Northern Territory Library
Collection Development Policy

DECEMBER 2016
Above: Digitising collection material (2017)

Front cover: NT Heritage Coordinator Sam Wells with a collection item donated from Darwin Entertainment Centre (2017)
Introduction

Since its creation in 1980, the Northern Territory Library has collected, preserved and made accessible the documentary heritage of the Northern Territory: published works, photographs, maps, government reports: anything that illuminates the Territory's historical development and culture.

For many years it has also built broad general collections in order to function as a 'state reference library', a location where Territorians could access otherwise hard-to-find information and books. With the increasingly widespread availability of the internet, most people now find it more convenient to look up basic facts online, and the reference and general collections in the Library at Parliament House have gradually become much less used.

In our consultation with the community in 2014, prior to the development of our new strategic plan, the message about our future collecting direction was clear: Territorians were looking to the Library to collect as comprehensively as possible a range of resources that documented the Territory's history, environment and the lives of those who called it home.

This Collection Development Policy is a response to that message. The Library will continue to make a wide range of general information available to Territorians – but will seek to do this both through supporting local public library collections and through the provision of online books, journals and reference materials. As to building its own collections, the Library re-commits with fresh vigour to the task of collecting Territory Stories, both true and imagined. It will seek to collect all works published about the Territory, in the Territory and by Territorians. It will collect books, journals, newspapers, maps, unpublished reports, internet sites, photographs, letters, organisational records and more – to build as rich a collection as possible for those seeking to understand the Territory's past and for those looking to build its future. And it will invigorate the use of these collections through engaging public events, exhibitions, and improved online access.

I encourage all Territorians, and all those with an interest in the Territory, to take a fresh look at the rich array of stories that the Northern Territory Library holds.

Patrick Gregory
Director, Northern Territory Library
**Aims of the Collection Development Policy**

*Guide the acquisition of collection materials by purchase,*
*by donation and by legal deposit.*

*Guide the de-acquisition of collection materials.*

*Inform the community about the Northern Territory Library’s collecting rationale and focus.*
Guiding Principles

Focus
1. We will collect and care for the unique and varied documentary heritage of the Northern Territory.

Engagement
2. We will engage with the community and with individuals throughout the collection cycle, from creation of new works and stories and knowledge, to their collection and conservation, to the process of making them discoverable and accessible, leading to the creation of new works and stories and knowledge.
3. We will engage with community organisations and individuals about securing their documentary collections both for their own use and for the use of the broader community now and into the future.

Access
4. We will make our collections easy to discover and easy to use.
5. We will find new ways to share and energise our collections so they are relevant to the Northern Territory community and to the world.

Creativity
6. We will encourage and support the community in the creation of new stories and knowledge about the Northern Territory and about its documentary heritage.

Stewardship
7. We will care for the documentary heritage of the Northern Territory and preserve it so that it is available for future generations.

Accountability
8. We will abide by our legal and ethical responsibilities and follow Australian and international standards, guidelines and protocols with particular reference to the Australian Government’s Australian Best Practice Guide to Collecting Cultural Material (2015).
9. We will uphold the Australian Library and Information Association’s Statement on Free Access to Information (2001, last amended 2015).
11. We will ensure that material copied or re-used from the Library’s collection adheres to the requirements of the Australian Copyright Act 1968.
Definitions

**Born digital**

Refers to documents that originate in a digital form. Moreover, born digital documents will often never have a subsequent physical counterpart, so they will be sourced digitally, stored and preserved digitally, made accessible digitally and consumed digitally.

**Collecting levels**

1. **Comprehensive**: collecting to an exhaustive level as far as is possible and includes exhaustive collecting of published materials and very extensive collecting of unpublished materials in all pertinent formats. A comprehensive collection serves as a national and international resource.

2. **Selective**: collecting to introduce and define a subject. In the context of the Northern Territory Library selective collecting might occur in areas of interest significant to the Northern Territory, such as Indigenous policy, Australian history, politics, law, art history, tropical sciences, northern development, Timor Leste, South-East Asia, etc. (For further discussion of the phrase ‘significant to’, see 5. Scope below.)

