

J S Battye Library of West Australian History

**By the staff of
the Battye Library**

The Battye Library (of which the State Archives forms a part) is a responsibility of the Library Board of Western Australia. Along with the other library services run by the Board the Battye Library has moved into the new Alexander Library Building which was officially opened on 18 June, 1985.

The Battye Library had its origins in material acquired by James Sykes Battye early in this century. He had been brought to Perth from Melbourne in 1894 to be responsible for the new public library which had been initiated along with a museum to celebrate Queen Victoria's jubilee in 1886.

Battye made Western Australian history his area of study and was aware of the importance of preserving archival records. In 1903 he arranged for the transfer to the library of a quantity of Colonial Secretary's Office records (1828-1878), which are the basic records of the settlement of the Colony. He also had transferred into his custody from the same Office a collection of early Western Australian newspapers.

In 1945 an Archives Branch was formed and Miss Mollie Lukis was appointed as the first Archivist. She was given the responsibility of caring for the material which Dr Battye had gathered and for organising and augmenting the collection. She gained the support of Government agencies in transferring their archival material to the library and also in persuading private organisations and individual donors to deposit their records. Official records were transferred under the authority of a Premier's directive until 1973 when an amendment to the Library Board Act gave legal recognition to the Board as the custodian of the State's archives.

Meanwhile there had been action on the library front. The old public library had become very run down and starved of funds and there was movement towards legislative action to introduce a new public library system. The Act to establish a Library Board was passed in 1952 and Mr F

A Sharr appointed Executive Officer. An amendment was passed in 1955 giving the Board control of the old public library with a change of name to State Library. The pigeons were ejected from the high beamed roof of Hackett Hall and a false ceiling put in, the wrought iron had a face-lift and sheets of plastic covered the shelves while painting was carried out. Much activity followed with reorganisation of the collections and renovations to the building. Qualified staff were appointed from England and student librarians and support staff locally. The concept of subject libraries was introduced and the collection divided into six areas, one of them the Western Australian History division.

Until this time the Archives Branch had been located in a room on the first floor but late in 1955, prior to the commencement of renovations, it was moved downstairs into part of the area previously occupied as living quarters by Dr Battye and his family. The area designated for the Library's eventual location was also on the ground floor but in a central position in the building. It had previously been the delivery area and a store room. At that time it was unlined, dark and cluttered with boxes of unopened Smithsonian donations. It was transformed into what became the envy of other divisions of the library, furnished in the latest 1950's style of blonde aloe wood shelving, tables and chairs with royal blue upholstery. It was designated the Carlton Club of the building. How different it was to the present concept!

Into this prized area was brought not only the manuscript records already held but also all published works relating to Western Australia, including *Hansards, Votes and Proceedings, Government Gazettes*, etc and monographs. All Western Australian serials and newspapers came under the control of this new library but were not physically transferred from the stacks until later. The renovated building including this Western Australian history library was opened to the public on 14 December, 1956, and this part of the library was named the J S Battye Library of West Australian History. The abbreviation of the word Western was done consciously to signify that the library did not only contain information about the Colony and State of Western Australia but also pre-settlement material.¹

In the 30 years following those heady days much expansion occurred and annexes were soon required to house the growing quantity of records being transferred. Similar space problems were occurring in the other divisions responsible to the Board and it was soon realised that the present building was inadequate. It was also a fire hazard, being described by one overseas consultant as a tinderbox. A new building was essential. The first bid for such a building was made in the 1960's.

Late in 1976 the Board accepted the Government's offer of a site in the Cultural Centre and the first edition of the architectural brief was drawn up in 1977. Every area had to be justified to the Public Works Department and



Alexander Library Building.
Courtesy Jim Courtney-Bennett.

staff went through interrogation sessions with an officer from that Department.

In 1979 a naming ceremony took place. The new library was to be known as the Alexander Library Building after Professor Fred Alexander, the first Chairman of The Library Board of Western Australia. The building was commenced in 1982 after the completion of an underground car park, and was opened to the public on 29 April, 1985. The final cost of the building, furniture and equipment was \$37.6 million.

