Library Odyssey 2001 - 2010

State Library of Victoria

INFRASTRUCTURE

VICLINK victorian public library and information network

Introduction

In March 2001 senior public library staff and other stakeholders attended a three day conference *Library Odyssey* 2001-2010 in Kalorama, an outer rural suburb of Melbourne, to discuss the future of public library services in Victoria.

The *Odyssey* was a joint initiative of the State Library of Victoria, Local Government Division of the Department of Infrastructure in conjunction with the public library industry organisations VICLINK and the Country Public Libraries Group.

Following a welcome from Barbara Horn, Viclink President, and Frances Awcock, CEO and State Librarian, the conference was officially opened by the Hon Bob Cameron, Minister for Local Government. Inspirational sessions were delivered by Richard Neville - co founder of the Australian Futures Foundation, Christine Kilmartin, from the Research Unit at the Department of Infrastructure, and David Chalke, senior analyst for AustraliaSCAN, the annual monitor of cultural change from Quantum Market Research.

Richard imagined the future, Christine challenged public libraries to understand the socio-demography of their users and David interpreted the wealth of data collected about Australians' aspirations and attitudes including their attitudes towards libraries.

Experts from the public library sector gave presentations highlighting key issues for libraries including: resources and budgets, workforce, information technology, collections and strategic partnerships.

A series of small group discussions were moderated by VICLINK and CPLG executive members and facilitated by Greg Cook. The conference participants identified key issues and some important strategies for libraries over the next ten years. This work will be invaluable in future development of statewide projects and in the formulation of a new public library policy for Victoria. One of the important themes emerging from the *Odyssey* is the value of the public library as a place for social engagement and it will be important to articulate this role when telling the story of today's public library.

Congratulations to all involved in *Library Odyssey 2001-2010*. The success of the conference is the result of careful planning by the organising committee, thought provoking papers by the speakers, enthusiastic participation by the delegates, excellent facilitation and a first class venue.

Judy Peppard
Library Network Unit Manager
State Library of Victoria

Contents

Summary

The papers included in these proceedings are a summary of the presentations by speakers as recorded by the conference facilitator Greg Cook, Director of the Centre for Leadership and Management. Where available, copies of speakers' Powerpoint presentations have been included in the appendices.

From the deliberations over the three days of the conference the key priorities identified for public libraries in Victoria are:

1. Social Engagement
2. Seamless Service
3. 'Moving out of the Square'
4. Sustainable Long Term Funding
5. Political Perception Management
6. Leading the Demand
7. Recruitment and Training
8. Establishment of a Business Arm of VICLINK – 'VICLINK Inc'

Program

Wednesday 7th to Friday 8th March 2001.

DAY ONE

Welcome and Introduction	Barbara Horn, VICLINK President
Opening Address	Frances Awcock, CEO and State Librarian, State Library of Victoria
	The Hon Bob Cameron MP, Minister for Local Government

Victoria in 2010

• **Beyond Future Shock**	Richard Neville, Australian Futures Foundation
• **Future Demographics of Victoria**	Christine Kilmartin, Research Unit, Department of Infrastructure
• **Not One Nation**	David Chalke, AustraliaSCAN
• **Panel discussion**	Richard Neville
	Prue Digby, Executive Director, Local Government Division
	David Chalke, AustraliaSCAN

Public libraries in Victoria – trends and issues

• **Resources and Budgets**	Craig Anderson, Yarra Plenty Regional Library
• **Services and Collections**	Pru Menzies, Casey Cardinia Library Corporation
• **Information Technology**	Gary Hardy, Development Manager, VICNET
• **Workforce**	Adele Kenneally, Glenelg Regional Library Corp. Deidre Pellizzer, Port Phillip Library Service

DAY TWO

Strategic Review

Library partnering & strategic alliances

• **3 case studies**	Paula Kelly, Yarra-Melbourne Regional Library Corporation; Lynne Makin, Upper Murray Regional Library; Susan Orr, Campaspe Regional Library

DAY THREE

Strategy Development	
Library Policy:	Janet Chimonyo, Consultant, The Strategy Shop

Beyond Future Shock
Richard Neville

Richard Neville presented his thoughts on 'what we could put in our backpacks as we journeyed through the 21st century' - asking "what are the scenarios facing Australia and the world in 2020?"

He described a world 'beyond future shock', where fibre optic cable can deliver information at the speed of light and storing data is critical. He stated that this year and next we will 'create more knowledge than in the rest of history'. Furthermore the boundaries between the real and the unreal are breaking down illustrated with examples such as sandy ocean beaches in shopping malls and digitalised actors in successful films. This future was illustrated with five key themes:

Things Disappearing

Richard Neville and conference participants reviewed all the things that are disappearing, including:

- Handwriting
- Languages
- Faith and tradition
- Privacy
- Trust
- Cultural artefacts like records, video tapes and typewriters

What are the new products of our culture and times? These certainly include information and the power of knowledge that it brings. Yet these products have some curious qualities. They are:

- Intangible - if it is shared, it grows
- Accessible – having no weight
- Creative – needing creativity as its primary resource
- Democratic

Borders and Walls Coming Down and Going Up

The present and future is also characterised by the collapsing of old borders and boundaries and the creation of new ones. These changes include changing or blurred boundaries between:

- Nation states
- Work, study and home – with more students working and workers studying than ever before, and with some corporations providing free tertiary education to staff funded through the cost of the course materials
- Cultural pursuits – such as garden centres, bookshops, libraries and pools with attached cafes and restaurants
- Physical, emotional and spiritual health
- Family and friends
- Retail and wholesale
- Product and service

- Children and adults – with Silverchair <u>still</u> being in high school
- Masculinity and femininity and a range of previously gender-bound behaviours

These blurred and changing boundaries seem to represent the colliding aspirations and behaviours of individual and communities, perhaps most obviously between men and women. We are also seeing new boundaries between:

- Rich and poor people
- Nations and continents
- Religions
- Information rich and information poor
- Town and country

These changes represent fundamental changes in how we describe and experience ourselves, changing the 'figure and ground', the perceived context for work, home, family, relationships, business, community, nation and so on.

Paradoxes and Apparent Contradictions

Many of these changes in structure or boundary are accompanied by some curious paradoxes or at least apparent contradictions. These include the tensions between:

- Information rich or information flooded
- 'Saving' time to 'fill' it with other things
- Multiple or homogenised cultures – balkanised in food, dress, music, language, manners and media
- The growth of ethics in an amoral world
- Economic wealth and emotional poverty
- Enhanced lifestyles and degraded environments
- Connected to the world but disconnected from each other
- The positive outcomes of globalisation creating its own opposition
- Transparency in public life creating increasing public paranoia

With all these changes in boundary and the consequent tensions and paradoxes it seems that the world is getting better and better, worse and worse, faster and faster.

Changing Organisational Identities and Values

Perhaps the greatest changes are in the more informal aspects of work life – in the nature of organisational 'identity'. Organisations are increasingly trying to reinvent themselves - window dressing or 'spin doctoring' how they are seen because of the pressure of transparency and being seen to be 'building their wealth on others' poverty'.

Nike produces nothing - a virtual company - an international research, design and marketing corporation. But it is very concerned about public perceptions of its identity. It understands that corporate scandals will be the political crises of the future.

Revolutions and Optional Futures

We are living through a time of social and economic revolution. These include extraordinary changes in the only the past forty years in:

- Globalisation
- The information revolution and new developments in nanotechnology

- The Internet
- Greater longevity
- Biotechnology
- Work and career descriptions

These changes have been characterised as a race between self discovery and self destruction. We have also seen dramatic 'spikes' or portents of optional futures in:

- Global warming
- Extinction
- Consumption
- De-forestation
- Population – now increasing worldwide at 80 million a year

These optional futures might be described as:

- 'Business as usual'
- 'Back to the 50's' – restoring old values and a simpler pace
- 'High tech' – getting the best out of new technology
- 'Nimbin 2100' -environmental sustainability
- 'Bladerunner' – rampant competition in the midst of fundamental social and environmental decay

Many of these futures seem unrealistic, unpleasant or unworkable. Elements of some seem unavoidable.

Public Libraries

These possibilities beg the question of the future of the public library.

Richard Neville, like many futurists, suggests that increasingly we will be concerned with balancing forces of:

- Society
- Technology
- Economics
- The environment
- Politics
- Psychology
  Increasingly Richard Neville believes we will also be concerned with psychological forces and our need to develop the psychological skills of the future. These include:
    - Toleration of failure
    - Accepting, indeed welcoming criticism
    - Tolerating ambiguity
    - Emotional literacy

Public libraries can have a significant role in managing the community's capacity to navigate this journey. Libraries that do not have to make a profit can be revolutionary when everybody else is swept up in consumerism. They can support others in the journey from:

- Quantity to quality
- Short to long term aspirations
- Extraction and consumption to restoration and sharing
- Acquisitiveness to relationship

The library needs to decide if and whether it can be:
- A social advocate
- A technological leader
- Captive to consumers or a free service
- Environmentally sustainable
- Politically engaged
- Psychologically challenging

These and other considerations are the work of the conference.

Reading the Future: Your people, your job in the Information Age

Christine Kilmartin, Department of Infrastructure

Christine Kilmartin challenged the conference participants to understand the socio-demography, the directions of people's aspirations, their participation in new and old economies, in the lives of their families and their communities, and their new forms of leisure. She suggested that the challenge for public libraries was 'definitely your people', but not a headcount challenge – rather it is a market challenge.

