

South Coast Cooperative Libraries

Annual Report 2024-2025



KIAMA
MUNICIPAL
COUNCIL

A man in a dark suit is shown in profile, looking down and holding a long wooden staff. He has white body paint on his face and chest. In the background, a crowd of people is gathered outdoors, some of whom are wearing traditional Indigenous clothing and performing a dance or ceremony. The scene is set in a park-like area with trees and a building in the distance.

Acknowledgement of Country

Walawaani (welcome),

Shoalhaven City Council recognises the First Peoples of the Shoalhaven and their ongoing connection to culture and country. We acknowledge Aboriginal people as the Traditional Owners, Custodians and Lore Keepers of the world's oldest living culture and pay respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Walawaani njindiwan (safe journey to you all)

This acknowledgment includes Dhurga language. We recognise and understand that there are many diverse languages spoken within the Shoalhaven.

Contents

Acknowledgement of Country	02
Cooperative Manager's Report	04
Shoalhaven Libraries Annual Report 2024-2025	05
Kiama Library Annual Report 2024-2025	16
Statistical Analysis	19
Staff Members - Shoalhaven Libraries	29
Staff Members - Kiama Library Service	32



Cooperative Manager's Report

Public libraries continue to evolve as vibrant community hubs. Far beyond their traditional role as repositories of books, they now offer diverse services and resources, provide welcoming and inclusive spaces for all, and foster lifelong learning and meaningful social connections.

The role of public libraries is more vital than ever, as rising costs make access to both print and digital literacy increasingly difficult for many in our community.

Libraries and library staff continue to provide a link to other service providers, local organisations and community groups, while also offering technology classes and coordinating accessible programs and events for all community members, often for free or at very minimal cost.

Last financial year, Australians made over 26.7 million physical visits to NSW public libraries and 14 million virtual visits to public library websites. 11.3 million people enjoyed internet access, including Wi-Fi hours and more than 1.84 million people enjoyed over 104,000 programs and events.

Programs and events held at libraries continue to unite communities, improving health and wellbeing, reducing isolation, increasing skills and fostering stronger, more connected communities.

South Coast Cooperative Libraries continue to offer a wide range of events and programs as well as physical and digital resources that not only cater to all members of the community but also help bring our communities together, as a place for all.

During the past financial year, South Coast Cooperative Libraries added over 19,000 physical items to the collection. Additionally, there are over 39,000 eBooks, 35,000 eAudiobooks and 36,000 eMagazines available for download.

We continue to play a vital role as digital literacy hubs, helping to build a digitally literate society by providing free technology classes, computer access and Wi-Fi.

Once again, thank you to Michelle Hudson and her team at Kiama Library for their ongoing collaboration, support and professionalism.

I am pleased to present the Annual Report for South Coast Cooperative Libraries, which highlights the services, resources and programs that are provided to our community through dedicated staff of the public library service.

Nicole Lonesborough
Acting Manager
South Coast Cooperative
Libraries



Shoalhaven Libraries Annual Report 2024-2025

With Shoalhaven City Council's financial position under review and staff recruitment on hold, library staff faced another challenging year. Staff shortages continue to impact library services, but staff, as always, have been responsive and made changes to regular programs to continue to meet the community's needs.

These changes included moving staff-led programs such as Book Club and Adult Craft to being self-directed and/or passive events. Initial responses to these changes were positive but over time attendance numbers did reduce.

Our spaces continue to be vibrant, welcoming and safe places, highly valued by the community. With new study desks purchased during the year, our quiet area at Nowra Library now offers individual spaces as well as tables for group work.

We continued to implement recommendations from the State Library of New South Wales following their site visit in 2023, and in February 2025, we commenced our own Library Services Review.

During Reconciliation Week, Shoalhaven City Council launched its Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). Library staff are working towards achieving their assigned actions in the RAP over the next 12 months. We are also looking forward to continuing our work with the First Nations people of the



Shoalhaven Libraries

Sanctuary Point Mobile Nowra Ulladulla Milton

Shoalhaven to make our libraries even more inclusive and user friendly.

Architects of the Sanctuary Point Library build were engaged to produce a Feasibility Study to confirm the viability of delivering a new library in Sanctuary Point. However, at a Council meeting in April 2025 Council voted against building a new library on the proposed site and instructed staff to find alternative land for the library build. This has halted all plans regarding Sanctuary Point Library as staff investigate other options under Council's direction.

Our little blue library turned 30 this year and we celebrated with a children's storytime, craft session and a beautiful birthday cake. Kids from the storytime blew out the candles and didn't hesitate in saying yes to a slice of cake.

Our café in the Ulladulla Civic Centre became vacant in December 2024. We have been lucky to engage the services of a temporary operator until a new expression of interest document is ready to be made public. We are hoping to offer the café to permanent operators soon.

We were thrilled to receive a Public Library Infrastructure Grant to support the purchase of a second Mobile Library Van. This vehicle will expand our reach across the Shoalhaven LGA, visiting pre-schools, nursing homes, retirement villages and smaller village communities.

Events & Programs

Our Outreach Team have had a massive year coordinating over 600 events and programs held across the branches and in the community. This has been a big effort by the team considering the reduction in staff numbers.

Adult craft sessions and Book Club moved from being facilitated by library staff to being self-directed. Sessions this year included mushroom collages, decorating library bags and mindfulness colouring.

During NAIDOC Week we were very lucky to host a Koori Weaving and Beading Workshop, attend the NAIDOC Family Fun Day at the Nowra Showground and present a screening of Satellite Boy for families to enjoy. Staff at Ulladulla Library facilitated a collaborative colouring passive activity.

We took library members on a “behind the scenes” of Nowra Library to celebrate Library and Information Week. The tour included all areas of the workroom, how we prepare for events and programs and how local heritage documents are digitised for preservation and access.

Our Winter Warmers Challenge is proving to be extremely popular with over 500 items received and donated to local charities such as the Milton Ulladulla District Soup Kitchen, the Ulladulla Little Free Food Pantry and the Nowra Homeless Hub.

In July, Nowra Library proudly launched our Inclusive Storytime, a celebration of community and connection that welcomes young adults living with disability to the library to enjoy a dedicated storytime. This initiative reflects our strong commitment to making the library a place for everyone.

The theme for Children’s Book Week “Reading is Magic” was celebrated with Readers Theatre sessions at Sanctuary Point, Ulladulla and Nowra Libraries. Over 145 children attended these sessions. Competitions for all ages – including colouring, bookmark design and short story writing prompts – were held across all branches. The celebrations also featured special storytimes, Book Week displays and craft activities.



