

REPORT

USER ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS, JULY-SEPTEMBER 2014

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GovHack

GovHack 2014 was held across Australia on the weekend of 11-13 July. GovHack is a national competition aimed at encouraging the creation of innovative applications using open government data. Once again, NSLA sponsored a prize for the best use of the Trove API. Trove team members, Tim Sherratt and Mark Raadgever, were data mentors, providing advice to teams wanting to make use of Trove data. Over the GovHack weekend they monitored Twitter and the Trove forum to respond to queries from participants, tweeted about possibilities with Trove data, and spent time onsite assisting Canberra teams.

Tim Sherratt coordinated the judging of the Trove prize with representatives from SLQ and SLSA. The prizes were presented in August at a 'red carpet' event in Brisbane which featured the Minister for Communications, Malcolm Turnbull. First prize in the Trove category was shared between two very different projects: [AussieMon](#), an online game to teach children about Australian wildlife, and [The Hack Report](#), a dynamically-generated newspaper. Second prize was shared by [Time Machine](#) and [Altrove](#), with [Hot News Time Machine](#) highly commended. Beyond the development of particular apps, GovHack is a valuable opportunity for the Trove team to talk to developers and other government agencies about the possibilities of the Trove API. Trove's value was clearly recognised, receiving the GovHack award for 'Most highly voted Government data'.

Supporting NAIDOC Week

The Trove Support team prepared a special series of tweets to support NAIDOC week. A tweet was sent each day from 6 to 11 July with two on 12 July. Resources were selected to illustrate this year's NAIDOC week theme of 'Serving Country: Centenary and Beyond'. Highlights of the week included Senator Nova Peris retweeting the week's final contribution which received 32 retweets and 15 favourites. The week's tweets have been [collected on Storify](#).

Engaging with Australian research

[‘Bringing You Australian Research’](#) was published on the Trove blog on 11 July. Written by Julia Hickie, the post explored how Trove makes current Australian research accessible by harvesting content from the institutional repositories of universities and other agencies. The tweet promoting the blog post received 28 retweets and 5 favourites and was the thirteenth-ranked Australian government tweet for the day.

The post highlighted the Trove Support Team’s ongoing engagement with Institutional Repository managers around the country. An email to the CAIRSS email list in July provided updates on relevant developments in Trove including [new Help pages](#), the research blog post and the [Collection Profiler](#) tool. This email prompted a number of Institutional Repository managers to get in touch, wanting to tidy their data, start contributing their Open Access Journal content and take advantage of the Collection Profiler as a communication tool to University management. The update also featured very positively in a webinar given by ANDS to the same community.

Family history month

Two special blog posts were published during August in celebration of Family History Month. The first post, [Like a parched man coming across a lush oasis](#), was a compilation of stories from family historians who use Trove. The second, [Trove tips for family historians](#), was a collection of tips for getting the best out of your research from Liz Pidgeon, Yarra Plenty Family History Librarian, compiled after a brainstorming session with her users. The response to both family history blog posts was very positive. As one reader noted:

‘Trove has given me access to information never spoken about by family and also a greater understanding of the lives of members of my family. It is sad that older family members no longer with us were so hesitant to speak of things because they perceived these incidents to be a blight on the family name. What they did was put a human face so to speak to names. Trove is addictive but I love it.’

THATCamp Canberra

The website for [THATCamp Canberra 2014](#) went live and registrations were opened to the public in August. THATCamp Canberra 2014, to be held 31 October to 2 November 2014, is part of the celebrations of Trove’s 5th birthday in November (Trovember). THATCamps are digital humanities unconferences that explore the possibilities and problems raised by the application of technology to the humanities. The Trove team is always on the lookout for innovative research using Trove data, and are looking to THATCamp as an opportunity to help people make use of our API to build tools and interfaces, or simply streamline their research.