A full copy of the presentation with detailed Powerpoint overheads is shown at Appendix One

Socio-Demography

Christine Kilmartin's presentation challenged public libraries to understand the socio-demography of their users - the directions of people's aspirations, their participation in new and old economies, in the lives of their families and their communities and their new forms of leisure.

The speed of change, of polarisation and a declining sense of belonging are seen as features of the communities into which public libraries deliver. The presentation focussed on future socio-demographics, for which there is sometimes even greater speculation than population projections.

Population Changes

Age projections and population changes for 2010 show dramatic increases in later middle aged and older populations across Victoria with the exception of inner Melbourne; in great numbers in middle and outer Melbourne and in proportion of population across Victoria.

Overall population is relatively stable, increasing slower than the rest of the world, and much slower than our neighbours, including New Zealand. North America and Europe however are increasing in population even slower.

Victoria's largest increases in population are in middle and outer Melbourne although with a progressively older population. Populations of young children are declining in Melbourne and populations of younger adults continue to decline in regional cities and rural Victoria.

These changes are best seen as cohorts of age groups dealing with different Councils across the State as shown over:

Top 10 Victorian Municipalities 2001, dealing with			
Children under 15	*Young adults 15-29*	*Middle ages 30-64*	*Aged 65+*
Casey (C)	Melbourne (C)	Port Phillip (C)	Queenscliffe (B)
Wyndham (C)	Yarra (C)	Golden Plains (S)	Bass Coast (S)
Hume (C)	Stonnington (C)	Macedon Rngs (S)	Yarriambiack (S)
Melton (S)	Port Phillip (C)	Murrindindi (S)	Hindmarsh (S)
Moorabool (S)	Melton (S)	Towong (S)	Strathbogie (S)
Nillumbik (S)	Maribyrnong (C)	Hepburn (S)	Buloke (S)
Golden Plains (S)	Wodonga (RC)	Alpine (S)	Cent Goldfields (S)
Cardinia (S)	Monash (C)	Pyrenees (S)	Loddon (S)
Swan Hill (RC)	Whittlesea (C)	Nillumbik (S)	W Wimmera (S)
Wodonga (RC)	Gtr Dandenong (C)	Manningham (C)	E Gippsland (S)

Distribution of Education/Occupation Advantage

Australian census data from 1996 further supports the clear population, education and employment differences across the state and between municipalities – indicating a clear advantage to Melbourne's eastern suburbs, the Mornington Peninsula and the Surf Coast.

The largest number of jobs are in metropolitan Melbourne, especially in communications, finance, insurance, property and business. These are best summarised in the maps and charts shown in the appendix.

Slow Demographic Change

Older persons attended libraries more often than younger persons. Almost 32% of the library users aged 65 years and over recorded attending a library 26 times or more during the reference period compared to 12% of persons aged 18–24 years.

Cinema was by far the most popular cultural venue, with 67% of Australians attending at least once in the 12 month period. The next most popular venues were libraries (38%), botanic gardens (36.1%) and animal or marine parks (34%).

Unemployed persons were more likely to attend libraries than the employed, but less likely to attend most other cultural venues.

Dominant Paradigm Rules, OK?

- What services do you offer to:
    - ESL students at local educational institutions?
    - Tele-workers who may journey from home for social interaction?
- How robust is your market?
- What threat will a downloading society offer?
- How do you handle a 24 hour society?
- How close are you to the nearest 24 hour supermarket?
- What library/companion services can your residents access on a Saturday night (the loneliest night of the week)?

Oh, to be Young Again

A summary of recent research was presented.

Fairfax Press

Qualitative research conducted by Heartbeat Australia on 18 - 24 year olds without children in Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and Armidale.

Key findings were:

- The Literati celebrate acceptance of diversity. They value individual expression and personal autonomy above all else.
- They hate political correctness.
- This age group have moved beyond traditional bigotry, they can be seen as post-racist and post-sexist. They have moved on.
- While this group acknowledges the enormous amount of information available about the world, as this amount of information increases, the Literati's feeling of helplessness also increases. Their circle of knowledge far outweighs their circle of influence.
- With the influx of information, the Literati also believe they are becoming desensitised to the horror of events. There is a level of acceptance of terrific events that in the past would have horrified.

Reality Bytes - A report commissioned by Multimedia Victoria

Key findings in the report include:
- Young people think that learning technology skills will limit their future career options, rather than broaden them.
- Young people are generally not motivated by high salaries in the IT industry.
- Young people are motivated by opportunities to work overseas.
- Careers in the IT industry are more attractive to young people from lower socio-economic groups, and
- Regional students have a clearer idea of the careers they want to pursue than those in metropolitan areas.

Rapid Cultural Change

Demographic changes will continue only slowly, but cultural change is becoming even more rapid. Some informed guesses about people of 2010 and some implications for public libraries are shown below:

- In the continuation of the information age, saturated brains are looking for very personalised services which not only sort the information for them but feed them with ideas beyond the information
- Young information entrepreneurs have moved on, burned by the NASDAQ events of the early part of the century
- Local residents feed their needs to the public library when they are ordering their shopping online - and what cannot be delivered to them online is dropped off with the vegetables

- Spend more of their:
  - Lives living alone
    (= new ways of socialising in/spending time in public spaces)
  - Time in broad cultural pursuits
    (= higher demand for just-in-time cultural experiences and information)
- Have children later, or not at all
  (= fewer family magazines)
- Rent more frequently, be later into the housing market
  (= knowledge of housing markets)
- Be less able to fix most of the things which run their lives
  (= fewer manuals)
- Renegotiate their later lives to spend longer working, but balancing it with leisure
  (= mixing fiction with fact)
- Take shorter holidays, less often, but with long periods of time doing other things at intervals throughout their lives
  (= more cultural information)
- Live in more polarised spaces, driven by housing markets, by wage mechanisms, by skill differentials and by learning from their own local environments as they grew up
- Choose to borrow, or just download at home
- Seek spaces to socialise, run book groups with Solomon Islands coffee and Incaburgers
- Seek room for their mobile vehicle as they move around the library, and special disks for the "all around sound" that they can run from the arms of their mobile vehicles as they move about
- Ring in, having self-diagnosed via the web, to check up with the resident medical specialist
- Video conference distant friends from the local library

Changes in Public Libraries

Public libraries are well regarded but not immediately open to current challenges, much less the demands of the next twenty years. More than half of Victorian public libraries currently do some surveys of users and possibly non-users - getting high satisfaction rates for information and lending services

Libraries are to be congratulated - but how much is that related to the expectations of users about what they can obtain from local libraries? What would happen if the questions were about possibilities? And what would happen if the statistics showed some of the other, less formal, processes which occur in the public spaces?

We might ask what part do libraries play in sustaining what Eva Cox has described as social capital?

> *One (of our small studies) is almost complete. It looks at public libraries as 'safe' spaces for diverse groups to meet, and their importance as a public space where trust can be built on interestingly. It is the 'higher trust' libraries, ie with lower security, that appear to create more compliance and mixes than those seeking to create security via video cameras and locked toilet doors. It was a very small study, more about methodologies than statistical validity, so more observation and limited interviews, but it showed that public buildings are places that can generate trust, probably if they trust their publics.*

and later,

> *Those who use libraries obviously value them, with about two out of three respondents stating they were very important. Those who do not use libraries were also surprisingly warm about their presence.*

In available studies of community library usage, the ways in which libraries function as community centres is notably under reported. These include patterns of regular usage, (ie attendance and using the space, rather than borrowing rates or information seeking activities), and various formal and informal activities that draw people to the library.

Some libraries face dilemmas in their staff requirements, with conflict between the demands of professional development, and the need for staff to be consistent, available, and appear friendly and approachable. By placing emphasis on improvement of professional skills, rather than the social aspects of the job, the sense of community trust and continuity seems to diminish. A growing emphasis on economic management of libraries means that the very important social benefits derived from staff interaction with the public are considered difficult to evaluate. Consequently public interaction may be considered irrelevant or unimportant and is not valued as a core activity.

<div align="right">Eva Cox, World Bank Social Capital Discussion List, June 2000</div>

The Cox report recommends that:
- Libraries themselves consciously advocate and articulate the recognition of their social role within a community as an important site which has value, including by its physical presence.
- Libraries explore ways in which they can increase their visibility and reach within a community as part of the social structure of shared space and interaction for people from diverse backgrounds living together.
- Library reports on the business of libraries include in their research and analysis some accounting of factors which enhance the ways libraries contribute to the social capital of a community.
- Trust-building be seen as a core function of local libraries so that libraries will actively be part of developing local community capacities, particularly in areas where lack of social capital is affecting the resilience of networks and capabilities for collective problem-solving.

New Hampshire State Library Advisory Council

This approach to public library futures is mirrored in a report of the New Hampshire State Library Advisory Council. This body developed a set of core values and roles and a set of agreements on the overall mission of libraries in this new era of enhanced electronic resources and greater access to information.

There was consensus that libraries are social and community centers which provide equal access to quality information designed to increase the level of "knowledge" in a community. Libraries represent social capital that makes people's lives better. They are non-secular service oriented institutions for all age groups. They are a safe place fostering intellectual freedom and inventiveness.

