

# NEWS NOTES

**Edited by Maggie Shapley**

**Archives Office of New South Wales**

*Correspondent: Michael Allen*

The Archives Office is involved in a number of bicentennial programmes. Three of these – the Genealogical Research Kit, the publication of the Colonial Secretary's papers, 1788-1825, and the mounting of the exhibition 'Punishment, Pardon and Promise – Government and the People'—are projects undertaken directly by the Archives Office with a special grant from the New South Wales Government. In addition to these the Archives Authority has entered into an agreement with the Australian Bicentennial Authority to administer the 'New South Wales Bicentennial Archives Program'.

The Genealogical Research Kit comprises microform copies of the major series of records suitable for genealogical research, and although specifically directed at genealogists, is of value to historians and researchers generally. A large number of libraries, historical societies and similar organisations have purchased the first three stages of the kit, including a number of institutions in other states and overseas. The first three stages contain 442 reels of 35mm roll film and 402 microfiche as well as a number of printed guides and information leaflets. The fourth and final stage, which will be officially launched in February 1988, will add 81 rolls of film and 14 microfiche.

The Colonial Secretary's papers, 1788-1825, which will be published in microform in September 1988, constitute the largest and most extensive collection of public records relating to the formative years of the settlement in New South Wales and reflect all facets of Colonial life. A significant aspect of this undertaking is the preparation and publication, in printed form, of an index to the papers.

The New South Wales Bicentennial Archives Program, which is part of the State Government's history and education contribution to the Bicentennial celebrations, consists of three separate projects. The aim of the program is to promote the use of the archives of local government,

of the labour movement, and of St Mary's Cathedral by their identification and processing and by the preparation of guides.

The acquisition of additional reference staff at the Kingswood Repository allowed full-time operation of the Search Room to commence on 3 November. The building was officially opened by the New South Wales Minister for Heritage, the Honourable R. J. Carr, on 18 December 1987.

## Australian Archives

*Correspondent: A. L. Pearlman*

The Australian Archives has increased its microfilming program to cover records of interest to genealogists in order to support the proposed publication in April 1988 of *Family History Sources in the Australian Archives: A Guide*. Another microfilming project which has just been completed is the filming of the Minutes of the Defence Committee, 1926-1953 (CRS A2031). A project to microfilm Registers of British Shipping for all Australian ports (to 1982) is currently underway.

A significant development has taken place in the Western Australian Regional Office in the area of conservation with the short-term employment of a contract conservator. Detailed survey work has been carried out by the conservator, and the previously unutilised conservation area is now operational with the recent addition of a fume extraction chamber.

A detailed condition survey has been conducted of literary and artistic copyright applications and associated exhibits held by the Australian Capital Territory Regional Office, allied with arrangement and description work to restore unidentified exhibits to their appropriate context and conservation treatment of important items. A survey of photographic items has also been completed at the ACT Regional Office. This has provided some interesting (but approximate) data: total holdings of 1,110,000 items from 240 record series, including a very large collection of aerial survey photographs and a large collection of both colour and black-and-white material from Promotion Australia and its antecedent agencies. The attention of our photographic conservation program will be mainly directed at improving storage and handling, controlling access to sensitive originals, providing copies of glass and nitrate materials, and undertaking intensive treatment of valuable items in greatest need of attention.

During 1987 the Australian Archives Disposal section produced a package aimed at helping agencies of the Commonwealth Government to appraise some of their own records. The package combines a self-help appraisal handbook and simple forms for use in developing a disposal schedule. The handbook is designed to be used by agency staff at a

relatively junior level with minimal knowledge of appraisal procedures, to cover some of the most common types of records created by Commonwealth agencies, including forms, computer printouts, case files, and other case records. The preparation of the handbook is part of a general strategy aimed at increasing the involvement of agencies in the development of authorised arrangements for the disposal of their records. The rationale for this strategy has been outlined in an article to appear in the Fall 1987 edition of *American Archivist*.

The Victorian Regional Office has recently taken into custody the personal papers of Patrick Hannaberry, who was Commonwealth Railways Commissioner between 1948 and 1960. Transfers of personal records to the ACT Regional Office have included transfers from Prime Minister R. J. L. Hawke, Ministers Barry Jones and John Brown, Ian Sinclair, and Pat Galvin.