**Document**

A document ‘records something with a deliberate intellectual purpose’. A document can exist in a variety of different formats including text, image, sound, video and digital, but is considered to have two distinct elements, the informational content and the physical support on which it is recorded. By extension, **Documentary heritage** is the accumulation of Documents over time.

**Government publications**

Government publications are documents and information produced and published by the three levels of Australian government, by government departments and by government organisations. They include parliamentary publications, legislation, policy documents, discussion documents, statistics and reports.

**Northern Territorian or Territorian**

A Territorian is defined as someone who identifies with the Territory or has made a significant contribution to the Territory’s community and society.

**Northern Territory**

The Northern Territory is defined as being the present jurisdiction, namely the area bound by parallels 129°E (NT-WA), 26°S (NT-SA), 138°E (NT-Qld) and the north coast including a number of islands in the Timor Sea, the Arafura Sea and the Gulf of Carpentaria.

**Public records**

The Northern Territory Information Act 2003 defines a Public Record as recorded information in any form (including data in a computer system) that is required to be kept by a public sector organisation as evidence of the activities or operations of the organisation. Public Records are generally unpublished.

**Published**

Means making a document publicly available by printing it or producing it by some other means and then issuing it to the public or making it available to the public upon request or making it available electronically on the Internet.
**Significance (or Cultural significance)**

Refers to the aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations. Significance is assessed with reference to the Collections Council of Australia’s publication *Significance 2.0: a guide to assessing the significance of collections* (2nd edition, 2009).

**Social Media**

Websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social communication and networking.

**Unpublished materials**

Materials that have not been published according to the definition above. Unpublished materials (sometimes known as ‘original materials’) usually derive from personal, family or corporate archives and consist of manuscripts, photographs and audio-visual recordings as well as born digital materials such as text, photographic, audio and video files.
Collection History

The State Reference Library first opened its doors in Cavenagh Street on 10 November 1980. In February 1991 the library became the State Library of the Northern Territory. In January 1995 the library moved to the new Parliament House and amalgamated with the Parliamentary Library. It was renamed the Northern Territory Library.

In 1980 the Library’s foundation collection numbered some 26,000 volumes of books, periodicals and government publications. After 36 years of focussed activity, the Library’s collection now numbers more than 200,000 physical items across a wide range of subject matter and formats, including traditional print publications but also including manuscripts, photographs, maps, ephemera, posters, realia, framed works and audio-visual materials. This growth has been facilitated by the enactment of the Northern Territory’s Publications (Legal Deposit) Act 2004, which requires the deposit of one copy of all publications issued in the Northern Territory. Moreover, a collection of unpublished materials, especially manuscripts and photographs, has also been developed. In 2010 the Northern Territory Library celebrated its 30th anniversary by identifying thirty ‘treasures’, including Tom Burstow’s Rough Diary of Air Raids on Port Darwin and Intermediate Alerts (1942) which has since been registered with the UNESCO Australian Memory of the World.

The Northern Territory Library has a strong record in the use of digital technologies to develop its collections and make them discoverable and accessible for the community. As early as 1982 the Library introduced online public access catalogues, and in 1993, the Library was at the forefront of the large-scale digitisation of photographs, making them available through its website Territory Images. By 2009 Territory Images had morphed into Territory Stories, and in 2016 the database contains almost 100,000 items including photographs, newspapers, maps, manuscripts, government documents and reports as well as sound and video files.
Scope

The Library's Content Strategy provides clear direction about "What we collect":

Specifically, the Northern Territory Library collects: items about the Territory, written [created] by a Territorian, published in the Territory, or containing information that is significant to the Territory [original emphasis].

This statement is a clear expression of the Library’s collecting focus, and the terms “Northern Territory”, “Territorian” and “published” are defined above. Where reference is made to collecting items “significant to the Territory” the Library will adopt a discretionary approach of selectively collecting materials in all formats which may not have content specific to the Northern Territory but which do have content relating to matters of great interest to the Northern Territory, for instance, in areas such as Indigenous policy, Australian history, politics, law, art history, tropical sciences, northern development, Timor Leste, South-East Asia, etc.

Where only part of a published or unpublished document is specific to the Northern Territory, the Library will collect a document if it contains a substantial amount relating to the Northern Territory. ‘Substantial’ can be discretionary but as a guide it might be at least one chapter or 10% of the work. (These quantities have precedence in that they are similar to those used in copyright provisions in relation to allowable copying of copyright materials for personal use.)

