



the one umbrella report

welcome to tour!

december 2007

I would like to welcome all of our readers to the last edition of TOUR for 2007.

This year has been The One Umbrella's busiest with new clients not only in Australia, but New Zealand, Hong Kong, China and the UK.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our readers a Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Gillian Hart
National Manager

Out of the box

It takes more than creepy crawlies to deter the intrepid One Umbrella team once they commit to an assignment.

Hazel Bowley got more than she bargained for when asked to update the records management system for a major NSW government department.

The project involved collecting documentation from 106 locations across NSW, making an assessment of the importance and value of the records and either consigning them to the Government Record Depository or a secure destruction bin.

While this seemed like straight-forward task, the condition of the government records was far from ordinary. The dusty archive boxes had been in storage for so long that many of them were now home to colonies of wasps!

Hazel thought she had seen the worst, when a large lizard scampered from another box - raising merry hell as staff set chase for it around the building.

The One Umbrella team completed the job on time and on budget despite these and several other hurdles (of the non-animal variety). These included the fact that documents were kept in a range of mediums (non-standard boxes to plastic sleeves), documents were in no apparent order or 'filing logic', and the number of records processed turned out to be far greater than the initial estimation.

hot skills

QLD	EDRMS Retention and disposal development Cataloguers Legal librarians and library technicians
NSW	TRIM/TRIM Administration Teacher-Librarians Financial research Legal reference and research Legal library technicians Sharepoint
VIC	EDRMS Vendors – business development, Technical support Cataloguers Web content/intranet
ACT	Sentencing Research and reference

By the end of the four month assignment The One Umbrella team had managed to process 6,500 boxes of documentation, helping pave the way for a new generation of record management by the department.

The project was such a success that the client received additional funding to carry out the same document management process at additional locations around the state.

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Happenings this Quarter...

Law in Focus

This issue, we take a look at employment trends in the legal sector, focusing on the private and corporate arena.

From the perspective of The One Umbrella, the market for legal library, records and knowledge jobs remains stable and suitably experienced legal staff will remain in strong demand. Law firms continue to seek training experience in library candidates given that lawyers now have greater access to online research tools and do more of their own research.

Philip Mullen of Middletons law firm is the convenor of The Sterling Group, a network of law firm libraries in Sydney. He believes that staffing levels in law libraries will remain constant in the near future. "Law is an information intensive area and demand for people who are experts at finding the law will remain", says Philip. The movement of the search and retrieval functions to lawyer's desks via company intranets has not led to declining demand for law firm librarians as first predicted. On the contrary, lawyers still require access to trained expert librarians who can deliver timely cost effective research. As the Internet has decentralised some of the functions of a traditional library, the physical space of law libraries has moved from large, separate, impressive spaces to smaller, more accessible spaces located on practice area floors. Philip Mullen believes this shift has been positive in making the library and librarians much more accessible and visible. In many firms this has resulted in higher use of the library and its services.

With the lifeblood of any law firm library being the reference department, Philip says that "a knowledgeable law librarian who knows the law and the lawyer's clients is worth more to the partners than any number of senior associates or junior lawyers". This means that law librarians need to be highly skilled at both Librarianship and the Law. Perhaps in the future law librarians will need to have both library and law qualifications. As noted by One Umbrella consultants, not only does a law librarian need to know how to find the law in an increasingly complex legal world, they also need to know how to teach research skills to lawyers.

"A lawyer's time is very expensive and with development of desktop searching, many lawyers spend an inordinate amount of time hiding in their offices fruitlessly searching LexisNexis AU, CCH and Thomson", says Philip. "Expert training of legal staff is needed if law firms are going to get value from them. This needs to be delivered by an information professional with a sound understanding about how professional staff learn."

Technology changes will always be a major factor facing law librarians. Melanie Elron, Sydney Library Manager with Blake Dawson Waldron (see Melanie's profile on next page) says that law librarians "need to manage that change and smooth the transition for our users". The development of Web 2.0 technologies, such as RSS and Wikis, "has great potential for service delivery in the legal and corporate environment. We hope the major publishers will increasingly provide services that are RSS capable", says Melanie.

Philip Mullen says it will be interesting to see how law librarians respond to developments like RSS and Wikis. "What happens to the library scanning and circulation services when the publishers finally move to RSS (for example, Alert 24)? What happens when publishers start offering the contents pages from journals (for example, <http://www.tictocs.ac.uk/>) or the loose-leaf summaries on RSS feed and our partners and solicitor's jump in and sign up using the Google Reader?" he ponders.

It looks like law libraries will always be an interesting and challenging place to be.

Congratulations to our candidates who have recently won Awards of Excellence!

