Love letters to libraries
In Australia, we love libraries.

There are 1,400 public libraries across the nation.
9.4 million of us are registered public library members.
There are more than 113 million customer visits each year.
We borrow nearly 37 million items,
and all at a cost of less than $50.

Our 9,400 schools all have libraries – everything from a few shelves of books to an exciting space for reading and study.

Then there are our National, State and Territory Libraries, part of the cultural heart of each of our capital cities.

Add to these, university, TAFE, government, health, law and business libraries, and we estimate there are 13,650 libraries serving 12.9 million users.

For Library Lovers’ Day 2018, we asked authors, politicians and library users what they thought about their libraries.

Here’s what they said.
Library dearest...
Hi Library,
Happy Library Lovers Day.
Keep doing your thing, because, in the face of all that is wrong with our world, reading is a solid, proven, magical thing that can transform lives.

Akin Lester

Dear Fairfield Library,

Thank you for serving the individuals and community groups in Moreton so professionally and with such aplomb. My two boys and I always have a wonderful and rewarding experience when we visit.

Lots of love

Graham Bennett

P.S. See you soon.
To all libraries all over the world - love you all - thank you for being!

Especially thank you to the public library in Beaumaris, Victoria - my books arrived in Australia 10 years ago unable to read English. Not only did you provide resources for them to learn but you also had books in Japanese so that they could mix both worlds.

Mark J. Hail  
CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
LOVE LETTER TO MY LIBRARY 14/2/18

Dear Library, love of mine
Your shelves are sweet, your books divine
How I long to visit you
My library love is pure and true!

Dear Library in Yeppoon
Fear not, I shall see you soon
You are gentle, kind and sweet
Neatly nestled in John Street

Magazines, and books galore...
I’m hooked and coming back for more!
Maybe today, maybe tomorrow
Thank you for the books I borrow!
To be with you, I've travelled far
I moved from South Australia!
Your staff have warm and friendly smiles
I'm glad I drove two thousand miles!

Today is special, sweet Library
It's the 14th of February
Dear Library, love of mine...
Will you be my Valentine?

It was love right from the start
I feel that we will never part
You are quite extraordinary...
How I love you, Dear Library!

Peace & Love,
Andrew Kemp
"If I had a choice I would live in a library, place my bed between the shelves, in the shelves’ embrace, sleep and dream in the presence of all the books contained."
"I remember when we first fell in love... eventually I started seeing other libraries. First my school library, then university libraries, and they were lovely too, but it was never quite the same."
Dear Library,

I love the way you connect communities through literature and help to foster Australia’s creative and intellectual life.

You connect us from an early age to the joys of reading and the opportunities for lifelong learning. Even the most fantastical fiction found in you, helps Australian children learn and has the potential to foster a love of reading that will serve them well into the future.

You continue to stand the test of time and the technological changes that have seen the rise of e-books, podcasts and online blogs. I must say that with the proliferation of ways to hear and watch Australian stories, there is
nothing like a great book. While you have continued to adapt to technological changes, you understand that there is simply a feeling and smell about a book that cannot be replicated on a kindle.

I was delighted to launch Library Lovers Day in February and I look forward to seeing the amazing impact libraries have on the lives of Australians for years to come.

Sincerely,

Linda

Linda Reynolds CSC
Senator for Western Australia
I don't know if you've noticed but I can't live my life without you. Whether planning a trip, learning about the past or in need of an inspiring friend you are always there for me and fulfilling my dreams. Dearest Jessica and Emma Park library staff thank you so much for all you are doing for us!

I can't live my life without you.

Clare Tittel
Thank you for the Star Wars and crystal books. I love reading them.

Joshua Herring
Our library is very small, and friendly. Great place to catch up on the local gossip, brush up information or even find a book to read.

Our book club gives us access to interesting books which we might not otherwise read. If we can't get to the library we can access a range of books on line.

It is excellent for a small community to have these facilities,

Anne Brindley
When I was only 19 I met and married my husband. 4 children quickly came along. My mother became ill and required constant care. I also began caring for my disabled brother.

Life was great but busy. I would often look at my bulging bookcase and think - one day I will have time to relax and read all these books.

Life passed and I realised, I had time. Unfortunately my eyesight had been deteriorating and now I had the time I was unable to see the words I had waited so long to read.

Then I heard about audio books and learned that the Llangstone Library had audio books which I could borrow and listen to. Thanks to my wonderful I can at age 77 lay for hours transported from the Australian outback to war torn London.

All my love and thanks to my wonderful library for all the joy you bring me.

Gwen Rosin
"...I occasionally binge on our romance. Some nights I’ve barely been able to reach my bed for the clutter of yet-to-be-read tomes stacked nearby."
“Living in a small coastal town, my library is on wheels. When I step inside, I’m transported without the bus moving an inch.”

Mark Smith
Dear library

I walk into your place knowing I can access freely written words in many forms.

Thank you for your sharing of valuable assets and stories of old that need to be told!

Rusty Joy
My earliest ambition was to be a librarian. At four years of age, I wrote to Santa asking for a date stamp for Christmas. There was, sadly, some sort of mix-up at the North Pole and instead I received a tartan umbrella. Fast forward to the day of my marriage to Simon French (writer) and one of my dearest (librarian) friends made my dream come true—a date stamp for a wedding gift! And—I finally ‘arrived’.

Thank you, librarians, for being my well-spring.

Donna Rawlings

As a Fairfield (Vic) resident for 18 years, my local library has been a godsend—stay hours for the kids when they were a venue, quiet study when they were quieter.
Dear library,

Thanks for being a safe haven in my childhood. I worked my way from one side of the shelf to the other. You filled my imagination with stories of birds/animals and inspired me to create my own.

