

ANNUAL REPORT TO CDNL 2010-11

WALES

National Library of Wales

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Library's relationship to government

Founded by Royal Charter 1907, renewed 2006. Registered charity.
Governed by a Board of Trustees. Funded by grant-in-aid by the Welsh Government through the Minister for Housing, Regeneration and 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: £10.5m revenue and £1.5m capital from the Welsh Assembly Government (2011-12).

Recent developments

1 How agile is your library?

A strategy is usually a very definite document. It states what a library sets out to do, so that everyone, within and outside, can watch, and judge, its progress.

The latest three-year strategy of the National Library of Wales, up to 2013-14 ('The agile library'), which follows last year's '2020' vision document, is rather different. It admits that times have never been more uncertain: the financial outlook is bleak, and the ever-accelerating pace of technological change can make apparent predictions look foolish. National libraries are not known for swift responses to circumstances, but that is exactly what we need to be prepared for.

The new strategy proposes a new 'agility' in three areas:

- ❑ the organisation itself: more flexibility in the use of staff, streamlined and simplified work processes, cleverer use of technology and the building, and being ready to change course quickly
- ❑ the collections: new approaches to collecting print, better discovery methods, ever more digital material
- ❑ how we interact with our users: discovering more about their uses and preferences, encouraging them to interact and volunteer

http://www.llgc.org.uk/fileadmin/documents/pdf/Strategy2011-12_2013-14.pdf

2 Everything printed in Wales online: another step forward

We're approaching the end of the first part of our project to convert 2m pages of historic newspapers and periodicals from Wales into searchable online form, freely available to all. Among other things it will create the biggest digital corpus of material in the Welsh language.

The next stage will be to complete the project with the help of the European Regional Development Fund. An interesting feature of this phase will be that we plan to offer the digital text free for a period to companies interested in reusing and adapting it for their own commercial purposes.

Among other items digitised during the year include:

- ❑ The battles of Alexander the Great: a fifteenth century manuscript illustrated by a Flemish artist
<http://www.llgc.org.uk/index.php?id=4432>
- ❑ Welsh journals online from the 20th century: 34 titles out of a projected 50
<http://welshjournals.llgc.org.uk/>
- ❑ Paintings in oils and acrylics from the Library's art collection: funded by the Public Catalogue Foundation (not yet publicly available)

3 Chair in Digital Collections

Lorna Hughes, previously of King's College London, has been appointed to the Library's Chair of Digital Collections. This post is funded for five years by the University of Wales and is intended to enable research on various aspects of digital libraries and archives, and at the same time to answer some of the National Library's own needs in relation to its substantial digital collections. Lorna has already attracted several studentships: it is hoped that the Chair will develop into a centre of expertise and research in digital libraries and link with other 'digital Chairs' in Wales.

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4 A major television archive

One of the most interesting parts of the National Library of Wales is the National Screen and Sound Archive of Wales. The archive collects all kinds of material: sound recordings from wax cylinders to downloads; films and videos; and broadcast television and radio programmes.

The Archive has reached an agreement with ITV, one of the UK's biggest broadcasters, to receive the huge ITV Wales archive of television broadcasts. This collection dates back to the beginning of commercial broadcasting in the 1950s and contains a wealth of unique material, in English and Welsh, documenting life in Wales in the second half of last century.

The Welsh Government has granted the Library over £1m to enable us to transport and house the collection and begin to migrate its contents to digital formats.

5 *The People's Collection*

The National Library, together with National Museum Wales and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, is now responsible for maintaining and developing a unique online service, the People's Collection Wales (Casgliad y Werin).

The People's Collection is, at one level, a bilingual, online collection of material illustrating the history and cultures of Wales, taken from over 100 institutions throughout the country. But it has another aspect: it invites its users to become involved in the collection themselves – by uploading their own digitised material, adding comments and notes, creating their own mini-collections and geographical 'trails' and maps, and following the collection on their mobile devices.

<http://www.peoplescollectionwales.co.uk/>

6 Artist in residence

The National Library has appointed its third Artist in Residence. Luned Rhys Parri, who is a 'three dimensional painter', is working with children in two schools, in Wrexham and Newtown: they will be creating work based on the Library's biggest photographic collection, that of the photojournalist Geoff Charles. An example:



[http://www.llgc.org.uk/index.php?
id=1514&no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=4277&cHash=10cebffa21ae8bdc8
b9efeffcc97bb21](http://www.llgc.org.uk/index.php?id=1514&no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=4277&cHash=10cebffa21ae8bdc8b9efeffcc97bb21)