The project architects were Cameron, Chisholm and Nichol whose planning architect, Eddie Goodfellow, had many sessions with library staff. In the early period a great deal of time was spent on this activity and staff were grateful for the architects' patience, but as the plan firmed and the building was being erected the pace quickened and decisions had to be made in a hurry. A liaison officer, who was a professional librarian, David Hickson, was appointed and he was most helpful in guiding decisions.²

In the end some areas worked out well but others not so well. For instance the stack area for the Battye Library was diminished owing to the overall design of the main facade of the building as each floor is stepped inwards. As the Battye Library is on the third and fourth floors those floors



Alexander Library Building. Sculptured staircase.
Courtesy Library Board of Western Australia.

suffered the most. Also the Oral History office which of any area should have been a quiet one, had the misfortune to be noisy owing to an airconditioning duct overhead. However, the overall effect is excellent.

The New Battye Library

The Alexander Library Building is the largest building in the Perth Cultural Centre, a complex which includes the Western Australian Museum, the Art Gallery, and Perth Technical College with more development to come. James Street has been turned into a plaza which sets off the mixture of old and new buildings to good effect.

On entering the library, the first impression is of space because of the void. This is spanned by bridges on each floor. The colour scheme, both carpet and walls, is a dove grey which allows stronger colours in upholstery and partitioning. Glass fronted public lifts go up the void, as does a sculptured staircase.

The Battye Library is on the third (shared with Administration) and fourth (shared with the staff room) floors with the void opening out to the rooflight high ceiling above the reading room on the third floor.

The shelving and furniture are made of Tasmanian oak, light grey laminate and dark grey vinyl. Upholstery and screens are in apricot. This makes it the most attractive public area in the building. The third floor public area includes Printed Records open shelving, map reading area, Pictorial Collection, microform reading area with 27 machines including two tape players, an enquiry desk, displays for serials and newspapers, seating at tables for 74, and 29 lounge chairs.

Leading off this area are offices for Battye Administration and Oral History, the microform reading stack, a seminar room, the State Film Archives, the Pictorial Collection workroom, the Map workroom, the photocopy room, and the Printed Records workroom and stacks. A stairway goes up to the fourth floor mezzanine Archives Search Room (as yet unused). The Archives workroom and stack lead off from there.

Reference and Enquiry Services

The Battye Library does not have separate reference staff. Each librarian, archivist, library technician or clerk, is primarily assigned to work on one collection, eg private archives or serials, and is also rostered for reading room duties.

Manning the Reading Room has always been combined between the staff of the Archives and Printed Records Divisions, but it was hoped to separate these in the new building, and accordingly an Archives Search Room was planned on the fourth floor contiguous to the Archives workroom and stack. Unfortunately, no extra staff has been forthcoming, so the old system has had to be maintained with some amendments. Printed records and maps, being adjacent to the Battye Reading Room, are fetched

whenever requested. Government and private archives, however, are housed in the fourth floor stack, so call slips are batched and two retrievals per day are made.

Because the Reading Room is so much more spacious, the staff have a larger area to control and much further to go to retrieve material. Allied to this problem is the fact that the increase in public demand since the move has been phenomenal. The number of users has increased by 104% and the number of enquiries by 53%. There has been a 71.4% increase in the number of photocopy orders carried out by the staff for the public and 85.71% increase in reader-prints, while the use of the various sources has increased by 89.2%. Since the staff are trying to cope with this increase with what basically amounts to the same number of people as were in the old building, the strain placed on those staff is considerable.

The use of microforms is now far more efficient with a purpose-designed area set aside for it. However, with three times as many machines available, the staff find it difficult to keep up with the demand for assistance and in supplying reader-prints. The photocopy room is also purpose-designed and has three different machines, instead of one only as hitherto. This mostly provides an immediate alternative when one inevitably breaks down. This is as endemic as it has always been because the machines, although new, are simply over used.

Over the years the Battye Library has compiled many different indexes and finding aids, often for very specific purposes. The major one is the main Battye catalogue, which is a card dictionary catalogue of monographs, ephemera, oral history, archives and manuscripts. There are separate catalogues for serials, maps, pictorial collection and film archives. Catalogue cards may refer to Archive Notes, Manuscript Notes, Printed Reference (ephemera) Notes or Map Notes which list material contained in a particular accession number. The old General (newspapers, serials), Biographical, Reviews and Colonial Ships and Wrecks Indexes are on microfiche, with readers available close to the catalogue area. Current (May 1984+) entries for these form the New General Index (on cards). There is also a card file of the *Dictionary of Western Australians*, which has for some years been compiled by Dr Rica Erickson, an eminent Western Australian historian. Now that her work has been completed with the publication of Volume 4, the cards and background information have been handed over to the Battye Library.

