



Report to the South Island Library Managers' Meeting – March 2007

▪ Sunday Opening

The District Library (Blenheim) opened from 1.30pm – 4.30pm for a trial period from Sunday 7 May – Sunday 1 October 2006, with the intention that if it proved to be successful it would open on Sundays permanently in 2007. It was interesting to see the large number of families use the library on Sundays, in particular fathers. It also proved a place for the elderly to meet on what can be a very lonely day if you are by yourself. Planning is now underway to celebrate the permanent opening of the District Library on Sunday afternoons. Activities will include live music, food and drink stalls in the courtyard and prize draws. Sunday opening recommences on Sunday 15 April from 1.30pm – 4.30pm.

▪ Book Fair

In June 2006, the Picton branch of the Friends of the Marlborough District Libraries held a very successful community book fair to raise funds for the 2006/2007 Summer Reading Programme. The three day event raised \$6690.95 - a tremendous community effort.

▪ Reading Programmes

Interest in this year's summer reading programme surpassed previous years with over forty children remaining on the waiting list at the end of the registration afternoon. Registrations at the District Library opened one afternoon at 4.30pm and in record time (35 minutes) all 180 places were taken. In total, 300 children enrolled, with the majority finishing the programme. An amazing two fold programme that benefits those who participate and creates such good will from the public and kudos to the libraries. A generous grant from the Lion Foundation enabled the libraries to extend the number of places available on the programme.

For the first time 'Winter Warmers' were run during the winter school holidays that attracted 100 Blenheim school-age readers and 50 from Picton. 76 of the Blenheim readers, having taken part in recording 'reviews' in a special 'Winter warmers' booklet, received a certificate and torch at a 'pyjama party' held in the Blenheim Children's library on a Thursday evening from 7-8pm (when it was dark), and no doubt terrorised neighbourhoods all over Blenheim and Picton, playing spotlight on the last few nights of the holidays.

▪ Picton Library

After a series of "Talking Walls" – gathering feedback from the Picton community about how they would like to see a prime piece of real estate owned by Council utilised, four architects were engaged to prepare drawings and present them to the public. (All four presented a library facility – first hurdle over!)

From these presentations Council selected one architect whose brief was to take the information gathered during the public consultation process and create a more detailed plan. The firm 'dKO' presented a very 'smart' plan with a civic building in a prime position. They felt a library was ideal and would fulfil this function well. Some members of the public couldn't understand how a library would attract people to the area! A splinter group was formed that eventually presented an alternative plan for the space that confused and complicated the issue. It was not that this group didn't want a library, their focus was more on the needs of the Sounds residents and boaties coming into the marina area.

Work continues on submissions that have been presented on both plans.

▪ **Touching Base with the Community**

The Marlborough District Libraries conducted a survey between 9-24 September to seek feedback about current resources and services as well as future needs. The survey was promoted and disseminated in various ways: it was published in a full page advertisement in the Saturday Express, beside the monthly library page. It was available on-line on the Library's website and was promoted on radio. Two classes from each of the Boys and Girls Colleges completed the survey and library staff took the survey to the streets (Picton and Blenheim) where they encouraged people to fill the survey in. A \$100 prize draw was offered to encourage participation and was won by a teenage library member.

1. There were a total of 834 responses with a few people responding more than once. A total of 799 individuals replied: 706 people were members, (5 no response), 88 were non-members - representing 12% of total respondents.
2. The largest age group was 36-60, followed by over 60, 16-25, 0-15. Twice as many females (498) as males (245) replied.
3. 742 respondents visit the library from 'every week' (232) to 'occasionally' (243), with the greatest number (267) visiting 'at least once a month'. 43 respondents replied they 'never' visit the library.
4. The majority of respondents use the Blenheim Library (657) with 79 respondents using the Picton Library. The majority of people stay at the library for less than 60 or 30 minutes (a total of 646), with slightly more people (340) staying for 'less than 60 minutes'. 89 people stayed for 1-2 hours and nine people stayed for more than two hours.
5. Only 15 out of 735 people said their interests are not well covered – the majority said they are.
6. The services valued by most people in a modern library are: quality resources (593), excellent customer service (504), easy access to information (446), assistance and programmes for children (186), free internet access (not email) (155), events and activities (118). Other features that would be valued include: rebates for Community service card holders (99), ESOL and resources for disabled people (89), books in other languages (85), a 'no fines day', recommended reading lists, longer hours, and toilets.

'SmartView' Magnifying Reader

A donation from the Marlborough Community Committee - Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind, with a top up' from the Marlborough District Library has enabled a SmartView magnifying system to be purchased which will be of great benefit to Marlborough's visually impaired people.

Genealogical Research Tool - Ancestry.com

As the result of a collaborative purchasing venture between the Marlborough, Hurunui, Selwyn, Nelson and Tasman libraries, the Marlborough District Libraries now offer the online genealogical database. Ancestry.com through the libraries iPACs.

District Library Carpet Replacement

The replacement of the District Library carpet is scheduled for the weekend before Easter, 31 March / 1 April. The carpet was to have been replaced in December last year but the new carpet was found to be damaged the day before relaying was to take place.

Glenn Webster
District Libraries Manager
22 March 2007