

NEWS NOTES

The Archives Office of New South Wales

Mr R.F. Doust, the Senior Archivist, has been appointed Deputy Principal Librarian of the Library of New South Wales. An advertisement calling for applications for the position of Senior Archivist has appeared in the press. Congratulations are offered to Mr Doust of his higher appointment.

The Queensland State Archives

There is no news yet of the appointment of an Archivist to take charge of the Queensland State Archives.

An important accession received recently by the State Archives was material from the Executive Council of Queensland. This includes Minutes of the Executive Council, and Indexes thereto, for the period 1859 to 1932. The linear measurement of this important transfer is 187 feet, and the physical condition of the volumes left much to be desired. The volumes have since been fumigated (see article in this issue about the Ethylene Oxide/Carbon Dioxide vacuum fumigation plant in the Queensland State Archives) and this process, it is expected, will prevent further deterioration from the prime cause of the trouble, book worm.

Western Australian Archives

Miss M. Medcalf, of the J.S. Battye Library of West Australian History and State Archives, is at present absent from Australia on a visit to Great Britain, and intends to visit the Library of Congress, the National Archives in Washington and the Saskatchewan Provincial Archives in Canada before she returns to this country. Miss Medcalf's absence is principally on recreational leave, but she intends to combine some business with her pleasure by visiting repair sections of archives institutions to examine the Postlip Lamination process at work (principally at the India Office Library, London, at the Greater London Council Archives, and at the Public Record Office.)

South Australian Archives

An anonymous donor has given the South Australian Archives \$50,000 to facilitate the preservation of public records. Under terms agreed on by the Libraries Board of South Australia and the donor, the money will be used to employ additional temporary staff to enable an

assessment to be made of old records still in the possession of Government departments and the transfer to the Archives of those no longer required by Departments but suitable for permanent preservation. Any remaining money may be used for related purposes, including arrangement and description and the purchase of equipment.

Archives Office of Tasmania

Planning of Phase II of the State Library building and the Archives Office portion thereof is now in its final stages. Indeed it has reached the point where any but minor changes are no longer possible. Equipment, shelving, furniture and fittings and space allocations have now been more or less finalised.

The major preoccupation of the office is the removal of the records to the new building involving a reorganisation of the collection, the creation of finding aids and ancillary tasks plus, of course, the organisation of the move itself. The last item has not yet passed the theoretical stage.

Approximately 45% of the collection is in the existing State Library building and 55% in the vaults beneath the Public Offices on the other side of the city. Since the division is largely between the more modern records subject to borrowing by Departments (in the vaults) and the older records in more constant use by scholars (in the existing building), the move promises to be divisible into two operations with a minimum disruption of user services as a result.

Timing of the move is still uncertain but is expected to take place in mid-1971.

Commonwealth Archives Office

Mr. K.W. Pearson, formerly Assistant Secretary in the Parliamentary and Government Division of Prime Minister's Department, took up his appointment as first Director of the Commonwealth Archives Office on 30 August 1970.

Buildings

Tenders have just been let for the construction of the first of two stages of a new Repository building for the N.S.W. Branch, on a six-acre site at Villawood, fourteen miles from the centre of the city and close to the Hume Highway. This building will provide approximately 57,000

square feet of space for repository, offices and lending area by August 1971, and an additional 50,000 square feet by May 1972. The second stage, which will almost double the storage space available in stage 1, is planned for completion by 1975.

The General Office of the N.S.W. Branch has moved from the Commonwealth Centre, Chifley Square, to Wembley Chambers, Hunter Street, Sydney.

In Victoria, a new building representing an early stage of the master plan for re-development of the site of the present Repository at Brighton, is now in the final stages of planning. This building will provide an additional 63,000 shelf feet of storage space. To allow for expansion and movement of holdings in the meantime, a building to accommodate some 36,000 shelf feet is being leased at Port Melbourne.

Australian National University Archives

The Archives Officer has recently returned to Canberra from a visit to Brisbane and to Tamworth (N.S.W.) on field work in connection with the collection of business and trades union archives. A large and valuable accession of business records from Dalgety Australia Limited, consisting of the more valuable of the business papers of the Queensland Branch of one of the original constituent companies (Dalgety and Company Ltd.), 1894 – 1961, was packed for removal to Canberra, and has since been received. The Queensland Branch records of the other major constituent company (New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company Ltd.) had already been received by the A.N.U. Archives.

Important negotiations were also conducted with officials of trade unions in Brisbane, and it is expected that significant accessions of records of employee organisations will be received by the A.N.U. Archives as a result. Some of the trades union records are very early indeed for this type of material in Australia, for they date back to 1867.

Negotiations were also opened up with an important Brisbane manufacturing firm.

The Archives Officer's call at Tamworth was occasioned by the need to collect further records of the Australian Agricultural Company – in this case, records dating from the period 1917 – 1940, earlier records in the same series having been collected on a visit in June. The story of the successful negotiations conducted by succeeding A.N.U. Archives Officers for the deposit of the Company's records is told in an article by Mr J.F. Atchison in this issue.

The History Department of the Institute of Advanced Studies, Aus-

tralian National University, has decided to offer a post-doctoral Research Fellowship to a scholar who will write the history of the Australian Workers' Union. Records of the Union have been copied on microfilm by the A.N.U. Archives, which is the only archival or library institution which is allowed to have copies. The co-operation of the Union in granting access to the records has been sought and obtained, and it is expected that the Scholar will begin work early in 1971. The name of the scholar has not yet been announced, though it is understood that a choice has been made.

Mrs. G.A. Marsden, Deputy Archives Officer, has resigned for personal reasons, though she continues to work for the A.N.U. Archives on a part-time basis. Applications have been called to fill the vacancy.

Reserve Bank of Australia

In recent months, some organisational changes have been taking place within the Reserve Bank, the repercussions of which will affect the work of the Bank's archivists for many years to come.

Current records in the Bank are maintained by each of several autonomous departments. A standard filing system is gradually being introduced and has been adopted by about half of the administrative records centres. From time to time a new department may emerge, an old one become defunct, or a function be transferred from one department to another. On such occasions, action has been taken to ensure that it will be possible to satisfy archival provenance when the affected records are eventually accessioned to the Bank's central archives repository.

The latest development, however, is a restructuring of the Head Office administration of the Bank, of major significance and impact. Instead of seven departments, we are to have eleven. In some cases, the re-structuring involves the division of former departments by sections corresponding with records groups and sub-groups. However, there are also many examples of division by functions and even by parts of functions formally documented in single files. The new framework has thrown together the current records of former groups, which had been maintained under different filing systems, thereby posing a puzzle in records management that requires immediate action. Problems arise too in the administration of "intermediate" records groups held in the central repository where the "owning" department no longer exists, or has divided, each part combining with parts of another former department to constitute a new department.

In the May 1968 issue of Archives and Manuscripts we defended

orthodox principles of archives administration in situations of this description and it would seem that we are now under an obligation to begin practising our preaching. When we have unravelled the anomalies of the situation and considered its implications for future action, we shall provide an account in more detail and, hopefully, of solutions to them.

Commonwealth Banking Corporation

A booklet outlining the history and functions of the Commonwealth Banking Corporation and its three member banks (the Commonwealth Trading Bank of Australia; Commonwealth Savings Bank of Australia; and Commonwealth Development Bank of Australia), compiled by the Corporation's archivist, has recently been published. The publication also includes a survey of the historical development and present structure of the Australian banking system.

Copies of the booklet may be obtained, free of charge, from the Archives Section, Secretary's Department, Commonwealth Banking Corporation, Box 2719 G.P.O., Sydney 2001.