

Marketing Plan

For Males

2006

Great Lakes Library Service

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Library is in the process of putting in place a series of marketing plans designed to enhance the service to targeted sectors of the community. As the Library was recently involved in a survey of male library users it seemed an ideal time to develop a marketing plan for males.

Overall, the Great Lakes Library Service is a particularly busy establishment. It tends to top the State in areas such as loans per item, loans per capita and loans per staff member. Services such as the Internet have gone from strength to strength each year and more and more information and services are being accessed online.

In general the shape of the collection fits a leisure-reading community with a strong emphasis on fiction materials. There is also a heavy bias towards non-print media, which relates to the age of the community.

When planning a library service, community trends such as:

- Lack of time;
- Retirees with high levels of disposable time;
- Interest in a range of formats;
- Internet usage;
- A desire for comfort;
- Disabled access;
- High levels of library usage in Great Lakes

need to be taken into consideration.

Though Great Lakes has a very high usage level by the community it is clear that males use the service far less than females. Over 60% of registered members are female, and in the age range from 30-60 years males are markedly outnumbered by females.

In order to better understand the nature of male library users and gain feedback on what the Library should and shouldn't be doing for men a survey was conducted as part of a Statewide undertaking. The results of this are presented in Annexure A. What the survey did show was:

- Most males borrowers are aged 60+ years and retired;
- Not many male library users have dependent children;
- Most males visit the Library at least fortnightly and prefer the mornings;
- Males generally use the Library for borrowing purposes largely related to leisure activities;
- The Library is the major source of reading material for men in Forster-Tuncurry;
- Males in Forster prefer to read fiction, non-fiction and magazines. There is also an interest in newspapers;

- As well as books men in Forster like borrowing music CDs, DVDs and videos;
- Males have a targeted approach to choosing material. They have a preference for subjects of interest and favourite authors. They do browse and use recommendations, but to a lesser extent;
- Forster Library male users like the formats available, the friendly staff and the comfortable environment;
- What they don't like is the limited range of stock, the limited opening hours and noise levels of occasions;
- Their preferred events in libraries are musical concerts and author talks/seminars;
- What the males would like to see more of is non-fiction stock (especially sports, military history), magazines, fiction and DVDs and videos.

Full details of library collection needs are contained in Annexure B. Many of the results of the Forster Library Survey are common to the Statewide results.

In addition to the survey men's health organisations have been approached for input. They full endorse the concept of expanding the collection in the areas of physical, mental, spiritual and emotional wellbeing for males.

In order to try and meet these needs this Marketing Plan proposes the following objectives:

- That greater consideration be given to male reading tastes in collection development. Annexure B has been distributed to appropriate staff;
- That a grant application be submitted to the Library Council to enhance the collection in key areas;
- That extended opening hours be considered, especially in relation to new or extended premises;
- That a quiet space be considered in the context of a new or extended library facility;
- That musical concerts and author talks continue to be encouraged;
- That once a Children's and Youth Services staff member is appointed that a father-child reading program be pursued;
- That the Library be promoted through men's forums.

2. BACKGROUND

In order to better serve its community the Library embarked, in 2002, on a series of marketing plans aimed at focusing on groups that had significant representation within the community. Since that time the following plans have been developed:

- Business Marketing Plan (2002)
- Youth Marketing Plan (2002)
- Indigenous Marketing Plan (2004)
- Ageing Community Marketing Plan (2005)

It was not originally intended to target men at this time, but as there has been a Statewide focus on attracting men to libraries and Great Lakes has been involved in collecting data on male patrons it seemed appropriate to make men the theme for this marketing plan.

The purpose of this Plan is to develop an understanding of the needs of males and to identify meaningful objectives to help meet these needs. Consideration will be given to the best means of conveying information to this key demographic and potential funding implications and opportunities will be discussed.

Outline of the Great Lakes Library Service

The Great Lakes Library Service opened to the public in 1988. It is maintained by the Great Lakes Council and derives 90% of its funding from this organisation. Around 10% of funds comes from the State government. Other grant opportunities are also pursued.

The service operates out of a central library in Forster and has a staffed branch at Tea Gardens as well as service points in Bulahdelah, Nahiack, North Arm Cove and Stroud. The Tea Gardens branch only commenced operations as a fully staffed service point in 2003 though its presence is already impacting on the Library service and loans. The Library also has a well-patronised Internet presence and is constantly expanding the services that it makes available over the online environment.

The central role of the Library is to provide equitable access to information and leisure materials. To meet this requirement of equity, and to comply with the Library Act (1939), the bulk of the Library services are offered free of charge to the public.

The public has a growing expectation of the material held by the service. In addition to books, the library stocks DVDs, magazines, books-on-tape, books-on-CD, videos, large print, CD-ROMs and Playstation games and has recently launched a Graphic Novels collection. Free access to the Internet is an integral component of the service.

Professional staff within the Library provide expert advice on how to obtain information.

There has been a growth in the number of people using the Library for relaxation and interaction. Community organisations also regularly use the Library to promote events.

3. ACTIVITY ANALYSIS

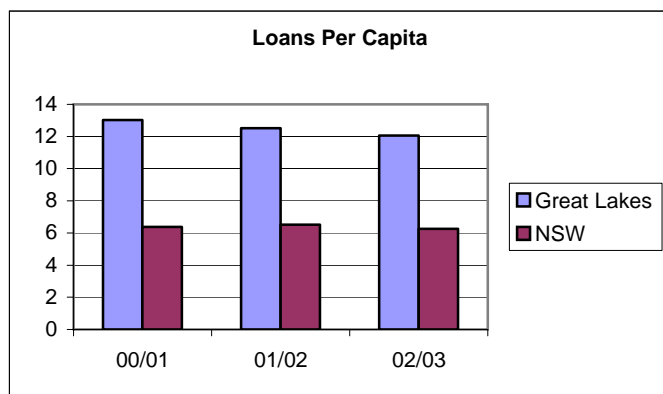
Patronage of the Library Service

On a per capita basis the Great Lakes Library Service is one of the most heavily used libraries in NSW. The data below provides figures on Library patronage over the past three years. It is evident that the Library lends out items at rate more than twice the State median. This level of usage places the Library as the most popular service in rural NSW and the third most popular in NSW. These statistics are compiled by the State Library of NSW¹.

Table 1: Loans per capita for both Great Lakes and NSW

	Loans per capita (Great Lakes)	Loans per capita (NSW)	Ranking in the State
2000/2001	13.03	6.37	4
2001/2002	12.51	6.51	5
2002/2003	12.05	6.26	5

Figure 1: Loans per capita for Great Lakes and NSW residents from 2000/2001 to 2002/2003



The high usage made of the library is reflected in the membership rate. 19,734 residents are registered library users, representing around 60% of the community. Each year Forster Library can expect 110,000 – 120,000 visitors. Since opening for service 15 years ago, there have been approximately 1.7 million visitors to this library service point.

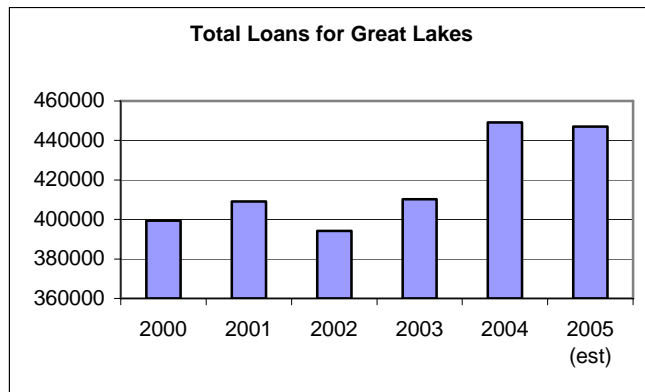
Lending Rates

The major service the Library provides is access to books, magazines, videos, talking books, playstation games, DVDs and Graphic Novels. Whilst lending rates only provide a limited perspective on the quality of the Library service they are an indicator of the health of the Library service. Figure 2 provides a graph of the loans since 2000. Loans rose sharply in 2004, with Tea Gardens having an impact, though it was certainly not the

¹ State Library of New South Wales, *Public library statistics 2000/2001-2002/2003*, State Library of New South Wales, 2001-2003.

only factor. There would appear to be a drop in loans in 2005. The reason for this is yet unclear. Nonetheless it is likely 2005 will be the second busiest year on record.

