communities because embedded in the logic of the portfolio grouping of Victorian Communities is the basis for a new relationship with local government, including regional library corporations and individual library services.

The Government's first term agenda was characterised by the rebuilding of basic services (health, education, justice) and a focus on growing and linking Victoria.

Growing Victoria Together, the Government's long term policy framework launched in November 2001, flagged an increasing focus on sustainability and strengthening communities as important issues for Victorians; a first toe in the water.

Following the election the Premier made a range of machinery of government changes to Government Departments to better align their functions to key priorities. These changes were the most extensive since the early 1990s.

At the heart of these changes were the establishment of the Department of Sustainability and Environment (formed essentially by splitting the former DNRE) intended in part to give institutional reflection to importance of enhancing the sustainability of the natural and built environment, and the establishment of a completely new Department - the Department for Victorian Communities - to drive the community strengthening agenda. The importance of

these Departments to the government's second term agenda is reflected in the fact that the Deputy Premier, the Hon John Thwaites, is the co-ordinating Minister for both.

The key functional areas of DVC apart from the Local Government and Regional Services Division are:

- Community Support Fund and the Office of Community Building
- Sport and Recreation Victoria
- Employment Programs
- Aboriginal Affairs Victoria
- Office of Youth
- Office of Women's Policy
- Multicultural Affairs Victoria
- The Public Records Office and the Office of Births Deaths and Marriages

Significantly the Department also has responsibility for the Commonwealth Games.

From this long list you can see that there are several areas in the Department besides the Local Government and Regional Services Division that have the potential to interact with public libraries. Some are already doing so: for example; the Community Support Fund is providing the \$12 million for the Living Libraries - Public Library Infrastructure Grants Program.

The Department is responsible to seven Ministers and the Minister Assisting in Multicultural Affairs.

The Department has over 550 EFT staff and a budget of around \$700 million per annum. Some \$340 million of this is Victoria Grants Commission funding for Local Government.

It has more than 45 grants programs - of which councils are also major recipients - which in itself illustrates the challenge of 'joining-up' planning and services. The public libraries grants program of \$25.165 million is one of the largest and most important specific purpose grants programs administered by the Department.

At first glance this collection of functions looks idiosyncratic. In fact it is a deliberate attempt to give institutional form to a Department that focuses on people and place.

The people function is covered by the fact that for the first time a range of specialist Offices - focussing on the needs of multicultural Victorians, Kooris, youth, women, as well as the government's employment, sport and recreation programs - have been co-located in a single agency. From the Government's perspective engagement with these groups and activities (amongst others) are essential to community strengthening.

The place focus is evidenced by the inclusion of local government in the Department. This reflects the view that partnerships with councils and other community stakeholders are critical achieving the Government's policy objectives.

Responsibility for the Commonwealth Games has been given to the Department to indicate the Government's commitment that the Games be seen in part as a community strengthening opportunity rather than just as another major sporting event.

Having sketched the origins and structure of DVC I now want to turn to discuss the importance of the concepts of 'joining-up' and community strengthening before canvassing some areas of possible partnerships.

### **What is meant by 'joining-up'?**

The concept of 'joined-up' government was I believe a term first coined by the Blair Government to describe a key objective of that government's program to drive public sector reform in the UK.

In fact though it is only the most recent term used to describe efforts to put in place systems and processes which make the delivery of services more seamless. In essence 'joining-up' is nothing more than implementing funding and service delivery arrangements as though the administrative and institutional boundaries between programs, departments, levels of government don't exist.

It is about designing from the perspective of the recipient - be that an individual, an agency or a community.

'Joining-up' is also about providing individuals and communities with the opportunity to be more involved in setting priorities about what governments fund and how services are delivered.

The constraints against 'joining-up' are a seemingly perennial problem in public administration. The establishment of 'mega Departments' in Victoria is one institutional manifestation of trying to 'join-up' Departments. The experience to date has been mixed.

Whilst our system is infinitely better than say NSW with over 40 departments the past decade has made clear that by themselves the merging of departments are not sufficient to create more flexible approaches to funding and delivering services to local communities.

Thus we still have agencies having to apply to multiple programs in a single department for funding using different application processes, with different decision-making timelines, and different accountability systems for like services. And this is often replicated for those agencies having to apply to more than one department to fund key elements of a service continuum.

For example a Regional Library Corporation receives funding from each member council, from the Department for Victorian Communities and a variety of other sources.

These are not easy problems to deal with. They require considerable and sustained organisational commitment at senior levels. It is unlikely that change will be systemic. Rather it will occur in a more piecemeal fashion by agencies gradually changing their grant making processes - and through others learning from their successes.

I mentioned earlier that DVC had about 45 grants programs, including those for public libraries. It is therefore logical for us to design a more streamlined, easily understood and simplified system of grants making for our programs.

We have therefore embarked on a project which is intended to deliver the following outcomes:

- Streamlining the process for agencies to make grants applications through a single gateway.

