

ANNUAL REPORT TO CDNL 2011-12

WALES

National Library of Wales

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Library's relationship to government

Founded by Royal Charter 1907, renewed 2006. Registered charity. Governed by a Board of Trustees. Funded by grant-in-aid by the Welsh Government through the Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage.

Fact and figures

Collections: books, periodicals newspapers and other printed material (about 6m volumes: as a 'legal deposit' library NLW collects about 90% of the entire printed publications of the UK); manuscripts (25,000 items); archives (2,500 collections); maps (over 1m maps and thousands of atlases); pictures (40,000); electronic publications and archives.

Staff: about 300.

Income: £10.35m revenue and £1.3m capital from the Welsh Assembly Government (2011-12).

Recent developments

1 Chair in Digital Collections

Prof. Lorna Hughes, the Library's Chair of Digital Collections, has completed the first year of her five-year appointment, and has had a catalytic effect, not only on the digital services of the Library but also on digital humanities scholarship. She has introduced several new funded projects including:

- the Wales and World War 1 digitisation project (see below)
- a crowdsourcing project on Welsh place-names operated with Galaxy Zoo

She has also attracted four PhD studentships, all of them studying aspects of the digital collections in the Library, and has built valuable links for the Library with digital collection and digital humanities specialists across the world.

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2 Wales in the First World War and other digitisation projects

The 'SCIF' project to convert 2m pages of historic newspapers and periodicals from Wales into searchable online form, freely available to all, is now coming to an end.

Work has started on the 'Digitisation for Business' project, which aims to promote the commercial exploitation of material digitised by the National Library among small and medium sized companies in parts of Wales. It is funded with the support of £1.9m grant from the European Regional Development Fund.

We have just started a major new project 'The Welsh experience of World War One 1914-18', with financial help from the higher education Joint Information Systems Committee. Materials in many different formats – newspapers and journals, archives, photographs, posters and moving images, from several libraries and archives in Wales – will be digitised and made available free. The result will provide an invaluable resource for teaching, research and commemoration in time for the 100th anniversary of the start of the War.

Some of the Library's digitised material, including two major photographic collections, has been included in 'The European Library':

<http://www.theeuropeanlibrary.org/tel4/>

3 Volunteers in the National Library

The Library has launched a strategy and programme for volunteers to contribute to its work, and especially its collections. Volunteers will enable us to achieve additional work which we wouldn't be able to do otherwise through the employed staff. The first project, which involves university students providing a social and political context to the 'Dorrien' cartoon collection, has begun, and will be followed by others – some through direct work with collections within the Library building, others contributing at a distance via the internet through crowdsourcing and other digital tools.

Through the generosity of the Big Lottery Fund the Library has been able to employ a Coordinator for three years to help match the needs of the Library with the availability of volunteers.

4 Arts and craft in the National Library

The Library has received a gift from the estate of Eluned Gymraes Davies to establish a project to conduct outreach work in communities throughout Wales in order to develop the creative skills of adult learners and young people in response to the national collections held at the National Library. The project will last for three years, and will involve adults and young people from six different communities. The work produced as a result of the project will be displayed in exhibitions within each community as well as the National Library.

5 A human chain around the Library

On 15 July 2011 a 'human chain' completely surrounded the National Library's building in Aberystwyth to celebrate 100 years since the laying of its foundation stone. Staff of the National Library, readers and visitors and supporters - some of them from a long distance - came together to remember our predecessors and their achievements, and to reassert the enduring cultural and human values of the Library.

