

2nd ALIA New Librarians' Symposium: report from a competition winner!

By Jocelyn Threadgold

I first heard of NLS2 in class at university, and thought it sounded like two days filled with opportunities to discover as much as possible about a career I was planning to embark upon. So, when I saw that [SALIN](#) was running a competition for free tickets, I thought, well, why not? To my absolute shock, my entry, saying that I wanted to be like Evelyn from *The Mummy* because she manages to maintain her calm and still hunt for information while being threatened with an ancient, homicidal mummy bent on world destruction, won! I knew then, with certainty, that NLS2 was going to be a blast.

Walking into the Hilton on the first day of the Symposium, I was a little apprehensive, I very definitely put the "new" in "New Librarian's Symposium", having completed my Graduate Diploma of Information Studies at the University of South Australia's Magill campus two weeks prior to NLS2. Still, I collected my funky satchel of tricks (to be added to over the course of the two days, and may I say that I just love post-its!), and sat down to listen as talk flowed around me. If I hadn't already been aware of the fact that the information management professions have enough jargon and acronyms to rival the military's, I was now. I happened to be sitting next to another graduate, one who had graduated in the semester before me, however, so we chatted about our mutual ignorance concerning whether Horizon was better than CRICOS.

"Beyond the Stereotype" could not have been a more accurate topic for the symposium, one had only to look at the vast diversity of people sitting in the ballroom at the Hilton to realise that. In the twenty-first millennium, librarians have moved far away from the cardigan-wearing, glaring over the top of glasses, hissing SSSHHHH! like a malignant goose stereotype that seems to have been the predominant image of our profession to date. We're hip, we're savvy, we're technologically aware, customer/client/patron focussed and committed to getting information out there.

The speakers at the symposium were evidence of this. Alan Smith, head of the State Library of SA gave a pep talk about the benefits of having a focussed and directional career path mapped out for yourself. We also heard from librarians who had been on job exchanges, leading to my indulging in a fantasy of working in a library at Oxford and punting on rivers on my weekends; librarians involved in helping to set up libraries in foreign countries; and the many different ways in which to make our libraries or workplaces more effective in supplying what we deal in, information.

As my first, but hopefully not my last, career-related symposium/conference, NLS2 was brilliant. An event where a gaggle, a score, a "stack" of librarians were able to get together and not only hear about the latest developments in our profession, but also talk to others who understand what we do, and most importantly why we do it!

NLS2 committee, which included one of my lecturers who reminded us weekly that we'd be regret missing out if we didn't go, snaps to you! You put together a terrific opportunity for Australian librarians to get together and realise as a group, that we do some pretty fabulous things, and that if we all take on board just some of the things that we learned during our two days we can definitely step "Beyond the Stereotype".