Ulladulla Library Book Week Winner



Our HSC Lock-In event welcomed approximately 22 students to Nowra and Ulladulla Libraries, allowing them to stay after closing time for some focused, last-minute study. It was a valuable opportunity for students to access library resources, connect with staff, and learn more about services available to them beyond school. The evening was made even more special with the support of therapy dog Ollie, whose calming presence was a highlight for many students. This fun and popular event continues to be a favourite among students preparing for their exams.

Santa was kept very busy replying to over 300 letters he received from our junior members just in time for Christmas. The kids were so excited to visit the library and collect their personalised replies, making it a magical and memorable experience for all.

NSW Seniors Festival was celebrated by over 60 seniors who attended tech sessions, a film screening and morning tea across three branches.

Youth Week was a success this year with a very popular Paint and Snack Program in collaboration with the Shoalhaven Art Society who facilitated the workshop. Participants ranged in age from 12 to 15 years, and they explored with different techniques using black paper to create an abstract picture. They also used art inks on plastic paper and experimented with watercolours, ink and different textures. Those who attended expressed enjoyment and appreciated having three separate art pieces to take home.

National Simultaneous Storytime was, as always, a fun and engaging event. We celebrated with a digital screening of the chosen book, *The Truck Cat*, which included Auslan interpretation to support accessibility and inclusivity. Following the screening, staff performed a lively readers theatre presentation of a second cat-themed

story, much to the delight of the attending preschools and storytime children. A replica truck was created by one enthusiastic staff member, which added a special touch and was adored by the children.

A singalong with the local Albatross Musical Society was something we decided to try after a previous successful author visit from Sandie Docker that included a choir. 17 participants enjoyed a morning of songs, singing and morning tea.

Our regular programs continue to be popular even though some changes were made to facilitation throughout the year.

Rhymetime and Storytime continue to attract big numbers each week at all branches. This year we had some special storytime presenters, including Aunty Kath, Joel Robinson and Michelle van Grinsven.

Code Club at Sanctuary Point Library has been very popular and successful since its inception 6 years ago. This year the kids participated in the Moonhack Challenge in association with Code Club Australia and continued to grow their skills by coding games and animations weekly in the Scratch environment.

Book Haven Book Club launched at Sanctuary Point Library and has proved very popular with a group of enthusiastic, regular members enjoying monthly social interaction with likeminded book lovers.



Mitch Jennings Author Event at Nowra Library

Community Hotseat held at the Shoalhaven Hospital has been running for several years now. This is a great collaboration between the two organisations where outpatients gain an understanding of what the library offers and how we can assist them to link up with other services.

Golden Aces was introduced at Ulladulla Library after proving popular at Nowra Library. Board games, card games and other puzzles are made available to members of the community to play. This has been a great way for community members to meet other likeminded people, keep their brains active, reduce isolation and improve their mental health.



A 20s & 30s Book Club catering for young adults across those age groups commenced monthly and has seen a steady membership. The local ABC Illawarra radio program made this “club” a feature of its “clubbies radio segment” recently where a staff member from the Digital Outreach team was interviewed by the radio host.

While regular Film Club attendance has decreased this year, one-off special screenings continue to shine. Message of the Lyrebird was a standout, with 30 community members enjoying a sold-out session and learning about the wonders of nature through film.

The Adult Craft sessions at Nowra and Ulladulla Library moved from staff-led programming to a self-directed activity due to staff shortages across the service. Whilst staff still gather the supplies and instructions needed for the activity, participants were left to complete the craft on their own. This also changed the way participants interacted with each other. There is more conversation between participants, and they look forward to meeting up again next month. We were however lucky enough to have a guest presenter, Christine Wiltshier, to help with craft sessions at Ulladulla Library in September.

Our collaboration with the WHAM (Well-Being, Health & Movement) grows stronger every month. Sessions this year included How to

Access Allied Health Services, Cardiovascular Disease and Osteoporosis.

Monthly Nature Matters discussions and workshops held at Nowra and Ulladulla Libraries saw some fascinating presentations on Black Cockatoos, Flying Foxes, Backyard Birds, Citizen Science and the work completed by organisations such as Landcare and Shoalhaven Riverwatch.

In April, Nowra Library participated in an outreach event at our local Bunnings Store. This was a great way to reach people who may not be aware of the free services and resources available at their local library. Being an afternoon event, we were able to reach both adults and children.

The Mobile Library is not only popular with community members in outlying villages, but it is also proving to be quite the drawcard at outreach events. This year we took the van to the Nowra Show and Noah’s Challenge.

Two new junior programs to reach school-aged children were introduced at Nowra Library: LEGO Club and Crafty Kids. The re-introduction of LEGO Club started after a successful school holiday family LEGO challenge and Crafty Kids was introduced due to the popularity of drop-in craft sessions also during the school holidays.



Storytime at Nowra Library



Ulladulla Library Adult Craft July 2025



Mobile Library



“
Thanks for a lovely night, full of good vibes
”

“
The talk on Artificial intelligence was timely. I congratulate the library on holding this event. The speaker was an excellent presenter and really knew his topic.
”

“
Wonderful service and environment. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit today for the book launch
”

“
Craft for adults is a lovely escape for people who have a busy life - a time to create and talk
”

“
This was the best event I have ever been to at Nowra Library and is up there with the best author events I have been to over the years. It was extremely entertaining, and the time simply flew by. I would love to see more events like this. Quite different to the usual author talks and in conversations (which I also love!)
”



