in the library to understanding more about e-books to skills in time management.

In the past four years, the library has also run a program called the Self Directed Professional Activity (SDPA). Once a semester each staff member spends one afternoon working on an activity of their choice to advance their knowledge, skills, and/or work performance. Activities undertaken in the past have included professional visits to other libraries, writing project briefs, developing a catalogue of publicity shots, and learning how to use new software.

Keeping staff engaged and engaging is important for all libraries and achievable even at smaller and more remote sites. Regional libraries just need to be a little more creative and take advantage of the networks to which they already belong.

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eRecords at the State Library of NSW

Thanks to the eRecords project at the State Library of New South Wales (SLNSW), public libraries and their users in rural and remote NSW will increasingly have the same access to the library's collections, via its online catalogue, as residents of Sydney who are able to visit the Macquarie Street buildings.

The eRecords project is unlocking the contents of the State Library's unrivalled cultural and historical collections with project funding of $10m over three years from the NSW Government. Although SLNSW has been using electronic catalogues since the 1980s, one million collection items remain accessible only through hand-written or typescript cards – necessitating a visit to Sydney or telephone or email contact through a staff member.

By September 2009, a total of 218 473 eRecords had been created for collection items, such as:

- the Dixson Library sheet maps which document the exploration and charting of Australia and the Pacific

- pictures and photographs in the heritage pictorial collections

- over 20 000 Australian literature titles, from popular 'penny dreadfuls' to rare first edition literary classics, including *We're all Australians now: a letter to the troops at the Dardanelles* by A.B. Paterson.

- The MacPherson Drama collection: 4000 20th century plays, including rare and quirky female-only productions, and classics that became major motion pictures, for example *Rebecca: A play in three acts* – the film adaptation scored Alfred Hitchcock his first Academy Award for Best Picture.

- The Robbins Stage Magic Collection

- The Nelson M. Richardson collection: a unique collection of bibles and medieval manuscripts including the Library's oldest manuscript, *The book of Isaiah*.

You can keep up to date with the progress of this major retrospective conversion project via the SLNSW website at **http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/about/projects/erecords/index.html** and the project blog at **http://blog.sl.nsw.gov.au/erecords/**

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