Chapter 3 • Collection management and development

Goal 2
To maximise the role of Australian Indigenous peoples in the activities and services of the Institute

Family history tracing

The AIATSIS Library provides a family history information service to Indigenous clients Australia-wide.

The majority of the Family History Unit staff are Indigenous.

In June, responsibility for funding the service was transferred to the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing, and extended for a further 12 months. Prior to this, ATSIC funded the service.

Uncertainty regarding the future of the service has impacted negatively on staff morale and retention. A significant backlog of enquiries has resulted from increased demand for services and staffing difficulties caused by funding uncertainties.

A Family History skills training program was delivered to Link-up case workers in March 2004. Visitors to the Unit included Link-Up case workers from NSW and Queensland, as well as 'Bringing Them Home' counsellors from Victoria and Western Australia.

A combined list of groups visiting the Library and the Family History is available at Appendix 8.

The Family History Unit provides web-based information for Australian Indigenous family history research. For further detail see page 48 above.

Family History staff worked closely with the Library digitisation team to prepare website access to all issues of the *Dawn* and *New Dawn* magazines from 1952–1975. These are a wonderful source of community and family histories for New South Wales during the period 1952–1975.

Productivity has been improved with networking of access to a wide range of CD-Roms including birth, death and marriage indexes. Indexing for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Biographical Index (ABI) was suspended and resources were redirected to answering client requests.

Recording and archiving workshop

The *Keeping your history alive* package, comprising an information handbook and a practical hands-on course, was designed to address the growing need of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, communities and individuals for information and advice concerning the care and handling of audiovisual material.

Photographs, sound recordings and videos are an important part of the Indigenous historical record in Australia, which has traditionally been transmitted orally and visually through narrative, song, dance and art. An audiovisual record is an important and immediate link between past, present and future generations. However, these materials are fragile and extremely vulnerable to Australia's harsh climatic conditions and to obsolescence of technology.

AIATSIS was the recipient of a major grant from the New South Wales Department of Aboriginal Affairs for 2003–2004. In December 2003 two one-day training workshops were held for around 10 community members each from the Vincentia High School and the Eden Land Council, both on the south coast of New South Wales.

In June 2004 AIATSIS conducted an intensive three-day workshop for 40 community representatives from many regional areas around New South Wales. All the staff of the Audiovisual Archives program participated in the training. Participants learnt how to take good photographs, video and audio recordings, how to process film in the dark room, and manipulate photographs and audio using digital technology. Training was also provided in documentation, systems for cataloguing, preventative conservation, storage of audiovisual material, project scoping and interview techniques.

Each participant was given an information handbook developed by the staff to accompany the training course and the names and contact details of relevant staff for future assistance. The workshop was extremely successful, with most people expressing particular interest in learning about the use of audiovisual technology. The participants all expressed surprise and alarm at how they were currently 'looking' after their materials and were keen to get home and put what they had learned into practice (see story page 45).

Return of materials to Indigenous communities (ROMTIC) and client requests

The Audiovisual Archives runs a program of repatriation of materials from the archives back to communities. The amount of material returned through this program has almost doubled during this reporting period.

During the year, the number of access requests increased slightly from 646 to 650. However, the size of the requests has increased dramatically — clients have requested everything AIATSIS holds on a particular language, group or place from all media collections: the film and video, audio and photographic. On occasions these requests can involve hundreds or even, thousands of separate items.

Clients discovered hidden treasures in the audiovisual collections, for instance, a Canberra man discovered a photograph of his great-grandfather taken in the 1920s at the Kerry King studios in Sydney; a Western Australian woman found a sound recording of her grandfather made by Norman Tindale in the 1960s; a Queensland man was given copies of all the Gugu Badhun materials which included recordings of his grandfather; and a woman from north-west NSW was given a copy of a sound recording of her great-uncle singing in language.
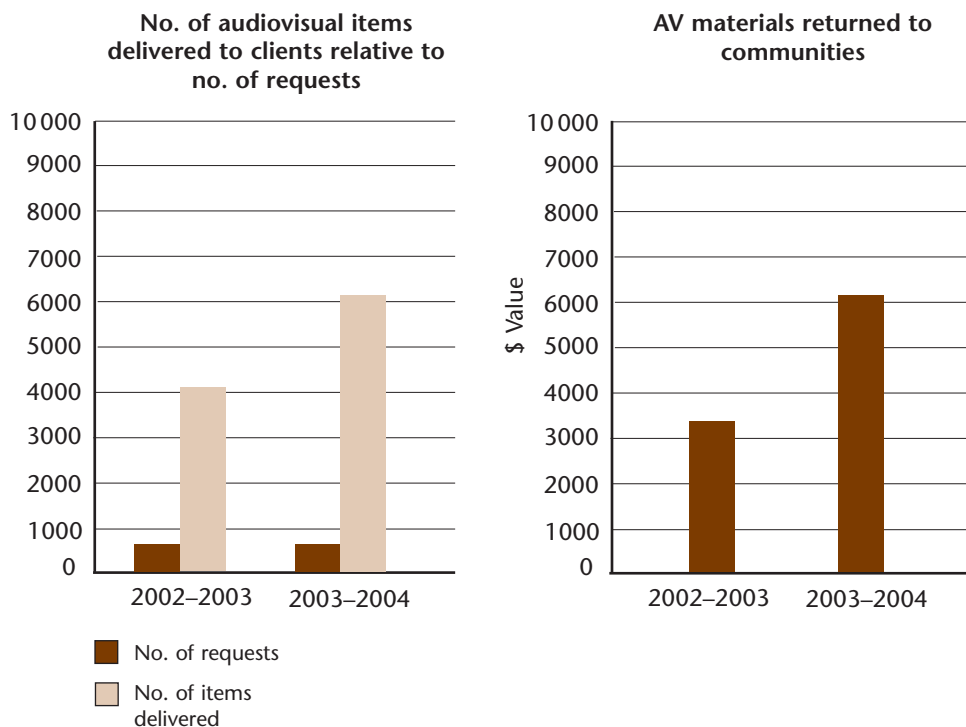
The Audiovisual Archives staff also located a photograph for a client and his brother as children at Walgett Aboriginal Station, in the Aboriginal Welfare Board Collection. Photographs were supplied to the Injinoo Aboriginal Council in Queensland. The elders requested the photographs as teaching aids to use when talking to young people about their history and culture.

