

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT - PETER MURGATROYD -

Peter Murgatroyd is our first Editorial Board member from New Zealand. Find out more about him below.

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| <i>Name:</i> | Peter Murgatroyd |
| <i>HLA Member Since:</i> | 2020 |
| <i>First Professional Position:</i> | Research Librarian [Bell Gully (law) –1991] |
| <i>Current Position:</i> | Library & Knowledge Services Manager [Counties Manukau Health. Auckland, New Zealand] |
| <i>Education:</i> | Bachelor in Social Work and Social Policy; Masters in Library and Information Studies |
| <i>Favourite Website or Blog:</i> | Not so much one site but I am an avid explorer of interesting content shared professionally across both the library and health sectors via Twitter. I am also addicted to Spotify! Follow me on twitter! - https://twitter.com/PeterMurgatroyd |

What is your current role?

Library & Knowledge Services Manager, Counties Manukau Health (NZ)



What do you find most interesting about your current position?

The opportunity to be innovative in the way that we manage and develop both our resources and our services to support better care and enhanced well-being for the communities of South Auckland. We have the opportunity to engage with our clinicians, managers and service development leads across all of our teams to contribute to exciting improvement projects and initiatives. Each day brings new challenges!

What has been your biggest professional challenge?

Repositioning my career for a return to New Zealand after 15 years working in a range of exciting and challenging but arguably niche / bespoke roles in the Pacific Islands. I

upgraded my Postgraduate Diploma in Librarianship to a Master's Degree studying via distance while living and working in Samoa, then returned to New Zealand with a young family in tow with no position to go to and without a logical next step for my career. I needed to be patient for the right opportunity to come along and then grab it with both hands. Everything has worked out just fine.

How did you join Health Librarianship?

Having been born with a congenital disability I spent many years of my childhood as a patient at Middlemore Hospital (part of Counties Manukau Health) and feel in some ways that I have come full circle returning to the health and disability sector and being based at Middlemore after many interesting years in a range of roles and sectors that took me away from New Zealand for more than 15 years.

What was your previous employment background?

I originally trained as a social worker and spent two years working in the health and disability sector. Since graduating in librarianship (in 1991) I have been a corporate high flying yuppie managing legal libraries in two of the top law firms in New Zealand (Bell Gully; Phillips Fox), a 'barefoot' library volunteer in the Solomon Islands, a University Law Librarian and Campus Librarian in Vanuatu (University of the South Pacific), an environment sector knowledge manager working for a Pacific regional organisation in Samoa (Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme), an Advisor to Schools with the NZ National Library, and now a Library Manager in the health sector promoting and supporting evidence-based care at Counties Manukau Health, one of the largest District Health Boards in New Zealand.

What would you do if you weren't a health librarian?

As I am heading towards the tail end of my career, my next move - if I were to move away from health libraries - would probably be towards either a regional or international organisation role, consultancy or possibly just drinking kava, relaxing, and enjoying the slow lane in my wife's native Vanuatu.

What do you consider the main issues affecting health librarianship today?

In New Zealand, we are challenged by a fragmented health and disability sector that acts as a barrier to providing equitable access to knowledge resources across the health sector. Libraries tend to be under-resourced and librarians oftentimes underpaid and undervalued within their organisations, struggling for profile and a voice during the decision-making process. The challenge across the sector is to move beyond the structural barriers and create a culture of collaboration that will lead to better access to information and ultimately better care across the whole of the sector.

What is your greatest achievement?

I have been fortunate to have been in a position in my roles in the Pacific to contribute to many significant regional projects in law, environment, climate change, and marine/fisheries

that have leveraged new technologies (at that time!) to provide free and open access to critical knowledge across the island nations of the Pacific in these sectors. These projects include:

- Pacific Islands Legal Information Institute (PacLII) - <http://www.paclii.org/> ;
- Pacific Islands Marine Portal (PIMRIS) - <http://www.pimrisportal.org/>
- Pacific Climate Change Portal (PCCP) - <https://www.pacificclimatechange.net/>
- Pacific Environment Information Network (PEIN) – <https://www.sprep.org/pacific-environment-information-network-pein>

What is your favourite non-work activity?

Exploring new places – bushwalks, hidden beaches, nature’s hidden treasures – particularly if I can encourage my teenage daughters to join me!

What advice would you give to a new member of Health Libraries Australia or a new graduate information professional?

In my current role I regularly have the opportunity to recruit for new staff to join our team and in as much as there will always be a core requirement for educational excellence and intellectual rigour I strongly believe that it is the soft skills that are increasingly essential to ensure that our profession thrives and not just survives.

I look to recruit team members who are curious, emotionally intelligent, collaborative, and agile. Excellent communicators. With the potential and desire to grow their confidence in both management and leadership.

For a recent graduate embarking on a career in librarianship, I would encourage them to explore sectors they are truly passionate about and to think about how they can grow and develop their ‘soft’ skills in addition to their technical expertise.

We live in a rapidly changing, disruptive world and as a profession it has never been more critical that we demonstrate both agility and courage to embrace new ways of thinking and new ways of doing.

Anything else you would like to share about yourself?

I am currently National Convenor of the New Zealand Library Association Health Special Interest Group and over the years have had roles in the Vanuatu Library Association and Samoa Library Association. One of my most rewarding recent activities was being part of the Programme Committee for the LIANZA 2019 Conference in Auckland. I would encourage all librarians in the sector to think about getting involved in professional association activities. It is a great way of growing your capability and experience as well as making life-long friendships across the profession.