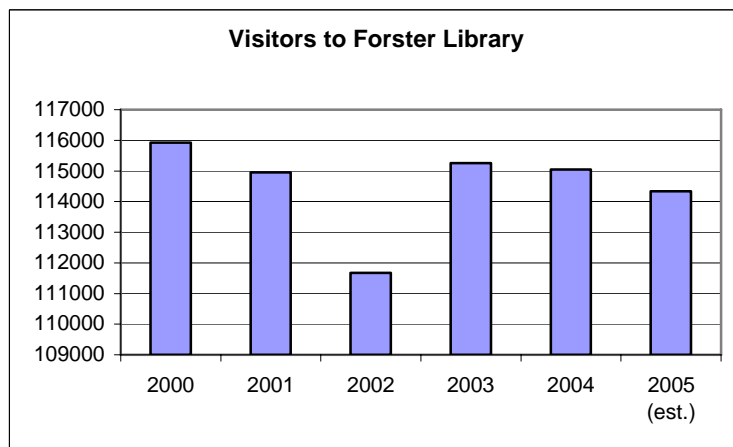
Figure 2: Annual loans for the Great Lakes Library Service



Visitor Numbers

Another indicator of the popularity of the Library service is the number of visits it receives. Extensive data is currently only available for Forster Library and is provided in Figure 3. Again, what they reveal is strong patronage.

Figure 3: Annual visitor numbers to Forster Library (2000 to 2005)



Visitor numbers fluctuate from year-to-year, though they are consistently between 110,000 and 120,000 per annum. There does appear to be a trend for people to borrow more items each, possibly indicating borrowing on behalf of other family members.

Visitor numbers are now being collected at Tea Gardens and early indications are that they should receive in excess of 20,000 visits per annum. In 2004 over 22,000 people visited the new Tea Gardens Library.

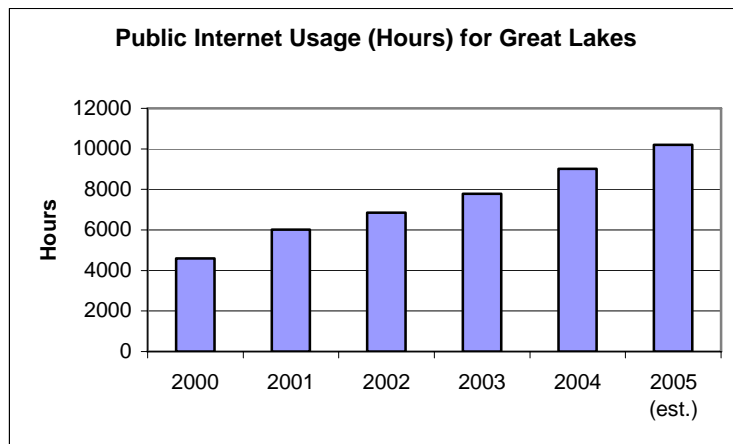
Membership

As at 1 August 2005 the Library had 19,734 members. This represents over 60% of the community. As Statewide figures are around 50% this is a healthy situation.

Internet Usage

As the world turns to the Internet for information and a means of communication, libraries have embarked on providing public access to the Internet. The patronage of this service has now become a mechanism for measuring the activity of the Great Lakes Library Service. Over the past five years the Library has steadily increased its provision of free public access Internet. This has met with very strong support from the community. Since 2000 there has been more than a 200% increase in patronage of this service.

Figure 4: Public Internet bookings from 2000 to 2005

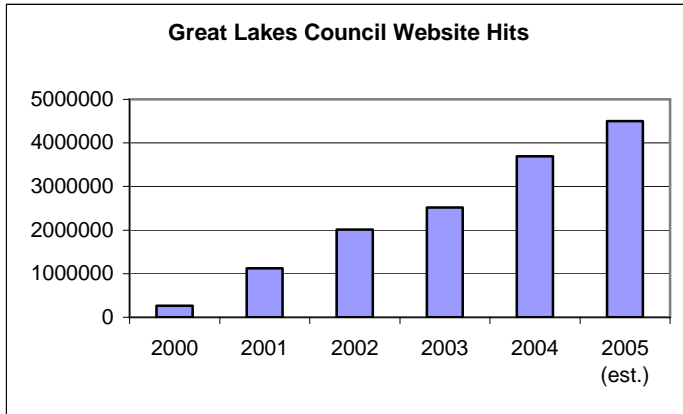


Note that in 2001 the Internet was introduced to the Library's branch service points. This has grown steadily, especially with the opening of the new library in Tea Gardens. Branches now account for over 20% of Internet usage.

Website Usage

In addition to providing Internet access the Library has embraced the opportunities the Internet provides. The Library originally established the entire Council website and it now offers a range of services online. The website includes information on the Library and Council, links to useful websites, provides access to the library catalogue and allows renewal of items, the placing of reservations and the opportunity to lodge an online reference enquiry. As this represents an extension of the Library into the virtual world, patronage of the site also becomes a meaningful indicator of the performance of the library. Figure 5 provides data on the number of hits the Council website has received since 2000. From 2001 (the first full year of data), to the end of 2005 it is expected that hits per annum will have risen 400%, from 1.1 million to 4.5 million. Figures are provided for the entire Council website because historically this was the data collected. It is not meant to imply that the Library alone receives these hits. The data is provided to demonstrate the growth in use of the website overall.

Figure 5: Number of hits on the Great Lakes Council Website

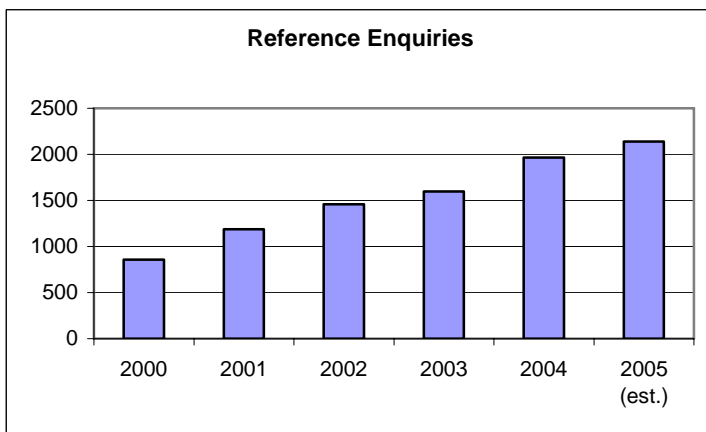


A possible indicator of the growth in use of the Library's online service is the surge in the number of reservations now being taken. Online reservations were made available from late 2004. A comparison between the first five months of 2004 and 2005 shows a growth of 23%. Whilst other factors are also at play it is highly likely that online reserves have had an impact.

Information Enquiries

A key aspect of the Library service is the provision of information. In 1999 the Library established a reference service to assist the public. Since then there has been a steady increase in demand and the total number recorded in 2004 reached 1,967. The projected total is 2,140 by the end of 2005. Figure 6 provides the last five years of data. Since 2001 when the reference service truly began to take off there has been annual growth in enquiries handled of around 16%. Since 2004 enquiries handled by Tea Gardens have been included. This represents in the order of 400 enquiries (or around 20% of overall enquiries).

Figure 6: Information enquiries received at Forster Library.

