

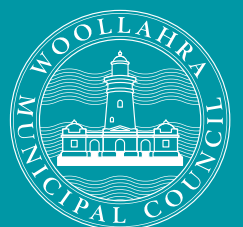
Woollahra  
Libraries



# Woollahra Libraries Annual Report

1 July 2021 – 30 June 2022

[woollahra.nsw.gov.au/library](http://woollahra.nsw.gov.au/library)





Stairs at Woollahra Library at Double Bay, featuring “Gadigal Connection” artwork by Jasmine Sarin of JS Koori Designs

Cover image: Woollahra Libraries Community Engagement Officer: Children’s Programs and volunteer lead a Story Time program session



# Introduction

## Welcome to the Woollahra Libraries 2021-2022 Annual Report.

We are now one year into our Five Year Strategic Plan (2021-2026), and it has been a year of immense change, adaptations, and in many ways, growth.

The Covid-19 pandemic once again saw doors at all three library branches shut from late June to October 2021, so our goal of enriching social cohesion and community wellbeing became a priority. We maintained connection with some of the more vulnerable members of the community during this time through our Home Library Reading Service and when the NSW lockdown was over, our Bus to Books program provided these same community members with social interaction and accessible outings. The rest of our community was kept involved with Adult, Youth and Children’s programming, which saw a 90 percent increase in attendance over the last financial year.

As access to physical collections was limited, this year has also been an important time for building an engaging and intuitive digital library. We announced several new online platforms and launched a contactless self-checkout service using mobile phones. Our digital library collection was well utilised, with almost a third of all annual loans being accessed online. Some of our newest technological initiatives will help to nurture lifelong learning, discovery and creativity for our youngest members. The introduction of a StoryTime Pod to the children’s library is engaging preschoolers with stories and educational entertainment.

In spite of the year’s challenges, we are proud of our continued contribution to local culture. This year we celebrated a significant achievement with our iconic Paddington Library reaching its 130th birthday. Located at Paddington Town Hall, the library opened in 1832 as the first ‘free public library’ in the Eastern Suburbs, and it has now

become one of the longest running library services to have operated from the same site. Over the years it has seen many changes, from moving between councils and undergoing refurbishments to the introduction of online catalogues and the internet, yet it remains a much loved destination for the curious minds of Paddington residents and visitors, young and old.

It’s been an exciting year at the Libraries, and we can’t wait to build on this foundation of recovery. We always appreciate your feedback – what you enjoy most about our services and program, and where you may like to see improvements. You can stay up-to-date with the Libraries by subscribing to our fortnightly eNewsletter, or following our Facebook and Instagram pages. Thank you for your continued support.

