

## ANNUAL REPORT TO CDNL 2012-13

### WALES

#### *National Library of Wales*

Andrew M W Green – Librarian (retired 31/03/2013)

Aled Gruffydd Jones – Chief Executive and Librarian (from 01/08/2013)

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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 Culture and Sport.

#### **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); photographs (950,000); maps (1.5 million maps and thousands of atlases); pictures (50,000); electronic publications and archives; sound and moving images (250,000 hours of film and television, 150,000 hours of radio and sound recordings, and thousands of records and tapes).

**Staff:** about 300.

**Income:** £10.52m revenue and £1.3m capital from the Welsh Assembly Government (2012-13).

## Recent developments

### 1 A new Chief Executive and Librarian

Professor Aled Gruffydd Jones, Sir John Williams Professor of Welsh History and senior Pro-Vice Chancellor in Aberystwyth University was appointed as the new Chief Executive and Librarian in March 2013. He will take up his new role on the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2013.



### 2 A serious fire at the Library 26<sup>th</sup> April 2013

At approximately 14.40 on 26 April 2013, the fire alarm sounded at the National Library of Wales. The Emergency Plan was immediately activated and approximately 300 staff and 100 visitors were evacuated promptly and safely. The fire was situated on the roof of 'Third Library Building Offices (TLBO)' on the southern side of the Library building. At the time of the fire, work was being undertaken on the roof of the building by external contractors. Six floors were damaged; five of the floors were used as offices and a server room was situated on the ground floor.

The storage areas housing the collections, including some of the nation's most important treasures, were not affected nor were the Library's digital assets. A small part of the top floor suffered serious fire damage. The afternoon of Friday, 26 April, was a normal working day, and items were being processed on desks and trollies on the top floor where the Legacy Acquisition Unit were situated. It is for this reason that there were, sadly, some losses. Even in that area, the manuscripts and rare books that were kept in oak chests survived without any damage.

Prompt action at the time by staff in enacting the Library's Emergency Plan minimised the losses. The fire brigade and the building contained the fire effectively. The fire doors were very effective and fire damage was restricted to the top floor. However, smoke damage extended further and extinguishant water permeated the whole way through that part of the building, from the top floor to the ground.

The Library has developed a team of professional conservators trained specifically to prevent and restore damage to the collections. Once the fire was under control and the Fire and Rescue Service allowed members of staff into the building, the areas at most risk and which held the most valuable materials were identified and the items were removed to safety. These included photographs, manuscripts, archival material, maps and books. These items suffered a very small degree of water damage and by the beginning of the following week they were totally restored by the Library's team.

At the same time, staff covered shelves and furniture with plastic sheeting to minimise water damage. Much of this work was completed before the arrival of expert conservators from Harwell's of Oxford at 9.30 p.m. on the evening of the fire. Harwell's are experts in restoring archival resources following disasters such as this.

The Library was closed to the public on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April to allow the seventy staff whose offices had been damaged to relocate to alternative working areas. We reopened to the public on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> April when normal service was resumed.

### **3 Electronic Legal Deposit**

Regulations came into force on 6 April enabling the legal deposit libraries to collect, preserve and provide long term access to the increasing proportion of the nation's cultural and intellectual output that appears in digital form – including blogs, e-books and the entire UK web domain.

From this point forward, the National Library of Wales, the British Library, the National Library of Scotland, the Bodleian Libraries, Cambridge University Library and Trinity College Library Dublin will have the right to receive a copy of every UK electronic publication, on the same basis as they have received print publications such as books, magazines and newspapers for several centuries.

The regulations, known as legal deposit, will ensure that ephemeral materials like websites can be collected, preserved forever and made available to future generations of researchers, providing the fullest possible record of life and society in the UK in the 21<sup>st</sup> century for people 50, 100, even 200 or more years in the future.

### **4 The Boston Manuscript**

With the assistance of the Heritage Lottery Fund, together with the Friends of the National Libraries and the Welsh Government, the National Library of Wales successfully purchased the Boston Manuscript of the Laws of King Hywel Dda in July

2012. Now, a year later, and following a laborious and careful process of disbinding and repair, the Library has published images of all the pages online, so that the public can see its contents.