Roles

Roles of new or growing importance in libraries are:
- Promoting and making reading easier
- Providing information
- Teaching customers how to use and get information
- Equalizer
- Improving the learning environment of a community

- Leading customers to information that is reliable
- Providing reader advisory services and guidance in selecting and using information resources
- Providing information more fully

Threats and weaknesses

A number of weaknesses and threats to libraries were also identified that might be relevant to Victorian public libraries. They included:
- The Internet
- Inadequate funding
- The rate of technological change
- The lack of technology (particularly in small libraries)
- An aging profession
- A lack of professional training opportunities
- Limited hours
- Inadequate parking
- The need to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act

Changing Needs and Interests of Young Adult Australians

An increasing proportion of Australians, described in this presentation as 'pixelated Australians' also present challenges to public libraries. These IT and Internet sophisticates were reported to have be increasingly common but not (yet) the norm:
- Around 60% of Australian households are <u>not</u> connected to the Internet.
- Australian adult Internet users tend to be younger, male, earning in excess of $75,000, employed, and living in metropolitan areas.
- Victorian Libraries had 1.7 Internet access points per 10,000 people in 2000, with 3.4 Internet terminals per 10,000 members.

Future On(the)Line

Can you crank up demand, regardless of headcount?
- May 2000, 47% of households online accessed the Internet daily, 40% accessed it two to six times a week, 8% went online once a week, 2% once every two weeks, and 2% once a month or less. Daily use was prevalent at home and work; monthly use more likely at other sites.

- Your own figures suggest about 25 per cent of local populations make at least one library request per year although ABS figures put this higher. Do we interpret from this that most people do not (want to) use the local library? Or do we look more closely at what libraries can and do offer?

How much can people learn about local things easily from your system?

> *"There's been so much focus on the boxes and wires to connect to the Internet that we almost forgot to ask what people are getting once they connect," said Wendy Lazarus, co-author of the study and founder of the Children's Partnership. "We found a strong desire among people for practical, local information about their neighborhoods that seems to fly in the face of the way the Internet is moving in terms of national portals like Yahoo, Netscape and Excite".*

Marlyn McInerney, the Community Economic Development Officer for Warroo Shire Council, Queensland, outlines the museum-led transformation of Surat, achieved through a combination of local community involvement, application of the principles of community economic development and the financial support of Warroo Shire Council. This transformation has resulted in demonstrable economic benefits and population growth in Surat.

The main outcomes of the redevelopment were:
- It established Surat as a cultural tourism destination
- It revitalized the main street
- It increased the profile of Surat and the Warroo Shire Council with outside agencies
- It increased the confidence of the community in that if they set out to do something, it could be done, and
- It increased the confidence of residents, potential residents and potential business people that Surat was a good place in which to invest.

Christine Kilmartin suggested that the link between use of local libraries and local literacy was very high. What of the less literate? Who are the current non-users? Do libraries have a different audience from the Internet?

For Americans at risk of being left behind, useful (Internet) content includes:
- Employment, education, business development and other information
- Information that can be clearly understood by limited-literacy users
- Information in multiple languages, and
- Opportunities to create content and interact with it so that it is culturally appropriate.

Keeping Up

This new socio-demography, along with the new information economy, demands considerable "keeping up".

Demography is not shifting as fast as the need to update information for that demography. Can public libraries provide the stability within change by recording and storing history/ies, and providing the anchors and mirrors for a changing society?

Will the demographic slowdown produce a concomitant slowdown in the development of ideas, and hence in the pace of social change?

Future On Line – A Half Finished Scenario

It is 2010.

A court case is about to get under way against LibLinkPlus for providing a series of health references to Mad Foot in Udder Disease.

The class action is focussed on East Gippsland where dairy deregulation has finally produced a cream of farmers who can afford to take time off for further education.

They have been enjoying their Net Classes at the local library. It is the most surfing they have ever done in their, till recently, holidayless lives. Now, fear has beset the green valleys.
Their web-based self diagnoses have led to a run on the local newsagent who supplies DIY wills.

The newsagent, who also operates as the local post office, library branch, plant nursery and Impulse agency, has collapsed from overwork.

Local farmers have begun downloading copies of wills, not realising that the ones they found are from places such as Tuscaloosa - where legal conditions are somewhat different. The Gelantipy library is staffed only by volunteers who, unfortunately, rarely come off the mountain due to carsickness, and do not recognise the geographical glitch.

The farmers' children live in Fitzroy and South Yarra. Some even commute to Aspen (having learned to ski on subsidised school excursions to Lake Mountain while reading about Switzerland in the picture books at the mobile library). Many are keen to return to rural Victoria to take up the now-profitable farms.

Meanwhile, back in Bigdaddy (the recently amalgamated Boroondara, Stonnington, Yarra and Melbourne City), a local library meeting room designed especially to encourage social capital is abuzz with discussion of another kind of capital.

A group of blue-green business operators debate listing their new company Whim on the stock exchange. Whim (We Hog Information Management) is a company whose main purpose will be a buy-out of the whole Victorian public library system.

The state-of-the art, satellite-controlled Victorian library system is seen as a very tangible asset in the now-not-so-new economy, in spite of the disastrous attempt by the
Privatise Library Use - No Downloaded E-Reading (PLUNDER) to infiltrate the system. It's greatest value is the stock of information it holds on how to jam your mobile phone, your fridge, your car and your bed to prevent electronic messages going back to your service agents about your habits.

What will become of the public libraries which everyone loves……Wait…..Oh, ….not again…….sorry, folks, the line has dropped out.

Hello, Tel-stropt? Hello?

Not One Nation
David Chalke, AustraliaSCAN

"The first job of Management is to identify
and to anticipate (social) impacts.coldly and realistically"
Peter F. Drucker

Organisations tend to view their objectives and strategy in terms of the market. This presentation was concerned instead with a 'refreshed' perspective from the views of people and their people's lives.

AustraliaSCAN, under license from DYG SCAN, Inc., USA, has conducted Australia wide surveys since 1992, using both qualitative & quantitative DYG methodology.

AustraliaSCAN is compiled from an annual face to face and in-person surveys of 2000 adult Australians. The survey is concerned with:
- Lifestyles
- Civics
- Institutions
- Issues
- Markets
- Information
- Brands
- Demographics

Not One Nation

AustraliaSCAN's information reveals that Australia is 'not one nation', but at least four. Beginning in the 1980's Australians started to wonder, "God ! What's happening?". In the 1990's many people felt that they had to get control.

In 1995, 44% of Australians reported that they were "very satisfied with their life". By 2000 we had learnt our own personal balance, but started to wonder if there was more to life than what we were doing. Only 36% now reported this level of satisfaction.

In particular, Australians started to wonder if life was more than just material well being. Our interest in the 'new toys' of mobile phones, home computers and the Internet have increased, although games systems and pay TV have levelled off.

We now feel that we are okay - large numbers of people surveyed reporting that they were personally satisfied with:
- Relationships with friends
- Family relationships
- Living conditions
- Independence
- Relationships with neighbours

but increasingly dissatisfied with:
- Australians morals
- National Government
- State Government

Australians apparently feel that we face a morally uncertain future, expecting that some things would probably get better. These included:
- Quality of my life
- Personal wealth
- Aboriginal reconciliation

but that many things in the more public arena would get worse. These factors included:
- The gap between rich and poor
- Violent crime
- Politicians' integrity

Who Can You Rely On?

In this environment people rely most on their friends and newspapers. But having little confidence in union and religious leaders, Local and State Governments and large companies.

Leaders

In our leaders Australians looked for, in this order:
- Honesty and truthfullness
- Honour and trust
- Responsibility

We were least impressed by:
- Aggression
- No personal failings
- Power
- Charisma
- High education

Business

We had collective disapproval but selective support for business, feeling that:
- There was considerable room for improvement in their exercise of social and community responsibilities.
- We had less confidence in their efficiency relative to public organisations, than we had in the mid 1990's.
- There was a greater need for business regulation.

Government

We expected more of government than Americans, wanting the government to just 'get on with it', although Australians paradoxically had less commitment to the system than Americans.

Beyond Rationalism

Australians:

- Support egalitarianism, rather than some form of 'social darwinism' more than Americans.
- Believe that facts are only ever part of the story; intuition and spirituality being necessary for the whole picture.
- See the primary signs of success and accomplishment as:
    - Raising happy children
    - Good marriage
    - Being in control of life
    - Owning your own home
    - Enjoying life
    - Being respected

Some stereotypical signs of success were consistently unimpressive. These included:
- Being famous
- Having an American Express Gold Card
- Understanding the Internet
- Having millions $$$

Private Tolerance, Public Resistance to Libertarianism

Australians supported pluralism more than Americans. We also saw honesty, hard work and family as the core values. Yet we are increasingly less tolerant of public libertarianism such as sexually explicit language on TV, sex themes in TV advertisements and nudity in the media

Filter and Focus

Australians are generally receptive to new ideas - using the Internet for example, although mainly for email and browsing, very little for commercial purposes or news.