Since moving into the new building we have also been able to set aside an area for genealogical services. The Western Australian Genealogical Society now provides a member on two half days a week, to assist readers with genealogical research. This has been of great assistance to the staff.

The Pictorial Collection and State Film Archives provide their own public reference service, the former, in particular, being heavily used.



J.S. Battye Library.
Courtesy Library Board of Western Australia.



J.S. Battye Library.
Courtesy Library Board of Western Australia.

State Archives

The State Archives of Western Australia is the only State archival institution which functions in an every day operational sense, as part of a State Library. For example, while its appraisal, acquisition and storage functions are administered independently, its reference functions are carried out in conjunction with the general service provided in the Battye Library Reading Room. The State Archives is not responsible for any intermediate records storage.

The old accommodation consisted of prefabricated wood and asbestos offices at the back of the State Reference Library building for the archives staff and six separate locations for archives storage. Retrieval for agencies and researchers was time consuming and inefficient. Not every annexe had a telephone so even minor problems had to be brought back to be checked against finding aids, etc.

Planning for the physical move of archives to the Alexander Library Building began some years prior to 1985 with the integration of the private archives collection from four annexes into two sequences, in accession number order in the Art Gallery's basement storage area. This task was accomplished gradually with existing staff over a period of four years, the collection consisting of 650 metres. The two sequences are for standard archive boxes and outsized material, (ie anything that will not fit into a standard archive box). There are some charts also.

In the integration of Government archives (from three separate locations) into the one location in the Alexander Library Building the Battye Library was fortunate to have the help of a team of people paid from building loan funds. Having boxed as many records as possible, the staff then identified each item and moved it according to its annexe location, which meant we did not have to change all our locations at the time of moving. Then came the massive task of putting the records into accession number order (4 kilometres in all), which took a full-time team of three people four months to complete and check.

The main archival storage area in the Alexander Library Building is adjacent to the Search Room and consists of 1350m² of hand-operated compactus stacks with a total capacity of over 10 kilometres. The shelving is 2300mm high x 900mm wide x 400mm or 600mm deep. Overall security is good, and there is additionally a high security stack protected by halon gas. A sprinkler system is used in other stack areas. Two goods lifts which may only be used by key holders provide access to the repository area from the loading dock. A book lift (which can take a standard trolley) provides access between the third and fourth floors.

The work area is basically open, but screens provide seclusion and quiet where it is needed. There is room for a dozen staff. A comfortable coffee table area is used often for small meetings both for staff and archival

clients. An unusual aspect of the work area is that it actually forms part of the storage area: there is no physical barrier between these functional units. Equipment in this area include a facsimile machine for the internal and external transmission of requests for records, an answering service for agency loan requests and a VDT.

The Archives Search Room is yet to be put to the acid test of usage. Because of its dimensions (33m x 6m), the Search Room is long and narrow, with seating for 27 researchers. The implications for surveillance are compounded by the stairwell which, protruding as it does into the western end, creates both a visual barrier and a physical bottleneck between the control desk and the people. At the eastern end there are three carrels designed for microfilm readers. It is envisaged that these will be used by those researchers engaged in protracted research based on microfilmed holdings, rather than the more 'specific instance' type of research carried out in the microfilm area downstairs. Other equipment includes microfiche readers, a VDT, microform reader/printer and facsimile machines.

Printed Records

The Printed Records Division of the Battye Library comprises those sections dealing with Western Australian monographs, serials, newspapers, government publications, ephemera, pictorial collection and indexing. Completed oral history tapes and transcripts are also part of Printed Records stock. Thus it is concerned with the administration of legal deposit and copyright. It is involved in the exchange of Western Australian government publications overseas. It seeks out rare books, follows up little known ephemera, newspapers or serials both current and non-current and is concerned to store its stock to the best possible conservation standards. This will include making decisions whether to bind, box, envelope or case, and especially with newspapers, to microfilm. With the latter all the preparatory work of collating, researching the history and targetting is done by the newspaper section before filming. The Australian Microfilm Standards are followed, and indeed the newspaper librarian and the photographer assisted the committee in deliberations.