**Jody Rodas**  
Manager, Woollahra Libraries

# Quick Statistics

1 July  
2021 –  
30 June  
2022



**29,499**

Active library members



**279,550**

Library visits



**149**

Hours of opening per week



**426,911**

Library loans



**125,279**

eCollection loans



**88,335**

Information requests



**6,726**

People attended 383 events and programs



**87**

Online programs were viewed 3,544 times



**4,301**

Groups booked library spaces



**10,987**

Public computer bookings



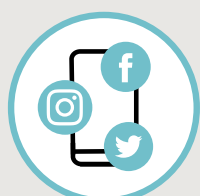
**122**

People used the Home Library Service



**81**

Volunteers



**25,005**

Social Media reach



**13,329**

Newsletter subscribers



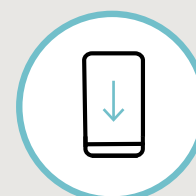
**10**

Book Clubs engaging 120 members



**27,190**

Number of new items added to library collections



**8,513**

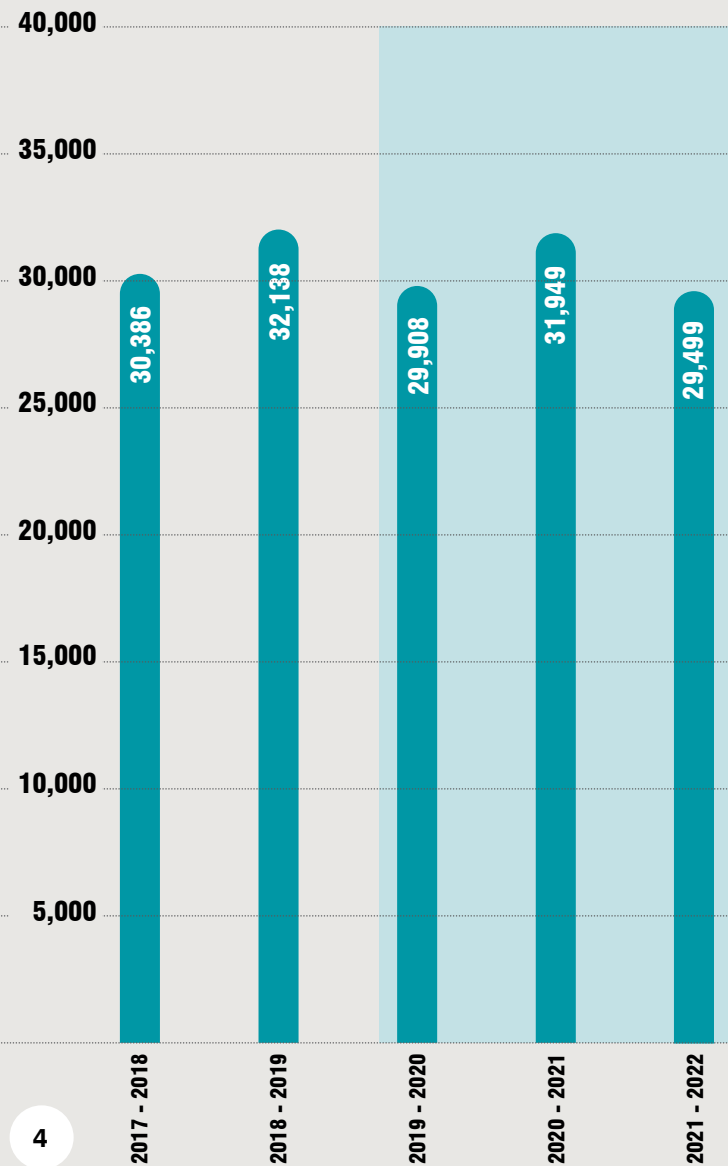
Woollahra Libraries app users

# Year-on-Year Changes

Please note 2019-2022 statistics impacted by COVID-19

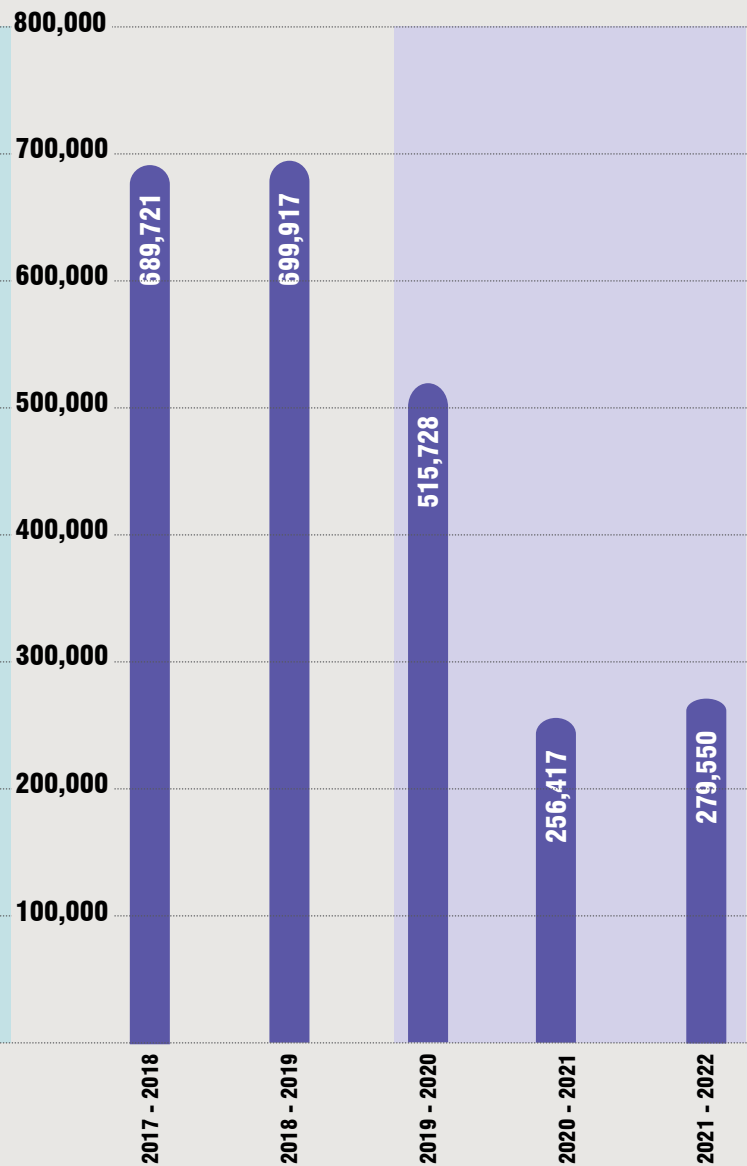
## Active Members

■ 2019-2022 statistics impacted by COVID-19



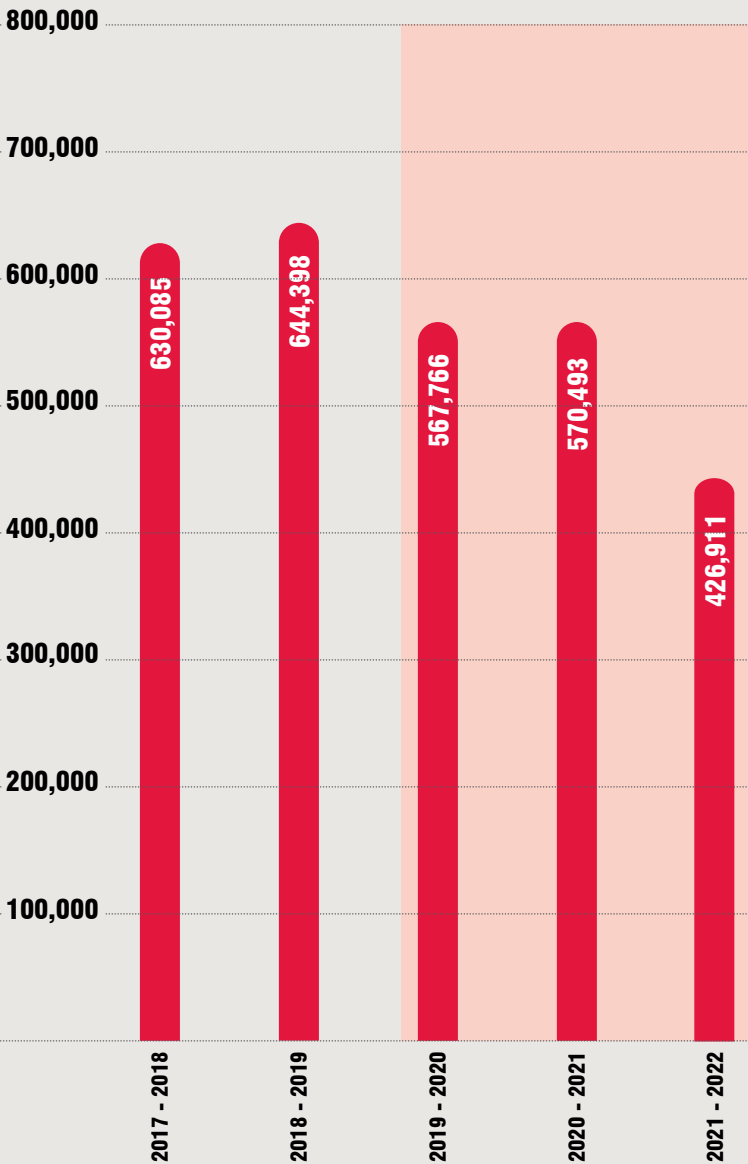
