

## CHAPTER 3

# Collection development and management

### Highlights 2006–07

- Digitisation of significant collections completed
- Funding for AIATSIS Digitisation Program extended to 2011
- More Indigenous websites preserved on the PANDORA online archive
- Family History Unit support for Link-Up organisations increased
- Continued Community Access projects in Cherbourg, Brewarrina and Palm Island

### ABOUT THE COLLECTIONS

One of the Institute's goals is to develop, maintain and preserve well-documented archives and collections, and to maximise access to these materials, particularly by Indigenous peoples, in keeping with appropriate cultural and ethical practices. AIATSIS works towards this goal through its Library and Audiovisual Archive. The work of each program area differs, in keeping with its core business; these differences are reflected in the discussion that follows.

The Library holds one of the most comprehensive collections of print materials on Australian Indigenous studies in the world. The Library has adopted the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protocols for Libraries, Archives and Information Services. It holds print materials in many formats,

including manuscripts, serials, language materials, books, rare books, records of organisations, art catalogues, newspapers and newspaper clippings, maps, posters and kits, some in microfilm and CD-ROM formats.

The Audiovisual Archive holds the world's premier collection of moving image, recorded sound and photographic materials relating to Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and history. Its vaults contain approximately 45,000 hours of recorded sound; 650,000 photographic images; 6,000 video titles; and 6.5 million feet of motion picture film. It also has a collection of around 1,000 artefacts and works of art. In total, the archive holds almost one million items.

The majority of items held in the archive are primary materials gathered during field research funded by the AIATSIS Research Grants Program as well as historical and contemporary items deposited by individuals, families and organisations for safekeeping and appropriate access. Around 98 per cent of the material is unique and irreplaceable. It provides an invaluable link between and among past, present and future generations of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

The Library's role is to develop, maintain and preserve well-documented collections and to provide the best possible access to clients, both in person and remotely via the Internet. The role of the Audiovisual Archive is to ensure the safety and longevity of the materials, and to migrate the information onto the latest technologies so that it remains accessible for future generations of Australians.

Access to the Audiovisual Archive and the Library's collections is provided through Mura®, the Institute's online collections catalogue. Staff use Mura® to provide information services to clients, and anyone with access to the Internet can use Mura® to search and discover materials held in both the Library and the Audiovisual Archive.

The Audiovisual Archive also offers access to its collection and specialist services through the Audiovisual Access Unit, manages the Return of Materials to Indigenous Communities (ROMTIC) project, and provides archival training for Indigenous communities.

## **COLLECTION MANAGEMENT**

### **Mura®, the AIATSIS catalogue**

Documentation of Library and Audiovisual Archive materials on Mura® is in accordance with standard bibliographic practices, and in line with Indigenous cultural practices. Value-added features of the catalogue include annotations and categorisation by specialist thesaurus terms, which provide a level of bibliographic access that is unavailable from other library catalogues. Book,

serial and manuscript records are added to Libraries Australia, a free online service that provides access to the holdings of more than 800 Australian libraries.

The AIATSIS thesauri contain headings for language groups and peoples, subjects and place names. These headings are used to describe all items held in Mura<sup>®</sup>. During 2006–07, a small team of Library staff undertook a complete review and restructure of the subject thesaurus (see breakout box, page 41).

In 2006–07, considerable work was completed on the systems that support Mura<sup>®</sup>. Two upgrades were made to the catalogue software to update to the latest version. Mura<sup>®</sup> was also upgraded to a new server, which has greatly decreased response time for clients.

At 30 June 2007 there were 344,431 records in Mura<sup>®</sup>. In 2006–07, the Library added 846 analytics to Mura<sup>®</sup> and 593 annotations were added to book records. There are now 3,609 records with electronic documents linked to them, which is expected to be especially helpful to remote clients.

Mura<sup>®</sup> was accessed 20,944 times during 2006–07, an increase of 40 per cent on 2005–06. Downtime was less than 4 per cent.

## Policies and documentation

Policies created and adopted during the year include the handling of born-digital documentation (material that was created in digital form) and rights management.

The Library completed finding aids for the papers of Les Hiatt, and finding aids for Jack Davis and Jackie Huggins are almost complete. Finding aids assist researchers by providing a concise description and contents list for a manuscript. A formal launch of Les Hiatt's papers was held on 1 May 2007 to honour the former Chairman of Council (1974–82).

Finding aids were also created and uploaded to the website for 56 audio collections, representing a total of 1,827 field recordings. These collections included recordings of Jaminjung language created by John Cleverly in the Northern Territory in 1966 and CAAMA (Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association) radio shows from the Northern Territory, including *Traditional Stories* and the *Reading Black* series, recorded between 1981 and 1992. These finding aids provide detailed descriptions of the content of the recordings and greatly enhance the user-friendliness of the collections.

A list of finding aids completed in 2006–07 is at Appendix 5.