Representatives of the Mer Island Community Council visited AIATSIS to search for information relating to their community. Relevant photographs found in the archives were made available to the Mer Island community through the community council.

Mr Greg Mackellar of the Muda Aboriginal Corporation spent a week in the Audiovisual Archives researching sound recordings of the Wangkumara language. Mr Mackellar is developing a talking dictionary and requested a digitised copy of all of the Wangkumara language recordings.

From 24–28 May AIATSIS sponsored a visit by women from the Geraldton community for a week to research materials in the AIATSIS collection about their community and families. With the assistance of Audiovisual Archives staff the women were successful in discovering photographic and audio materials, including photos of their grandmothers, aunties and themselves when young.

All the materials have been copied and returned to the community. They indicated they would talk to the communities in Geraldton with a view to depositing recordings at AIATSIS in the future.

No. of audiovisual items delivered to clients relative to no. of requests

- No. of requests
- No. of items delivered

AV materials returned to communities

Audiovisual Archives

Keeping languages and history alive

'We've got no fluent speakers [of our language] left. I have one Auntie at home and she's still got the intonation, she's still speaking, but she's not speaking it everyday. I've got the skills now and I want to go back and record her properly.'

Bernadette Dunkin from Boggabilla, teaches Indigenous language to primary school children in both Boggabilla and the old Tomalin mission. She was one of the enthusiastic participants in an AIATSIS workshop in 2004, 'Keeping Your History Alive', that provided inspiration and needed skills to Indigenous language teachers working to conserve and revive their Indigenous language heritage.

The workshop focused on the collection, storage and preservation of audiovisual language materials. Conducted by the Institute's Audiovisual Archives Program, 40 Indigenous language teachers participated in the workshop.

A core component of the workshop involved lots of 'hands on' activities with still and video cameras, and audio recording equipment. Along with discussions about methods and techniques for gathering audiovisual material, participants were also shown how the Institute's technicians digitise audiovisual material and enhance the images or sound. Work on preventive conservation, storage, handling and cataloguing was also included and participants were made aware of intellectual property rights and the legal obligations of people holding audiovisual material.

Kirby and Simone Barker from Corakai during the workshop

To help the participants transfer their newly acquired knowledge and skills back into their local community, a handbook based on the workshop was also provided.

All the participants expressed real appreciation for all they learnt about the role AIATSIS plays in conserving Indigenous materials.

Clancy McKellar from Bourke said, 'I'm so proud that we have the Institute to hold our records of Aboriginal history. We've found materials here on our Wangkumara language that we'll take back to Bourke, and we've invited a linguist to come down and help us to revive our language.'

Bernadette said learning their own language is crucial for Indigenous children's self esteem and cultural knowledge. The course provided her support, encouragement and inspiration to continue her work with them.

The workshop was also valuable for the Institute's technicians who gained a stronger understanding of difficulties people working in the field encounter.

Endangered Languages Project

This project, funded by ATSIC, aimed to document, catalogue, preserve and digitise language audio materials for greater accessibility to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language workers. Materials were returned to communities free of charge throughout the life of the project which finished in December 2003. The project was able to make a significant inroad into the backlog of original, unique tapes which required urgent preservation work.

Throughout the project over 2000 hours of recordings were returned to Indigenous language workers in 78 languages, and finding aids were created for a further 41 languages.

One of the most exciting outcomes of the project was the production of several sets of language compilation CDs for frequently requested languages. Recordings of a given language were edited together on CDs and stored in the Archive to facilitate future access. CD compilations have been produced for Gumbaynggirr, Dhanggadi, Wangkumara, Yugambeh, Badjala/Butchulla, Dharawal and Dhurga, Gamilaraay, Warrgamay and various other languages. All of the compilations were very popular and are still in high demand. Ideally, AIATSIS would like to produce a set of compilation CDs for every Australian language. The production of a finding aid is the first step towards producing a compilation.