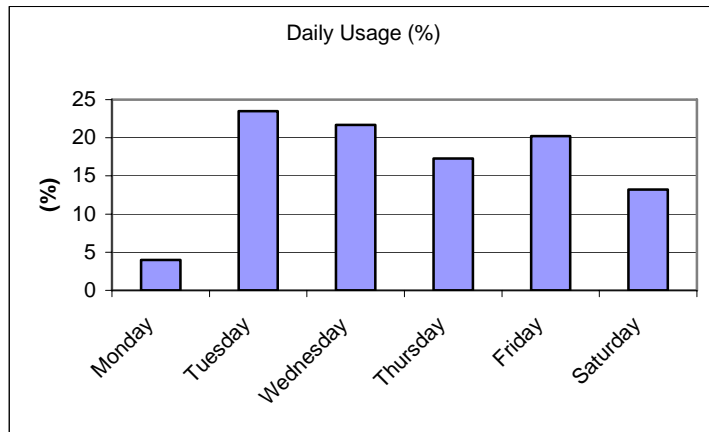


Fluctuations in Demand

Underlying the general trend upwards are seasonal and daily fluctuations in usage. The Library service is busiest on a Tuesday, which relates to the Forster Library being closed

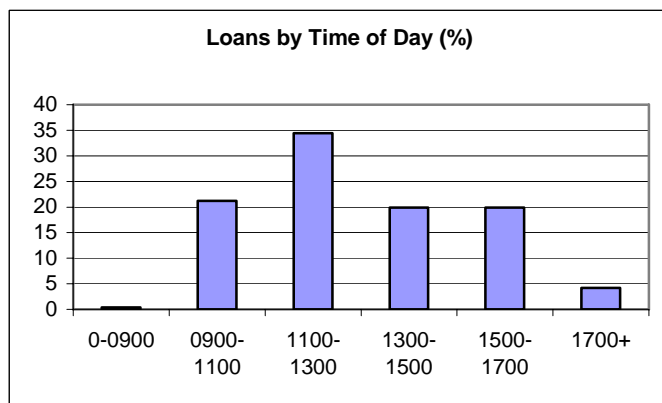
on a Monday. Figure 7 provides a profile of a normal week in the Library service. The proportion of loans on Friday has grown though this may also be due to the impact of Tea Gardens.

Figure 7: Percentage of loans on a daily basis



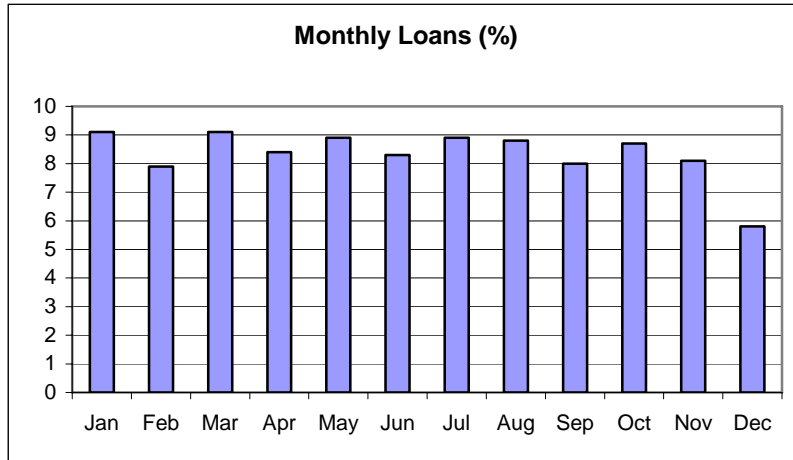
Loan rates also depend on the time of day. The Library is busiest in the mornings. Previously loans showed a small peak after 3 p.m. but there now appears to be a higher level of usage of the Library from 1100 to 1300 hours, increased usage from 1300 to 1500 hours and a drop in use outside these times. It is possible that the Library is being used less by school children. The motivation for a shift in usage until the late morning and early afternoon is not yet apparent. It is worth noting that the Library now does 0.002% of its loans after 1900 hours. This would amount to close to 1,000 loans per annum. The most obvious reason for this would be people renewing their items online.

Figure 8: Stock movement throughout the day



Looking at the activity of the Library from a seasonal basis it is apparent that lending rates are constant throughout the year. There is evidence of a dip during December and a slight peak in March, but generally Library patronage is strong all year (see Figure 9).

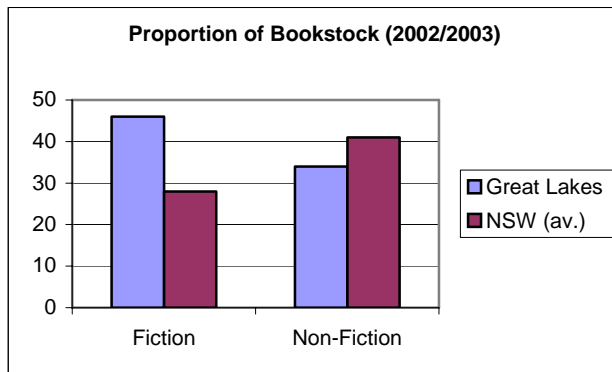
Figure 9: Monthly variation in lending rates as a percentage of total loans.



Current Focus of the Collection

Great Lakes Local Government Area has the highest median age in NSW. It has long been seen as a retirement destination and people over the age 55 have both a high representation in the community and amongst library borrowers. Not surprisingly the Library collection has been shaped to meet these needs. Consequently, there has been an emphasis on fiction and leisure materials for adults. This focus has worked well and has resulted in the Library service having one of the highest lending rates per capita in NSW. Figure 10 shows a breakdown of fiction versus non-fiction, as a percentage for the adult book collection and draws a comparison with the NSW average representation.

Figure 10: Proportion of Bookstock



In addition to leisure material the Library has a range of formats within its collection. In particular there is a strong presence of talking books and large print items. This reflects the need to cater for an ageing population. Figure 11 shows a breakdown of formats for Great Lakes and provides a comparison between 2001 and 2004. Overall, non-book material in 2004 represented 30% of the collection. This has grown since 2001, when it represented 25% of the total collection. There has been an increase in representation of just about all non-book formats, though some, such as videos will wane as the DVD grows in popularity. Though not immediately obvious from the graph, the Large Print collection and talking books merit attention. Large print books now represent 10% of the

collection, which is markedly more than the State average of 7%. Similarly, the spoken word/talking book material represents 2.4% of the Great Lakes Library Service collection, as compared to the State average of 1.9%. The preference for large print and talking book material is not surprising considering the population. The challenge it represents relates to the cost of purchasing the items.

Figure 11: Breakdown of Non-Book Formats for the Great Lakes Library Service

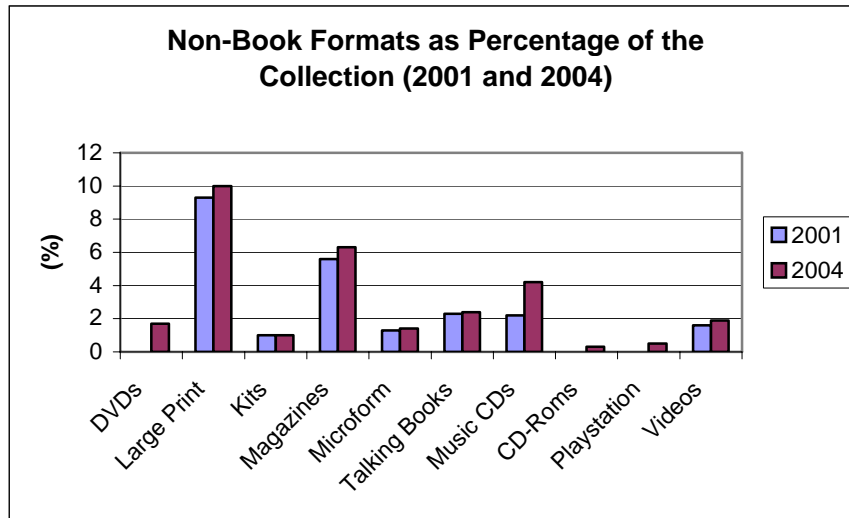
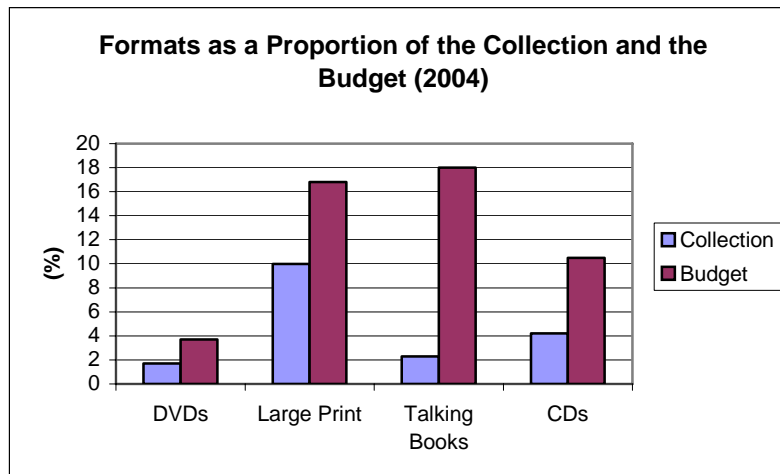


Figure 12 shows a comparison between the representation of certain formats in the collection as compared to the current impact they have on the budget.

