

NEWS NOTES

Australian Society of Archivists

The Third Biennial General Meeting of the Australian Society of Archivists was held at Trinity College, University of Melbourne, on Friday, 22 May 1981. Reports on work accomplished during 1979/81 were presented to the Biennial General Meeting by the Society's Executive Officers and the following Council Committees: Constitutional Review, National Consultative Machinery, Education, Finance, Conservation, Promotions and Information, Industrial, Public Issues, Accreditation, Bicentennial History Project and Membership. A.S.A. *Rules* revisions effected at the B.G.M. will be detailed in the *Minutes* of the Meeting which will be circulated to all members shortly. The Biennial General Meeting declared the following office-bearers elected for 1981/83: Lindsay Cleland (President), Elizabeth Nathan (Vice-President), Alan Ives (Secretary), Clive Smith (Treasurer), John Thompson (Editor), Margaret Jennings (Past President, ex-officio), Susan Healy, Paul Brunton, Ken Smith, Don Brech, Mervin Reed (Council).

The Third Conference of the Australian Society of Archivists was held subsequently to the Biennial General Meeting, from 23 to 25 May 1981. Approximately 150 people attended the Conference. Papers delivered at Conference sessions dealt either with the archival material relating to specific periods of Australian history (to 1838; 1839 to 1900; 1901 to 1945; 1946 to today) or with archival "dilemmas" in the areas of the archivist's responsibilities, archival priorities, disposal policy and practice, and the meaning and implications of "keeping up to date". The Conference papers will be published shortly and will be available from the Society.

Concurrently with the Conference, an exhibition entitled "Images of Yesterday: A Collection of Archives and Artifacts of Australia" was mounted at the Myer Mural Hall from 18 to 30 May 1981. Over 800 items, from twenty archival institutions or collections in Victoria, were displayed. A detailed and well-illustrated catalogue was produced to accompany the exhibition.

Australian Archives

Correspondent: Professor R. G. Neale

Recent accessions of personal papers include papers of the Most Reverend Felix Arnott, former Anglican Archbishop of Brisbane,

relating to his work as a member of the Royal Commission on Human Relationships (accessioned by our Queensland branch) and papers of Hon. Sir Howard Beale and Senator Kerry Sibraa (accessioned by our New South Wales branch). Other accessions in New South Wales were a major transfer of records from the Australian Broadcasting Commission, comprising vinyl 33 1/3 discs from the BBC Transcription Service and commercial shellac recordings; and a 1906 volume of transcripts of a hearing before the Industrial Registry, transferred by the President of the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, Sir John Moore.

Recent accessions in the A.C.T include a collection of documents relating to the history of Australian foreign policy, brought together by Dr J. S. Cumpston as Historian in the then Department of External Affairs between 1960 and 1969, and some Defence records, 1901-1971, maintained by Sir Frederick Shedden, former Secretary of the Department of Defence. Much of the latter material has already been released (control number MP1217), and relates to Australian and British defence matters, Prime Minister's visits abroad in 1941 and 1945, Commonwealth conferences, international relations including relations with China.

Recent releases of material in the A.C.T. include three volumes of full transcripts of evidence of the Darwin Air Raid Inquiry conducted by Mr Justice Lowe in 1942 (CRS A816) (these were previously partly closed); and four volumes of despatches from the Australian Legation in Chungking, 1941-1945 (CRS A4231), which contain a wealth of very informed and interesting background comment on war-time China.

A *copying project* recently completed in the A.C.T. entailed making a full set of duplicate negatives and positive contact prints of Lantern slides of Papua New Guinea, Norfolk Island and Java, 1908-1925 (CRS A24). The series comprises 352 glass slides, some of which date from 1884.

Accommodation. The A.C.T. Branch is vacating its accommodation in Parkes and part of its accommodation in Kingston and moving to new accommodation at Mitchell. The building at Parkes, which the Australian Archives and its predecessors, the Commonwealth Archives Office and the Archives Division of the Commonwealth National Library, have occupied since the 1950's, is being demolished to allow completion of the Australian National Gallery. The Mitchell building will house the A.C.T. Branch until the national headquarters building is completed in a few years time, and will then become the north Canberra repository.

The new address of the Act Branch is:

Cnr. Flemington Road and Sandford Street,
Mitchell, A.C.T. 2911. (Bus route 384)

The phone number is 421411, or 731217. The postal address remains P.O. Box 34, Dickson, A.C.T. 2602.

The N.S.W. Regional Office has moved to a new City location at Level 5, National Mutual Centre, 44 Market Street, Sydney (telephone: 02-29-6352).