## Visitation

■ 2019-2022 statistics impacted by COVID-19



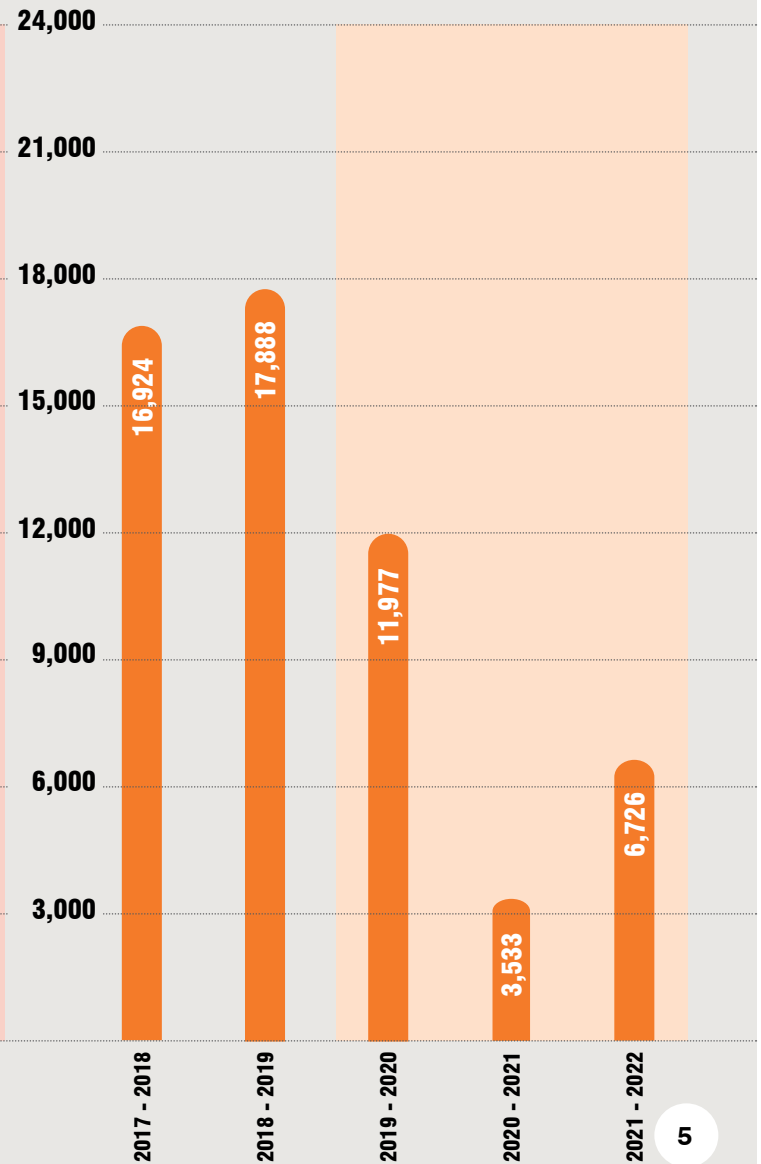
# Library Loans

2019-2022 statistics impacted by COVID-19



# Attendance at Library Programs and events

2019-2022 statistics impacted by COVID-19



# Covid-19 Update

On 25 June 2021 a rapid escalation in community transmission of Covid-19 once again resulted in the closure of Woollahra Libraries. Armed with the previous years' experience, the Library team seamlessly moved to online service delivery that resulted in an increase in loans of digital material and an increase in the number of library programs that were delivered and accessed virtually. The Libraries were closed for 124 days and reopened on 27 September 2021 with a select and collect service that remained in place until 18 October 2021. After this date, the public health order was relaxed to allow the community back into the libraries with a social distancing limitation of one person per four square metres. Further easing of the health orders removed capacity limits on 15 December 2021 and a return to face to face program delivery was resumed on 31 January 2022.