With regard to published materials, the Library collects works from the commercial, community, government and self publishing sectors (books, periodicals, newspapers, maps, CDs and DVDs), whether that material is in print, audio-visual or digital formats, whether it is published in the Northern Territory, elsewhere in Australia, or in the world. The Northern Territory also selectively collects ephemeral publications (flyers, posters) from Northern Territory sources.

With regard to unpublished materials such as manuscripts, photographs, personal recordings in film or audio, the Library will selectively collect this type of materials, basing its selections on an assessment of the heritage significance of the documents.

With regard to language, the Library will comprehensively collect published Northern Territory materials in all languages and will selectively collect unpublished Northern Territory materials in all languages basing its selection on an assessment of the material’s heritage significance.

The following are not in the scope of the Northern Territory Library’s Collection Development Policy:

- Public library collections
- Community Stories, which are community collections managed by local communities
- Parliamentary Library Service
- Public records deriving from the business of Northern Territory and Commonwealth government departments and statutory authorities are the responsibility of the Northern Territory Archives Service and the National Archives of Australia.
- Art for its aesthetic significance, the collection of which is considered to be the role of the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory. The Library may collect artwork if it relates to one of its documentary collections or if the artwork has documentary content, e.g. prints depicting early settlement in the Northern Territory.
- Objects (Realia) for their heritage significance, the collection of which is considered to be the role of the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory. The Library may collect an object where it relates to one of its documentary collections, e.g. Sam Calder’s ties.
Current Collection Overview

Northern Territory Collection

The Northern Territory Collection (NTC) is the principal documentary heritage collection for the Northern Territory, collecting all significant materials relating to the Northern Territory. The NTC comprises the following components:

- Published collections – consists of approximately 34,000 monographs, 43,000 newspaper issues and 4,500 periodical titles.

- Map Collection – numbers about 3,300 items including topographic maps (1:50,000, 1:100,000 and 1:250,000 scales) as well thematic maps covering subjects such as land tenure, navigation, exploration, settlement, geology, transport, tourism and electoral boundaries.

- Ephemera and posters – includes arts (performing, visual, decorative and literary), election materials, social issues, tourism (especially cultural and heritage tourism), significant community events, and selected advertising materials.

- Audio-visual – includes about 3,000 commercial audio and video items as well as about 1,500 mainly original works on obsolete carriers. All works contain Northern Territory material or were published in the Northern Territory or were published by a Northern Territorian.

- Photograph Collection – contains about 110,000 photographs in a variety of formats (prints, slides, negatives) dating from the whole period of European settlement of the Northern Territory from the 1860s through to the present day and including works by a number of important nineteenth-century photographers such as Paul Foelsche, Joseph Brooks and Samuel White Sweet.

- Manuscript Collection – consists of more than 150 collections of varying sizes and represents organisations and individuals who have made significant contributions to the life and development of the Northern Territory.

Digital Repository

- Reformatted materials, predominantly images, which have been received in hardcopy and converted to digital.

- Born digital materials, including media releases, government publications and newspapers.

General Collection

- The General Collection has in the past served as a ‘state reference collection’ for the Northern Territory Library.

- In addition to the General Collection of printed books, there are also periodicals, newspapers, maps and government publications of non-Northern Territory content.

- The General Collection is no longer being developed. The Northern Territory Library is now supporting the provision of general non-fiction resources through licenced digital materials and supporting public library collections.
Collecting Intentions

General
The following section gives general instructions on the Northern Territory Library’s collecting intentions across a range of formats. It begins with a general instruction on preferred formats where there are alternatives and a statement about Cooperative Collecting.

Formats
The Library will collect documentary heritage in a wide range of formats. It collects and preserves items in the format that best represents the creation, content and use of the work, however, the Library will also be mindful of factors of cost, ease of preservation and access. Multiple formats may be considered where an alternative format can provide better access – for example, a printed book might be acquired as the best copy but an eBook might also be acquired to provide wider access. The Library may also acquire variant formats where there are copy-specific reasons for doing so, e.g. where a work is produced in a significantly different format, or where there might be a significant provenance or association.