Most 1957 Cabinet records became eligible for public access on 4 January 1988. The records held by the ACT Regional Office consist of 2.1 shelf metres of submissions, minutes, and agenda papers and .4 shelf metres of control records. Accredited media representatives were given access to these records from 7 December, with an embargo against any form of publication until 1 January.

The ACT Regional Office commenced a series of access workshops for Commonwealth agencies designed to assist them in meeting their obligations under the Archives Act in relation to access to Government records. To date, two workshops have been held; one in October and one in December 1987.

On the ADP front, the Physical Control System (PCS) has been implemented in the ACT Regional Office and is expected to be operational in all other regional offices by August 1988. PCS supports the activities of transfer of records into the Archives, location of records and management of vacant space, retrieval of records for agencies and the public, and destruction of temporary records.

Final approval for the construction of the South Canberra Repository at Tuggeranong was included in the 1987-1988 budget. The building will be constructed in four stages. Stage 1 will provide an area comprising 4100 square metres, with an ultimate storage capacity of 50,000 shelf metres.

(Note: In the November 1987 issue, the reference to Passenger Lists 1898-1937 should be to the Port of Fremantle with the microfilm available at the Western Australian Regional Office, the reference to Senator Wilkes should be to Senator Withers, and microfilming of Inwards Passenger Lists in Victoria has *now* rather than *not* been completed.)

## **Australian Joint Copying Project**

*Correspondent: Mary-Ann Burchfield*

At the time of writing the future of the Australian Joint Copying Project is still uncertain. The State Library of New South Wales, one of the principal partners in the Project with the National Library, is withdrawing from the Project as from 30 June 1988 due to financial reasons. It has acknowledged the invaluable contribution to Australian research and scholarship made by the Project and its inestimable value to a wide variety of users. The Library is currently seeking ways to extend the life of the Project for up to five years to allow its major filming projects in Britain to be completed. We wish to acknowledge the enormous personal contribution made by Mr Graeme Powell, who recently resigned from the position of AJCP Officer in London, over the past nine years.

A new consignment of microfilm reels has been distributed recently to the partners. The Public Record Office reels include 31 reels of Cust. 34/613-861, Customs Board and Secretariat Papers relating to plantations, 1823-1868, and 96 reels of D.O. 57/1-115, Dominions Office Overseas Settlement Original Correspondence, 1925-1936. The Miscellaneous series reels were filmed at the British Library (Florence Nightingale papers and Robert Molineaux logbook), the Royal Institution, the Shropshire Record Office, the National Library of Ireland, the Devon Record Office, the Liverpool Record Office, the Northamptonshire Record Office, Stanbrook Abbey, and the Southampton City Record Office. Letters and diaries of several emigrants were filmed, and other private papers included correspondence of the 4th Earl of Clarendon, mainly relating to the Irish political convicts of 1848-1849, and the zoological and ornithological papers of the 13th Earl of Derby.

## **Australian National University Archives of Business and Labour**

*Correspondent: Maureen Purtell*

1987 was not our best year. A heavy workload, staff shortages, an interminably long salaries reclassification exercise, waiting for a budgetary decision on computer equipment, and a departmental review for Christmas seemed like our only news. As I write now, the answers to all these changes are imminent, and the computer plan has been approved.

Major new collections were received from the Building Workers' Industrial Union Federal Office, the Australian Government Lawyers Australian Capital Territory Branch, the Australian Finance Conference, the Australian Capital Territory Teachers' Federation, and the Federal office of the Municipal Officers Association. Mr Peter Cullen, a Canberra lobbyist, deposited records, as did the Combined Shop Stewards Committee of the Eveleigh Railway Workshops at Redfern. Substantial

additions to collections were received from the Australian Council of Trade Unions, the Confederation of Australian Industry, CSR Ltd, the Union of Australian Women, the Australian Association of National Advertisers, the Australian Railways Union in Tasmania, and the Operative Stonemasons Society of New South Wales. Federal Office records came from the Administrative and Clerical Officers Association, the Printing and Kindred Industries Union, the Seamen's Union, and Actors Equity. The Amalgamated Metal Workers' Union collection now includes the Minutes of the Commonwealth Council of the Amalgamated Engineering Union from 1887 until 1972 when the union joined with others to form the amalgamated Metal Workers' Union.