Audiovisual Archive staff began updating the catalogue records for the film and video collections. The work involves researching existing documentation and physical formats for each recently digitised film and editing the existing catalogue entry or, where there is not a record, creating a new one. Scanning film data

sheets to improve information retrieval is also a core component of this project. This is a mammoth task because items often have little or no accompanying documentation. In the process of digitising film material there have been some remarkable discoveries among the previously undocumented or unidentified material. This includes previously unseen footage of artists from Papunya filmed in the late 1970s (see breakout box, page 49). Collections management staff have refined the procedures relating to the storage and preservation of electronic documentation. As part of this project, staff have commenced the enormous task of scanning existing paper-based documentation such as deposit forms, transcripts, audition sheets and registers to an archival format, following strict file-naming conventions. Born-digital documentation is also copied to the target archival format and stored with the scanned documentation. As a result, access to documentation is gradually improving, and fragile paper-based documentation is being protected from further deterioration because it is no longer handled. In addition to procedures relating to the management of electronic documentation, standard practices are now in place for storing and processing born-digital audiovisual materials that are to be accessioned into the collection.

Work was completed on 1,393 catalogue records of photographic collections to update hyperlinks to photographic caption lists on the new web server. Clients now have access (via Mura®) to more than 90,000 item-level descriptions.

## **ACQUISITIONS AND DONATIONS**

The Institute is grateful for donations of materials from both individuals and organisations. Their donations add significantly to the Institute's collections.

### **Print materials**

During the year, a total of 42,847 items were added to the Library collections. This includes 418 purchased items, 1,230 serial issues and 15 items acquired through the Research Grants Program. Purchases for the year cost a total of \$63,710.

Priorities for the acquisition program include:

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



Just some of the resources held by AIATSIS described by the Library's revised thesauri. Photo courtesy of Kate Travis.

## Pathways to a treasure trove of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures

A library holding tens of thousands of books, manuscripts, maps and periodicals, an audio-visual archive with millions of images and sounds — a fraction, but a rich and significant one, of the full scope of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. That, in a nutshell, describes the AIATSIS collections.

Faced with so many resources, how does a researcher, student or a member of the public begin? That's where the 'pathways' come in to provide help along the way.

One such pathway is Mura®, the Institute's collections catalogue. The word Mura comes from the Ngunnawal language, and does actually mean pathway. The catalogue can be accessed through the library pages on the AIATSIS website at <[www.aiatsis.gov.au](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au)>, and you can search by entering one or more key words or a phrase, or a known search by author, title, place or subject.

A library thesaurus is another kind of pathway. The AIATSIS thesauri contain terms describing languages, places and subjects relating to Australia's Indigenous peoples and their knowledge. These words form part of the catalogue records in Mura®, but the thesauri can also be used directly through the AIATSIS website at <[www1.aiatsis.gov.au/thesaurus](http://www1.aiatsis.gov.au/thesaurus)>.

Library staff have just completed a major revision of the thesauri, which have been developed over many years and use culturally sensitive and appropriate language not found in most other catalogues.

The AIATSIS thesauri are available free of charge to libraries, keeping places and other organisations for cataloguing their own collections. This ready access will help to increase knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and peoples.

The collections catalogued by the Library in 2006–07 included materials from the former ATSIC libraries, the Western Australian Department of Indigenous Affairs Library and the Tom Austen Brown Collection, as well as books from the National Library of Australia. These add value to the collections but produced a backlog of material for staff to process. The impact of collection growth on storage capacity is constantly monitored. If material continues to be added to the collection at the current rate, approximately five to ten years remain before additional storage space will be required.

Work commenced in 2006–07 on digitising the Library's 6,000 deposit forms, which specify access conditions to each manuscript collection. Progress was also made in updating the database of manuscript depositors. This project aims to update details, modify access conditions and facilitate easier access by researchers.

The audit of the Library's serials holdings continues with over half the titles catalogued, including some unique holdings.

Important donations received by the Library during the year included:

- Dr Betty Meehan's deposit of the field notebooks and site plans of the late Professor Rhys Jones. Although the personal diaries of Professor Jones are held by the National Library, these notebooks are a significant addition to the collection and will be digitised as a special project, starting with his Mt Cameron material.
- Government consultant Kathryn Wells' deposit of a large collection of materials related to her work in Aboriginal affairs from the 1980s.
- Dr Luise Hercus' deposit of a major work on the Wurru (crane) mythology and song cycle of the Arabana and Wangkangurru people of the eastern and northern Lake Eyre Basin. This material will become the first of a series of outstanding reports.

## **Audiovisual materials**

During the year a total of 104 new collections were offered for deposit or donation to the Audiovisual Archive. These collections included over 700 audiotapes, over 40,000 photographs, and over 150 videos and DVDs. A further sixteen collections were gifted to AIATSIS (see Appendix 4).