Few people had seen this fourteenth-century manuscript of native Welsh law when it was in the possession of the Massachusetts Historical Society in the USA. Its condition had deteriorated greatly since the 18th century, and when the American authorities decided to place it on the market, there was a risk that it would be sold to a private collector, or for breaking-up by souvenir hunters.

The digital images are available at <http://www.llgc.org.uk/index.php?id=6177> and are accompanied by an introduction to the manuscript, and a detailed description of the volume is also available on the Library's online catalogue. During this summer, the Library will also be producing facsimile copies for use in outreach and education work.

The Boston Manuscript, in its new guise, will be making its first public appearance, newly repaired and rebound, in the National Library's exhibition of early Welsh manuscripts – 4Books: Welsh Icons United – on 12 October 2013.



### **'Boston' Manuscript of the Laws of Hywel Dda arrives home at NLW**

Plans are in place for a programme of education and training opportunities for existing staff, new apprentices and volunteers to learn new skills and play their part in saving the manuscript for the future. There are also plans for a touring exhibition of the facsimile.

## **5 Wales in the First World War digitisation project**

'The Welsh experience of World War One 1914-18' <http://cymruww1.llgc.org.uk/> project is nearing completion. Materials in many different formats – newspapers and journals, archives, photographs, posters and moving images, from several libraries and archives in Wales have been digitised and will be made available free. This

collaborative project is partly funded by the higher education Joint Information Systems Committee.

The result will provide an invaluable resource for teaching, research and commemoration in time for the 100th anniversary of the start of the War. The project will make available a coherent, consolidated digital collection revealing the often hidden history of World War One as it impacted all aspects of Welsh life, language and culture. These source materials are presently fragmented and frequently inaccessible, yet they collectively form a unique resource of vital interest to researchers, students, and the public in Wales and beyond.

## **6 Welsh Newspapers Online**

The Welsh Newspapers Online resource was launched on 13 March 2013. [Welsh Newspapers Online](#) is a major website from the National Library of Wales allowing anybody with an interest in the history and people of Wales to browse and search over 100 titles from its rich collection of pre-1910 newspapers - completely free of charge.

This mass digitisation project is the largest ever undertaken by the National Library and contributes to its far-reaching vision of Wales as the first nation to have digitised all its published print material and made it available free of charge on the web. Welsh Newspapers Online will allow the reader not only to browse digital copies of the original newspapers but also to search for words, names and dates across all one million pages.

Welsh Newspapers Online has been part-funded by the Welsh Government's Strategic Capital Investment Fund and the European Regional Development Fund.

## **7 DigiDo**

The DigiDo digitisation project <http://www.digido.org.uk/> is run by the National Library for Wales to support small and medium sized creative businesses within the convergence areas of Wales. For over ten years, the National Library has been conducting a large number of digitisation projects. The National Library is recognized as a centre of excellence in digitisation throughout Europe. By digitising the collections, the Library's intention is to offer access to its vast collections.

The aim of this project is to encourage innovative Welsh businesses and give them the tools to be able to compete both locally and globally. This project provides an opportunity for businesses to exploit and re-use this large repository that exists within the National Library of Wales, one of the greatest libraries of the world.

This four-year project is backed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through the Welsh Government, along with resources from the Library. We would not be able to provide this project and service without the help and financial support of the European Regional Development Fund.

## **8 Intellectual Property**

To celebrate World Intellectual Property Day and to promote discussion of the role of intellectual property in encouraging innovation and creativity The National Library of Wales announced a pioneering decision in relation to its digitised collections by declaring that it will no longer claim ownership of copyright in digital copies of items in its care.

For many years, the Library has been proactive in its use of digitisation and the Web as means of widening access to its collections. From Wales's earliest manuscripts to countless volumes of nineteenth-century Welsh newspapers, the Library has digitised and published copies of some of its most valued collections for all to see on the Web, anywhere and anytime.

During the next few months, the Library will be implementing a policy that will enable the public to use thousands of images on its website without any restriction. Users of the website should be aware that many images will still be subject to third party rights that will need to be cleared before use, but the Library will not impose additional copyright restrictions unless it owns the copyright in the original work. High resolution versions of the images will still be available under licence through the Library's Enquiries Service.