Intellectual control over Printed Records is achieved in various ways. Conventional library material such as monographs, serials and newspapers, are catalogued by the State Library Service's centralised Catalogue Division, with subject enhancements added by the Battye Library's catalogue editor. Other material such as ephemera, oral history, archives and manuscripts, are catalogued by their collection librarian and checked and co-ordinated by the catalogue editor into a single dictionary catalogue. The acquisition of monographs and serials is now almost entirely automated and other collections will eventually follow suit.

Indexing of Western Australian items only, is very selective, but all current serials are scanned as well as *The West Australian*. This section has been especially obliged to change its procedures because of the move. For

nearly 40 years additions were made directly to a card file, not only from the above, but from miscellaneous other sources as well. The indexers sat in the cramped reading room with researchers looking over their shoulders, more for lack of any workroom space than for any other reason. With the move, the decision was made to put all quarter of a million entries on microfiche. As automation of indexing was being planned the method of indexing was also changed so that it would be feasible to transfer the new index to computer when the time comes.

Printed Records in the old building occupied the former residence of J S Battye himself. Consequently the offices were the size of bedrooms or maids' rooms, workrooms were the lounge or dining rooms, and staff and toilet facilities were the size expected in a single family house. In some ways it was togetherness supreme, but practically hopeless to find space for everyone to meet together and almost impossible to find space for the staff to work.

The Printed Records workroom, which, as such, did not exist before, was especially designed to facilitate work flow and shelving, furniture and equipment were requested to suit the various purposes. It is situated between the reading room and the printed records stack, though a corridor direct from the reading room by-passes the workroom. Although some adjustments have been made to locations, on the whole the original plan is working out.

The newspaper section has particularly benefitted. Collators now can leave their work and come back later instead of being obliged to put everything away. Originally too, a publications room was planned. However, with no extra staff, this room has been handed over to the newspaper librarian and two collators. The Divisional Librarian's office is a completely closed room within the workroom and as such provides opportunity for private discussions when needed.

Since no extra staff has been allowed for the Alexander Library Building for the past year, the Battye Library has been particularly active in seeking Commonwealth Employment Programme grants and Printed Records has hosted five projects employing 17 people over varying periods of time. The most intensive of these has been collating newspapers for microfilming.

The Pictorial Collection occupies a corner of the main Reading Room and an adjacent workroom. It is heavily oriented toward photographs rather than other pictorial media as there is an agreement with the Art Gallery to allow them to have any paintings of artistic merit.

Over the years as technology has changed, a number of ways of allowing the public to view the collection have developed and the arrangement of cabinets and design of furniture reflects this. 7 inch x 5 inch copy prints have been arranged in subject order in drawers. Original photographs are photocopied and the photocopies arranged in accession order in bound

volumes. There is also the Government Photographer's Collection handed over to the Battye Library several years ago when that position was abolished. Glass negatives are copied onto video-tape with five second exposure. A video player is available in a nearby carrel. This section has made excellent use of volunteer labour who accession, index or do other clerical jobs, all tasks that would simply mount up if the volunteers were not available.

Co-operation with other institutions is also a necessity due to the staffing shortage.³ The Benedictine Monastery at New Norcia is a particular case in point.⁴ The Monastery received a grant for the listing and indexing of their photograph collection which meant the employment of a library technician for a year. This person worked in the Battye Library under the supervision of the Pictorial Collection librarian. Copies of both photographs and indexes are available in the Battye Library.

State Film Archives

The State Film Archives has advanced considerably since it was first established in 1969 as a section of the State Film Centre, which was itself an adjunct of the Education Department's Audio-Visual Education Branch. When the Centre came under the wing of the Library Board in 1978, the Film Archives was assigned to the Battye Library, and its first and, as yet, only full-time member of staff was appointed a year later. From 1978 to 1985 it shared with the State Film Centre a reasonably satisfactory annexe close to the State Reference Library, while its steadily-growing preservation stock was temporarily stored at the new Regional Office of the Australian Archives six kilometres away, where the environmental conditions were suitable, but not ideal, for film conservation. Like the Battye Library's microforms collection, the State Film Archives now occupies a recessed area leading off the main Reading Room, together with office, workroom and stacks immediately behind. Quite appropriately, it is situated between the Pictorial Collection and the Photographic Unit.

