

Experiments are being made to establish the efficacy of Mr W. H. Langwell's new method of deacidification publicised in the *Journal of the Society of Archivists* (see Vol. III, Number 3, April 1966, p. 137) — vapour phase deacidification by cyclohexylamine carbonate (CHC). In our early tests of the interleaving sheets and the powder sachets, records having a high acid content have shown improvement but not near enough to pH neutrality. Nevertheless, CHC offers attractive possibilities and experiments are continuing in the hope that further experience in use will give improved results.

BOOK REVIEWS

Gawrecki, Drahoslav.—*Compact library shelving*, translated from the Czech by Stanislav Rehak. Chicago, A.L.A. Library Technology Program, 1968. (L.T.P. Publications, No 14). Reviewed by R. C. Sharman.

This manual was originally published in Czechoslovakia in 1960, and the writer of the Foreword, Robert H. Muller, specifically states that no attempt has been made to bring the material up to date by including articles published after the original Czech publication. The manual was originally published in three separate volumes, and its being brought together in this way involves quite a lot of repetition. It is all the more valuable, therefore, to have the author's general summary in Part I, entitled "General characteristics of compact shelves". In this section the author classifies the various types of compact shelving as follows:

- (a) stationary shelves combined with movable revolving segments:
- (b) stationary shelves with movable drawers:
- (c) movable sliding shelves.

As for the first type, the "revolving" segments do not, in fact, revolve completely — i.e. they do not pass through all 360° of a revolution, but merely through a 90° or at most a 180° angle. Swinging shelving would probably be a more appropriate description of the segments that move, and this type could further be broken down into "double-wing" and "single-wing" varieties. The second type operates on the same principle as the standard steel filing cabinet, so familiar in offices in Australia. Design of this type of unit is complex, and could well result in great expense. On the other hand, the author is inclined to favour the further investigation of this principle:—

In our opinion, the applicability of drawer-type shelving will have to be re-evaluated when it is considered as being used in combination with movable sliding shelves, especially those which slide sideways; and we expect that this combined type of system will provide an important contribution to the economic organization of space with maximum effectiveness. For this reason, we cannot, at the present time, accept without reservation the unfavourable evaluation of drawer-type equipment which is often found in professional circles in Europe today.

Finally, the sliding shelf variety, with which Australians are more familiar, may use either the suspension (hanger type) or the under-carriage principle. Again, the sliding variety may be considered in relation to the direction of their movement — either laterally moving (e.g. "Stormor") or frontally moving (e.g. "Compactus"). Even as early as 1960, the author had come to the conclusion that the frontally moving or "parallel" sliding shelves

were demonstrably the most effective among all the types of compact equipment used at that time. It would be most interesting to know whether the author's experience since that date had confirmed his impressions. Failing this, it would be interesting to know what the experience was of librarians, archivists and others in the United States, as far as the "Compactus" type of shelving is concerned. Muller, in his Foreword, says:

Compact storage of books has not been a central concern among library managers in the U.S., partly because American libraries have tended, or preferred, to provide open and ready access even to little-used books (and compact shelving would presumably have made them less accessible), partly because libraries have rarely segregated more frequently from less frequently used books on a systematic basis. Other reasons are that American librarians have not become fully convinced that compact storage has sufficient advantages to offset its obvious disadvantages as long as land and building funds continue to be relatively plentiful, and the commercially available equipment relatively high in price and hard to write specifications for in situations that require competitive bidding. Moreover, the choice of readily procurable equipment has been limited, there are relatively few manufacturers that have done much to promote the sale of compact storage equipment, and some manufacturers have even discontinued their product lines, evidently for lack of sustained demand. Other manufacturers have continued to offer the drawer-type of compact shelving but probably have not sold a great deal compared to conventional stacks.

The main sections of the manual itself deal with the types of shelving mentioned in the introductory section:

- Part II Revolving Compact Shelves
- Part III Sliding Drawer Compact Shelves
- Part IV Sliding (Rolling) Compact Shelves

To this has been added a section (Part V) on "New ways of economical organization of storage space in the USSR and Czechoslovakia". There is a valuable bibliography, but of course it does not include any entries for writings subsequent to 1960. Then there are six appendices, which are as follows:

- A. New methods of organizing and equipping library stacks, by F. N. Pashchenko.
- B. Movable bookshelves: new efforts to solve an old problem, by Ake Kromnow.
- C. New types of compact shelving systems, by Ake Kromnow. [the preceding two items date from 1953 and 1958 respectively].
- D. Movable bookshelves in libraries, by Bjorn Tell. (1954).
- E. The compact storage of books: a study of methods and equipment, by F. J. Hill. (1955).
- F. Evaluation of compact book storage systems, by Robert H. Muller. (1954).