The project received several large requests from language centres and other Indigenous organisations who were seeking to expand their own holdings. The repatriation of language recordings to relevant community organisations is central to building a community's capacity to maintain or reclaim their language(s). Organisations which obtained material through the project included: Wangka Maya Pilbara Aboriginal Language Centre; Muda Aboriginal Corporation; Papalu Aparr-Kari Aboriginal Corporation; Yaegl Language Program; Yulawirri Nurai Indigenous Association; Yaitja Warra Wodli Language Centre; Narungga Aboriginal Progress Association; Morowari Tribal Aboriginal Corporation; Ngunnawal Community Care; Tibooburra Local Aboriginal Land Council; Wangkanyi Ngurra Tjurta Aboriginal Corporation; Yugambeh Museum; Diwurruwurru-Jaru Aboriginal Corporation; Tiwi Local Government Council; Coffs Harbour Gumbaynggir Elders; Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Cooperative; Gamilaraay/ Yuwaalaraay Language Program; Inala Elders; Arwarbukarl Cultural Resource Association; Juluwarlu Group Aboriginal Corporation; and Wirra Waalpa Aboriginal Corporation.

The project has also provided assistance to individuals and other organisations working on language preservation and revival. For instance, Queensland State Library is in the process of establishing Indigenous Knowledge Centres (IKCs) in a number of communities, including Wujal Wujal, Mabuiag, Hopevale, Woorabinda, Kubin, Mossman Gorge, Napranum and Doomagee. Through AIATSIS, the Preserving Endangered Languages Project has contributed many detailed lists of relevant languages and began copying selected recordings for lodgement at the centres once established.

Indigenous researchers and tertiary students

Ms Joanne Taylor, Ms Rebecca Stubbs and Ms Sue Carnell attended the Indigenous Researchers' Forum held at the Australian National University, Canberra. It was an invaluable opportunity to promote Library services and collections, in particular the services provided by the Family History Unit. Over 55 forum attendees participated in AIATSIS Library tours and took advantage of extended opening hours.

As a follow up, all University Indigenous Studies centres received information packages covering all aspects of the collections and the services available to remote clients.

Laura Mandima Dixon room

On 9 June 2004, the Audiovisual Access client area was officially named the Laura Mandima Dixon Room by Professor Mick Dodson. Forty members of Mrs Dixon's family, representing three generations, travelled from Dubbo to attend an emotional ceremony in the room, along with the Principal and Chairman. Mrs Dixon was the last of the Wangkumara women from Coopers Creek. Until around the age of 25 she had spent most of her time with her grandparents, which is where she gained her strong knowledge of the Wangkumara culture. Her great-grandfather, a respected Wangkumara elder, could recall the 1861 Burke and Wills expedition.

In the early 1970s Mrs Dixon began working with several researchers recording the Wangkumara language, reminiscences and sites and these valuable and irreplaceable recordings are held in the AIATSIS archives. Mrs Dixon became a member of AIATSIS in 1974.

Mrs Dixon has 382 descendants: 12 children, 72 grandchildren, 224 great-grandchildren and 74 great-great-grandchildren. Through her work recording her knowledge and memories, she wanted to ensure that she left a legacy that can be passed to her family.

At the naming ceremony, Don Dixon presented the Institute with one of his paintings, depicting Wangkumara country to hang in 'his mother's room'. The family also donated a collection of photographs of Wangkumara country and in return AIATSIS gave the family all the recordings of Laura Dixon from the archive.

Goal 3
To develop, maintain and preserve well-documented archives and collections and to maximise access to these, particularly by Indigenous peoples, in keeping with appropriate cultural and ethical practices

The Library aims to collect all materials relating to Australian Indigenous studies including published and unpublished materials. Its acquisition budget is $47,500. Film, video, sound recordings and photographic materials are in the Audiovisual Archives. The Library's collection development policy is available online.

Priorities for the acquisition program include:

• materials of Indigenous authorship

- archives of people significant in Australian Indigenous affairs
- archives of people prominent in Australian Indigenous studies
- materials to support family history research.

Family History usage statistics	
Enquiries	650
Visitors	218
Link-Up training courses	1
1800 free calls received	2559
Website visits	110,682

The Audiovisual Archives is a major archive of unique primary research materials of audio, film, video photographs, works of art and artefacts all related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and issues. It is the largest archive of such material in the world. In size the AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive collection is comparable to those of the National Library of Australia and ScreenSound Australia.

The role of the Audiovisual Archives is to preserve the materials in its custodial care for future generations. The Archives does this by undertaking conservation work on original materials, making preservation copies of all materials, undertaking research and documentation of the collection for ease of access to its clients and by providing access through a designated access unit.

Increasingly, Indigenous people are depositing their audiovisual materials with AIATSIS and many researchers are also becoming concerned about the deteriorating state of their audiovisual materials and seeking to place them safely in the AIATSIS Audiovisual Archives.

The Audiovisual Archives aims to create a comprehensive collection of audiovisual materials relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia. Historical materials are sought as well as contemporary materials to reflect the richness, diversity and dynamic nature of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures both past and present.

The Audiovisual Archives Program seeks to disseminate its collections and expertise to the Indigenous community through Community Access, Return of Materials to Indigenous Communities (ROMTIC) program and also through a recording and archiving training course *Keeping Your History Alive*.