The public area, the actual recess, occupies 48m² and houses the main card catalogue, a reading-desk and several chairs. Opening along one side of it are four carrels containing film and video-playing facilities. Immediately beyond the recess is the ample workroom (59m²) for the Film Archivist and the temporary part-time cataloguer. As the detailed cataloguing work requires the frequent viewing of films, a flatbed viewing machine (or in fact an editing bench) is positioned in a semi-darkened corner of this room shielded by high-standing shelves on which reposes material in course of processing.

The stock itself is housed in two adjacent stack-rooms. The first of these has a controlled temperature of 20°C and is shared with the Photographic Unit, for its storage of negatives. In its own component, the Film Archives has 23 bays of shelving for its ready-access 'viewing collection', plus a re-wind bench and accommodation for a range of projectors and

consumables. The second stack room is filled with 45 bays of shelving which house the 'preservation collection'. This room is the facility which has experienced some of the most painful teething problems in the new building.

The design specifications had called for a preservation chamber which would maintain a temperature of 10°C and a relative humidity of 50%. The temperature level was correctly attained, but it was only after condensation began to appear on the floor that it was realised there was a complete absence of the controls presumed to have been built in for the humidity! Consequently some 5,500 cans of film were sitting for six months in an atmosphere rising to 100% RH. Steps were quickly taken to assess the damage sustained by the films and to institute remedial action. It was found that in colour film there had been a general shift in colour towards blue and a partial lifting of magnetic-stripe sound-track in an extensive run of television newsfilm. The situation is not disastrous, but the process of salvage and recovery is inevitably a very protracted operation.

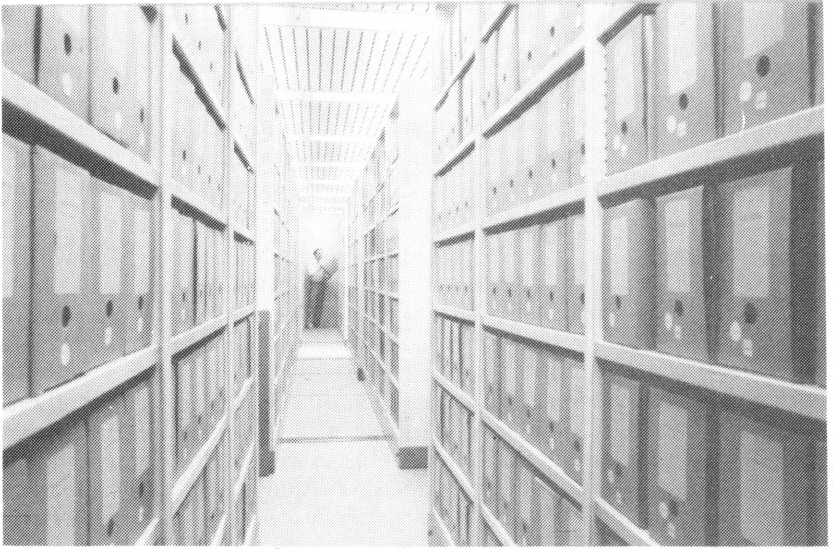
The total stack-area is already about two-thirds filled, but the consolation is that a fast-increasing proportion of the stock will be held as video-tape, which is spatially more economical than film. A small stock of nitrate films continues to be stored, for safety reasons, in a basement vault of another government building; all of it has been copied on to safety film for the viewing collection.

In its first twelve months in the Alexander Library Building, the State Film Archives has been responsible for half a dozen public screenings in the well equipped theatre which is situated on the ground floor of the building near the State Film Centre. For smaller gatherings it makes use of Battye's own seminar room for both film and video projection.⁵

Oral History

The Battye Library's oral history programme staff were located in a separate asbestos building, housing an extensive map collection, some 25 metres away from the staff entrance of the main library building. Research sources, photocopying and the collection's tapes were all kept in the main building and access to them depended on the vagaries of the weather. Each staff member had a spacious office, though map cabinets were either a nuisance or handy for sorting papers, depending on where located. There was drab dark lino on the floor, and very basic furniture. The building fronted a street and traffic noise intruded when listening to tapes or recording introductions on to them. There were no facilities to record interview sessions in this or the main library building. Some archives staff worked in the same building, and their presence and a separate tearoom made for pleasant working conditions, except when cockroaches and the occasional mouse were encountered.

