

Farewell, Angela Bridgland

At the association's May annual general meeting on 20 May, Angela Bridgland retired as director after two terms on ALIA's Board of Directors. Angela's latest contribution to the Association is just the tip of her long association with ALIA. *inCite* talked to Angela to discover what have been the highlights, so far, of her involvement with the Association.

inCite: Angela, the 2004 AGM was your last official duty as a director of the Association, but this latest appointment certainly wasn't the start of your association with ALIA. When did you first start making a difference to the Association?

Angela Bridgland: I became a professional member of the Association in 1974. I served on the Victorian Branch Council between 1982 and 1984, first as a branch councillor and *inCite* publicity officer, then in 1985 as Victorian Branch president, and 1986 as part of the executive as immediate past president. In 1989 I was elected to the ALIA Board of Education (BoE), and I remained on that board until 1994. The mission of the ALIA Board of Education was 'to empower members of the Association to attain excellence in their professional practice through provision of education and training policies, standards and activities'. Working with the Board of Education was a very rewarding experience.

inCite: When you nominated for the first Board of Directors in 2000, you said that the Association had an opportunity to structure its business to reflect the realities of the global information industry, to partner with potential competitors, and to ensure that issues previously-championed by other bodies are kept to the fore and strengthened. Do you think that the Association has taken advantage of these opportunities?

AB: Yes, I do. I think that the Association has positioned itself more strategically and has achieved a great deal in the past four years. Many of these achievements revolve around the Association's commitment to putting members first. Notable examples are the complete overhaul of the education framework for library and information studies (which was known as the LISEKA Project); the simplification of the continuing professional development processes, and the collaborative arrangements entered into with training providers to strengthen the range of reasonably-priced CPD opportunities. Another important outcome has been the focus on research as a way of improving practice. As an Association, we have realised that our agenda is often shared (and therefore strengthened) by others, and we have actively endeavoured to forge partnerships with like-minded bodies such as the Australian Society of Archivists.

inCite: What was the most rewarding experience from your time on the ALIA Board of Directors?

AB: I believe that you get back as much, or more, than you put in, and I found that my experience on the Board of Directors was rewarding both personally and professionally. The experience allowed me to reflect on the profession as a whole. I was also exposed to professional issues of international concern. It gave me the opportunity of meeting people who I never would have met in the course of my normal professional life. This networking gave me a sense of the energy in our profession, and the commitment and enthusiasm of the ALIA National Office staff was also infectious!

inCite: What do you think are the benefits that ALIA members can get from nominating and participating on representative bodies such as the Board of Directors?

AB: It is a great form of professional development. You are constantly learning. Because the Board works strategically, planning is vitally important. Guided by the Association's objects, you are simultaneously required to position ALIA both in the present and in the future and you are challenged to think politically. As I've said, you get a wonderful opportunity to work with and meet an entirely new range of people. And then there's the sense of having made a difference. Tangible outcomes in my time on the Board have included the Education Framework, the online manual for CPD, the redesigned website, the Research and Exchange Partnership (REAP) including ALIA e-prints and the Association's Strategic Plan *ALIA towards 2010* which incorporates a freshly-articulated vision and statement of core values for our members.

inCite: What will you miss most about not being a part of the ALIA Board of Directors?

AB: I could say 'no longer hearing the hot gossip' — but the real answer is the responsibility of working with fellow directors and the members to build a sustainable future not just for the Association, but for our industry sector. I will also sincerely miss working with Jennefer and her professionally dedicated team at the ALIA National Office.

inCite: Will we see you working for ALIA in the future?

AB: Never say never! ■

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