Research grantees awarded monies from the Institute's Competitive Research Grants Scheme enter into contractual arrangement to provide a deliverable product at the end of the tenure of the grant — including postgraduate theses, detailed audiovisual materials resulting from research, language databases and the like. The Research Program liaises closely with the AVA and Library to ensure that these deliverables are properly accessioned and are of suitable standard for permanent archiving. Grantees requiring specialist audiovisual assistance are now contacted early in the grant round.

Collections management

During the year, the Library acquired the research materials of Professor Ann Curthoys relating to the Freedom Ride of 1965 under the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts *Cultural Gifts Program*. The donation also included material collected by Pat Healy. Of great interest in this collection is a diary written on the Freedom Ride by Professor Anne Curthoys when she was a student at Sydney University.

A total of 4151 items were added to the collection (a 28% increase on last year). This figure includes:

- 637 items purchased
- 1298 serial issues received
- 21 items received through Research Grants program.

A list of donations and gifts is available at Appendix 7.

The following items were added to the Rare Book collection through purchase:

- A set of four 'copy book' water colour portraits of Aborigines *c.* 1850.
- McCombie, Thomas, 1858, *The colonist in Australia; or the adventures of Godfrey Arabin*, London.
- Turnbull, John, 1805, *A voyage round the world in the years 1800–1804; in which the author visited the principal islands in the Pacific Ocean, and the English settlements of Port Jackson and Norfolk Island*, London.

During the year, the Audiovisual Archive began work on the project to facilitate better access to information on individual photographs it holds. Over 300 caption lists were converted to html documents and attached to the corresponding Photographic Collection Level records in the AIATSIS online collection retrieval system Mura®. Upon completion, clients will have access to over 92,000 detailed descriptions by searching on personal name, place or subject.

A major film and video documentation project has commenced to make better access to this important collection. The paper documentation is being reorganised in a more logical manner, consolidated and information will be entered onto the collection management system. The films and videos are currently being documented to extract information which will assist our clients locate relevant materials within the collection. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people require information for many varied reasons, including family history, language and cultural revival, native title. Information about language group or personal names has not in the past been documented for the film and video collection, meaning that Indigenous people searching for this type of information may have been missing valuable resource materials.

The film collection includes thousands of hours of audio materials, much of which is audio created as the sound track for film. However, a large number of the tapes are incidental to the film and are an invaluable resource on their own. A project is underway to reorganise these collection materials into the audio collection for better client access.

A number of working groups have been established in the Audiovisual Archives; technical standards, quality control, registration, special projects, audio, video, photographic, artworks and artefacts. The groups meet to review procedures and progress for ongoing improvement and greater efficiencies.

This year the AIATSIS Audiovisual Archives purchased two important photographic collections from 'Oceania Ethnographica': a photo album compiled by Ernest E Kramer Collection and a postcard collection featuring portraits of Aboriginal people.

The Ernest E Kramer, Missionary of the Aborigines' Friends' Association, photo album, containing images taken during two of his 'camel caravan' tours through Central Australia, was purchased. The 65 prints, many with Kramer's own inscriptions on the verso, provide a fascinating visual account of his travels among the Luritja, Pintupi and Ngalia Warlpiri people in 1931 and 1932. Much of the content reflects Kramer's prime goal of taking the Christian religion to remote Aboriginal communities: the landscape he traversed, the outdoor religious services conducted and portraits of the Indigenous people who assisted him. Also included are photographs that demonstrate a curiosity into the material culture of the people he worked with. The gathering of bush tucker and other everyday activities are well represented.

That he was not only accepted but trusted by many within these communities prompted JB Cleland to call upon his services to provide assistance to members of the Board of Anthropology Research expedition to Cockatoo Creek. A letter of thanks from Cleland to the Aborigines' Friends Association following the fieldwork indicated the extent to which Kramer's good relations with the Aboriginal people paved the way for a successful expedition. The album contains a selection of images taken during this trip.

AVA also purchased a collection of early 20th century postcards featuring portraits of Aboriginal people in both studio and location settings, by photographers such as Charles Kerry and EF Reichenbach (aka Ryko). While these images show a strong emphasis on portraying what was considered the 'exotic' or 'unusual' aspects of Indigenous culture, they are nevertheless of immense value to researchers and descendents of the people depicted. Of particular note is a rare colour postcard printed c1910 featuring a family group from Western Australia, and an original albumen print of a group of South Australian Aborigines at their camp. This image dates from the 1870s and was taken by Captain Samuel Sweet, an early pioneer of Australian photography.

These collections are important acquisitions for AIATSIS in terms of their intrinsic worth and the fact that they can be both physically preserved, and to ensure the content is protected from inappropriate reproduction. Both collections are currently being digitised to preserve the original prints and to facilitate wider access for family history and research purposes.

Significant photographs were also donated to the Archive by the daughter and niece of the manager of the Roseby Park and Brewarrina missions in the 1920s. The family loaned the family photograph albums to AIATSIS and have given permission to copy any photographs of interest. There are several photos of mission buildings at the time, and people including school groups.

