

# ANNUAL REPORT TO CDNL 2009-10

## WALES

### National Library of Wales

#### Andrew M W Green - Librarian

Address: Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, Wales, SY23 3BU  
Telephone: +44 0 1970 632 805  
Fax: +44 0 1970 632 886  
Web address of Library: [www.llgc.org.uk](http://www.llgc.org.uk)  
Email contact for Library: [ang@llgc.org.uk](mailto:ang@llgc.org.uk)

#### Library's relationship to government

Founded by Royal Charter 1907, renewed 2006. Charity. Governed by a Board of Trustees. Funded by grant-in-aid by the Welsh Assembly Government through the Minister for 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:** £10.6m revenue and £1.9m capital from the Welsh Assembly Government (2010-11).

#### Recent developments

##### 1 Where will we be in 2020?

What are the main factors that will influence how the National Library will be by the year 2020? What services will we provide, whom will we serve, and who will work in the Library in future?

These are some of the questions we asked ourselves in the National Library of Wales towards the end of 2009, in an attempt to understand what kind of future awaits the Library, and what kind of future it can make for itself. The answers, after much internal research and investigation, and with the aid of advice from selected critical friends and the Library's Advisory Body and

Board of Trustees, were published in March 2010 as *2020: a long view of the National Library of Wales*<sup>1</sup>.

Among our conclusions are that:

- ❑ the Library will have switched resources away from the physical library and analogue collections to supporting online services and greatly increased digital collections (both born-digital and digitised)
- ❑ the educational as opposed to the research potential of all our collections will be better realised
- ❑ the Library will be better integrated with other library and archive services in Wales and beyond.

Many of the ideas contained in this 'vision' will be incorporated in the Library's next three year Strategy. We should be interested to hear from other national libraries outside the UK if they have undertaken (or intend to undertake) a similar exercise.

## **2 Mass digitisation continues**

The National Library is now over half way through a two-year project, funded by the Welsh Assembly Government, to scan and OCR 2m pages of historic newspapers and periodicals published in Wales. All of the scanning and much of the OCRing is being undertaken in the Library. We hope to gain an ERDF grant from the European Union to continue the project beyond March 2011. An earlier large-scale digitisation project, *Welsh journals online*, is likewise giving free online access to the digital texts of selected 20th century Welsh periodicals<sup>2</sup>.

Other current or recently completed digitisation projects include:

- ❑ Welsh ballads online<sup>3</sup>
- ❑ Wales-Ohio: Welsh emigrants to the USA<sup>4</sup>
- ❑ EuropeanaTravel: volumes of travel drawings<sup>5</sup>
- ❑ Geoff Charles's photographs of Wales in World War II<sup>6</sup>
- ❑ Portread: Welsh portraits online<sup>7</sup>
- ❑ the oldest manuscripts in the Library: three papyri from Oxyrhynchus<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.llgc.org.uk/fileadmin/documents/pdf/Vision.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.llgc.org.uk/fileadmin/documents/pdf/Vision.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.llgc.org.uk/fileadmin/documents/pdf/Vision.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <http://ohio.llgc.org.uk/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.europeanatravel.eu/>

<sup>6</sup> <http://geoffcharles.llgc.org.uk/>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.llgc.org.uk/index.php?id=4064>

A large number of digitised photographs from the Geoff Charles collection and the P.B. Aberly collection of historic Radnorshire have been uploaded to Flickr Commons<sup>9</sup>, where they have excited more interest than the same material mounted on the Library's website. (This was part of the Library's Web 2.0 engagement initiative, which has also led to blogging and the use of Facebook and Twitter<sup>10</sup>.)

### **3 Chair in Digital Collections**

The University of Wales has generously established a new senior research post in the National Library: a Chair in Digital Collections. The holder will conduct academic research on aspects of the creation, care, exploitation and preservation of digital collections and will also investigate areas of practical importance to the Library itself, especially related to digitisation.

We are not aware of Chairs of this kind in other national libraries and would be interested to hear if others exist.

### **4 Working with other libraries in Wales**

Through the support of CyMAL, the Welsh government body concerned with archives, libraries and museums, the National Library now provides a number of linked services to local public libraries and their users:

- ❑ it administers a national electronic resources licence, so that all Welsh citizens may access through their local library a common collection of electronic information resources, including newspapers
- ❑ it has developed and now hosts a single search point for users, Cat Cymru, to find items in the catalogues of most libraries in Wales
- ❑ it maintains a central website that acts as a portal to both these resources and other services available in Welsh libraries<sup>11</sup>

### **5 Automatic membership of the National Library**

Anyone aged 16 or over can become a National Library reader for free and with minimum formality. If they live in Wales they can also join as remote electronic users. We are currently piloting a scheme whereby those who join a local public library services (Gwynedd Library Service) are also offered the chance to join the National Library at the same time. Our hope is that we can extend this arrangement to all local libraries, public and academic, in Wales: even if local readers may never visit Aberystwyth in person they can still take advantage of the electronic resources available only to registered remote readers.

---

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.llgc.org.uk/index.php?id=3767>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.flickr.com/photos/llgc/>

<sup>10</sup>

[http://www.llgc.org.uk/index.php?id=1514&no\\_cache=1&tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=2870&tx\\_ttnews\[backPid\]=160&cHash=28e7c2e065](http://www.llgc.org.uk/index.php?id=1514&no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=2870&tx_ttnews[backPid]=160&cHash=28e7c2e065)

<sup>11</sup> <http://library.wales.org/>

## **6 Kyffin Williams bequest**

Sir Kyffin Williams, probably the outstanding Welsh painter of the 20th century, bequeathed to the National Library on his death in 2006 his entire remaining works, including 200 framed paintings and a large number of drawings.

The Library has always collected paintings and other graphic works as part of its mission. We have begun a comprehensive 'Kyffin Williams programme' of conservation, cataloguing, storage, digitisation and display, aided by two crucial provisions made by Sir Kyffin in his will: finance to undertake the programme and assignment of copyright in his works to the Library.

Staff on the programme contribute news of the progress of their work regularly to a 'Kyffin blog'<sup>12</sup>

## **7 Collecting authors' digital archives**

We shall soon complete a pioneering project aimed at investigating the complex issues of preserving and acquiring the digital archives of prominent literary authors working in Wales.<sup>13</sup>

One of the project's objectives was to raise awareness among Welsh authors of the importance of their retaining electronic drafts of their works, notes, correspondence and other material. Another was to develop an easy method of transferring those archives worthy of permanent preservation from the author to the National Library: to this end we have adopted the Portuguese software package RODA (Repository of Authentic Digital Objects).

## **8 Automating enquiries**

Until recently most enquiries arriving in the National Library have come through email, but our internal operations for managing and finding answers to them remained essentially manual. From June 2010 the Library will be adopting the Library of Congress/OCLC QuestionPoint system in order to automate the entire service, with the intention of improving efficiency, streamlining workflows and giving enquirers a better service.

---

<sup>12</sup> <http://kyffinblog.blogspot.com/>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.llgc.org.uk/index.php?id=3909>