We feel comfortable about the amount of information we get to make our life decisions, indeed we seem to enjoy getting it, but 'word of mouth' is our preferred source of information, whether from friends, local information or the Yellow Pages!
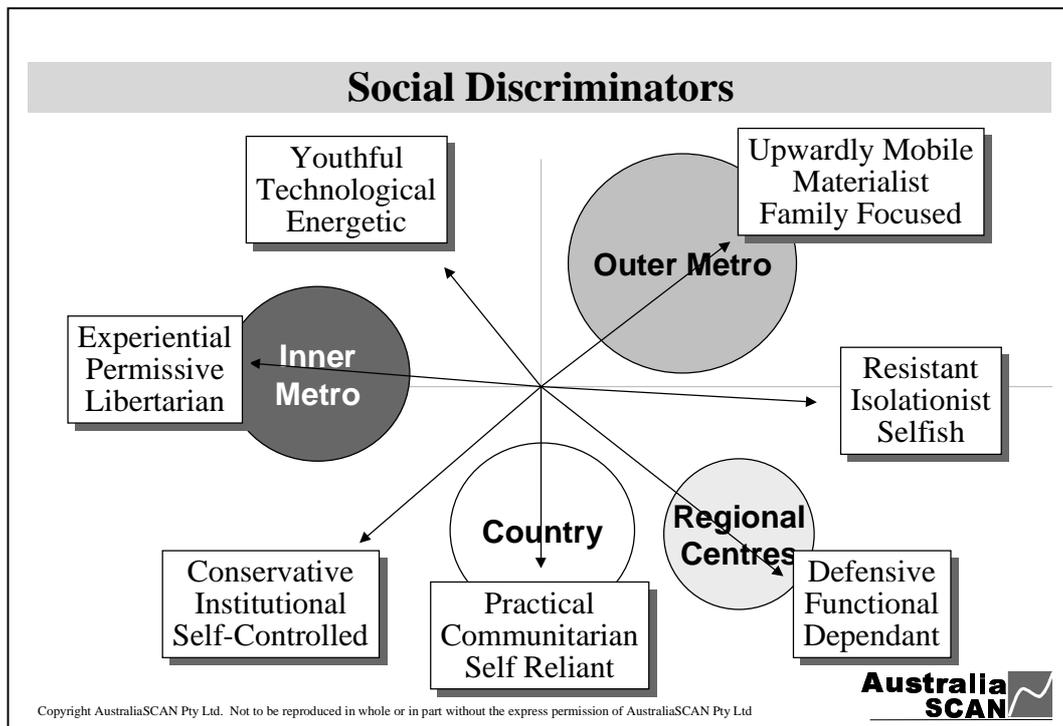
In recent years we have spent more time on:
- Meals at home
- Using the Internet
- With our families
- Gardening

and less time on:
- Movies
- Watching videos
- Going out
- Shopping

Inner City and the Rest

AustraliaSCAN described four Australias as shown below, with significant differences in perception.

Some of these differences were in metropolitan Melbourne's:

- Lesser concern about losing national identity to foreign interests
- Greater concern with becoming a republic
- Lesser concern with keeping our flag unchanged
- Greater concern with allowing Aborigines to 'live their own lives'
- Greater interest in the arts
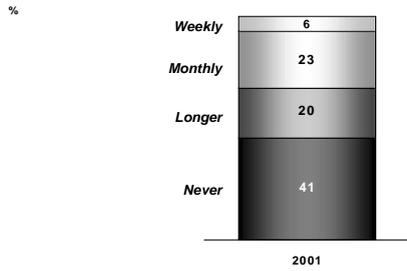- Less perception of ourselves as battlers

Library Questions

The statewide marketing project (librariesvictoria) commissioned AustraliaSCAN to include a number of specific questions about public libraries in its latest survey.
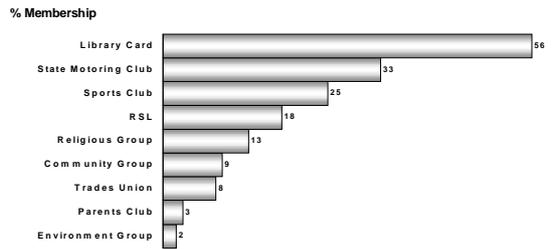
- Library cards
- Frequency of use
- Purposes used for
- Computer & Internet usage
- Service satisfaction & change
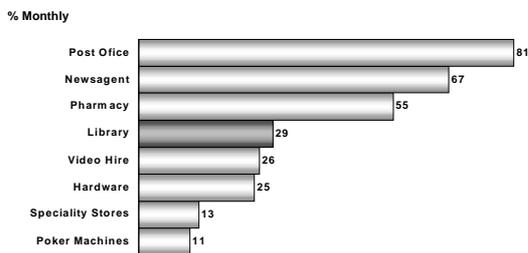
These results are shown over:
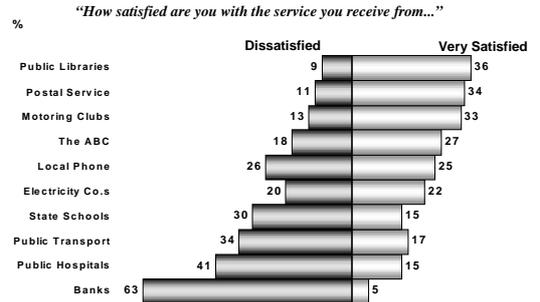
Frequency Of Use Of Libraries

%

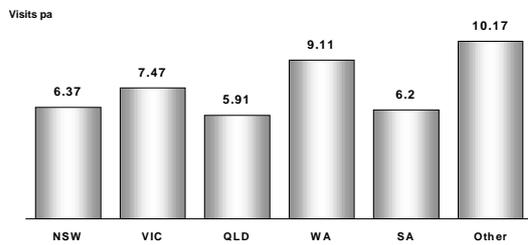|	2001
Weekly	6
Monthly	23
Longer	20
Never	41

Library Membership In Context

% Membership

Library Card	56
State Motoring Club	33
Sports Club	25
RSL	18
Religious Group	13
Community Group	9
Trades Union	8
Parents Club	3
Environment Group	2

Library Visiting In Context

% Monthly

Post Ofice	81
Newsagent	67
Pharmacy	55
Library	29
Video Hire	26
Hardware	25
Speciality Stores	13
Poker Machines	11

Libraries Delivering Better Than Most

%

"How satisfied are you with the service you receive from..."

	Dissatisfied	Very Satisfied
Public Libraries	9	36
Postal Service	11	34
Motoring Clubs	13	33
The ABC	18	27
Local Phone	26	25
Electricity Co.s	20	22
State Schools	30	15
Public Transport	34	17
Public Hospitals	41	15
Banks	63	5

States And Libraries

Visits pa

NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	Other
6.37	7.47	5.91	9.11	6.2	10.17

Life Cycle & Libraries

Visits pa

Young Singles	Young Couples	Young Families	Young Single Parents	Older Single Parents	Older Families	Empty Nesters	Older Singles
5.78	4.24	6.69	6.79	7.32	7.66	7.86	7.73

Location And Libraries

Visits pa

Inner Metro	Outer Metro	Regional Towns	Country
7.9	5.26	7.28	7.94

Age And Libraries

Visits pa

< 25	25 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 59	60+
5.96	5.1	7.32	7.31	8.01

Gender And Libraries

Visits pa

Male	Female
5.54	8.07

Internet And Libraries

Visits pa

Net Heads	Net Fans	Interested Virgins	Indifferent	Luddites
7.17	9.12	5.78	7.41	5.86

Education And Libraries

Visits pa

Degree	Certificate Diploma	Trade	Year 12	Other
9.03	8.08	5.59	8.79	5.89

Work And Libraries

Visits pa

Study	Full Time	Part Time	Home Duties	Retired	Other
10.37	4.96	7.55	6.8	8.78	6.1

Library Usage

% Users use for...

Borrow Books	88
Info. Hobby	25
Info. Study	22
Borrow Video	22
Borrow CD/Tape	16
Childrens Outing	13
Read Mags	10
Use Internet	10

Library Usage

% Users use for...

Local Info.	9
Info. Work	8
Read Papers	8
Toy Library	3
Borrow DVD	2
Borrow Video Games	2
Course	2
Others	5

