



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES

Ms Suzanne Orr MLA (Chair), Miss Candice Burch MLA (Deputy Chair)

Ms Tara Cheyne MLA, Ms Nicole Lawder MLA

## Submission Cover Sheet

### Inquiry into ACT Libraries

**Submission Number: 010**

**Date Authorised for Publication: 5 September 2018**

**From:** Robin McCallum  
**To:** [LA Committee - ETCS](#)  
**Subject:** Submission ACT Public Libraries Inquiry  
**Date:** Monday, 27 August 2018 5:26:56 PM

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### For the Public Libraries Inquiry 2018

#### What do we love about our library?

The friendly, inviting atmosphere when we enter.

The range of titles for babies to adults.

The wonderful request system that allows us to locate and ask for any title in the libraries. I can search from my computer and learn when the book is waiting.

The feeling of community hub as people gather to meet, access resources or participate in activities.

The knowledgeable, helpful, competent and kind staff.

The programs for children that introduce babies and preschoolers to the library, the songs and stories that contribute to shared language and cultures. It is lovely to see young mothers who did not grow up in Australia have become part of these groups. My granddaughter loves the Wednesday story lady.

Recently our library has had fun holiday activities where the children searched for hidden items. Older children helped my six year old granddaughter. Next holidays her first request was to "Let's go to the library".

Thank you also for putting together quick pick titles on tables and ends of shelves. I have discovered great titles that I would otherwise have missed.

#### What could be improved at your local library?

A friend once suggested stories help us to discover and understand what it is to be human. We need our stories and the knowledge that supports our curiosity and quests for understanding. We need our libraries, in accessible locations – new ones for new suburbs. If ever there is concern about justifying the cost, compare it with what is spent on sporting venues and match or exceed that!

It is a pity that the story times and baby/toddler groups stop for the school holidays. Firstly because these little one are still around and secondly it would be a chance for those now in kindergarten to renew their friendships with the group leaders and visit the books. Surely we want to reinforce for these children their delight in stories and having visits to the library become part of the pattern of their and their carers' lives. So continue the story times during the school holidays please.

Maybe you do this sort of thing already: As I have read about "The **Romans are Coming**" at our National Museum I wondered whether the libraries would build on this event in our city by bringing onto display books like those by Simon Scarrow who wrote about the Roman Army, Rosemary Sutcliff's *Eagle of the Ninth* trilogy (written for children and adults), Asterix, or the D and K picture books about Roman life. I am sure the museum could help with posters. School holiday colouring sheets? So this suggestion is about linking into cultural events in Canberra.

#### Experiences

As a family we have frequented the library at Kippax since the portable building was set up last century. I would borrow books for the children as they grew. Rosemary Sutcliff was a favourite. Now I bring my grandchildren and for them I seek out picture books and Michael Morpurgo. Sometimes we find a book we love so much that I buy a copy for our book box. Julie Donaldson's *Paper Dolls* and *Everywhere Bear* were titles discovered in a library display that had to be bought for the box. This year, through the library, I discovered *Heartbeat* by Sharon Creach (11 plus readers) and I wish every grade 6 child in Australia could experience this story of family, a love of art and the joy of running that

does not involve winning races. I have bought it for our 12 year old.

For myself the library is a source of lifelong learning and pleasurable reading.

A city that values libraries and books is a city that values community, thinking, knowledge, lifelong curiosity and learning. Canberra's libraries are to be treasured. Thank you.

Robin McCallum

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**From:** Robin McCallum  
**To:** [McGill, Brianna](#)  
**Subject:** Neil Gaiman and Chris Riddell on why we need libraries - an essay in pictures  
**Date:** Thursday, 13 September 2018 3:01:00 PM

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Dear Brianna,

Thank you for your message showing links to the submissions. I suddenly realise I did not say nearly enough! Neil Gaiman says what I mean so much better!! Enjoy the following that I have just discovered. Show everyone! Best wishes, Robin McCallum

[https://www.theguardian.com/books/gallery/2018/sep/06/neil-gaiman-and-chris-riddell-on-why-we-need-libraries-an-essay-in-pictures?CMP=share\\_btn\\_link](https://www.theguardian.com/books/gallery/2018/sep/06/neil-gaiman-and-chris-riddell-on-why-we-need-libraries-an-essay-in-pictures?CMP=share_btn_link)