- Simplifying the multiple reporting and accountability requirements on agencies so that the level of reporting is commensurate with the amount received.
- Encouraging the pooling of funds from different programs to achieve agreed goals

In developing recommendations to the Minister for Local Government concerning the future of public library Funding and Service Agreements, we have taken care to ensure that these considerations are accommodated.

'Joining-up' is as much a challenge for local government as it is for the State - and public libraries are a critical player.

'Joining-up' within DVC is the prelude to looking at broader place management strategies involving government agencies working with others sectors including local government and community agencies.

This will take time. It is encouraging that the Government has been willing to create a department with a clear mandate to work on these issues.

There is a risk that public libraries will be seen as being *apart from* - not *a part of* - local government. This can be a problem with regional library corporations in particular which need to work closely with member councils in delivering services to other community areas.

A challenge for us all is to develop libraries as a major focus for community engagement between local government and residents.

Over 50% of Victorians, choose to use libraries, more than any other services except roads and rubbish.

Importantly, using a library generally means face-to-face contact with staff - this does not normally happen with roads and rubbish. It is fair to say that people interact more with local government through public libraries than through any other service.

Public libraries are already delivering a wide range of services to local communities and are well placed to develop this further in the strategic areas of 'joined-up' government and 'joined-up' service delivery.

There is a need to make sure councils are aware of libraries' potential and to bring libraries more into mainstream local government operations rather than working along side local government.

### **Why are we interested in strengthening communities?**

I would now like to turn to the question of why we should be interested in strengthening communities.

It is about developing social capital - the bonding, the bridging, the linking within and between communities which builds connectedness to want to do things together. So strengthening communities is about tapping into and galvanising the 'social capital' embedded in communities.

I am pleased to see that 'social capital' and community building is an important topic for discussion at this Forum. We all know that public libraries have a high social capital value. You are well placed to make the most of this in the future.

So what are the characteristics of 'strong' communities?

In her speech to Mayors and CEOs which I referred to earlier, Minister Broad discussed the development of partnerships between State Government and councils aimed at building stronger communities. In saying this she had in mind communities that:

- encourage active social and civic participation;
- have a sense of confidence and
- are resilient in the face of changing circumstances.

Significantly the characteristics that build individual and community strength are also those that underpin high levels of education completion rates, increased levels of community safety, employment opportunities. Building strong communities is therefore at the centre of the enterprise for modern governments.

Indeed the absence of the characteristics of strong communities (such as isolation and lack of people to turn to for support) are precisely the conditions which correlate with ill health (especially mental illness) and which create the demand for many of the remedial services - such as child protection, family violence and justice services which have become core activities of State Governments.

So, if we take the basic platform of community strengthening and 'joined-up' services where would key opportunities for partnerships be? I will suggest three types of partnerships - partnerships around building long term community resilience; partnerships around 'joined-up' service delivery and; partnerships around specific policy priorities.

### **Partnership Area 1 - Communities that are active, confident and resilient**

In Victoria as a result of the bush fires and drought there are communities under stress. Long after the response and recovery stages we need to be assured such communities have the capacity to sustain themselves and face potential future opportunities and challenges.

Similarly there are many communities across Victoria under stress from industry restructuring and demographic forces. We need to be putting in place now strategies for their long term sustainability - and that requires a considerable joint effort within and between governments.

Specific partnerships in these areas - whether about towns or broader communities are key challenges facing us all. We all need to better understand the overall conditions underlying resilience and sustainability.

To date much of the effort has been fragmented and ad hoc and we need to be more certain about the overall impact of our joint efforts in building resilience and sustainability.

A further particular strategy we are keen to explore is the contribution of volunteers to community strengthening. In particular the Government believes that with the right type of support we can increase the scope and diversity of volunteering in Victoria.

Volunteering is an important feature of council activities and we are keen to explore a greater role both for traditional volunteering and for corporate philanthropy.

The international evidence shows that with the proper support volunteers can make significant contributions to service delivery and be key players in the life of communities.

In particular we believe that there are many small and medium large businesses that are looking for new ways of getting involved in their communities through encouraging their staff to contribute their time and skills to assist those in need.

Public libraries are no strangers to volunteers - most services use volunteers to deliver books and resources to housebound users. Local history collections often attract volunteers to help maintain access to the materials.

The state-wide National Information and Library Service for People with Print Disabilities relies very heavily on volunteers to assist in the recording and production of audio books and magazines.

## **Partnership Area 2 – ‘Joined-up’ governments**

The purpose of partnerships in this area would be to drive fundamental reform of how government delivers services at the local level. In particular the focus would be on new planning and delivery mechanisms which more centrally involve local communities with state commonwealth and local government.

Specific partnerships with local councils are a key to better local planning and ‘joining-up’ services. We would like to explore with councils different ways in which we can work with other community organisations in local planning, funding and service delivery.

Internationally there are examples such as the successful French ‘Contract de Ville’ where specific charters were agreed with local communities based on specific objectives designed to:

- enhance public service provision
- renovate poor housing areas
- support economic regeneration; and
- prevent crime

The initial projects ran from 1994-1998 and demonstrated that ‘joining-up’ objectives worked well where they were underpinned by: clear authorisation; local leadership; focussed objectives; realistic resourcing and; lots of good will between the parties.

