

Sad chapter for library teachers

MEGAN McNAUGHT

THEY have helped school students develop a love of books for generations but it seems the teacher-librarian could be a dying profession.

Tasmania has lost half its professional teacher-librarians in the past 20 years and concern at the diminishing number was raised at a federal inquiry in Hobart yesterday into how school libraries were staffed.

Federal Education Minister Julia Gillard has directed the House of Representatives committee on education and training to report on the role, adequacy and resourcing of school libraries and teacher-librarians in public and private schools.

The committee, which also visited Sydney and Melbourne this week, follows the Federal Government's \$16 billion input for new libraries and other buildings.

Teacher-librarians have both their teaching



KEY ROLE: St Michael's Collegiate teacher-librarian Sandy von Allmen helps student Adelaide Cain and other pupils in the library yesterday. Picture: NIKKI DAVIS-JONES

degrees and library qualifications, requiring a total of at least 4½ years of study.

But schools in Tasmania are no longer required to hire qualified teacher-librarians and many are instead opting for cheaper employees.

Sandy von Allmen, a qualified teacher-librarian at St Michael's Collegiate, said having both qualifications was vital to teach effectively.

She worked in a library for 17 years before

returning to university and completing her education degree.

"I can provide support for teachers because I understand and can work with the curriculum," she said.

Georgia Phillips, from the Hub, a lobby group campaigning against further losses of teacher-librarians, said principals were given autonomy to choose who they employed and were choosing cheaper alternatives.

"They are often library technicians or even

parents," she said. "It is the children's education that suffers because they do not learn as well."

Tasmania and the Northern Territory have lost the equal highest number of professional teacher-librarians.

Victoria has lost a third and New South Wales is the only state to mandate the qualification.

The State Government schools got funding so they could choose programs of most benefit to students.

Decision time for TWS

THE future of The Wilderness Society will be decided at a special general meeting in Canberra tomorrow after a last-minute court injunction to stop it was rejected.

The decision was a win for splinter group Save The Wilderness Society, which hopes to get a new management committee elected at the meeting.

Spokesman Vica Bailey called for senior leaders to resign and make way for a new leadership.

"It is the only honourable thing for them to do," Mr Bailey said.

The Save TWS committee was formed

to challenge the election of the society's national management committee after a meeting last November.

Separately yesterday, Supreme Court Justice Peter Evans released his judgment from an April 22 hearing in which he ruled the meeting was invalid because proper notice was not given.

He said the society's actions in holding a secret meeting was "subterfuge" that was "blatant to the point of dishonesty" and ordered the society to pay costs for the case.

TWS executive director Alec Marr could not be contacted last night.

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CONSUMER DIRECTED CARE IN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT FUNDED COMMUNITY AGED CARE

INVITATION TO APPLY

Aged Care Approved Providers are invited to apply for Consumer Directed Care (CDC) places in the Australian Government packaged care programs. Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centres are invited to apply for funding to provide consumer directed respite care.

Under the initiative, the Government will fund selected community aged care providers to deliver innovative service models, which provide care recipients and their carers with greater control over the design and delivery of the care and services they receive.

Consumer directed packaged care

A total of 500 (non-ongoing) CDC flexible care places will be allocated in 2010-11 through the Innovative Pool Program for delivering consumer directed care in Australian Government packaged care programs. These places will broadly align with the existing community package care programs and will require Approved Providers to offer clients control over how their CDC budget is expended.

Important note: CDC places will only be allocated to existing Approved Providers as defined under the *Aged Care Act 1997*, and a formal proposal for places must be submitted. In addition, those providers who are not currently approved to provide flexible care will need to submit an application for flexible care status.

Consumer directed respite care

Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centres are invited to apply for funding to provide CDC under the National Respite for Carers Program (NRCP).

APPLICATION KITS

Further information and application forms are available in the CDC Application Kits, available at www.health.gov.au/cdc or from the Aged Care Information Line on 1800 500 853.

CLOSING TIME AND DATE

All applications must be received within the Department of Health and Ageing by:
2.00pm Monday 31 May 2010.

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FREE SWINE FLU VACCINATIONS.

Swine Flu hasn't gone away. The next wave is expected to reach our shores soon. Protect yourself and the whole family against Swine Flu by getting your free vaccinations at your GP* or at Agfest (presented by the DHHS and Tasmanian branches of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners).

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Furniture school open

THE \$2.3 million Furniture Design building at the University of Tasmania's Inveresk campus was opened yesterday by the Governor of Tasmania, Peter Underwood.

He said the university's wisdom in rescuing the Australian School of Fine Furniture in 2005 and giving it a new home enabled the preservation and development of skills that otherwise may have been lost to Tasmania.

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