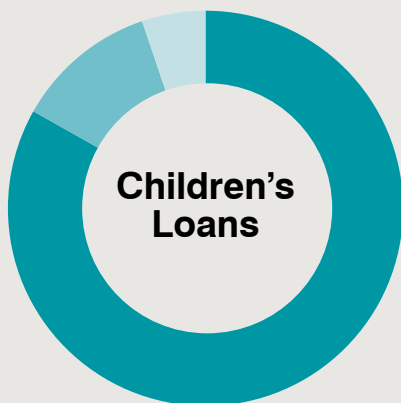
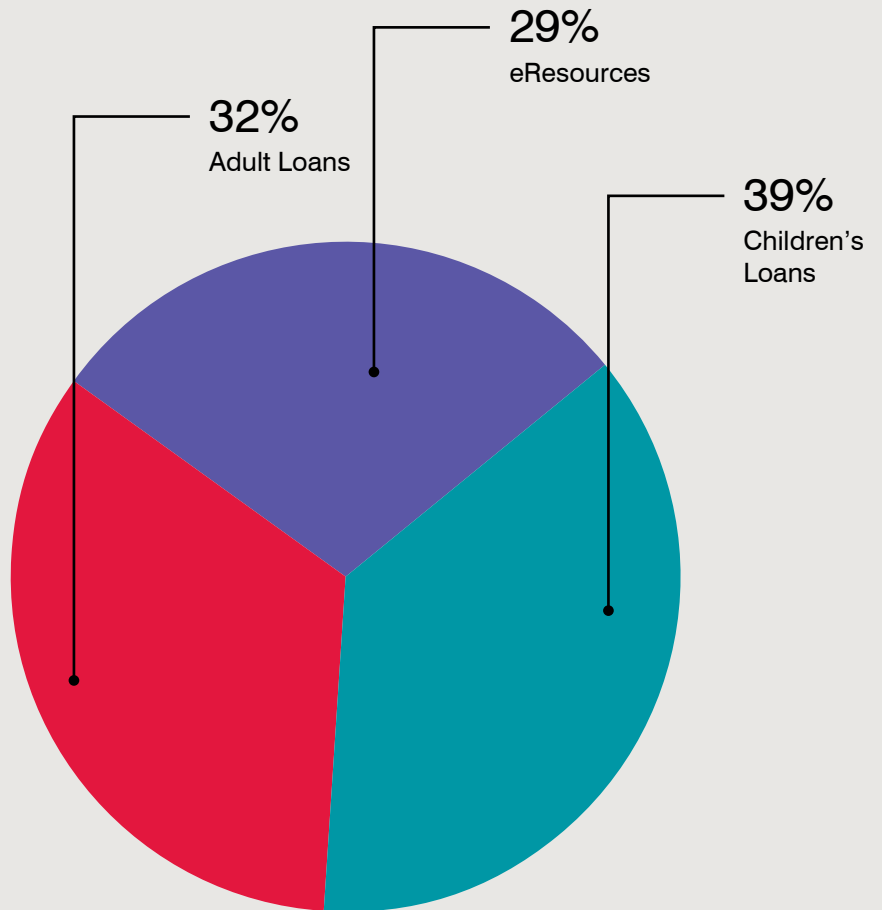
Library staff member prepares books for the select and collect service during the 2021 Covid-19 lockdown

# Library Loans Breakdown

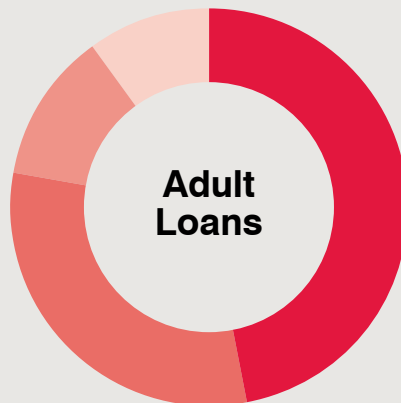
The most noteworthy trends throughout the year were the increasing popularity of the eResources collection recording 125,279 loans and 29% of total circulation, compared with 123,429 loans and 21% of total circulation the previous year.

In the print collections, Junior Fiction was the most popular with younger readers recording a total of 66,489 loans and 16% of total circulation.

The Quick Browse Fiction collection continues to be in high demand recording 30,295 loans, 48% of total Adult Fiction loans for the year. This collection includes the latest releases, bestsellers and multiple copies of popular titles.



- 83% Fiction
- 12% Non-fiction
- 5% Audio visual



- 47% Fiction
- 31% Non-fiction
- 12% Audio visual
- 10% Magazines



- 33% eBooks
- 29% eAudiobooks
- 27% eMagazines
- 11% Others

# Events and Programs

Despite the long lockdown period and ongoing public health order restrictions, the 2021/2022 financial year saw an increase in the numbers of programs offered compared to the previous year affected by Covid-19. Our in-person programs more than doubled in both delivery and attendance. We ran 24 individual programs and events for seniors versus 8 the previous year, and saw 212 attendees up from 59. Our seniors programs encompassed technology workshops like Tech at Ascham and Tech Savvy Seniors.



Library member Fairlie taking notes in a session of Tech Savvy Seniors



## All Programs

2021/2022

	Sessions	Attendance
Children	257	4,295
Young Adult	21	275
Adult	105	2,156
<b>Total</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>6,726</b>

## Online Programs

Recorded in 2021/2022

	Videos	Views
Children	25	1,688
Young Adult	27	279
Adult	35	1,577
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>3,544</b>





Children create leaves for a library 'family tree' as part of National Simultaneous Storytime

General adult programs also saw a clear increase, with 79 programs and 994 attendees. The Ideas Exchange panel discussions continue to be popular and to celebrate International Women's Day a lively discussion on 'Breaking the Bias' was well attended with 31 participants. Our Tea Topics series featured author Jessica North who discussed her work *Mary Anne and Captain Piper* and, as part of the Australian Heritage Festival, the local history team partnered with staff from the City of Sydney to deliver the talk 'Paddington Library: Sparking Curiosity for 130 years'.

Across 21 programs for youth and young people this year, we had 275 attendees, versus 129 people attending 11 programs the year prior. Our Youth Week program included pop-up ping pong sessions and free gelato, and we hosted senior high school student workshops as part of Ride the HSC Wave.

This year our Children's programs were our biggest area of overall delivery. We had an astounding 4295 attendees at 247 events for primary-aged and younger children. Last year, these same initiatives had 1612 attendees at 122 programs. In addition to the resurgence of our weekly Story Times, Rhyme Times, and Book Babies, our themed school holiday programs saw each term end with exciting craft sessions, shows, and movie screenings.

Of the above events, 296 were delivered in-person, and 7 more were hybrid online/in-person. Our online program continued to be popular with 87 sessions receiving 3,544 viewers. Our most popular online programs were the Book Week craft activities and Story Times for children, and live streamed author talks with Charlotte Wood and Ben Quilty for our adult community members.

