Bunyips

A National Library of Australia Travelling Exhibition

Media release

BUNYIPS AT THE STATE LIBRARY 9 JUNE – 24 JULY

This traveling exhibition largely drawn from the extensive collections of the National Library will be on display at the State Library of Western Australia from 9 June to 24 July 2006 as part of the 2006 City of Perth Winter Arts Festival.

Curated by Robert Holden, researcher of Australian folklore and children's literature, the ***Bunyips*** exhibition features 22 large, colourful panels, enabling children and adults alike to discover the history, folklore, art and literature inspired by Australia's famous bunyip.

You don't have to wait until ***Bunyips*** opens to see it. An exciting, animated, interactive exhibition can be found online at the National Library's website at **www.nla.gov.au/exhibitions/bunyips**

'***Bunyips*** explores the remarkable story of the translation of a creature from the Dreaming into popular culture today,' said National Library of Australia Director General, Jan Fullerton. 'It offers the public a chance to rediscover a creature that has enthralled us for so long.'

The bunyip originated in Aboriginal lore prior to European settlement of Australia and has become one of the few Dreaming stories to cross cultures. Early colonial settlers, struggling to come to terms with the unique wildlife in this country, were prepared to believe stories of a semi-aquatic animal with big tusks who ate women and children, had a booming cry and the ability to mesmerise its prey.

Attitudes to the bunyip in Australian culture have evolved since early settlement. There have been reported sightings, rewards offered for its capture and serious scientific debate about its existence. Bunyips have also made appearances in a variety of plays, musicals and in children's literature.

The exhibition is organised by the National Library of Australia with support from Visions of Australia. It has travelled to regional and remote venues in Western Australia since 2004 and is making its first visit to metropolitan Perth.

The development and tour of this exhibition was made possible by the Federal Government's touring exhibitions grant program, Visions of Australia. Visions of Australia aims to provide all Australians, wherever they live, with better access to the nation's cultural heritage; historic and visual arts material; and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

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CITY OF PERTH WINTER ARTS FESTIVAL

National Library of Australia 1901 2001 Celebrating 100 Years

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA

made possible by Visions of Australia

www.nla.gov.au/exhibitions/bunyips