



Virginia Walsh
Executive Director

The establishment of Closer Economic Relations (CER) with New Zealand in the early 1980s was a recognition and formalisation of the pre-existing partnerships between our two nations. Our political, cultural, economic and sporting ties have derived from historical similarities of European settlement in the Asia-Pacific region and from our common language. But these have developed into much more as we have both striven, in our own styles, to recognise the cultural heritage of our indigenous populations and to accommodate the political realities of growth and maturity in the global village.

Professional ties between our two nations have been consolidated through two previous joint conferences of the professional library associations of New Zealand and Australia. The first, in 1981, was held in Christchurch; the second, in 1984, was held in Brisbane. Our third such venture is to be held in Wellington in September of this year.

This issue of *inCite* features preliminary information about this event to encourage our members to commence planning their attendance. I have just returned from a planning meeting in Wellington where the conference organisers

from both associations have negotiated the final details of the conference program. Joint Convenors Warren Horton, Director General of the National Library of Australia, and Vic Elliott, Librarian at the Victoria University of Wellington, have been working closely together to develop a conference that will be the biggest and most comprehensive assembly of members of the library and information profession ever held in the southern hemisphere.

Program Managers, Professor John Levett (Monash University) and Peter Scott (National Library of New Zealand) have recruited speakers who will cover the myriad of professional issues of relevance to our rapidly changing workplaces. The program is structured to ensure the active involvement of all participants, aiming to guarantee a learning environment which will improve the contribution that you all make in your library, information or resource centre. This of course will ultimately benefit users, assist the further development of the 'information society' and ensure the future status of the library professional in the future world of information super-highways.

This conference will also focus on the wider region, with all speakers drawn from the region. Delegates will be attending from Asian

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and Pacific nations, providing occasions for cultural exchange and networking. The work of our profession in the region is well established and expanding. Attendance at this conference will foster greater understanding of developments in libraries in adjacent areas and contribute to our Federal and State governments' goals of greater involvement in our geographical region.

The detailed conference program will be available in April and will be distributed to all ALIA Members. A program outline is contained in this edition of *inCite* along with some other information about Wellington and some welcoming words from members of the New Zealand Library and Information Association. If you have any inquiries about the conference, staff at the National Office will do their best to assist and you are welcome to give us a call.

In the last six months I have travelled to every state and territory and met with many members of ALIA's branches, sections and special interest groups. I look forward to meeting many more members of the Association in Wellington on 26 September. This conference is your Association's pre-eminent event. It is only held every second year. See you there. ■

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