



ANNUAL REPORT TO CONFERENCE OF DIRECTORS OF NATIONAL LIBRARIES (CDNL) 2010



Name of Country: The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Name of library or equivalent national-level organization: NALIS – Heritage Library Division

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OVERVIEW

The past year has seen several changes in the continuing evolution of NALIS. There were improvements in collections development and access. Plans for the establishment of another national heritage collection in the second major city within the island of Trinidad have been initiated and digitization services were expanded. The Trinidad and Tobago Legal Deposit Act was updated. A National awareness programme of the oral history program was introduced. The physical establishment of the conservation laboratory begun and this will assist in preservation of our collections. A new joint project to provide public access to Trinidad newspapers from the 1800s was also developed.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN PROVIDING ACCESS TO COLLECTIONS

Plans are continuing for the establishment of a second national heritage collection in San Fernando, the second major city of Trinidad and Tobago, to mirror the existing collection at the Heritage Library in the capital Port of Spain. This collection will be housed at a restored historic Carnegie Library Building at Library Corner, and would provide members of the public on the southern side of the island with extended research facilities which currently are limited.

Digitization of heritage resources for preservation and access to the various collections to support the research environment continued. To date 11,197 articles and images have been digitized, and metadata for all records entered in respective databases. The total number of records in the collective databases increased by 8,259 from 38,753 to 47,012. The public now has access to approx. 40,000 records from the Special Collections Section of the Heritage Library. Access to these valuable heritage material,

which include newspaper clippings and periodical articles were made available via the Digital Library.

Outreach programs to educate our patrons continued. This year we took the bold step of combining techniques. For the 2010 celebrations of 'Indian Arrival Day', the library focused on Dr. Rudranath Capildeo (1920-1970), a renowned mathematician and politician. The public was invited to a tour of his birthplace, and this was combined with a major exhibition on his life and work and a lecture by a popular historian. In addition 3 book launches, 11 exhibitions, 9 displays, 1 lecture, 2 workshops and 5 programmes were hosted.

The Caribbean Research Workshop was first introduced as part of 2009/10 celebrations of National Library Week, but continued on a quarterly basis. This new program aimed at introducing secondary school students to the Trinidad and Tobago primary sources of information guided to use of these resources in their school research. The response from the students were extremely positive.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN CREATING AND BUILDING COLLECTIONS

The creation of a new Trinidad and Tobago Legal Deposit Act is near completion. The old act has been thoroughly revamped and the new one is now waiting to be tabled in Parliament. This law once approved will make it compulsory for all national publications to be deposited at NALIS. Items such as radio and television broadcasts, DVDs and CDs production and the more traditional periodicals and monographs will be captured. There are a few exceptions which include items such as calendars, but the acquisition of all other publications will ensure that there is near complete capture of all 'documents' published within Trinidad and Tobago. Currently there is no mechanism for compulsory deposit.

The National Library Building is one of the key centers for hosting educational and cultural events. These events hosted by NALIS and by other organizations contribute to creating a sense of self of the national community. Approximately 101 hours of footage were produced on national activities and library programmes recorded by NALIS staff.

For the period 2009/ 2010 year 3 collections were acquired thus far and another 3 is in the process of being acquired.

The 2009/ 2010 period has seen an increased national awareness of the existence of NALIS's oral history program. This program implemented by the Performing Arts, Genealogy and Oral History (PAGOH) Section of the Heritage Library, is structured to capture the commemoration and/or celebration of national holidays, religious festivals and other cultural events. Thirty-three (33) national cultural events were covered with 23, 783 photographs, 236 hours of footage, 51 interviews.

In addition to covering national events, PAGO H also re-introduced “Conversations with ...” , a taped oral life history interview with prominent Trinidad and Tobago calypsonians in collaboration with Gayelle the (television) Channel.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN MANAGING COLLECTIONS

4,627 queries from 8,012 clients were filled. 7,811 heritage materials were utilized.

The Library Conservator assumed duty at NALIS in September 09, and is the only qualified Conservator within the country. The process is also in train for outfitting a state-of-the-art preservation and conservation (PAC) Laboratory for the treatment of damaged paper material. This lab once established would make it the most modern in the Caribbean. In addition to the creation of the lab, measures for preservation of collections continued with increased use of the Wei T'o Freezer for fumigation. Approximately 10,937 items (library materials) from collections internal and external to NALIS, have been fumigated to date.

For the first time an electronic version of the updated National Bibliography is available to the public. Three volumes covering materials published during 2000-2005 were completed.

COLLABORATIONS

There is enormous educational interest in the historical Trinidad and Tobago newspapers from the 1800. A joint project with the National Archives to digitize these newspapers was undertaken. Prospective vendors for hardware and software were contacted and draft RFP was prepared.

The Learie Constantine Collection was submitted for nomination to the Memory of the World Register (http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=30095&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html). This collection if accepted will be the fifth accepted national collection, and the only NALIS collection. Baron Constantine is famous for his work as an international cricketer and politician who was considered “a legend in his lifetime who raised the professional cricketer and the coloured people in the British Commonwealth to a level of respect never before accepted in Britain”.