developed without concentrated effort or direction. Community involvement in the collection of local history material is of vital importance if the collection is to remain relevant to the community and in order to make it as rich and full a history as possible. Heap & Pymm (2009) discuss the importance of personal memory and experience to local history collections and how web 2.0 technologies can help to add these to a library's collection.

Web 2.0 has significant benefits for all libraries but especially for libraries serving rural and regional libraries. Isolation and the tyranny of distance lose their sting when library services are available online and are responsive, collaborative, and participative. Most of the technologies are free and easy for staff and library customers to use and familiar territory for many community members. As people spend more and more time online, libraries are able to meet people where they are, in ways that benefit both the library and the community. When libraries and community members, using web 2.0 technologies, collaborate in the development of a local history collection, they are able to build the type of collection that the community wants and one that is available at all times on the internet.

Wagga Wagga City Library created a local history wiki (**http://waggalocalhistory. wetpaint.com**) in order to provide constant access to the fascinating material held in the local studies collection and particularly to capture the memories and experiences of the local community. The wiki was created using the free software Wetpaint, which has proven easy for staff and community members to use. Charles Sturt University Regional Archives has partnered with the library to add material from their collection with minimal cost and staff time as much of the material was originally produced for events or newspaper articles which are good vehicles for promoting the wiki. The local community has responded well, using the wiki as a source of information and as an online meeting place to reminisce and to share memories and photographs. The open access does mean that there is the possibility of inappropriate or offensive material being added but the software provides regular updates on all contributions so it is easy for library staff to edit the site.

The benefits of using web 2.0 technologies in rural and regional libraries are well worth the efforts required. Libraries benefit through opportunities to develop new partnerships, richer collections, and by being responsive to community needs.

The community as a whole benefits by having constant access to collections via the internet, gaining the ability to build the type of collection they want, thus having a sense of ownership of the collection. Libraries that serve spread out and isolated populations are in the perfect position to build a real sense of close community online.

Reference

Heap, Amy and Pymm, Bob. Wagga Wagga Women's Wireless and the Web: Local Studies and New Technologies, *Australian Library Journal*, v58, n1; Feb 2009.

Amy Heap
Reader Services Librarian, Wagga Wagga
City Library
heap.amy@wagga.nsw.gov.au