Collections of particular note donated to AIATSIS during the year included:

- Mark Crocombe's deposit on behalf of the Kanamkek-Yile Ngala Museum of approximately 30,000 digital images, videos and recorded sound files. This material was collected at Wadeye and surrounding areas between 1960 and the present day. It constitutes one of the largest photographic collections held by the Institute. Subjects include ceremonies and community activities.

- Winifred McCaffrey's donation of the John David McCaffrey Photographic Collection comprising nearly 5,000 original negatives and prints. Winifred McCaffrey is the widow of anthropologist John McCaffrey. John McCaffrey employed a professional photographer, Neil Tilden, to compile a visual record of his anthropological field research in and around the Mowanjum community between 1964 and 1966. Rare images of the Mowanjum artists and the processes they employed are a key feature of this valuable collection (see breakout box page 44).
- Noah J Riseman's deposit of four audiotapes, two of which are recordings of oral history from Phyllis Batumbil, a Yolngu member of the Mata Mata outstation. Ms Batumbil discusses early colonial contact, the land of Mata Mata, and the participation of Yolngu men in the Second World War. She also discusses the role of missionaries as peacemakers in Arnhem Land after the war.
- Lee Sheldon's deposit of a photo album containing ninety-two black-and-white prints. The photographs are an outstanding record of life on two mission stations in Western Australia (Carnarvon and Norseman) between 1953 and 1955. They were taken by Stan and Audrey Bruton during their time at the stations and provide invaluable identification details of the Indigenous people featured in the images.
- Robert Levitus' deposit of thirty-three videotapes from Frog Hollow in the East Kimberley. The tapes record a school and community trip in 2001 from Frog Hollow to Turkey Creek, east across Texas Downs to the location of the abandoned Old Texas Station on the Ord River.
- Lawrence Wilson's deposit of forty-four CDs containing fifty-six recordings of Bandjalang dialect speakers dating from 1976 to the present day.
- Betty Meehan's donation of more than 2,000 photographs from the personal archives of the late Professor Rhys Jones. The collection comprises images from archaeological sites as well as Indigenous communities where Rhys Jones worked over three decades.

A list of donations and gifts received during the year is at Appendix 4.

## DIGITISATION

In 2005, the Australian Government allocated funding to AIATSIS over three years (2005–08) for the digitisation of a proportion of its film, video and audio collection and selected items from its paper-based collection. The AIATSIS Digitisation Program (ADP) has completed its second year of the funding period. As part of the 2007–08 budget, the Australian Government announced that the program will be extended to 30 June 2011. A further three years' funding will allow the Institute to consolidate the achievements to date.



Jack Wherra carving a boab nut. Photo courtesy of the McCaffrey collection, AIATSIS.

## Rare images from the Kimberley preserved

In October 2006 the Audiovisual Archive finally took delivery of the John David McCaffrey Photographic Collection following lengthy delays due to United States customs procedures. This collection of nearly 5,000 original negatives and prints was donated to the Institute by John McCaffrey's widow, Winifred McCaffrey.

John McCaffrey, then a PhD candidate from Stamford University, was selected to work with anthropologist Professor Ronald Berndt in 1964. Later that year he began fieldwork in the Mowanjum community in the Kimberley region of Western Australia, which continued through to 1966. He employed a professional photographer, Neil Tilden, to compile a visual record of his anthropological field research, which concentrated on the process of visual art creation. Rare images of Mowanjum artists and the processes they employed are a key element of this valuable collection. Among the artists featured are Alan Mungulu and

Jack Wherra, a renowned carver of boab nuts.

The photographic collection augments the set of twenty-nine audio tapes the Institute obtained in 2004 that John McCaffrey recorded of Jack Wherra talking about his life, including stories and explanations of the imagery depicted on the boab nuts. The audio and photographic material constitutes a remarkable record of Indigenous art production in Australia.

The collection has generated significant interest among researchers and community members. The Mowanjum community are producing their 50th Anniversary Community History and are incorporating a selection of the images that Audiovisual Archive photographic staff digitised specifically for the book. The remainder of the negatives have been scheduled for digitisation following conservation work currently being undertaken by collection management staff. Copies of these images will be sent to the Mowanjum Arts and Culture Centre upon completion.



The ADP's goals are to:

- preserve a substantial proportion of vulnerable and deteriorating collections
- provide better client access to primary research collections held by AIATSIS
- create online exhibitions
- return materials to Indigenous individuals and originating communities
- undertake research and negotiation into the copyright, intellectual property and ethical and cultural rights of the collections
- undertake community consultation projects, including production of a best-practice handbook to assist agencies in their consultations with Indigenous communities.

## Infrastructure

The ADP funding enabled AIATSIS to undertake a significant upgrade of facilities. All building modifications to accommodate digitisation staff and equipment that commenced in 2005–06 have now been completed. The final area of construction was the audio recording booths, which have received full acoustic treatment. This treatment will dramatically decrease the comb filtering, which will produce a much more accurate audio listening image.