Ian Dunlop, pioneer of the genre that was to become known as 'ethnographic filmmaking', deposited nearly 1000 slides taken on location during work on the Commonwealth Film Unit's 'People of the Western Desert' series between 1965 and 1968. He also deposited nearly 3000 slides taken at Yirrkala and environs while filming the Yirrkala film project between 1970 and 1982. These beautifully photographed images provide valuable insight not only into the filmmaking process in often difficult conditions, but the material culture and daily activities of the communities with which he worked. The portraits of prominent community leaders and artists are particularly noteworthy. Approximately half of the Yirrkala material has now been digitised with some of those images now available for clients to view on-site through the AIATSIS Digital Picture Library.

The Institute was fortunate to acquire, at auction, a set of recordings of Jack Wherra recorded by John McCaffery at Mowanjum in the 1960s.

In 1964, John McCaffery, a PhD candidate from Stanford University, lecturer in anthropology at San Francisco State College and Fullbright Scholar was selected to work with the late Professor Ronald Berndt. Later that year he undertook fieldwork in the Mowanjum community in the Kimberley region of Western Australia. His interest was the process of creating visual art objects. The result of his research was a large collection of objects and documentation. The tapes which AIATSIS has acquired are recordings of Jack Wherra, an artist notable for carving boab nuts.

McCaffery worked closely with Wherra and recorded many important details about boab nut carving, a much neglected area of Indigenous art. The nuts that McCaffery detailed with Jack's assistance are, in many instances, on par with the sort of detailed recording that was to be done on Arnhem Land barks or Central Australian dot paintings: they are most important depictions of so many aspects of Indigenous life of the Kimberley.

The collection comprises 29 tapes, each reel of which is 1800 feet in length. The tapes contain Jack Wherra's life history and the history, stories and imagery depicted on the boab nuts. AIATSIS is currently in the process of preserving these valuable tapes comprising 1,800 feet reels and as yet the total hours of recording is unknown but could well number hundreds of hours. The Powerhouse Museum successfully bid to acquire the boab nuts documented on the tapes and a future mutual partnership is anticipated with the Museum.

AIATSIS has acquired the only print of the 16mm film *Grain of the Voice* by highly regarded film makers Arthur and Corinne Cantrill. The film, made in 1976, interprets the landscape in the Areyonga area, Northern Territory, through both

men's and women's song cycles, highlighting the strong relationship of the Pitjantjatjara to their land.

The soundtrack is unedited, preserving the long pauses in the singing and the discussions between the women as about the songs and verses, capturing the true nature of the performance song cycles.

Dr Betty Meehan donated one of her and the late Professor Rhys Jones's works of art to the AIATSIS Artwork Collection.

The piece is a desert painting, by Charlie Tjapangarti acrylic on linen, 94cm x 63.5cm and was purchased for Rhys Jones and Betty Meehan by Professor Fred Myers. In the documentation, Professor Myers states that Charlie Tjapangarti and Yumpulurru Tjungurrayi, Pintupi men are the probable owners of the design.

An accompanying audio recording provides further documentation for the painting. The interview by Fred Myers with the artist, Charlie Tjapangarti is in Pintupi and Yumpulurru Tjungurrayi sings the song relating to the artwork.

Preservation, conservation and maintenance

A fundamental responsibility of any collecting institution is to ensure that the audiovisual materials it holds — which are extremely vulnerable to decomposition and damage — are preserved, conserved and constantly monitored. Technical staff are also responsible for copying materials for internal and external client requests, recording and photographing AIATSIS events, and creating original media materials.

The Library houses materials to archival standards and collections are held in a secure temperature controlled storage space. Conservation and preservation activities were expanded because of additional activities funded through the digitisation program. This additional money enabled the employment of two conservators for a considerable part of the year.

The Library treated 121 items including: 35 NAIDOC posters; six volumes of rare books in preparation for 'Portraits from Rare books' online exhibition; and 15 Aurukun diaries. Fifty of these items were placed in custom made archival storage enclosures.

Conservators played a major role in the establishment of a joint use quarantine room. Plans have been completed and tenders have been let. The project has included the selection and purchase of equipment and fixtures, including a freezer, shelving and benches. It is anticipated that the room will be operational by the end of August 2004.

Conservation staff also provided expert advice to Link-Up caseworkers as a part of their training at AIATSIS. Advice was given on the preservation of documents and photographic records with specific reference to preservation products which are readily available and low in cost. Much of this information can be found online in a series of Home Preservation information sheets on the AIATSIS website.

A conservation plan was provided for the AIATSIS Library's nomination for the 'Sorry Books' to be included on the Australian Memory of the World Register. One staff member received training in Disaster Preparedness.

During the year, a number of displays were mounted in the Stanner Room. One featuring the work of Indigenous researchers coincided with the Indigenous Researchers' Conference held in October 2003. The current display has been prepared by Conservation staff and demonstrates how readily available items can be used to store documents and photographs at home.

AIATSIS continually conducts testing for Vinegar Syndrome — the decomposition of cellulose acetate materials so-called because it smells like vinegar. One hundred per cent of the AIATSIS film collection and 85 per cent of its photographic collection is cellulose acetate. When this material decomposes it not only destroys the item itself, it releases chemicals which will infect other materials in the archive.

