

OBITUARY



Lindsay Cleland, 1928–2017



Lindsay Cleland on the Sea of Hands Tour, September 1998, courtesy of Mary Wyatt, photographer (MS 4870, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies).

James Lindsay Cleland, known as Lindsay, passed away on 15 August 2017 aged 89. Lindsay's archival career spanned the development of professional archives administration in Australia: the establishment of the Manuscripts section of the National Library in the 1960s; the transformations of the National Archives in the 1970s and 1980s; the initial activities of the Australian Society of Archivists (ASA) in the mid 1970s; the formation of the Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (ICA) and forging links between the ASA and the international archives community in the 1980s.

Lindsay was a principled man, modest and kindly, with a democratic outlook and a deep sense of social justice, unafraid to tackle authorities. He was a practised administrator, versed in the mechanics of bureaucracies. His administrative style was assiduous, to the point of being over-meticulous. He was a committed archivist who applied his administrative skills actively to the development of his profession at home and abroad. Chris Hurley remembers Lindsay as 'not your typical bureaucrat ... a courteous, generous man – slow to pick a fight and always reaching out to find a mutually agreeable solution'.

Lindsay was brought up on a small family farm in the foothills of the Adelaide Hills. His immediate family was not all that well off. As Lindsay put it, 'my father didn't make all that much in terms of money'. The farm at Glen Osmond was shared by his father, William, a mining engineer who became a house builder after World War One, and William's elder brother, Sir John Burton Cleland, a renowned pathologist and naturalist. Sir Donald Cleland, Administrator in Papua and New Guinea, 1953–1967, was their cousin. The Clelands have ancient Scottish ancestry. Lindsay's was the 25th generation. The families of the two brothers attended Glen Osmond Anglican Church together. Their family motto is *non sibi* – not for thyself. Lindsay felt that it created an ethos for him.

Lindsay went to school at Prince Alfred College. He commenced studying civil engineering at Adelaide University in 1946, the year his father died. Lindsay was involved in the Student Christian Movement at university. He was a lay reader in his local Anglican church, a member of its choir and President of its youth club. After two years Lindsay dropped engineering in favour of arts. Searching for a vocation, Lindsay chose teaching rather than the Church. He taught junior science at Prince Alfred College while completing the undergraduate course. Lindsay was impressed by Douglas Pike's iconoclastic lectures on history as an honourable craft and Professor WGK Duncan's enthusiastic defence of democracy and the common people. In 1953 Lindsay submitted an honours thesis in history and politics on the introduction of free education to South Australia. Over the following two years he worked on a Master of Arts thesis, *Compulsory and Secular Education in South Australia 1875 to 1891*.

In 1955 Lindsay decided to go to Indonesia with the Australian Volunteer Graduate Scheme. The Scheme had links with the Student Christian Movement, in which Lindsay was still active. His choice was also influenced by Douglas Pike's teaching of South East Asian history, particularly Indonesian and Malayan history. Lindsay took a placement with the Indonesian government on local rates of pay, teaching English as a foreign language at a teachers college in Tondano, Minahasa, North Sulawesi. At the time there was Minahasa resistance to central Indonesian authority. Out of loyalty to his Indonesian employers, Lindsay declined an invitation from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs to report on events. In Minahasa Lindsay linked up with Sylvia Graham, a fellow volunteer teacher whom he had known through the Student Christian Movement. Their escapade, lost on the Siau Island volcano, is recounted in Ivan Southwell's *Indonesia, Face to Face* (1964). They were engaged on Indonesian Independence Day 1956.

Sylvia and Lindsay were married in Melbourne in 1957. Both returned to high school teaching. Sylvia remained a teacher/librarian for the rest of her working life. Lindsay took a position in the Victorian Department of Education teaching English and history, but felt that he was not altogether successful in that he was 'teaching the subject rather than the youngsters'.