Digitool, the digital asset management system (DAMS) selected for the ADP, was installed fully in 2006–07. DAMS will be the ultimate home of the Institute's digitised collections. It must be able to support staff in fulfilling requests for digital items quickly and efficiently.

DAMS is an evolving software and is not yet providing what AIATSIS requires. The Library has been active in arguing for formal enhancements to develop the system's functionality to meet the Institute's needs for preserving and delivering the information clients require.

The DAMS manager has worked on implementing the full production version of Digitool. This has included working with contract programmers to automate the ingest into DAMS of the large numbers of digital files created each day. Other projects involved developing search scripts, authentication for users, metadata for describing collections and formats for displaying large collections to clients.

FilmLab Australia developed a customised film re-winder for the Audiovisual Archive to pack film after it has been digitised. The device is the first of its type manufactured in Australia. Archive staff approached FilmLab Australia about modifying an existing high-speed film re-winder to suit the archives' specific needs. The new machine operates smoothly and consistently at all times, producing results that even the most experienced film archive technician would

find difficult to achieve manually. It will significantly increase the number of films staff can examine and prepare for digitisation. The machine does not require any specialised training to operate and will enable non-technical staff involved with the film preservation program to achieve correct film tensions before accessing or storing film from the collection in accordance with the archiving policy.

As part of the ADP, planning for the refit of the art and artefact vault has been finalised. It is expected that the building work will commence in 2007–08.

The Library purchased two new flatbed scanners that are designed to copy rare and fragile bound volumes. The new scanners have been very effective for processing clients' digitisation-on-demand requests. An A1 overhead book scanner was replaced and upgraded, providing the ability to scan large posters and maps.

The Library has acquired new software that will increase the productivity of staff who are creating digitised files for access.

## **Digitisation of audiovisual collections**

Audiovisual materials are selected for digitisation using criteria that include physical condition and age of the original material, rarity of the content, obsolescence of the carrier, and level of demand.

Digitisation for preservation was completed for the Audiovisual Archive's one-inch videotape collection, a broadcast format that was popular in the 1970s. The material included a set of fifteen tapes of dancing and ceremonies from Borroloola in the Northern Territory, which arrived at AIATSIS covered in mould. Each tape was painstakingly cleaned by hand and then run through the playback machine. The machine was then stripped down and thoroughly cleaned to remove any contamination. The process of cleaning the tape, playing it back and then cleaning the machine took approximately six hours per forty-minute tape. These tapes are now digitised at preservation standard and are easily accessible by clients.

Digitisation of the archive's approximately 560 'J' format videotapes has commenced. The 'J' format was one of the earliest domestic video formats and was popular in the 1960s. A specialised cleaner for these tapes has been manufactured in-house and staff have been able to properly clean these tapes for the first time. The archive has also commissioned the manufacture of a specialised playback machine, which will allow staff to view these tapes for the first time in fifteen years and to digitise them for preservation.

Digitisation of audio materials continues. Collections of note include:

- EGLOFF\_B01 consisting of twenty-five items. This collection contains recordings of oral histories from the south coast of New South Wales.

- HERCUS\_L26 consisting of thirty-eight items. This collection contains language material from Indigenous communities in Port Augusta, Wilcannia, Farina, Point Pearce, Marree and Finke.
- KNOPOFF\_S01 consisting of eighty-nine items and KNOPOFF\_S02 consisting of forty-eight items. Both of these collections contain recordings of music and ceremonies in the Yirrkala region in the Northern Territory in the late 1980s.

Digitisation of photographic materials continues. Collections of note include:

- The Margaret Tuckson collection of black-and-white negatives taken in the Yirrkala region in the late 1950s.
- AIATSIS.171, a collection of approximately 166 black-and-white negatives taken on Bathurst and Melville Islands between 1912 and 1946.
- The Ronald Rose collection of approximately 795 black-and-white and colour negatives taken between 1950 and 1966 at various Aboriginal communities throughout the Northern Territory, Queensland and New South Wales.

Table 3: Audiovisual materials digitised, 2006–07

Photographic	Approximately 16,000 items
Audio	2,225 archive tape sides 944 field tapes
Film	Approximately 300,000 feet (73 titles or 2,160 items)
Video	Approximately 547 titles

## Digitisation of print collections

Aboriginal Studies Press undertook digitisation and e-publishing of some of its titles and the Library created new three online exhibitions. See Chapter 2 for more information about these projects.

The Library obtained permission to digitise the book *Nyungar Tradition*, which contains a large number of photographs and extensive genealogical information on the Noongar people of south-western Australia. The book is available through Mura®, and will become the basis of an online exhibition.

The Library Digitisation Unit took delivery of the digitised files for the Diane Barwick collection, provided by the University of Melbourne. The digital files were downloaded for future ingest into DAMS.

The Library Digitisation Unit scanned and preserved 13,005 digital files for preservation and access in 2006–07.

The ADP funded a staff member to catalogue material in digital form onto Mura®. The material includes archived websites and publications from PANDORA, Australia's Web Archive, which is managed by the National Library of Australia and its partner institutions. This work has increased the number of records on Mura® that provide electronic access to remote users.

