



# LOOKING FOR LIFE BALANCE? TRY WORKING FOR A REGIONAL UNIVERSITY



**ROBYN TWEEDALE:** THE MORE RELAXED AND AFFORDABLE LIFESTYLE WAS A PLEASANT SURPRISE.



**ELIZABETH HAYWARD:** ACHIEVING WORK/LIFE BALANCE WAS A BIG DRAWCARD.



**COURTNEY MORAN:** THE BEST THING IS WATCHING YOUR UNIVERSITY, AND YOURSELF, DEVELOP.

**A**re you new to the profession or ready for a change? Why not consider working in a regional library? Three librarians at different stages of their career share their experiences and insights into the many benefits of working in a regional university.

Regional libraries are, for the most part, smaller than their metropolitan counterparts and may offer more opportunities to learn new skills and gain experience in a range of roles. This is particularly true if you are open to participation in project teams or secondments. There are also many lifestyle advantages associated with living in a regional area.

**ROBYN TWEEDALE: MANAGER,  
INFORMATION SERVICES  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND  
(USQ), TOOWOOMBA**

I came to USQ Library in Toowoomba nine years ago after working in a university library in Brisbane for more than 15 years, so I think this has given me the opportunity to see the advantages of both. In Brisbane, I found opportunities for career advancement were more limited, so when the opportunity came up in Toowoomba, I leapt at the more senior role. Living in a regional city was an adjustment, but the friendly people at work made it easier.

I came to USQ for professional reasons, so the more relaxed and affordable lifestyle in a regional city came as a pleasant surprise. I live three minutes from work (with free parking!) and nothing is more than 20 minutes away. I love that it is still daylight in winter when I get home to walk my dog, and that I can afford to buy a house, when I never could in Brisbane.

Professionally, I believe that working in regional university libraries has some other advantages. They are more social and intimate places, with staff working in close relationships across all sections. The need to be agile and responsive presents a lot of opportunities for projects, and all staff can not only be involved, but frequently take on leadership roles as well. In our digital age, there are easy options to communicate and collaborate with technology.

As a manager, I am always seeking enthusiastic, energetic people to come and live and work in Toowoomba. Staff who do come and embrace the advantages of working in a regional city will love it.



## ELIZABETH HAYWARD: SENIOR LIBRARIAN – PRINT DISABILITY SERVICES AND COPYRIGHT AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY (ACU), BALLARAT CAMPUS

I have been reflecting upon my career as a librarian lately. Working in a regional city has enabled me to transition from children's librarian to university reference librarian to my current role in print disability services, as well as from the public sector to the university sector, without the necessity of moving house or additional travel.

The big drawcard for me has been the ability to achieve a healthy work life balance, a topic that receives much attention in the literature discussing stress factors related to the modern work environment. I work fulltime but do not battle through heavy traffic in order to get to work. I am able to attend yoga class or the gym straight after work and still get home to walk the dog. My drive to work passes through rolling hills, farms and urban streets, affording glimpses of native (and feral) wildlife.

When my daughters were young, I was able to organise my work schedule so that I could attend debates, performances and sporting events as these were never far from my workplace.

Intercity or interstate travel is required a few times a year, but opportunities to participate in professional development have not been limited by my choice to live in a regional city. As a staff member of a national university with six dispersed campuses, I manage a small team who are located on campuses across three states. Meetings via web based video conferencing allow a personal management style; distance is not a barrier.

Here in Ballarat, the small campus community provides opportunities to engage with staff from across the disciplines and work groups. In summary, I would encourage others to consider working away from the 'big smoke'. That elusive work/life balance is achievable in a regional setting.

## COURTNEY MORAN: FACULTY LIBRARIAN UNIVERSITY OF THE SUNSHINE COAST (USC), SIPPY DOWNS

As a new graduate in 2010, I was keen to progress to librarian within a year. I had no preference in terms of location, as I was ready to relocate. I knew before I commenced my librarianship studies that I wanted to be a faculty librarian. In 2010, I applied for positions at the University of Queensland, where I had been employed since 2003, plus other universities in metropolitan NSW, ACT and Victoria. It was my eighth application that led me to USC.

The best thing about a regional university is the opportunity to watch it, and yourself, evolve into something better. In three years I have been a Reference Librarian, Learning Support Librarian (Acting), and seconded as a Faculty Librarian, culminating in a permanent appointment.

I also had the opportunity to work with senior staff outside my department, and to engage in influential projects. I have worked on literature reviews for a USC's Deputy Vice Chancellor commissioned grants project and an Australian Government Office of Learning & Teaching project. I was also involved in two significant library projects.

*The contributors to this article are employed by institutions that are members of Queensland University Libraries Office of Cooperation (QULOC). QULOC ([www.quloc.org.au](http://www.quloc.org.au)) is a collaborative organisation providing a supportive framework for information exchange, good practice development, cooperative activities, and the promotion of common interests which support the teaching, learning and research needs of member institutions. QULOC has 13 member libraries, located in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and the Northern Territory.*

**INCITE  
MARCH 2015**

**LET'S TALK  
ABOUT THE WAR!**

2015 is set to be a busy year for historians, analysts and communities, as we mark the centenary of Gallipoli, and communities continue to discuss the consequences of WWI. So, let's talk about the war.

We know there are many special projects and events planned for 2015. Are you involved? Has this anniversary spurred the genealogists and historians on your staff or in your community? Are you showcasing special collections or developing new resources? Then it's time to let your colleagues know by writing about it for *INCITE*.

The deadline for contributions is 19 January 2014. Check the guidelines for contributions on the ALIA website and email your stories and images to [incite@alia.org.au](mailto:incite@alia.org.au). Please note all images must be high resolution (at least 300DPI, 500KB or higher) and sent separately as jpg files. Images may be reproduced in print and online.