Usage Locations

% Users. Ever use

	Computer	Internet
Home	75	68
Work	41	31
Friends	21	21
Education	15	14
Library	14	12
Net Café	4	5
Mobile	3	3
Other	5	4
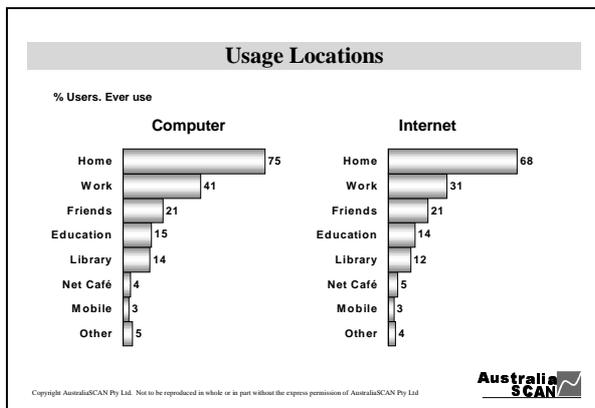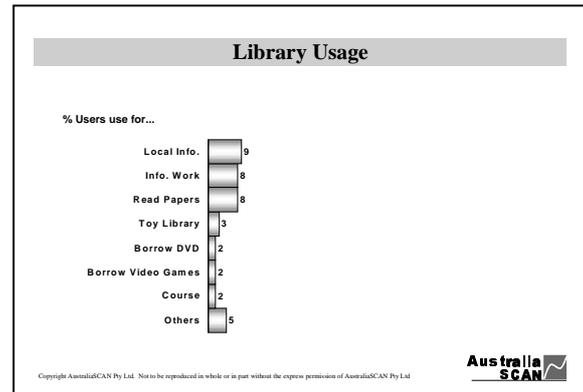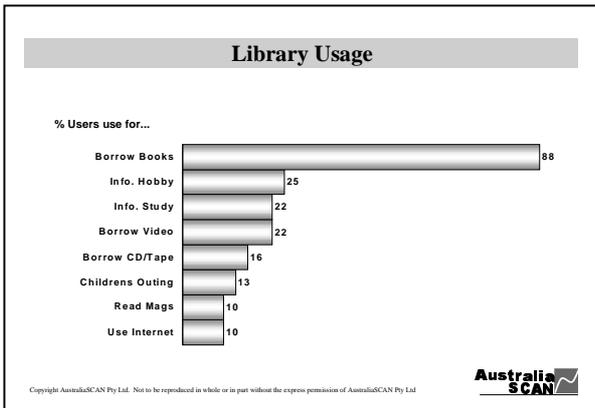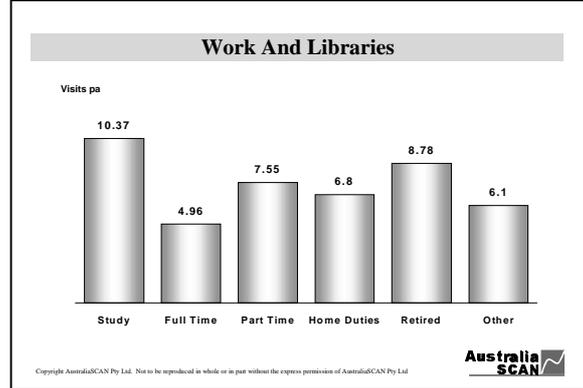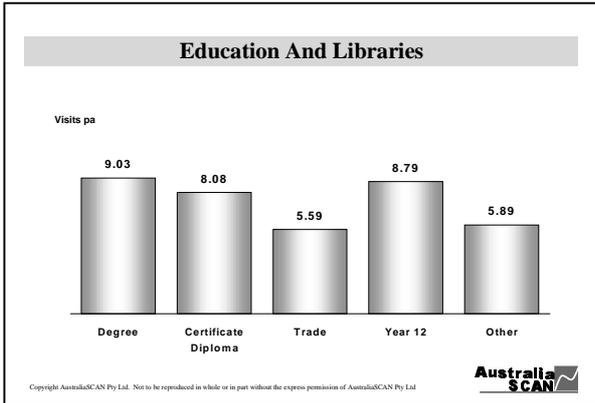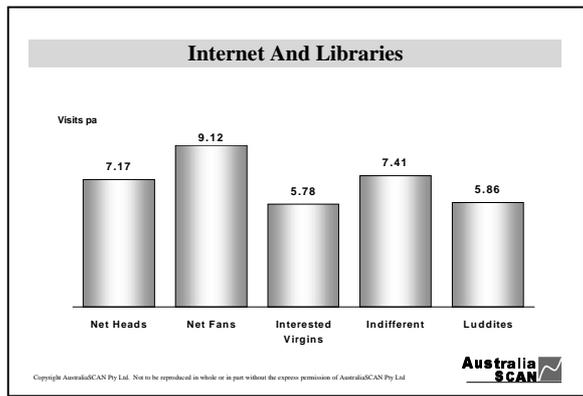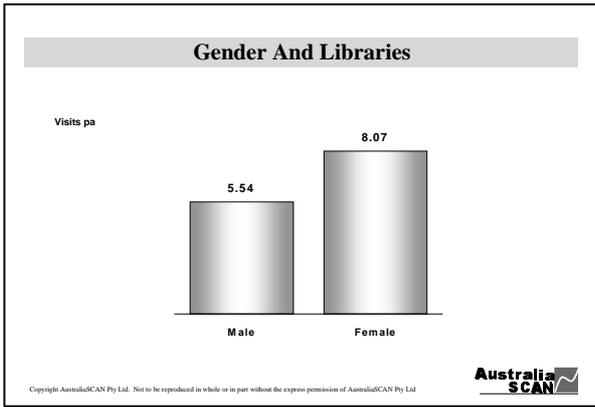
Public Libraries in Victoria

Trends and Issues

The conference heard four presentations from five presenters about key issues confronting public libraries.

Resources and Budgets

Craig Anderson from Yarra Plenty Regional Library presented his views on where library resources were headed.

In summary:
- Library utilisation has increased dramatically from 3.0 loans per capita in 1955 when only 50% of the population had a library to 9.8 per capita in 2000 with almost 100% coverage of libraries
- Library uptake is probably levelling off and perhaps declining from a 'high base'
- Physical resources of books are paramount, but…
- Impressions of libraries and libraries is critical in the mind of stakeholders
- Computer uptake has been greater than anyone anticipated, but ….
- Running a PC costs between $5-10 thousand each year and depreciate rapidly
- Books don't depreciate rapidly
- It also requires specialist staffing funding

Building the Largest Library in the World

Proposals and possibilities exist to build the largest library in the world, the Amazon.com of libraries. This would include:
- Sharing of common material
- Greater possibility of local concentration on local content
- Centralisation of networks and infrastrucutre
- Central (Viclink) subscription to databases

It would also require considerable input of new resources to fund development and start-up.

Parallel Worlds: "A Science Fantasy Adventure" Services And Collections

Pru Menzies from Casey Cardinia Library Service and representing the Viclink Collection Management Cooperative presented a creative overview of the public library of the furture. The presentation is shown in Powerpoint form in the appendix and in summarised form below.

"Managing your collections into the Future!"

- In 2010, collections are still critical to public libraries - simply they exist in different formats and locations, not all housed within our physical buildings.

Information Age

- Libraries and the Internet now defining their own respective niches:
  - strategic & targeted marketing is critical (not just promotion)
- Library needs to be a civic place:
  - convenient & easy to access
  - a cultural resource

Lifelong Learning

- Book borrowers
- Services for children
- Electronic resources:
  - for techno-literates
  - for techno-reluctants
- Training issues
- Collaboration & partnerships

Collection Challenges

Choose your own adventure:

- Information seekers
- Dream: voracious appetite for up to date, relevant resources in varied formats
- Reality: maximising budgets & limited resources to manage change
- Duality desired but budget decides
- Social justice issues

"Building Earth's largest library: driving into the future"

Amazon.com model:

- Just in time distribution
- Electronic ordering with record
- Enhanced catalogues/database access

- Digital identification systems

Newspapers and Magazines:

- Amalgam of electronic indexes with full-text periodicals
- Print on demand using smartcard
- Popular print editions also available
- Gulliver consortia model or other partnerships could be applied more widely

Recreational Readers:

- 'Immersive' reading of traditional books continues
- Speculation about the future of electronic publishing continues
- E-books on hand held devices by 2002-2005
- Prediction of growth for digital book industry resulting from standardisation of platforms & comprehensive rights

Aging or Disabled People:

- Large print published or print to suit
- Talking books will continue to evolve
- More housebound residents vs. time poor society
- Technology offers some solutions

LOTE:

- New standards are being developed
- Community consultation is valuable
- Continue funding for subsidized cataloguing
- Support statewide minority languages

Important Resources:

- Open Road for multi-lingual surfing
- A/V formats, DVDs
- Magazines good value high circulation

Issues for Further Development and Discussion:

- Children's services: resourced adequately?
- More collaborative programs
- E-books & the Hybrid collection

Information Technology – A VICNET View

Gary Hardy, Development Manager, VICNET presented his views on possible developments in information technology.

Overview/Context

- IT a driver and an enabler
- IT is our business
- VISION -what do our users want to do today……and tomorrow?
- Budget/politics/role

Issues now – 3 years

- Infrastructure
- Bandwidth/Communication costs
- Support
- Training/professional development
- Project to recurrent transitions

Metropolitan and Rural Trends

- Required levels of investment in IT
- $ around for rural projects, no one interested in metro issues…
- Ongoing disparities between hubs and the rest of the state
- Patchy and expensive telecommunications infrastructure
- Support issues especially for country

Strategic Issues

- Role articulation/positioning – equity, access, learning
- Collaborative capacity building
- Cultural change
- Keeping on the wagon

Strategic Issues: Strengths

- Collaborative capacity
- Calibre of people in the network
- Link with local government
- Link with local communities
- Reasonable track record of government investment in libraries' IT

Strategic Issues: Need to Try Harder…

- Accept that IT is core
- Strengthen collaborative capacity
- Build staff capacity
- Data gathering

Patterns and Issues

- Positioning/Repositioning
    - libraries as key part of the information infrastructure of the state
    - edemocracy and lifelong learning
    - key equity role for libraries in providing "easy everything"

Conclusion

- Make the investment
- Keep on the wagon
- Build statewide collaborative framework
- Partnerships/Alliances/Linkages

<u>Workforce</u>

Two public library managers Adele Kenneally, Glenelg Regional Library Corporation, and Deidre Pellizzer, Port Phillip Library Service, presented personal reflections on the emerging futures for library staffing.

In Summary:

- Many staff have worked in libraries, and in some cases, only in libraries for many years – sometimes up to twenty years. The changes of recent years, with Internet, Gulliver and multiskilling all presenting cumulative challenges
- Regional and rural libraries have different issues to metropolitan libraries
- Regional Library staff:
  - Serve longer and less alternative employment opportunities
  - Have poorer opportunities for training
  - Lower salaries
  - Greater variety of tasks
  - Overly preoccupied with authority and control issues

  Yet these staff can also be:
  - Optimistic about change

- Metropolitan Libraries tend to:
  - See themselves as integrated with Council services
  - Value being asked to raise the profile of Council through the Library
  - Have users who want 'more, better, faster' - interaction, access and space

- Emergent Library Service principles include:
  - Access 24/7
  - Equity
  - Responsive to community needs
  - Fostering diversity
  - Visionary
  - Gateway

Staffing Strategy

Library staffing strategies can include:
- Offering community information and Council business services in exchange for Information technology and resources
- Training
- Generic management skills
- Staff change management and morale management strategies
- Budget management through creative rostering

Library Partnering and Strategic Alliances

Introduction

Greg Cook, facilitator and Director at Centre for Leadership and Management presented an introductory summary of the principles and key issues for partnering in a library context.

