

NEWS NOTES

COMMONWEALTH ARCHIVES :

Mr. Peter Scott has been appointed to the position of Archivist in the Commonwealth Archives Office. Mr. Scott has recently been on the staff of the Department of French in the University of Sydney and spent much of his spare time over the last few years in acting as Honorary Research Secretary to the Society of Australian Genealogists.

Mr. Salim Baksh of the Central Archives of Fiji is at present spending six months in training at the Commonwealth Archives Office in Canberra.

Work has now been completed on the security microfilm copying of the Passenger Lists held by the Archives Office in Melbourne. Copying of the Sydney series is about to begin.

The new repositories in Adelaide and Brisbane are now almost complete. The Adelaide repository is to be formally opened in mid-June and the Brisbane repository in mid-July. Plans are being prepared for conversion of the old Government Printing Office in Canberra into the Commonwealth Archives Building. A firm date for completion is not known but it is expected that the Archives Office will occupy its new quarters before the middle of 1964.

Mr. Val Prescott, Archivist in the Archives Branch of the Administrator's Department of the Territory of Papua New Guinea called at the Canberra Office early in April on his way back to New Guinea from extended leave.

Mr. H. J. Gibbney, Senior Archivist in Canberra has recently completed work on the translation of a German handbook for official archives which was reviewed in this journal some time ago. The possibility of publication is now being examined but should publication prove to be impracticable, as seems likely, arrangements will be made to make it available in some other way to members of the profession in Australia.

QUEENSLAND STATE ARCHIVES

The ground floor of the former Lady Bowen Hospital in Wickham Terrace, Brisbane, which was some time ago made available to the Archives, is at last being made ready for use. Total floor area for archives accommodation in this building is almost 2,000 square feet, but it is distributed amongst nine rooms. The building is very old and a thorough renovation is being carried out to make the premises pleasant, but they will remain somewhat maze-like. The rooms will be used for material which is seldom consulted, such as local court records, Mining Warden's registers, and local government records.

Early in March Miss D. Wheeler, B.A., was appointed Assistant Archivist.

Mr. Robert Tan, B.A., staff member of the Queensland Archives, plans to leave Brisbane on 1st July for a three weeks' tour of south-western areas of the State. The recent floods which these districts experienced — particularly the town of Adavale, where police records of some value were destroyed — have made the collection of regional records a matter of urgent consideration. Mr. Tan plans to visit Dalby, Roma, Charleville, Quilpie and Adavale.

State Cabinet announced recently that approval had been given for the spending of £137,000 on a new Intermediate Records repository at Rocklea, a suburb about six miles from the G.P.O.

TASMANIAN STATE ARCHIVES

An event of some importance occurred last year when the Tasmanian State Archives was moving into its new quarters. This was the restoration to proper custody of a small file of Colonial Secretary's Office correspondence concerning the early proposals of John Batman to settle in Port Phillip, and related matters. These papers had been stolen from the State Archives in 1925 and offered to various well-known institutions for a very considerable sum, and finally found their way to the collection of the late Sir William Dixon, which collection is in the process of being put in order in the Dixon Library, Public Library of N.S.W. When the facts were brought to the notice of the Trustees of the Public Library of N.S.W., they recognised the justice of this part of the claims of the Tasmanian Library Board, and returned these papers to the Tasmanian State Archives.