

## NEWSLETTER NO 1

### 1. Biennial General Meeting

At the Biennial General Meeting, held in Sydney on 24th August 1971, the following officers and Committee members were elected to serve the Archives Section of the L.A.A. in 1972:

President:	Miss M. Medcalf
Hon. Secretary/Treasurer:	Mr J. Honniball
Editor of the Journal:	Mr R.C. Sharman
Committee:	Mrs N. Cooper, Mr G.L. Fischer, Mr K.Green, Mr J.H. Love, Miss S. Mourot, Mr J.Thompson Miss D. Wheeler, Mr P.D. Wilson

Mr G.L. Fischer reported to the meeting on the need for the *Directory of Archival Institutions* to be updated. It was agreed that a new edition of the *Directory* should be prepared, under Mr Fischer's editorship, and that advice from such societies as the Royal Australian Historical Society should be sought on the question of whether or not individual historical societies in provincial centres (with perhaps a small historical museum) should be included. Mr Fischer agreed that an appeal should be published seeking advice from members as to the names of organisations whose libraries, archives or museums might be included in the *Directory*.

### 2. Association's Archives

Mr Gerald Fischer is investigating the question of formulating a retention, storage and disposal policy for the archives of the Library Association of Australia.

### 3. Appointment of Non-librarians

The Agenda Papers for the November, 1971, meeting of Standing Committee included a letter from the Victorian Branch concerning action the Association might take in the event of positions being advertised "which would exclude or tend to lessen the need for professional qualifications", and which concerned generally the policy the Association might adopt if in future non-librarians and non-archivists were appointed to professional positions in librarianship and archives respectively.

Standing Committee discussed this matter, and the following is an extract from the minutes:

SC 158/71. Resolved (1) that the proposals of the Victorian Branch as set out in the agenda papers be adopted in principle,

(2) that the Acting General Secretary, Vice-President and President draft a statement of policy for consideration and comment by Standing Committee in the first instance and thereafter by the Branches.

As a result of resolution SC 158/71, the Association's President has drafted a statement which was submitted to the Standing Committee in March 1972. With alterations suggested by persons present at that meeting, the statement is being submitted to the Branches of the Association. One of the alterations suggested for the statement related to the need for recognition of qualifications other than in librarianship for certain positions. It is also emphasized, however, that such positions require qualifications in librarianship as well, and that such qualifications might well be obtained through postgraduate and advanced study.

#### 4. Honorary Awards

The General Council at its meeting in August 1971 resolved that (i) an award to be known as the H.C.L. Anderson Award be established and may be conferred on any person who is a professional member of the Association or who holds an overseas qualification by a Library Association or Archives Association in the country concerned, and who has rendered outstanding service to librarianship or to the library profession in Australia, or to the Library Association of Australia, or to the theory or practice of librarianship; (ii) an award to be known as the Redmond Barry Award be established and may be conferred on any person who is not eligible to be a professional member of the Association who, in the opinion of the General Council, has rendered outstanding service to the promotion of a library or libraries, to the Association, to the theory or practice of librarianship, or to an associated field such as bibliography.

The award shall take the form of an appropriate certificate.

#### 5. Papua-New Guinea Records

The Papua-New Guinea Branch of the L.A.A. has written to the L.A.A. drawing attention to the following press release and has recommended to Standing Committee that the Association express its concern to the Minister for External Territories.

*Commonwealth Archives Officers to Examine Records of Papua New  
Guinea Administration — 1 February 1972*

The Department of External Territories has arranged for officers of the Commonwealth Archives Office to examine records of the Papua New Guinea Administration with a view to completing Australia's record of its administration in Papua New Guinea.

The Minister for External Territories, Mr Barnes said the officers began work in Port Moresby today.

Mr Barnes said that the examination, copying and transfer of some records to Australia was one of the preparatory steps being taken to

avoid administrative disruption should the people of Papua New Guinea indicate that they want self-government during the life of the next House of Assembly.

Some records, which were essentially Australian, would be removed to Commonwealth custody. Copies would be made of certain documents which would be of historical or other value to Australia.

The great majority of the records would remain in Papua New Guinea as an essential part of the heritage of the new nation.

Mr Barnes said the Commonwealth Government would meet all the expense.