The new office provides greatly improved and expanded research facilities: these include records storage (limited to the most often used archives), an exhibition area, and provision for the replay of audio-visual archives.

Search Room hours will remain unaltered at 9.00 a.m.-4.30 p.m., Mondays to Fridays.

The new postal address is: Senior Archivist, Australian Archives, P.O. Box C328, Clarence Street, Sydney, N.S.W., 2000.

Australian Joint Copying Project

Correspondent: Pam Ray

The Project, jointly administered by the National Library of Australia and the Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, completed a successful year in 1980. Thirty-six microfilm reels were produced in the PRO series, namely selections from Board of Trade 107, Admiralty 51, Admiralty 98, Admiralty 104, Colonial Office 428 and Colonial Office 485. 206 reels were added to the M series of copying (copying outside the Public Record Office, London). The major collection filmed was that of the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (135 reels), a valuable record of missionary enterprise in Australia, New Zealand, the Pacific, South-East Asia, China and Japan 1780-1936, documenting social, economic and political conditions as well as mission affairs. Smaller collections copied include the De La Rue Company records (18 reels), being correspondence relating to the printing and supply of postage stamps, stamp paper, passports, etc. to colonial governments throughout the British Empire; the final reels of the collection of the New Zealand and Australian Land Co. (16 reels); papers of officials such as Walter Long, Andrew Bonar Law, David Lloyd George, Sir Eldon Manisty, and Lord Beaverbrook on 20th century politics (14 reels); House of Lords Record Office papers 1790-1912 (3 reels); private journals, letters and diaries, the writers being from varied social classes and occupations, ranging from the surgeon aboard the convict ship *Clyde* 1838 to Mr Beaumont Featherston, gentleman of means on a tour of Australasia and the Pacific 1891-94.

Part 8 of the *Australian Joint Copying Project Handbook* has recently been published. It describes the M (Miscellaneous) series in detail and is available from the Sales and Subscription Unit of the National Library, price \$7.95 including postage.

Major libraries will shortly receive a circular describing in more detail

the new accessions mentioned above. Other institutions or individuals may request a copy of the list by writing to the Principal Librarian, Australian Reference, National Library of Australia, Canberra, A.C.T. 2600. The list can be regarded as a first supplement to the *AJCP Handbook* Part 8.

Late Press: Abolition of the two A.J.C.P. positions in London was recommended as part of the Federal Government's "Razor Gang" cuts. If implemented, the recommendation could have meant the cessation of the Project but it has now been decided not to effect it. — Editor.

Australian National University Archives of Business & Labour

Correspondent: Michael Saclier

By the time this appears in print our move into our new quarters will have been completed. Despite the seemingly endless delays which have dogged this project we are convinced that staff, clients and records will benefit from the move. With a shelving capacity two and a half times that of our current holdings, the Archives of Business and Labour probably can now boast of a greater proportion of expansion room than any other archives in the country. We will also have more room for our users and more workspace for the staff. Not to mention proximity to the University Staff Centre and one of the best views in Canberra from the roof. Physically, our new address is Acton Underhill, Balmain Crescent, Acton, although our postal address remains unaltered (P.O. Box 4, Canberra A.C.T. 2600. Telephone 492219 or 494066).

On the accessions front, four items deserve mention. Last spring saw the arrival of the first deposit of A.C.T.U. records which are now partially processed. The good offices of Professor Jim Hagan of the University of Wollongong are acknowledged with gratitude in this connection. November was made memorable by the eventual arrival of the London records of Dalgety Ltd which we have been awaiting for some four years. Alas they are not as complete as they should have been. Finally, the summer now ended was made gladsome by the deposit of the early records of Tooth and Co. — the earliest dating back to the early 1840s — and by some less aged but equally valuable early records of the Sheet Metal Workers' Industrial Union and of the Boilermakers and Blacksmiths Society deposited by the Amalgamated Metalworkers' and Shipwrights' Union.

Archives Office of New South Wales

Correspondent: Michael Allen

1980 saw another significant increase in public use of our services. The number of readers increased by 43% resulting in a 26% rise in issues. Inquiries answered by letter and telephone increased by 27% over the

1979 figure. While these increases can be partly attributed to the better facilities provided in the new State Archives building, the major cause is the increasing popularity of genealogical research.

Processing of State Archives however, was down almost 65% due to staff shortages caused partly by the need to maintain reference services at a high level.

Significant accessions during 1980 included: Premiers Department: Records of the Royal Commission into Drug Trafficking, 1977-80; Supreme Court-Protective Division: Documents relating to the committal of John Macarthur and James Birnie for Lunacy, 1828-33, 1844; Water Resources Commission: Papers re the Employment of Henry Lawson, 1915-16; and Public Works-State Dockyard, Newcastle: Plans of Vessels built or proposed to be built, 1935-70.

