

2016 -- the making and the talking

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The image above is from Geoff Hinchcliffe's [awesome visualisation](#) of more than 12,000 #fundTrove tweets.

This year I sadly left the wonderful team at [Trove](#) and took up a full-time academic post at the University of Canberra. But it was Trove that dominated the early part of the year, as the [impact of continual funding cuts](#) on the National Library of Australia became clear. Users of Trove shared their feelings on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), organisations posted statements of support, and numerous articles appeared in the media. In the lead up to the federal election, both the Greens and ALP made commitments to support Trove and our national cultural institutions.

In the last few days, [we've learnt](#) that the Government will [provide \\$16.4 million](#) over four years to the NLA 'for digitisation of material and upgrade of critical infrastructure for its Trove digital information resource and to upgrade other critical infrastructure'. While we wait to hear exactly what this means for the future of Trove, it's important to remember that it comes after many cuts and job losses across the cultural sector. The lesson of #fundTrove is that we cannot take the future of our collecting organisations for granted. We need to show [why they matter](#) and fight for the resources they need.

Access is important — both its politics and its practicalities. This year I've tried to be a bit more rigorous in the way I share information and document my projects. I created a [Digital Heritage Handbook](#) where I publish workshops, activities, and other bits and pieces. Much of it is in draft form, but I decided it was better just to push everything out in the hope that it might be useful. Similarly, I created an [Open Research Notebook](#) to share work in progress. The Handbook also includes details of the two undergraduate units I taught in second semester — [Working with collections](#), and [Exploring digital heritage](#). I think they went pretty well, but I've got a few improvements planned for 2017.

This year I accidentally built my own version of [Historic Hansard](#), created an interface to National Archives files we're [not allowed to see](#), and mined ASIO surveillance files for [redactions](#). As well as these major projects, there were lots of little hacks and harvests aimed at exploring the idea of 'access'. You can follow my main research obsessions in my notebook:

- [Closed Access](#)
- [Historic Hansard](#)
- [Immigration, Recordkeeping, and Surveillance](#)
- [LODBooks](#)

Talking and making details follow...

2016 — the making:

- **DFAT Documents**
[Demonstration code](#) to harvest the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's collection of historical documents and extract some metadata. The [harvested documents](#) are available in Markdown format and can be explored through a [simple website](#).
- **People of Australia**

[@people_au](#) is a Twitter bot sharing random names drawn from late 19th and early 20th century naturalisation records held by the National Archives of Australia. Many names. Many cultures. These are the people of Australia.

- **RecordSearch Series Harvests**
[Code](#) to harvest the metadata and digitised images of all items in a series from the National Archives of Australia. Data from an assortment of [harvested series](#) are available as CSV files.
- **SRNSW indexes**
[Code](#) for harvesting indexes from the State Records of NSW website. Data from [59 harvested indexes](#) is available as CSV files.
- **Facial detection demo**
[Code](#) and [website](#) to demonstrate the principles of facial detection using OpenCV.
- **Show Redactions userscript**
[Code](#) for inserting details of redacted files into RecordSearch results.
- **ASIO Experiments**
[Code](#) used for the extraction of redactions and other experiments with digitised ASIO files.
- **Redactions dataset**
Redactions extracted from ASIO surveillance records in National Archives of Australia Series A6119,
- **Non redactions dataset**
False positives (non-redactions) extracted from ASIO surveillance records in National Archives of Australia Series A6119,