In conclusion, the present reviewer found this manual to be a valuable summary of the information available in 1960 respecting compact shelving. It should not be difficult for the Library Technology Program to supplement its translating work by publishing in the near future a volume which brings

us down to 1968. In particular, readers would like to know what developments have taken place, particularly in the U.S.A., with regard to types of compact shelving that have come on to the market since 1960, and which types are no longer available. Readers would also like to know whether any major U.S. libraries have had any major successes or failures in using compact shelving. Finally, readers may well ask to what extent compact shelving has proved useful in Archives institutions and intermediate records repositories in the United States.



Australian Academy of Science.—*Records*. [Canberra, The Academy, 1966+]. Vol. 1, Nos 1-2, Dec 1966, Dec 1967. 72 pp., 154 pp. Reviewed by M. J. Ryman.

Modern man is, as Simon Archer says, "the result of a long biological evolution traceable to pre-human ancestors at least 600,000 years in the past; a social and cultural evolution extending back to more than 20,000 years ago; and a comparatively short but very significant scientific evolution beginning some 300 years ago¹". As a unit of western society, Australia has existed only in the years since Newton and as such Australia is unique in western societies, having no direct experience of mediaevalism, the Renaissance or the Reformation. As Professor C. M. H. Clark is at pains to point out, Australia, from the beginning of white settlement contained "men of the enlightenment²". Rather obviously the development of modern science in Australia has been an integral part of the development of Australian society and Australian culture.

Writing the foreword to the first volume of "Records of the Australian Academy of Science" the President, F. M. Burnet, saw the role of this publication as having three characteristics. Firstly the journal would "provide a suitable place where the personality and achievements of deceased Fellows may be placed on record"; secondly it was to be a medium for the publication of the Flinders Lectures; and thirdly, and Burnet stresses, most importantly, "Records" would be "a repository for articles of scholarship and distinction on the history of science and scientists in Australia". It is for this third role that "Records of the Australian Academy of Science" will make its mark. By providing a series of scholarly articles with an historical slant on scientific development, "Records" will contribute to the present struggle by historians to define and trace the growth of the Australian cultural unit.

This contribution is evident in the first article in Volume I, L. A. Gilbert's "The Bush and the Search for a Staple in New South Wales, 1788-1810", which by injecting a scientific interest into a well-known historical situation, gives fresh meaning to those early years. The struggle of the first colonists is well illustrated, with their attempts to adapt to their environment, and find in its natural resources those essentials of the civilization they represented. Just as the early Australian artists depicted the new landscape in the style of the English countryside, so too the first colonists looked at the new land's natural resources through the eyes of Western Europeans searching for those products of Western Europe for which the original inhabitants had found no use. This article shows that from the earliest years of white settlement, the colonists had adapted the environment to suit their needs. Continuing on in this general

vein of looking at well known historical situations and trends through the eyes of a scientist, Amirah Inglis in the second article describes vividly the trials of Lawrence Hargrave as an outcast in a philistine land. For these two articles alone, "Records" has provided a valuable understanding of the strands of historical development in Australian society and they fulfil the third requirement of Burnet's justification for the existence of "Records".

The journal is, unfortunately, not without some blemishes. In Volume I at least four pages of printed paper were wasted by the insertion of material on the Arms of the Academy. While being perhaps of marginal interest to a few scientists, the material is in no way in conformity with the aims of "Records" as set out by Burnet, unless one sees the article as one of the "noteworthy contributions . . . made in the course of Academy functions". The suspicions roused by the insertion of the notes on the Coat of Arms tend to be confirmed by Martyn's article in Volume II on "Personal Notes on the Early Days of the Academy". While Martyn gives an interesting and detailed account of the foundation of the Academy, he tends to skate over many controversial issues that are obviously involved with the establishment of the Academy. In doing so he uses the clever device of emphasizing the formalities involved in the creation of the Academy. This is probably the result of Martyn's desire to avoid embarrassment personally and the determination not to offend persons still living. More fearfully these two articles reflect a tendency in Australian scientists, long the dread of social scientists, that they turn to a formality and to shreds of a culture having very little relevance to this country. If this is so, then "Records" has fallen short of Burnet's aims.

In relation to the other aims, "Records" appears to have enjoyed a large measure of success. Apart from the tendency to sentimentality apparent in some of the biographical memoirs, these memoirs do give a vivid and normally sympathetic biographical account of scientists so frequently forgotten by the historian. These memoirs serve as a reminder that Australia today is the result not only of the Macquaries, the Nellie Melbas and the Hugheses, but also of the Martsons, the Cherrys and the Stillwells. These notes provide one with a valuable new insight into the development of the total Australian scene.

