



Australian  
National  
University

# **JB Chifley Library Collection Rebuilding Project**

2018 – 2023

## **Final Report**

ANU Library, Scholarly Information Services

+61 2 6125 2003

[roxanne.missingham@anu.edu.au](mailto:roxanne.missingham@anu.edu.au)

The Australian National University

Canberra ACT 2600 Australia

[www.anu.edu.au](http://www.anu.edu.au)

TEQSA Provider ID: PRV12002 (Australian University)

CRICOS Provider Code: 00120C

## Contents

Introduction .....	4
Collection rebuilding.....	5
Methodology .....	5
Budget .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Physical spaces reconfiguration .....	6
Project outcomes .....	7

# Introduction

On Sunday 25 February 2018 the JB Chifley branch of the ANU Library was hit by a flood of devastating proportions. After heavy rain waters entered the Library from nearby Sullivan's Creek and flooded the ground floor of the building (Level 1) which housed metres of packed compactus, rows of cabinets of microform, service equipment, 40 study spaces, staff tearoom and amenities, and the central air-conditioning plant.

Flood waters reached one metre in height. The water was contaminated with matter from the creek and sewerage from the bathroom facilities located on the ground floor. Much of the collection was under water for three days and the high humidity and temperature created an environment that produced significant mould. Dehumidifiers and fans operated for three and a half months 24x7 to reduce mould level.

Staff saved what they were able to but ultimately the mould became uncontrollable, and all collection material located on Level 1 was lost - approximately 50% of the JB Chifley Library collection. The discipline areas most affected by the loss were History and Philosophy.

**Table 1: JB Chifley Library collection material lost in the 2018 flooding incident.**

	Titles	Items
<b>Monograph collection</b>	92,052	113,619
<b>Reference collection</b>	1,735	2,390
<b>Serial collection</b>	3,078	73,913
<b>Audio-visual collection</b>	1,323	1,720
<b>Official Document collection</b>	2,731	54,054
<b>Microform collection</b>	5,396	50,270

After the flood, the Library launched a series of strategies to meet the immediate needs of the ANU community and mitigate the initial impact of the loss on patrons:

- a retrieval service was put in place during the temporary closure of JB Chifley Library for those who needed to access resources from Level 3 and 4 of the building.
- short loans replacements, material required for courses and priority research resources were fast-tracked.
- reading lists for all affected disciplines were reviewed and re-ordered.
- access to electronic book collections was increased.
- free interlibrary loans for all ANU students and staff were expedited.
- use of ArticleReach service to request digital copies of journal articles was encouraged.
- undergraduates were given access to BONUS+ book sharing service, which allowed users to request print books from 14 other libraries based in Australia and New Zealand.
- an hourly free shuttle service for ANU staff and students began running between ANU and the National Library of Australia.
- a call for book donations and financial contributions to help rebuild the lost collections was put out and a comprehensive list of monographs lost in the flood was published on the ANU Library website for potential donors.
- the **Chifley Collection Rebuilding Academic Advisory Group** was formed – with representation from all the discipline areas affected by the flood - to provide advice and guidance to the Library.

## Collection rebuilding

After the incident Level 1 of the JB Chifley building was no longer suitable to house collection material due to significant risk of future flooding. A large-scale multiyear project was developed to undertake the ongoing work to rebuild the collections lost in the flood and to redevelop the physical spaces to meet the learning, teaching, and research needs of ANU staff and students. A total amount of AUD \$39,921,140.31 was allocated to the project by the University's Insurers.

A dedicated team of professional staff with relevant technical skills and expertise was assembled to work with Library staff to enable the project completion. Consultation with the academic community about the collection rebuild remained a very important part of the decision-making process throughout the course of the project.

The initial rough estimate for collection replacement was four years but unpredictable external disasters (bushfires, smoke, a massive hailstorm, and COVID-19 pandemic), staffing shortages, and the introduction of a new Library system adversely impacted the project schedule causing delays and disruptions. The project is now complete with acquisition of any material undertaken through business as usual processes.

One of the complexities of the project was that the majority of works lost in the flood were out of print and had been out of print for many years. The project included activities to obtain material in the disciplines where titles had been lost to create a collection that best met the university's needs.