# Library Highlights

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A family enjoying the craft activities  
at Paddington Library's 130th  
Birthday Party



📷 A customer on re-opening day after the 2021 Covid-19 lockdown period



📷 Woollahra Libraries staff engaged in the Home Library Reading Service Program

## Community Engagement in Covid Recovery

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Over the past two years, Public Libraries were just one of the thousands of services around Australia that had to adapt through the changing background of the Covid-19 pandemic. The 2021-2022 financial year saw both the longest lock-downs in the Sydney region as well as the largest ease in restrictions. Yet, our engagement with the community who need our support, or spaces as a place of study and respite, is stronger than ever.

In times where our services were impacted or shut down, we engaged with the community remotely. The year saw more than 25,000 people reached through our social media channels. We also transitioned our e-newsletter program from monthly to fortnightly to meet growing demand. Following the ease of restrictions, we reinstated the distribution of a bimonthly printed What's On Woollahra events booklet, which now features all Council events and programs.

When Woollahra Libraries reopened to the public on Monday 18 October 2022, we were happy to welcome everyone back. On average our library users have visited us 5.26 times this year, compared to 2.19 visits for other libraries across the state with similar populations according to benchmarking data provided by the State Library of NSW (SLNSW) for 2020-21. Members borrowed more than twice the books than average from our collections which hold 69% more books per capita. Our ability to renew collection materials has kept library users engaged.

It's comforting to know that, whether remotely or in person, Woollahra Libraries can adapt and fully serve our LGA.

## Read Aloud for Home Library Members

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During lockdown from late June to October 2021, Library staff moved to creative solutions to support our community. One such program was the offer to read material over the phone for Home Library Members who were unable to access eResources. This was critical during a time when physical book deliveries were unable to take place.

Woollahra Library Staff and Volunteers read to Home Library Members twice a week. The choice of reading material was in consultation between both parties, and it was hard to tell who enjoyed it more! The titles chosen ranged from classics and contemporary prize winners, to animal stories, cosy mysteries, detective novels, and science based non-fiction. In discussions around the project, Library Staff mentioned that they found their participation fulfilling and have even offered to continue while not at work.

The service provided a meaningful way to connect with and give mental stimulation to members of the community who may have felt isolated during lockdown, due to changes in their usual social routines.

The Home Library Reading Service was a wonderful platform to make connections within our local community. From 6 October 2021, we resumed our regular Home Library Service deliveries and are happy to be out in the community once more.



📷 DigiVol Volunteers meet virtually to discuss transcription projects



📷 An example of the DigiVol transcription software and a handwritten page to be transcribed

## Local History Transcription Project & DigiVol

Libraries closed their doors across Sydney in late June 2021, and Woollahra Libraries customer service staff found themselves working from home. Volunteers were likewise no longer able to help at the library. Woollahra Libraries Local History staff took advantage of the COVID-19 lockdown by launching a transcription project focusing on the hand-written Woollahra Council Minutes.

Prior to Council's transfer to typescript minute keeping in June 1914, thousands of hand-written pages record Council's activities, containing information that was neither indexed nor machine-searchable. This lockdown project established protocols for making those records more accessible, and a year later the project has covered some thirty years of records.

Online training began in July 2021 with 15 staff contributing over 100 hours per week. Staff transcribed five years of the Minutes series over these early months, and in late August, Woollahra joined DigiVol – an online platform designed by the Australian Museum.

Library volunteers joined the project, with our Duke of Edinburgh students the first volunteers to be trained and transcribing. Additional volunteers began training in October as staff returned to usual duties, and they have continued the process.

The project has involved 40 staff and volunteers, and included high school students and retirees. Over 1500 total historic pages from Woollahra Minute books have been transcribed - and counting!

Between March 2022 and November 2021, two volunteers alone made 1100+ contributions – and they are still going. Ultimately, the transcriptions will be added to the Woollahra Digital Archive, alongside the handwritten pages.

This project has been a fantastic example of embracing opportunities in the face of adversity.

**“I really enjoyed being part of the transcription process. It made me feel part of a broader community”**

- Hayley, Duke of Edinburgh volunteer

### Volunteer Program

Woollahra Libraries' 81 volunteers made a noticeable impact on library services in 2021-2022, both virtually during lockdown and in person once Covid-19 restrictions eased. In a typical week, this group of enthusiastic individuals contributes 150 hours to the service. The volunteer program fosters wellbeing and community connectedness, and enables us to successfully deliver our numerous programs and events, as well as Home Library and JP services. Volunteers also provide the community with IT support, and even supervise the slippery slide at Woollahra Library at Double Bay. They are an essential part of the library team.

To find out more visit:  
[woollahra.nsw.gov.au/library/volunteer](http://woollahra.nsw.gov.au/library/volunteer)



📷 The Woollahra Council Plaque Scheme display located in the Woollahra Council Chambers customer service area



📷 Representatives from the La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council and the Gujaga Foundation with the Mayor of Woollahra, Cr Susan Wynn at the plaque unveiling for William Warrell, 30 May 2022

## Woollahra Council Plaque Scheme Round-Up

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The Woollahra Council Plaque Scheme is driven by community suggestion and relies upon the public making interesting and eligible nominations. It honours exceptional people or events associated with our local government area that have made a significant impact on life in the area or Australia as a nation.

Since the start of the Scheme in 2013, over 40 nominations have been successful in applying for a plaque. A full list of all plaque unveilings can be found on the Woollahra Libraries webpage under the Local History section, together with instructions for nominating a person or event.

### Woollahra Plaque Scheme Display and Talk

November 2021 saw a milestone in Woollahra Council's Plaque Scheme, with the 35th plaque unveiled under the program. The first plaque, placed in 2013, had commemorated Watsons Bay resident and colonial politician Sir John Robertson. Eight years later, the 35th plaque celebrated the life, career and local connections of world-renowned operatic soprano Dame Joan Sutherland. In between, another thirty-three historical subjects had been recorded in this way.