This steady stream of incoming records in seventy deposits totalled 898 cartons over the year. 1330 visits by 352 people were recorded of which 224 were researchers who made 1202 daily visits—a similar figure to that of 1986.

Considerable staff effort has been devoted to encouraging undergraduate student use over the years. This increased in 1987. In consultation with lecturers, guided tours and explanatory talks were given and topics were devised for students in History and Economic History at the Australian National University and in Historical Geography at the Australian Defence Force Academy. In addition groups of records management students from the Canberra College of Advanced Education now come regularly for lecture tours, and in some cases course work follows from this.

Our newsletter *ABLative* continues as our regular source of information for our users and depositors. The 1987 issues, Number 5 on records of the coal industry and Number 6 on records of CSR Ltd, are available from the Archives. We welcome suggestions from other institutions for an issue which illuminates sources here and elsewhere which jointly provide coverage of a particular event or research area.

Our Deputy Archives Officer, Pennie Pemberton, left us in April 1987 and our loss is Pennie's gain. She has been accepted as a PhD scholar in the History Department at the Australian National University, and we welcome her return as a user of the Archives for much of her research.

### **Australian Science Archives Project**

*Correspondent: Gavan McCarthy*

The Commonwealth Government's Committee to Review Australian Studies in Tertiary Education (CRASTE) drew attention in its recently published report, *Windows onto Worlds*, to the need for an updated guide to the archival records of Australian science. At present the only guide available is the pioneering *Guide to the Manuscript Records of Australian Science* compiled by Ann Mozley (Moyal) in the mid-1960s and now, inevitably, somewhat dated. CRASTE has now issued a contract to the

Australian Science Archives Project (ASAP) to prepare a new guide. This will be based upon the extensive data file that has been assembled by ASAP in the course of the past three years. Information about additional collections of documents is expected to be generated through ASAP's participation in the Australian Bicentennial Authority's Historic Records Search, while further systematic searching and recording will be funded under the CRASTE initiative. It is anticipated that the guide will be ready for publication in mid-1988. Information and suggestions concerning collections of documents that ought to be listed will be most gratefully received. Contact Gavan McCarthy, ASAP, Department of History and Philosophy of Science, University of Melbourne, Parkville VIC 3052.

### The CSIRO Archive

*Correspondent: Colin Smith*

*The good news:* Professor C. B. Schedvin's official history of CSIRO's predecessor, CSIR, *Shaping Science and Industry, 1926-1949* was launched in November 1987. It is a stimulating review of the interplay of ideals and realities in the development of a remarkable and significant Australian institution and draws heavily on CSIRO's archives. At the launching Professor Schedvin referred to the CSIRO Archive as 'a valuable resource for historians . . . (which) had ensured the preservation of vital and irreplaceable records of science in CSIRO' (*CoResearch* 308). The book is available from the CSIRO Bookshop, 314 Albert Street, East Melbourne, 3002, for \$29.95.

The CSIRO Archive currently has three full-time and two part-time staff, more than ever before, and good prospects of maintaining this level despite drastic cuts in CSIRO. We provide a very good reference service and have given good value for weight in promoting the objectives of the Archives Act. Without us, hundreds of metres of valuable records would no longer exist and others would be much less safe, retrievable and available.

*The bad news:* We are under constant crushing pressure and increasingly preoccupied with the Corporate Centre at the expense of the rest of CSIRO, and our storage and working conditions are very unsatisfactory. We have come a long way on the basis of a brash undertaking by CSIRO and mere acquiescence by the Australian Archives, but seem unlikely to ever surmount the critical hurdle of obtaining proper accommodation.

*The solution?:* Logic suggests a division of labour with the Australian Archives, whereby they provide the head and trunk—a superstructure and capital resources (storage, conservation, disposal authorities, national database) while we provide the arms and legs—in-house professional initiative in disposal and transfer. One wonders, however, if we will ever escape the present limbo and whether, if we do, our progress will be up or down.