Locally there are many examples of ‘joined-up’ services already underway but often we fail to capture the learning or consider how such models could be applied more broadly.

I am certain that there are examples of public libraries working with local communities to provide ‘joined-up’ services. A challenge for you all is to make these examples better known and to offer your expertise to work with other areas of councils in developing services further.

Often what holds back such reform is not the willingness of people to make the changes but the authorisation to do so.

This is where DVC can act as an advocate for 'joined-up' services and address blockages.

### **Partnership Area 3 - Specific Policy Priorities**

In addition to partnerships around longer term community resilience and partnerships designed to reform service delivery there are a range of specific policy priority areas where partnerships could be developed.

These policy areas are likely to also contribute to both community strengthening objectives and 'joining-up' services so have a double benefit.

Partnerships in all these areas would most likely be with one or more local governments - not on a state-wide basis. For example we are keen to see local government central to the policy debate around the Melbourne 2030 strategy and representing the interests of local communities as this major strategy unfolds.

We also have a keen interest in working with local government to further rollout physical activity strategies.

The Living Libraries - Public Library Infrastructure Grants Program is an example of partnerships already underway. The \$12 million in program funds provided by the State Government and at least matched by local councils will fund 45 projects in total worth more than \$46 million. By the time all projects are complete in around 2 years time, 20% of the State's library branches will have been upgraded. More than half of the State's 79 councils will have at least one project funded.

These partnerships have common objectives - better services, stronger communities. All are local and focussed.

### **Conclusion**

I have sketched today some specific areas for partnerships. Where and how we move forward on these or other areas will be influenced by the extent to which councils, regional library corporations and library services themselves choose to get involved. You may wish to address these issues in your discussions over the remainder of this conference.

These partnerships are not about devolution of roles and responsibilities but about jointly delivering on agreed specific objectives around shared policy priorities.

Local government has been through momentous change in recent years. This has obviously affected public libraries which are a key part of local government. However local government is now positioned to become a more significant actor in working with State Government to improve the overall wellbeing of their communities.

The Department for Victorian Communities is helping to add value to public library services by assisting with collaborative arrangements and in building the network. We have a role in two key areas:

- helping to develop the network as a whole; and
- developing the role of the public library in the local community;

By working across all 44 libraries everyone gets 'more bang for the buck'.

Look at what has been achieved through the Gulliver project.

The soon to be released manual *Taking Services into the Future* commissioned by the Local Government and Regional Services Division will assist country libraries in particular to manage their operations better and work more closely and collaboratively with member councils and local communities.

Of course libraries themselves are taking the initiative in a number of areas, including developing a business case for a state-wide collaborative library management system and a major project to look at libraries and community building and social capital. These are being discussed at this Forum.

There are important local examples of co-operation and 'joining-up' already in operation. Kilmore Library is a well known example with the Tourist Information Centre, VicRoads agency, TAFE classes and other services available at the library. Here the library has taken the lead in offering services drawn from state government and educational sectors to the community.

There are several examples of council information centres operating from libraries, and sometimes using the same staff.

One model does not suit all. There is a need to have instruments to help local libraries plan to work with communities – the Taking Services into the Future manual will help here.

The Local Priorities Funding component of the library grant assists libraries to respond to local needs in local ways. These funds have assisted individual libraries to respond to particular needs within their communities and have helped reinforce the central role the library plays in those communities.

Minister Broad has flagged the opportunity for an enhanced relationship with councils based on specific partnerships around shared priorities. The Department for Victorian Communities has a clear mandate to drive community strengthening and improved encouraging a variety of 'joined-up' approaches to deliver better services to individuals and communities.

Local Government, regional library corporations and libraries can be a major players in this enterprise. This is your challenge as your Odyssey continues and I look forward to seeing where the journey takes you from here.

# Powerpoint presentations

Please note that the following presentations, due to size, are not reproduced in this document but are available on Victoria's Virtual Library Infonet:

- Christine Kilmartin (Department of Infrastructure) – Victorian Communities in Transition – demographic trends and outcomes in Victoria.
- Fiona Lange (Lange Hill Marketing) – @yourlibrary campaign

Lynne Makin (Upper Murray Regional Library, Viclink President)  
Viclink overview since 2001: Secretariat and current projects

## **VICLINK OVERVIEW SINCE 2001**

### Key Priorities from Kalorama

- *Social Engagement*
- *Seamless Service*
- *'Moving out of the Square'*
- *Sustainable Long Term Funding*
- *Political Perception Management*
- *Leading the Demand*
- *Recruitment and Training*
- *Establishment of a Business Arm of VICLINK -  
'VICLINK Inc'*

## VICLINK Overview Since 2001

What have we been doing?

### Projects

- Building the Capacity
- Libraries Building Communities
- Collaborative Library Management System
- Marketing
- VICLINK Secretariat
- Gulliver

## VICLINK SECRETARIAT

- Established in 2002
  
- “Grand Vision” for the Secretariat
  - independent structure for VICLINK
  - development of a business arm
    - Sustainable Long Term Funding
    - Leading the Demand

## GULLIVER

- New Members
  
- BRUCE
  
- Kinetica Licence

Is this enough?

