National Library of Wales
Annual Report
2013–2014

Knowledge for All

Chief Executive and Librarian
Dr Aled Gruffydd Jones
In February 2014, following an extensive process of internal and external consultation, the Board of Trustees approved a new Strategic Plan for the Library. This document will steer the Library’s activities for the coming three year period, and in so doing will reposition the Library in relation to the needs of its users and those of a devolved Wales. Five key strategic priorities are noted: access, expertise, collaboration, sustainability and forward-thinking. Foremost among the Library’s responsibilities will be to secure for itself a more prominent and visible position in the lives and expectations of people from across Wales, and to be seen by them as an institution that is of direct and lasting value to their information needs.
The National Library of Wales Fire
26 April 2013

The nation’s most significant documentary treasures were unaffected by the fire, however a number of items were sadly lost. Prompt action at the time by staff in enacting the Library’s Emergency Plan minimised the losses and the implementation of a number of business continuity plans enabled the Library to resume normal business on Tuesday 30th April.

Six floors of the part of the building known as the ‘Third Library Building’ were damaged. Five of the floors were used as offices and a server room was situated on the ground floor. Physical collections were processed on four of the six floors. The storage areas housing the collections, including some of the nation’s most important treasures, were not affected nor were the Library’s digital assets.

The Library’s Conservation Unit has developed a team of professional conservators trained specifically to prevent and restore damage to the collections. Once the fire was under control and the Fire and Rescue Service was happy to allow members of staff into the building, the areas at most risk and which held the most valuable materials were identified and the items were removed to safety. These included photographs, manuscripts, archival material, maps and books. These items suffered a very small degree of water damage and by the beginning of the following week they were totally restored by the Library’s team. At the same time, staff covered shelves and furniture with plastic sheeting to minimise water damage. Much of this work was completed before the arrival of expert conservators from Harwell’s of Oxford on the evening of the fire. Harwell’s are experts in restoring archival resources following disasters such as this and were called to assist the Library due to the extent of the damage. Some of the material was badly damaged by water and smoke and due to limited internal capacity materials were sent to their Centre in Oxford to be freeze-dried. Items were also transferred to the Library’s own Conservation Unit to be freeze-dried or to be dried and restored. Although the damage was serious, the materials will soon be restored to their original condition. At year end all the materials have been returned to the Library but specialist work will continue to repair and restore damaged items as resources permit.

The areas affected by the fire and the extinguishant water provided office spaces for 70 members of staff and immediate plans were made to temporarily relocate them within the building. During the year the accommodation provided has been monitored and improvements made.

Community and other Partnerships

In line with the ‘Knowledge for All’ Strategic Plan 2013-17, the Library has been investigating the development of community partnerships across Wales. The first was established in collaboration with the Local Authority, the Further Education College and the local public library in Merthyr Tydfil. The lead has been taken by the National Library’s Education Service, which has adapted its outreach activity to build a more long-term and sustainable relationship with schools in the Merthyr area. Other NLW departments have also contributed, including the Promotions and Exhibitions Teams, along with People’s Collection Wales. Costs so far amount to £7,450, £3,360 of which is related to the PCW crowd-sourced digitisation programme. In June 2014, the NLW’s work in Merthyr was acknowledged by Welsh Government as a ‘pioneer area’ in its response to the Andrews Report on Culture and Poverty. The Library has also used its platform in Merthyr to run its current Eluned Grynraes Davies craftwork project, on premises on the Gurnos estate. Further discussions have taken place with the Local Authority and two Universities in Swansea, Amgueddfa Cymru National Museum of Wales and Cardiff University, and with the National Museum about the further development of our existing collaboration in Wrexham Museum.

Other potentially significant partnership opportunities that have been developed during the past year are with the National Trust Wales, the Hay Festival and the BBC. These offer the Library a means of gaining access to larger numbers of new users of its digital and other material, as well as providing opportunities for the broader marketing of its services.
Digital Resources and the First World War

In November 2013, NLW launched *The Welsh Experience of the First World War* (http://Cymru1914.org), a major digital archive of over 200,000 pages of primary sources on the impact of the First World War in Wales. The project was funded by Jisc, and is an all-Wales collaboration with partners from the archives and special collections. The project was led by the Library (Prof. Lorna Hughes was the PI on the project), and most of the content comes from our collections.