The Library greatly increased its commitment to PANDORA in 2006–07. Staff are archiving a wide range of Indigenous websites and individual publications on PANDORA. Additionally, all archived PANDORA websites are individually catalogued and are accessible on Mura®.

During 2006–07, eighty-four new websites were archived while a further seventy websites are awaiting copyright permission clearance.

## **PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION**

AIATSIS houses materials to archival standards and collections are held in a secure, temperature- and humidity-controlled storage space. Many new collections are initially housed in a specially equipped quarantine room for receipt and processing.

Audiovisual materials are delicate and vulnerable to deterioration from poor handling, climatic conditions and storage prior to lodgement as well as the natural chemical decomposition of the media on which the information is held. The Audiovisual Archive undertakes conservation work on material in poor condition and makes preservation copies of each item to ensure its permanent accessibility. Each item must be researched, documented and catalogued for retrieval. Copyright, intellectual property and cultural rights must be researched and negotiated. The archive's aims are to make the materials easily accessible according to cultural protocols that ensure respect for the rights of Indigenous peoples, and educate the general public about Indigenous cultures and societies.

Following a review of its existing disaster response plan, the Audiovisual Archive has developed and implemented an upgraded plan. By clearly defining and assigning roles and responsibilities, the upgraded disaster response plan takes a far more comprehensive approach to the risks posed to our collections. Extensive staff training has been delivered and relevant work practices have been altered. In addition, the archive has reassessed its approach to storage of the collections. As of May 2007, all 13,000 ten-inch preservation master audiotapes are now stored off site in the vaults at the National Library of Australia and staff have commenced the transfer of the 4,500 seven-inch master tapes in the collection. The use of off-site storage for unique material is a fundamental principle of sound archiving practice.

## A happy coincidence in the digitisation process



Severely degraded soundtrack to the previously unidentified Geoffrey Bardon footage. Photo courtesy of AIATSIS.

In 1978, Geoffrey Bardon directed an interview in Sydney with two senior men, Tim Leura Tjapaltjarri and his brother from north of Alice Springs. Both men were artists who in collaboration with Geoffrey Bardon played an integral role in establishing the highly significant Papunya Tula art movement of the Western Desert. On completion of the filming the cameraman, Graham Dyson, handed the film cans to Mr Bardon and went on his way.

In 2003 the Geoffrey Bardon collection of more than 100 cans of

film arrived at AIATSIS in a highly degraded state. It was affected by vinegar syndrome and was quarantined. After undergoing extensive restoration work, a small amount of the collection was ready for digitisation in early 2007. Having cleared his work schedule for the day, our telecine operator, Graham Dyson, loaded the telecine machine with the footage from a can labelled simply 'Unidentified Footage'. Within moments of pressing 'play' on the telecine machine, Graham realised that he was viewing the very same footage he had created almost thirty years before. As a result of this remarkable coincidence Graham has been able to provide a great deal of information about both the subject matter and the film-making process used by Mr Bardon.

Because of the lack of documentation accompanying this footage, it was not identified and did not appear in the 2004 award-winning film *Mr Patterns*, which examined the emergence of the Papunya Tula art movement and the role Geoffrey Bardon played. As a result, we suspect that the community is unaware of the existence of this footage. The remainder of the Geoffrey Bardon collection will be digitised in early 2008, when technical staff will dedicate three months to copying all of the vinegar syndrome-affected materials held in the archive. Once digitisation is complete, AIATSIS will approach the community at Papunya with a view to providing copies of this irreplaceable material.

All moving image film scheduled for transfer was tested for vinegar syndrome prior to digitisation. Vinegar syndrome is a process that attacks the cellulose acetate base of film, causing the film to shrink and give off a distinctive vinegar smell. This syndrome can easily spread to other film, so it is essential to identify and isolate all affected materials. Testing identified a number of collections that are badly affected by vinegar syndrome. These collections have been isolated and scheduled for digitisation. In 2008 archive staff will spend three to six months digitising only infected materials.

The Library engaged a conservator as part of the ADP. The conservator also provides assistance and advice to Audiovisual Archive staff. Unfortunately, due to the availability of staffing resources, not all scheduled projects were undertaken.

The conservator worked on several rare books purchased recently, including John White's *Journal of a Voyage to New South Wales* (1790).

## RIGHTS MANAGEMENT

Ninety-eight per cent of the audiovisual collection and 60 per cent of the print-based collection is unique unpublished material, which is lodged with AIATSIS under various conditions of deposit. Copyright holders must often be approached to give permission for access and copying of the material. In almost all cases the copyright is not held by Indigenous individuals or the communities where the material originated.

AIATSIS is also committed to ensuring the property rights of the Indigenous peoples for whom we hold the materials as custodians. As part of the ADP, the rights management project seeks to contact copyright holders and relevant Indigenous individuals and communities to negotiate rights in the material and ascertain the most appropriate access to collection material.