In the new Alexander Library Building, the staff have their own suite on



Compactus stack, Archives.
Courtesy Library Board of Western Australia.



State Film Archives. Intercine.
Courtesy Library Board of Western Australia.

the third floor adjacent to the Battye Library. Most offices are small, but are attractively and amply furnished and carpeted. A recording studio has been provided which is well sound-proofed, except that the door is standard, and noise from word processors and telephones intrudes. There is a lockable equipment storeroom, which makes it possible for equipment to be housed in better and more secure conditions. Previously, all equipment was in steel cupboards. There is a large reception area and plenty of bookshelves and cupboards.

Whilst seeming an improved environment, the offices in which work is being carried out are too small and two are located beneath particularly noisy airconditioning ducts. This has made for very trying work conditions, especially when tapes have to be monitored. It has therefore been decided to redesign the section turning the noisy area into the equipment store, and sacrificing the recording studio to enlarge offices. The office for each oral history officer will be sound treated so that interviews can be conducted in them, if necessary. Mostly interviewing is done in people's homes, but this is not always convenient, especially when the person being interviewed is from a country town and staying in a Perth hotel.

There has been a tremendous increase in the number of public enquiries, many from people wanting to interview for themselves but uncertain of how to go about it.

The oral history staff have need to use many of the Battye Library's research sources and find that the convenience of all the collections being brought together in the one area close to their offices a tremendous advantage.

Conservation Unit

Before moving to the Alexander Library Building the Conservation Unit was located upstairs in a warehouse, one of a number of annexes leased by the Library Board as storage areas. The Conservator was only able to carry out 'first-aid' conservation in this area of 36m² with very few facilities.

The area now occupied by the Conservation Unit consists of 198m² comprising three main areas: a book conservation section, laboratory, and general work area. The book conservation area has all the essential equipment for hand bookbinding and it is here that the bindings of rare books are restored and boxes made for their safe keeping. The laboratory is well equipped for the visual and chemical analysis of paper and related materials with high and low magnification microscopes and digital filtrator, balances, pH meters and conductivity meters. There is also a vented fire-proof cupboard for storing flammable chemicals and a safety shower in case of accidents. The general work area has two 2.5m x 1m sinks with moveable fume hoods, benches with fitted light boxes and a number of moveable work tables and light tables.

Two important items of equipment include an ultra-sonic encapsulating machine for enclosing maps, manuscripts, etc. in polyester film and a leaf-caster which casts paper pulp into missing areas of damaged sheets of paper. The employment of C.E.P. workers has meant the encapsulator has been put to considerable use, but the leaf-caster has been idle because of technical problems. The Conservation Unit was designed for a staff of seven with the capacity for eleven including volunteers, trainees, etc. Severe staff restrictions have meant that there are currently only two staff: the Senior Conservator and Conservator: Books.

Other areas in the Conservation Unit include the office where records and extensive technical files and literature are maintained and two rooms on the ground floor for the cleaning and sterilisation of incoming items. The sterilisation facility is designed for the use of Insectigas (Dichlorvos) as an insecticide and Thymol as a fungicide.

Photographics

The Photographic Unit now has approximately three times more working space in the Alexander Library Building than previously, when it occupied an annexe on the top floor of a warehouse which it shared with the Conservation Unit. The working area of 337m² is now well-divided; formerly the lay-out of the Unit consisted of a dark room and a combined camera and clerical area. Today, the Photographic Unit has a separate camera area, which is used for developing and enlarging, in addition to a dark room which is used for archival film processing and the duplication of microform. A completely new addition, due to changing functions of the Unit, is an audio-visual area which is used for tape/slide production and film to video transfer. A separate area has also been assigned to quality control.

Previously, all photographic negatives were stored in the annexe in the general working area, where there was no humidity or temperature control. However, there is now a special stack area for their storage. There is a separate room with a regulated temperature of 20°C, and a relative humidity of 50%. This stack is also used for the checking of processed and duplicated microfilm for completeness, quality and accuracy.