Cooperative Collecting
The Northern Territory Library is focused on collecting and preserving Northern Territory content, both current and retrospective. The Library recognises that it is only one in a network of many collecting organisations and it values the need for a coordinated approach. In particular,

- The Library will actively participate in the coordinated management and sharing of content through National and State Libraries Australasia (NSLA) initiatives
- The Library recognises that the Northern Territory Archives Service (NTAS) and the National Archives of Australia (NAA) have the responsibility for preserving Territory and national public records
- The Library recognises that the National Film and Sound Archive has the responsibility for preserving the nation’s audio-visual heritage
- The Library will work in collaboration with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) to support the acquisition and preservation of Indigenous language and related materials
- The Library will liaise with local collecting agencies such as the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT), Charles Darwin University Library, the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education and local public and community libraries, recognising that the collecting interests of these organisations may intersect with those of the Northern Territory Library.
Published Materials

Books
Books are standalone textual or literary works made available to the public in either print or digital formats. The Library comprehensively collects books that are published in the Northern Territory, have Northern Territory content, or are by a Northern Territorian.

The Library will selectively collect books that may not have Northern Territory specific content but are significant to the Northern Territory in a range of areas, including Indigenous policy, Australian history, politics, law, art history, tropical sciences, northern development, Timor Leste and South-East Asia. This intent to selectively collect materials that are ‘significant to’ the Northern Territory can also be applied to other formats.

Periodicals
Periodicals are published at recurring intervals (including newspapers, scholarly journals, magazines, gazettes, newsletters, reviews, digests, yearbooks, etc.) and are made available in print or digital formats. The Library comprehensively collects periodicals that are commercially published in the Northern Territory, have significant Northern Territory content, or are by a Northern Territory organisation. The Library will selectively collect more ephemeral types of periodical such as school and community newsletters.

A significant amount of the Northern Territory’s documentary heritage appears as articles in periodicals published throughout Australia and across the world. This material is made accessible to our library users by means of a variety of commercial bibliographical services. Generally, the Northern Territory Library does not collect this type of material, but relies on the relevant legal deposit libraries in other states and other parts of the world to collect and preserve it for future use.

Government Publications
Government publications are documents and information produced and published by government, by government departments and by government organisations. This section complements other sections of this policy by providing additional advice on the collection of government materials to that found in the specific format sections, including books, periodicals, websites, maps, ephemera and audio-visual collections.

The Library will comprehensively collect government publications published by Northern Territory government departments and statutory bodies, government publications published by Northern Territory local government authorities, and government publications published by Federal government departments and statutory bodies where the content is specific or significant to the Northern Territory.

Although self-governing since 1978, at various times in the past the Northern Territory has been under the control of other jurisdictions, including New South Wales (1788-1963), South Australia (1863-1911), and the Commonwealth of Australia (1911-1978). The Library will collect government publications from these jurisdictions if the content is specific or significant to the North Territory.
It is recognised that government publications are now frequently published in digital formats. Where the publication is published only in print, the print format will be collected. Where the publication is published in print and digital formats, both formats will be collected if possible. If it is not possible to collect both formats, the digital format is preferred. Where the publication is published only in digital format, the digital format will be collected.

**Maps**

The Northern Territory Library has a substantial collection of printed maps with good coverage of topographical maps as well as representative collections of a range of thematic maps. In recent years there has been a shift from producing printed maps to the compilation of digital spatial data which is then rendered into an electronic map using specific software. The Northern Territory Library will continue to comprehensively collect printed maps with significant Northern Territory content. The Library will liaise with the appropriate relevant Northern Territory government departments about the long-term preservation of digital geospatial datasets and rendering software with a view to making this information discoverable and accessible.

**Ephemera and posters**

Ephemera is a term used generically to refer to transitory printed materials usually produced to convey topical timely information about an event or issue. Ephemera, including posters, are mostly printed on paper but also include other types of objects such as buttons and t-shirts. Ephemera can cover a range of issues from political, social protest, tourism, retail and community and cultural events and issues.