To celebrate the milestone of the 35th plaque, the Libraries' Local History staff mounted a 'Plaque Retrospective' at Redleaf – a display of images and realia relating to the thirty-five installations. Staff also gave a presentation drawing on highlights of the history uncovered through the nominations. Among these were the pioneering achievements of pastoralist Elizabeth Macarthur, activist Jessie Street and orthopaedic specialist Dr Max Herz. Also singled-out were the 1908 World

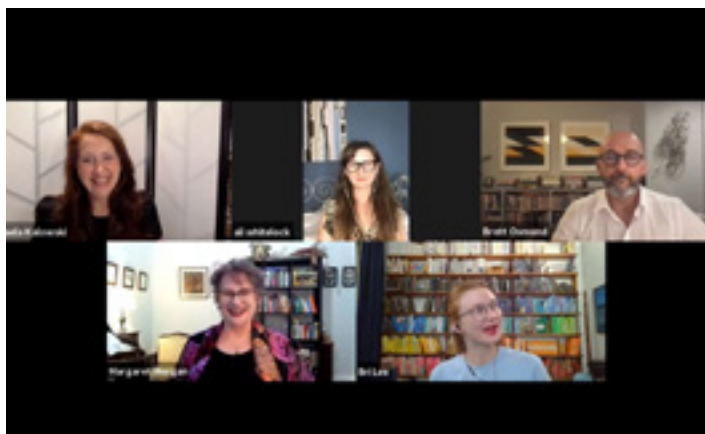
Heavyweight Boxing Championship and the 1964 Beatles Concerts – held at the Sydney Stadium some fifty-five years apart, as well as Sydney's First Seaplane Flight, a 1914 event pre-dating by a quarter-century the famous era when Rose Bay became synonymous with the craft.

Both the display and presentation illustrated how the Plaque Scheme captures and reveals moments of Woollahra's forgotten past.

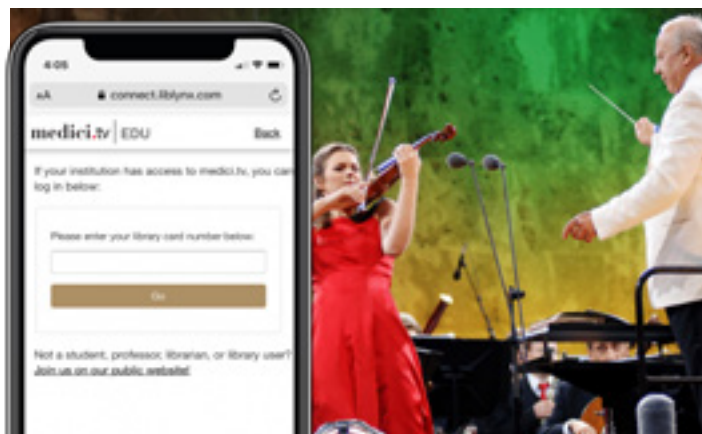
### Unveiling of Plaque for William Warrell

As part of Council's Reconciliation Week program for 2022, a plaque was unveiled under the Woollahra Council Plaque Scheme commemorating the life of William Warrell, a senior Aboriginal man of nineteenth-century Sydney. Representatives of the La Perouse Aboriginal Land Council (LPALC) the Gujaga Foundation and the State Library's Indigenous Unit joined the Mayor and Woollahra Councillors, the Honourable Gabrielle Upton (Member for Vaucluse) and members of a number of local organisations to mark the significance of William Warrell's connection with Rose Bay.

Aunty Lola Ryan, who delivered the Welcome to Country and Guest speaker Michael Ingrey of the LPALC, both spoke of the importance of recognising our shared history. In this, William Warrell was an exemplary figure - a leader of the Aboriginal community who forged connections with the European colony on terms that preserved and asserted his identity and autonomy. This plaque, placed on the eastern end of the Rose Bay promenade, joins another at the foreshore's western end, which commemorates earlier Aboriginal leader, Bungaree. Together these plaques remind us of the cultural significance of Pannerong (Rose Bay) to Aboriginal people.



Michaela Kalowski hosts the 2021 DLA Judges in discussion of the winning entries



A preview of the medici.tv platform and example of a streaming classical concert

## 2021 Woollahra Digital Literary Award

The Woollahra Digital Literary Award continues to grow in reputation, with a 36% increase in entries in its fifth year. 180 entries were received in 2021 and a new category of Digital Innovation was introduced. New judges Bri Lee, Ali Whitelock, Brett Osmond and Margaret Morgan reviewed the entries and selected a shortlist of 24 works. A total of \$7,500 was awarded to winners across the four categories:

**Fiction:** Katerina Cosgrove, *Zorba the Buddha*  
**Non-Fiction:** Yen Pham, *In the Penal Colony*  
**Poetry:** Dan Hogan, *We're Processing Your Direct Debit*  
**Digital Innovation:** David Henley, *The Collapse*

To encourage community engagement in the DLA, the Readers' Choice Award returned with 440 people casting votes within the shortlist. Heidi Sfiligoi won for her work *I Am Water*, receiving a small cash prize of \$250.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the awards ceremony moved online with a virtual winner's announcement featuring Mayor Councillor Susan Wynne and an extended judge's comments video facilitated by Michaela Kawolsky. This provided an opportunity for greater public involvement.

**"It is really touching and motivating to be read with so much care and insight alongside other wonderful writers. The recognition has been a wonderful boost — thanks for your involvement and support!"**

- Yen Pham, Non-Fiction Winner

## Launch of New Online Platforms

Woollahra Libraries introduced several new online platforms this year, part of our collection offered 24/7 to keep up with increasing demand for online resources.

In August 2021 the library launched a new streaming platform medici.tv, an online music video streaming service with global musical works, including concerts, ballets, operas, documentaries and more. At the time of the launch, the library service was closed due to COVID-19 restrictions, and this popular service recorded more than 478 views in the first few weeks.

