

AUSTRALIA

THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA

JAN FULLERTON — DIRECTOR GENERAL

ANNUAL REPORT TO CDNL 2002 – 2003

DIRECTIONS FOR 2003-2005

In the last quarter of 2002 the National Library of Australia released its new strategic directions statement, *Directions for 2003-2005*. The key focus for the next three years is the development of programs and services that make it as easy as possible for all Australians to find and to access the information they need to support them in their academic, cultural and social pursuits. One of the ways in which the National Library of Australia will achieve this is through the redesign and restructure of the Library's web site to enable users to search all services, such as the catalogue, directories and services offering direct access to digital content, through a single search point. Other strategies include the on-going digitisation of Australian maps, sheet music, pictorial images, manuscripts, sound and other formats and the development of collaborative services to provide users with access to the digital content held across a wide range of collecting institutions. *Directions for 2003-2005* is available on the Library's web site at www.nla.gov.au/library/directions.html.

SELECTION OF NEW INTEGRATED LIBRARY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The National Library of Australia signed a contract with Endeavor Information Systems Inc for the Voyager library system in October 2002. Voyager will replace the system currently used by the Library which has been in place since 1991. The implementation of Voyager is a major project for the Library, because the Library uses its integrated library management system to manage access to all its collections, including manuscripts, maps, music, oral history, pictures, films and digital resources. Voyager will support acquisitions, cataloguing, circulation, the Online Public Access Catalogue and e-call slips for closed stack access. The Library will customise Voyager to integrate the online catalogue with the rest of the Library's web site so that a single search will target the Voyager catalogue and other indexes and finding aids that provide deeper access to the Library's collections. Implementation commenced in November 2002 and the system will go live in August 2003. The Library has migrated 3.3 million bibliographic records to Voyager.

ASKNOW: ONLINE ANSWERS AUSTRALIA WIDE

The National Library of Australia has been offering an email reference service in addition to the traditional telephone, fax, letter and on-site services for some years. It has also been a participant in the QuestionPoint collaborative email reference service managed by the Library of Congress and OCLC (Online Computer Library Center). However, in response to an increasing preference for accessing information online, the Library has expanded its reference services to include an interactive chat reference service. In January 2003, the National Library together with the seven Australian state and territory libraries, launched a collaborative digital reference service, *AskNow: Online Answers Australia Wide*. The service currently operates from Monday to Friday between 9.00am and 8.00pm and is

available to anyone who has access to the Internet and a standard PC. *AskNow* utilizes chat software to enable library staff to guide users through the steps needed to find information on the Internet. Both the library staff member and the user view the same web pages and at the end of the session the user receives a summary of the relevant sites found during the search. The national libraries of New Zealand and Singapore are both participating in the service for a limited period of time in order to assess the benefits of the service. Additional information about the service is available at www.asknow.gov.au.

AUSTRALIADANCING

During the year the National Library of Australia launched a new service, *AustraliaDancing*. The service facilitates access to Australian dance resources through a directory based on a dynamic database which provides direct links from entries to other relevant content available online, such as images from the *PictureAustralia* service and web sites archived in the Library's PANDORA Archive of Online Australian Publications. A typical directory entry will contain a biographical note or history, and a list of resources associated with a person, company or a work. The list of resources will span all formats including pictures, oral histories, manuscripts, books, journals, films, audio recordings, digitised and born digital resources. *AustraliaDancing* is an initiative of the Library, which holds the largest collection of dance materials in Australia, in partnership with other collecting institutions and the peak industry body for dance in Australia, Ausdance. The service supports the Library's goal of providing direct access for users to information in online form whenever possible. *AustraliaDancing* can be explored at www.australiadancing.org.

DIGITAL COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

Digitisation of the Library's Australian collections commenced in 1995 with the routine digitisation of all pictorial acquisitions and the conversion of oral history recordings from analogue to digital format. In 2001 the Library embarked on a major digitisation program that has expanded the range of materials digitised to include maps, sheet music and manuscript collections. Items selected for digitisation have either cultural significance or importance for research, and in the case of pictorial images and sheet music, also support the Library's collaborative web based services such as *PictureAustralia* (www.pictureaustralia.org) and *MusicAustralia* (www.musicaustralia.org).

The Library has developed a database called Digital Collections Manager (DCM) to manage this digitised material. DCM is used by staff to support the digitisation workflow, for example the creation of derivative objects for web delivery (such as low resolution thumbnail images) and the uploading and downloading of files to and from the Library's digital storage system. The functional specifications for the DCM can be found at www.nla.gov.au/dsp/doms/dcm.html. Library staff can use DCM to view the history of a digital object including information on when an item was digitised and when it was taken into the storage system. This feature will be used in future to record changes to the storage format and other preservation processes that may be undertaken on a digital object. The Library is also creating delivery systems for digital objects so that users can easily access the materials we are digitising. Web delivery systems have been developed

to date for pictures, sheet music, maps and manuscripts in context with their bibliographic descriptions and facilities for page turning, zooming and other navigation aids. More information about the delivery systems can be found at www.nla.gov.au/digicoll/.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES PORTAL

In line with its new strategic focus to facilitate direct access for all Australians to the information that they need, the Library is rethinking the way in which it provides access to its collections and services. To help achieve this the Library is working closely with public libraries because they are the key point of access to information for many Australians. Through a new project called the *Public Library Portal* library staff are working with a group of public libraries to create direct and easy access to Australian online and printed resources. Through the portal people in public libraries will be able to access a variety of online databases and services that have been traditionally mediated by public library staff on their behalf. A feature of the service will be the ability to carry out a search across all databases listed on the portal homepage simultaneously via a Z39.50 broadcast search.

ADDRESS:

National Library of Australia
Parkes Place
Parkes ACT 2600
AUSTRALIA

Tel: + 61 (0)2 6262 1111
Fax: + 61 (0)2 6257 1703

Email: jfullert@nla.gov.au

URL: www.nla.gov.au