

of staff time. Those who were present at the 1954 Seminar will remember that Dr. Schellenberg stated that the basic needs for the Pre-Federation Guide were:

'a) an outline of administrative history
and b) a conception in general terms of the contents of the group.
This amounted to an inventory.'

But it seems to me that a programme of description at the record group level would also go some distance towards satisfying these basic needs. Be this as it may, Australian archivists adopted as their model National Archives Staff Information Circular 14 on the Preparation of Preliminary Inventories.

My contention is that this level of description (the series level) is far too intensive for such a thing as a Guide. For an example of what a guide should consist of we must turn our attention to the National Archives Guide, a work which is compiled at the record group, not the series, level. What we need from our Guide is an overall view of our record holdings, and we need this view as soon as possible.

In other words, I believe the model for our Guide should be N.A.S.I.C. 15, The control of records at the record group level, and not N.A.S.I.C. 14. This would result in an instrument which would be nowhere near as exhaustive as a full-scale inventory but at the same time it would have the advantage of being much more within the competence of our sparsely staffed Australian repositories.

Yours etc.

A.W.B. Mortimer.

NEWS AND NOTES

Mr G.L. Fischer has been appointed Archivist in the Public Library of South Australia, in succession to Mr John McLellan, who resigned in October 1960.

The 35th Congress of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science, held in Brisbane in May, provided an opportunity for University Archivists to get together. Amongst those present were Mr Bruce Shields (Australian National University) Mr Frank Strachan (Melbourne University) and Mr Ray McDonald (University of New England).

Six years have now elapsed since the Archives Section of the Library Association, meeting in Brisbane during the 1955 Library Conference, resolved that a semi-annual publication be issued under the authority of the Section. Since then, eight numbers have been issued, but unfortunately not semi-annually. The present issue represents the ninth number, and the beginning of volume II.