

Dear Editor

Thank you Philip Kent for your thoughtful and polite reminder to all of the way it was in "our day" (*INCITE*, September 2011). It would seem a reminder like this is timely. So many of the matters that you mention as common practice and that served as a thoughtful, professional and very useful networking training ground for the likes of you and me appear to be missing in the profession as it stands today. You mention:

- How so many staff members at large institutions were almost automatically members of our professional association. I understand that this is not always the case today.
- How we "networked long before the term was in currency" through Committee meetings, to which I would add the steep learning curve these meetings provided in standards of recording meetings, conducting debate, speaking professionally and being well informed before one dared to open one's mouth, and being courteous in formal meeting settings.
- The loss of "professional connection" with the demise of such meetings – to which I can only agree. The meetings gave a sense of professional worth and strength and certainly assisted in times when, for example, employers were hiring librarians without the requirement of "eligible for professional membership of ALIA" as part of the advertisement. You don't see the latter too often these days and as you write, this is the "official standard".

Lest anyone think that this is yet another oldie with a professional gripe, there could be none more astounded than I, when I gave a bit (or is it 'byte') speech at the New Norcia Library Lecture in WA recently, on the philosophical underpinnings of our proud and worthy profession under the rubric of the information commons. How heartening it was to have so many colleagues express their appreciation of this reminder of our true worth and meaning. And if you want a brief reminder of why librarians exist and should continue their proud journey then please read "What librarians & Google are for..." (*INCITE*, August 2011, p. 4) for starters.

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4. **Before you select an architect, ask the contenders what the word 'library' means to them.** If their notion is outdated, you are going to have to either change their mind or re-educate them before you get started. And any architect or designer you choose must share your vision and enthusiasm if you are going to create something really revolutionary together.
5. (And this is actually Kevin's number one priority): **Insist on 3D-rendering of everything during the design process.** Think Grand Designs. That computer-generated building you can actually watch yourself walking through isn't just a fancy trick; it's the way you can be sure you and your architect are imagining the same new library and it saves you from those nasty surprises once the building starts (I thought it would be higher/larger/smaller...). A retail or even a domestic project these days will routinely be 3D-rendered and a project as complex as a library definitely should be.

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