A major contribution was made through the Flood Working Group chaired by Prof Paul Pickering. We are very grateful to the group for their advice. The members were:

Prof. Paul Pickering, Research School of Humanities and the Arts (Chair)

Dr Mark Dawson, School of History

Dr Paul Burton, School of Literature, Languages and Linguistics

Colin Steele, Emeritus Fellow, ANU

Dr Ian Higgins, School of Literature, Languages and Linguistics

Dr Marc Oxenham, School of Archaeology and Anthropology

Prof. Kim Sterelny, School of Philosophy

A/Prof. Vladimir Canudas-Romo, School of Demography

Prof. Keith Dowding, College of Arts and Social Sciences

## Methodology

Different strategies and replace methodologies were applied to obtain materials:

---

### Acquisition

Over 20 million items were acquired to replace resources lost in the flood and to enhance the collection. Preference was given to digital delivery as a more immediate and equitable form of access. Acquisition partners were identified and engaged in accordance with University Procurement practices. Cataloguing and shelf ready services were outsourced to external suppliers to provide for cost efficiencies.

---

<b>Donations</b>	Over 4,000 replacement books donated to the Library by members of the ANU community and broader community were processed and shelved on Level 3 of the JB Chifley Library.
<b>Digitisation</b>	5,365 items lost in the flood which could not be commercially replaced were digitised within Copyright Act 1968 parameters and made available to ANU staff and students through the ANU Library catalogue and Open Research Repository. Some of the digitisation activities were outsourced to external specialists where this represented the best value for money arrangement.
<b>Open Access</b>	1,012 ANU scholarly works were made freely available online through HathiTrust Digital Library. Over 1,300 flood replacement resources available openly online from trusted digital repositories were identified and made available to the ANU community through the catalogue.

ANU staff and students were kept informed of progress and new developments through regular updates posted on the Library website and social media accounts. A promotional campaign to highlight new flood replacement resources added to the collection was implemented by the Library Communications Team to ensure maximum exposure and uptake.

## Costs

The costs for the project so far have included:

- Acquisition (purchase of physical and digital collections)
- Staff time expenses for ordering materials, processing materials and management of the project (2 fte for 5 years).
- Storage costs for establishing substitute storage of material as level 1 was no longer available to store material
- Processing costs for making collection material available such as barcoding and spine labelling
- Inter library loans for material lost in the flood that could not be acquired for the collection that were required by users.

Projects that are continuing but being managed by business as usual processes include:

- Digitisation and adding digital copies to the repository of 1901 + ABS publications that were not available on the ABS website (16,082 units from 4,281 items)
- Digitisation of Australian items lost in the flood that have not been able to be sourced (310 items)
- Digitisation of audio visual materials (approximately 5,500 items) and adding them to the repository (outsourced solution with specialist equipment acquired through RFT process)s – multiyear project that commenced in 2023
- Interim storage solution for materials acquired while collection storage is reconfigured and long term solution is found.

These will result in the completion of the funding.

## Physical spaces reconfiguration

The whole of the internal space in level 1 was removed due to the flood. Existing physical spaces on Level 1 and Level 2 of the JB Chifley building were re-evaluated and reconfigured to meet the needs of ANU staff and students. The renovation resulted in the opening of new study and research spaces on Level 1 with around 220 seats and additional study rooms and amenities and the relocation of services and staff areas on Level 2. A new entry door to the JB Chifley Library was opened to provide greater access to and from the Kambri precinct via the bridge.

Physical spaces on Level 3 and 4 of the JB Chifley building were re-organised to accommodate the collection footprint going from four levels to three levels. Regular collection management practices and policies were followed with material relocated including to the repository (35,549 works), titles reviewing (104,267 titles), duplicate, damaged and no longer required material deselected (22,826 copies), back-shifting and installing over 400 new additional shelves.

## Project outcomes

The project outcomes were successful - despite many challenges:

- ✓ A replaced and dramatically improved Library collection – with over 20 million items acquired to replace titles lost in the flood and to enrich the collection and strengthen teaching and research at the University.
- ✓ Huge growth to the range of eBooks and digital datasets available through the ANU Library catalogue and increased accessibility to users compared with physical resources.
- ✓ Collection stored away from potential flooding areas as required by the University's insurers.

A productive collaborative partnership between the project team and their ANU colleagues in Collection Access & Discovery, Client Services, Digital Scholarship, Library Communications and the academic community has contributed to the success of this project. Although the 2018 flood was traumatic it ultimately built a stronger Library team.

Luciana Panei was the Project lead for the whole of the project. She made an outstanding contribution for which we are very appreciative.