As the national and international commemoration activities now ramp up, having this resource available has been invaluable for the Library. From 2014-19, our greatest priorities are encouraging its widest use, and adding to the content available. In terms of content, the project is complete apart from some outstanding work to be done by PCW to make community-generated content visible. New digital content based on NLW collections will be added to Cymru1914.org throughout the commemoration period. Currently, the Library is digitising a number of collections, including additional newspapers; the Cardiganshire Great War Tribunal (Appeals) Records; Saunders Lewis Letters; the Welsh Horse Lancers Research Papers Archive; as well as books (including novels), periodicals, diaries and letters.

We will also digitise the Welsh Book of Remembrance as a contribution to the Temple of Peace HLF project, and develop this as a digital focus for commemoration in Wales hosted at the Library, with a crowdsourcing platform for transcription.

Cymru1914.org is being widely used for research, and outputs of this are becoming visible in print and online publications. Dr Paul O’Leary at Aberystwyth University used it to develop research on the impact of Total War on Merthyr and the Valleys; Dr Gethin Matthews at Swansea has integrated the material into a volume of essays on Welsh History. It is also the source of investigations of different narratives of the War in the Welsh and English language documents: Ifor ap Glyn presented on this at the British Library at an international conference on Languages in the First World War in June 2014.

The resource has been a valuable focus for public engagement, especially family history: it has been used at several events, including Who Do you Think You Are? roadshows. Analysis of usage statistics shows that it is popular outside Wales, especially for research and by the Welsh diaspora. It has been used as the basis of research for TV and radio programmes about the First World War. As part of the Arts Council commemoration event ‘LIGHTS OUT’, the Welsh artist Bedwyr Williams created a major light installation in Bangor for 4th August, to be projected on the new Pontio arts centre by the North Wales Memorial Arch. The installation is produced by Wales based organisation Artes Mundi, and will also form the basis of a digital exhibition. Both will include images from Cymru1914.org.

Cymru1914.org will be used to develop teaching resources in two major projects led by NLW:

1. The First World War Education Project
   This is an initiative to develop teaching materials on the First World War and Paris Peace Settlement based on collections at NLW (especially Cymru1914.org) and the National Museum of Wales. The project was commissioned by the Welsh Government Education Department, and has been led by the NLW Education Unit. One post associated with this project is based at the National Museum of Wales.

2. Wales at War
   Wales at War is a broad partnership led by NLW to support schoolchildren in Wales developing biographies of the names on their local War Memorials. It has been funded thanks to successful grant applications to the HLF, the Armed Forces Covenant Fund and the WG Education Department. Partners in the project include schools in Wales, ARCW, The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, RCAHMW, Cadw, and Lancaster University. The project is led by Prof. Lorna Hughes, and has the support of the Royal Navy. The RN have contributed a FT project manager for one year, and hosted a project launch on HMS Westminster on June 27th 2014.
Exhibitions and Events

A programme of talks and events around the First World War will take place at the Library, partner organisations, and the National Eisteddfod and Royal Welsh Show.

The exhibition Lloyd George: Y Dewin, Yr Afr, a’r Dyn Enillodd y Rhyfel/Lloyd George: The Wizard, the Goat and the Man Who Won the War ended in May 2014. It will be digitised and become part of an online exhibition that will be hosted on the NLW website for the remainder of the centenary. Early preparation is underway for 2016 for an exhibition on the theme of Mametz Wood, based on work by the photographer Aled Rhys Hughes, and David Jones’s ‘In Parenthesis’. An exhibition of manuscripts, archival materials and early books looking at how war has been represented in Welsh literature will take place at NLW in 2016. This will be an opportunity to bring together Llyfr Aneirin (Battle of Catraeth) and items from the David Jones Archives (Mametz Wood).