The State Archives and Government Records Repository, located at Kingswood, closed to further accessions of semi-active records in March 1980 as a consequence of a space shortage. Plans have been approved for Stage II Phase II of the repository, which will cost \$2.5m. This extension, due for completion in mid 1982, will give the repository a total capacity in excess of 120,000 linear metres. This new two storey building will be for the storage of semi-active records and will not be air-conditioned. Utilizing compactus storage it achieves a ratio of floor space to shelf space of 1:4.2.

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Correspondent: Anne Robertson

One of the more interesting manuscript acquisitions of the Mitchell Library in 1980 was a substantial collection of the papers of Henry Kendall (1839-1882). The collection contains original letters by Kendall and his wife, Charlotte, valuable for the insight they give into his troubled life and career, and over two hundred letters to Kendall by Charles Harpur, Henry Parkes, Edmund Barton, W. B. Dalley, Henry Halloran, J. Henniker Heaton and George Gordon McCrae, among others. Manuscripts of Kendall's poetry and prose are included, and other material such as the logbook kept during his last year as he struggled, despite failing health, with his work as an inspector of forests. The Mitchell Library already held the major collection of Kendall's papers in existence, and this latest acquisition gives further strength to the Library's holdings in the field of nineteenth century Australian literature.

During the year, the Library also received an addition to its holdings of material about the New Guinea Exploration Expedition of 1885. Sponsored by the Royal Geographical Society of Australasia, this was the first expedition to explore the Strickland River. The new collection consists of the journals of Sidney A. Bernays, surgeon, geologist and

botanist; of Wilhelm Bauerlin, botanist, and Walter Froggatt, zoologist, with accompanying photographs.

A large collection of the records of the Great Synagogue, Sydney, covering the period 1832 to 1970 was placed on deposit in the Library during 1980. The records, which are only to be issued with the written authority of the Synagogue, include correspondence dating from 1846, financial records from 1832, and minute books covering the period 1837 to 1940.

A Guide to the papers and books of Miles Franklin, and *A Guide to the papers of Rev. John Joseph Therry in the Mitchell Library*, were published during 1980 by the Library Council of New South Wales as Mitchell Library Manuscript Guides Nos. 3 and 4. They follow the two earlier guides, to the papers of G. E. Morrison and the Scott Family, published in 1977 and 1979. All guides are available free of charge from the State Library of New South Wales.

Queensland State Archives

Correspondent: Paul Wilson

Many requests have been received from overseas conservators for copies of *Notes on Paper Conservation* by Jim Bruce, State Archives Conservator. The *Notes* were reviewed during 1980 in two overseas publications. Jim is currently training Judy Fraser (Department of Mapping and Surveying) in map conservation.

Recent transfers have included records from the Ipswich Railway Workshop and the plans of the New South Wales — Queensland border survey in the mid-1860's. Arrangements have been made with the Department of Education for the transfer of all pre-1940 school admission registers to State Archives. Hitherto, only the registers of closed schools have been transferred.

The microfilming program has been delayed by camera failures, but electoral rolls to 1952 have now been completed.

Ruth Kerr visited North Queensland in late 1980 to arrange transfers from the Herberton Magistrates Court. The State Archivist was on loan to the Queensland Place Names Board from May to August.

Archives Branch, South Australian State Library

Correspondent: John Love

Arrangements have been made to lease from the Commonwealth some shelving in one of the Australian Archives suburban repositories. It is proposed to take over the lease of the building (subject to suitable terms being negotiated with the owners) when the Australian Archives move out later this year. This will be a temporary solution to our storage problem. However, it will considerably increase travelling as we will then have two depots outside our main premises in the State Library building.

Australian Manuscripts Collection, La Trobe Library, State Library of Victoria

Correspondent: Paul Macpherson

The Manuscripts Collection has recently occupied a further repository area in part of the Library-Museum building complex which was formerly occupied by the Public Record Office of Victoria.

Recent significant accessions include the records of the Victorian Baby Health Centres Association, 1918-1953; the records of the Archaeological Society of Victoria, 1965-75; the records of the Victorian Branch of the Book Collectors' Society of Australia, 1957-1978; the records of the Carlton Refuge, 1882-1949; and the papers of the former Chief Justice and Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria, Sir Edmund Herring. Additional deposits of records of the Congregational Union of Victoria and of the Children's Protection Society have also been received as well as further microfilms in the Australian Joint Copying Project, Pacific Manuscripts Bureau and Western Pacific Archives series.

