



# UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER  
WINTER  
2014



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## Greetings from the President

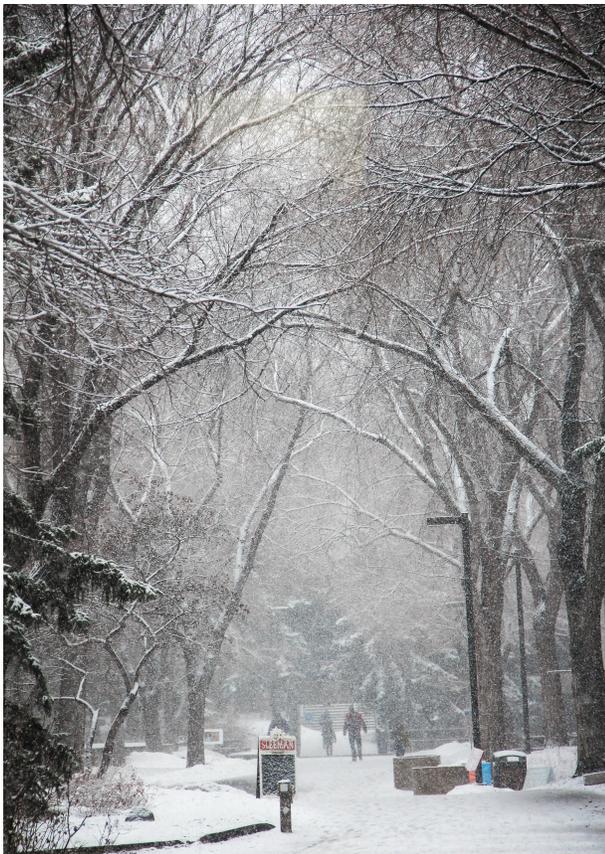
It is again my pleasure to present our winter newsletter to update you on latest news from LISAA. In this issue you will find an update from interim director Anna Altmann, an article showcasing our distinguished alumni award winner Kathleen De Long and a recap of the popular Forum for Information Professionals conference, which LISAA supports annually. Since our brunch in September of 2013 the LISAA executive has met on a number of occasions and as we move forward towards spring we will be planning our annual general meeting. At our AGM we hope to present a new financial model for LISAA that would mean the elimination of membership fees. We believe this new financial model will not only improve our local events but make LISAA membership more effective and equitable. I encourage you to watch for our notices and to attend the AGM to learn more about these planned changes. Those unable to make it to Edmonton for the AGM are welcome to contact me for more information at [hanne.pearce@ualberta.ca](mailto:hanne.pearce@ualberta.ca).

*Hanne Pearce*

## The News from SLIS

by Anna E. Altmann, Interim Director

Many of you will know that the 2013/14 academic year has been a difficult one for the universities in Alberta, including the U of A. The reduction in government funding has forced reorganization and cuts in staff and programs right across the institutions. In the past few months I have frequently been asked by people in the field whether SLIS has been affected by these hard times. The answer is a joyful “no”. Thanks to the strategic thinking of Fern Snart, the Dean of Education (our home Faculty), and the initiatives of Ernie Ingles, my predecessor, SLIS is in excellent shape. We’ve lost neither money nor staff nor faculty. The new online program is in its second semester, and it looks as though we’ll have even more applications for the second intake than we did for the first one. Work on pedagogical development and faculty and student support within the online program is one of our priorities for the coming academic year. We all want this new program to have the high quality of the onsite MLIS.



Our onsite students are a stellar group, and their academic achievements have been recognized by major scholarships. For the first time, an MLIS student won the Ivy A. Thomson and William Thomson Graduate Scholarship. This substantial prize is worth \$18,000. Only two of these are awarded each year and the competition is campus-wide. Two of our students hold master’s SSHRC grants (\$17,500 each), and five more won the \$10,000 Queen Elizabeth II awards. The quality of our students was also evident at this year’s Forum for Information Professionals (FIP), a one-day conference planned and run entirely by the students. The theme this year was “Biblio Tech” and 133 participants registered for the event that was held on February 7th. It was a huge success.

