



Tasman District Libraries

Report to the South Island Library Managers' Meeting March 2007

- **Customer services**

The redevelopment of the Library website was our major initiative in 2006. The site was redesigned from scratch and the format has proved successful and been well-received by customers. A lot of staff time went into the creation of content to be lodged on the site. There is now a regular weekly opportunity for loading new content for book reviews etc and news items can be added at any time.

Information Services has been closely involved in the redevelopment of the Library website and particular attention was given to making our on-line resources as easy to find and navigate as possible. Much work has gone into promoting awareness and use of the on-line resources.

Children's and Young Adult services have a very full slate of programmes most of which are now well-established. Most demanding and successful is the annual Summer Reading Programme now including more than 400 children. We feel we have reached our capacity in terms of numbers if we are to continue to provide a quality programme. This year will be the third year we offer a winter reading programme for young adults. We are still experimenting with the format for this programme and hope to hit on the winning formula this year.

One of the major themes which emerged from our customer focus groups in 2005 was a wish for the Library to communicate better with the community. One of our responses to this is to have a monthly promotional focus. The programme is set out for the year and each month a particular service is highlighted and promoted. Some items such as access to customer accounts through the website are promoted repeatedly to consolidate the message.

- **Usage**

Circulation statistics for 2005-2006 were 2% down on 2004-2005. The decline in circulation was halted from about August 2006 and there was a very modest increase in circulation for the first seven months of this financial year. Although door count figures have also been depressed, use of value added services such as reference, reservations, inter-loans, story time programmes, reading programmes, school class visits, talks by authors, on-line information sources and the website have all been buoyant. The challenge has been to convey to the Council the significance of the use of a broad range of Library services and to encourage them not only to focus on the "big two". At times the message seems to be getting through and at other times not.

- **Support services**

In recent years we have centralised all book ordering and cataloguing and all ordering and receipt of magazines. In this year we standardised and centralised selection procedures. We still order mainly from publishers and distributors and make use of publishers' representatives, published reviews and *BookFind-Online* to identify titles for purchase. Purchases for the adults' collections are coordinated by the Collections Librarian and for the Children's and Young Adults' collections by the Children's and Young Adults' Librarian. Each branch is able to put forward recommendations to them as part of the selection process.

- **Buildings**

There are two Library building projects in Council's LTCCP – a new branch Library in Takaka and an extension to the District Library in Richmond. However despite their status as approved projects within the LTCCP, Council halted both projects and has delayed their progress by several years. After extensive debate, consideration of alternative proposals and revisions of plans, the new Takaka building was finally approved as a design-and-build project and a contract was signed in December 2006. The District Library project however remains stalled while negotiations are conducted with a private developer.

- **Friends of the Tasman District Libraries**

The Friends continue to fulfil their role very well. They act as a supportive lobby group for the Library and arrange a regular series of stimulating meetings in the Library. We enjoyed the company of authors such as Jenny Patrick, Chris Cole Catley, and Jim Hopkins. Our biggest turnout of 180 was for Marguerite van Geldermalsen, former local girl speaking about her autobiography, "Married to a Bedouin". Helen Moulder presented her one hander "Playing Miss Haversham" and other meetings included an art auction, film premiers and book review evenings. Through their meetings the Friends also raise some money for specific Library projects. There is now a thriving group of Friends in Takaka as well.

- **Future challenges**

- Complete successfully the Takaka Branch Library building within the constraints of the design and build framework.
- Obtain Council approval to proceed with the District Library building extension and achieve the best result we can within the rigorous budget imposed.
- Ensure that as many Councillors as possible share our conviction that public libraries are a vital service to the Tasman communities.
- Motivate for adequate funding and resist demands for increased charges in an increasingly inhospitable financial environment.
- Keep up with service development demands in our technology driven world.

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