

# Media Release



## State Library of NSW appoints 'extraordinary talent' to lead Indigenous Unit

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The State Library of NSW has expanded its thriving Indigenous Unit with the appointment of Kirsten Thorpe as the new leader, the NSW State Librarian announced today.

"Kirsten Thorpe's appointment is an exciting addition to the Library's Indigenous Unit," says Alex Byrne, NSW State Librarian and Chief Executive. "She brings extraordinary talent, depth of experience and her strong roots in Aboriginal culture to a significant leadership role."

"Ms Thorpe's proven ability to connect present generations of Indigenous people creatively to archived records on their history and culture will enrich the Library's vital work in this area," says Dr Byrne.

The State Library's Indigenous Unit has a long-standing history in delivering quality services for Indigenous communities across NSW. Currently staffed by Indigenous Librarians, Melissa Jackson and Ronald Briggs, this team has built a remarkable service supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; linking communities with information and stories from their history and traditional heritage.

In 2011 the State Library launched a landmark project to identify and preserve vital surviving records of Indigenous vocabularies and word lists found in the Library's collections, with major findings to be announced later this year. The Library will host an Indigenous Librarians Symposium on 26-27 August to discuss the role of libraries and archives in the revival of Indigenous languages.

"Ms Thorpe's appointment adds significant strength to the Unit's ability to capture meaningful Indigenous material from our collection of records, diaries, photographs and artworks, as well as providing guidance in preserving contemporary Indigenous content for future generations," says Dr Byrne.

"This is an incredible opportunity to work with the State Library's extensive Indigenous collection and contribute to the successes of the Indigenous Unit," says Kirsten Thorpe, who will take up her new position as Coordinator of the Indigenous Unit at the State Library on Monday 22 April 2013.

Kirsten Thorpe recently held the position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Data Archive Project Officer at the University of Technology Sydney. She previously worked as Senior Archivist, Aboriginal Liaison at State Records NSW for 10 years (1999 – 2009), and is extremely passionate about Indigenous communities having sustainable access to records and connecting people with their history.

"I'm particularly interested in the Library's ongoing digitisation of its collections and the opportunities it presents for creating online spaces of engagement for Indigenous communities," says Ms Thorpe. "This allows the reclaiming of knowledge, revitalises culture and can include communities in contributing content and sharing of our Indigenous heritage."

Information on the State Library's Indigenous Unit can be accessed online at [www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/indigenous](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/indigenous).

Highlights from the State Library's Indigenous collection can be viewed at [www.sl.nsw.gov.au/discover/collections/history\\_nation/indigenous](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/discover/collections/history_nation/indigenous)

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