Public Record Office, Victoria

Correspondent: Leo Marchesi

Task Force on Records Management — Implementation Committee. The Committee is charged with the implementation of the recommendations of the Task Force on Records Management. It is tackling the recommendations systematically as suitable opportunities arise. It has sponsored seminars on records management which have been well attended.

Publications. The Public Record Office has sixteen publications of documentary history in print. A brochure about the publications has been widely distributed. For the past three years, the Publications Section has been engaged in compiling, transcribing, organising and editing the manuscript documents for publication in the new series, *Historical Records of Victoria*. The first volume, *The Beginnings of Permanent Government*, will be published this year. The aim of the work is to enable the Port Phillip District of the Colony of New South Wales to speak for itself through the original documents.

A general Disposal Schedule for Patient Information was published and distributed to Victorian Public Hospitals in late November 1980.

Major and Minor Works. At the base repository at Laverton the Compactus system is being extended, a camera security system is being installed in the repository and reference areas and sound-proofing is being introduced into the reference inquiry area. Provision is being made for luncheon facilities for members of the public researching at the repository.

The Ballarat regional repository has now been opened. Appropriate

listing of documents is in progress and compactus storage has been installed. Special provision has been made for the storage of maps and plans.

ASA Exhibition. The Public Record Office participated in the exhibition associated with the Third Biennial General Meeting and Conference.

The J. S. Battye Library of West Australian History, Perth *Correspondent: Jack Honniball*

The New Year's Honours List brought the pleasing news that Her Majesty the Queen had appointed Nancy Lutton a Member of the Order of the British Empire, on the recommendation of the the government of Papua New Guinea. She was promptly showered with congratulations from near and far, and certainly her new associates in Battye duly marked the occasion in a right royal — in fact, imperial — manner. Miss Lutton worked for thirteen years in Port Moresby, latterly as librarian of the New Guinea Collection at the University of Papua New Guinea. She reorganised the entire stock of this fast-growing collection, and left the country with its treasury of history and culture readily accessible to visiting scholars and the local community. She also played a very active role in the young nation's Library Association, which honoured her as its first life member.

After acquiring a diploma in Materials Conservation at Canberra in 1979 and gaining further experience briefly in other institutions, Marshall Blundell-Wignall has begun duty as the Library's first Conservator. Since July he has been busy gathering equipment together and establishing procedures, and in October he attended the conference of the Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Materials held in Adelaide. He received valuable assistance in the long-term planning for his particular department when the Library Board secured a visit to Perth in October by Mr Murray Miller, Conservator at the Australian Archives in Canberra.

Other newcomers to Battye's professional staff in the past year are Thomas Reynolds, Kaye Hill, and Susan Davis. The losses through resignation have been Wendee Sobon and Deborah Trew. A third, Pam Mathews, has been working in Sydney, locating and describing for Battye, under contract, items relating to Western Australia held in the Mitchell Library, with a view to their eventual copying.

Extensive work on the map collection, which André Mali got under way on a voluntary basis while on sabbatical leave from his post in Library Studies at the W.A. Institute of Technology, has come to fruition with the opening to public use of the new map catalogue, which follows AACRII. David Whiteford, who has the everyday care of this collection, took part in the Australian Map Curators' Circle's conference

held in Sydney in February; prior to this he joined in a seminar arranged by the corresponding body in New Zealand and attended the combined Library Associations' conference in Christchurch.

Chris Coggin, the Deputy State Archivist, made his first forays into the countryside in pursuit of records, when he went to Geraldton in September and to Kalgoorlie in October.

Archives Division, University of Wollongong

Correspondent: John Shipp

During 1980, 32 metres of University records were accessioned. This represented an 11.38% increase in holdings. The number of items retrieved from University records rose from 147 in 1979 to 275 in 1980, an increase of 87.07%. Large deposits were received from Student Affairs, the Students' Representative Council and International House. Records were also received from the Departments of English, Metallurgy, Computing Science and from the University Librarian.

New accessions to the research collection totalled 35 shelf metres, which represented a 6.03% increase in holdings. At the end of 1980, approximately 615 shelf metres of research material were held. Significant new deposits included copies of Australian Council of Trade Union minutes, which were deposited by Associate Professor J. Hagen; the papers of Eliot V. Elliott, a former secretary of the Seamen's Union; the papers of Lewis George McKay, who unsuccessfully challenged Charlie Oliver for leadership of the N.S.W. Branch of the Australian Workers' Union between 1969 and 1973; and additions to existing deposits of WIN TV, Water and Sewerage Employees' Union, and A.L.P. Branch records.