If the editorial board feels that "Records" is a suitable avenue for the publication of the Matthew Flinders Lectures it will be a section of "Records" that will be of little interest to the generally uncomprehending student of history. Compared with the printed space devoted to these subjects of purely scientific interest, the notes on the Bassett Library in Volume I and the manuscript collection held by the Bassett Library in Volume II are treated as being of marginal interest. While this emphasis can be justified by reference to the President's foreword in Volume I, archivists and librarians will no doubt grate under its impact.

In terms of the aims set out in Volume I, the editorial policy followed in "Records of the Australian Academy of Science" has achieved a large degree of practical success. The more balanced overall scheme found in Volume II augurs well for future volumes of this journal. While to the social scientists, looking for a synthesis of the physical and social sciences, "Records" will have some disappointing tendencies, the several articles of high standard which do attempt this synthesis will be of

tremendous interest and encouragement. The difficulty involved in producing a magazine involving the mixture of two disciplines, is being adequately tackled by the editorial board, but only time will show whether they can continue to work towards a solution of the problems involved.

REFERENCES

1. Simon Archer.—“Science as Human Evolution”. New York. Pagent Press, 1963, p. 1.
2. C. M. H. Clark.—“A History of Australia”, Vol. 1, Melbourne University Press. Melbourne. 1962.



New Zealand. National Archives. *A summary of work 1968*. Wellington, Department of Internal Affairs, 1968. ii pp, 18 pp.
Reviewed by Miss J. M. Carroll.

Australian Archives authorities would do well to follow the example of the National Archives of New Zealand in presenting, in booklet form, an annual report of their operations, accessions etc. *A Summary of Work 1968*, produced by the National Archives of New Zealand, covers the period 1 Apr 1967 - 31 Mar 1968, and gives brief summaries respecting accommodation, holdings, disposal of records, arrangement and description, preservation of records, use of material, and records management.

The main Archives office is situated in Wellington, but there are branches in Auckland and Lower Hutt, which serve as records repositories rather than archives institutions. The New Zealand Archives is under the direct control of the Department of Internal Affairs whereas most Australian State Archives are attached to libraries, although the Commonwealth Archives is responsible to the Prime Minister's Department. However, like most Australian Archives, with the exception of the Queensland State Archives, New Zealand Archives is housed in a building not specifically designed for the purpose and consequently accommodation is “strained to capacity”.

The *Summary* details arrangements which have been made for the disposal of records of various departments for the period under review—for transfer to the Archives or for destruction.

Total Archives holdings up to March 1968 are listed and consisted at that time of 19,302 linear feet of records, 21,508 maps, 1,864 reels of microfilm, and 136 cinematograph films. Measurements of material accessioned and destroyed are also given. Duplicate material would normally suffer the fate of destruction, but duplicate maps received from the War History Branch, including World War I maps of Europe and the Middle East, were donated to the History and Geography departments of some secondary schools.

The booklet points out what has been done by the New Zealand Archives in the preservation of archival material—the results of their research could be valuable for Australian archivists. For instance, acidity tests have been carried out by the Scientific and Industrial Research Department with a view to determining which papers and cardboards are neutral and therefore suitable for archives purposes. The Hope Gibbons fire in 1952 provided New Zealand archivists with experience in dealing with fire-damaged records, and details of how they rescued and re-organized records could be useful to Australian archivists if they are ever faced with a similar situation. Probably the most valuable document in the New Zealand Archives is the Treaty of Waitangi, and in order to take

the best possible steps towards its preservation, advice was sought from the keeper of the Department of Conservation at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

With respect to access conditions, *Summary* points out that as New Zealand has no statutory rule covering a specified period after which records must be made public,

The Chief Archivist operates under somewhat difficult circumstances under the general direction of the Department of Internal Affairs.

He treats on its merits, each request for access.

The analytical "Table Showing Classes of Readers and Topics Studied" indicates that, apart from genealogical and departmental enquiries and minor projects, the bulk of the material was for university staff, masters' theses and research for publication, and the booklet goes on to say:

The tendency towards an increasing number of readers engaged in research at the higher levels, is still apparent.

This trend is also apparent to archivists in Australia.

The New Zealand Archives produces a National Archives Information Circular which could be adopted by Australian Archives authorities also. Research into subject file classification has resulted in one circular and another on subject indexing is planned. In addition, a paper is being prepared on "the whole problem of records management, its goals, its problems and some suggested solutions".

Probably the most useful section of *A Summary of Work* is the appendix which briefly describes the holdings of New Zealand's National Archives to March 1968. The list is arranged alphabetically by the name of the originating department and gives its classification symbol. As this publication is distributed to public libraries in New Zealand, and to scholars, institutions and departments in New Zealand and overseas, it is of great benefit.
