

# UNITED KINGDOM: WALES

**NATIONAL LIBRARY OF WALES**

**ANDREW M.W. GREEN — LIBRARIAN**

## **ANNUAL REPORT TO CDNL 2002 – 2003**

The first stage of work on the Library's new visitor centre was opened this Spring. The centre contains:

- two new exhibition spaces: the 'Peniarth Room' for general exhibitions, and the 'World of the Book', showing the development of printing in Wales
- two education rooms
- new accommodation for the National Screen and Sound Archive of Wales
- a reception area
- a restaurant ('Pen Dinas')
- a shop
- a new entrance suitable for those with mobility difficulties

The new facilities have been very well received. Work continues on the construction of the second stage, due to be complete in Spring 2004:

- a 100-seat multimedia auditorium, and foyer
- above it, a carefully-controlled 'sensitive materials' display area

The Centre is the main element in our 'Open Library Initiative'. It will enable the Library to make its exceptionally varied collections - printed works, manuscripts and archives, maps, pictures and drawings, sound recordings and moving images - much more visible to a larger and more varied audience.

Digitisation work has continued, as part of the 'Digital Library Initiative'. Important advances have been made on metadata control (using METS). Recent additions to the website include the Book of Taliesin (some of the oldest poems in the Welsh language), Yny lhyvyr hwnn (the earliest Welsh printed book), and the remarkable work of the 'Welsh Primitive' painter.<sup>1</sup>

Gathering the Jewels, the all-Wales digitisation project funded by the New Opportunities Fund (a branch of the National Lottery) and based within the Library, is due to come to an end in September 2003. Its success has proved that libraries, archives and museums throughout Wales can work together creatively on a common project – a virtual collection of 20,000 items from scores of different institutions.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.llgc.org.uk/drych/index\\_s.htm](http://www.llgc.org.uk/drych/index_s.htm)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.gtj.org.uk/gtj/>

**Culturenet Cymru**, a new organisation based in the Library, was established in Spring 2003. It is funded by the Welsh Assembly Government as a limited company owned by its members, all the main national cultural organisations in Wales. Its aims are to promote Welsh culture online by increasing members' organisational capacity and by funding digital content creation programmes. It will also be responsible for the future of the 'Gathering the Jewels' website and data.

Last year's reconfiguration of the Library's organisational structure created a new, unified 'Department of Collection Services'. This in turn created the opportunity to take a holistic view, for the first time, of our **collecting policy**. A draft policy was published as part of a public consultation paper.<sup>3</sup>

A strategy for **digital preservation** has also been produced.

A new online gateway or directory of websites of Welsh interest, **Wales on the Web**<sup>4</sup>, is now available. Websites are scrutinised and validated by an editorial team, according to a set of quality criteria, before being included. The service is based in the National Library and is now funded by the Welsh Assembly Government.

The Library has introduced a new rolling regime of 'best value' efficiency studies (entitled a **Service Improvement Plan**), which will look at three or four areas of our activities each year and make recommendations about steps we should take to improve the ways in which we operate.

At the same time a new **fund-raising strategy** has been prepared, with the help of a specialist external consultant.

An article describing recent **strategic developments** in the National Library of Wales appeared in a recent issue of the journal *Alexandria*.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.llgc.org.uk/adrodd/collecting.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.walesontheinternet.org/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.llgc.org.uk/adrodd/alexandria.pdf>