The first major guide to the holdings of the University Archives, *Select List of Archives and Manuscripts*, was published in March 1980. Copies were distributed to archival institutions, libraries and academic institutions throughout Australia.

New Zealand

Correspondent: Judith Hornabrook

The fourth annual conference of the Archives and Records Association of New Zealand was held in Auckland 29 to 31 August 1980. A notable feature was a panel discussion on the future of archives in the Auckland region — an area singularly underprivileged archivally. The result was the appointment of a steering committee to form an Auckland Regional Archives Council and support for a proposal to provide training for volunteer work force. The volunteers are to support an archivist who it is hoped will soon be appointed to the Auckland staff of National Archives — to date no archivist is permanently stationed there. In the interim the

Archives and Records Association in conjunction with the University of Auckland Centre for Continuing Education, and with support from National Archives, planned a seminar on *Archives: Appraisal and Processing* on 4 and 5 April 1981.

Several specialised conservation workshops have been held. The recently formed group of Wellington Cultural Conservators has made a lively start and meets regularly to exchange information. Its latest venture was a Disaster Preparedness Workshop to be held 6 to 8 March 1981.

Outside Auckland and Wellington interest in archives has grown. A Canterbury Branch of the Archives and Records Association has been formed in Christchurch. In Blenheim a committee has been set up to promote a Marlborough Archives and Museum Association and plans for a building are being drawn up. Plans have also been prepared for a building including archival storage for a Northland Regional Museum at Whangarei.

Two archivists from other institutions, Kevin Bourke (ANZ Banking Group) and Brian McNamara (Marlborough Historical Society) joined newly appointed National Archives staff for an in-house training course held between February and April 1980.

Appointed during the last year to National Archives staff have been archivists Cheryl Campbell, B.A., Ruth Munro, B.A., Wayne Nelson, M.A., Kay Sanderson, M.A., and Mark Stevens, M.A., Dip Tchg. Robert Kerr-Hislop has joined the staff as conservation technician and Margaret Retter, B.A. (Hons) has returned after a year's study leave. A pending appointment of great significance will be to the new position of Director.

On the debit side we regret the loss of several valued colleagues. Maureen Mitchell has returned to teaching; David Retter has left to become first assistant, Manuscripts, at Alexander Turnbull Library. Mrs E. M. Park has left to become conservator, Bank of New Zealand Archives and is busy establishing the laboratory there — the first in the business archives sector in the country. Senior Archivist, Rosemary Collier, a long serving member of staff, also left to undertake consultant work on her own account. Michael Hodder has been promoted to the vacancy. Ken Cook, Officer-in-Charge of the Lower Hutt Records Centre, retired after long service and has been replaced by one of his assistants, Mrs J. E. Knight.

The departure of Peter Miller overseas left a vacancy at the Hocken Library. Rosemary Collier is to act as archivist from March 1981.

Work at National Archives has centred on the papers of Sir Walter Nash (1882-1968) a former labour party leader and Prime Minister. The largest collection ever left by a public figure in New Zealand, the papers were received in a disorganised mass and the work of organising them and making them accessible for research is daunting. A concerted effort

has enabled the opening of a significant quantity of the papers to the public. Already several scholars have taken advantage of this and there has been interest in a special exhibition mounted to illustrate the nature of the papers.

The installation of a fume cupboard and a deacidification unit has been a step forward for the conservation section. A major conservation project has been the treatment of heavily used New Zealand Company passenger lists (1840-50) preparatory to their microfilming for wider dissemination.

Progress is being made towards a New Zealand Film Archives with the nomination of trustees for a proposed Film Archives Trust. Its registration as a charitable trust is in hand.

Four New Zealanders attended the IXth International Congress on Archives in London in September 1980. They were Rosemary Collier, formerly Senior Archivist, National Archives; Peter Miller, archivist Hocken Library; Frank Rogers of Auckland and Judith Hornabrook from National Archives. The last named has been elected to the 14 member Executive Committee of the I.C.A. for the term 1982-1986.

Following the Congress, Rosemary Collier and Frank Rogers, joined by National Library conservation officer, Jeavons Baillie, went to Cambridge to take part in the conference on conservation of library and archives materials and the graphic arts sponsored by the Society of Archivists and the Institute of Paper Conservation.

Judith Hornabrook attended a British Council course on Management of Archives at Easthampstead Park.

Pacific Regional Archives

A training seminar for Pacific archivists is to be held in Fiji in October 1981. The latest news is that a grant from UNESCO has been approved, but full details are still awaited. It is planned to hold a conference in association with the seminar with the hope of forming a Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (PARBICA).