We are developing a methodology for producing small, targeted ‘pop-up’ exhibitions, with related online exhibitions, publications, and talks and events, around the key areas of Welsh Commemorative focus.

Volunteering Strategy

2013-14 has been a busy year, and once again the volunteering strategy has gone from strength to strength with 60 volunteers making a considerable contribution to the success of the Library by working on 11 different projects. Here’s an analysis of the statistics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATUS</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young people in education</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals with barriers in the workplace</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working part time</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

References were provided for many of our volunteers; 6 of whom were successful in progressing to employment.

The year ended by hosting a very successful Volunteers Fair at the Library. It brought together representatives from 22 associations (regional and national) that offer volunteering opportunities, and welcomed a good number of members of the public, many of whom were visiting the Library for the first time ever. The feedback on the day was very positive; we are grateful to the staff of Ceredigion Association for Voluntary Organisations for their support in organising the event. We must also pay tribute to Gwyneth Davies, volunteering coordinator, for her tireless work during the year.

Human Resources and Staff Training and Development

The past year has been a time of support for the workforce following the introduction of the Competencies Framework and its integration to the recruiting process and the annual performance review process. A review of both processes was undertaken following a six month period to ensure that the new systems were implemented and interpreted correctly by both managers and staff. The Unit continued to respond effectively to any individual issues, the inevitable challenges which faced the Library, for example, and the challenging
People’s Collection Wales
People’s Collection Wales is a website dedicated to the story of Wales and its people and is free to use. It is a place to discover, learn and contribute an individual’s story alongside stories and content provided by other people and organisations. It is led by a federated delivery partnership consisting of the three national heritage bodies: the National Library, National Museum Wales and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales.

The Library is responsible for delivery and development of the Community Engagement, Content and Editorial, and Moderation Strands. The People’s Collection office at the National Library has a dedicated team that visits Welsh communities, supporting and encouraging groups and individuals to use the website and share their content.

Early in 2014 People’s Collection Wales launched a refreshed website, with the aim of creating an improved experience for all users.

As a result, the website now has:

- An enhanced search facility;
- A more user friendly uploader for contributors;
- Improved interactive tools for creating collections, stories and trails;
- A more informative profile page for registered users;
- A dashboard for contributors to monitor use and popularity of their items;
- Personalisation options to ‘follow’ and ‘favourite’ users and items of interest;
- An option to receive notifications about contributions of interest;
- Tools to share activity on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest.

www.peoplescollectionwales.co.uk

financial climate, small scale re-structuring and project work developments such as the Conservation Centre (first bid to HLF), JISC, ITV and DfB.

A series of internal courses were conducted in accordance with the Training Programme. We also took advantage of external opportunities for training including a course on PRINCE2 in collaboration with the County Council. Under the Fair Play Scheme, 5 members of staff attended an ILM Level 2 in Management course and another 5 on an Essential Skills in the Workplace course; aimed at improving IT skills, numeracy and Welsh language.

digiDo project
By now the project has achieved most of its aims which is to assist small creative businesses to create new products or services. The targets at the beginning of the project were to assist 100 businesses, 25 individuals, create 10 new products or service and to create 6 new jobs within the creative industries.

With a year remaining, 122 businesses and 15 individuals have benefited from the project and these have created a total of 69 new products. An evaluation was undertaken of the first half of the project and the report was very positive and praised the success of the project up until now and suggested recommendations for these final months. We are busy implementing the changes and are targeting some new audiences.

