

Media Release



Add your entry to the great pandemic diary of 2020

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As social distancing restrictions ease, the State Library of NSW wants to capture the thoughts and feelings of the State via a new diary sharing platform launched **TODAY, Monday 4 May**.

The Diary Files is an 'online community diary' that collects the stories, poems, lyrics, thoughts and reflections of the people of NSW and beyond during this significant moment in our history.

According to State Librarian John Vallance: "COVID-19 has affected us in so many ways, and we're keen for as many people as possible to write about their experiences for the historic record."

"We want to document this year more than ever, so when researchers look back in 50 or 100 years' time they'll be able to access a rich and diverse slice of history and understand what it was like for people living through a pandemic," says Dr Vallance.

To help launch the online diary today, a few well-known friends of the Library were asked to share their diary entries, including artist Wendy Sharpe, award-winning author Tony Birch, media identities Gretel Killeen, Tim Ross and Patrick Abboud, and actor and writer Michelle Law, who chose to share a poem.

The Diary Files invites people to submit a diary entry - using their name or anonymously - of up to 300 words or less. Each entry will have a link for sharing on social media.

"It can be anything you want it to be. Poetry, a love letter, song lyrics, short or the full 300 words," says Paula Bray, head of the Library's DX Lab which has created this community-driven platform. "People can write what they see and feel right now, what they miss, or unexpected joys or talents they have uncovered."

"The Diary Files is also a place to feel connected to each other through reading other diary entries," Ms Bray adds.

The Diary Files is a valuable addition to the Library's COVID collecting projects, including the #NSWathome photo-sharing initiative and ephemera drive. Diary entries will be accepted until at least the end of 2020.

Paula Bray is available for interviews.



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