Figure 12: Comparison Between Representation in the Collection and Impact on the Budget for Non-Book Formats



What is apparent is the high cost of non-book formats. In the case of DVDs it is not surprising as this is a new collection going through a growth phase. The same cannot be said for the other formats. In particular, catering to the sight-impaired population through large print (10% of the collection but 17% of the budget) and talking books (2% of the collection, but 18% of the budget) has a major cost implication for the Library.

4. MARKET TRENDS

Lack of Time for People to Visit the Library

In general working people appear to have less and less time to access services like the public library and this resulted in a growth of services that make for quick access to the collection (e.g. online catalogues, online reserves). This needs to be taken into consideration when developing new library services and enhancing/modifying existing ones.

The lack of time appears to be a key issue for males. As survey analysis discussed below indicates being “Too busy” was one of the central factors in preventing men from using the Library. This was particularly evident in the pre-retirement age groups.

Extensive Disposable Time for Retirees

In direct contrast to the above many retirees are rich with disposable time. Furthermore, people are living longer. This has direct implications for the Library service. Patrons with plenty of time on their hands do need access to larger collections simply because they have more time to read.

Interest in Formats other Than Books

The explosion in differing entertainment formats (e.g. PCs, multichannel television, Playstation/PS-2/X-Box/Nintendo/Gameboy games, CDs) has made the entertainment industry increasingly competitive. There has been a similar growth in information being provided in a non-book format (e.g. DVDs). Patronage of non-book collections reflects interest in these formats. A snapshot of 2002 date reveals around 15% of loans being from non-print collections; by 2004 this had risen to 23%.

Again, this interest in other formats amongst men is borne out by the survey, which showed that in some age brackets over 40% of respondents were interested in non-print formats such as DVDs and CDs. There was also a strong interest in magazines.

Internet

The Internet is one of the most successful services the Library has implemented in recent years. Its great strength is that it is available for all.

Again up to 40% of respondents in certain age brackets of the male library patron used the Library for Internet access.

Desire for Comfort

There is a desire for the Library to provide a place to interact socially or simply to provide comfort. This has seen the Library purchase more furniture, develop an attractive interior to the Forster Library and install a drinks machine at the Forster Library. Patrons are even permitted to eat food in any of the Libraries across Great Lakes.

The survey bore this out also with “atmosphere” and “peace and quiet” featuring strongly in what men liked about libraries.

One of the things the Library does not provide that would help with patron comfort is a space that can be closed off e.g. a study room.

Disabled Access

Community expectations are of increasing disabled access to facilities, technology and the materials they hold. This has implications for the Library in building design, collection material held and Internet and computer provision.

Patronage of the Library Service

Contrary to some predictions in the library literature the Library service has not seen a decrease in patronage over recent years. At worst the Library usage has remained constant, though there have been fluctuations in demand. These predictions were based upon the increasingly competitive leisure market (e.g. videos, electronic games, Internet, pay television) and expected private use of online information. It is likely that these forces have had some impact, but it has either been greatly exaggerated or offset by growth in demand in other sectors. In the latter case libraries have been very effective at adopting the modern technology and this has seen strong take-up of new collections (e.g. DVDs) and patronage of new services (e.g. the Internet). There is also a case to be made for people seeking assistance in finding information in what is an increasingly complex environment. Recent surveys also indicate that patrons are turning to the library as a place of comfort and relaxation².

² Source: Cox, Eva *A safe place to go: libraries and social capital*, State Library of New South Wales, 2000

5. MALES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

Gaps in Provision of Information and Leisure Needs to males

Financial Gap

Staying abreast of the latest information can be costly. Whilst some information may be available on the net its authenticity and currency may be questioned. It is also necessary to have access to a PC and the Internet. Generally, current, accurate and objective information comes at a price. Similarly, magazines and other literature may provide useful (though often narrowly focused) information, but this also carries a cost. The Library offers free (or low cost) access to such information. In addition, traditional material has risen significantly in price and there is a growing range of formats material is now available in. The Library can play a role in providing access to this media.

Technology Hurdle

The Internet is now a significant means of accessing information, for information or leisure purposes. This provides people with potential access to a wealth of information from their own home, but this does require access to technology (only 19% of the population has access to the Internet via work or home³). If such access is not readily available, a public forum which offers free access can be an important service.

Geographic Gap

Areas in the Great Lakes region face geographic isolation. Pockets of population within the community may need to drive up to an hour to reach a major centre and the region itself is distant from Sydney. Data derived from the NSW Regional Profile 2004, indicates that around 12% of the local population live in areas defined as 'outer regional'⁴. There are branch libraries that can provide a service, but the size of these services points means only limited stock is available. This is particularly the case for Bulahdelah, Nahiack, North Arm Cove and Stroud.

Skills Gap

Finding information in a world with so many alternative sources is challenging. There is a role to be played by offering access to experts skilled in locating information. In relation to this, an argument may be put forward that telecommunications are bridging these gaps. In reality reliable and adequate telecommunications are hard to come by in the country for an affordable rate. On top of that commercial information providers will levy an additional fee in order to make a profit.

There is a potential for an Internet skills gap, though the male user survey did not reveal great interest in training courses in this area, so it may be less relevant for them.

Other Gaps

The grouping of males in the data does bring together age ranges that may have challenges particularly relevant to them. It is worth bearing in mind that older males may

³ Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Census 2001: Great Lakes Statistical Local Area: Basic Community Profile*, 2002

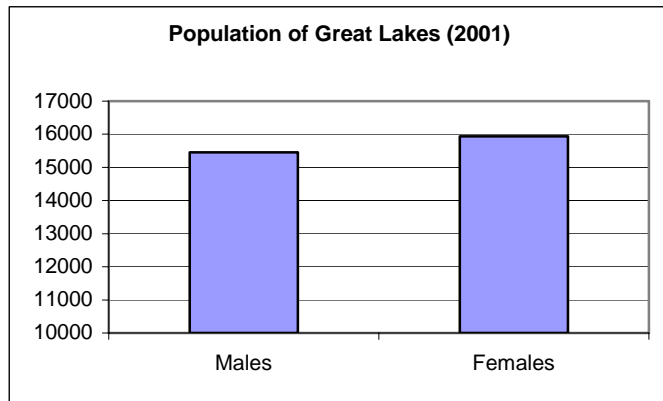
⁴ Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *2004 Regional Profile*, 2004.

have similar challenges to those identified in the Ageing Community Marketing Plan e.g. mobility, technology skills, disability issues⁵.

