

## Serving on Boards in Retirement

### Board room not boredom in retirement

*Pat Callahan has found her time on the Library Board of WA a rewarding experience and encourages other retirees to use their experience and expertise and serve on a board. Pat tells us more ...*

The Board is the accountable authority for the State Library of WA (SLWA). Members are appointed for a period of four years. As a statutory authority, the SLWA has responsibilities to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the State Library's operations without getting involved in management issues. It receives reports from its committees and from the State Librarian and is required to make recommendations on various matters, mainly of a non-operational nature. It also considers strategic, policy and planning issues. As well as these responsibilities, my time has included membership of three subcommittees — Joint Advisory, Internal Audit, and Legislation. It is quite a heavy commitment, but one which I enjoy.

The Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) has the task of strengthening the important partnership between the Public Libraries and the SLWA and considering ways to ensure that the future direction of WA's public library services provides for a 'sustainable and responsive network of vibrant, well-resourced, public libraries that are the hubs of the community'. With so many challenges facing libraries today, it is important for all concerned to be sharing expertise and resources to ensure they continue to be a strong service as relevant in the 21st century as they have been in the past. The JAC is a very stimulating experience and keeps me in touch with the new developments and opportunities being considered by library managers. My passion for libraries has certainly not diminished.

**Pat Callahan**  
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## Finding board opportunities

The **Our Community** website provides a wealth of information about joining boards and committees, including fact sheets, newsletters and guides. It also has a board and committee matching service and has information about the representation of women, Indigenous people, the disabled and culturally and linguistically diverse individuals on to boards and committees. Visit <<http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/boards/>>.

The **Queensland Register of Nominees to Government Bodies** helps match volunteers with hundreds of boards, advisory committees and statutory authorities in Queensland. See <[http://www.premiers.qld.gov.au/getinvolved/Qld\\_Register\\_of\\_Nominees/](http://www.premiers.qld.gov.au/getinvolved/Qld_Register_of_Nominees/)>.

The **Department for Victorian Communities Diversity Register** is aimed at increasing the representation of women, Indigenous people, youth, culturally and linguistically diverse individuals and people with a disability on Government Boards and Committees. See <<http://www1.dvc.vic.gov.au/diversityregister/>>.

You can register your interest for **NSW Government boards and committees** at <<http://www.premiers.nsw.gov.au/premiers/boardsandcommittees.asp>>.

In WA, register your interest in **Boards and Committees WA** (Incorporating the Interested Persons' Register) at <<http://www.boards.dpc.wa.gov.au/>>.

In the NT, women can register their interest at <<http://www.nt.gov.au/dcm/women/leadership/register.html>>.

In Tasmania, the **Tasmanian Women's Register** is available at <<http://www.women.tas.gov.au/register/downloadableform.pdf>>. There are also valuable links to other state and territory registers. at <[http://www.women.tas.gov.au/register/state\\_registers.html](http://www.women.tas.gov.au/register/state_registers.html)>.

In SA, the **Boards and Committees Unit** has information about joining government boards. See <[http://www.premcab.sa.gov.au/dpc/community\\_boards\\_committees.html](http://www.premcab.sa.gov.au/dpc/community_boards_committees.html)>.

For the ACT, visit <<http://www.women.act.gov.au/women%27sregister-boardsandcommittees.html>>.

Do you know of other places retirees can register their interest in joining a board? Why not let the ALIA Retirees Group know.

## Encouraging women to join boards

**AppointWomen** is an online registration database that gives women an opportunity to be considered for appointment to a variety of Australian Government boards and other decision-making bodies. Registration is free and confidential and applicants are required to complete a resume.

AppointWomen is managed by the Australian Government Office for Women, within the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. The Office matches skills and experience when Australian Government departments request nominees for board vacancies, which include many sectors including technology, industry, business and law, through to the community, arts and culture. See <<http://www.appointwomen.gov.au/>>. The Federal Budget 2007–2008 included initiatives to encourage women's representation on regional and rural bodies of influence in Australia. In 2007–2008, two key initiatives will be funded: a mentoring program for board candidates and high performing boards in regional areas will be established, and; the development of a board toolkit for regional boards. For more information, see <<http://www.budget.gov.au/2007-08/ministerial/html/dotars-26.htm>>.

**Women on Boards** is a national online network for women seeking positions on Australian boards. It partners with many professional women's organisations as well as the corporate, government, not-for-profit and sports sectors to hold events, create opportunities for women and mentor women into directorships. Subscribers to the website can draw support, encouragement, advice and services from an established network with a common purpose. Women on Boards charges an annual subscription fee. For more information, see <<http://www.womenonboards.org.au>>.

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## contribute to your member magazine

Contributions on issues relating to library and information science are welcome. Tell us about your work; share the issues discussed in your ALIA group; report on an activity or event. Or, consider a feature article under 1000 words — themes and deadlines for the remainder of 2007 are:

- **November** —  
*library buildings*, copy due 4 October
- **December** —  
*copyright; Web 2.0*  
copy due 1 November

Please note: These are **editorial** themes; **advertising** themes are on page 22.

Send contributions to <[incite@alia.org.au](mailto:incite@alia.org.au)>, high resolution images are welcome too! For more details, see <<http://alia.org.au/publishing/incite/>>.

*Serving on Boards in Retirement continued*

### A checklist of considerations when joining a board

Volunteering Australia's website at <<http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org>> provides a checklist of things you should consider before joining the board of a not-for-profit organisation. From the home page, click on 'Best practice', then 'Tips and advice'.

- Is the organisation a registered not-for-profit organisation i.e. an Incorporated Association or a Company Limited by Guarantee?
- Is the organisation able to provide you with the most recent copy of the annual report, audited accounts, mission statement and other relevant documentation?
- Does the organisation have professional indemnity and insurance which covers board members when discharging their duty?
- Is there a written position description for you as a board member and does it explain your role as a board member?
- Have you been fully briefed on the governance role of the board and the legal liabilities and requirements of a board member?
- Is the philosophy of the organisation compatible with your own values and beliefs?
- Is the time commitment required of you achievable?

### ABS National Survey of Volunteering in Australia

Australians are generous when it comes to volunteering — 34% of the adult population (5.4 million people) volunteer, a total 713 million annual hours! These are some of the survey results reported in the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) report on volunteering titled *Voluntary Work, Australia*, 2006 (ABS Cat no. 4441.0) This publication contains results from the national Voluntary Work Survey conducted throughout Australia from March to July 2006 as part of the ABS General Social Survey — the census.

The major aim of the survey was to collect data on rates of participation in voluntary work, hours contributed, characteristics of people who volunteer, the types of organisations they work for and the activities they undertake. Information on whether people made monetary donations to organisations and the types of organisations donated to were also collected.

The entire report (88 pages) is available to download free of charge from <<http://www.abs.gov.au/>>. On this home page, type '4441.0' into the search box. A summary report has been prepared by Volunteering Australia, and is available at <<http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org>>, click on 'Volunteering facts', then 'Statistics'. Unfortunately, libraries are not clearly identified in the statistics; libraries are included in the broad category, *Arts/Heritage*.

### Master of Library and Information Management.

New technologies have a significant impact on every aspect of library services around the world. Libraries and industry need information professionals who are flexible, adaptable and able to work with the latest technology. UniSA's Master of Library and Information Management is designed to equip information professionals with the knowledge and skills needed for the information society of the 21st Century. You can choose to study full time, part time or externally online.

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