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## ANNUAL REPORT TO CDNL-AO 2012

**Chief Executive (Director-General): Anne-Marie Schwirtlich**

### **1. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF RECENT MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS**

The National Library of Australia plays a major role nationally in supporting education, innovation, scholarship and creativity by providing access to a comprehensive and diverse collection of Australian and overseas documentary resources.

The Library issues a strategic directions statement every three years outlining its vision and desired outcomes for the period ahead. In March 2012 the Library released a new strategic statement for 2012-2014. (<http://www.nla.gov.au/library/directions.html>). The Library has made some decisions regarding its priorities in order to ensure that it has the capacity to maintain its online presence and to sustain the program of collecting, digitising and preserving information in digital form.

#### Digital Library Infrastructure Replacement Project

The Digital Library Infrastructure Replacement project commenced in early 2011 and will run over five financial years. It will replace existing systems that form the backbone of the Library's digital library infrastructure and will deliver capabilities for digital preservation, online deposit and the ability to support an extended range of digital formats.

The Project will enable the Library to acquire, manage, preserve and provide access to petabyte level information. Central to the project is an open approach to the market with the aim of purchasing pre-existing software or services to deliver the software, supplemented by in-house development activities to implement components that cannot be purchased. The implementation phase will commence in 2012-2013.

#### Extension of Legal Deposit

Over the last decade, in response to the dramatic impact of digital technology on information dissemination, the Library has advocated for change to the legal deposit provisions of the *Copyright Act 1968* (section 201) to include publications such as CD-ROMs and DVDs, web sites, e-books, e-journals and magazines, online newspapers and blogs in the requirement that a copy of 'library material' published in Australia be delivered to the National Library.

The Library therefore welcomed the establishment of a working group to consider the Library's legal deposit requirements and to prepare a public consultation paper on the issue. The consultation paper "Extending legal deposit" was issued by the Attorney-General's Department on 7 March. It presented a model for how an extended scheme would apply to electronic publications of all kinds – both online and offline in a physical carrier. The Library contributed a submission responding to the consultation paper and will participate in further discussions of the issue.

#### Opening of the Treasures Gallery

The Treasures Gallery was opened by Her Excellency Quentin Bryce AC, Governor-General on 6 October 2011. The Gallery is the culmination of many years of planning, fund raising, design and curatorial work. The gallery provides the Library with a world class space in which to display its treasures to the public for the first time. Over 77,000 visitors, including education groups and international visitors, have enjoyed the gallery since its opening. A website for primary school children, Treasures Explorer, and new education programs based on the items in the gallery, are extending the appreciation of the Library's important Australian collections and the stories they tell about our history and culture.

#### Other achievements

Other important achievements are outlined in the Library's Annual Report:

<http://www.nla.gov.au/corporate-documents/annual-reports>

## **2. RELATIONSHIP TO GOVERNMENT**

The National Library of Australia had its origins as the library of the Federal Parliament, established in 1901. With the passing of the *National Library Act 1960* it formally separated from the Parliamentary Library. The Library fulfils its role by carrying out the functions defined in this legislation.

The Library is a statutory authority within the Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport portfolio of the Australian Government. The Library operates within a reporting and accountability framework as set out in the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*.

The Library measures its activities through the Balanced Scorecard performance management system and reports to government annually through its *Annual Report* (<http://www.nla.gov.au/policy/annual.html>).

## **3. KEY FACTS AND FIGURES**

In 2010-2011 Library staff averaged 461 employees (equal to 438 full-time staff). The Library also has a volunteer program which currently has 76 volunteers.

512,000 local, interstate and international visitors came through the Library's doors in 2010-2011.

For the 2010-2011 year the usage of the Library's website was over 339 million page views, a 22% increase over the previous year.

### Facts on the Library's Collections

There are approximately 10 million items (including an estimated 2 million manuscripts items and 2 million serials volumes) in the Library's collection.

In 2010–2011, the Library received 81 800 new items.

As at June 2011, the proportion of the Library's collection currently on the online catalogue is 89.1%. The total number of items without online records is now estimated to be about 727 000 items (mostly comprising photographs and maps). The Library has an ongoing catalogue conversion program.

The Library digitises selected items in its collections. A total of 174 000 items had been digitised as at June 2011. The Library also collects online publications and websites through PANDORA and has undertaken large scale harvests of the Australian web domain. In June 2011, the total size of the Library's digital collections reached 917 terabytes.

At 30 June 2011, 174,000 original items from the Library's Australian collections had been digitised and made available through the catalogue and other services. The Library is also undertaking a major newspaper digitisation project; at 30 June 2011 over 5.1 million digitised pages were available to the public. The objective is to ensure that the Library's business processes are as efficient as possible and that the Library is effective in its service delivery to users by creating a critical mass of works in digital form.