Where to for VICLINK  
after our "Port of Call"?

Patterns of use and demand  
(and a bit of a vision)

- History is bunk ....
- or
- Those who ignore history are condemned to repeat it

## Where we have come from

- Part of long slow pattern
- Growth in use – 1950's to mid 1990's
- Now plateaued
  - Employment
  - Internet
  - Book votes

## Initiatives and tensions

- SLV vs. Public Libraries
  - Or ... “PLD as enemy”
- Out of SLV
- Into Arts
- Later into Local Government
- Has always been an ambivalent relationship

## Initiatives and tensions

- Regional Libraries & Barrett Reid
  - (and PLD)
- Technilib – 1974 – 1994
  - Staff shortages
  - Central computer system
  - Grew to 24 + members

## Where we are now

- IT obsolescence now catching up
- Replacements require a new way of thinking
- 10 year old John Grisham vs 10 year old PC
- Network support & expertise
- Relative cost of labour

## Where do we go .... And how (and why ?)

- Hybrid service needed
- Can (if the spirit is willing) dissolve geographic barriers
- Balance old and new
- Co-operation should be a good thing
- Local nature of funding will always be central issue

## The dawn, the dark

- Always darkest before the dawn
  - Is it dark now ?
  - Will it be soon ?
- Funders must be involved and engaged
- Vision must be clear
- Goals must be obvious to everyone

## A vision

- From People's Network
- My own

Lynne Makin (Upper Murray Regional Library, Viclink President)  
Changes in the Industry: Public Libraries Australia Ltd

## PUBLIC LIBRARIES AUSTRALIA Ltd

A change for the future of public  
libraries

### Does it Exist?

- Company Limited by guarantee
- Board of Directors
- Membership model
- Project development

## What are its Objectives?

- Representing public libraries at a national level
- Providing advocacy for public libraries
- Lobbying the Federal Government on behalf of public libraries
- The Voice of Australian public libraries

## Where will it sit in relation to state organisations

- Will work at a national level
- Will work for all public libraries
- Will not compete with state initiatives
- Will encourage thinking of initiatives on a national level

## ACTION - Time Line

- Membership drive from 1st July 2003
- Project application lodged by 30th April 2003
- AGM August 2003
- Election of Board August 2003

## Impact on Libraries?

- Initiatives at a state level may be better advocated at a Federal level
- Recognition of libraries as the key player in the future of information service delivery

## Impact for the Retreat?

- Feed into Public Libraries Australia those initiatives identified during the retreat that can be better advocated at a national level
- This is the first opportunity for direct input from the “grass roots”

Anna Cook (East Gippsland Shire Library) Statewide Marketing Project :  
Advisory Committee response to the Adshan review

## Statewide Marketing Project

### Advisory Committee response to the Adshan Review

Anna Cook,  
Advisory Committee  
Convenor

April 2003

## Key Project Stakeholders

- Viclink & CPLG
- Victorian public libraries/library staff
- Local Government
- Library users - current and potential
- Other State government agencies
- Other Statewide Projects

## Background

- Marketing Project established 1998
- Project review requested by Viclink as part of 2002/03 project proposal
- Review conducted by Adshan Consulting Group, Oct.- Dec. 2002
- Key findings circulated to Viclink & CPLG Executives & via VVL Infonet

## Key findings from the Review

- Ineffective branding
- Poor internal communication
- Inefficient allocation of resources & need to refine strategic planning

## Key issues (identified by Committee)

- Need for clarity and shared awareness of project goals, including relevant roles/responsibilities
- Library staff engagement with public library marketing & its strategic role
- Internal communication processes
- Relationship between budget and capacity to deliver outcomes
- Brand awareness - internal vs. external

## Project 'mission' and role of Advisory Committee

- To provide appropriate marketing leadership, expertise and tools to help foster awareness of public libraries in their local communities
- Developing Marketing Plan & Communication Strategy
- Facilitating 'quality' market research on a statewide level (e.g. AustraliaScan)
- Marketing education (seminars etc)
- Developing partnering opportunities

## Challenges and major factors for project success

- Implementing a viable communication strategy
- Adoption of the Review recommendation to phase out the librariesvictoria brand
- Successfully shifting existing tactics to a more cost-effective and strategic mode of delivery

## Priority issues

- 'Branding' and Promotion
- Web site - [librariesvictoria.net](http://librariesvictoria.net)
- 1300 number and White Pages
- Staffing
- Internal Communication

## 1) Branding and promotion

- Recommendation:
  - The Advisory Committee endorses the Review recommendation that the *librariesvictoria* brand be discontinued, and that the *@yourlibrary* tagline be adopted.
  - Recommendation is NOT wholesale replacement of one brand with another. *@yourlibrary* functions as a tagline for a promotional campaign, and is one component of a broad-based and strategic marketing project.