SLIS faculty members also have been busy with local, regional and international conferences. One or more of us gave presentations at following: The Progressive Librarians Guild Symposium (PLG Edmonton); “Decolonizing Global Citizenship Education”, an international conference organized through the Centre for Global Citizenship Education and Research at the University of Alberta; Netspeed (Calgary); the Association for Information Science and Technology (ASIST&T) conference in Montreal; the British Columbia Teacher-Librarians Association conference in Port Coquitlam; the Literacy Research Association in Dallas; the Norwegian National Centre for Reading Education and Research in Stavanger, Norway; the Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE) in Philadelphia. And I’ve probably missed some.

In short, SLIS is thriving, and I am delighted that I will be part of this going concern for a second year: Dean Snart has asked me to stay on as Interim Director for 2014/2015 for the sake of continuity. An open and widely advertised search for a new director will begin in the Fall of 2014.

*Anna Altmann*

## An Interview with Kathleen De Long

*Distinguished Alumni Award Winner 2013*

By Gooneshwaree Besoon

'A tall, confident, professional with a welcoming smile' is how anyone would describe Dr. Kathleen De Long, recipient of LISAA's Distinguished Alumni Award in 2013. She, however, chooses to describe herself as a mom, a daughter, a professional Librarian and a library administrator at the University of Alberta.

Kathleen De Long has an impressive track record. She holds her first degree from the University of Alberta, majoring in Sociology and Psychology, a Masters in Library Science from the same institution and a Masters in Public Management. She has also completed a PhD in Public Management from Simmons College in Boston, Massachusetts.

Except for a brief spell at the EPL where she was replacing a staff member away on maternity leave; Ms. de Long has worked at University of Alberta for 99.9% of her career. She was recently appointed to the position of manager of Human Resources for the entire department of Learning Services on the 1st January 2014. She considers her job to be very challenging but very rewarding at the same time.

When questioned about what she would consider the highlights of her career, Kathleen is convinced that though the completion of her PhD from Simmons College is a major milestone of her life, becoming the Head of the Education Library many years ago, and most recently, receiving the Library and Information Studies Alumni Association Award, are the highlights of her career.

Though she does not work directly with students, she staunchly believes that she has been instrumental in hiring great people with remarkable skill sets that are a benefit to the students at the University of Alberta. Ms. De Long concedes that her path to success was not smooth all the time. For example, in 1985, when she was Head of a reference department she realized that she was not equipped for the position. Lack of skills for this position was perceived as her biggest obstacle. This prompted her to complete her degree in Public Management. She has not looked back since.



Currently, Kathleen is striving to figure out the particulars of her new job. Having to face the challenge of working in the area of HR in Learning Services is both interesting and challenging. Her job includes performance management, and the design of jobs. In the process, she has discovered the multifaceted nature of HR. According to Kathleen, it is a time of great change and a lot of uncertainties. Thus, to manage this environment is a challenging enterprise. Dr. De Long believes that technology underpins everything; it is a constant in her workplace and keeps everyone productive.

Kathleen De Long would like to point out that when she graduated, she wanted to work for the public library. However, when she got a university job she could not pass up such an opportunity. Similarly, one cannot have a set of assumptions about something and not want to change. Her message to MLIS students and future librarians is that change is inherent and unavoidable. In such circumstances, flexibility is important; we need to adapt to change, even embrace it.

### LISAA Executive Members Needed

## Nominate Someone!

LISAA accepts nominations for the distinguished alumni and honorary alumni awards year round.

If you have a former classmate or colleague who has made a significant contribution to any or all of the following:

- The library profession
- The School of Library and Information Studies at the University of Alberta
- The advancement of knowledge

Please consider nominating them for a LISAA award. For more information contact Hanne Pearce at [hanne.pearce@ualberta.ca](mailto:hanne.pearce@ualberta.ca)

LISAA is looking for interested individuals wishing to be part of the LISAA executive starting this spring. Two positions will open up at our AGM this spring:

#### Vice President/President Elect (3 year commitment)

The vice president serves in a leadership role on the executive, filling in for the president whenever needed. After one year as vice president this role moves into the president's role and the past-president's role thereafter.

#### Communications Officer (2 year commitment)

The communications officer is responsible for LISAA communications. The position duties include posting messages to listservs, managing our social media accounts and assisting with the distribution of the newsletter.