## **Geelong Historical Records Centre**

*Correspondent: Norman Houghton*

Overall patronage for the calendar year 1987 was at a record level of 9673 enquiries comprising 7325 personal visits, 1932 phone calls, and 416 correspondence items; a rise of over 12% on 1986. The number of personal visits dropped slightly, due to a severe decline in school-based enquiries. This unexpected development appears to be due to the introduction of a four-term school year which resulted in briefer and fewer projects being tackled by students. The school project shortfall was almost compensated for by a massive increase in family history enquiries.

Cataloguing in all collections is up-to-date. The services of work experience students are mostly responsible for the map and photograph catalogues being current. The function and condition of all catalogues was critically reviewed recently with the aim of simplifying public access and devising approaches to the proposed computerisation of finding aids. A strategy was devised, which can be implemented either manually or electronically, to create a finding aid superstructure or set of pointers that will be placed above each separate catalogue for records, maps, photographs, reference books, and microfilm, and direct users to likely sources within each collection type. Simultaneously, the record and photograph catalogues are being enhanced by the construction of nominal and subject headings.

Much detailed planning and investigation on the engineering components of the Bicentennial Upgrade project is being undertaken. Floor plans, shelf layouts, and load characteristics have been prepared for the architect and engineers. The plan includes the provision of adequate storage space protected from environmental and disaster hazards so that local government records from contributing municipalities can be deposited for safekeeping and research purposes.

The Donations Fund has been generously augmented by two major and numerous minor contributions. The Howard Hitchcock Bequest donated \$500, and the estate of Roy and Elva Holden provided a bequest of \$10,000. The Holden family were strong supporters of Geelong history so the bequest represents a fitting commemoration of their interest. The Holden bequest will be put towards a computer system so that users of the Centre's computer-generated indexes will have a lasting reminder of the Holden's passion for local history. The Donations Fund was drawn on to finance the \$2,500 purchase of the Tasmanian Birth, Marriage and Death Indexes and Registers, 1803-1899.

## **La Trobe Library, State Library of Victoria**

*Correspondent: Tony Marshall*

1987 closed with an unusual and exciting social function — a party to which some 200 donors of manuscripts, pictures, books, ephemera, and other material to the Library were invited. Further donations are now coming in from those who hope that the party will become an annual event.

The Bicentenary is also having an impact on the level of donations as well as on other activities in the Library. Two major exhibitions are planned: 'Australia's Italians, 1788-1988', which will be shown at the Library from April to June and then travel interstate, and 'Victoria, the Garden State', an exhibition of gardens and gardening in Victoria, which will be on view from September to November. In 1987 the Library and the Brotherhood of St Laurence mounted 'Living Places', an exhibition of photographs and plans of twenty different housing styles in Victoria. This exhibition will tour to Victorian regional galleries in 1988, and a book of the same title is now available from Penguin Books. The Library is also lending material to numerous major and minor Bicentenary exhibitions throughout Australia. Looking further ahead, 1989 will see the results of a project funded by the Australian Bicentennial Authority called 'The Migrant Experience', which seeks to create and collect contemporary and historical photographs of Greek, Lebanese, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Italian communities in Victoria.

Recent acquisitions in the Manuscripts Collection include records of Soroptomist International of Victoria (Australia), a women's service and social organisation, for the period 1949-1982; 500 cartons of job files of the architects Stephenson and Turner; business and personal records, c. 1870-1940, of the Millear family and their properties in western Victoria and the Riverina; records of the retail and manufacturing pharmacist Hood and Company, c. 1870-1980; records of the retail trading and transport company Permewan Wright Limited; records of the Victorian Horticultural Society; and an exciting range of contemporary documents, including several collections of personal diaries and a collection of letters and diaries written between 1968 and 1978 by John Byrnes, a freelance helicopter pilot who worked throughout Australia, Papua New Guinea, and the Antarctic.

## **Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales**

*Correspondent: Jim Andrighetti*

National and international attention focussed on the Library's purchase at Sotheby's auction in London on 15 December of the letters of Newton Fowell, a 19-year-old midshipman on Governor Phillip's flagship *Sirius* of the First Fleet. A highly successful public campaign for donations helped to secure the thirteen letters which cost \$A273,000. Considerable publicity



on television, radio, and in print attended the Library's acquisition. Fowell's letters home to his father in Devon vividly recreate the voyage of the First Fleet, the first months at Sydney Cove, the epic circumnavigation of the globe from October 1788 to May 1789 made by the *Sirius* when it was sent to Cape Town to secure provisions for the starving settlement at Sydney, and the wreck of the *Sirius* at Norfolk Island in 1790. This most fitting acquisition adds to the Library's incomparable collection of personal accounts of the First Fleet. The Library holds eight of the extant eleven handwritten diaries and the largest collection of surviving personal letters.