## 2) Web site - librariesvictoria.net

- Recommendation:
  - librariesvictoria.net should be merged with the Victoria's Virtual Library site ([libraries.vic.gov.au](http://libraries.vic.gov.au)) to provide a single portal to information about public library services in Victoria
  - Core functionality from site will be maintained
  - Vicnet to be contracted to provide on-going site maintenance

### 3) 1300 Number & White Pages

- Recommendation:
  - The Committee recommends the phasing out of the 1300 Number and the current (reduced) White Pages directory listing
  - To support this recommendation, the Committee proposes to include training (as part of the established seminar program) to assist services in providing a consistent level of access to library information for users.

### 4) Staffing

- Recommendation:
  - The Committee endorses as a high priority the Review suggestion to appoint an outsourced marketing manager - a qualified and experienced marketing professional - on a fractional, on-site basis.
  - The role of the manager would initially look at communication, implementation of *@your library* and strategic planning.

## 5) Internal Communication

- Recommendations:
  - Both the Viclink and CPLG Executives are represented on the SPSC
  - The Marketing Manager develops a Communication Strategy between the Project and public libraries
  - The Marketing Manager works on-the-ground with libraries individually and through the established seminar program

## Conclusion

- It is exactly one year since Viclink requested a review of the Marketing Project
- A comprehensive review was carried out recommending major change
- The Project Advisory Committee undertook to lead the response to the review, which it has done
- The Committee now seeks endorsement of its recommendations for immediate implementation following the Glen Erin Retreat

## Implementation Costs (to end of 2002/03 yr)

- @yourlibrary (campaign 'buy-in'; advertising production costs; print production costs) - \$65,000
- Website merge - \$5,000
- Outsourced Marketing Manager (F/T in May/June) - \$18,000
- Total of \$88,000 is well within the remaining Project budget, which has been effectively on hold since the review commenced

Catherine Palmer (New Focus)  
Libraries Building Communities Research and Development Project

 NEW FOCUS

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 **NEW FOCUS**

**Research Strategy and Implementation**  
Telephone: 1800 807 535  
Facsimile: 1800 812 319  
[admin@newfocus.com.au](mailto:admin@newfocus.com.au)  
[www.newfocus.com.au](http://www.newfocus.com.au)

 

ACN: 066 433 707  
ABN: 87 533 903 259

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**Libraries Building Communities –  
Research and Development Project**



**Presentation to Public Libraries Retreat**

*March 2003*

 2



- background to the project
- previous projects /experience
- what is social capital?
- project outcomes
- methodology
- project deliverables



- social *engagement* was identified as the number one priority at Odyssey 2001:
  - libraries *connect* people in ways that are largely unrecognised
  - importance of this from a policy and 'marketing' perspective



*"The public library's historical role in civic education; its openness to people of all ages, races and economic status; its role as a public meeting place for groups and individuals; its position as the repository of the community's history and culture; its popularity and long tradition of service; its highly educated staff; its extension of service to the homebound and others with disabilities; its leadership in providing access to new technologies such as the Internet; and the convenient hours and central locations of its buildings make the public library a good place to begin the work of strengthening communities."*

Sara Ann Long



- 'social capital' has come to replace social engagement as a way of framing the role that libraries play in building their communities
- key aim of the project:
  - identify and document how, why and in what ways, libraries do build their communities, what the potential barriers to this process might be, and how we can overcome this





- previous projects have looked at the role of social capital in various settings including health, housing, employment and urban re-generation



- "social capital" refers to those relationships of social connectedness that enable people to act collectively
- "bottom-up" phenomenon based on trust, reciprocity, networks and norms to facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit



- some examples:
  - neighbours exchanging fruit over the back fence (reciprocity)
  - neighbours feeding the cat or bringing in the mail while you are on holidays (trust)
  - neighbours providing their skills for free (networks)
- combined effect of trust, networks, norms, reciprocity and tolerance of diversity that creates a strong community



- social capital is looked to as a means of community building:
  - promises hope for the generation of social and economic benefits that are said to come from those interactions among neighbours, citizens and governments which are characterised by strong norms of trust, tolerance and mutuality
- social capital provides a framework for conceptualising and measuring the social resources that individuals can invest in and draw upon to actively engage in the communities around them
- the 'glue' that holds a society together



- process or an outcome?
- is it the 'property' of individuals or groups?
- the appropriateness of using the language of economics and production to speak of human capabilities
- the potential for governments to devolve their funding responsibilities *back* to the communities



- most useful to consider social capital as an *outcome* of a range social processes that draw on social capital producing resources:
  - norms and networks, features of geographical areas (eg the availability of local services and opportunities for interaction and identity building - parks, playgrounds, community centres, libraries)
- social capital is an outcome that is context dependent, and relies heavily on human agency



- libraries are important 'third places' where complete strangers can safely come together, to connect with others, to build skills and to seek out interactions and information
- libraries are places where people can find differing opinions
- from librarians that people learn how to find, evaluate and use the information essential for making decisions that affect the way we live, learn, work and govern ourselves



