

Editorial

Integrity is a truly honest word, and a most appropriate term to have been adopted for an important archival principle. Recent events have alerted archivists to the need to be ever vigilant. The vetting of Lord Casey's diaries by ASIO and ASIS has prompted letters to major publications by archivists and others, and to the Foreign Minister and the Minister for Home Affairs by the ASA President. The official replies received, though illuminating, completely avoid the issue and ignore the question put. Why is it necessary for a non-archival agency to be involved when institutions such as the National Library and the Australian Archives have well established procedures for restricting access to sensitive files and for protecting privacy? This reluctance to trust the proper authorities can only mean that ASIO and ASIS believe that the professional ethics of archivists might complicate matters for those who wish to nullify the record.

In standing on principle in cases such as this, to whom does the archivist morally owe his loyalty? In this case it is clearly to the Australian people to whom the diaries have been willed. The diaries can be restricted for as long as is necessary, but they must not be falsified or partly expurgated. It can be a difficult situation for even the most senior archivist who may be responsible to a non-archivist who puts expediency above principle. But integrity works both ways. The archivist also has to stand firm against the blandishments of the powerful who would press him to allow access in secret to properly restricted documents.

Too often though, archivists are obliged to stand by helplessly and watch records being neutralised in one way or another. We are not alone in Australia; the July 1983 issue of the Society of American Archivists' *Newsletter* reports a similar case.

In this issue, we have two articles which deal with different aspects of the overall problem. Graeme Powell draws our attention to the increasing incidence of the breaking up of unique collections through sale to the highest bidder. Carole Inkster's essay is a summary of various occurrences which create archival estrays. These articles are timely reminders to archivists to continue to be attentive in their endeavours to protect archival integrity.



Colleen Pritchard has resigned as Book Reviews editor. Her diligent seeking out of books for review and matching them to appropriate

reviewers, as well as the high standard of editing, has been greatly appreciated by this editor, and many thanks are due to her.

Paul Brunton has now taken over the Book Reviews. He has also contributed a review to this issue, and those who do not know him will see him introduced in the *About the Contributors* section.

There has also been a change in the News Notes section. Ann Archer and Stephen Howell are now specially assisting with the *Bulletin*, though they continue on the *Journal* team as well. Maggie Shapley has taken over News Notes. Maggie has an MA with First Class Honours from the University of Sydney, and a Diploma in Archives Administration from the University of New South Wales. Formerly employed as a tutor in the English Department of the University of Sydney, she now works in the ACT Regional Office of the Australian Archives.

A very sincere welcome to the editorial team is extended to both Maggie and Paul. Contributors to these sections should contact them direct.

Ann Pederson is continuing to compile the Publication Notes section, while the Hon. Secretary, Anne-Marie Schwirtlich, is keeping a tally of publications received by the Society. Thanks are due to both for their good work. Neither could the editor manage without her team of seven assistants in Perth. They help to assess, edit and proof-read, as well as to envelope, label, stick and sort both the *Journal* and the *Bulletin* prior to distribution. Many thanks to all the team.