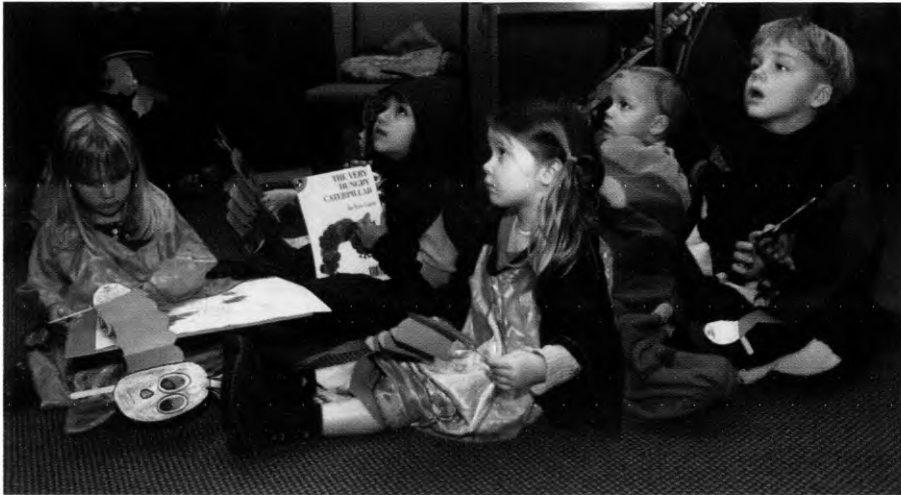


ABC meets ALW in Victoria

Australian Library Week had a much higher media profile than usual in Victoria in 2000 due largely to sponsorship from ABC radio negotiated by a

The story-time was featured on ABC TV's *Snapshot* program and ABC radio promoted the event in an interview with Carle from his home in Canada. As a result, on Thursday 18 May at 2.15pm, over three thousand pre-school children gathered in 115 public libraries for a reading of his story.



Children enjoying a reading of *The very hungry caterpillar* at the Flemington Library as part of the state-wide story-time

publicist employed by the State Library of Victoria to support the week. It was the first time that a publicist had been employed for this purpose in Victoria. The key task of the publicist was to maximise media coverage of the many initiatives and activities that were planned by librarians across the State. These included the *Build, Renovate or Detonate* seminar on the future of library buildings, a statewide story-time in public libraries, and the launch of Victoria's Virtual Library.

The ABC sponsorship provided forty-five community service announcements by well-known broadcasters and local celebrities such as comedian Rod Quantock and best-selling children's author Andy Griffiths. In addition, five major interviews were secured on metropolitan radio with many more on regional stations. Melbourne newspaper *The Age* ran several feature articles profiling the activities of various librarians and *The Herald-Sun* featured a full page article on Eric

Carle, creator of the classic picture book *The very hungry caterpillar*, as a promotion for the state-wide story-time.

The story-time was a simple and low-cost idea that captured the media's imagination.

Library building seminar

Earlier in the week 140 local government councillors, senior officers, architects, library managers and consultants attended the *Build, Renovate or Detonate* seminar in Melbourne on the future of public library buildings. There has been a perception in some areas of local government that the internet will render the public library obsolete and therefore no further investment is required for Victoria's 230 library buildings.

The seminar explored this idea and, for those who do not accept the premise, looked at funding, location and design issues.

Professor of Urban Design, Dimity Reed, spoke on the importance of public buildings. This led to an interesting exchange with local government CEO, Bob Seiffert, who offered other views on whether it is necessary for councils to own buildings. He cited the example of the Doncaster Shoppingtown library, located in space provided by Westfield, which more than meets the needs of the community.

Louise Adler and Tony Wheeler from *Lonely Planet* spoke about the unique qualities of books and libraries, pointing out that while the internet has shaken companies such as Readers Digest, Bill Gates says that it is nonsense to suggest books will disappear. Greg Burgess offered a poetic interpretation of how an architect approaches designing a building, illustrating his themes with superb slides.

'One of the best one-day seminars I have attended', was a common response from attendees. What might have seemed a simple concept of bricks and mortar led to the deeper and more complex issues of what a library means to a community.

Virtual library launched

The sometimes heated discussion about the future of libraries in the information age proved timely, given that Australian Library Week also saw the launch at Camperdown Library of Victoria's Virtual Library web-site (<http://www.libraries.vic.gov.au/>) by the Minister for State and Regional Development, John Brumby. This site has been developed as part of the Libraries Online project funded

Tony Wheeler and Charles Wright debate 'Books, bytes and reading' as part of the *Build, renovate or detonate* seminar