- important showcase for the contributions that Victorian public libraries make to their communities
- improved access to key performance information that reflects the contribution of libraries to their communities
- access to case studies and other information on best practice
- series of local community profiles that identify groups in the community who are not well serviced by their libraries, and provide the basis for a state wide approach to the development of strategies for social engagement



- greater awareness among library staff of the role of libraries, especially in developing social capital and community building:
  - support for the development of library plans for future improvement through identification of strengths and weaknesses in current practice
- greater awareness of the scope and range of library services and activities, i.e. beyond loans of books



- increase understanding of the current and potential role of public libraries in community building
- improved information on the availability of Victorian public library services to particular groups such as ethnic minorities, people in regional and remote communities and people with disabilities
- provide government with an enhanced understanding of how public libraries assist government at all levels to address key policy issues and achieve their strategic goals (e-government, health promotion, lifelong learning and learning communities)



- focus of the project is on library users and *potential* library users rather than on non library-users
- four-stage approach to conducting this project



**Implement a methodology for demonstrating the contribution made by Victorian public libraries to building their communities**

- preliminary consultation with stakeholders
- literature review of relevant secondary data and publications, (eg various performance and quality frameworks being developed across government - such as Best Value, Health & Well-Being frameworks, community building, cultural policies, ICT connectivity and lifelong learning policies, social capital and community building)
- development of appropriate indicators of social capital and other outcome measures
- documentation of the research methodology, including guidelines and advice for its implementation



**Research**

- primary research and data collection stage
- analysis of existing data and the collection of new primary data through focus groups, telephone and face-to-face interviews, community forums, workshops and telephone surveys



**Sub-components and tasks**

***Analysis of the degree of correlation between local community demographics and characteristics of library users***

- Victorian Multicultural Commission on access of LOTE populations to local council services
- the community profiles developed by the Department of Infrastructure as part of the 'Facts about your area' publications
- data collected through the Annual Survey compiled by the Department of Infrastructure
- data collected by libraries themselves on users and 'customer satisfaction'



***Focus groups***

- nine focus groups will be run with library users and nine focus groups will be held with potential library users for whom there are clear barriers to access (as opposed to those who consciously choose not to visit a library)
- provide an in-depth understanding of who uses libraries and the benefits they get from these services:
  - explore the potential for libraries to act as hubs for community interaction and exchange



***Focus groups continued***

- used to identify those factors that act as barriers to use of public library services by some sections of the community
- capturing a slice of the community
- focus groups in libraries to allow us to capture some observational measures
- six focus groups will also be held with library staff to build an understanding of the ways in which libraries build communities – as seen from the inside



***Telephone interviews***

- 50 x 30 minute in-depth telephone interviews with residents in rural and regional communities
- Issues of access, availability, services offered, barriers to use, perceptions of the library, role of the library and suggestions for improvement will be explored
- 30 x 30 minute telephone interviews will be conducted with key influencers to measure the impact of libraries on the broader community



***Community groups and workshops***

- three community forums will be undertaken as a way of boosting awareness of the research, and informing residents of the social capital building potential of their local libraries
- three workshops will also be conducted with library staff to enable staff to learn from the research findings and to build their awareness of the social contribution libraries make to their communities, and the processes through which this occurs



**Quantitative telephone survey**

- 12 minute quantitative telephone interview with a random sample from the general Victorian population:
  - quantifying and validating the extent to which some of the qualitative issues were significant within the broader community
- inclusion of several questions that act as an indicator of social capital



**Strategy**

- develop a consultation and communications strategy that can be used to increase the understanding of the role of public libraries and awareness of the value they contribute to their communities
- 'living document' to access and reference as needed



**Implementation**

- develop a range of materials and tools that can be used by public library service managers and peak bodies at federal, state and local government level to communicate key messages and findings from the Research and Development project



- active contributors to and participants in the project
- ideas and input in focus groups and workshops, assist in recruiting library members
- experience on the ground will be critical to the success of this project



- descriptive and quantifiable
- relevance for the local library environment
- social, economic and environmental contribution of libraries
- short report outlining the key findings from the analysis of data and key performance indicators:
  - summarise the key information on each library service and provide state and regional averages for comparison
- guide for library staff that will assist in the implementation and analysis of these indicators in future years



- short, simple document that presents the findings from library users and community consultations
- report on social engagement issues, identifying what individuals in the community want from their library and barriers in accessing library services
- series of case studies of innovative practice in an accessible and attractive form that engages readers
- strategy document that outlines an approach for raising awareness of the research and development project and its findings with various stakeholders and includes practical advice and examples



- complex project/complex problem
- the project places the role of the library fairly and squarely on the public agenda

# Workshop notes

Please note that the following ideas are taken from the 'Other Priorities and Issues', small group workshop sessions. What follows is not a record of all ideas in all workshops. Delegates had the choice of participating in two workshops which included presentation and group discussion.