Since this press release was issued, Mr Barnes retired as Minister for External Territories, and Mr Andrew Peacock assumed responsibility for this office. The new Minister discussed the matter with Professor K.S. Inglis, who will soon be Vice Chancellor of the University of Papua and New Guinea, and who is at present a Visiting Scholar at the Australian National University. It is understood that Professor Inglis informed the Minister that considerable concern was felt in the History Department, and by other bodies, in Papua/New Guinea. The Minister said that he wanted to ensure that no damage resulted to the integrity of the New Guinea archives.

An Assistant Secretary from the Department of External Territories visited Port Moresby, and was interviewed by the President of the Papua New Guinea Branch of the L.A.A. The Assistant Secretary assured her that the only records to be removed were confidential documents originating in Australia relating to Australian defence and international relations, circulated to the Papua/New Guinea administration for information purposes.

On 3 March 1972 Mr Peacock was in Papua, and three members of the P.N.G. Branch of the L.A.A. spoke to him on this matter, indicating their concern that valuable records were being removed from the Papua/New Guinea Administration as a preliminary to the taking over of responsibility for the government by the indigenous people. The Minister gave a press conference two days later, and in this he confessed that in certain instances they (the Australian officials) may have been going too far.

In general the officers of the Papua/New Guinea Branch have expressed themselves as being satisfied that the Minister himself is convinced of the need to retain in Papua/New Guinea the essential records of the Administration, but some concern is felt as to whether or not the Australian officials entrusted with the task are fully conversant with the Minister's views, or are prepared to implement those views in strict accordance with the guidelines laid down in the Minister's press statement, which were :

Only a few documents sent for information only to senior Administration officials would be removed. They related to such matters as Australia's

defence and Australian relations with independent foreign countries. In cases of doubt the documents would remain in Papua New Guinea and copies would be taken to Australia.

The Papua/New Guinea Branch has suggested further that the Archivist of Papua/New Guinea should have been consulted before any records were removed, and that he should sit in on any reviewing committee and should have the final say in determining whether records are removed or not.

The Association has made a number of submissions to the Minister for External Territories on this matter, and has conveyed the views of the Papua/New Guinea Branch to the Minister.

#### 6. Archives Course at the University of New South Wales

Professor Wilma Radford, Head, School of Librarianship, University of New South Wales, has announced that she is putting forward proposals for a post-graduate course in archives administration. If approval is received and if funds are available, the course will come into operation at the University of New South Wales in 1973. It is likely to occupy one year of full-time study or two years of part-time study.

#### 7. Queensland State Archives position.

The State Library of Queensland has appointed Mr P.D. Wilson as Archivist. Mr Wilson is a graduate (first class honours in History) of the University of Queensland, and a Diplomat of the Canberra College of Advanced Education. He has been appointed Archivist in succession to Mr R.C. Sharman, and the position was vacant for fully two years before Mr Wilson's appointment was announced.

#### 8. University of Ottawa

Dr Edwin Welch, formerly Archivist of Churchill College, Cambridge, has taken up a position on the lecturing staff of the Library School of the University of Ottawa, where he is in charge of the course for archivists. Dr Welch writes that he believes that the University is going to agree to train archivists from overseas countries, and has asked that publicity be given to the course. Those interested may write to :-

Dr E. Welch,  
Library School,  
University of Ottawa,  
Ottawa K1N 6N5  
Canada.

## 9. Death of Mr G.H. Pitt

Mr John Love has written a note about the late G.H. Pitt, and this appears elsewhere in this issue. A tribute was paid to the memory of Mr Pitt by the *Adelaide Advertiser* which devoted its first leader on 8 April 1972 to the achievements, qualities and personality of South Australia's first Archivist. (The fact that he had also been a Principal Librarian of the Public Library of South Australia was not mentioned). After an opening which quoted Patrick O'Donovan to the effect that historians should be humble, the leader-writer continued:

Humility is not so important in an archivist, on whom the historian depends for his raw materials, though Mr Geroge Pitt, who died in Adelaide this week, had a becoming share of it. What the archivist – the collector and storer – needs above all else is a mind as curious as it is orderly.

The article is a fine tribute to the orderliness of mind, the enthusiasm, the inventiveness, and the diligence of George Henry Pitt, and it reflects great credit on the *Advertiser*.