### Facts on Access

There are currently six reading rooms, namely the Main Reading Room, Newspapers & Microforms Reading Room, Petherick Reading Room (a facility for advanced researchers, those using rare or vulnerable materials and for after hours use of special collections), the Pictures and Manuscripts Reading Room, Maps and Asian Collections reading rooms. The Library is planning further reading room integration associated with a master building plan and following the development of the Treasures Gallery on the ground floor of the Library.

Over 250,000 items in the physical collection were delivered to users either on site through the reading rooms or via inter-library loan in 2010-2011 and in the same period over 68,000 reference enquiries were answered.

140 computers are available for public use in the reading rooms. All reading rooms are wireless enabled and this service is heavily used with up to 150 concurrent laptop users active at any time.

The Main and Petherick Reading Rooms are open every day of the week for a total of 68 hours a week; the Newspapers & Microforms Reading Room is open 48 hours a week on 6 days and the special collections reading rooms are open 40 hours a week over 5 days. There were over 419,000 entries to the Main and Newspapers and Microforms Reading Rooms in 2010-11.

The Library uses instructional videos to help users learn about the range of services offered by the Library and to access the Library's resources online. Videos have been produced on accessing online e-resources and the use of microfilm reader /printers and these can be viewed through the Library's YouTube channel. More recently the Library has

commissioned four new videos using stop-motion and computer animation on getting started with Library services both on and off-site, the Copies Direct services and family history. These will be available through the Library's website once completed in July 2012.

Further details are available on the Library's Fact Sheet:

(<http://www.nla.gov.au/library/factsheet.html>).

#### **4. NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN CREATING AND BUILDING COLLECTIONS**

##### Review of overseas collecting

Last financial year the Library began a review of its collecting of books and journals published overseas. It assessed options for reducing the cost associated with acquiring and processing overseas materials, taking into account the needs of researchers and trends and developments in information dissemination such as e-publishing and mass digitisation.

The review was completed in August and the Library has begun implementing the recommendations. These included immediate work to make processes more efficient and a longer term strategy to shift the Library's largely print based collecting model to a digital collecting and access model over the next five years. This means that, where possible, the Library will collect e-books and e-journals and it will provide access to freely available digital content hosted elsewhere instead of collecting the print versions. In addition, the Library will reduce its total expenditure on overseas resources to release funds for strategic priorities such as digitisation of the Australian collections. As a consequence, the range of overseas resources accessible from the Library will decrease and a significant number of print journal subscriptions and electronic services will be cancelled. This will be reflected in the revised Collection Development Policy which will be released early next financial year.

The review recommended and the Library has affirmed that continuing to collect vernacular language publications, in both print and digital form, from Asia and the Pacific will remain a priority.

##### Forgotten Australians

The Australian Government's Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs provided funding to the Library, commencing in 2009, to record oral history interviews with 'Forgotten Australians'. Over 150 interviews have been completed as at April 2012 out of an expected total of 212 interviews. The interviews document a diverse range of experiences of being in out-of-home care, and the complexities of the lifelong impact of those childhood experiences. Additional interviews were commissioned with welfare professionals, employees in homes, lawyers, politicians and advocates who provide context and insights into the policies and systems of care and the challenges associated with providing care and achieving justice. In selecting interviewees, Library staff were mindful of representing a range of demographic factors as well as whether stories had been previously told. The 41 interviewees have conducted interviews across rural, regional and remote Australia as well as in metropolitan areas and the project has generated the donation of significant archival collections, self-published autobiographies and ephemera.

#### **5. NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN MANAGING COLLECTIONS**

### Resource Description and Access (RDA)

The Library has been closely involved in the development of Resource Description and Access (RDA), the new international standard for the bibliographic description of library materials that will replace the existing standard. Library staff, together with colleagues from the Library of Congress, the British Library, the National Library and Archives Canada, have served on the international committees with responsibility for development of the new cataloguing rules which are designed to enable libraries to manage their collections in the digital, online environment. During the year the national libraries involved agreed that RDA would be implemented in early 2013. In preparation for implementation the Library has developed training materials and a training program to enable Australian libraries to adopt the new standard and assessed the changes to workflows and data management systems that will be required. Training will commence in late 2012.

### Collection Storage Arrangement

A major project to transfer Australian retrospective print collections into separated monograph and journal sequences was completed, resulting in more efficient use of available on-site space. The total project has resulted in an additional three years growth space onsite for Monographs and Serials and has deferred the requirement for extensions to the Library's offsite facility at this stage until 2015.