For more information on these positions feel free to contact [hanne.pearce@ualberta.ca](mailto:hanne.pearce@ualberta.ca)

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## Forum for Information Professionals 2014 – BIBLIOTECH

by Eric An

*For the past several years LISAA has supported this student-run conference. We sent Eric, our secretary-treasurer to this year's conference and below he provides a detailed recap.*

The Forum for Information Professionals (FIP) was held February 7<sup>th</sup> 2014. Over the decades, FIP has grown from a relatively small conference confined to the University of Alberta to a wider audience, which draws an audience from other institutions such as EPL, Provincial Archives of Alberta, and MacEwan University. In the past, FIP mainly showcased presentations from the students of University of Alberta, but as it has grown, more professional speakers and attendees from outside the University of Alberta have joined the conference, providing students the opportunity to network with professionals and widen their perspectives.

I spoke with current co-chairs, Alexandria Eldridge and Lauren MacLean, and they explained that FIP 2014 has been under preparation since May of 2013 and the committee members met monthly to organize and plan the conference. According to the co-chairs FIP is a great opportunity for students to gain advanced presentation experience in a controlled and stable environment. The committee's

goal was to help build a community of information professionals by providing space where they can share ideas and make connections.

This year's main theme was technology in the library or "Bibliotech", but the student speakers were encouraged to present on themes of their choice, and presentation topics ranged from difficulties in museum cataloguing to copyright issues from international trade agreements. According to the co-chairs, these various topics gave attending alumni a chance to catch up with the current topics in information science. Both Alexandria and Lauren expressed their wish for FIP to grow bigger and better.

The conference opened with a welcoming keynote speech and presentation from EPL's Makerspace team. This presentation showcased EPL's effort in fostering digital literacy by providing materials, people, activities, and philosophy. The speakers Carla Haug, Jason Harris, and Holly Arnason explained the

importance of digital literacy in modern everyday life, and showed the equipment used in the Makerspace to foster curiosity, experimentation, learning, creativity, and relationships with librarians and patrons. EPL staff received enthusiastic questions from the attendees.

The student speakers took over after the EPL's presentation. Overall, 10 students did presentations, all of which are worth summarizing. The presentations in the morning dealt with various sectors of academic librarianship. Maureen Babb presented her study about the perception of academic librarians as researchers, and Lydia Zvyagintseva shared her study about data curation in the digital humanities. Elizabeth Kreiter presented about difficulties in music research, and Sarah Vela exhibited her observation about museum records. These presentations provided observations and findings that benefit academic librarians by highlighting different perspectives and difficulties faced by unorthodox settings such as museums.

After coffee break, Cari Lynn Postnikoff presented on the potential impact of International Trade Deal in copyright issues, and Meghan O'Leary shared her findings about social media usage among young people. Robyn Stobbs dealt with how the information about a book influenced the reader's choice of novels. Cherrie Smith, Anastasia Alexandria, and Alanna Scott presented on how the narrative of the board game *Clue* has changed over time.

The last two student speakers presented topics in the technology sector. Morgan Hordal explored elderly people's usage of e-books, with a discussion about the advantages and the disadvantages of e-books for seniors and how e-book service can be improved. Erik Christiansen shared his finding about mobile usage of the NEOS catalogue system among the students in University of Alberta. Christiansen observed that participants of his study preferred the browser-optimized mobile page rather than the separate app for NEOS, and this finding could be used to improve usability of the NEOS catalogue. These presentations highlighted the kind of help users want from librarians.

Finally, Anabel Quan-Haase from Western University did a talk on serendipities and stated that serendipities can help the researchers move away from linear study and lead to more

discoveries.

Participating in FIP in any position gives you a wonderful experience; for students, presenting is a good addition for their resume and for professionals it is a great opportunity to network and see what is new in information and library research.

## LISAA Executive 2013-14



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Hanne Pearce



Immediate Past President  
Dale Storie



Vice President / President Elect  
CJ De Jong



Communications Officer  
Leah Plouffe



Secretary / Treasurer  
Eric An



Anna Altmann  
Faculty Representative



Katy Moore  
2<sup>nd</sup> Year Student  
Representative



Gooneshwaree Besoon  
1st Year Student  
Representative



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