Profile of Great Lakes Community and the Place of Males Within It

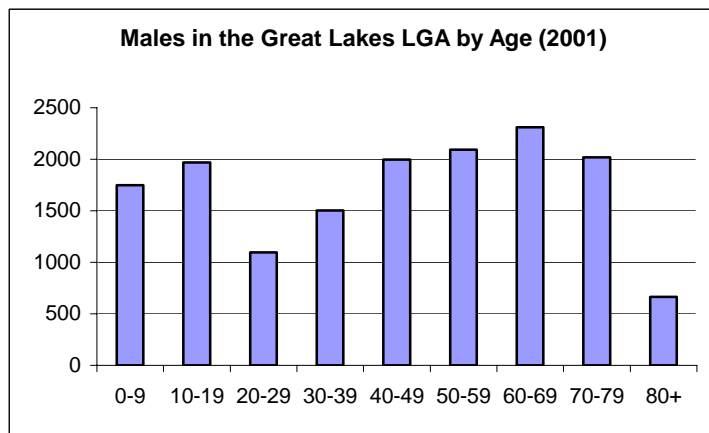
The latest Census data reveals the Great Lakes has a population of 31,384, of which 15,451 are male and 15,933 are female⁶. Since 1996 the population has grown 9.7%.

Figure 13: Males Vs Females for Great Lakes in 2001



The data on males can be broken down further by age. This is provided in Figure 14.

Figure 14: Males by Age Grouping for Great Lakes LGA in 2001



There is clearly a strong presence of younger and older males in the community. The presence of older males is hardly surprising as Great Lakes has the highest median age, 47, in NSW.

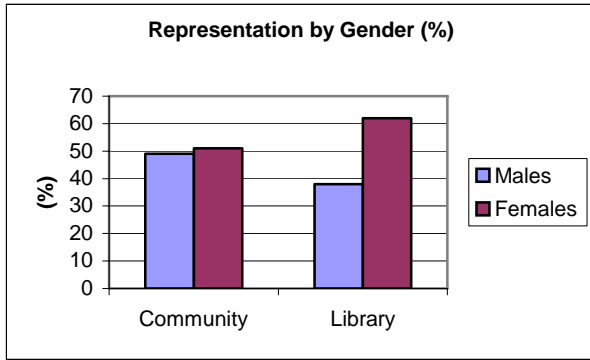
Representation of Males as Library Members

There is a general perception that there is a lower level of male membership in the Library than females. The data in Figure 15 confirms this perception.

⁵ Source: Great Lakes Library Service, *Ageing Community Marketing Plan, 2005*

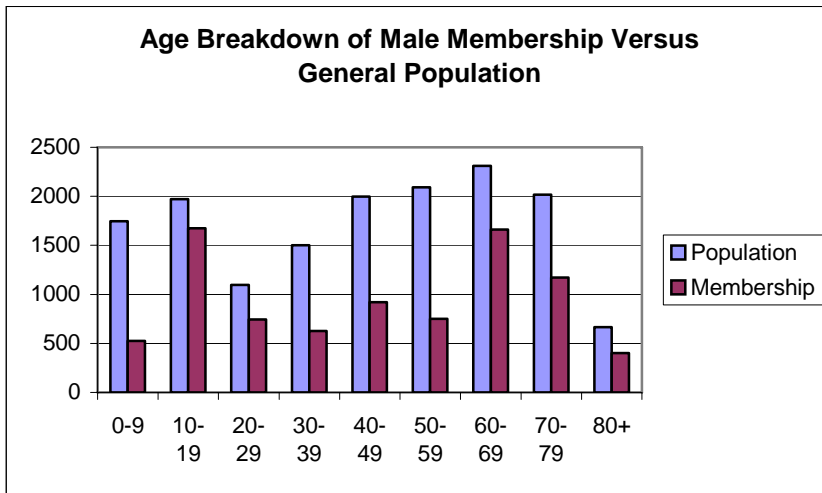
⁶ Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Census 2001: Great Lakes Statistical Local Area: Basic Community Profile, 2002.*

Figure 15: Representation of Genders in the Community as Compared with Library Membership



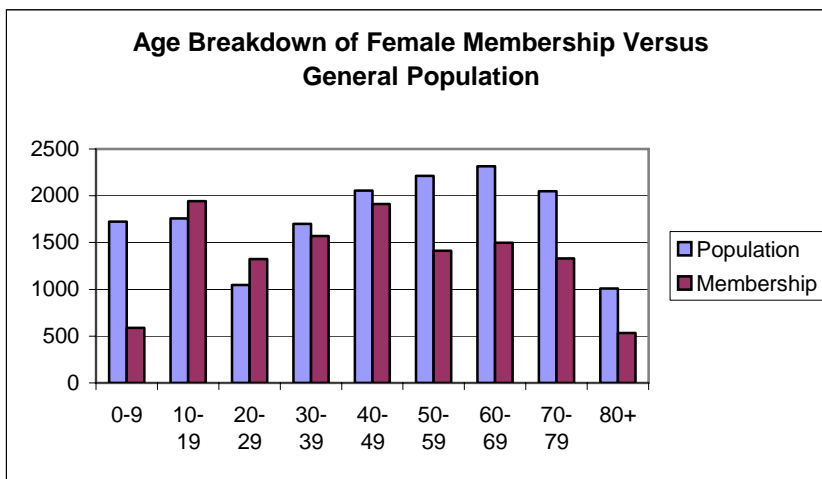
Male membership can be broken down into age groups. This has been done in Figure 16.

Figure 16: Membership for Males Broken Down by Age Compared to the General Population



A comparison of the data with female residents has been done in Figure 17.

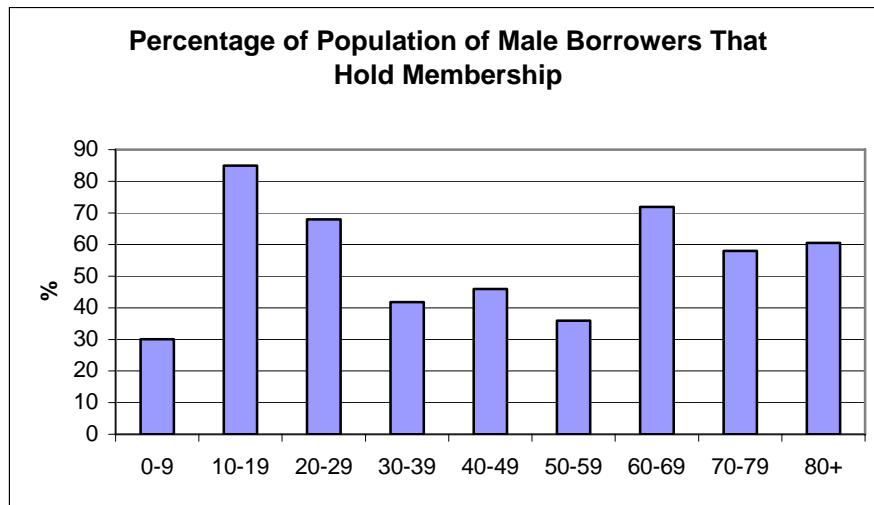
Figure 17: Membership for Females Broken Down by Age Compared to the General Population



The aberration where there seems to be more female members than there are women present in the community for the ages 10-29 can be explained by the fact that members stay on the Library's database for up to five years after last using their card. This means that at the age when females are moving into and out of the area there is a lag between the data. Having said this the same applies for males, so the actual comparison between the genders remains valid.

The data can be used to determine the proportion of each age group holding membership, though the comparison has to be between Library membership data collection in 2005 and census data from 2001. This means that the proportion holding membership is likely to be exaggerated. Having said this, the overall trend across the ages should be valid. This data is given in Figure 18.