Partnering

> *"A formal process of bringing teams from different organisations together where they co-operate to achieve separate but mutually complementary objectives."* (Hunter, K)

Partnering is about…

- Trust and openness in business dealings
- Co-operative rather than adversarial relations
- Collaboration rather than competition
- Joint resolution or differences rather than contractual sanctions or penalties; and
- Dialogue of ideas about how best to deliver policies and programs

Critical Success Factors to Partnering

- Parties must want to win and achieve
- Each party is an active listener
- Understand what drives the other's business and the common needs
- Each respond and acts on feedback
- Flexible to changing circumstances
- Trust with integrity - know how to trust
- Parties seek win-win solutions and outcomes
- Partnering is a relationship of interdependence

Focus on the Relationship

Partnering focuses on the working relationship - establishing agreements on the everyday working arrangements to achieve the mutual objectives including:

- Protocols or codes of behaviour
- Mechanisms for communication & information
- Resolving problems and disputes
- Monitoring and measuring the relationship

Partnering: The Right Environment

Is the organisation conducive to partnering?:

- Customer focussed and customer driven
- Has clarity of internal roles
- Is a single organisation with a common purpose
- Has clarity of purpose
- Corporate commitment to partnering
- Inclusion of partnering as a KPI at some levels
- Systems and skills to partner

Choosing to Partner with Whom?

- Identify stakeholders, users or borrowers, suppliers and strategic alliances
- Map out service systems, client patterns, the relationships and how they work currently
- Assess the current and potential value of each opportunity and relationship
- Determine the most important and invite them to discuss partnering possibilities

Prepare To Partner - Internal Alignment

- Understand your own organisation's capacity to enter into a partnering process
- What are the values of your organisation?
- How well do you understand your business?
- How does your organisations plan and make decisions (maturity)
- Are you clear about roles and responsibilities
- Customer satisfaction
- Strengths and weaknesses
- Activities, products and services

Format for a Partnering Agreement

- Context and Rationale of the agreement
- Mission or Purpose Statement
- Goals and Objectives of the Relationship
    - Outcomes / Outputs / Process or Relationship Objectives
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Protocols to Guide the Relationship
    - Processes, Working Arrangements, 'Rules'
      for managing the relationship
    - Problem Solving and Dispute Escalation
    - Managing, measuring and feedback on the Agreement
- Signatures to the Agreement

Library Partnering and Strategic Alliances

Paula Kelly, Yarra-Melbourne Regional Library Corporation, Lynne Makin, Upper Murray Regional Library and Susan Orr, Campaspe Regional Library presented case studies of library partnering and strategic alliances.

Yarra Melbourne Regional Library Corporation (YMRLC)
LOTE outreach to housing estates

This project was characterised by:
- People with passion for empowering others
- The right stuff - communicators
- Passion for people – shared values and belief in the project

The project was a joint undertaking between the Library and Jesuit Social Services:
- YMRLC Project brief - to build a link of familiarity and trust between non English speaking background housing estate residents and their local libraries.
- Jesuit Social Services brief - the provision of intensive resources for local residents to build a sense of participation and social interaction.

The strength of these partnerships and their relationships – shaped the success of the project:
- Targetting agencies with similar target groups
- Building on identified needs – statistics and reports
- Interdependence of partners – access, communication and trust between partners
- Internal organisational partnerships – support and expertise

Other Partnering Projects...

Yarra-Melbourne Regional Library Corporation has undertaken other partnering projects. These include:
- Youthlink Homework Support Program
- Connections Youth Information Project
- The Gift of Reading Video Project
- Brotherhood of St.Lawrence Homework Program
- Yarranet
- Carringbush Adult Education

LIBRARY PARTNERING AND STRATEGIC ALLIANCES
THE UPPER MURRAY REGIONAL LIBRARY EXPERIENCE

When asked to present this paper I looked at:
- The projects Upper Murray Regional Library is involved in
- The range of partners we have in the community

Why are we engaged in these projects?

- We have goals/objectives we wish to achieve
- Other organisations have goals/objectives that they wish to achieve

Strategies:
- Find the partners whose goals/objectives are compatible with your goals/objectives

PROJECTS BEING INVESTIGATED

Training
- Delivery of targeted Internet searching training (Lifelong learning being reinvented for the future)
- Partner – Continuing Education Centre
- Our Goals
  - delivery of training in a safe non-threatening environment
  - securing our place as recognised trainers in our community
- Continuing Education Centre Goal
  - increasing student hours

Resource Development
- Investigating purchasing resources to compliment collections
- Partners -   Wodonga TAFE
  -   La Trobe University
- Our Goals
  - to increase our resources
  - to maximise our budgets
  - to increase access to information
- TAFE/University Goals
  - to increase our resources
  - to maximise our budgets
  - to increase access to information

Business Information Service
- Development of an information service for businesses
- Partner – Investment Albury Wodonga
- Our Goal
  - to establish a Business Information Service
- IAW Goal
  - packaged information for new businesses coming to the area

CURRENT PROJECTS

Cataloguing Project
- Partner is Uncle Ben's – Asia-Pacific Centre for information for the company
- Goal – to catalogue their extensive research collection
- They needed cataloguing expertise as they
  - were moving to a new software platform
  - data could not be transferred
  - needed to update records
  - create new records

UMRL needed a project to start its newly formed business unit
  - UMRL submitted quote and were successful
  - project is being delivered within budget
  - is an ongoing project with two more research collections to be moved to new software platform

- UMRL to catalogue new items as acquired

Pierce Penetrate Puncture
- Partner is the Regional Arts Board
- Goal for UMRL – to promote libraries to the 15-24 year age group
- Goal for the RAB – to deliver a creative writing project within the region
  - this was through a grant opportunity
  - funding from Arts Victoria
- Project is as follows
  - author to work with young people in a series of workshops
  - local businesses to be involved (cafes as workshop venues)
  - web page to be created (auspiced by UMRL)
  - continuation of writing for web page once project has finished
  - investigate a youth run youth library

CONCLUSION

- We are all partnering and forming alliances
- It is something we do very well
- We need to continue what we are good at
- Build on our established partnerships and alliances for the future

Campaspe Regional Library

Library Depots – A Case Study

When Judy Peppard rang and asked me to speak at today's session my first thought was "not library depots again - isn't everyone sick of hearing about them".   However despite our blasé attitude towards them, there does seem to be an interest in what we are doing. Not only did we win the ALIA Award for Innovation in 1999, but we have had a number of library services visit the area to see first hand how the depot system works. In fact, Russ Elwin and most of the Board of Wimmera Regional Library Corporation have visited a number of our Depots.

As many of you will have heard me speak about our library depots at the *[New Models for Delivering Public Library Services in Victoria]* seminar in May 1999, I do not intend to repeat myself. Instead I will provide a short overview of the library depot system at Campaspe, before concentrating on our most successful depot and the several partnership arrangements we have with that community.

The Shire of Campaspe covers an area of some 4,550 square kilometres and includes a multitude of small townships and outlying districts. Depots have been established at 6 of these towns *[Colbinabbin, Girgarre, Gunbower, Lockington, Stanhope and Toolleen],* which have populations ranging from around 100 up to 600. There are few, if any, other Council services in these towns so the library depot provides a Council presence and in many cases a community hub. Prior to amalgamation, a number of these townships received a bookmobile service from the Goulburn Valley Regional Library Service. As the Shire had no bookmobile, a decision needed to be made on how we were to provide a library service to these towns. It was decided that models comparable to Lockington, Girgarre and Gunbower (which had been in existence for many years) should be formally established in the smaller population centres within the Shire and tendered out to businesses/individuals/schools/or community groups under Compulsory Competitive Tendering

guidelines with specified minimum standards. And thus our new model for delivering public library services to outlying rural areas in partnership with local businesses and community groups was born out of the need to provide an equitable library service at little cost. These depots have now been contracted out for a period of over 4 years, and some have been more successful than others. I would like to elaborate on our most successful partnership and why it has succeeded.

Lockington Depot was originally contracted to Gordon's Corner Nursery (where an original depot service had been provided for over 30 years). Over this time, stock and patrons had to run the gauntlet of spider webs in an old, run-down building. About 2 years into the contract the elderly couple running the store decided to call it a day, and a young single mother of two bought the business, and changed the name to *Yvette's Field*. One of the major selling points to her was that it housed the library depot. And I think that has been a significant factor in the success of the partnership - she realised that the library depot could enhance the rest of the business. Yvette is passionate about books, and quickly expanded the area of the store available to the library. She keeps in regular contact with Headquarters' staff, and often requests additional stock. She promotes the library within her local community, and visits the local school and preschool to promote storytimes and other activities, as well as providing bulk loans to the preschool. Over 120 children from the school have visited the Depot and been shown how it works. She has participated in the Summer Reading Club for the past two years with an excellent participation rate - outperforming two of our branches! In other words, she does much more than is specified in the contract at no extra cost to the library (or Council.)

A second partnership is established:
In early 1999 the Shire of Campaspe received a Networking the Nation grant to connect 10 Public Access Internet Sites within the Shire. 4 of these sites have been situated in Library Depots, providing patrons with access to the library's catalogue via the Internet.