Author Visits

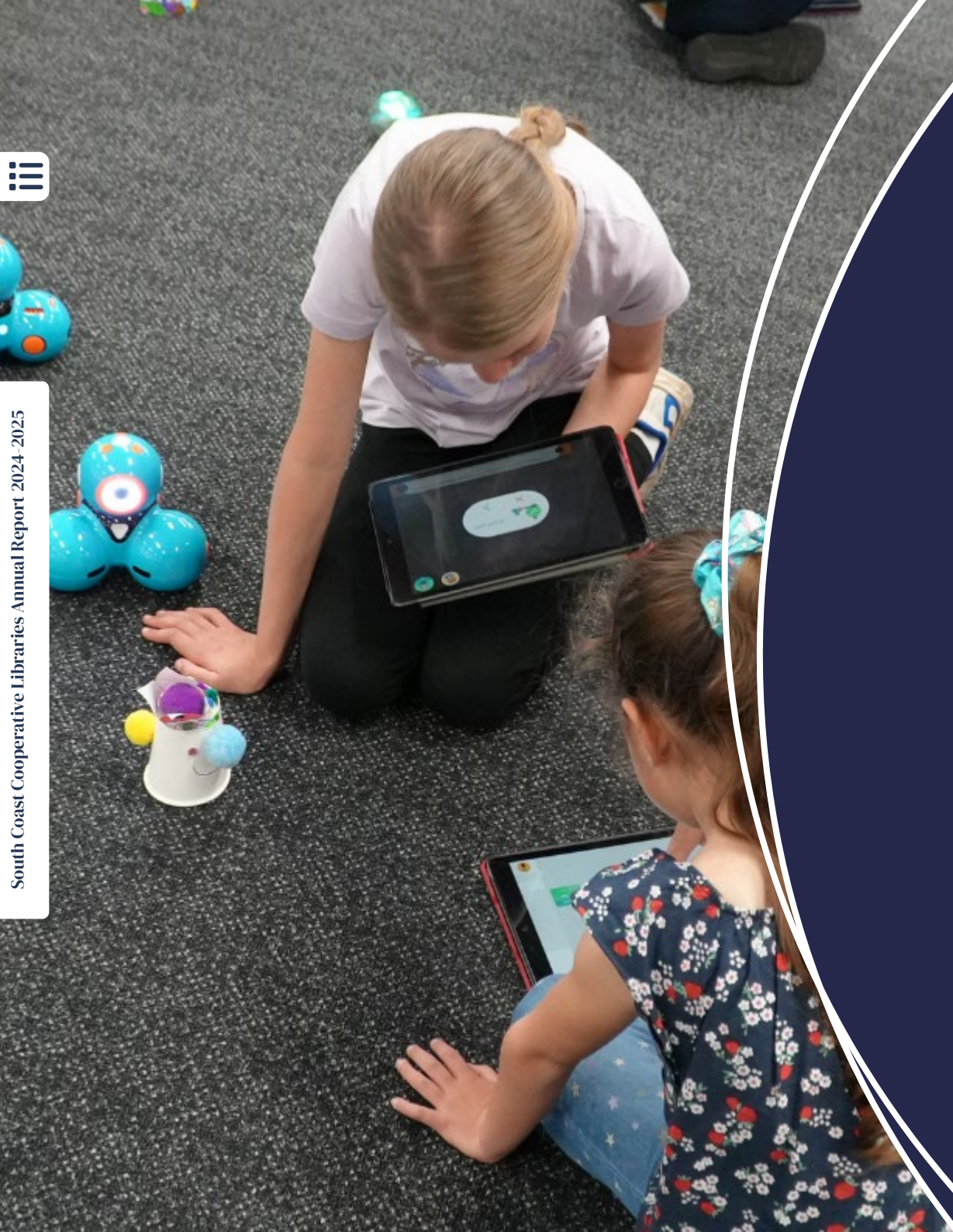
The library continues to promote authors and literacy by hosting talks and book launches by a range of authors. Authors who visited our libraries this year included Sandie Docker with an amazing performance by Shoalhaven Community Choir, Fiona McArthur, Mitch Jennings, Penelope Janu and Gina Chick.

Our "In conversation" sessions continued, featuring engaging discussions with Nicole Alexander and Claudine Tinellis, Ali Lowe and Maxine Fawcett, Kell Woods and Meredith Jaffe, and a special performance from musician-turned-author Dave Warner. Dave's event was particularly memorable, as he shared how his music influenced his writing career, performed songs connected to his books, and entertained the audience with hilarious personal anecdotes. The event drew attendees from across the region, with some travelling from as far as Bega to take part.

Ulladulla Library held some great author talks by Valerie Ringland "Indigenous Wisdom" and Maureen Carter "Ten Pounds for Paradise." Events at Ulladulla Library were affected this year due to staff shortages.

Book Fest is a much-anticipated event. This showcases local authors and illustrators in a panel style discussion. Local authors this year included: Garry McDougall, Maureen Carter, Robert Downie and high school student Sean van Hoven. Audience members were encouraged to ask questions throughout the discussion and there was also the opportunity to purchase books and have them signed by the author.

Hosting author talks and book launches is a wonderful way to promote reading and literacy. It also supports local authors and brings new members to the library.



Technology

Technology assistance and enquiries have nearly doubled over the past 10 years, and our staff have responded to this growing community need by continuing to offer tech one-on-one support, drop-in tech help, group classes and digital information sessions. Library staff are continually upskilling in this area and collaborating with organisations to ensure our community is a digitally literate one.

Grant opportunities help staff provide much needed lessons and support. Tech Savvy Classes held at Ulladulla and Sanctuary Point Libraries and supported by Telstra saw participants learn about the internet, smartphones, tablets and more.

For the first time, Nowra Library hosted Tech Savvy sessions for Spanish-speaking community members, with a regular group of 10 participants learning about technology while supporting each other through language and skills barriers – a wonderful example of learning and connection in action.

During Get Online Week, Nowra and Sanctuary Point Libraries hosted morning tea and trivia, whilst Ulladulla Library conducted a rolling robotics session.

Robotics and Coding are popular school holiday activities and senior members of the community also participated in robotic sessions during Seniors Week.

This year, we held several specific tech sessions across our branches, including 'Appy Hour, showing our customers how to download and access library apps such as BorrowBox, Kanopy and Storybox Hub, How to Manage and Store Digital Photos and Avoiding Scams. These sessions helped our customers build confidence when using everyday technology.

Local Heritage

A key milestone achieved in the past year has been finalising the Local Heritage Plan 2024-2028, a strategic document which applies the broader vision of Shoalhaven Libraries and Shoalhaven City Council to the Local Heritage collection. This document provides a framework for activity prioritisation, resource allocation and support for staff and stakeholder engagement with the collection. It also sets out short- to medium-term plans for Local Heritage in the priority areas of people, collection, spaces, technology and programs, whilst keeping sight of a long-term vision to build an accessible and reliable destination for local and family history information, which maintains industry standards for the preservation of items in our care and delivers innovative ways of engaging with the community.

The Preservation Station at Nowra Library continues to attract patrons who are keen to convert personal collections of analogue audio cassettes, VHS, slides and negatives into a digital format. In recent months it has also received wider promotion, with the Local Heritage Librarian invited to speak about this free self-service equipment at GLAMawarra 4.0 convened by ALIA South Coast, and to the Shoalhaven Museums and Galleries Breakfast. It is hoped this exposure will encourage further bookings for the Station and increase knowledge of this important

aspect of collection management amongst the institutions in our region.

This year Sanctuary Point Library celebrated its 30th birthday, and a brief history of the building was compiled with digitised photographs and newspaper articles for display at the celebration. Other significant milestones were marked with the community, including the centenary of the Nowra CWA branch who held an event in the library during History Week and an accompanying display in the Local Heritage room, as well as an exhibition of significant milestones and artefacts for the 150th anniversary of the district's oldest church, Shoalhaven Presbyterian. Nowra Library was also a stop along the inaugural Yila Healing Trail, with a display commemorating the shared Aboriginal and European history of the Bherwerre Peninsula around the theme of 'Sea Stories'.

