

International Notes

**Edited by
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**Alexander Turnbull Library,
National Library of New Zealand**

Correspondent: Diana Meads

The Alexander Turnbull Library is faced with a busy time in the next eighteen months preparing for a move from several scattered locations around Wellington to the new National Library building which will house the Turnbull and other National Library collections.

Of immediate concern to Library staff is the move from the present building whose lease is to expire in March 1986, leaving the Turnbull to find temporary accommodation for the collections until mid-1987 when the National Library building is likely to be open for public use. At time of writing (August 1985) interim accommodation is being sought and long-term researchers are being warned that services will be restricted from the end of 1985. Researchers are being asked to inform the Library as soon as possible of their needs for services from then until mid-1987.

Despite preoccupation with the move, the usual work of the Library has continued. The Manuscripts Section had a busy year in 1984 with a 127% increase in metres of material accessioned, an increase partly explained by the snap General Election of July 1984. The resulting change of government saw the emptying of Members of Parliament's offices and the transfer of several large collections of personal papers to the Library.

In February 1985 the sixth instalment of the *National Register of Archives and Manuscripts New Zealand* was published, bringing the number of collections reported so far to 1500.

The staff of the Manuscripts Section have taken an active part in the Archives and Records Association of New Zealand during the year, a highlight being the Wellington Branch meeting in June when four of the Manuscripts staff presented an evening of readings from diaries and letters of World War One soldiers and civilians selected from the Library's War History Archive. Three members of the Section are to take part in a training course on the management of small archival collections being held in Auckland prior to the ARANZ Conference in September.

A guide to nineteenth century manuscript collections relating to women

is being compiled in the Manuscripts Section for publication in late 1985 to mark the end of the United Nations Decade for Women. It is hoped that a companion volume for twentieth century collections will follow at a later date. The Library also proposes to dedicate the May 1986 issue of the *Turnbull Library Record* to women's studies.

Hocken Library, University of Otago

Correspondent: Peter Miller

In February this year, Stuart Strachan, formerly a Senior Archivist at National Archives of New Zealand took up his appointment as the new Hocken Librarian. He replaced Michael Hitchings who retired in June 1984 as Archives Assistant, a position funded by National Archives.

Several recent exhibitions have featured archives, the most notable being those on the history of the Methodist Church in Otago and the 75th Jubilee of the Hocken Library. The latter, for which a catalogue was produced, was the occasion for the display of many of the Library's most valuable manuscripts, including correspondence of the Rev. Samuel Marsden 1813-1815.

Accessions in 1984 totalled 156 linear metres, with details being given in the Annual Report. This year has seen a number of substantial deposits, especially from lodges, business firms and community organisations. The Library is an approved repository for archives of district offices of Government departments and statutory authorities and this has resulted in several important transfers, notably from the NZ Railways Corporation.

Two notable developments in the region are deserving of report. In August last year, the Dunedin City Council appointed a full-time archivist, Jill McClymont, the first such appointment by a local authority in New Zealand. Since this time, the Auckland City Council has followed suit, a welcome step. Also in August 1984, the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand appointed John Bennett, for two years in the first instance, as a half-time archivist at Knox College where the headquarters archives of the Church, as well as those parishes and presbyteries in Otago/Southland, are housed.

National Archives of Malaysia

Correspondent: Zakiah Hanum Nor

International Archives Week 1979 will always be remembered as an important landmark in the history of the National Archives of Malaysia. Various programmes were undertaken by archival institutions all over the world to celebrate the Week. The National Archives of Malaysia held a number of activities, the highlight of which was a gala exhibition at the premises of the National Museum which drew a large number of visitors. A Commemorative publication was also issued in conjunction with the exhibi-

tion.

While planning programmes for the International Archives Week it was thought that it might be worthwhile to have a programme where the name of the National Archives was mentioned daily for the entire period of the Week over radio stations and the main TV channel. For this a programme would have to be thought out which would interest listeners throughout the country.