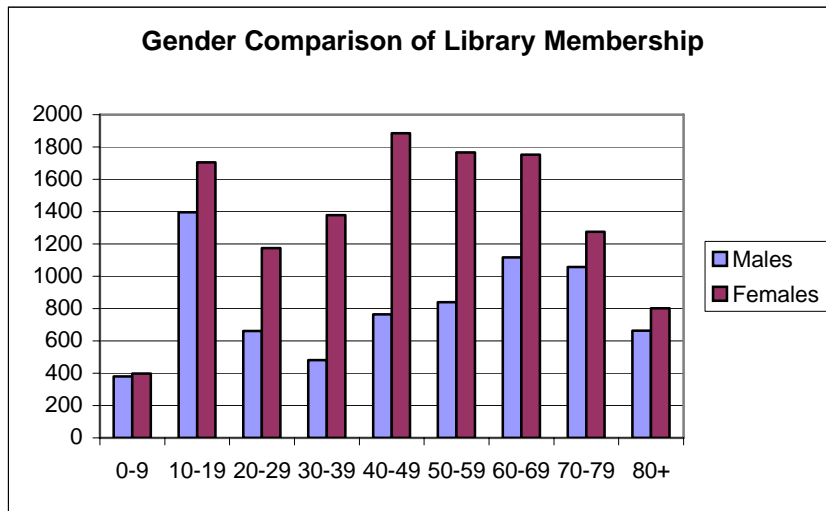
Figure 18: Percentage of Males Holding Membership by Age



The data shows the library appears far more relevant to women. The two groups of males worth discussing further are the young (under 10 years) and males aged 30-60 years.

The case of the younger children can likely be explained by the behaviour of parents regarding library membership. Under the age of 10 neither females or males have high membership rates which probably indicates that parents borrow on behalf of the children. This is borne out by a gender comparison, which is given in Figure 18.

Figure 18: Gender Comparison of Library Membership



The 30-60 year age group is more concerning. Making the Library more relevant or accessible to them is clearly a priority. It may be more than coincidence that this is also the age when men may be fathers of young children and perhaps males in the age group could be approached through activities for their children.

Details on other features of male library users are contained within the needs analysis given below.

6. NEEDS ANALYSIS OF THE MALE COMMUNITY

Survey of Male Library Users

To this point the Marketing Plan has focused on information available through statistical sources, such as library data and census information. It is now necessary to introduce feedback from the male community. Such information can be readily found from a survey of males conducted in Forster Library in 2005. A summary of responses are provided in Annexure A.

In addition to having local data, information from other libraries surveyed across NSW is available.

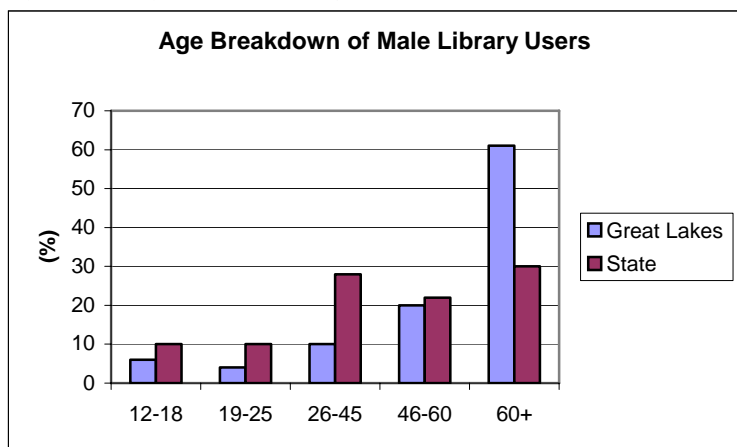
From both sets of data it is possible to develop a picture of the male library user and to identify areas where more could be done to raise the appeal of the Library to them.

Demographic and Borrowing Patterns of the Male Library User

Age

Figure 19 contains an age breakdown, as a percentage, of the male respondents. A comparison is provided with the broader survey.

Figure 19: Age Breakdown of Male Respondents to the Library Survey



Clearly, there is a strong presence of older male library users in Great Lakes and that in comparison to the rest of the State we are underutilised by 26-45 year olds.

Employment Status

The data from the local survey shows most men are retired, which ties in with the high proportion of older library users.

Family Status

Again, in line with the age of respondents, few had dependent children. It is worth noting that there were only 10 responses from the 20-29 year old age group in Forster and 9 of these had dependent children. Using children as a means of attracting males from this age group continues to gain merit.

Regularity of Visits

A very high proportion of men (82%) visit the Library at least fortnightly and 43% visit daily or weekly. The trend appears to be that as a male gets older he comes to the Library more regularly. There is a similar trend across the State.

Time of Day for Using the Library

67% of respondents use the Forster Library in the morning. The next most popular timeframe was afternoon. Considering the limited time the Library is opened in the evenings and even on weekends it is not surprising that those timeslots have a lower representation.

Reason for Using the Library

The overwhelming response was to borrow items (44%) and over 60% of male users seemed to utilise the Library for leisure purposes. Only around 25% of males used it for research, with interest in research being more common with the under 60+ age bracket. These figures are not dramatically different from the State results, though Forster certainly reveals a high level of male usage for reading and borrowing purposes.

Most Common Source of Books

Here the Forster Library stands out. Across the state around one third of males cite the library as the most common source for books. In Great Lakes it is closer to 90%.

What Material Men Like Reading

In Forster, fiction and non-fiction are very popular, with magazines also featuring strongly. Men do also appear to have a liking for reading the newspapers. Across New South Wales there seems to be a broader spread of interest with fiction and non-fiction featuring less strongly and a greater preference shown for newspapers and magazines.

What Material Men Like Borrowing

In Forster there seems to be a wide spread of interest. Books still feature very strongly but there is also a noticeable liking for music CDs, DVDs and videos. This is also typical of the State figures.

Method of Choosing Books

Males at Great Lakes appear to have a targeted approach to selecting items. The major criteria for selecting material are subject of interest and favourite author. Browsing and recommendations also play a part but twice as many respondents indicated that searching for specific authors and topics was preferred to simply browsing for material. This is similar to the Statewide response.

Positive Aspects of the Library According to Males

Comments were received from 65 respondents at Great Lakes and these can be grouped into:

- Pleasure to see the range of formats available;

- Friendly staff; and
- Comfortable environment

Five comments received indicated that they liked everything about the Library. Access to computers and the free aspect of the service also received positive comment.

This dovetails well with the Statewide survey which again had the range of formats, the atmosphere of the library and friendly staff as the most significant positives. Access to computers and the free nature of the service also received a notable level of comment.

Negative Aspects of the Library According to Males

The level of negative responses was significantly lower than the positive comments. The major concerns appeared to be:

- Amount of stock available;
- Opening hours; and
- Noise levels on occasions.

The Statewide survey also found these to be three major areas of concern, though the order of importance was:

- Noise;
- Inadequate collections; and
- Opening hours.

Events/Programs Male Users Would Like to See in the Library

24 responses were received for this in Forster and wide range of options were put forward. The top two events were:

- Musical concerts; and
- Book/Author talks.

One respondent indicated that seeing Council staff cars towed away would be his favourite event.

Statewide the most popular events proposed were:

- Author talks;
- Seminars;
- Computer classes; and
- Children's events.

What Males Would Like to See More of in the Library

The answer to this in Forster is quite clear-cut. Overwhelmingly males would like to see more stock, right across a range of formats and subject areas. Reference was also made on a number of occasions to more support, which probably meant greater access to staff, but could also imply the Library needed greater resourcing.

Again the stock issue came across loud and clear in the Statewide data. Men want access to more material, particularly in the areas of:

- Non-fiction;
- Magazines;
- Fiction; and
- DVDs and videos.

What Would Make the Library More Relevant to Male Users

The things that males didn't like about Forster Library featured in what would make the library more relevant to them. The two standout features in the responses for Forster were:

- More stock; and
- Longer opening hours.

The response was similar for the Statewide data. More stock, in particular fiction, non-fiction, magazines and DVDs, was what men wanted to see in the library. Longer opening hours, greater access to technology and a quieter environment were also evident in the responses.

Options for Increasing Male Patronage of the Library

From the survey results it is possible to come up with a number of undertakings that could increase male usage of the Library.

Enhancement of Stock

It is quite clear from both the Forster and Statewide data that men would like to see more stock in the Library. Though the preferences were eclectic, certain trends do appear:

- More non-fiction material;
- More fiction material (though with a more male theme such as military);
- More magazines; and
- More DVDs.