## Recruitment and Training Workshops

Workshop leader: Anne Holmes (City of Boroondara Library Service)

### **Key Issues:**

- Encourage staff to achieve potential
- Tertiary qualifications – flexibility and relationship with providers
- Promotion of profession as active, vibrant, exciting
- Industry competencies
- Ongoing role of Statewide Training programs

### **Other Issues:**

- Pay and conditions – variation between Councils (EBAs, LAWAs, local policies)
- Future planning re - workforce profile

---

### **Maximising Staff potential:**

- Staff exchanges – also investigating alternative ways to achieve this
- Encourage contact with peers – Statewide training programs identified as a good pathway
- Mentoring
- Career planning
- Succession planning

**Action:** Internally within library services; Statewide Training Project (see below)

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### **Tertiary qualifications:**

- Re-establish relationship with providers (Monash, RMIT, Charles Sturt, TAFEs)
- Identify training gap
- RMIT review
- Review industry competencies

**Action:** Working group comprising Anne Holmes, Craig Anderson, Elisabeth Jackson, Karen Ward-Smith.

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### **Promotion of Profession:**

- @your library career promotion
- Promoting variety of roles
- Promoting through schools, universities
- Media coverage

**Action:** Statewide Marketing Project

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### **Statewide Training:**

- One of the best projects ever undertaken
- More of the same training courses
- Also focus training on practical adult services, collection development and collection management, multicultural public library services, youth services to take up shortfall of training previously provided by professional groups
- Training targeted for Library Officers

## Shaping Political Perceptions Workshops

Workshop leader: Barbara Horn (Yarra Melbourne Regional Library Corporation)

### **Background:**

Both groups reviewed the record of discussion of these priorities from the Kalorama conference. In the time available, strategies relating to three of the key issues identified by the groups were documented, but they did not get to 'next steps'. Other key issues, which arose from the groups' discussions, are recorded in these notes.

**Issue:** Political influence depends on having an ongoing media presence.

### **Strategies:**

- Source funds (from Statewide projects?) for lobbying/media expertise
  - Use outcomes of social capital research
  - Use Marketing Manager (as recommended by the Statewide Marketing Project Advisory Committee) to get coverage
  - Identify champions – local, state, national; long-term and short-term
  - Possible adjunct role to Secretariat
- 

**Issue:** Viclink relationship with local government, Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) etc

### **Description:**

- Some participants identified resentment by local government of the cost of public libraries
- Mistrust of Viclink – not seen as legitimate by some in local government (councillors and officers)
- Others (i.e. from local government) not engaged in/with Viclink projects.
- Who does Viclink represent? – councils? the community? Answer to this has implications for relationship with state government.

### **Strategies:**

- Discuss (resolve?) question of who Viclink represents
  - Determine what perception we want local government to have of Viclink
  - Develop links with other local government bodies, eg. Viclink members attend LGPro
- 

**Issue:** Metro/rural divide is a barrier to statewide approach, as are different structures (ie.regional and single municipality services)

**Assumption:** That a statewide approach is advantageous to us all, ie. one voice, consistent stories in any forum

### **Strategies:**

- Consider different models for Viclink and Country Public Libraries Group (CPLG), (note NSW bodies have councillor members):
    - > conferences
    - > roadshows to councils
    - > councillor induction
  - Write the stories, make them available, know how to tell them
  - Ongoing communication between Viclink and CPLG (ie. keep up what we currently do)
-

**Other issues:** Sustainable long-term funding

- Parallel funding (ie. 2 ministries)
- Declining funding
- Cost shifting
- Unpredictability of funding
- Of these, the key concerns are cost shifting and sustainability, to date the decline in real terms of state government funding has often been picked up by local government.

**Other issues:** Political perceptions/influence

- Having an ongoing voice
- Impact of social capital research and how it will be reported to politicians and influencers / assists with the difficulty in measuring the intangibles of our service delivery
- Federal government to be included
- Variability of Australian public library network could lead to 'dumbing down' of Victorian libraries if national projects are funded
- need to anticipate politicised issues and be able to speak with single voice (eg. internet porn media interest)
- 'M.A.C.'s back' – what do we want to say about where it should go?
- Library Board taking on public libraries as an issue they are considering – need to influence this *now*
- Split between 2 ministries – more clarity, but still requires effort in 2 directions if we are to exercise political influence

## Leading the Demand Workshops

Workshop leader: John Murrell (West Gippsland Regional Library Corporation)

*Issue:* Kalaroma objectives

- funding over longer or shorter periods as projects required
  - core themes vs developmental and research themes (Gulliver/Bruce models), research (stepping back). Analyse the existing research for product development
  - content/service creation based on research
  - use our learning's (eg. E-books) to influence future service developments (be the facilitator of community debate)
  - libraries are the 'Experts' on social engagement
  - shape and design of library facilities can influence usage
  - linkages with social capital
  - what is it that we 'have' to lead the demand? (local promotion of arts and culture, information, education)
  - statistical information for local planning – product we already have
  - library needs to have a local knowledge base
  - 'fogies' of today are the research subjects of tomorrow.
- 

*Issue:* Building a Local Knowledge Base (LKB)

*Strategy:* to develop and use LKB

- Market
- Fine tune
- Keep current
- Research and ensure you have the Local Knowledge Base – who has what and what format and where
- Identify human resource and skills available on staff - prioritising resources.

