

Prized Australian history heads to South West NSW

13/3/2015

Captain Cook's shoe buckles and rare Indigenous word lists are among the extraordinary items from the State Library's world-renowned collection heading to primary schools in South West NSW from 16 to 18 March 2015.

According to NSW State Librarian & Chief Executive Alex Byrne, this will be the first time these prized Australian historical items from the State Library's collection will be shown in Hay, Balranald and Wentworth as part of the Library's valuable *FAR Out! Treasures to the Bush* initiative.

"Over the past two years 228 schools have enjoyed the Library's popular *FAR Out!* regional outreach program, and I'm thrilled primary students from nine more schools will get to experience some amazing items related to the discovery and exploration of our continent and nation," said Dr Byrne.

Over 480 students and teachers will be among the first in Hay, Balranald and Wentworth to view the actual handwritten letters of Mary Reibey, extraordinary Indigenous artwork and Indigenous word lists from the local area.

This program will be the second time Wentworth Public School students have connected with the State Library. In 2014 the school participated in the *Art Around the Library* video conference, with real-time art-making workshops. The students made their own 2D artwork inspired by an extraordinary work in the State Library's collection.

"We're adding more and more riches to our website every day, and providing remote access to our extensive heritage material through digitisation, online resources and video conferencing, but actually seeing these original and unique historic items has a special appeal!" said Dr Byrne.

"The State Library is committed to giving regional and remote communities of NSW the opportunity to experience some of the original documents of our nation, and hopefully inspire their interest in Australian history."

From 16 to 18 March 2015, the State Library's Learning team will run fun and interactive activities with students and teachers around a selection of landmark Australian treasures including:

- a letter written from Sydney in 1792 by convict Mary Reibey who became Australia's first business woman;
- a painting of European women by Indigenous artist Johnny Kangatong, from 1855;
- a local Indigenous word list; and
- Captain Cook's shoe buckle.

Media Release



“The State Library is the home of Australia's history and taking artefacts and manuscripts to schools in rural and regional NSW allows students and teachers to connect with our past in a very real way,” said Megan Perry, State Library Manager of Learning.

FAR Out! is just one of the unique learning services the State Library offers students and teachers, with extensive online services and learning resources available to all on the Library's website at <http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/learning>

“The State Library has developed learning resources for the NSW Syllabus for the Australian curriculum. Some of the historic items we're taking to South West NSW will be part of our contribution to that national initiative, demonstrating the significance of the Library to understanding our national story,” said Ms Perry.

For more information about *Far Out! Treasures to the Bush*, please contact Learning Services, State Library of NSW, on (02) 9273 1778 or learning.library@sl.nsw.gov.au.

For interviews and publicity images, please contact:

Vanessa Bond, Media & Communications Manager, State Library of NSW
(02) 9273 1566, 0411 259 898, vanessa.bond@sl.nsw.gov.au

Sara Fishwick, Marketing Officer, State Library of NSW
(02) 9273 1710, sara.fishwick@sl.nsw.gov.au