Full details of the expressed collection needs are provided in Annexure B. These are drawn directly from Annexure A.

Opening Hours

This is clearly an issue for men. Budgetary implications place restrictions on what the Library can do in this regard though this should not prevent factoring such concerns into the long-term goals of the Library.

Whilst it is not necessarily clear as to which hours would best suit males it is assumed that limited access to the service relates to working and family commitments. This would imply looking at opening longer on either the weekend or in the evenings.

Quiet Space

It is evident that men appreciate the opportunity for quiet space in the Library. Much has already been done to improve comfort levels in Forster. The provision of quiet space is

problematic because of the design of the Library. The best option is to strive to incorporate greater quiet space in any new or extended library facility.

Male-Oriented Events/Programs

The current program of musical events held in the Library, which are occurring once or twice a year seem appropriate to local male needs. Furthermore the program of events conducted by the Friends of the Great Lakes Library Service (FOGLLS) would seem to meet other possible events of interest.

Though this was not spelt out in the survey the concept of holding father-child events could be an effective means of attracting more males to the Library.

Promotion of the Library

The lower levels of patronage of the Library by men may also reflect an unawareness of the breadth of services and collections the Library holds. It is worth considering targeted promotion of the Library, though the Manager Library Services has already spoken to the majority of men's groups in the Great Lakes.

Input from Men's Health Organisations

Direct discussions with men's health organisations indicates that there is a need in the community for more material on male health. This could take the form of mental, physical, spiritual and emotional health.

Such organisations encourage the concept of expanding the library collections in these areas and will write letters of support for any grant applications that would achieve this goal.

7. IMPLICATIONS AND AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Collection

Given that a major component of improved services to men revolves around enhancing the current collection there are obvious budgetary implications in achieving this. In recent years the Great Lakes Council has steadily increased the Library bookvote, though 2005/06 has seen a need for cutbacks across the Council and the Library has not been exempted from this process. The Council recognises the importance of the collection to the Library service and so budget cuts in this area have been kept to a minimum.

In this environment perhaps the best option in expanding the collection is to seek grant funding for a targeted collection enhancement, though greater awareness of male needs can be factored into current stock selection processes.

Improvements to the collection will ultimately benefit males at all the Library service points, though space limitations may be an overriding factor in some branch service points.

Staffing

Extended opening hours requires additional staff and in the current financial climate this is highly unlikely to occur. This does not mean that the basis for such an expansion of hours is invalidated but rather that it needs to be implemented in this context.

Perhaps the most effective way of addressing this issue is to take it into consideration when expanded and/or new library facilities are undertaken for Forster/Tuncurry.

In regards to the branches, Tea Gardens already has quite significant opening hours and an expansion is not likely to be necessary for some time. The branch service points are staffed by volunteers and practically it is not feasible to extend the hours in this arrangement. Indeed, it is more likely that hours will be reduced in the branch service points over the next few years. The most effective means of increasing hours at branch points is to consider combining the Library service points with other Council service points e.g. combine the Visitor Information Centre with the Library in Bulahdelah.

Facilities

Areas of quiet space require building redesign. In the case of Forster the Library is already stretched to capacity so such space can only be considered when planning new and/or extended library facilities. It is unlikely that any of the other branches will be extended in the near to mid-term future to allow such space, nor is it considered to be a pressing matter.

8. OBJECTIVES

From the above analysis it is possible to derive a range of meaningful objectives.

Objectives

1. To continue to develop the collection to meet the needs of male patrons.

- a. That stock selection takes greater consideration of male needs and interest. To be implemented immediately with appropriate staff given the information contained within Annexure B.
- b. That grant funding is applied for to expand the collection in areas of interest and relevance to males. To be done by February 2006.

2. To continue investigations into opening hours

- a. That extended opening hours be factored into the planning for the new library facility. This is a long-term goal for which it is not possible to identify a specific completion date.

3. Quiet Library Space

- a. That planning of the new library facility (or any planning to do with extending the existing facility) factor in a quiet space. Again this is a long-term goal that it is not possible to identify a specific completion date for.

4. Events

- a. Assist the Friends of the Great Lakes Library Service (FOGLLS) in holding two musical events a year. To be done by December 2006.
- b. On the creation of a Youth and Children's Services Librarian's position instigate a father-child reading program. This is a long-term goal for which it is not possible to identify a specific completion date.

5. Promotion of Library Facilities

- a. Speak to identified Men's Health Groups. To occur by August 2006
- b. Speak to any men's bookclub groups that can be identified. To occur by August 2006

9. PROMOTION

Media Activities

There is no reason to think that traditional media channels would not be effective at reaching the male population, though more targeted approaches are likely to be more productive. The following avenues will be pursued:

Personal Contact: The Library will continue to develop links with male-focused groups such as men's health organisations.

Press Releases: The Library has strong links to the local radio and newspapers and where relevant these will be used to raise profile.

Newsletters: The Library will promote itself to male residents through its own newsletter.

10. FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

Potential Expenses

Grant Application: There will be a cost associated with implementing a successful grant. This is hard to ascertain at this point in time. It is likely to be in the order of several thousand dollars in staff time.

Expansion of the general collection: Injection of around \$35,000 worth of stock.

Extended opening hours and provision of quiet space: It is not possible to determine this until detailed plans are developed regarding a new or expanded library building.

Potential Income

Grant Funding for Books on CD: Seeking \$35,000 from the Library Council of NSW for male-related material.

ANNEXURE A

Age

12-18	19-25	26-45	46-60	60+
6	4	10	20	61

Employment Status

Student	Full-time	Part-time	Unemployed	Retired	
6	0	0	0	0	12-18
0	2	1	1	0	19-25
2	6	0	1	1	26-45
0	7	4	2	7	46-60
0	1	0	0	60	60+
8	16	5	4	68	Total

Dependent Children

None	One	Two	Three	Three+	
6	0	0	0	0	12-18
4	0	0	0	0	19-25
1	3	5	1	0	26-45
13	3	2	1	1	46-60
59	1	1	0	0	60+
83	7	8	2	1	Total

How Often do you visit the library?

Daily	Weekly*	Fortnightly	Monthly	Infrequently	Never	
	2		2	2		12-18
	2	1	1	0		19-25
	0	6	1	2		26-45
1	8	6	2	3		46-60
4	26	26	2	3		60+
5	38	39	8	10		Total

* All bar one of those that visited weekly were retired, students, unemployed or part-time work

Why do you visit the library?

Borrow	Research	For family	Library programs	Read	Meet people	Project info	
3	2			4		3	12-18
4	1			1		2	19-25
8	5	6		1			26-45
16	11	7	1	4	1	6	46-60
47	9	3	4	23	0	6	60+
78	28	16	5	33	1	17	Total

Where do you get most of your books from?

Library	Bookshop	Presents	Borrowed from friends	
5	2	1	2	12-18
3	2	0	0	19-25
8	3	1	2	26-45
16	4	1	6	46-60
58	6	8	4	60+
90	17	11	14	Total

What puts you off coming to the library?

Too busy	Opening Hours	Nothing relevant	No place in my life	
3	3	0	1	12-18
0	0	2	0	19-25
2	4	0	0	26-45
3	5	3	1	46-60
4	3	2	0	60+
12	15	7	2	Total

What time of day do you usually visit the library?

Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Weekend	
0	5	0	2	12-18
0	3	1	0	19-25
3	4	3	2	26-45
9	11	1	4	46-60
55	22	2	8	60+
67	45	7	16	Total

What do you like reading?

Fiction	Non-Fiction	Newspapers	Magazine	
5	3	1	2	12-18
3	2	1	2	19-25
2	5	1	2	26-45
13	11	6	9	46-60
42	29	10	12	60+
65	50	19	27	Total

Are you interested in borrowing?

