

# A FIRST TIMER

**J**ESSE IRWIN was a volunteer at the 2015 ALIA Information Online conference held in Sydney on 3–5 February 2015. It was the first librarianship conference she had attended, and because she is from Brisbane, it meant her first plane flight since primary school. She gives us a run-down of her experience.



The conference provided an excellent opportunity to meet people involved with Jesse's online librarianship degree. Pictured: Tania Barry, Kathryn Greenhill, and Jesse Irwin

## DAY 1

My volunteer duties were scheduled for the afternoon, so I spent the morning exploring the exhibitor areas. I was interested in the exhibitor prize – a hamper worth up to \$4,590 – which involved scanning 16 QR codes in order to enter. After watching the end of the keynote address on screen, I went to the First Timers' morning tea.

The first session I attended was by Sue Hutley, who spoke about the New Media Consortium 2014 Academic Library Trends report, which explored the effect new and changing technologies will have on libraries and wider society.

In the afternoon, Professor Sarah Kenderdine's plenary session demonstrated how digital technologies combine with archival materials to create large-scale installations. After assisting with afternoon tea, I was on duty for the



Jesse also won an iPad Mini from OCLC.

workshop titled 'Hold tight and pretend it's a plan! Strategic approaches to client engagement via social media' presented by Richard Gray and Amy Barker.

## DAY 2

Again I had the morning free to attend presentations and enjoyed the keynote address by Erik Boekesteijn from the Netherlands, who told of his experiences travelling the world and researching and redesigning library spaces.

I also attended the presentations titled 'Library as place, make the space' by Tania Barry, 'New media lab – new customers' by Lisa Miller, Katie Davis's session on connective learning, and Pia Waugh on engaging with users and innovation for a better society.

I was assigned to the Grand Ballroom and heard Katrina McAlpine and Lisa McIntosh warn us not to underestimate library staff. Clare McKenzie and Emma McLean explained ROS (Robot Operating System), and Clare Thorpe shared a streamlined client identity management experience at State Library of Queensland.

At the conference dinner – which was called 'Night time garden party' – I discovered that librarians dance harder than anyone I've ever met when given the chance.



The conference dinner and dance taught Jesse that librarians know how to party.

### DAY 3

I assisted on the registration desk in the morning, but was keen to learn how libraries use social media. Katie Mills and Jill Benn spoke about how social media strategy improved student experience at the University of Western Australia, and Ellen Forsyth followed with 'Social media analytics in an imperfect world'.

After 'Social media mentorship: a new-fashioned approach to an old-fashioned concept' by Ozge Sevindik-Alkan and Tania Barry, I decided I would like to try this new type of mentorship. Alyson Dalby and Clare McKenzie then told us what the International Librarians Network managed to achieve with zero budget.

In the final keynote address Liz McGettigan challenged librarians to be tougher and more rebellious, as incremental changes will not enable libraries to remain relevant in the future. The ALIA presidential address and presentation of ALIA awards ended the conference.

I will certainly volunteer again and recommend that students and new graduates join ALIA and volunteer at conferences. The chance to meet people, learn about the amazing things happening in the world of libraries and information management, and see the practical applications of the theory I've been studying was invaluable.

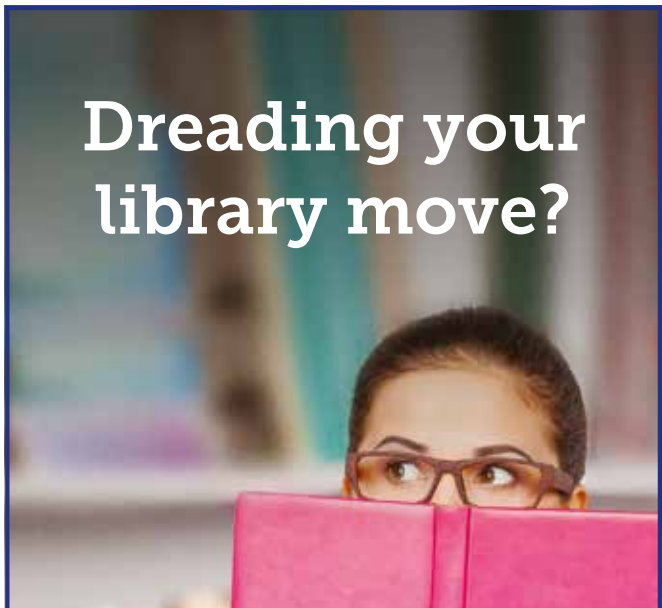
I also learned about the importance of being engaged on social media by sharing quotes and photos from the presentations I attended and interacting with other conference attendees.

#### JESSE IRWIN

Jesse Irwin lives in Brisbane and is studying for a Bachelor of Arts (Librarianship and Corporate Information Management) at Curtin University via Open Universities Australia. Her Twitter account is @ACatAteMyTweets.



Jesse, Mr Bones, and the bottle of champagne Jesse won from Marketline.



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