After a series of events at the Library, the project, by now, is arranging events across Wales with two very successful ones having been held in Pembrokeshire and Swansea. The next events will be held at the National Eisteddfod in Llanelli in August and then in Caernarfon, Merthyr Tydfil and Aberystwyth during the Autumn. The project has a website (www.digiDo.org.ok) and there is ongoing work to design a new user interface to ease the task of searching for the Library’s images and we will be launching the interface, along with changes to the website, during the coming year.
Exhibitions and Promotions

One of the highlights of the year was the exhibition 4 Books: Welsh Icons United. This was an opportunity to see the most important Medieval Welsh manuscripts brought together under one roof for the first time: the Black Book of Carmarthen and Book of Taliesin from the National Library of Wales, the Book of Aneirin from Cardiff Central Library and the Red Book of Hergest from Jesus College, Oxford. A successful programme of events was arranged around the exhibition including lectures and films.

Lloyd George: The Wizard, the Goat and the Man Who Won the War, commemorated the 150th Anniversary of the birth of the British Prime Minister by exhibiting some of the best of our Welsh Political Archive. The Welsh Landscapes exhibition was a favourite with our visitors, especially as there was a chance to see both of our paintings by JMW Turner on display. To coincide with the exhibition the Library held a Facebook competition to decide which view of Castell Coch would be shown and the winning picture was displayed in Oriel Gregynog.

Still on the theme of Turner, in October, the Library took part in the Masterpieces in Schools initiative alongside the BBC and PCF, by generously agreeing to lend one its most treasured oil paintings, Dolbadarn Castle by JMW Turner to Trelai Primary School for the day along with contributing a day of educational activities on the work.

Electronic Legal Deposit

In April 2013 Electronic Legal Deposit came into force in the UK.

At the moment most of the change is to be seen in journals, especially the journals of certain large publishers where a number of titles have moved from print to electronic deposit. Generally this means more titles being deposited than was the case with print deposit. This will effect users of the Legal Deposit Libraries who will have to turn to computer terminals to get access to the latest issue of their favourite research journal rather than ordering the print issue to be viewed at their desk.

The Library is surveying the situation as regards publishers in Wales and archiving relevant electronic publications or directing publishers of this material to the Deposit Portal.

The Deposit Portal was set up by the British Library in cooperation with the other Legal Deposit Libraries in order to enable small to medium sized publishers to load their monographic and periodical publications to a secure store, ready for ingest and cataloguing. At the moment only a select number of publishers use the Portal, including a handful from Wales chosen by NLW but the hope is that this year the site will be opened up for any publisher to use.

Some official bodies in Wales, such as Welsh Government, publish too much to be able to archive publications individually via the Portal and NLW is working towards implementing a more efficient solution for depositing these numerous publications in cooperation with the British Library and the National Library of Scotland.

The Bibliography of Wales Unit is continuing to claim and catalogue Welsh electronic publications published before April 2013 under Voluntary Deposit. This is part of the Library’s long term effort to ensure that a digital gap does not open up in our Welsh collections.

It is sometimes forgotten that websites are also publications according to the Legal Deposit Libraries Act. The National Library of Wales has been supplying information about Welsh websites to the British Library in order to ensure that all relevant Welsh sites are archived in the crawl of the UK web domain. At the same time the Library’s work in archiving Welsh websites outside of Legal Deposit, under the voluntary scheme, in the UK Web Archive, continues.
Digitising Archival Resources
An important development during the year was to extend the Library’s ability to digitise archival resources. Efficiency in the processes for preparing materials to be digitised and scanned depended to a certain extent on the consistency of the originals. Unique and distinct materials, such as archival resources, are of necessity inconsistent in format and form. So developing the necessary processes and workflows needed intense work and drew on the expertise from many different sections and units within the Library. As a result a workflow to enable digitisation of archival materials was developed. Initially this has been used mainly to digitise resources related to World War 1, as part of the Library’s contribution to the WHELF project Wales 1914: The First World War and the Welsh Experience funded by JISC. The digitised collections include a significant body of records relating to the Welsh Army Corps, Welsh Army Corps Papers 1914-1925. The Corps was established as a result of a speech by David Lloyd George in September 1914 calling for a “Welsh Army” and the records include correspondence relating to the administration of this ‘army’: from its formation, training, equipping and deployment, to demobilisation in 1925. Due to digitisation this important record of Wales’s involvement in World War 1 is now available to researchers across the country and beyond.