Vandals or volunteers

An article in *The Australian* in September described a recent study which claimed that deliberate sabotage was much more widespread in crowdsourcing projects that had been previously acknowledged. The story was taken up by *The World Today* who interviewed Tim Sherratt [on 10 September](#) for a Trove perspective. Needless to say the Trove experience has been

overwhelmingly positive – vandalism is rare and generally seems to be the work of bored teenagers, rather than determined saboteurs. For a critique of the original study see [Mia Ridge's blog](#).

Powered by partnerships

The Winter edition of the *Museums Australia Magazine* included the article '[Powered by partnerships: Trove Year 5 and beyond](#)' by Tim Sherratt and Catriona Bryce. The article is part of the Trove team's ongoing efforts to develop our engagement with the museums sector.

Powered by Partnerships: Trove Year 5 and beyond

Trove

Tim Sherratt and Catriona Bryce

Trove isn't just digitised newspapers and our records don't just come from libraries. From staffed desks and wooden shelves to the latest scientific research, Trove's content is sure to surprise.

Trove is a collection of collections. It aggregates records from hundreds of Australian libraries, museums, archives, universities, research organisations, government agencies, and community groups. All these records can be explored through a single search. It's Trove's job to make unique Australian content easier to find and use.

No collection is too big or too small. Amongst the Trove team's favourite are 14 records from the Queensland Police Museum. These include Peter, a staffed desk, who was one of the key pieces of evidence used to identify a murderer in the 1950s. This collection also includes a small lamp of metal – coins welded together after the Kenniff brothers set fire to the bodies of two murdered police constables in 1962.

But Trove is not just for finding records, it also helps you find connections. Starting with that tragic lamp of metal, a search for the Kenniff brothers reveals a map-sheet from the State Library of Queensland, a crime and memorial from Monmouth Australia's database, and books, journal articles and an entry in the Australian Dictionary of Biography. Then of course there's the whole story recounted in detail by contemporary newspapers. Trove adds layers of context that no one collection can provide. It reveals you down the rabbit hole of serendipitous discovery.

Working together

With close to 400 million records, it's tempting to focus on the scale and complexity of Trove. But alongside the servers and the algorithms, the metadata, Trove's content is sustained by a series of collaborations. Trove is powered by partnerships. Libraries Australia leads Trove with information about the holdings of libraries across the country. Through the Australian Newspaper Plan, the National and State Libraries coordinate the digitisation of Trove's rich collection of newspapers. Meanwhile, the Partners team work with web publishers to preserve online content. But that's just the beginning. Trove collaborates with organisations large and small to

break down collection silos and expose their contents to the wider web.

If your organisation's collections are online, there's a good chance we can harvest the details and make them easier to find. Trove wants to help get people through to your website. There are more details in our Content Partners help page.

A passionate community

There's another important group of Trove contributors – the public. Trove has an active and passionate community of users who work with us to improve our service.

The most obvious example is in our newspapers zone where volunteers work to correct the OCR-generated text of articles. So far they've fixed over 140 million lines of text. As one of our top correctors has noted: 'It is so nice having the information online if it cannot be found.' Improving the quality of the text makes it more discoverable by all.

But the community adds much more to Trove than text corrections. Tags and comments also enhance raw metadata with valuable information – all of which is searchable. Sometimes one message further. One West Australian enthusiast has been assembling lists of out-of-copyright American sheet music, using software to perform and record the pieces, and then adding links in Trove comments that point to these recordings on YouTube or SoundCloud. As a result, anyone viewing these records in Trove can just click on the link to hear them performed.

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Trove Year 5

Trove will be celebrating its fifth birthday on 20 November 2014. As we enter Trove Year 5 we'll be continuing to think about the future.

We recently upgraded some of the technologies underpinning the newspaper zone, and there's more to come including a mobile-friendly interface for the newspapers, and more full-text digital content. We'll also be working to remove open access content and provide better tools for finding openly-licensed resources.