The Local Heritage collection continues to grow and become more accessible. Shoalhaven Libraries was pleased to receive a large archival donation from the Lake Wollumboola Protection Association, an organisation which has been working to protect the environment and wildlife in this remarkable landscape since 1993. These records will fill an important collection gap by documenting an aspect of Culburra Beach's

history. Rate books which were digitised last year through the Ancestry Grant Program are now fully text-searchable and available to view on Ancestry.com, and historic editions of the South Coast Register newspaper have been added to TROVE, thanks to a second grant received from Create NSW's Cultural Grants Program, a devolved funding program administered by the Royal Australian Historical Society on behalf of the NSW Government. We also recorded oral history interviews at the NAIDOC Family Fun Day which were then integrated into Council's RAP document. The actions identified in this document will continue to shape priorities in this space into the coming year.

Our weekly Flashback Friday posts continue to reach a wide audience on Facebook. The most popular subjects this year were: history of the Wool Road (reaching 89,709 accounts), five generations of the Drury family (reaching 22,042 accounts), Shoalhaven River boats (reaching 12,392 accounts), and high school band Infa Red wins the 1989 Battle of the Bands competition (reaching 10,239 accounts).



Collections

Energy Saving Kits. Shoalhaven Libraries continue to see growing interest in the Energy Saving Kits, which are available for loan across library branches. These kits enable residents to monitor their household energy and water usage, supporting efforts to reduce utility costs and environmental impact. Each kit includes a comprehensive instruction booklet, a worksheet, and an action plan designed to guide users through practical steps for improving resource efficiency. In the 2024–25 reporting period, community engagement with the kits increased markedly, reflecting a heightened public awareness of sustainable living practices. This initiative remains a valuable and well-utilised resource, reinforcing Shoalhaven Libraries' commitment to environmental education and community empowerment.

The Seed Library continues to thrive, with an increasing number of seeds being donated by members who have successfully grown produce from previously borrowed seeds. This cycle of borrowing, growing, and giving back has helped

sustain and expand the collection, fostering a strong sense of community engagement and environmental stewardship.

The Book Bar collection continues to be a highly popular choice among borrowers seeking access to the latest bestselling titles. Items in this collection are available for a two-week loan period, with no option for renewal or reservation, ensuring high circulation and timely access to new releases. Popular titles are added upon release to maintain the collection's relevance and appeal. Furthermore, titles that have decreased in popularity within the Book Bar collection are repurposed into Book Club Kits, available for group borrowing.

Book Club Kits have been introduced over the past 12 months. These kits are stored at Nowra Library but can be requested by members from any branch across the library service. Currently, 22 kits are available for loan. Each kit includes up to 10 copies of the selected title, along with a set of discussion questions designed to support

and enrich group conversations. The kits have garnered positive feedback from members of the library community.

Sensory Collection items have recently been introduced across our libraries to support a more inclusive and welcoming environment. These resources are currently available for in-library use only and include a range of items such as fidget toys, calming tools, weighted objects, and ear defenders. The initiative aims to provide comfort and support for individuals who may benefit from sensory regulation during their visit.

Accessible and Engaging Collections. Our picture book collection in Braille has been expanded to further support inclusive access to literacy for children with vision impairments. In addition, we have introduced Wonderbooks – interactive picture books that allow children to listen and read along, as well as Decodable Readers – enhancing engagement and supporting early literacy development.

“
*Love the
seed library!
Thank you
so much!*”
”



Staff and Training

Once again there was a considerable amount of staff movement during the year. Many of our casual staff moved on to other work opportunities or retired completely from the workforce and with most recruitment throughout Council currently on hold, library staff have been taking on extra duties during this time.

Outreach and Digital Resources Manager, Robin Sharpe resigned from her position in January to take up a role with TAFE NSW. Robin had been with the library for over 30 years and was the driving force behind the increase in programs and events across the service. Team member Lisa Beverstock took on higher duties to keep the Outreach team on track and has done an amazing job during this time with an extremely under-resourced team.

Several library staff completed their Diploma of Library and Information Services this year, and one staff member completed a Certificate III in Local Government. This is a great achievement for those staff. These qualifications will enhance their knowledge, improve their skillset and enable them to use this knowledge for future job opportunities.

Other training opportunities available to staff during the year included: Homelessness Facts & Support seminar, LivingWorks SAFETalk Suicide Prevention training, DEFUSE training, STEM sessions with UOW, TRIM training, website training, readers advisory, TROVE webinar, Safety Talks, and Team Wellbeing.

A big thank you to everyone who works at Shoalhaven Libraries. This has been another challenging year; however, staff never lose sight of our purpose and the value we bring to community members' lives. We all love our library service and the passion the staff have for serving the community is second to none.

I cannot thank the senior staff of Shoalhaven Libraries enough for the support they continue to provide to myself while acting in the manager's role. I truly could not do this without you.

I must also thank our dedicated volunteers who continue to generously offer their time to support the library. Thank you very much for all that you do.

As we move into another year with a new set of challenges, I feel very privileged to have been able to lead this dedicated team. I am looking forward to providing some stability to our workforce and helping staff navigate new challenges.

Nicole Lonesborough
Acting Manager | South Coast Cooperative Libraries





“ Nowra Library is wonderful! Libraries are vital community resources, and this one demonstrates that with its range of products and the variety of users ”

“ I lost my job last October. Came to use internet services to apply for jobs and got one within the month. I couldn't have done it without the library resources ”

“ The staff are perfect. Always obliging with a big smile ”

“ Every visit that I make to this little gem of a library leaves me with a fond memory. The welcoming atmosphere and friendly attention shown by the staff makes my day! Thanks to you all ”

Kiama Library

Annual Report 2024-2025

Our libraries continue to provide opportunities for our communities to come together to learn, collaborate and engage in all manner of programs. In the last year we have provided 338 activities attended by just over 9,000 community members. Our programs strengthen our community by building social connections, increasing cultural understanding and enhancing access to information and resources.

In July 2024 we held our biennial Readers Festival with two full days of literary discussion and insightful author talks. Held in partnership with the Friends of Kiama Library, the festival saw thirteen author events held across several venues around the municipality. Our first festival event was held in the local garden centre where attendees enjoyed listening to all things gardening with local author Fiona Weir, organic gardening specialist Craig Castree and permaculture expert Kirsten Bradley. Fred Smith, the singing diplomat, launched the Festival on Friday evening at Kiama Library, and The Pavilion was the venue for a great array of authors including Hugh Mackay, Sue Williams and Karen Viggers throughout Saturday. The final session on Saturday afternoon brought together two journalists turned award-winning crime writers, Chris Hammer and Michael Brissenden, for a lively discussion with crime reviewer Professor Susan Turnbull. To round off the festival, on Saturday night social commentator and writer Jane Caro was the guest speaker for the Gala Dinner at Kiama Leagues Club.