The Fowell letters, as well as the First Fleet journals, will be rotated to feature in the Library's major Bicentennial exhibition, 'The Coming of Strangers: Life in Australia 1788-1822', which opened on 19 January and will run throughout the year. The exhibition invites the public to view the early colonists from a novel perspective as 'strangers' to a continent and environment which was quite familiar and 'normal' to the Aboriginal inhabitants. The challenging exhibition book written by Baiba Berzins who headed a team of researchers is published by William Collins Pty Ltd. The book will remain a lasting tribute to Baiba's scholarship and administration. In October she resigned as Mitchell Librarian to take up the position of Principal Archivist at the Northern Territory Archives Service. By no means the coming of a stranger, Margy Burn has been appointed Mitchell Librarian. She was formerly Mortlock Librarian and before that Reader Services Librarian at the Mitchell Library.

Throughout January, daily entries from the Library's collection of diaries including those of Arthur Bowes Smyth, Reverend Samuel Marsden, Governor Lachlan Macquarie, Lord Beaucamp, George 'Chinese' Morrison, Emily Caroline Creaghe, Frank Hurley, Brigadier Sir Frederick 'Black Jack' Galleghan, and Eleanor Dark were published in the Sydney Morning Herald.

The Library has acquired the literary papers of the writer and Miles Franklin Award winner, Elizabeth Jolley. The papers, dating mainly from 1950 to 1987, comprise 4.4 shelf metres and include literary manuscripts (drafts of all her novels, three collections of short stories, individual short stories, and teaching aids) and correspondence about teaching and writing. A guide to the papers has been prepared and is available for consultation in the reading room.

A guide to the papers of fine art dealer, W. H. Gill, has been published as Mitchell Library Manuscript Guide Number 7. This heavily used collection includes letters from notable Australian artists including Julian Ashton, Tom Roberts, Arthur Streeton, Thea Proctor, Norman Lindsay, George Lambert, Elioth Gruner, and Charles Conder.

Some recent acquisitions include the papers of the Delmer and

MacDonald families featuring Frederick Sefton Delmer's correspondence with Arthur Streeton (c. 1897-1917) and Constance MacDonald's involvement with Australian women's organisations (1947-1967), the papers of jazz musician Ray Price and politician George Cann, the further papers of Majorie Barnard and the literary manuscripts of Jessica Anderson, and the records of the Builders Labourers Federation—New South Wales Branch, the Vietnam Demonstration Defence Fund, the Hawkesbury Benevolent Society and Hospital, and the Kings Cross Youth Refuge.

### **National library of Australia, Manuscripts Section**

*Correspondent: Graeme Powell*

The impending Australian Bicentenary has created heavy demands on the Manuscript Section. In 1988 some of its most celebrated manuscripts are to be displayed in an exhibition on the theme 'From Cook to Phillip, 1770-1788'. Other items are being lent for exhibitions, both in Australia and overseas. It is apparent that the Bicentenary is stimulating a greater awareness of heritage issues and historical records. Numerous inquiries have been received for information and advice on the care and placement of manuscripts.

A number of substantial acquisitions have been made during 1987. One of the most important is the archives of the De Salis family who have been landowners in the Canberra-Queanbeyan area since 1855. The diaries and other papers contain a wealth of material on the pastoral, political, religious and social history of a region which now forms part of the Australian Capital Territory.

Four major collections of political papers have been received. The papers of Norman Makin document his long career in Federal parliament, his work as a Minister in the Curtin Government, and his years in Washington as the first Australian Ambassador. The papers of Alan Missen, Wal Fife, and Doug Everingham recently deposited are useful sources on Australian politics in recent decades. A related collection received are the papers of William Macmahon Ball, the eminent political scientist and diplomat.

