

HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY TO THE SLV DOMED READING ROOM



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IMAGES:

1. A bird's-eye view of Domed Reading Room, State Library of Victoria. *Herald and Weekly Times*, ca.1940.
2. Tower trusses and rib trusses, photographed April 3, 1911.
3. Laying concrete on the roof of the annulus corridor. John Richard Thorpe Clark, foreman in charge of the concreting, standing at centre in waistcoat and bowler hat, ca. 1910.
4. Construction work on the former Newspaper Room in the basement of the domed reading room at the State Library of Victoria, ca. 1913.
5. Looking East. Brickwork up to first gallery level, photographed December 23, 1909.





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This November the State Library of Victoria is celebrating the 100th anniversary of its iconic domed reading room. Throughout its 100 year history, the domed reading room has provided an imaginative haven for artists, readers, writers and scholars. The soaring ceiling, ornate plaster work, balconies and distinctive seating plan contribute to the room's special character. For a time it was the largest structure of its type on earth, and it is loved by Victorians as a place to reflect, dream and be inspired.

Since opening on November 14 1913, the magnificent reading room has been the heart of the library. Originally commissioned for the library's 50th anniversary it was designed by architects Bates, Peebles and Smart and built by JW and DA Swanson at a cost of £66,914. The dome was constructed from reinforced concrete, brick and glass, and is as high as it is wide.

The State Library of Victoria is the oldest public library in Australia and one of the world's great libraries. The library opened in 1856 and holds over two million books, 16,000 serials, and a vast number of photos, pictures, artworks, maps, rare manuscripts – some over a thousand years old – as well as significant items in Victoria's history – like Ned Kelly's original armour which is on permanent display. Annually the Library attracts more than 1.5 million visitors who come to study, research, attend events and browse exhibitions.

Learn more about the history of the Dome and people it has inspired on the State Library's Dome 100 website at dome100.com.au.



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**FREE, SECULAR AND DEMOCRATIC:
BUILDING THE PUBLIC LIBRARY 1853–1913**

is a free exhibition now showing at the State Library which traces the first 60 years of the Library's history, from its founding in 1853 to the opening of the magnificent domed reading room in 1913.