Lindsay applied for a position at the Commonwealth National Library. He was interviewed by Harold White, the National Librarian, who was in Melbourne recruiting staff for the Library to help with its expansion from Parliament House into the Romney buildings. Harold White was dapper in a summer seersucker suit, relaxed, smoking cigarettes, leaning back with his feet up on the desk. Lindsay got the job and moved to Canberra, staying at the Hotel Kurrajong, Lawley House, the Acton Hostel, and with Sylvia at University House. He built his own house in the suburb of Campbell and lived there with Sylvia for the rest of his life.

Lindsay and the other new starters in the class of 1960, John Brudenhall, Kim Scott Smith, Susan Stratigos and Jim Dwyer, undertook Library Association of Australia (LAA) registration certificate courses in librarianship taught by Carol Schneider and John Balnaves in the St Marks Library building. It was the fifth year that the LAA course was run for National Library trainees. Lindsay's training in librarianship included hands-on work in sections of the Library: in general reference under Cliff Burmester; in Australian reference under Pauline Fanning; and cataloguing. He also read Jenkinson and Schellenberg, taking three archives electives, on archives theory,

archives institutions, and records management and physical management of archives, ending up with a qualification in archives administration. Ian Maclean, Chief Archives Officer of the Commonwealth Archives Office, taught the archives papers in his office in East Block. Harold White's office was in Parliament House, opening off from the Parliamentary Reading Room.

The Archives Office separated from the Commonwealth National Library in 1961, but they shared three long Romney buildings for storage. (They were Nissen huts, roofs formed by a semicircle of corrugated iron, ground to ground, with a concrete floor, beside what became Kings Avenue Bridge.) The National Library's manuscripts were held in an upstairs strong room in one of the Romney buildings. In about 1964 the manuscripts section shifted to the ground floor of the Horton building in Leichhardt Street in Kingston.

Lindsay was the first head of the manuscripts section from December 1961, after it was separated from the Australian Reference section, until June 1968. Greg Denning praised Lindsay as one among the National Library's 'collectors, guardians and guides' – manuscripts librarians who had 'not just professional qualifications, but experience and imagination too'.¹

Initially, there were two full-time staff in the manuscripts section, including Lindsay, and two or three part-timers who arranged and described the papers. The manuscripts, stored in pamphlet boxes, occupied only three or four bays of shelving. Graeme Powell pointed out that the 1960s was a great period for the National Library's manuscript acquisitions, including the papers of Alfred Deakin, John Latham, Vance and Nettie Palmer, Herbert and Ivy Brookes, Bessie Rischbieth and John Monash. In acquisition work, Lindsay worked closely with Harold White and Pauline Fanning. Acquisition letters were always signed by White, but Lindsay drafted many of them and Sir Harold apparently had a high opinion of his literary skills.

Graeme added that Lindsay was the first to apply archival principles and procedures to the management of the Library's manuscript collection, particularly in the areas of arrangement, description and housing. Although the systems that he devised have been modified over the years, they remain substantially the same today. For instance, he introduced type-1 archives boxes labelled with Letraset transfers, began the simple numbering system for manuscript collections (assigning MS 1 to Captain Cook's journal), introduced accession sheets and gave priority to the production of finding aids for the more substantial or important manuscript collections.

Apart from administering the National Library's manuscript collection, Lindsay contributed to the publication of three major union catalogues of archives and manuscripts: the *Guide to Collections of Manuscripts Relating to Australia*, the *Australian Joint Copying Project Handbooks* and Phyllis Mander Jones's *Manuscripts in the British Isles Relating to Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific*.

The plan to produce a union catalogue of collections of personal papers and non-government organisational records held by Australian libraries and archives was an outcome of the Commonwealth National Library's Conference on Source Material for Australian Studies, organised by Cliff Burmester in July 1961. The National Library was taking the role of the central institution for the whole of Australia and the bibliographical side of things was considered quite important.