## **Project proposal for Department for Victorian Communities: LOCAL EXPERTS @ Your Library from Leading the Demand Workshops - John Murrell**

- Community building
- Harnessing local knowledge
- Packaging the information available
- Library as the focal point

**Outcomes** – project that:

1. Strengthens libraries role in building social capital
2. Links to corporate planning or drives
3. Identifies local initiatives (some good models of community building) – advocacy, information, facilitation
4. A toolkit for local use
5. Training links
6. Demonstration of the sector's role in state government goal setting
7. A strong and resilient community

A convergence project - we have the vehicles to deliver:

- Statewide Training Project
- Statewide Marketing Proposal project development

**Project team:** Brendan Fitzgerald, Frances Savage, John Murrell, Graham Dudley

- A potential Department for Victorian Communities (DVC) project
- \$100,000
- Timing – 12 months
- Next step - develop the project, talk to DVC.

# Key outcomes/actions

## Key outcomes / actions arising from the 2003 Biennial Victorian Public Libraries Planning Retreat

At the Retreat plenary sessions a number of follow-on actions were agreed by the Viclink group. These are detailed below. At the workshops many other ideas for action were discussed and may be re-visited by Viclink.

### Meeting with the Library Board Victoria (LBV) and the State Library Victoria (SLV) CEO

Towards the end of the Retreat there was discussion on decisions about funds for the Statewide Public Library Development Projects. Viclink members agreed:

*"That an appropriate delegation from Viclink arrange a meeting with the Library Board of Victoria prior to their next meeting to clarify the use of funds and the decision making process for the Statewide Public Library Development Projects funds."*

It has since been arranged that Lynne Makin, John Binnion, Barbara Horn and Patti Manolis will meet with LBV representatives and the SLV CEO on 1 May 2003 to further discuss the partnership between these bodies and Victorian public libraries.

### Statewide Marketing Project

The Viclink group agreed to the following recommendations put forward by Anna Cook on behalf of the Statewide Marketing Project Advisory Committee:

The Statewide Marketing Project objective is to provide appropriate marketing leadership, expertise and tools to help foster awareness of public libraries in their local communities. Key recommendations for project priorities include:

- Branding and promotion

The *librariesvictoria* brand be phased-out, and that the *@yourlibrary* promotional 'tagline' should be adopted. The key factors informing this proposal are that, as a promotional tactic, the *librariesvictoria* brand has proved ineffective and lacks the capacity to be 'owned' at a local level.

- Website: [www.librariesvictoria.net](http://www.librariesvictoria.net)

Librariesvictoria.net should be merged with Victoria's Virtual Library ([libraries.vic.gov.au](http://libraries.vic.gov.au)), to provide a single portal to information about Victoria's public library services.

- 1300 number and white pages

The Committee recommends the phasing out of the 1300 number and the current (reduced) White Pages listing, with assistance as appropriate for country library services.

- Staffing

The Committee endorses as a high priority the review proposal to appoint an outsourced marketing manager - a qualified and experienced marketing professional - on a fractional, on-site basis.

Key functions to be provided by this role would include: development of a marketing plan and communication strategy, *@yourlibrary* implementation, strategic marketing, stakeholder-relationship management, marketing seminars and research.

- Internal communication

The Committee recommends a strengthening of the project reporting lines back to both Viclink and CPLG by embedding executive representation from both groups on the Statewide Projects Steering Committee.

### **The *SWIFT* Initiative**

Following a presentation by consultants PricewaterhouseCoopers on the *SWIFT* business case analysis, the Viclink group agreed to in-principle support for a statewide collaborative library management system for Victoria's public libraries.

The Viclink group also resolved to seek \$50,000 in funding from the 2003/04 Statewide Public Library Development Projects to proceed with the next phase of the project. The Project Advisory Committee will develop a proposal.

### **Local Experts@yourlibrary**

Arising from the 'Leading the Demand' workshop, the Viclink group agreed to develop a proposal for a project entitled Local Experts @yourlibrary and to seek funding for this project of approximately \$100,000 from the Department for Victorian Communities. John Murrell, Karen Ward-Smith and Susanne Gately nominated to develop the proposal.

### **Training and Recruitment**

The Viclink group agreed that a delegation comprising Craig Anderson, Elisabeth Jackson, Anne Holmes and Karen Ward-Smith would approach RMIT and Monash Universities in regards to training requirements for public libraries. The group's concerns are that the courses currently on offer do not appear to appear to be producing graduates with the skills for or interest in public library work.

### **Shaping Political Perceptions**

The Viclink group agreed that Craig Anderson, Tricia Smyth, and the Viclink Executive would respond in writing to Prue Digby's speech on State government priorities (community strengthening and 'joined-up' government). Their response will be sent to Prue Digby, Executive Director, Local Government and Regional Services Division; Joanne Duncan MP (Member for Macedon) and The Hon Candy Broad MP, Minister for Local Government.