But as we contemplate the future it's clear that collaboration will remain the key. Trove will be what we make it, together. **LI**

Tim Sherratt is the Manager of Trove at the National Library of Australia. He's also a digital historian and cultural data hacker sometimes known as @wragge. Catriona Bryce is one of the Trove Support Leaders and regularly blogs for Trove. <http://www.nla.gov.au/bigdata>

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Some interesting blog posts

- [A Trove of ideas: Historical sources as inspiration for fiction writers and poets](#)
- [Football in Australia in the 1850s](#)

Talks and presentations

- Tim Sherratt gave a presentation in AustLII's research seminar series at UTS on 28 July. AustLII provides a comprehensive database of Australian legal information and they are exploring ways of integrating data from Trove. They are also keen for Trove to harvest data from their large collection of digitised Australian legal journals.

- On 18 August, Tim Sherratt spoke to a group of history honours students visiting from ANU about researching in Trove.
- Tim Sherratt was guest speaker at a meeting of the ACT branch of the Australian Law Librarian's Association on 27 August. About 20 people attended the talk on 'The future of Trove'. A representative of the Australian Government Solicitor was particularly pleased to see their legal opinions used as an example of Trove's growing content, and noted that they hope to publish more opinions soon.
- On 11 September, Tim Sherratt gave a presentation at a digital history workshop for graduate students and staff at ANU.
- Marie-Louise Ayres presented '[Trove at 5: Are we there yet?](#)' at the ALIA National Conference on 17 September.
- Tim Sherratt presented a brief introduction to Trove via a pre-recorded screencast to the 'Cultural Heritage and New Media' workshop at Curtin University on 25 September.
- On 20 September, Tim Sherratt presented a keynote address at the Annual Conference of the Japanese Association for the Digital Humanities entitled '[Life on the outside: Collections, contexts, and the wild, wild web](#)'. This was a personal undertaking; however, the presentation included many examples from Trove, drawing together a number of threads relating to the use of Trove resources. The paper was very well-received and has been widely shared online.

Trove Traces

As part of his personal research, Tim Sherratt undertook a preliminary analysis of web pages that include links to Trove newspaper articles. A sample of these 'backlinks' was harvested and the details saved to a database for easy exploration. [Trove Traces](#) is available online and includes the details of 3116 pages containing 11,242 Trove links. The number and diversity of linking pages emphasises the impact of the digitised newspapers.

Trove Blog summary

The Trove blog received 4651 pageviews in the July-September quarter. The most popular posts were:

Blog post	Number of views (July-September)
Trove tips for family historians	1518 views
Bringing you Australian research	578 views
Like a parched man coming to a lush oasis	460 views

Twitter summary



The screenshot shows a tweet from Jen Li (@jennnigan) to @TroveAustralia. The tweet text is: "Dear @TroveAustralia, some days I think I love you more than life itself. How did people undertake research before you?!" The tweet has 1 favorite and was posted at 11:33 AM on July 11, 2014. The interface includes a profile picture, name, handle, a settings gear, a follow button, and interaction icons for reply, retweet, favorite, and more.

Twitter recently opened up its analytics data to all users, making it easier to extract basic statistics around user engagement.

	July-September	April-June
Tweets published	219	262
Impressions (number of times users saw a Trove tweet)	386,232	395,992
Engagements (number of times users interacted with a Trove tweet – clicks, retweets, replies, follows, and favourites)	7030	8974
Retweets	1118	947
Replies	118	165
Favourites	1236	1112
Clicks on url	1929	1960