In February 2022 the Comics Plus platform was launched. Comics Plus is a digital platform offering access to over 20,000 digital comics, graphic novels, and manga titles for comic fans of all ages. Uptake of the service has been enthusiastic with 275 downloads being recorded since the launch.

Also popular is the Libby App by Overdrive, which offers a selection of eBooks, eAudiobooks and digital magazines to download. This year Libby launched Ben's Book Club, a virtual book club available exclusively to Australian and New Zealand libraries that is hosted by best-selling author Ben Hobson. Members have access to the title, and can join the author for a live discussion. The club has been a great way to connect and engage customers online.

**"I think the Library is very easy to use and I loved the access to the online library during lock down."**

- Woollahra Libraries Customer Engagement Survey 2022



📷 Bus to Books participant Diana Armstrong and library volunteer enjoying the program in June 2022

## Bus to Books

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In response to community feedback, Bus to Books is a new Library service initiative that is being piloted in 2022. This provides an intermediary stage to our Home Library Services program for Library members living within the LGA who are limited due to mobility or access to transport but would still like to visit the library to select their items in person. On the third Thursday of each month, participating members are picked up from their homes to visit Woollahra Library at Double Bay, and dropped back home via a Holdsworth Community bus.

During their library visits, these users can choose their borrowing material and be provided with instruction on searching the library catalogue. Tuition on the use of eResources also helps to provide further bridging support between full library use and the Home Library program as members transition between the two services.

The conclusion of the visit features members enjoying morning tea together, fostering a community connection reducing isolation.

**“Bus to Books is a wonderful event that the Library puts on. It’s a very personal occasion – so lovely to connect with the volunteers and we all learn a bit about each other’s backgrounds. The Library has such a lovely atmosphere and there is always someone to help you”**

- Diana Armstrong, program participant



📷 Nicholas, age three, at the re-opening of the slippery slide at Woollahra Library at Double Bay

## Double Bay Slippery Slide Reopens

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On 21 February 2022, the Woollahra Library at Double Bay’s Slippery slide reopened after nearly two years, since being closed in March 2020 due to Covid-19 public health restrictions. On the morning of the grand-reopening, Library staff cut a giant red ribbon for a queue of small children – many of whom had never known a world without these restrictions.

Nicholas, age three, was first in line to go down the slide! With a huge smile on his face, he demonstrated safe sliding, setting a precedent for all sliders to come. The slide is open every day during school term from 10-11am and 3-4pm, and is supervised by our wonderful volunteers and staff.

**“Thanks for taking my photo,” Nicholas told the photographer, ready to use to library after a few rides down the slide. “Me go read now.”**



📷 Girls from Latouka Hospital in Fiji enjoy a day on the water, showing the books they've received from Woollahra Libraries



📷 70 boxes of books ready for transport from Woollahra Library at Double Bay to Lismore Library in Northern NSW

## First Book Fair in Two Years

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The first Woollahra Libraries Book Fair in two years was held on the weekend of 26-27 February 2022. Unfortunately, Covid-19 lockdowns and restrictions meant it wasn't possible to hold the Book Fairs earlier in the financial year. These are normally quarterly events, which enable the Library to offer ex-library stock to customers at a small cost and ensure Environment and Sustainability Action Plan objectives are met.

What happens to the remaining books leftover from Book Fair?

Woollahra Library's Book Supplier, James Bennett donated books to the Indigenous Literacy Foundation, and other community members collected 70 boxes in order to support charities.

The Library was approached by Emilie Myers, a hand therapist who, with her husband Dr Stuart Myers, a hand surgeon, visit Lautoka Hospital in Fiji annually as part of Orthopaedic Outreach. This is a voluntary organisation to assist in the teaching of local surgeons, students and physiotherapists. Several years ago, Emilie and Stuarts' children organised a project with their local school to take used books to the hospital children's ward and the local school. This year, Emilie asked Woollahra Library if it would be possible to take some leftover young adult fiction for the teenage girls in Lautoka hospital. Emily collected 6 boxes of books to take to Lautoka in April and will continue to collect books from future Book Fairs.

Other children's and young adult books were provided to Charity Community Support Services in Bankstown by community member Elizabeth Cummings. This non-profit organisation provides services to marginalised families, the homeless, people with disabilities and special needs, seniors, refugees, domestic violence victims and international students. Elizabeth, an author and member of the NSW Branch of the Children's Book Council has been redistributing ex-library books to charities both in Australia and overseas for many years. Woollahra Libraries' ex-library books have both provided disadvantaged people access to books and saved books from ending up in landfill.

The remainder of books from the May Book Fair were sent to Lismore Library in Northern NSW. Lismore Library was severely impacted by floods in March 2022 and lost almost their entire collection. The State Library of NSW kindly agreed to pay for the cost of transporting the 70 boxes of books from Double Bay to Lismore to help rebuild their library service.





Library staff from across NSW participate in the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras parade



A closer look at the costumes from the Mardi Gras parade: books with covers reflecting a diverse range of LGBTQIA+ authors

## Woollahra Libraries Parade LGBTQIA+ Books at Mardi Gras

This year saw the first library industry entry into the 'Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras'. This landmark achievement was instigated and organised by Woollahra Libraries Coordinator Library Experience, Corinna Pierce.

On Saturday 5 March, more than 30 library and information staff from across NSW marched (and danced) around the Sydney Cricket Ground in the 'The Librarians' group. Participants wore costumes in the shape of books, with covers reflecting a diverse range of LGBTQIA+ authors, to recognise the importance that books play in helping us to understand ourselves and to reflect our varied experiences.

Planning for this event began in March 2021. Whilst watching the parade that year, Corinna decided that it was time the industry was represented at Mardi Gras and equally important that we highlight to our customers, communities and organisations that libraries and librarians offer safe spaces where everyone is welcome and no-one is judged. Funding for the entry was sought and eagerly provided by the Australian Library Industry Association (ALIA).