Other Friends of Kiama Library activities throughout the year included author talks from Jeff Apter, Ryan Butta, Lyn Hughes, Helen Signy and Jan Merriman. Library audiences have also enjoyed talks from Amanda Hampson, Allison Edwards, Lisa Darcy, Susannah Hardy, Benjamin Stevenson and Sandie Docker. All these wonderful authors provide readers with a better understanding of the writing process and support cultural well-being as well as expose our reading community to wonderful new authors.



Collaborations continue to be an important component of our programming activities and extend our reach into the community. A joint venture with Council's SENTRAL Youth Services has seen the introduction of a monthly Dungeons and Dragons program. The fantasy tabletop role-playing game encourages social interaction between young people of diverse backgrounds, is an outlet for creativity, and fosters critical thinking. It's a great way of engaging with the youth audience and provides an opportunity to highlight other library programs.

Our Seniors Festival activities were also another successful collaboration with Council's Community Services team. The festival program included several Chocolate Makers tours, art classes at Minnamurra Rainforest and culminated in a Bush Dance at Jamberoo. All these collaborations provide opportunities to promote library services to non-traditional library users.

A productive partnership with Bunnings Nowra, has seen popular programs including building birdhouses and a series of gardening basics. A number of very popular nature talks saw presenter Andrew Skeoch inviting participants to tune in to nature and identify species by call and interpret their communications. Allison Mellow shared her wealth of knowledge about local native bees, while conservation ecologist Dr Shannon Kelleher spoke about Corroboree Frogs. All these presentations foster environmental awareness and increased access to nature.

In November our libraries welcomed a consultant from the State Library NSW to conduct a library assessment program. The consultant spent the day visiting our libraries, talking to staff and hearing about the many programs and activities that are provided to our community. Library staff are currently working through the suggestions for improvement offered in the report to ensure best practice continues in our library service.



In December a consultant was engaged to facilitate the development of our Strategic Plan which will set the direction for the next four years. Consultation included several small community focus groups, staff meetings and consultation with Council's Executive Leadership team. The Strategic Plan was endorsed by Council in April 2025.

It's been 150 years since the free library opened in Gerringong, and we couldn't let that go uncelebrated. Several activities were planned, including an exhibition that featured artefacts and information about the history of the service from the first little library in the back room of a grocery store to the purpose-built library and museum facility we inhabit today.

To start the celebrations, extraordinary journalist and radio/television broadcaster Caroline Baum spoke about libraries as defenders of free speech, as democratic spaces where you're free to borrow whatever you choose or don't choose. Her eloquent words about diversity of thought, as well as the importance of libraries within communities, were welcomed and celebrated by the community and staff alike.

This year, to celebrate Library Lovers' Day, Kiama Library set up a free Poetry Pharmacy at the local farmers' market. The very talented local poet and writer Joseph "Butch" Schwarzkopf set up his old-school typewriter and dispensed personalised poetic remedies on request to soothe, revive and inspire the heart. The response was overwhelming! Butch worked tirelessly for three hours to write unique poems for a constant stream of people. It was awe-inspiring to see people from all walks of life so moved by his words and poetry.

Alongside the Poetry Pharmacy, a pop-up library market stall provided bookish Valentine-themed library bags, bookmarks and mystery books as well as a fun free craft activity for kids. Overall, it was a great outreach activity and fun way to get out into the community and promote our services.

The strength of our library service is complimented by the many community members who volunteer at our libraries, either assisting with Home Library deliveries, facilitating our many book clubs and knitting groups, helping with shelving or assisting with Family History research. Their assistance is truly appreciated.

Staff continue to be our most important asset and their dedication to supporting our community by providing innovative and engaging programs and services continues. We are also fortunate to have strong professional networks such as South Coast Cooperative Libraries and other library colleagues who are willing to share their expertise and knowledge across the NSW library networks.

Michelle Hudson

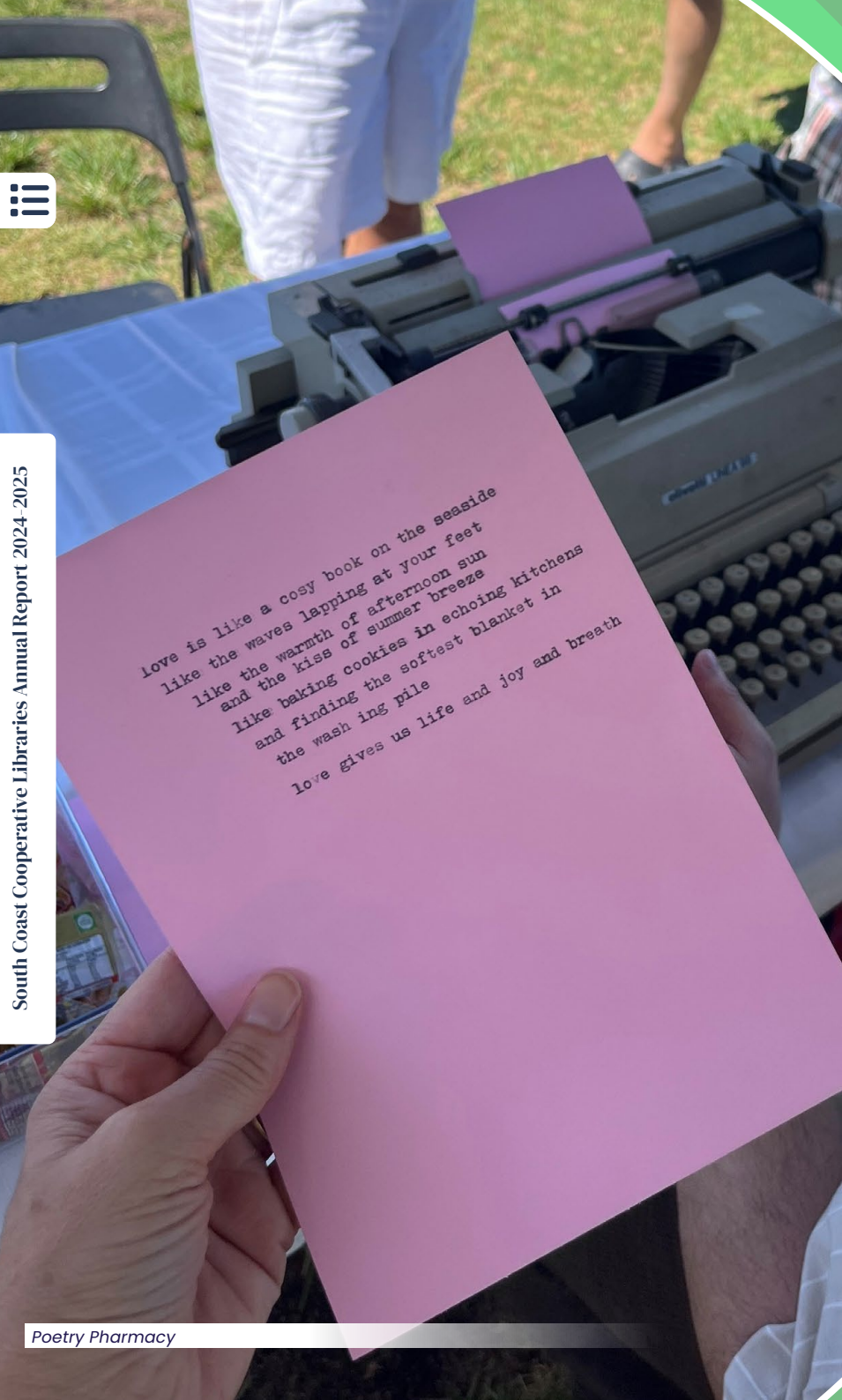
Manager Library Services | Kiama Library