Technical staff have hosted a number of whole day workshops this year for representatives from other archives around Australia, the New Zealand Radio Archives and the Archive of Maori and Pacific Music. The world-class digital audio facility at AIATSIS is of great interest to others in the field.

A new purpose designed film and video room has been installed and commissioned. The film handling facility enables significant advances in the ongoing preservation and maintenance of the AIATSIS film and video collections. In a dust free environment film can be inspecte and rewound for preservation. The room is equipped with both old and modern technology which gives staff the ability to migrate obsolete video tape formats to current formats including digital master tapes. The room also has a tape baking oven which temporarily rejuvenates decomposing magnetic tapes in order that they can be played one more time and migrated to current formats.

Collection documentation

The Library controls materials in the collection through library stock-control practices. Documentation of materials is in accordance with standard bibliographic practices, and in line with Indigenous cultural practices. Value-added documentation includes annotations and the use of specialist thesaurus terms to enhance bibliographic access. Manuscript records are added to the Register of Australian Archives and Manuscripts. Monograph and serials records are added to the National Bibliographic Database.

1401 analytics were added (an increase of 17.8% compared to the previous year). 1408 annotations were added to monograph records.

The following guides to manuscripts are available online at AIATSIS website.

MS number	Title
MS 2188	Papers of Gerhardt Laves (Original papers)
MS 2189	Papers of Gerhardt Laves (Photocopies of originals)
MS 2907	July Inglis Papers. Addition
MS 2995	Papers of Jack Waterford (revised from 2001)
MS 3510	Seminars on the 'Rights of Peoples'
MS 3752	WEH Stanner Collection – Revised version to include Addition
MS 3764	Father Dixon and the Stuart Case
MS 3803	Papers of Marjorie J Oakes
MS 4054	Coral Dow's Aboriginal Tent Embassy Press Clippings
MS 4112	Jack Horner's Research Notebooks on the Life and Times of Bill Ferguson
MS 4114	Miscellaneous Australian notes of Kenneth Hale
MS 4114	Miscellaneous Australian notes of Kenneth Hale. Addition
MS 4127	Papers of Neil McGarvie
MS 4165	Aboriginal Families of the Moree Region
MS 4167	Papers of Barrie Dexter
MS 4169	Papers of Beth Graham
MS 4170	Linguistic materials of Frank Zandvoort

Access to the collections and services

Bibliographic access is provided to all newly acquired items. Online access, when available, is provided through catalogue records. Physical access is provided in accordance with copyright provisions and in accordance with conditions determined by depositors and donors in consultation with the collection management staff.

An inter-library loan service and a document delivery service are available and these are provided in accordance with copyright provisions and in accordance with access conditions. Specialist reference staff provide information services to visitors and access to collections in the Stanner Room. Remote clients access information services by telephone, mail, fax and email.

All CD-Roms are now available to clients in the Stanner Room. A detailed guide provides information on subject coverage and instructions on its use. A proposal for access to commercial databases, both bibliographic and full text is under consideration.

Usage statistics

Entries in visitors book	1392
Reference desk enquiries from visitors	1356 (an increase of 30% from previous year)
Enquiries requiring a written response	644 (an increase of 9% from previous year)
Phone enquiries	1033 (an increase of 26% from previous year)

For details on group visits to the library see Appendix 8.

Online full text access

Number of full text documents accessible through catalogue records	406
Cumulative total of full text documents accessible through catalogue records	1463

Document delivery (inter-library loans)

Requested by Institute from other libraries	286
Requested by clients and other Libraries from Institute	202
On-site delivery (number of items delivered to clients in the Stanner Room)	10 591 (an increase of 16 per cent from previous year)

The NTRU provides a dedicated service for people doing research on native title claims wanting to access the AIATSIS collections. Research and Access Officer, Ms Grace Koch, provides information, advice and access to library and audiovisual archive materials held at AIATSIS.

Total transactions for the year were 1040 (66% more than in 2001–2002, but 15% less than 2002–2003). It was pleasing to see a continuing increase in requests from Indigenous people.

Access statistics 2001–2004

	2001–2002		2002–2003		2003–2004	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Indigenous individuals	53	(8%)	76	(6%)	126	(12%)
Indigenous organisations	198	(29%)	198	(16%)	195	(19%)

(cont. next page)

Access statistics 2001–2004						
	2001–2002		2002–2003		2003–2004	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Government	300	(43%)	783	(63%)	510	(49%)
Consultants/ private companies	109	(16%)	143	(11%)	117	(11%)
Other	28	(4%)	30	(2%)	92	(9%)
Total transactions	688	(100%)	1230	(100%)	1040	(100%)

Digitisation project

The consumer-driven music and video industries are dictating the move to digital technologies and the abandonment of analogue technologies. This poses quite a challenge for audiovisual archives as tape, play back equipment and spare parts can no longer be purchased. AIATSIS is digitising its audiovisual collections; however, it is imperative that it maintain its analogue playback equipment in order to do so.

ATSIS provided 12 months of funding for the AIATSIS digitisation project, following its initial funding for a pilot project. The objectives of the pilot project were to:

- establish the infrastructure and policies needed to digitise collection materials
- begin digitising components of the collection for preservation and access
- improve and simplify access to collection materials
- make material available through the Internet, subject to satisfactory controls
- return to communities, materials relating to their heritage in a digital form
- undertake substantial conservation work on the collections
- create opportunities to 'add value' to the collections by creating digital linkages
- create materials suited to the development of educational, commercial and pro-motional product.