A number of working bees were held at Woollahra Libraries to brainstorm and create the costumes, which had to be waterproof, easy to carry and most importantly eye-catching and spectacular. During the process local shops were cleared of their sparkly book covering supplies and shelves at hardware stores were emptied of fairy lights.

On the day of the parade, the group met at Paddington Library, (which was fitting, given it was the site of the meeting that preceded the original Mardi Gras march in 1978), put on their costumes and made their way over to the Sydney Cricket Ground. The excitement of entering a stadium of 40,000 excited people with the lights and the music was indescribable.

Everyone had unbelievable fun and we delivered the important message:

**“Everyone is equal inside a library: it’s a place where we can all take pride in our-shelves.”**

- Corinna Pierce, parade entry organiser

### IDAHOBIT

On 17 May, Woollahra Libraries took part in International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersexism and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT), a day to stand against the prejudice, fear, violence and marginalisation that members of the LGBTQIA+ community continue to face in their daily lives. Staff wore rainbow pins to show their support, and a large themed display was installed at Woollahra Library at Double Bay for the week.



Photo of Parsley Bay from the Woollahra Libraries Digital Archive, taken ca. 1920s-30s (one of the curious names in Vaucluse)

## Curious Names in Vaucluse- a Filmed Walking Tour

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The 2022 National Trust Heritage Festival challenged participating organisations to respond to the theme ‘Curiosity’. At Woollahra Libraries, Local History staff built on the success of their first ‘Visual walking tour’, which had covered Cooper Park, by producing a second video – this time set in Vaucluse, and focusing on some of the intriguing place-names found in the suburb.

The result is *Curious names in Vaucluse*, a filmed tour which explores the history preserved in the names of local roads, parks and localities. The name of the suburb itself involves the story of colourful ‘gentleman convict’, Sir Henry Brown Hayes, who named his estate for ‘Fontaine de Vaucluse’ in Provence. The origins of names such as ‘Bottle and Glass Rocks’, ‘Parsley Bay’ and ‘Christison Park’ are among those examined, as are Aboriginal names such as ‘Belah’ and ‘Myall’.

In line with the Library’s commitment to inclusive programming, *Curious names in Vaucluse* has been added to the local history webpages and offers anyone with impaired mobility an armchair visit to a number of historical landmarks of Vaucluse. The addition of closed captioning further extends the film’s accessibility.



Patricia Ocelli, Dave Sharma, Lord Mayor Clover Moore, Cr Susan Wynne (Mayor of Woollahra), Jody Rodas, and Heather Davis celebrate at Paddington Library’s 130th Birthday Party

## Paddington Library Turns 130

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On 11 May 1892, the Aldermen of Paddington Council showed their progressive thinking in opening a library within the newly-built Paddington Town Hall. It was noted as being the ‘first of its kind in the Eastern Suburbs’ and a library has operated almost continuously from this base for the last 130 years.

To celebrate this milestone anniversary, Woollahra Libraries carried out several display initiatives, from a photographic exhibition depicting the Library over the past century-plus, to commemorative street banners installed along Oxford Street and Five Ways, and a new Local History webpage dedicated to the Library.

The Libraries also held two key events. Firstly on 11 May, Woollahra Local History and Programs teams collaborated with the City of Sydney Librarian Dr Lisa Murray and Paddington Society member Sandra Hall, to produce an interesting and insightful history of the Library and the changing nature of Paddington the suburb. The talk, “Paddington: Sparking Curiosity for 130 Years” attracted 50 bookings.

Then on 15 May, a 130th Birthday party was held. The fun activities included a special storytime, robotics, a scavenger hunt and craft for children, live music and speeches from VIPs, including the Mayor, Susan Wynne who was joined by Lord Mayor, Clover Moore from our service partner City of Sydney. The speeches were followed by birthday cake (of course!) and the party was enjoyed by more than 500 community members.

Overall, it was a hugely successful initiative that enabled Council to spotlight Paddington Library and remind everyone of the ongoing importance of their local library to the vibrancy and well-being of a community.



📷 The Woollahra Libraries app in use on a customer mobile



📷 The new StoryTime pod, located in the Beehive at Woollahra Library at Double Bay

## Contactless Checkout for Mobile Devices

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In May 2022 Woollahra Libraries introduced a self-checkout option in the Woollahra Libraries App. This function is available at Paddington Library and at Woollahra Library at Double Bay.

The app turns customers' phones into self-service machines, and their books can be checked out by tapping them with their phone. The app will simultaneously process the loan on the customer's account and disable the item's security alarm.

This new way of borrowing is contactless, safe and hygienic. It adds to a suite of measures that Woollahra Libraries is using to protect the community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

To be able to use the new self-service feature, customers will need to download the latest version of Woollahra Libraries App on their phone from either the Google Play or Apple App Store. During the first two months after the launch, more than 600 items were checked out by customers using this contactless method.

## New Children's StoryTime Pod at Woollahra Library

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On Friday 24 June, Woollahra Library at Double Bay became home to its very own StoryTime Pod—the world's first story-telling machine for children.

The new feature, situated in the Children's craft area, offers a digital storytelling solution which has over 200 short, high quality digital books with stories in seven languages. Many are recited by some of our favourite Australian storytellers through a partnership with StoryBox Library.

Woollahra Libraries' youngest patrons have flocked to the machine, with 324 stories and educational activities accessed in just the last week of the financial year! We are excited to see them engaged, entertained and educated all at the same time.

**"I like that it's got Thomas (the Tank Engine) and memory games!"**

**- Noah, age 3**

# Woollahra Libraries

## Double Bay

451 New South  
Head Road  
9391 7100

## Paddington

Town Hall  
247 Oxford Street  
9391 7988

## Watsons Bay

8 Marine Parade  
9391 7999

[woollahra.nsw.gov.au/library](http://woollahra.nsw.gov.au/library)