It is unrealistic to attempt to collect ephemera comprehensively, so the Northern Territory Library has identified a number of topical areas – elections, commemorative, cultural and art events, tourism, social issues – in which it collects actively by utilising staff and public library resources as well as media and social media campaigns. Occasional topical events and issues are also collected on an *ad hoc* basis.

**Audio-visual materials**

Audio and video publications are an essential part of the Northern Territory’s documentary heritage. The Northern Territory Library has a collection of more than 3,300 audio-visual items mostly of commercial products such as CDs and DVDs but also including older commercial carriers such as audiocassette tapes and VHS recordings.

The Northern Territory Library comprehensively collects all audio-visual material that is published in the Northern Territory, has Northern Territory content, has content that is significant to the Northern Territory, or is created by a Territorian.
Websites

A website is a connected group of pages on the World Wide Web regarded as a single entity, usually maintained by one person or organization and devoted to a single topic or several closely related topics. Websites cover a range of functions including publication, communication and transactional. Websites are significant and influential publishing platforms. The Northern Territory Library does not currently archive websites but does utilise the National Library of Australia’s *Pandora* program on an *ad hoc* basis.

The National Library of Australia (NLA) currently harvests the .au domain on a regular basis, and, through its Australian Government Web Archive program, the NLA also attempts to harvest content from all Commonwealth government departments and agencies, including websites and content that are significant to the Northern Territory. The Northern Territory Library has an important role in collaborating with the National Library to realise the benefits of this wholesale harvesting by making the archived websites and content discoverable, searchable and accessible.

The Northern Territory Library’s collecting intent is to regularly harvest the nt.gov.au domain and make its contents discoverable and accessible, to regularly harvest select key community organisation websites that are significant to the Northern Territory, and to selectively archive websites with significant Northern Territory content with an emphasis on discussion, debate and commentary around events and issues that are significant to the Northern Territory.

Social Media

In recent times certain social media formats have assumed functions previously performed by different kinds of print media. For example, Facebook pages and websites might now provide forums for social communication around Northern Territory specific topics and events. These forums will often contain unpublished materials with heritage significance and so should be collected by the Library. In particular, the Library will collect certain Facebook pages that routinely publish Northern Territory significant materials. The Library will also collect select Twitter feeds and hashtags that reference topics and activities of significance to the Northern Territory, for example, around elections and important public events.

Other Born Digital

Other categories of published born digital material are also considered to be part of the documentary heritage of the Northern Territory and will be collected by the Northern Territory Library.
Unpublished Materials

Unpublished materials proposed for acquisition by the Library may sometimes have access conditions, either due to the culturally sensitive nature of the material or because the donor has proposed some type of restriction. When such collections are being considered for acquisition, the Library will be mindful of the Guiding Principle relating to Access, that “we will make our collections easy to discover and easy to use” as well as the ALIA Statement on Free Access to Information. All unpublished materials undergo a significance assessment prior to acquisition; as part of this assessment the long-term ‘benefit’ of bringing an embargoed collection into the Library must be weighed against the ‘cost’ of making it available within a reasonable timeframe. If the ‘cost’ outweighs the ‘benefit’, then the collection should not be acquired. If the collection is acquired, any embargo period must end on an agreed date that is written into the Deed of Gift. If the collection is culturally sensitive, there should be a documented plan involving consultation with the relevant communities with the intention of making the material freely available within a reasonable timeframe.

Manuscripts

Manuscripts refer to personal papers (letters, diaries, drafts) or organisational archives accumulated in the course of the life, work and activities of the individual or organisation. Such archives can contain a variety of formats including handwritten texts, audio-visual material, digital texts, photographs, etc. Collecting unpublished materials such as manuscripts is highly selective and library staff must make reference to the heritage significance of the item or collection including its research and interpretive value, its historical value, and its relationship to other parts of the collection.

Photographs

Photographs are collected for two reasons: (1) for their documentary value, which is determined by a significance assessment, and (2) as representative examples of the work of both significant Northern Territory photographers and significant photographers who worked in the Northern Territory.

Audio-visual materials

The Library holds approximately 1,500 unpublished audio-visual items on obsolete carriers which are mainly non-commercial in origin but contain valuable original documents. With regard to unpublished audio-visual material, the Northern Territory Library will collect selectively with reference to the significance of the content to the Northern Territory, but will also take into account the condition of the carrier and the recording as well as the potential for reformatting into a digital format.

