

# TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

**NATIONAL LIBRARY & INFORMATION SYSTEM AUTHORITY**

**MRS PAMELLA BENSON — EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

## ANNUAL REPORT TO CDNL 2001 – 2002

The National Library and Information System Authority (NALIS) was established in 1998 to integrate the existing library services which had been in operation from 1857. The NALIS operates the National Library, the Public and School Library Systems and the subject specialist libraries serving Government Ministries.

The National Library collects, preserves and disseminates material in all formats published in Trinidad and Tobago and which deal with Trinidad and Tobago. It also collects materials relating to other islands of the Caribbean.

A Legal Deposit Act requires the deposit of the copies of all publications to be delivered to the National Library. Regulations to govern this activity are being updated to include electronic publications.

The NALIS also publishes the annual Trinidad and Tobago National Bibliography of which Vol. 23 (1998-1999) is the latest edition.

Preservation and conservation of material will be addressed more effectively by the establishment of a preservation and conservation facility in the new National Library Building. Microfilming, regular binding and conservation and restoration activities will be carried out in-house in this new facility.

The NALIS has also embarked on a digitization project to protect fragile and brittle materials and to allow wider access to rare materials and materials which are more easily accessed in digitized format. One of the first items to be digitized are very valuable slave deeds dating from 1768 - 1819 which have been recently transcribed and digitized and will be placed on the NALIS website <http://www.nalis.gov.tt/>.

The public access catalogue developed using Library Solutions software which provides access to materials acquired from 1998 is also available online. Retrospective conversion of all Trinidad and Tobago records held in the collection was started in 1999 and a national referral system which links database at all the subject specialist libraries in the country is also being developed on a phased basis.

The NALIS offers a varied training programme to its staff in all aspects of Library and Information Science, which impacts on its services to the public. This training is also made available to libraries in the wider Caribbean especially in the use of UNESCO's CDS/ISIS software for which NALIS is the official distributor in Trinidad and Tobago.

During 2002 new services have been implemented targeting the visually impaired, the institutionalized, and the very young. These complement the reference, loan and Internet access services which are available free of charge to all citizens of Trinidad and Tobago.

Trinidad and Tobago's new National Library building will be opened to the public in the fourth quarter of 2002.

NALIS  
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