### Digital preservation

In collaboration with the Australian state libraries through the Re-imagining Libraries program, which is supported by the National and State Libraries Australasia (NSLA) consortium, the Library commenced a project to reinvigorate the approach to collecting significant Australian web sites for inclusion in Pandora web archive, which commenced in 1996. The intention is, over the next 1-2 years, to implement more sophisticated and flexible software that will support more efficient collecting and "user-friendly" delivery options for presenting search results. As well as continuing to select individual web sites and to conduct larger scale collecting by type of publication, such as government web sites, a new collaborative approach to selecting important web sites on contemporary issues such as the mining boom will be pursued and the results presented as curated collections.

## **6. NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN PROVIDING ACCESS TO COLLECTIONS**

### New Exhibition Gallery

The new Exhibition Gallery opened on 25 November 2011 and the inaugural exhibition was *Handwritten: Ten Centuries of Manuscript Treasures from the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin*. The exhibition was a significant success with over 72,000 people visiting the exhibition. *The Life of Patrick White* was opened on 13 April.

### Digitisation

The Library's collections digitisation program continues to improve access to the collections. Progress with digitising different formats of material is reported through the web site at (<http://www.nla.gov.au/digicoll/index.html>). Through the Australian Newspaper Digitisation Program, the Library expects to have digitised almost 7 million newspaper pages consisting of almost 70 million articles by 30 June 2012.

Digitisation of rare and unique collection materials continues to be a priority to increase access to the Library's collections. In the lead up to the centenary of Canberra celebrations, we prioritized the digitisation of important maps relating to the selection of the Federal Capital site, and to the international design competition for the national capital.

#### Access projects

A number of short term projects have better positioned the Library to make its collections more quickly and directly accessible to readers. For example, a standards-based IT project has enabled interoperability between the Library's copy request system and the catalogue, eliminating the need for double-keying and ensuing inaccuracies in availability status . Another initiative has resulted in the digitisation of 140 000 pages of oral history transcripts, which can now be delivered electronically on demand rather than being photocopied for readers. In addition over 4 200 new and legacy oral histories (or 10 percent of the collection) are now available online in full through the catalogue.

#### Flickr commons

The National Library Flickr Commons site went live in September 2011 exposing 300 of the Library's out-of-copyright images. In the first fortnight the images received 71,749 views.

The "Swan Lake", Ballets Russes image ([http://www.flickr.com/photos/national\\_library\\_of\\_australia\\_commons/6173569675/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/national_library_of_australia_commons/6173569675/)) was the most popular with 4,940 views in a fortnight which contrasts with fewer than 350 views on the National Library's website in the previous three months. In April, to mark Anzac Day, the Library made about 20 photographs relating to Australians at war available on Flickr commons. On the second day after the images had been released they attracted 70,000 views. There has also been a strong response from users adding comments and title information to the images and linking them with collections in other national collecting institutions.

## **7. COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES**

### National and State Libraries Australasia

The Library continued its work with National and State Libraries Australasia (NSLA) libraries to achieve the vision of 'Open Borders', supporting the freest possible flow of information resources among NSLA and other libraries.

The NSLA Archival Collections group continued to develop tools to assist with efficient processing of manuscripts collections. Guidelines on pragmatic approaches to initial and full processing of these collections, and a tool to allow libraries to accurately cost the many individual tasks associated with archival processing were finalised and made freely available to the library and wider community. The Archival Collections methodologies will be re-used to commence similar work on managing large pictorial and cartographic collections.

### Trove

Trove continues to be central to accessing the collections of this Library and of Australian collecting institutions of all kinds. More than 48,000 people use the service every day, many of them on mobile devices. Humanities and science scholars value Trove's digitised content,

with many describing Trove as revolutionising research in their fields and opening new possibilities for enquiry.

Thousands of Australian and Trove users engage enthusiastically with Trove content – annotating, tagging, correcting computer generated newspaper text, or adding their own digital content to the service. From April 2012, individuals and agencies have been able to use new functionality to engage further. Trove records, tags and comments can now be retrieved using an Application Programming Interface (API), opening new possibilities for displaying Trove content in other services. Trove's strength is based on the willingness of cultural organisations to contribute their content to this central discovery service. They can now reap the rewards of this collective endeavour by finding and displaying content of interest to their local users, held by anyone of Trove's many contributors.

Scoping work on options to allow Trove users to reach copy order services offered by Trove contributors commenced during the year. This project builds on the Library's successful redevelopment of its own Copies Direct service (and exposure of the Copies Direct option in Trove), and the lightweight approach to eResource authentication which allows Australian libraries to add data to their library 'profile' on Australian Libraries Gateway, to affect what can be viewed and accessed via Trove.