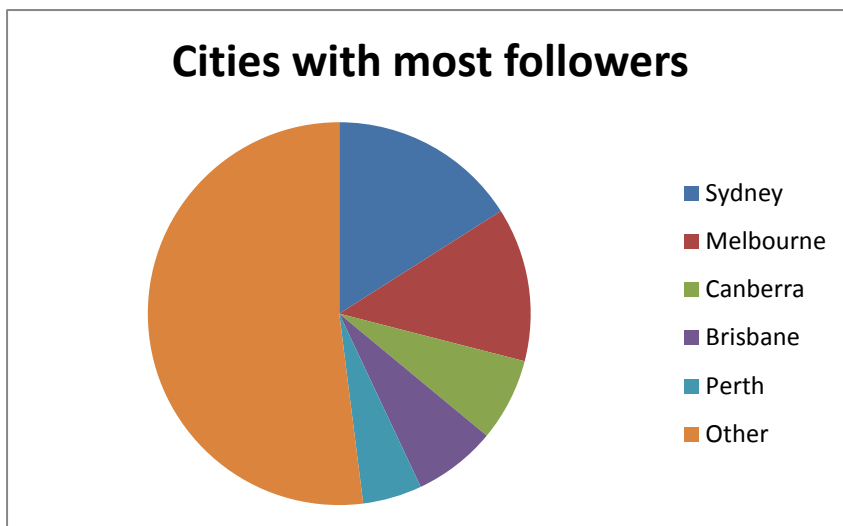
The enhanced analytics also allow us to analyse more effectively the performance of individual tweets. Interestingly the 'top' tweet for the July-September period differs depending on the measure used.

Top Tweets – Impressions (number of times users saw a Trove tweet)	Number of impressions
CSIRO Observatory in Parkes transmits the first pictures of the Apollo 11 Moon walk	7596
A 5 minute intro to the wonders of Trove for #GovHack participants	6406
Yes, we won 'Highest voted Government Data' at the #GovHack Awards!	5827

Top Tweets – Engagement (number of times users interacted with a Trove tweet)	Number of clicks, retweets etc
Diary of a soldier from 1914	265
Thousands watched the AIFs 2nd Infantry Brigade march through Melbourne	204
A change in ladies fashion is not regarded highly by sheep farmers	196

Top Tweets – Url clicks	Number of clicks
Diary of a soldier from 1914	89
This cartoon shows that dog walking seems about the same in 1932	66
A bored radio announcer sent a town into panic	55

There continues to be strong growth in Trove's Twitter following. The total number of followers at the end of September was 7594, an increase of 742 across the quarter.



Not surprisingly, 81% of Trove's followers come from Australia, with 3% each from the USA and UK.

55% of Trove's followers are female and 45% male.

Trove continues to be well-represented amongst the [top-ranked Australian government tweets](#). In July-September 24 Trove tweets were ranked in the daily top 50. The tweet with the greatest reach, according to their analysis, concerned Indigenous Literacy Day.

Date	Subject	Ranking	Retweets	Favourites	Reach
3 September	Indigenous Literacy Day	12	18	6	90,935
21 July	National Lamington Day	18	25	10	67,096
21 July	Apollo 11 moon walk	2	37	17	58,648
22 July	Seeking stories for Family History Week	40	12	3	48,669
11 July	Current Australian research blog post	13	21	4	46,381
22 September	Ben Chifley	21	14	6	45,588
24 September	Diary of a soldier	7	19	17	42,770
9 July	Resources about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service (NAIDOC Week)	37	10	6	41,458
9 September	University of Melbourne collections	20	11	8	40,713
25 September	AIF 2nd Infantry Brigade march through Melbourne	5	27	11	39,127
24 July	Amelia Earhart	45	6	4	35,228
5 August	First shot of WWI	35	10	3	33,641
10 August	Trove's GovHack prize	6	15	13	33,163

<u>12 August</u>	Australian football in the 1850s	30	7	5	32,808
<u>28 July</u>	Albert Namatjira	48	6	4	32,653
<u>2 September</u>	Henry Lawson	33	10	2	32,367
<u>12 July</u>	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander servicemen (NAIDOC Week)	3	19	13	31,825
<u>30 July</u>	Ghost whispering cat	45	4	7	30,482
<u>7 September</u>	TroveNewsBot	4	17	11	16,357
<u>15 September</u>	Mark Twain	35	9	5	14,652
<u>13 August</u>	Lauren Bacall	50	6	4	13,658
<u>11 September</u>	Scottish independence	16	11	7	13,281
<u>4 September</u>	First issues of the Age	18	10	6	13,211
<u>26 September</u>	Short skirts	17	13	6	9,986