Some notable writers are represented among recent acquisitions: the poets R. D. FitzGerald, Judith Wright, and Frank Kellaway, the playwrights Rodney Milgate, Alex Buzo, and Jack Hibberd, and the novelists Christina Stead, John O'Grady, and Sara Dowse. Of special note are the manuscripts, correspondence and other papers of David Williamson. They form a substantial collection which documents his career from his school and university days to his present position as Australia's best known playwright and screenwriter.

The Library has commenced a program for the conservation microfilming of manuscripts, with priority given to heavily-used collections. They include the papers of Henry Handel Richardson, Tom

and Adela Pankhurst Walsh, and Vance and Nettie Palmer. As filming continues, it is hoped that there will be a gradual reduction in the handling of fragile papers and that some collections will be more accessible to remote users.

The Editorial Advisory Committee of the *Guide to Collections of Manuscripts relating to Australia* met in April 1987 to review the 1986 microfiche edition and to discuss options for the future production of the *Guide*. Work has commenced on the first instalment of Series E.

In August Graeme Powell returned from London to take up his appointment as Manuscript Librarian, a position he had previously occupied in 1969-75. Pam Ray, who had led the Manuscript Section through some difficult years, has moved to a position in the Australian Reference Section.

### **Northern Territory Archives Service**

*Correspondent: Baiba Berzins*

The Principal Archivist, Don Brech, resigned in June 1987 in order to take up the position of Government Records Co-ordinator in Hong-Kong. Greg Coleman was Acting Principal Archivist until Baiba Berzins, formerly Mitchell Librarian at the State Library of New South Wales, took up as Principal Archivist in October 1987.

During November and December the Archives Review Committee, originally commissioned in August 1986, prepared its report for the consideration of the Minister for Conservation. The review considered such matters as archival legislation, the administrative location of the Archives Service, its responsibilities, and its future resource needs.

The Archives Service is currently negotiating to acquire additional space at its Winnellie repository in order to resume the transfer of non-current Government records, which was halted in March 1987 due to lack of storage space.

A programme of exhibitions has been planned for 1988 including displays relating to Darwin in World War II and the tenth anniversary of Territory self-government.

### **Queensland State Archives**

*Correspondent: Lee McGregor*

As the rest of Australia may have heard, there have been some major political changes in Queensland in recent months. Indeed the pace of

change in government administration has been quite phenomenal. In our own case, the Archives has moved from the Department of the Arts, National Parks and Sport (but responsible to the Minister for Mines, Energy and the Arts) to the Premiers Department. Time will tell what practical changes this will bring. The Public Service Board has been disbanded, temporarily reformed, and now disbanded again; flexitime has been abolished, then resurrected as variable working hours; holiday leave loading was to be abolished but rumour has it that it will be retained. Stay tuned for the next exciting instalment of politics in Queensland!

Following the lead set by the Archives Office of New South Wales, Queensland State Archives has now produced a set of records in microform for sale. Although aimed primarily at the genealogical market, the records should be of value to historians generally. Stage 1 of the Queensland Public Records Historical Resource Kit consists of lists of passengers, crew, and ships arriving in Queensland from Europe in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as well as a name index to immigrants. A prospectus including order forms and details of prices is available from Queensland State Archives. Like most projects of this type, it has taken far more time and resources than originally intended. However orders have already started coming in, and it is hoped that the Kit will be a resounding success.

The damage being caused by photocopying of records has been a major cause of concern for some time. During the financial year 1986-1987, 175 thousand photocopies were done. Clearly, continuing to copy at this rate was unacceptable, so action has been taken, despite some user resistance, to reduce it very substantially.

As from August 1987, the range of records unavailable for copying has been extended, and prices charged for photocopies have been increased from 20 cents to 50 cents a sheet with a \$2.50 minimum charge. Preservation photocopying of small series in heavy demand is being carried out so that originals can be withdrawn from use and copying can be done from the photocopied set. The program will be reviewed early in 1988 to see whether or not the reduction in the rate of photocopying is sufficient.

Accommodation for records continues to be a major problem. For some years transfers have been limited to older, historically valuable records. State and local government agencies are therefore required to provide their own accommodation for temporary records; a situation which is becoming increasingly difficult and expensive for many of the agencies concerned.