Benjamin Stevenson Author Event at Kiama Library



Bush Dance



love is like a cosy book on the seaside
like the waves lapping at your feet
like the warmth of afternoon sun
and the kiss of summer breeze
like baking cookies in echoing kitchens
and finding the softest blanket in
the wash ing pile
love gives us life and joy and breath

Poetry Pharmacy



Christmas markets



Caroline Baum at Gerringong Library



Statistical Analysis – South Coast Cooperative Libraries – July 2024 – June 2025

Note: NSW Av figures taken from the Public Library Statistics 2023/2024

Expenditure & Subsidy 2024–2025

	Shoalhaven	Kiama
Total Expenditure voted	\$3,872,067	\$1,007,153
Total Expenditure per capita	\$35.23	\$43.86
Subsidy	\$313,201	\$123,181
Local Priority Grant	\$35,000	\$17,287



Item Purchases – South Coast Cooperative Libraries July 2024 – June 2025

*Donation & Grant material only includes those catalogued and processed by Shoalhaven Libraries

Book

Category	Number	Cost	Average Price	Donation / Grant*
Reference	3	\$195.18	\$65.06	0
Adult Non-Fiction	3,866	\$99,097.06	\$25.63	0
Literacy	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Local Studies	1	\$20.00	\$20.00	6
Adult Fiction	6,684	\$158,186.48	\$23.67	220
Adult Paperback	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Adult Large Print	538	\$31,372.44	\$58.31	0
Youth Non-Fiction	52	\$797.89	\$15.34	56
Youth Fiction	725	\$11,842.43	\$16.33	7
Youth Large Print	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Youth Graphic	98	\$1,565.00	\$15.97	3
Junior Non-Fiction	726	\$14,119.74	\$19.45	2
Junior Fiction	3,220	\$37,565.61	\$11.67	77
Junior Graphic	934	\$12,666.72	\$13.56	17
Junior Reader	125	\$991.98	\$7.94	0
Picture Books	1,713	\$25,254.01	\$14.74	0
Home Education	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Total Book	18,685	\$393,674.54	\$21.07	388



Non-Book

Category	Number	Cost	Average Price	Donation / Grant*
CDs	2	\$82.65	\$41.33	0
Audiobook (Junior/Youth)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Audiobook (Adult)	166	\$8,460.58	\$50.97	4
DVD (Adult)	678	\$20,055.09	\$29.58	33
DVD (Junior)	70	\$1,585.37	\$22.65	0
Games/Puzzles	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Junior Kit	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Playaways (Adult)	151	\$17,091.07	\$113.19	0
Playaways (Junior)	3	\$301.34	\$100.45	0
Playaways (Youth)	2	\$227.94	\$113.97	0
Total Non-Book	1,072	\$47,804.04	\$44.59	37
Grand Total	19,757	\$441,478.58	\$22.35	425



Item Purchases – Shoalhaven – July 2024 – June 2025

Book

Category	Number	Cost	Average Price	Donation / Grant
Reference	3	\$195.18	\$65.06	0
Adult Non-Fiction	3,399	\$85,850.24	\$25.26	0
Literacy	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Local Studies	1	\$20.00	\$20.00	6
Adult Fiction	5,438	\$130,577.21	\$24.01	220
Adult Paperback	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Adult Large Print	355	\$21,212.75	\$59.75	0
Youth Non-Fiction	48	\$700.23	\$14.59	56
Youth Fiction	565	\$9,400.62	\$16.64	7
Youth Large Print	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Youth Graphic	97	\$1,549.10	\$15.97	3
Junior Non-Fiction	622	\$12,079.51	\$19.42	2
Junior Fiction	2,812	\$32,997.96	\$11.73	77
Junior Graphic	925	\$12,543.57	\$13.56	17
Junior Reader	125	\$991.98	\$7.94	0
Picture Books	1,360	\$20,438.33	\$15.03	0
Home Education	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Total Books	15,750	\$328,556.68	\$20.86	388

Non-Book

Category	Number	Cost	Average Price	Donation / Grant
CDs	2	\$82.65	\$41.33	0
Audiobook (Junior/Youth)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Audiobook (Adult)	102	\$5,515.73	\$54.08	4
DVD (Adult)	678	\$20,055.09	\$29.58	33
DVD (Junior)	70	\$1,585.37	\$22.65	0
Games/Puzzles	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Junior Kit	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Playaways (Adult)	151	\$17,091.07	\$113.19	0
Playaways (Junior)	3	\$301.34	\$100.45	0
Playaways (Youth)	2	\$227.94	\$113.97	0
Total Non Book	1,008	\$44,859.19	\$44.50	37
Grand Total	16,758	\$373,415.87	\$22.28	425



Item Purchases – Kiama – July 2024 – June 2025

*Donation & Grant material only includes those catalogued and processed by Shoalhaven Libraries

Book

Category	Number	Cost	Average Price	Donation / Grant*
Reference	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Adult Non-Fiction	467	\$13,246.82	\$28.37	0
Literacy	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Local Studies	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Adult Fiction	1,246	\$27,609.27	\$22.16	0
Adult Paperback	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Adult Large Print	183	\$10,159.69	\$55.52	0
Youth Non-Fiction	4	\$97.66	\$24.42	0
Youth Fiction	160	\$2,441.81	\$15.26	0
Youth Large Print	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Youth Graphic	1	\$15.90	\$15.90	0
Junior Non-Fiction	104	\$2,040.23	\$19.62	0
Junior Fiction	408	\$4,567.65	\$11.20	0
Junior Graphics	9	\$123.15	\$13.68	0
Junior Reader	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Picture Books	353	\$4,815.68	\$13.64	0
Home Education	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Total Books	2,935	\$65,117.86	\$22.19	0