Fiction	Non-fiction	Music	Videos	DVDs	Talking books	Playstation	CD-Roms	
5	3	2	1	3	2	1	2	12-18
2	3	2	1	2	0	0	0	19-25
3	4	4	5	5	2	2	0	26-45
14	14	7	5	10	2	1	2	46-60
43	29	16	8	14	4	0	3	60+
67	53	31	20	34	10	4	7	Total

How do you Choose Books

Browse	Recommendations	Subject of int.	Promotions	Fave author	Reviews	Online book pages	
1	2	5	0	3	2	0	12-18
2	1	3	0	2	0	0	19-25
4	3	5	0	2	1	0	26-45
3	7	13	4	11	5	0	46-60
20	15	40	0	32	9	0	60+
30	28	66	4	50	17	0	Total

What type of event or program would encourage you to visit the library?

12-18 year olds

More public events

19-25 year olds

More fishing DVDs

26-45 year olds

Reading to kids like Forster had when I visited

Sale

More autobiographies

Online

46-60 year olds

Visiting authors, poets and visual artists

Different opening hours

Concert e.g. string quartet

Seeing Council staff's cars being towed away would tickle my fancy

Computer course

60+ years

Musical events

Musical events

Music - classic and jazz

More jazz programs

Jazz

Well-known authors attending more often

Book review discussion

New book release

New books by favourite authors

Sports

Sporting

Computer course

More free parking

Grouped

Music	6
Stock	3
Author visits	2
Sport	2
Computing courses	2
Parking	2
Book discussion	1
Childrens	1
Booksale	1
Online events	1
Opening hours	1
More public events	1
Autobiographies	1

What do you like about libraries?

12-18 year olds

They have most things you need
Range of books and resources
The ability to read in peace, look for new books to read

19-25 year olds

Things are free
The relaxing atmosphere
Information that assists in completing assignments

26-45 year olds

Quiet usually
Tidy. Informative staff
Interesting books can be borrowed
Range of material
Variety of books and formats
Sporting books

46-60 year olds

Computers
Ability to listen to CDs I would probably not buy
Availability of different subject matter
Helpful service
Computer are free
They are free and interesting
Most things
Resources, low cost reading of a variety of resources
Pleasant staff
Large range of books on diverse subjects
The variety
Resource availability
Centre and exchange of knowledge and information
Accessibility

What do you like about libraries? (Cont.)

60+ years

Friendly helpful advice
The supply of good books
Wonderful service and range of services
Wide selection
Books
Peace and quiet
The scope of its activities
Borrow books and read the Financial Review
For the community - educational - entertaining
Most things
The choice of material and books available
Interesting material
Their friendly attitude
The variety of books available
Atmosphere
Books that interest me
The staff are great
Availability of books
Books. Music
Excellent Service. Friendly staff
Economical reading
What you can get from them.
Books
Pleasant peaceful and informative
Everything about this one
Educational and friendly
Great variety of subjects
Everything
Cost - nil
The friendly atmosphere
Books
I'm a reader
Large selection of material
Everything
Good service, comfortable surroundings
Such a vast amount for selection
The access to information not generally available in the popular media
Their broad appeal

Groups

Range of material (includes specifically books)	30
Friendly staff	11
Peace and quiet	6
Everything	5
Free or cheap	5
Accesibility for all	3
Computers	2
Sporting books	1
Musical CDs to listen to without buying	1
I'm a reader	1

What don't you like about libraries?

12-18 year olds

Inconvenient hours

Sometimes the book you want is not in

19-25 year olds

Not being to borrow reference material even overnight

Selection of some material

26-45 year olds

Not enough sporting books

More DVDs (documentaries)

Opening hours for full-time employed people

46-60 year olds

Opening hours

Crowded Internet computers

Opening hours

Little selection on Buddhism - travel books out of date

60+ years

Business people using the photocopier because its cheap

A bit noisy sometimes when attempting a quiet read

Insufficient books by recognised authors of past decades

Insufficient classical and historical material

Crowds

Crowds

Restricted opening hours

Noisy children

Where series of books are shared between branches and volumes are out of sequence

Open on a Monday

Groups

Availability of stock 9

Opening hours 6

Noise and Crowds 4

Crowded Internet computers 1

Photocopier usage 1

What could we do to make libraries more relevant to you?

12-18 year olds

Open earlier
More fiction books
Open on a weekend
More stuff

19-25 year olds

More journals
More selection of fishing and more men's DVDs

26-45 year olds

More sporting books
More war fiction
More classics
Comprehensive list of readers challenge books

46-60 year olds

One or two evenings open each week
Open of a night
Earlier opening hours
Get more up-to-date DVDs and movies
More books on other religions and up-to-date travel books

60+ years

Open mondays
Keep series of books together
Allow reading (not borrowing) of current edition of magazines
Some golf videos and DVDs
More books
Open more of the week
Segregate short stories
More mystery/murder/thriller/suspence
More classics
Open on Mondays
More musical DVDs - Jazz
Books on current affairs - more money spent on latest publications

Grouped

Opening Hours	8
More stock	15
Reading challenge list	1
Series together	1
Non-lending of new magazines	1
Segregate short stories	1

What would you like to see more of in libraries?

12-18 year olds

Comics like JTHM

Books tha teens can get interested in

Youth books (non-fiction and fiction) for us

19-25 year olds

Journals

Fishing

26-45 year olds

More sport magazines

Military books, DVDs

Military modelling magazines

Music CDs

Fortean Times

Story reading to kids. Saw this in Forster. Great for kids

46-60 year olds

CDs, videos, DVDs

Naval stories, sailing stories, fish identification book

Graphic novels and DVDs

More books on religions other than Christianity

Update travel books

Cycling mags

More DVDs

Travel magazines

Businesss management/accountancy

Reading/learning activities for children

Computers

What would you like to see more of in libraries? (Cont.)

60+ years

Non-fiction on current affairs
Jazz and classical nights
Music DVDs (Jazz)
Recognised authors of past decades
Support
Support
Historical novels
Large print
Historical (World War)
More books by authors such as John Cleary, Dick Francis, John Francombe etc.
Support
Support
More books in general
Support
More mystery books
Support
More DVDs on music and TV series and less on sport
More sporting subjects
More up-to-date information on trades (building) relevant to Australian standards
More legal books
SF fantasy

Grouping

General books	18
Support	6
DVDs	6
Sporting	4
Magazines	4
Military	4
Graphic novels	2
Youth material	2
CDs	2
Children's activities	2
Fishing	2
Travel	2
Non-christian religions	1
Business	1
Computers	1
Current affairs	1
Jazz/classical nights	1
Historical fiction	1
Adventure	1
Mystery	1
Naval/sea	1
Large print	1
Building info	1
Legal	1
SF/Fantasy	1

Annexure B

Expressed Interests of Forster Males

Fiction

Classics

Insufficient classical and historical material

More classics x2

Recognised authors of past decades x 2

War

More war fiction

Naval stories, sailing stories

Mystery/Thrillers

More mystery books

More books by authors such as John Cleary, Dick Francis, John Francombe etc.

More mystery/murder/thriller/suspense

Historical

Historical novels

SF/Fantasy

SF fantasy

Large Print

Large print

Journals

More journals x2

Fortean Times

Cycling mags

More sport magazines

Military modelling magazines

Travel magazines

Non-Fiction

Fishing/Sporting

More selection of fishing and more men's DVDs

More sporting books x 2

fish identification book

Fishing

Military

Military books, DVDs

Historical (World War)

Travel

Update travel books x 2

Religion

More books on other religions x 2

Current Affairs

Books on current affairs - more money spent on latest publications x 2

Business

Business management/accountancy

More up-to-date information on trades (building) relevant to Australian standards

Legal

More legal books

CDs

Music CDs

CDs, videos, DVDs

DVDs

Some golf videos and DVDs

More musical DVDs - Jazz (x2)

Get more up-to-date DVDs and movies

More DVDs

Graphic novels and DVDs

More DVDs on music and TV series and less on sport

Youth

Comics like JTHM

Books that teens can get interested in

Youth books (non-fiction and fiction) for us