Lindsay was allocated the task of devising the form and content of the union catalogue and he edited the early issues of the *Guide to Collections of Manuscripts Relating to Australia*. He modelled the *Guide to Collections* on the Library of Congress *Union Catalogue of Manuscripts Collections*, which had begun publication in bound volumes of catalogue records in 1959. He designed the Australian *Guide* as loose-leaf, single page per entry, standardised descriptive data for each entry, indexed. The index was mainly a name index, designed to identify correspondence of an individual scattered across a number of collections. In theory the *Guide* was designed to cover archives as well as manuscripts. The format allowed for detailed description of a single manuscript, but only sparse description of an extensive archival record group. Lindsay was not happy with the variable levels of description. He recognised that the difficulty arose

from attempting to marry the divergent administrative practices of manuscripts libraries and archives repositories. The *Guide to Collections* began publication in 1965. It was superseded by the *Register of Australian Archives and Manuscripts* (RAAM) online database in 1995 and by Trove in 2009, both of which included entries originally published in the *Guide to Manuscripts*.

In December 1967, in response to demands from the Australian Advisory Council on Bibliographic Services (AACOBS), Lindsay was made available by the National Library to produce a plan for the preparation and publication of a guide to the microfilms made by the Australian Joint Copying Project (AJCP) of archives in the Public Record Office (PRO). Jim Gibbney, who had been involved in an earlier AACOBS advisory committee on the matter, pointed out to Lindsay that an archival approach to the description of the microfilms would be effective. In March 1968 Lindsay reported to AACOBS on the form and content of the guide, recommending serial publication in parts, hierarchical description consisting of summary, class and piece lists derived from PRO documentation, supplemented by AJCP shot lists where the filming was selective, correlated with reel numbers and, where possible, frame numbers. The series of *Australian Joint Copying Project Handbooks* began publication in 1972, along the lines that Lindsay had devised, after he had joined the Commonwealth Archives Office.

As explained in the introduction to *Manuscripts in the British Isles Relating to Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific*, the National Library seconded two of its officers as Phyllis Mander Jones's assistant editors: Judith Baskin from January to December 1967, and Lindsay from July 1968 to June 1970. Lindsay surveyed the majority of English counties as well as Wales, Northern Ireland and Eire. Northern Ireland was unsettled at the time. Ian Paisley was making inflammatory speeches. Petrol stations were being set alight. Lindsay fled Belfast, with Sylvia and their three children, who had come to Ireland for a holiday, carefully selecting where to drive across the border into the south.

A highlight of Lindsay's surveys was being shown a manuscript copy of Cook's journal of the second voyage, 1772–75, in two volumes, 416 and 558 pp., held in the National Library of Ireland among a number of books transferred to the Library in the Joly Collection. Lindsay sent a copy of some pages to the PRO where the handwriting was identified as the hand of Cook's clerk on the *Resolution*. Lindsay ran into Professor Beaglehole in Dublin and got him to go round to have a look at this hitherto unrecorded copy of the journal of the second voyage.

During Lindsay's time at the National Library of Australia, 1960–1970, it was fully staffed by qualified librarians. In his oral history interview at the Library Lindsay in September 2000 commented that: 'We were all librarians. I was a manuscript librarian, and the term archivist was nowhere used, not until the Commonwealth Archives Office, and you went along to meetings of the archive section of the Library Association of Australia and you were comfortable there because you were involved in the original source material, but the term archivist was... was, in my mind, it has never sat comfortably with manuscripts. I feel they are fairly categorically different.'

Lindsay's commitment to his work was both professional and industrial. He was Secretary of the Archives Section of LAA in 1967–68, and contributed articles to *Archives and Manuscripts* and to the *Journal of Pacific History*. He was the Professional Officers' Association's steward in the Library. He and Denis Richardson (LAA President in 1980) contributed evidence to a librarianship work value case in the Arbitration Commission, and he was involved in the National Library's review of the classification structure for its librarians and library officers in 1965.