The Lockington Community Internet is located at *Yvette's Field* - once again proving to be the most successful of the Campaspe Communicating sites. It is run by a Section 86 Committee of Management, and ostensibly has no relationship with the library. However the library approached the Committee last year to see if they would permit the library to install PC Reliance (a Dynix offline software program) on the Internet PC. They agreed, and yet another partnership was born. The installation of PC Reliance enables Yvette to scan in check-ins and check-outs offline. The file is then emailed to Headquarters where it is loaded onto the library's database, saving considerable time at both ends.

Why has it worked so well in Lockington:
- First and foremost I would have to say because Yvette saw the benefit the library depot would bring to her business. It provided a win-win situation for both partners.
- All involved are prepared to give and take. While Yvette can be demanding in what she requires (in terms of bookstock in particular), library staff can see the results in increased loans.
- A supportive community
- The contractor's involvement with the community
- Willingness to provide extra services at little or no cost - preschool visits, Skillsnet Roadshow
- Yvette's catchphrase - "Nothing's a hassle"
- All parties can see the opportunities the alliances bring to the community

On telling Yvette that I was speaking today she commented "it needs the right person to succeed" and I would have to agree with her.

Unfortunately, not all the depots are as successful. The Stanhope Bakery, which probably has the most pleasing ambience - lots of room, tables and chairs, enticing smells - barely survives. The Internet PC was located in another business in town; it is impossible to arrange storytimes, and the Bakery staff only provide the service as specified. The major reasons being that the owners of the

Bakery have been trying to sell their business for the last couple of years, and the Stanhope community itself. It was opposed to the establishment of the depot, and I guess some members of the community have voted with their feet.

Which only goes to reiterate the requirements for successful partnerships outlined above.

Current Depot costs per year:
Toolleen: $260
Girgaree: $740
Gunbower: $850
Colbinabbin: $1,970
Stanhope: $2,740
Lockington: $3,600

Strategic Priorities

Public Library Future Identity

Many of the priorities described reflect a future Public Library – or a picture of a future library that emerged gradually during the Conference. This future Public Library reflects many present trends and can be summarised as:

> *A Public Library providing:*
> * *an extensive, common Victorian, electronic catalogue*
> * *an expert search and access point for hard copy collections, electronic and reference materials, many of which are freely accessible; and*
> * *the primary local venue and support process for community development, including direct access and two way communication to Local and State Government, a comfortable, equitable, and safe centre for activity, support and community engagement.*

The Conference developed this idea of the Library through discussion and exploration of presenters' and participant contributions. In moving towards this future identity a range of strategic issues were identified. Some of these issues are already recognised and being explored, such as electronic linkages. Other issues needed considerable further development such as the idea of the Public Library as the primary venue and process for local community engagement. In all cases the Conference thought that the issues identified should be addressed now if we were to make real progress by 2010.

More than twenty (20) issues were identified. These were prioritised and the eight
key strategic priorities then examined in more detail. The key priorities are examined below in order of their priority - highest priority first. The remaining priorities are briefly described in the following section.

Key Priorities

1. **Social Engagement**
2. **Seamless Service**
3. **'Moving out of the Square'**
4. **Sustainable Long Term Funding**
5. **Political Perception Management**
6. **Leading the Demand**
7. **Recruitment and Training**
8. **Establishment of a Business Arm of VICLINK – 'VICLINK Inc'**

The issues have been analysed and where possible key objectives identified and in some cases a proposal for a strategy to address the issue.

1. *Social Engagement*

Introduction

Public libraries have a great opportunity and considerable internal strength to take a role as providing both venue and process for greater community engagement between government and citizen and for the general development of communities.

History and Other Background

Public libraries enjoy considerable support in their local communities and by Government. Libraries are considered by many to be accessible, safe, socially equitable and engaged. The atmosphere and 'tone' of libraries varies from community to community and this is a considerable strength. Public libraries have always contributed to the 'social capital' of local communities.

Justification

Strategic opportunities – internal strengths

The recent emphasis on 'best value' has encouraged a greater appreciation of the importance of community consultation – in managing and maintaining services, standards and costs. Community consultation is difficult and requires a process of continuous rather than intermittent engagement. Public libraries a naturally placed to be the venue and process for this engagement.

Public libraries have:
- High public and community visibility, awareness and use
- Perceived integrity
- Ready access both in person and electronically
- Local infrastructure for communities sometimes very different from other communities in the municipality
- Safe, after hours public facilities
- Responsiveness to new and changing values and needs through their small size and inherent flexibility
- Partnering experience

Environmental threats – internal weaknesses

- Some facilities are inadequate or inappropriate
- It is possible that commercial providers of information access and/ or materials may 'crowd out' public libraries

Benefits, Risks

There are some tensions between
- The perceived credibility of libraries in the community and the general mistrust of any level of government
- Existing safety and the potential risks of an expanded clientele
- Traditional library and community development service styles

Mandate and Sponsorship

The development of public libraries as a venue and focus for community engagement would require overall state-wide endorsement and commitment

Goal

- Develop, empower and enrich local communities

Objectives

The objectives are to:

- Further develop the Public Library as the primary local community venue offering an accessible, equitable, comfortable, safe, flexible and welcoming environment
- Clarify and develop a role for Public libraries as the point and process for community development, being:
  - Linkage between Council / Local Government and other levels of Government
  - Information exchange, communication and feedback
  - Development of other Best Value consultative mechanisms, and
  - Growth of community engagement.
- Maintain free access to core services

2. *Seamless Service*

Introduction

Public libraries are well placed to be able to build on existing arrangements to develop and provide a seamless, state-wide, information technology based, research and material access library service – available to all public library users

History and Other Background

Public libraries have adapted well to the growth on information technology – in access to hardware and in development of service processes and skills. Many library users are keen to make use of sophisticated, rapidly obsolescent and otherwise expensive technology. Most users are 'learning as they go' and are keen to make use of the Internet in a supported environment.

Public libraries also have a well-deserved and highly valued positive image in the community. Libraries are trusted and this is a valuable attribute when dealing with unfamiliar and new technology

Justification

Strategic opportunities – internal strengths

Public libraries have many natural advantages in the development of a future seamless service system. These include existing:

- Close liaison and formal arrangements such as VICLINK and CPLG
- Local and state-wide information technology infrastrucutre providing a natural platform for future growth
- IT user freedoms
- Library user access and equity
- Opportunities / needs for software customisation in libraries

Environmental threats – internal weaknesses

There are some difficulties in the development of a state-wide seamless library service. These include:

- Telecommunications difficulties in the available technology infrastructure, bandwidth and access arrangement
- Hardware / software costs(IT staff / network / funding – start up and recurrent)
- Project administration arrangement
- Changes in government that make ongoing commitment to a several year development less likely
- Parochialism in Local Government and between State Government Departments

Benefits

A state-wide service would:

- Save money through economies of scale, effort, expertise, opportunity and outcome
- Simplify use
- Provide improved opportunity to further develop services

Risks

A state-wide co-ordinted strategy does entail risks. These include:

- Government inexperience and poor track record in coordinating projects across Departments and levels of Government
- Local political issues running the strategy off the rails
- Inadequate, inconsistent or incomplete funding
- Wrong decisions leading to wasted expense and opportunity

Mandate and Sponsorship

A strategy of this size requires state-wide sponsorship and effective partnership that includes:

- DOI, VICLINK, CPLG
- Local Government, MAV, VLGA,
- State Government
- Telecommunications providers
- Partnerships with library management system vendors

Goal

- Provide seamless access to any library service across the State without impediments

Objectives

This goal would require a series of linked objectives and strategies over the next several years. These objectives include :

- Introduction of state-wide smart cards
- Feasibility studies for integrated software / hardware
- Consultation processes regarding funding arrangements
- Telecommunication strategies

Timelines

Many of these strategies are achievable and we already have some technology to support them. Potential time-lines might be:

- Smart card introduction = 50% in 2 years, 100% in 4 years

- Feasibility studies = Investigation of shared software over next twelve months aiming for , 50% shared software in 5 years, 100% in 10 years
- Consultation = immediate start and development of plan/ process for on ongoing consultation
- Telecommunication strategies = strategic development plan by end 2001

Next Steps

A detailed strategy outline needs to be prepared including:
- Clear costs, time-lines and briefs for sub-projects, such as:
    - Documentation of the package
    - Telstra consultations
    - Funding bodies / government consultations

3. *Moving Out of the Square*

Introduction

Libraries have a valuable role within society. But this needs to remain relevant to ensure that Libraries are sustainable in the future. Libraries have redefined their role and services over recent years and this needs to continue. The challenge is to consolidate or institutionalise a process that will enable libraries to continue to change and develop.

History and Other Background

A fixed perception of what a 'library' is that may no longer be relevant - the myth of the traditional library is fading. This provides great opportunity to develop a 'new myth' or story.