The Audiovisual Archive holds a large number of collections for which there are either no deposit forms or outdated forms prescribing inappropriate access and use conditions. Without appropriate forms, the archive is unable to provide any clients with copies of these materials. In an attempt to increase the accessibility of these collections, particularly by Indigenous clients, a draft policy has been developed. Designed in consultation with intellectual property legal specialists, it is hoped that this policy when completed will allow the archive to provide Indigenous people with access to collections from their communities which were previously closed.

In addition, the Audiovisual Archive has developed draft versions of new deposit forms that will change arrangements with future depositors. Material that is lodged will be administered under a licensing arrangement as opposed to the prevailing situation, which is akin to a long-term loan. This will greatly enhance the archive's capacity to provide appropriate access to the audiovisual collection, in line with the archive's collection policy and the Act.

## COMMUNITY CONSULTATION PROJECTS

The Audiovisual Archive is conducting an intensive three-year repatriation project with a number of communities throughout Australia. The project, called 'Giving it Back', has this year focused on Brewarrina, Cherbourg and Palm Island. All three communities are well represented in the Audiovisual Archive collection.

The aims of the project are to visit each community several times over three years and establish a relationship of trust between community members and AIATSIS. Materials held at AIATSIS from the three communities have been digitised so that copies of all materials can be returned to individuals and community centres. Digital copies are being returned, but many people have requested prints of photographs. Having the photographs in digital form has enabled staff to print them in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

The third Community Access site visit to the Cherbourg community in Queensland was held at the Cherbourg Community Town Hall on 11–14 December 2006. AIATSIS co-hosted the visit with the Cherbourg Aboriginal Community Council. The visit attracted more than 450 community members, who lodged over 250 requests for more than 3,000 images. This equates to about \$85,000 worth of ROMTIC, the Return of Materials to Indigenous Communities project. Under ROMTIC, material is copied and given to individuals at no fee. A three-day 'Keeping Your History Alive' workshop, run by the Audiovisual Archive as part of the Cherbourg Community Access visit, was attended by fifteen participants from the Historical Precinct and the Murgon State School.

In May 2007 a poster series was returned to Brewarrina and is now on public display in the town. In June 2007, staff travelled to Palm Island to provide the community with an opportunity to see the photographs AIATSIS holds from that area. This visit coincided with two community events, resulting in a large number of people from all over Queensland and New South Wales visiting the island. As a result, the Institute received many requests for material.

The 'Giving it Back' project will be expanded in 2007–08 to include Fitzroy Crossing.

## ACCESS

The Library is open to the general public for study and reference. Mura® includes bibliographic details of all catalogued AIATSIS collections materials. The AIATSIS thesauri can be used to browse the Institute's collections. The Audiovisual Archive is open to anyone who wishes to access and research audiovisual materials. Because of issues of space and equipment, appointments are necessary.



William Malone, Cherbourg Community Hall, Community Access visit 30 August 2006.  
Photo courtesy of AIATSIS.

On-site access and copying of materials is provided in accordance with copyright provisions, and in accordance with conditions determined by depositors and donors in consultation with collection management staff.

### **Assistance with access**

Library reference staff provide information services to visitors and access to collections. Services to remote clients are an equally important aspect of the Library's information services. To assist these clients, the Library provides accessible content on the AIATSIS website, including online exhibitions, fact sheets and bibliographies. Remote clients can also access information services by telephone, mail, fax and email.

During 2006–07, reference staff produced fifty-eight bibliographies of the Library's holdings on individual Indigenous languages. The bibliographies have proved to be popular, with over 200 available on the AIATSIS website. They complement the Library's other language resources — the language thesaurus and the *Collectors of Words* online exhibition.

Free copies of the *Dawn* and *New Dawn* CD-ROM continued to be distributed on request to Indigenous organisations, and individuals can purchase these CD-ROMs at the AIATSIS bookshop. The CD-ROM content of these magazines is



now on the AIATSIS website, which has increased access. Mission magazines, *Our Aim* and *Australian Evangel*, are currently being digitised and many issues will be made available on the website in 2007–08.

Indigenous studies centres in Australian universities were kept up to date on the Library's activities and its services to remote clients through regular mail-outs. The centres are a target group for the Library as potential long-term users of its services.

Table 4: Library usage statistics

Entries in visitors book	1,048
Group visits	31
Reference desk enquiries from visitors	1,441
Telephone enquiries	936

## Community access and ROMTIC

The Audiovisual Archive received more than 700 requests for material in 2006–07. The items copied to fill these requests equated to more than \$85,000 worth of ROMTIC. In addition, the archive hosted group visits from several Indigenous communities. These included:

- a group of men and women from Cherbourg who were looking for materials to include in the displays in the cultural precinct they are developing
- a group of Pitjantjatjara women who viewed and requested copies of restricted women's material
- a group of senior Pitjantjatjara men who viewed previously unseen footage of restricted men's ceremonies.