It's been a long time... so I'm sure you now have many Indigenous stories.

........... Kira K
Dear Library,

Thank you for always being a friend.

You have the best advice when I am uncertain, the best inspiration when I need to be inspired and the best friend when I need company.

Michelle.
“From rhyme time to the knitting club,
you’re there our whole lives through
And you never ask for thanks, but
this poem’s thanks to you.”

Sara L.

the hidden hours
SARA FOSTER
“...libraries are more than places to borrow books from. They’re crucial custodians and curators of our country’s culture.”
I love reading books because I use my eyes for reading the words and my mind for imagining the characters and story. 

Paige Venter
My love of libraries started 60 years ago when I held in my hand my very first library card.
My love of books started at home, we were always encouraged to read. I have passed this love on to my family and even our great grandchildren love reading.
Libraries have always been a source of peace and comfort to me. I have belonged to many libraries all over Australia.
I have met many lovely librarians in different towns and only one or two not so nice.
Yes, I love my library wherever I am, because I love books.
I now look forward to many happy hours using the Emu Park library. Wonderful facilities, lovely people.

Pam Ranson.
"...every second Tuesday night my mother drove us to Carina Library...I’ve never forgotten those Tuesday nights, that wonderful, magical space filled with stories."

Toni Jordan

© James Penlidis
“Libraries are where people can hone their reading tastes...The public library is the perfect place for those of us with a book dependency.”

M.J. Tjia
Dear Library

I love you for 67 reasons:

You're safe.
You're welcoming.
You are full of books and information.
I think you are perfect.

love,
Marianne Ballantyne
Publisher

To Victoria Park (QLD)

Library,

You offer so much to enhance my child's life....

Thank you!

Love from
Stephanie Eaton
mother of Toby
Library dearest,

I love you! I’ve loved you from the day we first met, when I was in primary school, and have been visiting you regularly ever since. I’ve come to learn that you are not just a magic cave of books and stories - you’re a hub that links different strands of my community. In fact you don’t just link, you help to create that community.

I love how you welcome everybody, whether they’re six or sixty, simple or sophisticated, weak or strong, rich or poor, lonely or sociable, digital natives or complete luddites. You give everyone a sense of belonging, and that inclusiveness warms my heart. For me, every day is Library lovers’ day!

Library dearest, you help make Australia a wonderful place to live. Keep growing and flourishing so that you continue to provide a space where we can all find ourselves, and each other.

Senator Catryna Bilyk
Senator for Tasmania
What I love about Libraries is:

it's an excellent community resource – not just books and magazines but wonderful technology as well. Everyone is welcome and the staff members are fabulous!

Thank you, Singleton Library – we love you!

S.L.
Dear Library thank you for all your amazing help with encouraging, establishing, helping and supporting me to keep reading I now love to read and will always thank you for all your help

From Maddy

What I love about Libraries is:

The great range of activities, books, music & courses.
The helpful staff who go out of their way to be involved with customers
“...when I step through your doors...I still feel that same deep calm and sense of belonging - you’ve always made me feel at home.”

Mark Brandi

xO
“...you introduced me to my greatest friends, those who would inspire and comfort me, who would thrill and challenge me.”
Thank you for always being there for me when I need you. Walking into the cool air can and being greeted by friendly smiling staff always makes me feel like coming home. Aahh.

I like that you have a store of variety DVDs, games, books, mags – whatever suits my mood. You are a faithful, fun place to be. Thank you! Thank you!

Teresa Anderson
Heartfelt love for my Library, in my life it is so necessary.

Providing for residents' materials that vary, subject to Council constraints budgetary.

Newspapers, Mags, DVDs and CDs discretionary, however for me it is a book reading dispensary.

Reading words to build vocabulary, especially sci-fi to expand dreams imaginary.

But it is the staff who are very extraordinary, they truly qualify as legendary.

I will not be here to celebrate its Centenary, rather, will be reading a book resting in a cemetery.

Donne's quote will be included in obituary, “Death is Ascension to a better library”

- Greg
Dear Library,

I have been to many libraries over my considerable years and without a doubt our little library in Emu Park is by far the most welcoming. Being small helps to accomplish that but, it is the atmosphere that the ladies in the library create that is the key. Nothing is a trouble and everything is done with a smile.

Christmas time is so special because the decorations look amazing and make it special. Any events during the year are also given the special treatment. It is not just the room that looks wonderful, the ladies themselves are so in the part.

We had occasion last year to use the facilities offered by the library for my husband to learn about technology in the form of an iPad. He was very challenged by it, but again the ladies assisted admirably at a very trying time for him.

Congratulations to all for your hard work behind the books. It is such a pleasure to come to your library.

Helen Duffy
This is a very unique library for me. It has a lot of range of different novels and self-talk books which I read a lot on them cause they're so enjoyable and have a lot of input. Especially magazines that go along way to pick up interesting topics also when I leave the library I feel fresh and a lot of wisdom from coming into the library. They have a lot of CDs, DVDs, to choose from. Thank you so much for letting me be a borrower. I love your computers.

LESLEY CAMPBELL
Thank you to the many library lovers who shared their messages in this publication.

In particular, we would like to thank the Australian Publishers Association and the following publishers for their author contributions:

AUSTRALIAN PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

hachette AUSTRALIA Passion. Shared.
HarperCollins Publishers Australia
Pantera Press great storytelling

SCHOLASTIC

And a special thank you to Yeppoon Library and Singleton Public Library for their contributions from the public.