Lindsay shifted to the Commonwealth Archives Office in December 1970 as a Grade 1 Archivist. His interest in archives administration had been developed by association with archivists in the Romney buildings, such as Jim Gibbney and Ian Diamond, and in the Archives Section of the LAA, such as Bob Sharman, Mollie Lukis, Gerald Fischer, Alan Horton and Kevin Green. His work on the *Guide to Collections* and on archives in the UK and Ireland had fed his interest. He wanted to work on official records. The Commonwealth Archives was making dramatic changes. Peter Scott had joined several years earlier and was beginning to work up the idea

of the series basis of the description of archives. After the National Library moved into its new building in 1968, the Archives took over all three Romney buildings for storage. The Reference and Access section was based in the administration building that linked up the Romneys; the Arrangement and Description, and Survey and Disposal sections were in the Kingston buildings which the Library had also vacated.

Lindsay worked with Thea Exley in Reference and Access, then took over from her, as Senior Archivist, when she moved to a Central Office position. In 1970 the total staff numbers of the Commonwealth Archives Office amounted to about 50 people, five in Reference and Access. The Archives control system was being shifted from CP (Canberra Permanent) to the CRS (Commonwealth Record System), the 30-year rule was introduced, giving the broad public access to World War Two records and Cabinet Papers. Access clearance shifted from departmental determinations to the Archives Office. By October 1973 the Reference and Access establishment had increased to 42, including 19 access clearers. Despite the increase in staffing, delays in providing access to researchers owing to the bulk of material for vetting were severely criticised in public. In September 1973 W Kaye Lamb sympathetically reported the issue in his *Development of the National Archives*.² He wrote that the Archives was not to blame for many of the difficulties, 'for the Government ... imposed upon it a virtually impossible task' (p. 21) and recommended that 'the Government take a calculated risk and open records more than 50 years old to research without restriction' (p. 25).

In March 1974, possibly in response to the Lamb Report, Lionel Bowen, the then Special Minister of State responsible for Australian Archives, announced that a top-level Archives Task Force would be formed to examine the structure of the Commonwealth Archives Office. The Task Force Support Group was intended to provide preliminary studies for the Archives Task Force. The Support Group started with something like 14 staff gathering information on 17 project areas in preparation for the Archives Task Force.

From May 1974 to 30 June 1978 Lindsay transferred to the Task Force Support Group in the Central Office. Lindsay undertook research on *Project No. 10, User Services and Facilities (Official and Public)*. His broad-brush research on the role that Commonwealth Archives played in relation to other collecting institutions in Australia was influenced by the establishment of the Museums Association, Peter Pigott's *Report on Museums in Australia* (1975), the formation of the National Museum of Australia, the proceedings of the Institute of Public Administration and HC Coombs's Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration. Ironically, the Archives Task Force was never convened. Its functions were overtaken by drafting Commonwealth archives legislation and by an internal Joint Management Review.

Back into line administration and Reference and Access in the ACT, Lindsay had a falling-out with the Director-General, Professor Neale, over a meeting in August 1978 of AACOBS which sunk the draft Archives Bill.

While attached to the Task Force Support Group, Lindsay had completed a Graduate Diploma in Administration at the Canberra College of Advanced Education, and commenced an MA in Public Administration. He became increasingly critical of managerial control over professional archives administration, particularly after a Joint Management Review in 1980–81 installed managers in place of archivists in the Central Office.

Lindsay found that his access clearers were hampered by Central Office rules and procedures on what could and could not be released. In November 1980 one of the access clearers, Helen Berriman, took a case to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, arguing that records were being improperly restricted as a result of Central Office directions. The case was withdrawn, but created eruptions. Towards the end of 1981, when the Archives was shifting to its new building in Mitchell and the Romney buildings were being demolished to make way for the National Gallery, they held a *Romney Wrecking Ball* with songs and skits by the access clearers. One song, to the tune of *My Bonnie Lies over the Ocean*, was based on the access manual:

Our manual's not what it should be,
 Our manual drives us to tears,
 Its blanket restrictions just could be,
 The end of our brilliant careers.
 Bring back, bring back, oh, bring back initiative.
 Bring back, bring back, our faith in the judgments we give.
 Oh, how can we work when we're smothered,
 With thousands of set rules and regs?
 We're really too old to be mothered,
 Or taught by CO to suck eggs.
 Bring back, bring back...