While this was being planned, the Broadcasting Department itself had expressed the need to have a programme which would stimulate interest in the country's history and this proposal was directed to the National Archives. This was a timely proposal which saw the birth of what is now a popular programme called 'Today in History'. The programme has been running continuously for the last five years.

'Today in History' is a daily programme consisting of a narration of historical events which took place in this country on the dates in question from the start of documented history. The narrations are brief and are generally accompanied by illustrations. The programme appears at 'prime time' for both TV and radio broadcasts and are in the national language, English, as well as in all vernacular languages.

The impact of this programme has been tremendous and it has created a greater awareness of the role of the National Archives and what it can offer in terms of materials for research on the history of this country. The National Archives has since registered more researchers and users. At times, it has seemed to us that even officials in central agencies handling fiscal and budgetary matters are so taken up by the programme that they react favourably to requests made by the National Archives. They regard 'Today in History' as something worthwhile and useful for a young nation like ours.

National Archives, Singapore

Correspondent: Lisa Lim

The National Archives is a function of the Archives and Oral History Department established in 1968. It is responsible for the permanent preservation and custody of Singapore's public records as laid down in the National Archives and Records Centre Act, Cap 310. The Oral History Unit, established in 1979, augments the collection of written records with oral history sound recordings and transcripts.

Archives holdings comprise a continuous series dating as early as 1804, some fifteen years before the founding of Singapore by Sir Stamford Raffles in 1819. The archives are valuable not only for the history of Singapore but also for that of Malaysia, Brunei and Indonesia. In addition to textual documents and records, there are maps, building

plans, photographs and a small collection of films. Finding aids are available for consultation in the Public Search Room.

The Records Management Unit provides advisory services to government departments and statutory boards on records management and micrographic systems and equipment. It operates the Records Centre in Minden Road where public records, pending review, are kept. In March 1984 these occupied 4140 linear metres. It also operates the Central Microfilm Unit which was transferred from the National Library. This provides common-user services to government departments and copies records of historical value.

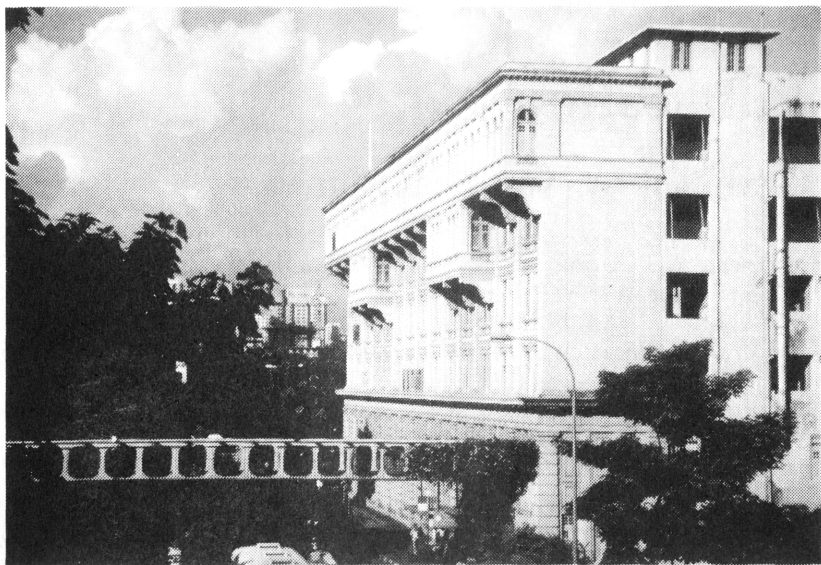
The National Archives was originally situated in the National Library where it occupied one stack floor and two offices. In 1970 it moved to Fort Canning occupying three semi-detached buildings.

In December 1983 it moved into its present premises in the Hill Street Building. The Department is now equipped with bigger repositories, a conservation and repair workshop, exhibition hall and a public search room large enough to accommodate 25 readers.

Future plans include feasibility studies on the possibility of using automatic data processing to index archival holdings for speedy retrieval of information.



Former Singapore National Archives Building at Fort Canning.



Hill Street Building, Singapore.



Exhibition Hall, Hill Street Building.