

## THE LIBRARY CONFERENCE AND THE ANNUAL MEETING

In August, 1963, the 12th Biennial Conference of the Library Association of Australia was held in Hobart. Meetings of special interest to archivists were:—

**Symposium on training for archivists**, to which papers were contributed by R. F. Doust (Honorary General Secretary of the Association, and Senior Archives Officer in New South Wales) and G. D. Richardson (Principal Archivist of the N.S.W. Archives Authority, and President of the Section) and R. C. Sharman (Archivist, Library Board of Queensland, and Secretary of the Section).

**Some aspects of the collection, processing and use of non-official records**, with papers by Miss J. D. Hine (Librarian, Dixson Library, Public Library of N.S.W.) and Miss M. F. F. Lukis (Librarian, J. S. Battye Library of W.A. History, and State Archivist of Western Australia).

**Local history collections in public libraries** by F. H. Rogers (Librarian, University of New England, Armidale, N.S.W.).

**Problems in provenance**, by P. R. Eldershaw (Archives Officer, State Library of Tasmania).

**Access to public records**, by Ian Maclean (Chief Archivist, Commonwealth Archives Office, Canberra).

**The historian and his manuscript sources** by Dr. M. Roe (Lecturer in History at the University of Tasmania).

In each case, the papers had been prepared some months ahead, and had been distributed to those attending the Conference. There was no formal reading of the papers; those attending were expected to have read them in advance. Discussion took place, more or less under the direction of a Chairman. Some of the people mentioned amongst those who had prepared papers were also asked to act as Chairmen (although not for the sessions at which their own papers were being discussed) and others who presided at sessions included G. L. Fischer, Archivist at the South Australian Archives, and B. W. Wray, State Librarian of Tasmania.

This particular method of organising a conference was not uniformly successful. Much depended upon the nature of the paper, and on whether or not the person preparing it had deliberately left issues open for further discussion, or had raised contentious issues which people were prepared to air in public. Discussions like this tend to assume the characteristics of a serial — people not present at earlier sessions find that they are not *au fait* with matters discussed at later ones, and people who leave the Conference early miss much that is relevant to issues raised at the inception.

Some resolutions came out of discussions, and these had to be referred to the Annual Meeting of the Section before they could be adopted in any formal way. They were:—

1. **Exchange of Archivists.** The view was expressed that some benefit would accrue to the profession if individual staff members could be seconded to a different employing organisation for a matter of one, two, or up to six months. It was agreed that the matter be left in the hands of the Section Committee, but that as a preliminary measure the various Senior Archivists present might like to raise it with the Departmental heads to whom they were responsible.

2. **Uniform archives legislation.** Concern was expressed at the fact that, even where a State has archives legislation, it was difficult, if not impossible, to enforce the terms of the legislation, so far as the return of archival estrays was concerned, in cases where such estrays had come into improper custody in another State. It was agreed that some approach might be made to Commonwealth law officers to see whether the passing of uniform archives legislation would overcome this.
3. **Syllabus revision.** Some discussion took place regarding the syllabus of the Library Association's Examinations for Papers 14, 15 and 16. Those who took part had already attended the discussions on the training of archivists which had taken place during the Library Association Conference. It was agreed that a sub-committee of three should be asked to examine the current syllabus with a view to making suggestions regarding any changes deemed necessary and that the sub-committee should report to the Section Committee. The sub-committee to consist of—

Mr. P. R. Eldershaw, convener,  
Miss T. Exley,  
Miss M. F. F. Lukis.

Miss M. F. F. Lukis was elected President and General Councillor of the Section for 1964 and 1965. The positions of Editor and Secretary were filled by the reappointment of Mr. R. C. Sharman, and Miss P. J. Coles was elected Honorary Treasurer. Mr. A. E. M. Andrews was appointed Auditor. The following persons were elected to the Section Committee—

Mr. P. R. Eldershaw, Miss T. M. Exley, Mr. G. L. Fischer, Miss J. Hine,  
Mr. A. R. Horton, Mr. G. D. Richardson, and Mr. A. Wilkes.

On Thursday 22nd August, in the Board Room of the new State Library building in Murray Street, Hobart, a meeting took place which was not directly connected with the work of the Conference, but which was of some importance to the archivists present. It was called by the Chairman of the Commonwealth Archives Committee (Mr. A. L. Moore) who presided, and it was attended by the head librarian of each State Library in Australia, by the Chief Archivist of the Commonwealth Archives Office, and by the Senior Archivist in charge of each State archival institution in the Commonwealth. The first time all six State Archives have been represented, along with the Australian Federal Government, and the State Librarians, at one Conference. The subject discussed at this gathering was access to "shared" records, that is, records which are made up, in part at least, of documents emanating from some public authority other than the government in whose custody they have found their ultimate resting place.

The Committee expressed its appreciation to the Conference Organiser, Mr. R. W. Hill, and the Chairman of the Conference Committee, Mr. D. H. Borchardt, for their work in arranging such an excellent series of meetings. Thanks are also due to the Tasmanian State Archives staff, especially to Mr. P. R. Eldershaw, the Archives Officer, and his wife, for much of the hospitality of Conference time; and to Mr. B. W. Wray, the State Librarian in Hobart.

Appreciation was also expressed at the meeting for the work of Messrs. G. D. Richardson and R. F. Doust, as they completed their terms of office as President and Honorary Treasurer respectively of the Section. Mr. Richardson has since been elected Vice-President of the Library Association of Australia.