Non-Book

Category	Number	Cost	Average Price	Donation / Grant*
CDs	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Audiobook (Junior/Youth)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Audiobook (Adult)	64	\$2,944.85	\$46.01	0
DVD (Adult)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
DVD (Junior)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Games/Puzzles	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Junior Kit	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Playaways (Adult)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Playaways (Junior)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Playaways (Youth)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Total Non-Book	64	\$2,944.85	\$46.01	0
Grand Total	2,999	\$68,062.71	\$22.70	0

Total Items Purchased

*Kiama purchase the majority of items for their DVD and CD collection

	No of Items purchased 23/24	No of Items purchased 24/25**	Average Cost per item 23/24*	Average Cost per item 24/25	Purchases per capita 24/25
Shoalhaven	14,234	16,758	\$25.34	\$22.28	0.15
Kiama	2,851	2,999	\$23.85	\$22.70	0.13
Total	17,085	19,757	\$25.09	\$22.35	0.15
NSW Av	19,554	-	\$27.57	-	-

*Includes expenditure on periodicals and donations counted as acquisitions

**Purchased as part of the Cooperative only

Total Loans – All formats – 2024-2025

	Loans	Population*	Per Capita
Shoalhaven	423,947	110,803	3.83
Kiama	152,557	23,173	6.58
Total	576,504	133,976	4.30
NSW Av	441,594	92,661	4.77

*Population figures used are taken from .id community and Remplan. NSW Av taken from the Public Library Statistics by State Library of NSW

Loans by Format

Book Stock

	Adult Non Fiction	Youth Non Fiction	Junior Non Fiction	Adult Fiction	Youth Fiction	Junior Fiction	Picture Books	eBooks	Total
Shoalhaven	36,695	447	10,463	121,662	6,124	31,489	46,321	33,771	286,972
Kiama	9,942	94	3,078	44,182	1,810	12,805	16,549	11,126	99,586
Total	46,637	541	13,541	165,844	7,934	44,294	62,870	44,897	386,558
NSW Av	40,846	1,002	17,419	86,257	9,467	59,179	68,382	30,252	312,804

Non-Book Stock

	Adult Audio Book	Youth Audio Book	Junior Audio Book	eAudio	Adult CD	Junior CD	Toys / Games	Total
Shoalhaven	8,891	41	900	64,137	3,684	221	428	78,302
Kiama	865	3	193	19,537	379	46	1,847	22,870
Total	9,756	44	1,093	83,674	4,063	267	2,275	101,172
NSW Av	3,997		33,376		2,398		1,836	41,606

	Adult DVD	Junior DVD	Adult Serial	Youth Serial	Junior Serial	eSerial	Other*	Total
Shoalhaven	22,593	5,741	11,194	8	657	17,631	849	58,673
Kiama	2,468	1,204	2,189	7	251	23,968	14	30,101
Total	25,061	6,945	13,383	15	908	41,599	863	88,774
NSW Av	28,536			55,026			1,220	84,782

* Other includes devices, kits etc.



Total Physical Stock* - 2024-2025

	Lending	Non Lending	Total
Shoalhaven	104,861	4,695	109,556
Kiama	40,349	2,292	42,641
Total	145,210	6,987	152,197
NSW Av	129,396	20,331	149,726

*Total stock does not include digital stock

Book Stock

	Adult Non Fiction	Youth Non Fiction	Junior Non Fiction	Adult Fiction	Youth Fiction	Junior Fiction	Picture Books	Total
Shoalhaven	26,439	489	4,764	33,837	3,609	9,636	7,554	86,328
Kiama	9,883	264	1,978	15,729	1,792	4,128	3,519	37,293
Total	36,322	753	6,742	49,566	5,401	13,764	11,073	123,621
NSW Av	26,620	592	5,732	28,488	4,019	12,638	10,069	88,158

Non-Book Stock

	Adult Audio Book	Youth Audio Book	Junior Audio Book	Adult CD	Junior CD	Toys / Games	Total
Shoalhaven	5,623	29	553	3,838	96	132	10,271
Kiama	970	23	148	501	49	366	2,057
Total	6,593	52	701	4,339	145	498	12,328
NSW Av	2,785			1,662		249	4,697

	Adult DVD	Junior DVD	Adult Serial	Youth Serial	Junior Serial	Other*	Total
Shoalhaven	6,582	1,170	2,840	5	147	2,213	12,957
Kiama	1,744	534	908	11	74	20	3,291
Total	8,326	1,704	3,748	16	221	2,233	16,248
NSW Av	10,686		158	2	6	1,116	11,179

*Other includes devices, kits, images etc.

Separate Collections*

	Reference	Literacy	Large Print	Local Studies	Home Library Service	Graphic Novels	Images	Total
Shoalhaven	489	0	9,751	4,206	1,376	2,855	2,132	20,809
Kiama	514	156	4,306	1,778	67	965	0	7,786
Total	1,003	156	14,057	5,984	1,443	3,820	2,132	28,595
NSW Av	2,521	777	5,526	6,303	456	2,982	10,558	29,123

*Separate collections already counted in Book and Non Book stock.

Total Digital Stock – 2024–2025

	eBooks	eAudiobooks	eMagazines	Total
Shoalhaven	18,804	17,176	15,428	51,408
Kiama	20,312	18,688	20,866	59,866
Total	39,116	35,864	36,294	111,274
NSW Av	9,875	5,964	10,227	26,065

27

Donations and Discards – 2024–2025

	Donations*	Purchases**	Discards	Discards as a % of Acquisitions*	Discards as % of Total Stock*
Shoalhaven	425	16,758	22,530	131.82	20.56
Kiama	415	2,999	5,691	213.55	13.35
Total	840	19,757	28,221	142.84	18.54
NSW Av	631	19,554	18,528	105.34	10.83

*Excludes Digital Stock

**Cooperative purchases only



Library Membership – Active Members – 2024–2025

Please note – Inactive members are deleted from the database if they have not borrowed over the past 3 years.