QLD

Matthew Allat
Andrew Noble
Adam Baker
Roy Norman
Nicholas Jones

VIC

Kate Ritchie
Marcus Stacey -ACT
Tracey Beale
Lesley Tow

NSW

Anthony Zappia
Lyn Milton



Roy Norman,
Barbara Leslie
and Nicholas Jones



Sheeba Vawda (TOU)
and Adam Baker

A Peek inside the Fairfax Media Archive

Lyn Milton recently won a TOU award of excellence for her temporary work as Company Archivist with Fairfax Media. She shares some insights into the Fairfax archives collection and her work there.

Fairfax is best known as a publisher of newspapers, particularly the Sydney Morning Herald (the oldest English language newspaper in the southern hemisphere), the Sun-Herald, The Age, and the Australian Financial Review. As a media enterprise that dates back to the 1830s, Fairfax has an impressive collection of archives, of interest to historians and students of the media alike.

The Fairfax Media archive includes a range of records about the company's day-to-day editorial activities, including journalist's duty books showing their daily assignments.

It holds staff files that give lots of information about the organisation and development of the company and working conditions, in addition to the personalities of its employees. Of particular interest to the research community might be Fairfax family records and general correspondence of the senior officers, especially from 1932-1972.

The archive also contains indexes to coverage of key events and issues, such as first world war articles and the social pages. For those interested in visual records, the archive holds special formats such as photographs of buildings, staff, and printing presses; creative artworks (cartoons and caricatures); building plans; films, audio and video tapes; posters; and illuminated addresses.

"When I commenced at Fairfax I found the archives in environmentally controlled storage, in a room shared by bound volumes of newspapers dating back to 1831 and the photographic library," said Lyn.

"The archives had been controlled by a traditional 'record group' system and I decided to implement the 'series system' for the new material added to the collection and to back capture the material already documented."



Award of Excellence for
Lyn Milton,
L to R: Lyn Milton,
Sally Kudrna,
Connie Dolores,
Deborah Browne,
Anthea Darmon

Lyn was also involved in setting up a virtual exhibition entitled Fairfax in Bricks and Mortar to increase awareness of the archives.

At one time, Fairfax was actually a world leader in recognising the importance of archiving in the media industry. Ms Eileen Dwyer was appointed the first Archivist in March 1974, joining a select group of newspaper company archivists throughout the world.

"In 1979 the General Manager observed that the only other newspaper to have a full-time archivist was The Times (London). A full-time archivist was employed until 1996 when the position was discontinued," Lyn said.

Pssst.. Have you been watching The Librarians, Wednesdays 9.30pm, ABC?

No 'shush' noises to be heard and no daggy cardigans in sight! It's a hoot! For discussion about the show, see The Librarians Blog set up by ALIA at:

<http://www.alia.org.au/thelibrariansblog>



professional profile: melanie elron (sydney library manager @ blake dawson waldron)

What does your current position involve?

I manage a team of staff that provides information services in a law firm. We are part of a national library team and our work can involve legal research, developing information solutions for clients, training new law graduates and maintaining a relevant collection of print and online resources.

Why did you become a librarian?

I love problem-solving and the 'detective' work of research. I love knowing lots of crazy facts that I may never have any use for. I discovered that in this job I probably will have a use for them one day!

What has helped you to be successful in your career?

Taking initiative, and being willing to help others when required. Keeping an open mind and being persistent when you believe in something. And the inspiration of great mentors!

What is the most rewarding aspect of your job?

Knowing that we contribute to significant events - seeing a case or corporate deal in the newspaper and knowing that we provided research for that is very rewarding. Also, as a manager, being able to help staff develop their skills and career path.

What is the most difficult aspect of your job?

Being a manager of people is harder than it looks. I'm learning how important it is to encourage and maintain constant communication.

What's the strangest information request you have ever had?

It's hard to choose just one! Finding evidence of grants of crown land in the 19th century is all in a day's work for us, whereas finding the average price of a second hand truck in 1985 is definitely not. That one really had us stumped! That's why it's great to have a community of librarians - when I'm really stuck I call up a library who I think might know an answer and even when I've never met them before, they go out of their way to help out.

If you had not chosen information management, what profession might you have chosen?

Publishing, journalism - something involving words and ideas!

Upcoming Conferences and Events

Best Practice Library Knowledge Management

Brisbane, 6 December 2007.

http://www.keyforums.com.au/master_classes.aspx

Beyond the Hype: Web 2.0

Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane

1-2 February 2008.

<http://www.alia.org.au/conferences/2008-2009.html>

VALA 2008,

'Libraries/changing spaces, virtual places'

14th Biennial Conference and Exhibition.

Melbourne, 5-7 February 2008

www.vala.org.au