Justification

Strategic Opportunities
Libraries are:
- Attractive / willing partner to other institutions, eg cultural institutions
- Able to respond to and drive change
- Linked with IT strategies

Environmental Threats – internal weaknesses
Libraries are
- Rule bound – especially towards and with council accountability
- Physically limited
- Subject to increasing expectations
- Constrained by existing
    - Staff resources (skills and numbers)
    - ER / IR arrangements

Benefits and Risks
Libraries are, perhaps uniquely, placed to
- Support life long learning
- Provide accessible, cheap, recreational / educational facilities
- Create happiness

Risks of Doing / Not Doing Something?
The territory is unfamiliar, beyond the 'comfort zone' of many Libraries and staff. It will pose great challenges to the profession. But not doing something is the greater threat – that Public libraries don't continue to develop and adapt and see their existing high reputation challenged and eroded, including:

- Loss of client base and potential client base
- Future irrelevance
- Society loses a valuable resource

Mandate and Sponsorship

- VICLINK & CPLG
- State Library
- Office of Infrastructute
- Local Council and Library – 'local' influencing across and upwards

Goal

- To be relevant to the community in whatever form

Objectives

'Moving out of the square' is an industry-wide process, culture or even can be seen as part of the emerging library identity. Some of the objectives are to:

- Question all existing approaches – 'No rules OK!'
- Extend local services using virtual service delivery where possible

Strategies

Public libraries already have a range of strategies for encouraging ongoing innovation. The Library Odyssey 2010 is part of this ongoing approach. Strategies to promote' moving out of the square' include:

- ALGA Innovations Award
- Local Government Award
- Development grants
- Statewide projects including training
- Service innovation think tank – VICLINK sub committee?
- Communication strategy – website

Examples of approaches that are 'out of the square' might include:

- Regional collaboration and regional projects
- Development of multi functional centres, including cultural / council / library / commercial services
- Development of library 'depots' combing some library service in a private, commercial and non-library business

Other strategies need to be developed, communicated and learnt from

4. Sustainable Long Term Funding

Introduction

Public libraries require greater certainty of financial sustainability. Existing public library funding arrangements are characterised by:

- Parallel funding from different government departments
- Erratic funding in the past, historically going down
- Changing mix of funding with the State Government withdrawing from its past funding responsibility
- Non-existent guidelines, protocols or formulas for funding. Funding is tied to no agreed arrangements, set percentages or other standards. It depends on the year to year goodwill of governments

Justification

Environmental threats – internal weaknesses

- Loss of opportunity for an integrated, 'seamless service' and loss of opportunity for meaningful community engagement. These opportunities are met most cost effectively in the next few years
- State government could withdraw from funding their share
- No standards for library services or quality of service
- No standards for infrastructure

Benefits, Risks
Sustainable funding has some risks making it harder to 'move outside the square'.
These include:

- Tying public libraries to:
  - A 'fixed specification' of service
  - International models
  - Bureaucratic models
  - Public sector rises and falls
- Allowing other funding sources to step aside

Mandate and Sponsorship

Changed funding arrangements would require considerable coordination between Local, State and Commonwealth Governments and with existing Public libraries

- Federal, state, local
- VICLINK, MAV, Library Board of Victoria, etc

Objectives

The primary objective is to clarify and endorse sustainable public library funding arrangements within the next five years.

Strategies

The primary strategy is the development of a:

- Professional secretariat to research to undertake and develop to:
  - Perform a modelling of available models

- Clarify intentions of current funding bodies
- Investigate philanthropic funding sources
- Raise awareness of funding issues

5.   Shaping Political Perceptions

Introduction

Public libraries have in the past been fairly politically naïve. Public libraries have run on smell of oily rag but been perceived as 'whingers' and as elite by the current government. This perception of public libraries needs to be challenged.

Justification

Public libraries are not guaranteed survival and area t real risk of becoming irrelevant.

Strategic Opportunities
Public libraries have
- Valued and valuable services
- Huge lobby potential
- 'Friends' Groups and ALGA able and interested to support Libraries

Environmental threats – internal weaknesses
Public libraries are:
- Political naive
- Under regarded by Government
- Resistance to change

Benefits
- Productive relationship with funding bodies, with change of perception

Risks
- To be disregarded as whingers if we don't go it right!

Mandate and Sponsorship

- VICLINK

Goal

- Rectify / improve the power brokers' perception of libraries

Objectives

Public libraries need to
- Engage and negotiate with Government

6. Leading the Demand

Introduction

There is a need for libraries to build variety, innovation and demand for service.

History and Other Background

Demand for library services has reached a plateau – due in part to libraries' reactive rather than proactive behaviour in the past. If the current plateauing in demand turns into a decline, libraries will be unable to attract recurrent funding.

Justification

Strategic Opportunities

- Adding more to our 'value chain'
- Building different capabilities to deliver our core business (information)
- Seeking like opportunities to enhance our core business

Risks of Doing / Not Doing Something

- Decline in community participation
- Decline in relevance, respect, funding, ability to build social capital
- Risk of going too far down a new path
  - Eroding core usage
  - Creating a clash with core values

Mandate and Sponsorship

- Local government is the major sponsor with public libraries - SLV as the engine room
- Other sponsors include State & Commonwealth Governments

Goal

- Review market demand and product / service mix to meet / lead demand

Objectives

- Marketing – ensure that resources are allocated annually for marketing and communication (product development, analysis and segmentation)
- Conduct analysis and feasibility studies of potential products / services
- Info net and VICLINK lists - build our business skills in unpacking hidden costs on service delivery
- Viclink Collections Co-operative – evaluate and share information on the take up and impact of changing the products and services
- Tailoring of local service to meet needs and demand

Next Steps

VICLINK (or the secretariat) needs to explore and develop its linking and service development role.

7. Training and Recruitment

Introduction

Public libraries require innovative, lateral and proactive approaches to ensure they attract the right people and continue to encourage, challenge and retain their existing staff. There is a significant challenge in the skills, skill mix, knowledge and personal capacities of library staff. These changes in staff capacity have been brought about by:

- Changing environments
- Greater customer expectations and focus
- Move to competency based work demands
- Low staff turnover

Justification

What is the impact of doing / not doing something?

- Cannot meet the new challenges, will never change

Environmental threats – internal weaknesses

- Industrial relations – award / LAGA
- Other organisations take on public library 'role'
- Other organisations hire staff away
- Risk adverse individuals

Opportunities / Strengths

- Skills / commitment of staff
- Work with educational bodies input into courses
- Partnering – rotations across council or between library services

Benefits, Risks

- Better staff – meet challenges / more strategic

Mandate and Sponsorship

- VICLINK – educational bodies
- ALGA
- Individual library services

Objectives

Public libraries need to:

- Develop shared and agreed sets of library competencies
- Review and redevelop some library training programs
- Continue to provide high quality, targeted training programs

8. Establishment of a Business Arm of VICLINK

History and Other Background

Public libraries have considerable experience and skill in collaborative work. VICLINK and CPLG have been instrumental in developing more collaborative arrangements – yet these groups are under-resourced and their efforts tend to hide the lack of co-ordination of funding or policy between the various formally sanctioned funding bodies. Effective co-ordination is central to all the key strategic priorities identified – yet a lack of co-ordination is structurally encouraged by current arrangements.

The growth of electronic services and the centrality of IT to the emergent library identity only further increases the need for effective co-ordination.

Justification
- There is a critical roles for a core enabler and co-ordinator of public libraries
- Telling the story and raising awareness of the critical issues of linkage and service system development is a central part of the co-ordination role
- Self determination of public libraries

Benefits, Risks
- Failure
- Alienating funding people
- Walk before crawl
- Fragmentation
- Increased cohesive voice / power / influence

Mandate and Sponsorship
- VICLINK
- CPLG
- Individual libraries
- Library Network Unit

Goal

The primary goal is to establish an independent structure for VICLINK, minimally a secretariat but perhaps including a business arm. This objective links with other strategies for 'Sustainable Long Term Funding' and 'Leading the Demand'.

Objectives
- Successful implementation of a VICLINK secretariat – September 2001
- Develop the business case for VICLINK INC. by mapping opportunities
- Fund and implement business case

End Products

- Business case for Viclink Inc.
- Secretariat

Timelines

- Twelve months

Next Steps

- Map through concept – VICLINK / CPLG
- Electronically discuss how, when, where, who

Other Strategic Issues

A range of other strategic issues was identified. These included:

Library Services

"Collection Projection"
- Formats
- Technology
- Enabling
- Trends

"Replacing Space"
- Redefining the library space:
  - physical
  - intellectual
  - emotional
  - cultural

Finances and Resources

"More Effective Use of Funds"
- Consortia
- Statewide system / infrastructure
- D0 we need 45 library services systems

"Range of Services"
- Priorities vs posterities

Systems

"Visioning"
- Think tank on funky IT futures

"Next Wave Technology"
- For example, blue tooth, mobile computing, digital ID, smart card

People and Organisation

"Image of Public libraries"
- Need to enhance image
  (through active connection with educational institutions – secondary and TAFE etc)

"Performance Management"
- Encourage 'challenge relishers' and refocus the under performers (internally or externally)

"Flexible Organisational Structures"
- Need to be able to provide appropriate rewards, etc to meet changing community needs, including range of partners, volunteers

"Health and Safety"
- Proactive approach for staff and public

Environmental Sustainability

"Building Design"
- Siting – putting them in the 'right' place
- Low energy consumption / smart buildings
- Resource sharing / multi use / flexibility of space and hours
- Saying no to unacceptable buildings

"Environmental Advocacy"
- Information provision
- Community role model
- Dealing with ethical businesses

"Junk Management"
- Limit the junk that comes in
- Disposing responsibly of the junk going out

"Funding / Economic Value Argument"
- Recurrent vs capital costs
- Research and development – general building standards / library specific requirements
- Savings and income – reducing costs / making energy to sell back

Appendices

Following are the Powerpoint presentations:

- ***Reading the Future: Your people, your job in the Information Age,***
  Department of Infrastructure, Christine Kilmartin's presentation (pp1-21)

and

- ***Australians in the Future (Not One Nation)***
  AustraliaSCAN, David Chalke's presentation (pp1-14)