Due to additional space and changing functions the Photographic Unit now possesses a far wider range of equipment. Of particular interest is the FICA film conditioning and vacuum packing machine designed by the Swedish Film Institute. This machine is of highly advanced technology and is used to prepare both colour and black and white original archival films for storage thus assisting their long-term preservation. It is believed that this machine is the first of its kind to be installed in the southern hemisphere.

Most growth in equipment has been in the audio-visual field. A Videola film to video transfer unit is used to produce video viewing copies from



Conservation Laboratory.
Courtesy Library Board of Western Australia.



Video equipment in Photographics.
Courtesy Library Board of Western Australia.

original cinematographic films of the State Film Archives' collection. A ¾" video editing unit is used in conjunction with the Videola for the transfer of cinematographic film to video tape. This unit can also be used for the editing of training and publicity programmes for the benefit of library staff. A range of audio equipment is used to produce tracks for audio visual productions and audio for silent movies from the State Film Archives collection.

Pictorial images in transparency and glass negative format were previously copied on to continuous tone negatives using back lighting, a time-consuming procedure. However, these pictorial images are now reproduced on to colour videotape using a video camera, which makes them more readily accessible to library users.

A horizontal photographic enlarger is a welcome addition to the Unit. This enlarger takes 10 inch x 8 inch (large format) negatives and is currently being used for the printing of the J S Battye Library's large and important collection of glass negatives.

It also produces enlargements up to mural size (3m x 3m) for displays and exhibitions. The vertical enlarger, with a colour head for possible colour printing purposes in the future, can also take large format negatives. Black and white continuous tone film is now developed in an Enterprise automatic film processor. This processor has the capacity for processing colour positive and negative film, colour microfilm and also colour prints.

Three new microfilm cameras have been purchased to compliment our two existing cameras. The new cameras are a Fuji 35mm planetary microfilm camera and a 16mm document microfilm camera, which are identical to the ones already in the Unit. In addition to these, a Fuji 16mm planetary microfilm camera has been purchased. This reflects the J S Battye Library's decision to become more involved in smaller format microfilm. Duplication of microfilm, which was previously contracted out to a commercial bureau, is now carried out within the Unit using an Extek film duplicator. Quality control of microfilm continues to be carried out within the Unit with a Macbeth densitometer and also with the addition of a recently purchased ocular microscope. The implementation of a film cleaning programme can now be considered due to the acquisition of a Cinetek cine' and microfilm cleaning machine.

As a result of the move to the Alexander Library Building, the changes in the Photographic Unit have been quite dramatic in the increase in size of the area, new facilities and the services it can now offer.

Conclusion

Sharing the Alexander Library Building with other divisions of the State Library Service, also enables the Battye Library to have full use, when required, of facilities such as a modern theatre seating 208, which is fully provided with appropriate equipment. There are also one or two meeting

or seminar rooms of varying sizes and variously equipped, on each floor and the most suitable can be selected for any occasion. The ground floor, which was planned to be a public library, funds for which have not been forthcoming, is used for exhibitions and a display co-ordinator has been appointed to the staff. These facilities have already been used for several conferences, one of particular interest to archivists being the Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Materials (ICCM) Conference towards the end of 1985.

The Perth Regional Branch of the Australian Society of Archivists is pleased to be able to offer these facilities for the Society's 6th Biennial Conference in April 1987, and is looking forward to welcoming visitors from archives institutions all around Australia.

FOOTNOTES

1. See also '.. And the End of an Era. The J.S. Battye Library of West Australian History and State Archives'. *Archives and Manuscripts* Vol. 12 No. 2, December 1984, p. 187-190.
2. David Hickson. 'The Alexander Library Building, Perth, Western Australia'. *Australian Library Journal*, August, 1985, p. 4-19 for a detailed account of the planning and construction of the building.
3. See also, Kandy-Jane Henderson. 'Co-operation for the Future: the Manuscripts Programme at the Battye Library'. *Archives and Manuscripts*, Vol. 10, No. 2, December 1982, p. 136-140.
4. See also, Tony James. 'Monastic Musings'. *Archives and Manuscripts* Vol. 13, No. 1, May 1985, p. 12-23.
5. For further details and statistics, see: Jack Honniball, 'The State Film Archives of Western Australia' in *The Moving Image: Film and Television in Western Australia 1896-1985* Perth, History and Film Association of Aust., 1985, pp. 29-32.