The project has been highly successful and the level of achievement has far exceeded expectations. This was due in part to the dedication and commitment of the digitisation staff, who undertook the task of creating thousands of digital objects and records, and who also participated in a highly productive and involved fashion, in the formulation, testing and proving of digitisation policies and procedures.

Through an extensive process of inter-program collaboration, an extensive suite of policies, procedures and technical standards dealing with digital objects within AIATSIS was established for every stage of the digitisation process. These standards are in keeping with 'best practice' and are equal to or exceed those in use by other major Australian collecting institutions.

Library Acquisition

A coup for AIATSIS

'Mr Prime Minister, you're asking me to open Pandora's Box!'

'That', he replied, 'is precisely what I am asking you to do, Barrie.'

And so began Barrie Dexter's plunge into one of the most dramatic periods in Indigenous affairs in Australia.

Barrie Dexter played a crucial role in national Indigenous affairs from his appointment by the Prime Minister, Harold Holt, in 1967 as an Executive member of the newly formed Council for Aboriginal Affairs and Director of the Office of Aboriginal Affairs, through to 1976, when the Aboriginal Land Rights Act (NT) was passed by the Fraser government.

In 2002, in what AIATSIS Principal Steve Larkin described as 'something of a coup', the Institute acquired Dexter's personal papers from the ANU.

'The Institute's function is to promote knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs, peoples and cultures', Mr Larkin said. 'Barrie's papers make a magnificent contribution to this pursuit.'

The papers chronicle 10 years of Barrie's work and as Secretary of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, provide an invaluable insight for researchers into the day-to-day machinations, debates and personalities that shaped Indigenous affairs at the time.

While the papers were not part of the official filing system, they include a large amount of material originating from, or relating to 'Nugget' Coombs and Professor William Stanner, Chairman and Member, respectively, of the Council for Aboriginal Affairs.

(From left) AIATSIS visiting scholar Dr Gordon Briscoe, Mr Jack Horner, Mr Barrie Dexter, AIATSIS archivist Ms Jann Kirkham and AIATSIS Principal Mr Steve Larkin with one of 35 boxes which form the 'Papers on Aboriginal Affairs of Barrie Dexter' held in the AIATSIS Library.

Mr Dexter said the papers, which include reports, photographs, correspondence, minutes and personal notes, came from a filing cabinet behind his desk.

'I do emphasise that they are not the official files and are therefore not the whole story. If you want the whole story, you must go to official archives,' he said.

The AIATSIS Library undertook the extensive cataloguing, archiving, editing and digitising of the 35-box collection, and launched an online catalogue to the collection in 2004 (see the Institute's Mura online catalogue at www.aiatsis.gov.au. Associated audiovisual material is held in the AIATSIS Audiovisual Archives. *Note*: some material is closed access).

To achieve the above objectives several significant improvements were required to the computing, network and peripheral structure of AIATSIS's computing facilities. As a result, AIATSIS now operates an audio digitisation facility that is the equal of the best collecting institutions in Australia. In addition to high quality, faithful digitisation, the sophisticated restoration tools available to our technicians can add value to these priceless, historic recordings by removing sound flaws and age damage, making the content clearer and more audible.

AIATSIS clients now benefit directly from the improved quality and enhanced access to digital audio objects. Pictorial digitisation also established digitisation capabilities that are at the peak of the current technology.

All AIATSIS programs benefited from improvements and enhancements such as:
- automated high speed and high resolution film scanners
- professional high resolution digital still camera
- automated full colour document page scanner
- specialised digital audio and data cabling complete with network switching
- high speed sub-network with 1.8 terabytes of work-in-progress data storage
- colour management tools for highly accurate colour fidelity
- 'near photo quality' plain paper colour laser printer
- centralised automated CD/DVD burner/printer
- large format (1mt wide) 'near photo quality' poster printer
- computer based non-linear digital video editing and titling suite.

More than 60 collections have been digitised, creating more than 75,000 digital objects, including:
- 10,600 Pictorial Digital Preservation Masters (approx 1.6% of the Pictorial Collection);
- 22,100 Pictorial Digital Viewing Copies;
- 2363 Audio Digital Preservation Masters (approximately 4.5% of the Audio Collection);
- 2363 Audio Digital Listening Copies; and
- 21 language compilations, each consisting of more than 16 hours of language materials.

After two years of testing and exploring the potential pathways and guidelines optimum procedures to enable routine digitisation of the audiovisual collections have been established. The final cornerstones of this process will be the provision of a secure, digital storage device, and an effective digital asset management product.

AIATSIS has developed a world-class digitisation facility, applying best-practice across its photographic and audio collections. Fruitful explorations have been made of the possibilities of applying the lessons learnt during this project to developing a video digitisation process that achieves the same quality standards as the pictorial and audio processes.

