

IN BRIEF

Top jobs at ALIA

Two senior positions have been created at ALIA House, Canberra.

A new director of professional services will cover education and professional development and a chief operating officer will manage day-to-day operations at the national office. Both will report to executive director Sue Hutley.

Missing issues

The National Library, with Australian Consolidated Press and the State Library of NSW, is digitising the *Australian Women's Weekly* from 1933 to 1982, but a few issues are missing. Visit the [website](#) to find out which ones are needed.



'How do you say thank you to people who have dedicated a massive amount of their free time to a project for no reward other than the satisfaction of knowing it's a job well done? We couldn't let the work of the text correctors go without recognition so we invited the six most prolific volunteers to be our guests for a day. The willingness of volunteers to be part of library ventures never ceases to amaze me and it sends a clear signal about the value the public sees in the work of libraries.'



NEWS



Front row (left to right): David Ong, manager, Australian newspaper digitisation; Queensland text correctors Maurie and Lyn Mulcahy and Fay Walker; Victorian text corrector Julie Hemenstall; Cathy Pilgrim, director, newspaper and digitisation branch, and Cathy Jones, logistics officer, Australian newspaper digitisation. Back row: text correctors Ann Manley (NSW) and John Hall (Victoria) flank Rose Holley, manager of Trove

Text correctors' labour of love is rewarded

Six people who have helped correct millions of lines of text online in the National Library of Australia's newspaper digitisation program were presented with special awards at the end of January.

The top text correctors, who have made the program's Hall of Fame, Julie Hemenstall (Victoria), Maurie and Lyn Mulcahy (Queensland), Fay Walker (Queensland), John Hall (Victoria) and Ann Manley (NSW), were presented with awards for their efforts at a special presentation in the National Library theatre. They were also given an exclusive viewing of some of the library's prized collection items and saw a demonstration of the library's new discovery service, Trove (see page 7).

The National Library's newspaper digitisation program began two years ago, using optical character recognition software, which automatically converts old newspaper images into digital text. Although this is the latest technology, the small fonts and uneven printing of many of the newspaper pages made conversion difficult and not always accurate. Online users from all over Australia were keen to help by correcting the text.

More than 5000 online users have corrected text – with the top correctors presented with the special awards. From a stay-at-home mum with a special interest in family history to a retired couple keen on shipping, the correctors have provided enormous assistance to the program, with some spending up to 45 hours a week correcting text.

Manager of the Australian Newspaper Service at the National Library, Rose Holley, said the correctors' work was an invaluable service to the community. 'Their contribution and dedication to this project is simply remarkable,' Ms Holley said. 'They have really gone the extra mile.'

The program, which is run in conjunction with state and territory libraries, digitises historic Australian newspapers from 1803 up to 1954 when copyright began. The digitised images and text are then made available to everyone via the web. The millionth newspaper page went public on 14 December 2009, with that page, a 1901 edition of *The Sydney Morning Herald*, containing the 10 millionth article to be digitised. It is expected 40 million articles will be available via the program by June 2011.

The National Library received \$1 million in 2008 from the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation to assist with the digitisation of out-of-copyright editions of *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

For more information about the National Library's Australian newspaper digitisation program, go to: <http://www.nla.gov.au/ndp>

FOCUS

Books, journals,
magazines, articles ...Pictures
and photosAustralian newspapers
(1803 - 1954)Diaries, letters,
archives

Maps

Music, sound
and videoArchived websites
(1996 - now)About people
and organisations

It doesn't take much digging to find treasure in Trove

Launched last November, [Trove](#) is a discovery service developed by the National Library of Australia, with the avowed aim of making finding and getting information for all Australians, faster, easier and more powerful. It allows the National Library to combine and integrate eight existing national discovery services.

The name 'Trove' encapsulates the concepts of treasured and valuable collection items and of the process of discovery (from the French "trouver" – to find or discover). Trove was released as a prototype in May 2009 with comments invited from users before it was ready to go public in November 2009.

The National Library has been delighted with the response so far to Trove. Like many innovations, it is a work in progress, and the National Library has many ideas for improving and extending it, but it is already providing users with a new discovery experience focused on Australia and Australians. It supplements what search engines provide with the best information available from Australia's memory institutions.

Trove gives users a single point of access to more than 45 million

'I just wanted to take a moment to thank you for this amazing resource. I am a theatre historian trying to research a few American minstrel performers who spent extended periods of time performing in Australia. I was despondent of finding any information on their time there until I stumbled upon this resource, and what a find! I have spent a great deal of time in a wide variety of databases, and I do not believe I have ever found anything as useful or comprehensive. I love that I am able to search newspapers, books, diaries, etc. all at the same time.'

items, searching both metadata and full text content. It provides users with information from more sources than ever before – library, archive and museum collections, university research repositories, digitised newspapers, web archives and online biographical databases. It also includes other large collections including OAlster (23 million research articles from the world's universities), the Open Library (350,000 online public domain books) and the Hathi Trust (140,000 online public domain books.)

Trove has features aimed at making discovery and navigation easy for the user.

- It supports relevance ranking – the results which are shown first will be those most relevant to the search.
- It provides features to group editions and versions of works.

- It supports refinement of search results by format, availability, keywords, author, decade, language and Australian content.

Trove has been designed to support user contributions and annotations. The library welcomes contributions from researchers and the public and encourages them to add comments and tags, correct newspaper text, split or merge versions within works. There is also a feedback form available on the website.

The Library had already made a head start on user contributions through Australian Newspapers, released as a beta service in 2008 and now incorporated into Trove. The Library also welcomes contact from memory institutions which would like to contribute data to Trove or would like to re-purpose the data in Trove for non-commercial purposes.