After the move to the new building in Mitchell in early 1981, Lindsay headed the Survey and Disposal section, where he had no hands-on experience and faced the difficulty of supervising people who knew more about disposal work than he did. Managerialism was a key issue of the time. Lindsay had maintained his industrial interests, continuing as the Professional Officers Association steward while there were POA members in Australian Archives, mainly those who'd had a library background. In 1981 he was elected President of ASA, along with Elizabeth Nathan, Vice President, and Alan Ives, Secretary, all from Australian Archives. The Australian Archives had abandoned the term 'archivist' in favour of 'records services officer'. Lindsay wrote to Professor Neale pointing out that members of the Society were concerned about the effects of the Joint Management Review on their professional standing and prospects in the public service (NBAC, ASA Archives, N187/63). Alan Ives complained to Nancy Lutton that in 'the Australian Archives there is almost a complete antipathy to the ASA: support is at an absolute zero in any terms. Even leave for Council meetings is not accepted as reasonable' (N187/64).

Nevertheless, the ASA Council addressed a range of key issues, for example: Clive Smith arranged for the Society to be incorporated; Susan Healy organised policy and by-laws for the establishment of Special Interest Groups; submissions were made on copyright, the closure of the Community Research archives at the University of NSW and the review of the CSIRO Archives; Don Brech and Nancy Lutton put *Archives and Manuscripts* back on course; Colleen Pritchard and Peter Moore took over production of the *ASA Bulletin*; Elizabeth Nathan produced a paper on the reorganisation of the Society including restructuring its committee system; Olga White, Anne-Marie Schwirtlich and Jennifer Nash compiled *The Directory of Archives and Manuscript Repositories in Australia*; and the Council produced a Medium Term Plan, modelled on the ICA medium-term plan, tabled at the conference in Adelaide in May 1983, where Lindsay gave a presidential address emphasising the importance of the ASA looking outwards to be part of the world community of archives.

Participation in the inaugural conference and training course of the Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (PARBICA), Suva, 13–27 October 1981, was the immediate and pressing issue. There were two serious problems occasioned by the disinterest of Australian Archives: 'Category A' (that is, national) representation at the conference given that Australian Archives was not going to attend; and funding for the ASA representatives. The first was solved by having ASA represent Australian interests, and the second by securing a grant at the last moment from the Department of Foreign Affairs (23 September, N187/64) to send Ian Maclean and Lindsay to Suva. The grant was probably allocated in response to Alan Ives's appeal to Ian Sinclair (Minister for Communications and a friend of Alan's father).

Setareki Tuinaceva (Government Archivist in Fiji) was elected President and Lindsay was elected PARBICA Secretary-General. Apart from one meeting in Rarotonga to work on the PARBICA medium-term plan, the PARBICA executive meetings were held by PeaceSat, a temperamental satellite that Lindsay and Peter Orlovich would link up to in Sydney. Lindsay did travel, at his own expense and in his own time, to Kuala Lumpur for the International Conference of the Round Table on Archives in late 1982, and to the United States and Canada on his way

to the ICA conference in Bonn in 1984. Funds were secured from the Canadian International Development Organisation for the first fact-finding advisory mission in the South Pacific, carried out by Bruce Burne in late 1984.

The second PARBICA training conference was held in Sydney early in 1985, with the support of the NSW Archives Authority and the Sydney Office of Australian Archives, and funded by UNESCO and the South Pacific Cultures Fund. It was an extraordinarily successful conference held at the ASOPA campus in Mosman attended by many Islanders. Charles Kecskemeti, ICA Secretary-General, also attended and gave a talk to the Sydney Branch of ASA. Peter Orlovich did the training with support lectures by Anne-Marie Schwirtlich and others. Frank Evans, from the US National Archives, who had been at the first PARBICA conference, organised a seminar on appraisal. Evans and Kecskemeti made a formal visit to Australian Archives in Canberra. They also visited the Australian Development Assistance Bureau (ADAB), which helped gain ADAB support for the third PARBICA conference in Port Moresby in June 1987. Ken Scadden, from the National Archives of NZ, took over from Lindsay as PARBICA Secretary-General at the Port Moresby conference. Earlier in 1987 Lindsay toured Micronesia, completing the Fact Finding Advisory Mission in the South Pacific. He gave a full report of his findings at the fourth PARBICA conference in Wellington in 1989.

