

some decisions which can only be made by the Governor-in-Council. Example: The Governor-in-Council may determine (a) that any office or body is not a public office within the meaning of this Act. (Part of sub-section 2 (2)). Others can be made by the Minister, either acting alone or in consultation with a fellow minister or on the advice of the Advisory Council. Others may be made by the Advisory Council, though it does not appear to have any unbridled executive authority. Others again may be made by the Keeper. It is not clear from the Act whether the Advisory Council is there to advise the Minister, the Keeper, or whom. There is certainly no evidence to suggest that the Keeper has to approach the Minister through the permanent head of the Chief Secretary's Department, nor that he has to keep the Advisory Council informed of what he is doing.

These are possibly only minor criticisms, though they may give rise to friction in the future. The important point is that archives legislation has at last been passed by the Victorian Parliament, and that, in common with the Tasmanian legislation of 1965 and the N.S.W. Act of 1960, it comes to grips with some of the major pre-occupations of the profession archivist. In my view, the Victorian Act does most things better than either of its above-named predecessors.

1. P. R. Eldershaw — "The Tasmanian Archives Act, 1965", in *Archives and Manuscripts* 3 (4), May, 1967, p.10.
2. *The Age*, 21 Feb., 1973, p.8.
3. G. D. Richardson — "A note on the practice of the Archives Authority of New South Wales". *Archives and Manuscripts* 3 (4) May, 1967, p.12.

MISCELLANY

It is proposed to publish regularly under this heading notes on products, publications, people, techniques and events likely to be of interest to archivists which would not otherwise be dealt with in the pages of *Archives and Manuscripts* or which deserve mention because of their topicality pending more detailed treatment in an article.

Items for this section may be forwarded to Michael Saclier, Research School of Social Sciences, A.N.U., P.O. Box 4, Canberra, A.C.T. 2600. All material used will be acknowledged.

Formation of Conservation Group

A "Committee for the Conservation of Cultural Property" has been formed in Canberra to promote "the science and art of the conservation of cultural property" by the encouragement of co-operation, information exchange, "the establishment of a national body to create and promote co-operation and information exchange on a national basis" and by the creation of public awareness of the need for greater Government participation in the conservation of cultural property. A news and information bulletin is to be published of which the first issue has now appeared. Membership is open to all persons interested in furthering the aims of the committee, the subscription having been set at five dollars per year. It is hoped the formation of a national body may be put in train at the national seminar on the conservation of cultural material to be held in Perth (6-11 August) which is being sponsored by the Visual Art Board of the Australian Council for the Arts. Although the seminar is primarily concerned with paintings and sculpture the discussion is certain to move into the general field of conservation including the problems which concern the archivist.

A New Lamination Material available in Australia

An English company, Ademco Ltd., has recently established an agency in Sydney for its products. An innovation is its Lamatec Laminating tissue, a "paper" tissue coated (on one side) with a thermoplastic adhesive. Summaries of tests carried out by the India Office Records indicate that the material is satisfactory in most respects and that the process is reversible. A note of warning is sounded, however, by a rider that it was considered that whilst the tissue is readily removed, the adhesive, which is not water soluble, is left behind on the document. Two advantages of the material are that, because the operating temperature is relatively low (80°C) as compared with other lamination techniques, the process is somewhat kinder to the document being laminated and also, there are some indications that the adhesive does not permeate the document but remains on or close to the surface where it may more readily be removed by other solvents. A further advantage of the low operating temperature is that the range of dry mounting presses manufactured by the company which are somewhat more economically priced than (say) the Barrow apparatus, can be used.

Both presses and tissue are supplied in Australia by Amarisco International Trading Company, Floor 2, 405-411 Sussex Street, Sydney, from whom details may be obtained. Prices are, for the tissue \$15 per 100 ft. roll (30 inches wide) and, for the presses \$405 (11 in. by 13 in. platen), \$717 (17 in. by 21 in.) and \$1,012 (21 in. by 25 in.).

Vapour-Phase Deacidification.

Readers may have noted in the April, 1973 issue of the *Journal of the Society of Archivists* (p.597) a note by W. H. Langwell on a new application of this much talked about technique. I have recently heard that considerable doubts (if nothing stronger) are now being expressed as to the future of CHC because of its toxicity. This is apparently the case not only in America where the Food and Drug Administration has, in recent years, developed a reputation for being if anything over-cautious, but also in Great Britain. This may, of course, be nothing new to better informed readers, but for the sake of those who, like myself, may have depended for their information on the archival journals from the U.S. and U.K. I shall be following the matter up and attempting to document the facts of the case.

Towards a Deacidifying Machine?

While on the subject of deacidification and for the edification of those who, like the writer, find little enough time to read four archives journals let alone specialist publications, it may be worth mentioning that experimental work is being done in America on a deacidification process utilising a basic material in solution with Freon or another of the related gases used in refrigeration. The advantage in theory is that large quantities of material can be treated at one time without the costly page-by-page treatment which all orthodox techniques require. The engineering problem to be solved is the recovery of the very expensive Freon (it costs about a dollar a pound in Australia) from the waste products after the treatment is completed. Depending upon a vacuum chamber technique the process is going to involve a high capital expenditure if and when perfected. But the high levels of throughput which seem possible would suggest that co-operative arrangements between institutions would be possible. As more information becomes available it will appear on these pages.