A National Estate grant of \$45,000 over a two-year period has provided for the employment of two staff to work on a collection of approximately six thousand plans of Queensland Government buildings of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The plans are mainly on paper with some on linen, diazo, and other materials, and the treatments include surface cleaning, removal of 'sticky' tapes, hand repair, and encapsulation.

## **Reserve Bank of Australia**

*Correspondent: Samantha Hughes*

The Bank's monthly *Bulletin* has since April 1986 included an historical events section called 'From the Past'. Each month an event in Australia's economic history is highlighted with emphasis placed on the Bank's involvement. Pertinent documents and press cuttings from the archives are used with some explanatory commentary. At present the archives is assisting Nick Sharman, a contract researcher, prepare topics for the next twelve months.

The archives recently received approval to purchase an Astecair mobile fumehood. This unit eliminates toxic gases by filtration through replaceable molecular filter cartridges. Our conservation program can now be extended to include deacidification. The conservator's first priority is the treatment of 19th century signature registers of the Savings Bank of New South Wales.

Recently the Bank engaged Pascoe Pty Ltd to microfilm our series of press cuttings (1911-1939) which are pasted in volumes too large for our own microfilming facilities. To date, fourteen of the 43 volumes have been filmed. This series, which is a valuable and unique collection of cuttings pertaining to banking and finance, is an excellent research tool.

At the time of writing and two years after our application, we still do not know whether Australian Archives will permit the Bank to retain custody of its archives under section 64 of the Archives Act. This is considerably inhibiting our long-term planning.

## **State Archives of Western Australia**

*Correspondent: Chris Coggin*

The long-awaited Functional Review report on the State Library Service was handed down in November. Twelve main recommendations were made, of which several affect the future direction of the J. S. Battye Library and the State Archives. Fundamental changes likely to emerge from the recommendations, as they affect archival activities, are:

- The archival functions will be removed from the Battye Library and embodied in a separate division of the State Library Service to be headed by a State Archivist. The Battye Library *per se* will form part of a newly-created Directorate of Reference and Information Services.
- The Library Board of Western Australia Act will be repealed and replaced by other legislation to reflect the changes embodied in the Review.
- The State Archives will have an involvement in the entire records cycle, covering the promotion of efficient records management practices in agencies through to the final disposition of records.

- The new-look State Archives will eventually be transferred to the Department of Services.

In the report, attention was drawn to the difficulties of operating in a conventional library environment. Inclusion of the records management function in the existing legislation was also highlighted, an aspect which lack of resources has prevented personnel from pursuing. Until major changes are underway, the State Library Service will continue to be responsible for the management of the State Archives which will include both public and private archives.

## **State Bank of Victoria**

*Correspondent: Sandra Hinchey*

The State Bank's Archives became the first fully accredited in-house archives under Victoria's Public Records Act of 1973 on 12 August 1987. Public Record Office Standard 86/6 provides for the Bank to retain custody of its own records in a secure, purpose-built repository at 23-27 Lanyon Street, Dandenong. It also allows the Bank to close to public inspection records relating to fraud and security indefinitely at five-yearly intervals as approved by the Public Record Office.

The Bank's archival staff has been increased to five with the addition of the position of Documentation Archivist. This position was created to administer and develop archival finding aids by completing all the necessary documentation associated with accessioning, arranging, and describing the Bank's archives, to assist with the implementation of the access provisions of the Public Records Act of 1973, to administer the Bank's oral history programme, and to facilitate the use of the Bank's archives by Bank staff and the public.

Record surveys have been completed in the Internal Audit and Insurance Departments, and a disposal schedule for the Personnel Department is being drafted and will be submitted to the Public Record Office for approval in the near future. The Branch Records Manual (disposal schedule for branch records) is in the process of being amended and updated, and guidelines for the destruction of general correspondence files are being compiled.

All series and photograph entries have been transferred to the Archives Database of STATUS automated system, and item entries (Note: not *time* entries as reported in the November 1987 issue) are currently being input. Due to the varying format and scarcity of data recorded for series items it was not possible to transfer data from the Wang word-processing system to STATUS. The museum collection is being input as time permits, however due to the lack of records concerning the acquisition of most of the items specific details concerning them are vague and unsubstantiated at present.