Editorial

With the sixtieth anniversary of *Archives and Manuscripts* fast approaching in 2015 and the first volume of tandem print and online production of the journal now complete, Sigrid McCausland's article in this issue is a timely survey of the journal's origins and development. The starting point is the long gestation of the fledgling professional identity that emerged alongside the journal and which emerged in the midst of libraries and librarians: the Australian archivist. The article ranges through the various phases that the journal has undergone along the way, the debates that have punctuated its history and shaped its identity and the trends that are taking it into the future. The journal continues to evolve, and a few more changes are planned for next year to bring the journal up-to-date. From next year, the journal will have a revised aims and scope statement that is more inclusive of the authors and readership that it attracts, alongside a new cover design. In addition, during 2013, we expect the initial phase of the digitisation of the journal's back issues to be well underway.

Having carved out separate identities in Australia and throughout the world, archives are now encountering a range of new pressures (or are they opportunities?) to merge, cooperate, collaborate, converge or otherwise subsume their distinct identities within a broader umbrella identity. Robert VanderBerg in 'Converging libraries, archives and museums: overcoming distinctions, but for what gain?' asks whether the recent trend to amalgamate hitherto separate memory institutions is fundamentally a rebranding exercise, which will strip archival collections of their defining characteristics. Much of the impetus for this convergence trend, VanderBerg proposes, emerges from the way in which the Internet, particularly the habits formed through Google searches, has induced researchers into a kind of intolerance of the distinctions between collections. Is the convergence of libraries, archives and museums really all that it has been hyped up to be? And are archives most at risk, because convergence might lead to the occlusion of their recordkeeping mandate by becoming confused with institutions generally associated with culture and leisure activities?

In 2005, Michael Piggott proposed that archivists have generally had a carefree attitude to memory – a certainty that they know what memory is and how their professional practice and discourse is related to this thing called memory. In his paper 'Genres of the trace: memory, archives and trouble', Verne Harris explores two personal experiences that proved to trouble his 'conventional positivist archival thinking' at a time when he 'was not hospitable to complexity and uncertainty'. With the insights of theorists Jacques Derrida and Paul Ricouer, Harris shows how the intertwining threads binding memory and archives unravel before our eyes once we question many of the binary oppositions through which we construct order and stability about our experiences. Among the troubling experiences that Harris recounts, one involves an exchange with a former freedom fighter he calls 'Ben'. Working together on the files that he describes as 'a destructive mix of misinformation and horrible truth, evidence of personal flaws and compromises, deeds of courage and deeds of betrayal', Ben turns to

Harris one day, shakes his head and opines about the surviving records: 'Maybe they should have destroyed them all'.

The nexus between human rights violations and recordkeeping is also the focus of Gabriela Andaur Gómez's 'Finding facts and constructing memory: the creation and custody of human rights records in South America'. In this article, Gómez examines the place of records documenting the violation of human rights. Her discussion of the fragility of human rights records strikes familiar echoes within the Australian context, in regards to records relating to the Stolen Generations and the Forgotten Australians: where should such records be housed? Who should be making decisions about them and how are they to be accessed? Should these records be appraised, preserved and accessed under the same regime as other archival records? Or do they call for a fundamentally different arrangement, because of what they are and what they document? Gómez asks some searching questions about who should be entrusted with the custody of these kinds of records; questions which are the corollaries of the troubling encountered in Harris' encounter with human rights archives.

Richard Lehane in 'Documenting sites of creation' argues for an approach to documenting the physical arrangement of records that encompasses the site of creation as yet another meaningful and useful dimension of context for records that become permanent archives. The neat arrangement of records into boxes and ordered sets may actually mask the reality in which they were created, the working habits of the records' creator, the place in which the records took form and, ultimately, sterilising what they document.

In 'A "powerful, creative history": the reticence of women architects to donate their professional records to archival repositories', Julie Collins addresses the reluctance of women professionals to donate records, arguing that archivists should advocate more vigorously to change this state of affairs. Complete and accurate histories of modern cultural life are difficult to write, perhaps not even possible, when the records that show the evidence of women's professional lives are missing. This not only applies to women architects, which are the main subject of Collins's article, but also of the buildings and the built landscape that they created or helped to shape. In Collins's view, this is partly due to women underestimating themselves as significant historical actors whose practices are worthy of documentation. Furthermore, the absence of records about women professionals is felt by current generations of women seeking out their precursors and attempting to forge a professional identity in traditionally male-dominated fields. Rather than waiting for women in architecture and design fields to come to them, Collins urges archivists to be more actively engaged with women professionals through public outreach, encouraging them to document their activities and make plans to transfer their records to a suitable collection.

Alistair Tough and Paul Lihoma in 'The development of recordkeeping systems in the British Empire and Commonwealth, 1870s–1960s' argue that there was considerable scope for innovation at the periphery of the British Empire and Commonwealth in the development of recordkeeping systems. Among the most interesting of these developments is the advent of the confidential registry system to maintain security and secrecy and the generation of the Secretariat as a distinctive institution of British imperial administration that resulted from integrated registry systems.

In the 'Reflections' section in this issue, Christine Yeats and Alan Ventress review the collaborations that State Records NSW entered into with third party providers in order to remain relevant to its researcher community, despite the ongoing economic hardships that government archives have had to endure at the hands of stingy

governments. Most important in these endeavours were the relationships that were established with the Genealogical Society of Utah and Ancestry, in order to develop microfilm and mass digitisation products that could take archival resources outside the traditional reading room, first to regional centres around New South Wales and then to the world via the Internet. For those at the other end of the organisational scale, advice on digitising and fundraising are among the strengths identified by Desley Soden in her review of Christina Zamon's book *The Lone Arranger*. If you are looking for advice on how to succeed in a small repository when you *are* the staff, this book aims to appeal to lone arrangers across all types of archives, whether they be religious, academic, corporate, government, library, museum or historical.

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