Institute member Ruth Fink-Latukefu undertook a visit to Mullewa, Western Australia in December 2006 to return copies of her recently digitised photographic material and recordings of traditional songs to the community. The original material, which is held in the Audiovisual Archive, was recorded in the Murchison/Gasgoyne region of Western Australia during fieldwork in the 1950s. This highly successful visit received a great deal of attention in the local press.

## Valuable historical volumes returned to Torres Strait Island councils

The Library completed the production of a digitised full set of six volumes of the *Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to the Torres Straits* (1898). These volumes contain a great deal of information about the culture, history and genealogy of Torres Strait Islanders of the time.

The full set was put onto CD-ROM and sent to the Torres Strait Regional Authority for distribution to each local island council.

## NATIVE TITLE ACCESS SERVICE

The Native Title Research and Access Officer provides expert advice and access assistance to native title clients on the holdings of the AIATSIS Library and Audiovisual Archives. The table below provides a summary of the source of requests and number of requests received for the reporting period as well as the number of visits hosted by claimants and researchers.

Requestor Type	2004–05		2005–06		2006–07	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Indigenous individuals	156	12.5%	99	2%	57	4%
Indigenous organisations	382	30.5%	342	28%	400	28.2%
Government	307	25%	623	20%	314	22.1%
Consultants/private companies	211	17%	131	14%	330	23.3%
Other	189	15%	168	36%	317	22.4%
<b>Total number of transactions</b>	<b>1245</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1363</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1418</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Total number of requests</b>	<b>n/a</b>		<b>318</b>		<b>330</b>	
<b>Number of visits</b>		<b>44</b>		<b>31</b>		<b>50</b>

## FAMILY HISTORY TRACING

The AIATSIS Library has a Family History Unit jointly funded with the Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health. The unit assists Link-Up caseworkers around Australia in family tracing and reunions for Indigenous people who were removed from their families. Assistance is provided through family tracing skills workshops and an enquiry support service. The unit delivered two family history skills workshops in Canberra and Perth to Link-Up caseworkers in June 2007

The unit has been in a rebuilding phase since two experienced staff left to pursue other opportunities. Excellent replacement staff have been recruited and a thorough training program is in place to ensure that they will be effective family history officers as soon as is practicably possible.

In 2006–07, the unit focused on more closely supporting Link-Up organisations. This involved visiting Link-Ups to assess their capacity for record storage, preservation and security. Unit staff developed *Caring for Link-Up Records*, a brief, practical guide to ensuring the best possible care of records held under varying environmental conditions.



Link-Up caseworkers at the AIATSIS family history tracing workshop 4–8 June 2007.  
Photo courtesy of Alex Flood.

## Practical help beyond the decade of *Bringing Them Home*

The official record told of shattered families, scattered siblings — a bleak history of coercion, bereavement and betrayal. It touched ordinary Australians in ways that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues had rarely done before, and fixed in the public eye an image of lost parents and children searching for each other through the years. Above all, it spoke of ‘bringing them home’.

The tenth anniversary of the tabling of *Bringing Them Home*, the report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families, was commemorated on 26 May 2007. The report traced the impact of more than 100 years of forced removal of children from their families and communities.

One of its recommendations resulted in the creation of the AIATSIS Family History Unit. Co-funded with the Office of Aboriginal and Torres

Strait Islander Health, the unit’s priority is to support and assist Link-Up organisations throughout Australia, which help members of the Stolen Generations find their families.

The unit holds workshops to train Link-Up caseworkers in family history tracing and research. It has trained more than 140 caseworkers since 1998.

The unit also provides an enquiry service for anyone with Indigenous heritage. The unit’s comprehensive Indigenous family history website has had more than half a million visits over the last five years. The unit encourages people to do the research themselves, as this can be very empowering.

AIATSIS is proud to be contributing to realising the recommendations of the *Bringing Them Home* report, and looks forward to continuing this important work.

The unit also developed a password-protected website for Link-Up caseworkers, which will become an important means for communication and delivery of training materials.

The unit maintains a comprehensive Indigenous family history portal on the AIATSIS website. The site has a family history kit and contains links to hundreds of web resources such as guides to records. The unit's staff thoroughly reviewed and redesigned the site in 2006–07 to encourage clients to undertake their own research. The site is constantly used by Link-Up caseworkers, libraries, archives and the public, with over half a million visits since 2003.

The unit also provides a family history information service to Indigenous clients Australia-wide. This service is highly valued, since many clients live in regional and remote areas with little or no access to records.

The backlog of family history enquiries carried over from 2005–06 remained constant, and is a permanent reality for the unit given the level of demand, the availability of staff and the complexity of many of the enquiries. The unit has received funding from OATSIH for an additional position for twelve months to assist with answering enquiries. The absence of similar Indigenous family history services in each state as recommended by the *Bringing Them Home* report has placed a disproportionate workload on the unit.