Theses

The Library will collect post-graduate theses which have content specific to the Northern Territory.

Realia

The Northern Territory Library has a small collection of realia (objects) which are generally associated with other collections. The Northern Territory Library does not collect realia unless it is associated with a documentary collection or more rarely where the object might be considered a document.
Oral History
The Northern Territory Library does not have a discrete Oral History program or collection. This activity has been the responsibility of the Northern Territory Archives Service which has run an oral history program since the late 1970s. The Library will selectively collect and preserve oral history interviews with reference to their heritage significance, but will also take into account the condition of the carrier and the recording as well as the potential for reformatting into a digital format.

Born Digital
Unpublished born digital materials, e.g. text files, photographs, digital audio and video, are also part of the Northern Territory’s documentary heritage. The significance of unpublished born digital material should be assessed according to relevant criteria in the same way as other unpublished material. If the material is assessed to be suitably significant then it will be collected by the Northern Territory Library.

Priorities
Apart from its general mandate to collect published works and unpublished materials created in the Northern Territory, with content significant to the Northern Territory, or created by a Northern Territorian, the Northern Territory Library’s strategic plan identifies a number of key priorities for particular support.

Unpublished Materials
Collecting manuscripts, photographs and other unpublished materials is a priority for the Library because unpublished materials have high research and interpretive significance. The Library’s focus is on collecting in the areas of Northern Territory social and cultural life including people, the creative arts, events and social change.

Creatives and the Arts
The Northern Territory Library has the role of creating and maintaining the Northern Territory Arts History Collection (as articulated in Vibrant NT, the Northern Territory Government’s Arts and Culture Policy 2016, p.12). The Library will prioritise the collection of published and unpublished materials created by Northern Territory individuals and organisations working across a range of art forms, including the visual and decorative arts, performing arts, screen and animated arts, and a range of music performance genres.

Themed Collecting
The Library will identify particular collecting areas (e.g. music, visual arts) as a focus for an annual program of collecting.
Ways of Collecting

The Northern Territory Library will continue to use traditional methods of collecting the Northern Territory’s documentary heritage in all formats, but it will also investigate new methods of collecting, especially in relation to digital formats.

New Publications
The Library will monitor publisher alerts, book reviews and the periodical literature and will act on recommendations from the community and from library staff. The Library will regularly monitor the Libraries Australia database for new publications with content significant to the Northern Territory. The Library will regularly monitor select websites for new publications.

Legal Deposit
The Northern Territory’s Publications (Legal Deposit) Act 2004 sect.7(1) requires that the publisher of a new publication published in the Northern Territory must deposit a copy with CEO (i.e. with the Northern Territory Library as the proxy for the CEO). The Act describes a broad range of published documents including books and other printed materials as well as information recorded by means of recording devices, computers, or other electronic devices, thus including commercially published DVDs and CDs.

Out-of-Print Publications
The Library will regularly monitor select bookselling and vendor sites for Northern Territory significant material and will also develop relationships with commercial vendors so that Northern Territory significant material is brought to the library’s attention.

Unpublished Materials (Purchases)
The Northern Territory Library will regularly monitor commercial vendors for unpublished Northern Territory significant materials and will also develop relationships with vendors so that Northern Territory significant material is brought to the library’s attention. The Library will monitor Libraries Australia for new post-graduate theses with Northern Territory content, and will either purchase same or will provide access to a digital copy if available.

Unpublished Materials (Donations)
The collection of unpublished materials of high heritage significance has been identified as a priority for the Northern Territory Library, but unpublished materials can be acquired through a diverse range of processes, often requiring ongoing relationships with creators and donors. In order to be proactive in seeking out and responding to potential donors, the Library will develop a Donations Strategy for the creation and maintenance of donor relationships. The Library will monitor select websites and social media for identifying collectors and potential donors. The Library will develop media and social media collecting campaigns around special topics and events significant to the Northern Territory.

Born Digital
An increasing amount of published and unpublished materials are now being created and circulated in digital formats, including websites, apps, games, social media, photographs, text documents, audio, video, etc.) The Library will be proactive in collecting born digital formats by enhancing the processes and tools to support this collecting activity.