	Adult	Junior	Digital*	Institutions	Other	Non-Residents	Total	% of Pop**
Shoalhaven	27,140	3,287	3,689	140	43	1,344	35,643	30.95
Kiama	8,150	2,100	923	4	180	39	11,396	49.01
Total	35,290	5,387	4,612	144	223	1,383	47,039	34.08
NSW Av	28,661	2,822	-	104	331	5,463	22,230	33.85

*Digital members include both adult and junior digital members

**Figure excludes Non-Residents

Summary of Comparative Statistics

	Library Materials per capita	Adult Fiction as a % of total book stock	Turnover of Stock
Shoalhaven	1.45	39.20	2.71
Kiama	4.42	42.18	1.52
NSW Av	2.40	35.04	2.81

Document Delivery

	Interlibrary Loans requests sent to other libraries	Interlibrary Loan requests received from other libraries
Shoalhaven	190	131
Kiama	65	46
NSW Av	488	578

Visits, Access, and Information Requests

	Library Visits	Internet Access	Information Requests
Shoalhaven	312,410	68,721	39,661
Kiama	89,289	12,153	21,203
NSW Av	296,607	126,040	73,467

Members of Staff as at June 2025

Shoalhaven Libraries



Nowra

Name	Qualifications	Position
Nicole Lonesborough	AssDipAppSc(Tech)	Customer and Community Resources Manager Library Services Manager (Acting from 29/01/2024)
Denise De Strang	CertIIILocalGov	Library Administration

Collections & Resources Team

Carissa Close	BA, DipLibInfoServ	Collections & Resources Manager (Acting)
Bronwyn Gollan	DipLibTech(InfoServ)	Librarian – Cataloguing (Acting)
Cher Murphy		Library Assistant – Acquisitions
Debra Nettle		Library Assistant – Branch Support (Resigned 25/01/2025)
Megan Crook	GradDipLocFamAppHist MHist, MInfoStud	Local Heritage Librarian
Sylvia Bloxsome		Library Assistant (Aboriginal) - Collection Services (PPT)
Ursula Rentz		Library Assistant (PPT)



Customer & Community Resources Team

Damien Bottle	DipLibTech(InfoServ)	Library Technician – Systems
Gemma Luxford	BA(Hons), GradDipInfoStud	Customer Service Assistant (Casual)
Jackie Robinson	DipLibTech(InfoServ)	Library Technician - Children & Youth
Kerry Johnston	BHSc	Library Assistant (Casual) (Resigned 07/11/2024)
Michelle Chapman		Library Assistant (PPT)
Michelle Marshall	DipCommServ	Customer Service Assistant (Casual) (Resigned 05/08/2024)
Susan Jones	BEd	Customer Service Assistant (Casual)

Outreach & Digital Resources Team

Robin Sharpe	BAppSc(LibInfoMgt) AssDipArts(LibPrac)	Outreach & Digital Resources Manager (Resigned 01/01/2025)
Aimee Scott	BA, GradCertJourn MCreativeWrtg	Library Assistant – Outreach Services (Resigned 03/12/2024) Customer Service Assistant
Charmaine Bodini	CertIIICommServ CertIIIAgedCare CertIIBusAdmin	Library Assistant – Outreach Services
Emily O’Driscoll	BPubHlth(HlthPromotion) DipLibTech(InfoServ)	Library Assistant – Outreach Services
Jennifer Lyttle	DipLibInfoStud	Customer Service Assistant (Casual)
Jim Hines		Mobile Library Officer
Lisa Beverstock	BA, DipLibInfoServ DipLibTech(InfoServ)	Information Access Librarian
Shaneah Jones		Library Assistant (Aboriginal) - Outreach Services (Resigned 23/10/2024)

Bay & Basin (Sanctuary Point)

Name	Qualifications	Position
Anne Lee	BInfoStud	Sanctuary Point Library Manager
Daniel Paterson	BA(Phil) CertIVLibInfoCultServ	Library Assistant (PPT)
Jade Collinson	BA(EngLitHist)	Customer Service Assistant (Casual)
Melanie Harris	DipLibTech(InfoServ)	Library Assistant - Sanctuary Point (PPT)
Natasha Hammond	BSc(EnvStud)	Customer Service Assistant (Casual)
Ruby Walton	BCom, MTeach(Primary)	Customer Service Assistant (Casual)

Ulladulla Library and Visitors Centre & Milton Library

Name	Qualifications	Position
Cathryn Burns	MEd(TeachLib)	Customer & Community Resources Manager
Alan Arnold	BA GradDipAppSc(LibInfoStud)	Customer Service Assistant (Casual) Resigned 09/12/2024
Amy Robson		Customer Service Assistant (Casual)
Andrea Smith		Customer Service Assistant (Casual)
Kate Asmussen	BComm(Journ)	Customer Service Assistant
Kim Richards		Customer Service Assistant (PPT)
Lara Donohue	BA(VisArts), BSc(EnvSc)	Customer Service Assistant (PPT)
Lynne Fricke	BA(LibSc)	Customer Service Assistant (Casual)
Michelle Haigh	BGenStud/BTeach	Customer Service Assistant (Casual)
Michelle Richards	BAppSc(OccTherapy) DipLibTech (Info Serv)	Customer Service Assistant (Casual)
Tracey Myers	BArchStud GradDipAppSc(LibInfoMgt)	Library Technician (PPT)

Kiama Library Service

Librarians

Name	Qualifications	Position
Michelle Hudson	BAppSc(Lib)	Manager Library and Cultural Hubs
Catherine Taylor	Masters Inf Studies (Lib)	IT Librarian (PPT)
Erin Tierney	BInfoStud	Local Studies Librarian

Library Officers

Name	Qualifications	Position
Angela Braham	DipLibInfoServ	Library Officer (Casual)
Arthur McConnachie	BA, GradDipContEd, GradDipLib, MEd, DipEd	Library Officer (Casual)
Carla James	DipLibInfServices	Outreach Services Library Officer (PPT)
Carmen Jacobs	BA, DipEd, MAppSc(Lib)	Library Officer (Casual)
Elizabeth Skorulis	DipLibInfServices	Children's Services Officer (PPT)
Jane Thompson	DipLibInfServices	Library Officer (Casual)
Lauran Mills	MEd (TeachLib)	Gerringong Library Officer (PPT)
Lauren Watkins	GDipArts (Lib)	Gerringong Branch Supervisor (PPT)
Liz Thornton	BA, GradDipEd, MEd (TeachLib)	Home Library (PPT)
Mandy Thorpe	DipLibInfServices	Library Officer (Casual)
Rebecca Cook	BSc, GradDipArts(Lib)	Library Officer (Casual)
Wendy Harrison	BEd (Primary), GradCert (TeachLib)	Library Officer (Casual)
Wolf Villalta	BA, GDip (Lib)	Library Officer (PPT)

Family History Centre

Name	Qualifications	Position
Carolyn Morrow	BA(Hist)	Family History Officer (Casual)



Address all correspondence to:

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