

Message from the President

PHYLLIS MANDER-JONES an Honorary Member of the Australian Society of Archivists, died in Adelaide on 19 February 1984. In her passing, the archival profession in Australia has lost one of its pioneers and shapers.

Miss Mander-Jones was born in Sydney in January 1896. She received her education in Sydney and graduated from the University of Sydney in 1917. Several years later, in May 1925, she joined the staff of what was then the Public Library of New South Wales. By 1933 she had completed the examinations required for full library qualification. At the Public Library, Miss Mander-Jones became especially informed about the history of the book, its manufacture and decoration, and from 1941 to 1946 she held the position of Bibliographer.

In November 1946, Phyllis-Mander Jones was selected to succeed Ida Leeson as Mitchell Librarian. To her fell the task of the post-war re-organisation of the Library, which had experienced many difficulties and upheavals during the war years. She set new standards in the care and recording of the collections generally and gave particular attention to the conservation and processing of maps and pictorial material in the Mitchell Library and Dixson Galleries. At the same time, she played an important part in preserving our documentary heritage by actively acquiring new material, especially original source material. She also addressed groups and conferences in Australia and overseas and was instrumental in preparing a number of significant publications to assist those researching Australian history.

Phyllis Mander-Jones was particularly active in regard to the preservation of archival materials in this country and to the establishment of an archival profession. In 1948 she investigated archival practices in the United Kingdom and the United States, explored holdings of records relating to Australia in Europe and in the Americas, and attended the inaugural conference of the International Council on Archives. In 1949, she prepared a report about archives in New South Wales for a conference of Commonwealth and State authorities. She was also instrumental in establishing the Archives Section of the Library Association of Australia (subsequently to become the Australian Society of Archivists) and in launching *Archives and Manuscripts*.

On her retirement from the Mitchell Library in 1960, Miss Mander-Jones went to London to take over the work of the Australian Joint

Copying Project, a programme initiated in 1945 for the copying of records of Australian and Pacific interest in the United Kingdom. She saw the need for a survey which would set out plans for further copying; in 1964 she was appointed to direct such a survey. The completed work, *Guide to Manuscripts in the United Kingdom relating to Australia and the South West Pacific* (popularly known as the “Mander-Jones Guide”) was published in 1972 and is an indispensable tool for people researching the history of the area.

After returning to Australia, Miss Mander-Jones retained an active interest in Australian history and its documentation. She contributed to the bibliography of Dr Beaglehole’s *Life of Captain James Cook* and compiled a guide to the manuscript holdings of the South Australian Branch of the Royal Geographical Society.

Miss Mander-Jones’ achievements were recognised by her colleagues and the community: in 1971 she was awarded an MBE; she was made an Honorary Member of the Australian Society of Archivists in 1976; in 1982, she was presented the H C L Anderson Award by the Library Association of Australia.

The Society has lost a valued colleague and a kind and generous friend. Our gratitude to Phyllis Mander-Jones is deep and everlasting.

Baiba Berzins
President
Australian Society of Archivists