From selling insurance to buying rare books for the State Library of New South Wales

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1. The Library’s collection

2. How we are structured

3. A day in the life of a Collection Liaison Specialist Librarian

4. Journey from Insurance to Libraries

5. Lessons learned
1. The Library’s collection
• Documents life in New South Wales
• Provides an information service for the people of NSW
A brief brief history of our collecting

Bedroom, David Scott Mitchell's residence, c. 1907, by unknown photographer, SV1/Res Mit/1
Our collecting goals today:

• Extensive in regard to NSW, reflective of Australia and deep in priority areas
• Accessible, open, connected and usable for all
• Has integrity, is trusted and enduring
2. How we are structured
Old structure: format-based

New structure: function-based

Acquisition
Manuscripts
Pictures
Maps
Other formats

Cataloguing
Manuscripts
Pictures
Maps
Other formats

Research & Interpretation
Manuscripts
Pictures
Maps
Other formats

Access
Manuscripts
Pictures
Maps
Other formats
Starting from scratch

Acquisition → Cataloguing → Research & Interpretation → Access

A map of the world in Japanese / by Ed. Schnell, 1862  M4 100/1862/1
3. A day in the life of a Collection Liaison Specialist Librarian
• Responding to phone calls/emails
• Selecting from antiquarian bookseller catalogues
• Research
• Field trips
• Negotiating
• Writing reports
• Valuing items
• Dealing with material once it arrives
Finding the stories
‘I’m so glad I make you happy John. I would not like you to think that it is because my love for you is small that I am so unsettled. Indeed it is the opposite – Since Heidelberg or even some days before I have known myself to be in danger of falling in love so desperately that my courage has almost failed me. I’m not a child – goodness knows I have been wishing often enough that I was only twenty odd and could fall blissfully and trustfully in love –

But I have had long years of such hurt (past now darling) that I have built up for myself a strong defence against life – and this has become so much of my character that in turn is now hurting me by causing so many doubts & fears.’

Muriel Reid, Thursday, 28 June 1934
Proof / Penny Evans, 2015 HF 2016/15
Fig 1.

Fig 2.

Fig 3.

Fig 4.

Fig 5.

Fig 6.

Opticks: or, A treatise of the reflexions, refractions, inflexions and colours of light / Isaac Newton, 1704 RB/2812

Isaac Newton, 1702 / Godfrey Kneller (National Portrait Gallery, London)
Poisson plat énorme vu en mer le 23 Février 1819 après de l’île de Amirauté / Rose de Freycinet, 1819.

SSV/145
4. Journey from Insurance to Libraries

Map from La Salade nouvellement... / Antoine de la Salle, 1527
My origin story
Transferrable skills

• Sales
• Dispute resolution
• Customer service
• Decision making
• Writing
5. What have I learned?

- Value of non-library experience
- Curiosity and enthusiasm can take you a long way!
- Restructures can be opportunities