Indexing for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Biographical Index (ABI) continued in 2006–07. Great effort is always made to ensure that the ABI covers all of Australia. A full list of titles indexed over the year in review is available on Mura®. The ABI includes both historical and contemporary Australian Indigenous biography.

Unit staff attended the annual National Link-Up Forum in Melbourne, convened by OATSIH, where a report on the unit's activities was presented.

A combined list of groups visiting the Library and the Family History Unit is available on the AIATSIS website at <[www.aiatsis.gov.au](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au)>.

Table 5: Family History Unit statistics, 2006–07

Enquiries	310
Visitors	55
Link-Up training courses	2
1800 free calls received	1,252
Number of ABI records added	3,314
Number of ABI records modified	7,146

## CONFERENCES

Audiovisual Archive staff participated in a number of conferences in 2006–07. These included:

- Australian Registrars Committee Conference (Hobart, November 2006)
- Australian Society of Archivists Conference (Port Macquarie, October 2006)
- AIATSIS Native Title Conference (Cairns, June 2007)
- Collections Council of Australia's Workshop and Conference on Digital Collections (Adelaide, August 2007).

AIATSIS Library Director Rod Stroud presented a paper at the September 2006 biennial conference of the Australian Library and Information Association, 'AIATSIS Library: Innovations in Indigenous library services'. The paper was published in the official conference proceedings and has increased awareness in the library community of the AIATSIS Library's services and resources.

Library staff attended a number of conferences during the year, including:

- Australian Society of Archivists Conference (Coffs Harbour, October 2006)
- Digitisation Seminar (Canberra, November 2006)
- Innovative Ideas Forum (Canberra, April 2007)
- Australian Society of Indexers Conference (Melbourne, April 2007).

### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library and Information Research Network Conference**

The Library held a successful conference in August 2005, 'Deadly Directions: Current and emerging trends in libraries, archives and information services for Indigenous knowledge'. A follow-up conference was held at the University of Technology Sydney, 20–22 November 2006. Library staff were closely involved in organising the conference and several staff presented papers. The support of Alex Byrne, University of Technology Sydney Librarian, and Professor Martin Nakata and his staff from the Jumbunna House of Indigenous Learning was very much appreciated.

The conference also heard papers presented by former senator Aden Ridgeway, filmmaker Rachel Perkins, Professors Larissa Behrendt and Marcia Langton, and Dr Loriene Roy (President-Elect of the American Library Association; the first Native American to hold this position). The conference consolidated the work of the 'Deadly Directions' conference. AIATSIS now hosts the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library and Information Research Network website.

### **STRATEGIC ALLIANCES**

During 2006–07, the Library and the Audiovisual Archive fostered close working relationships with many important institutional partners. This section provides an indicative but not exhaustive description of the major collaborations undertaken during the year.

## **Digital Collections Summit**

Rod Stroud, Library Director, together with Di Hosking, Audiovisual Archive Director, and Craig Greene, Manager of the Audiovisual Archive's Access Unit, attended the Digital Collections Summit in Adelaide, 16–17 August 2006. Presentations were made on the Library's digitisation program. The summit, organised by the Collections Council of Australia, was the first step in setting an agenda for the collections sector on standards and protocols for digital collections. A follow-up Digital Futures Industry Briefing was held at the National Archives of Australia on 8 November providing reports on progress to date.

As a result of the summit, Library staff met with staff from the Department of Education, Science and Training and the Learning Federation to discuss the use of digitised materials from the Library's collections for school curriculum. This project will be developed further in 2007–08.

## **Libraries Australia**

Libraries Australia is a modern online resource that provides access to the national database of material held in Australian libraries, known as the Australian National Bibliographic Database. Users can search for any item and find out which library in Australia holds it. The AIATSIS Library contributes some of its holdings to Libraries Australia, which helps to raise awareness of our collections.

The AIATSIS Library is an active participant in Libraries Australia Document Delivery, an Internet-based system for interlibrary lending and document delivery managed by the National Library. The AIATSIS Library borrows, lends and copies materials to and from other Australian libraries.

## **Register of Australian Archives and Manuscripts**

The Library contributes to the Register of Australian Archives and Manuscripts website (<[www.nla.gov.au/raam](http://www.nla.gov.au/raam)>), a guide to collections of personal papers and non-governmental organisation records held by Australian libraries and archives. Many entries contain links to finding aids that provide researchers with detailed information on collections and refer them to where further enquiries can be made about the material, either online or through direct contact with libraries and archives.

## **Other alliances**

During 2006-07 the Institute was involved with a number of leading institutional and professional bodies, including the Commonwealth Collecting Institutions Group, the ACT Sirsi Users Group, the Cross Agency Digitisation Forum, the

Copyright in Cultural Institutions Group and the Digitisation Roundtable. The Library also maintained institutional memberships of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library and Information Research Network, the Australian Library and Information Association, the Australian Society of Archivists and the Australian Society of Indexers.