

NEWS NOTES

Papua and New Guinea Archives.

The Commonwealth Archives are returning to Port Moresby the Pre-War Papuan records which they have held since about 1944. The Mitchell Library have agreed to return the records of the Government Anthropologist of Papua which were bought about 1953.

Queensland State Archives.

Miss S. M. Geddes, B.A., has joined the staff of the Queensland State Archives. The Archivist has recently been on leave in Tasmania but before that visit he attended meetings of the Standing Committee and the Board of Examiners of the Library Association of Australia in Sydney.

South Australian Archives.

Mr G. L. Fischer has left South Australia to become Archivist in the University of Sydney.

Mrs A. M. Enderby, formerly of the Archives Office of New South Wales, has been appointed to the staff.

Mr J. Love is acting Archivist.

Victorian State Archives.

Mr Denis Street has resigned from the Archives Section and transferred to the Education Department of New South Wales.

His replacement is Mr E. W. Russell, B.A. — Honours Degree in History.

Australian National University Archives.

Plans are now all but complete for the new section of the Coombs Building which will include new accommodation for Archives. The new area continues from the present repository (part of which will be retained) but with a height difference of half a floor. To overcome this it is hoped to install a large book-lift and small circular staircase.

The new repository will provide approximately 4800 square feet for shelving, a little over two-thirds of which will be under compactus and the remainder under fixed shelving. The office area is to be separate, adjoining the repository. It will include two small reading rooms, a reading bay and a small room to house and read microfilm. It will also include a repair bench with sink, and provision for a fumigation room adjoining the reception and sorting area, which opens to suitable access for trucks. Readers and staff have a separate entrance from the new Great Courtyard of the Coombs building.

The building will not be air-conditioned, but the repository will be fitted with Xpelair fans (as is the present repository). These, combined with

its ground-floor position, have been found to keep the repository successfully within the desirable temperature and humidity limits, with sufficient air-flow to prevent the growth of fungus. It does not, however, combat the problem of dust.

Work on our two largest present projects, the Dalgety and New Zealand Loan deposits, and microfilming of Australian Workers' Union records, continues. It is hoped to continue with the filming of Queensland A.W.U. records as soon as possible this year. A number of small but valuable deposits has been received over the past months. A notable recent deposit was eight tea-chests of records from Davies and Baird Ltd. (founded 1883), steel founders, including all sale invoices from 1935.

Sydney University Archives.

Work has started on a small new repository for the Archives of the University of Sydney. The Archives has been allotted a small part of the ninth floor of the book-stack tower in the Fisher Library. There will be office accommodation, a reading area, sorting area and something over two thousand feet of steel shelving. Accommodation for the University Archives, at present, is somewhat *ad hoc* and uncomfortable, and inconveniently separated from the Archivist's office by two floors. There is much work to be done, cleaning, arranging and listing existing material but little real progress is anticipated until the Archives is in the new repository where there is room, light and air.

New England University Archives.

Proposed extensions. The University of New England Library, of which the Archives Division is part, is to be extended by the addition of a new wing in 1970.

One result of this will be that room will be made available for the extending of the Archives Division into an adjacent area, in the present building, currently occupied by periodicals.

Occupation of the additional area will give only an additional 21% floor-space, but use of compactus shelving in the new area will add 60% to the existing shelf-footage, thus relieving for a few years the pressure on accommodation.

Study leave. The University Archivist, Mr A. Wilkes, will proceed overseas on sabbatical leave at the end of August 1969, and will spend the greater part of the year in North America.

While there, he will attend the Annual Conference of the Society of American Archivists (at Madison, Wisconsin in October, 1969), will visit various archival institutions, and will study for a Masters Degree in history at the University of North Carolina. Before returning to Australia, Mr Wilkes will spend some time in the United Kingdom.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives.

The Bank's records repository is fitted with 5900 feet of Compactus shelving. In addition to housing the permanent archives of the Bank, it

services a continuous flow of inactive records under a records management programme. On moving into occupation four years ago, an accumulation of 3217 feet of records were placed on the shelves. At the rate of growth then evident, the Archivist was somewhat concerned that all accommodation in the new repository might be taken up in five or six years. In fact, after four years, the total shelving occupied has actually decreased to 3147 feet.

This result was achieved by reviewing in detail some series previously appraised as "permanent". Closer examination revealed runs of "case" files and other voluminous material, of which an effective sampling sufficed to cover future documentary requirements. Similarly, a review of some classes of intermediate records has led to the shortening of their retention periods, enabling the destruction of some hundreds of feet of unwanted paper. To date the Archivist has had no second thoughts.

It is not suggested that accommodation should dictate retention policy: the staff is satisfied, however, that a careful but realistic approach to records by units, instead of by series or batches, affords scope for very extensive weeding.

Commonwealth Archives Office.

Extensions are in hand for the Commonwealth Archives Office, Brisbane repository, and additions will also be made to the Victorian repository in 1969/70.

The death occurred on 10 February of Keith Mackenzie who was Officer-in-Charge of the South Australian Branch of the Office. He will be greatly missed.

The Commonwealth Archives Office is undergoing a progressive organization review. Under the new structure for Canberra the following appointments have so far been made —

Chief Archivist — K. Penny

Senior Archivist (Registration & Disposal) — P. J. Scott

Senior Archivist (Reference & Access) — Miss T. Exley