Lindsay did not have a bright future at Australian Archives. Blamed for delays in providing disposal schedules, he had become marginalised. As he put it, the administrators had dug 'a big pit' for him. Lindsay took early retirement from Australian Archives in 1989, but continued in his vocation. In 1990 Lindsay gave his services to his cousin, Barbara La Nauze, arranging and describing papers of her late husband, the historian Professor John La Nauze, for addition to his collection at the National Library. Lindsay volunteered three days a week from 1989 until 2013, sorting and compiling a finding aid for the enormous Tippet Missiological Collection, including the papers of Lorimer Fison, at St Mark's National Theological Centre in Canberra. In the 1990s, Lindsay spent a long period in the National Library Manuscripts Reading Room as a research assistant to Renate Howe, who was writing the centenary history of the Australian Student Christian Movement.

In retirement Lindsay also pursued his abiding concern for the rights of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. He joined the Canberra Sorry Day Network and ANTaR ACT, which campaigned for recognition of the anniversary of the tabling of the *Bringing Them Home* report. In September 1998 Lindsay travelled with other activists by coach from Sydney to Uluru, Alice Springs, Darwin, Broome, Geraldton, Perth and back to Sydney, participating in various Sea of Hands installations. He also compiled monthly press summaries on Aboriginal affairs for an Aboriginal support group which was part of Community Aid Abroad.

In 2000 Lindsay made an oral history recording at the National Library for ASA. This obituary has drawn on the transcript of Lindsay's oral history together with notes on discussions leading up to the recording. Toward the end of the interview, Lindsay said:

I've been happy to be involved in archives. I'm glad that I moved through various aspects. I'm glad I moved from the National Library into archives more widely. Archives seem to fit. Perhaps it's part of a personality that's in many ways tidy. And the archives were being tidy on a larger scale. It has probably fitted into my personality as much as anything else. But I've been happy to be involved in it and ... it's the background to being able to follow the actions of government critically...

Ewan Maidment
29 November 2017

Lindsay Cleland: publications, manuscripts and an oral history recording

Compulsory and secular education in South Australia, 1875–1891, thesis prepared for presentation for the Degree of Master of Arts at the University of Adelaide was not submitted, 1959, NLA MS 2148.

Papers of James Cleland, c.1959–1966 [manuscript], 42 cm. (1 carton), NLA MS 9015.

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'PARBICA: Why Belong?' In Pam Mathews (ed.), *The National and International Environment. Proceedings of the 6th Biennial Conference of the Australian Society of Archivists, Perth, 21–25 April 1987*, ASA, Perth, 1988, pp. 13–20.

'Report on Fact Finding Advisory Mission South Pacific, Part 2, 13 March – 16 April, 1987', *Pacific Archives Journal*, no. 8, June 1989, pp. 25–60.

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Sea of Hands Tour, September 1997, photograph album, AIATSIS, MS 4870.

Lindsay Cleland Interviewed by Ewan Maidment for the Australian Society of Archivists Oral History Project [Sound Recording], Australian Society of Archivists oral history project, National Library of Australia, 2000, 6 sound discs (CD-R) (369 min) ORAL TRC 4619, uncorrected transcript (typescript, 111 leaves) ORAL TRC 4618 (transcript).

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Endnotes

1. Greg Dening, 'MS1 Cook, Holograph Journal', in Peter Cochrane (ed.), *Remarkable Occurrences: The National Library of Australia's First 100 Years 1901–2001*, NLA, Canberra, 2001, pp. 9–10.
2. W. Kaye Lamb, *Development of the National Archives*, Department of the Special Minister of State, 1973; online reprint <http://www.naa.gov.au/about-us/organisation/history/index.aspx/>, accessed 9 February 2018.

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