Audiovisual collections digitised 2002–2004

Year	Value
2002–2003	10
2003–2004	80
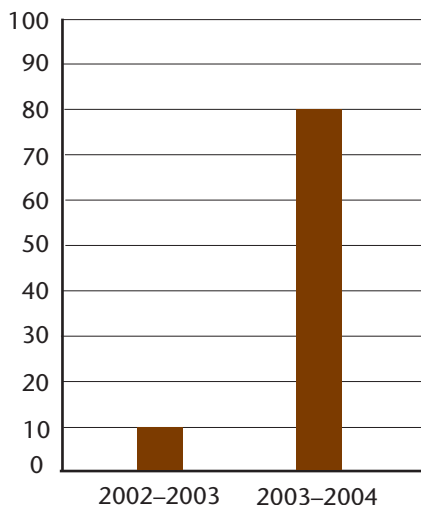
Audiovisual digital assets created 2002–2004

Year	Value
2002–2003	2000
2003–2004	7600
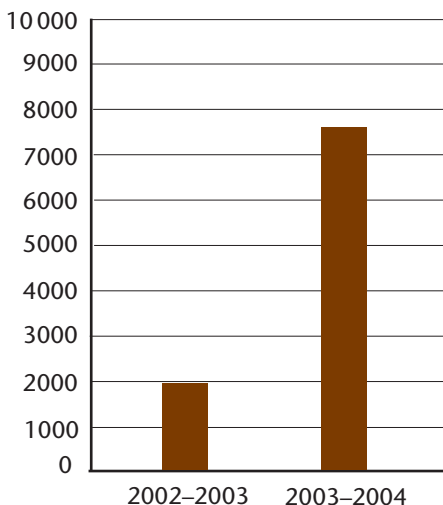
An additional resource created by this project is the broader understanding and greater knowledge gained by staff, of the issues and technical aspects relevant to archival digitisation processes which they have been sharing with representatives of other organisations who are wishing to develop digitising facilities.

Goal 5
To develop and maintain strategic alliances that add value to our activities

Digital Endangered Languages and Music Network

AIATSIS through the Audiovisual Archives has become a member of the Digital Endangered Languages and Music Archive Network (DELAMAN) based in the Netherlands at the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics. This international network is a valuable information sharing forum in the new area of digital archives.

Pacific and Regional Archive for Digital Sources in Endangered Cultures

AIATSIS has formed a strategic alliance with the Pacific and Regional Archive for Digital Sources in Endangered Cultures (PARADISEC). This digital archive network is an initiative of three major universities: Sydney University, Melbourne University and the Australian National University. This alliance offers AIATSIS a valuable opportunity for information sharing, complementary work and data sharing.

Dawn and *New Dawn* CD-Rom project

This important project was made possible with financial and other support from ATSIS, the NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs and State Library of NSW. The production is nearing completion. Copies will be distributed in the coming year. It will provide unprecedented access to a unique family and community history resource for Aboriginal people living in New South Wales.

A 1954 edition of *Dawn* Magazine; 252 editions of the magazine were digitised by staff in the AIATSIS Library under the Institute's pilot Digitisation Program funded by ATSIS.

Pandora community website

In 2004, the AIATSIS Library became the 10th Pandora partner. A main focus of the Library's selection policy is community web sites. Pandora is an acronym for 'Preserving and Accessing Networked Documentary Resources of Australia'. It is a collaborative online archive of web sites and online publications, developed by the National Library of Australia, to ensure long-term access to selected Australian online publications and website.

Register of Australian Archives and Manuscripts (RAAM)

The Library contributes to the RAAM website (www.nla.gov.au/raam/), a guide to collections of personal papers and non-governmental organisational records held by

Australian libraries and archives. It provides researchers with a convenient, centralised register of locations for primary research material. It does not provide detailed descriptions of the collections themselves; rather, it alerts researchers to the existence of collections and enables them to pursue further enquiries about the material, either online or through direct contact with repositories. The AIATSIS Library has added 645 manuscript records to date.

Ethnomathematics Project

An online exhibition highlighting Australian Indigenous mathematics was completed in conjunction with the United States National Science Foundation (NSF), as a part of the Ethnomathematics Digital Library (EDL), located at www.ethnomath.org. This is a resource network and interactive learning community for ethnomathematics, with an emphasis on the indigenous mathematics of the Pacific region.

Canberra Institute of Technology

The Library has continued its relationship with the School of Library and Information Services with the placement of Maureen McIntyre, a final-year student supervised by Pat Brady and Bella Morgan.

Kinetica Document Delivery

The Library is an active participant in the Kinetica Document Delivery, an Internet-based system for inter-library lending and document delivery, managed by the National Library. All the Library's monograph and serial records are added to the database. This ensures wider access to printed materials on Australian Indigenous studies to other Australian libraries and their clients.

The AIATSIS Library is an active participant in the following organisations:
- Commonwealth Collecting Institutions Group
- ACT Sirsi Users Group
- Digitisation Group
- Copyright Group.

Conferences and seminars

During the year, Family History staff contributed to the National Archives of Australia's staff development program, presenting information sessions on services to Indigenous clients.

Library staff gave papers or presentations at the following conferences:
- Australian Committee on Cataloguing (ACOC) Seminar
- National Conference of Link-Up organisations
- 11th Information Online Conference, the Information Specialists Group of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA).