

BOOK REVIEWS

Edited by Glenda Acland

Michel Duchein, *Archive Buildings and Equipment*, 2nd Edition. David Thomas (Translator), Peter Walne (Editor). ICA Handbooks Series Volume 6. München, K.G. Saur, 1988. 232pp. Illustrated. ISBN 3598202784. \$50. (Available in Australia from Butterworths Pty Ltd., P.O. Box 345, North Ryde, N.S.W. 2113).

Michel Duchein, the author of this book, is acknowledged as a world expert on the construction of archive buildings. He has been head of the Technical Service of the Direction des Archives de France for two decades and has been directly involved in the construction of several dozen archive buildings in France. He has advised on the construction of archives in other countries by government invitation and through his work as a UNESCO expert and a consultant for the International Council on Archives. His published works have been read and heeded by archivists around the world. With this background of practical experience, Duchein is the ideal person to write a general manual on archive buildings and equipment.

The first edition of this book was published by the International Council on Archives in 1966. In 1977 an English translation was published which included substantial modifications and additions to the original text.

When it was decided to produce a new edition, the 1966 edition having been out of print for some years, Duchein realized that a simple updating would not be sufficient. Technology had advanced so rapidly in the intervening twenty years that a complete rewrite was necessary. Consequently this is a new work more than a new edition. Not only does it include vastly expanded information on a range of topics such as fire protection, handling and internal movement of records, and the preservation of special types of records, but it also updates earlier information. For example, the strongroom floor loading of 1500kg/square metre of standard height (2.2m) non mobile shelving given in the 1966 edition (p. 36), is revised down to 1200kg/square metre in the second edition (p. 46) to take account of more recent advice.

However the basic purpose of the book remains the same in both directions.

"It offers a framework of ideas appropriate for those who intend to build . . . It is not a question of applying a single solution in all cases. The author . . . has too much practical experience to believe that the same responses can be gained in circumstances which differ in the size of funding available, as well as in the balance between the different administrative, scientific and cultural needs."

Provided that the reader bears this caveat in mind at all times, the book provides an excellent introduction to the problems of constructing an archive. It offers a comprehensive analysis of the main areas of concern to the archivist as well as having sufficient technical data to be of value also to the architect and the engineer. Overwhelmingly it makes the point that it is not sufficient simply for the archivist to describe the requirements in general terms. He or she must work in partnership with the architect, the engineers, the quantity surveyors, the landscape planners and so on, on all stages from the preparation of a brief for the architect to the completion of the building. And he or she must acquire sufficient technical knowledge to express all requirements clearly, specifically, and in detail to these experts.

"An archivist who has not followed the course of the work closely and in minute detail will have forfeited the right to blame the architect for any shortcomings once the job is finished. A weekly visit to the site should be part of the archivists professional duty."

The format of the book is well thought out and well presented. Information is organised into three parts. Part one introduces the basic options for building construction. The pros and cons of constructing a new building or adapting an old one are canvassed with the author expressing a decided preference for a new building in most circumstances. Advice is given on the criteria for the choice of a suitable site and on the general layout of the buildings and the need to allow for future expansion.

Part two deals more specifically with matters to be considered in the drawing up of the brief for the architect. There are chapters on the overall plan, the construction and equipping of the strongrooms, the staff working areas, and the public areas and facilities. Sound advice is given on work flow patterns and general layout. The various types of shelving are discussed at length and requirements for storage of a wide variety of paper record formats are given. There is a useful analysis of the public areas, particularly the reading rooms, and the problem of supervising and servicing these areas adequately.

Part two also includes more technical specifications for the benefit of the architect and engineer. There are sections on construction materials, fire protection, security, climatic control, lighting, fumigation, power, water and gas supply, telephones, and handling and internal movement of records.

Part three relates to two special areas of concern in the design and construction of archive buildings, viz. records centres or intermediate repositories and their special needs, and archive buildings in tropical countries. This latter subject of course is of relevance to large areas of Australia.

Appendix 1 is a short summary of the main dimensional requirements and technical standards for archival buildings. However it is such an abbreviated version that it is of very limited value. Appendix 2 consists of a model brief for the construction of a departmental archives in France.

A short bibliography of six pages is provided. Unfortunately, the majority of works listed are in the French language, which will be a problem for many readers. A more comprehensive English language bibliography would have enhanced this translation. There are 69 black and white illustrations although again most of these relate only to French archive buildings. The one and a half page index is so short to be almost useless. However this defect is remedied quite adequately by an excellent table of contents which makes it quite easy to find the information required.

In a book of such wide ranging application there are inevitably some difficulties in relating it to local and specific circumstances. The section on staff quarters for example may be applicable in some places but is probably not much use to archivists in Australia. Similarly the section on binding and conservation refers to extensive binderies and to workshops for making and repairing seals, neither of which are common in archives in Australia.

With a book of this kind the final judgment depends on its usefulness in the practical world. Is this a book which I would recommend to an archivist, engineer or architect involved in planning for and constructing an archives? Unhesitatingly I would answer yes. It is not merely useful—it is indispensable.

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Peter Walne, editor, *Dictionary of Archival Terminology*, 2nd Revised Edition, ICA Handbooks Series, Volume 7. München, K.G. Saur, 1988. 212pp. ISBN 3 598 20279 2. \$57. (Available in Australia from Butterworths Pty Ltd., P.O. Box 345, North Ryde, N.S.W. 2113).

A significant contribution to the international archival community as well as to the advancement of the science of archival administration was made by the first edition (1984) of the *Dictionary of Archival Terminology*, ICA Handbooks Series Volume 3. The publication of a second edition

after a period of only four years reflects not only this significance but also the effect of rapid technological changes on our profession. The *Dictionary* content has been revised, corrected, updated and refined but the format remains essentially the same.

In the introduction to the first edition of a *Dictionary of Archival Terminology* the diversity of the archival profession, and consequently the diversity in terminology was pointed out. The International Council on Archives made no claim to having produced the definitive set of definitions for the profession. The *Dictionary* achieved its aim of providing “. . . *the core of concepts common to several languages*”¹. It presented broad workable definitions for some terms to take account of national and cultural variations. Other terms were given a standard definition, which tended to be the descriptive rather than the conceptual terms used in the archival profession.

The Second Edition of the *Dictionary* actually has fewer definitions than the first, 486 compared to 503. This is primarily due to the deletion of many old-fashioned, out-dated computer terms. *Binary notation, bit, boxing, byte, operating system* and many others have been eliminated, presumably either as a result of the word becoming obsolete or passing into common usage. Another set of deletions involves equipment: *copier-duplicator, enlarger-printer* and *micro-processor* are no longer terms that need to be defined in an archival dictionary.

Some of the new additions to the *Dictionary* herald the beginning of a new era in archival administration. A definition of *freedom of information* is provided which indicates not only the increasing volume of legislation that affects archives, but also the responsibilities that many archives are acquiring for semi-current and non-current records and in some cases current records as well. The increasingly litigious nature of our society is reflected by the inclusion of terms such as *legal protection of archives* and *archival legislation*.

Local differences are reflected in the addition of extra cross references, particularly in regard to records and computers, for example *computer-readable records, electronic records* and *machine-readable records*. It is ironic that for some archivists the terms *computer assisted retrieval, computer-readable records/archives* and *electronic records* have become so commonplace they have necessitated the addition of the term *conventional records/archives*.

It was interesting to see that a typographical error has been carried over from the First Edition. Under the term *culling* there is still a cross reference to *wedding* instead of to *weeding*, which has doubtless led to the exchange of witticisms in numerous archival institutions. There have been only minor alterations in a few of the definitions, the vast majority remain identical to the First Edition. One of the changes is the word

aisle, which has changed from a “principal route through a storage area”² to a “subsidiary passageway between rows of shelving”³, and gangway has become the principal route.

Australian archivists trained in the series system of arrangement and control may not be comfortable with the definitions of *series* and *class*. To many, including the authors of this review, the notion of a *sub-series* as defined in the *Dictionary* is conceptually unsound and quite unacceptable being reflective of a lack of understanding of the series concept. The term *register* lacks the precision often associated with archival usage in this country while *provenance* could benefit from finer distinction to avoid the pitfall of mistaken provenance between creator and recorder, perhaps of greater concern in a country of constant administrative change. Some common Australian archival terminology, for example *agency*, *access policy*, *acquisition policy*, *administrative change*, *administrative history* and *consignment*, does not appear in the *Dictionary*, while some searching is needed to find terms such as *disposal sentence* and *archival significance* which appear as *disposal date* and *disposal value* without cross-reference.

Some comments on the layout of this *Dictionary* are necessary. Perhaps it is a case of trying to do too much for everybody as occasionally this style of bi-lingual publication can be confusing to look at and difficult to read. The two columns on a page can prove very distracting. The eye should be assisted by the sequential number given to each term, but not to each cross-reference. The placement of this marginal number has been curious. While it has moved sides on the left hand pages of the second edition, this makes it more rather than less confusing (But maybe this is only for the English rather than the French readers!). Perhaps the third edition will get it right: in the left hand margin of each page as a minimum, but preferably in both margins to assist both English and French readers. The cross-references in the text would no doubt benefit from the addition of the principal term number. These appear in the other language indices, but not for English language readers. While it may be difficult to avoid, leading a page with a cross-reference term rather than a numbered primary term can make the former easy to miss.

Overall, a *Dictionary of Archival Terminology* provides the archival profession throughout the world with an extremely useful reference tool and should serve to stimulate interest in producing national glossaries to complement this work. For those who have worked towards producing an Australian equivalent, under the auspices of the Australian Council of Archives, the efforts of Peter Walne and his working party are an inspiration and have provided a standard of publication to be aspired.

REFERENCES

1. Peter Walne, editor, *Dictionary of Archival Terminology*, 1st Edition, ICA Handbook Series, Volume 3. München. K.G. Saur, 1984. p. 7.
2. *ibid.* p. 20.

3. Peter Walne, editor, *Dictionary of Archival Terminology*, 2nd Revised Edition, ICA Handbook Series, Volume 7. München. K.G. Saur, 1988. p. 16.

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Sally A. Buchanan, *Disaster planning, preparedness and recovery for libraries and archives: a RAMP study with guidelines*. Paris: UNESCO, 1988. 182pp. PGI-88/WS/6.

Some but not all readers will be familiar with RAMP studies. For those who have not come across them before, I quote from the Preface of each publication: 'In order to assist in meeting the needs of Member States, particularly developing countries, in the specialized areas of Archives Administration and Records Management, the Division of the General Information Programme has developed a long-term Records and Archives Management Programme—RAMP. One of the major activities of the Programme has been the commissioning of specialists to prepare studies for publication dealing with a variety of topics. These publications are available free of charge from the Division of the General Information Programme, UNESCO, 7, Place de Fontenoy, 75700, Paris, FRANCE.

The past year, 1988, was a busy one for RAMP studies dealing with preservation issues. The publications I have received have dealt with: pest control; environmental pollution; assessing the preservation needs of libraries and archives; and preservation and restoration techniques. There may be others, but because individual publications do not include a listing of related studies it is impossible to know what has been published or what is planned.

The content of these publications vary in quality from poor to excellent. They are inexpensively produced from the authors' typescript and are stapled together.

The publication PGI-88/WS/6 on *Disaster Planning* by Sally Buchanan is a useful contribution to the vast and ever growing body of published information on disaster planning. It consists of two main sections: the first, on disaster preparedness covers the different phases of the planning aspects of prevention and protection; the second, on disaster recovery provides an excellent, logical explanation of how to respond to and recover from a variety of disasters varying from flood to civil unrest: the emphasis

however, is on fire and water damage. A selection of graphic photographs illustrate the text. Appendices provide examples of disaster planning documentation, sample survey forms for assessing hazards, checklists to determine needs of damaged materials, and names and addresses of human resources and services. The publication also includes an extensive (44 pages) bibliography on disasters, disaster preparedness and disaster recovery compiled by Toby Murray from the University of Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA.

The size of the bibliography gives an indication of the extent of information available on this topic. Indeed, a common deterrent when preparing a disaster plan is becoming bogged down in the literature. As archivists and librarians from developing countries are the main target for this publication, such an extensive bibliography, without annotations, is next to useless. Most developing countries have limited resources and the inclusion of a small group of selected key articles would have provided a more accessible source of useful information.

One criticism which can be directed towards most RAMP studies, this one included, is that they are prepared by specialists in developed countries most of whom have had no experience in developing countries. However, Sally Buchanan has attempted to reduce the procedures involved in preparing for and recovering from disasters to their essential elements. The results of this exercise are mixed: it is not very successful in the first part dealing with prevention and preparedness but is much more successful in the second part dealing with response and recovery where the author has called upon her extensive experience as a teacher and a disaster recovery expert to produce an excellent summary of the essential steps to follow when disaster strikes. A minor omission in the section dealing with recovery techniques is that no mention was made of the unsuccessful techniques of drying wet materials in a microwave oven. Despite the unreliability of this method many librarians and archivists have heard of its use and should be warned of its risks.

Both parts, but especially the first, would have benefited considerably by the addition of specific references to a few key works. Mention should also have been made of the videos currently available on disaster planning. The size of the Bibliography attests to the vast amount of published information on disaster planning but it is impossible to identify key works. The Appendices provide useful information but most of it is relevant only to residents of the United States of America. It should have been mentioned that companies such as Document Reprocessors and Airdex are prepared to travel to other parts of the world to conduct recovery operations.

The numbering system used throughout is logical but confusing: the mixture of Roman and Arabic numbers along with alphabetically identified sections is much more confusing than a straightforward numbering system.

In summary, this useful book does not quite succeed in its aim of being of most use to developing countries but it does provide a useful summary for Australian archivists, librarians and conservators concerned with preparing workable disaster plans. Hopefully it will run to a second edition where the problems with the first can be corrected.

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Suzanne M. Burwasser, *Files Management Handbook for Managers and Librarians*. 2nd edition. Pacific Information Inc., California USA., 1988. 165pp. ISBN 0 913203 15 7. US\$24.50. (Available from Pacific Information Inc., 11684 Ventura Blvd., Suite 295, Studio City, CA 91604, USA.)

There are so few texts on practical, or even theoretical records management that any new word is welcomed with open minds. There is a strong need for authoritative, informative, creative and practical writings for, and about the records management profession. It is with regret I believe this book does not provide what we are seeking. For managers or librarians (at whom the book is aimed) it may be even less useful.

The author has a library background which is reflected in the concepts, approaches and terminology used throughout the book. At 165 pages, the format is plain, well spaced and easy to read. Whole pages are devoted to simple drawings of file folders/pockets, tab cuts and file labels.

In the preface the author warns us that traditionally "files management" is about "analysis of filing equipment", and that this book, instead, will interpret the term as "the application of the principles of records management to departmental, or decentralized files". The reader gets the feeling that neither of the above approaches is properly addressed in the book. Overall, there is a strong concentration on the traditional elements of records management, such as equipment, inventories, file covers and storage. These are covered by chapters headed *Long Term Storage*, *File Equipment Analysis*, *Setting Up Filing Systems*, *File Maintenance*. Much of this information would be available from vendors of such products.

Although the book was written as recently as 1986 (with a reprint in 1988), there is almost no mention of information technology. This is certainly a difficult area, but it can no longer be ignored in today's information environment. The chapter *Long Term Storage* discusses technology solely in the context of storage media. No thought is given to the revolutionary impact of technology such as optical disk or EDP

for information distribution, retrieval and manipulation. The chapter on storage does give a good overview of the legal status of microfilm.

On the "technical" aspects of records or file management, the book is fairly sketchy and only a few aspects are described or evaluated in any detail. These include: a good chapter on surveying techniques and the development of a records disposal schedule; types of classified filing systems; types of numbering systems. Some statements made on technical matters are questionable. For example, a subject classification system with sequential file numbering (eg. annual single numbering) is called "Flash Filing". The author says this method "works moderately well for a small group of files with a limited range of subjects using an index as the primary access aid". Many records managers will have used, seen or installed very large systems of this type very successfully, usually using a KWOC index and register for control and retrieval.

The chapter headed *Developing a Filing Classification System* does not really tell you how to go about such a task. However, it does provide useful hints about how to undertake classification work in consultation with professional staff and with clerical/secretarial staff. This chapter also contains some useful ideas about records and professional staff education, although this would be better placed under a different chapter heading.

Chapter headings are slightly misleading as the above example shows. The chapter headed *Staff Responsibilities* contains discussion of specific file management activities or processes, eg. *Preparing To File, Filing Routines, New Files, Cross Referencing*. These would be better placed under an alternative chapter.

Staff responsibilities are referred to throughout the book. However the Records Manager barely gets a mention until p. 97. The context presented emphasises the roles of action officers and secretaries. The system architecture (physical layout) described appears characteristic of a large private sector organisation. A range of options or contexts is not discussed other than one small section "Centralized vs Decentralized" (under the chapter headed *Files Maintenance Program*).

There are many useful ideas and hints in this book. A few have been mentioned above. Others include: useful hints about storage area rationalisation and how to measure costs of storage; characteristics of effective filing systems; a plea for simplicity and pragmatism in system design; rejection of traditional practices maintained for the sake of it; the need to sell a records management program to departments/units of your organisation. However, all these points are already well understood and practised.

The book is quick and easy to read, and is worth reading for those useful aspects outlined. However, for a practising records manager, or

someone with responsibilities for record-keeping the book does not offer anything new, innovative or instructive for our technology driven and increasingly complex information context.

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Louise Douglas, Alan Roberts, Ruth Thompson. *Oral History: A Handbook*. Sydney. Allen and Unwin, 1988. 217pp. ISBN 0 04 320231 4. \$24.95 hardback; \$16.95 paperback.

Noeline Kyle, *We Should've Listened to Grandma: Women and Family History*. Sydney. Allen and Unwin, 1988. 147pp. ISBN 0 04 310025 2. \$12.95.

Oral History and other "documentation programs", as *Keeping Archives* acknowledged, raise theoretical and resource problems for archival institutions. Nevertheless, the importance of such programs cannot be denied nor the public perception of them as appropriate archival activity. Many archives are involved in collecting oral history or are contemplating it, whether through choice or circumstance. Moreover, archivists are frequently approached for advice about "how to do it".

Oral History: A Handbook is an instructive and well-produced guide to the subject of oral history, its technicalities and its problems. The three authors not only have in-depth experience of oral history work but also they have participated actively in the Australian oral history scene over the last decade. Their knowledge and insights range widely and are presented in a very practical and useful manner.

The *Handbook* deals with four main aspects of oral history: theory and history, equipment, interviewing, preservation and use. The best sections are those on the practicalities of interviewing. The chapter on equipment is an excellent overview, with good advice about options and with plenty of cautions about what can go wrong. The chapters on interviewing provide sound information about arranging and managing interviews and sensitive advice about the art and politics of interviewing. Four sample questionnaires are included for "the most common themes explored by oral historians" and these should assist both experienced and amateur interviewers with the structure and content of their interviews.

The opening chapters on theory and history firmly establish the importance of oral history. The authors persuasively present the case for the value of oral history as evidence by acknowledging its weaknesses as well as by emphasizing its strengths. They also present an account

of the development of oral history in Australia which confirms its continuing and now established role in the Australian "historical scene". The account, in my opinion, has some inaccuracies and omissions but none that detract from the role which the authors ascribe to Australian oral history.

The *Handbook's* coverage of preservation and access is uneven. The range of topics is ambitious: arrangement and description, preservation, transcribing and editing, copyright, oral history in print and other media, oral history in the classroom. Some topics are inadequately dealt with: deposit and access conditions, for example, are referred to briefly in the chapter on copyright (not the "Access and Preservation" chapter) and their complexities are not addressed. Likewise, the sections on arrangement and description are very short and assume more understanding of the procedures advocated and the reasons for them than many readers will have. Some topics are not covered at all, in particular the automated control of collections and retrieval of information.

Such inadequacies do not detract from the achievement and the value of *Oral History: A Handbook*. It is a clear and comprehensive guide to an interesting and important subject. In short, it is indispensable.

Genealogy is another area about which archivists are frequently approached for advice about "how to do it". *We Should've Listened to Grandma* promises instruction in "how to research and write more effectively about women ancestors". Regrettably, it promises more than is delivered.

We Should've Listened to Grandma may prove useful to the family history beginner but it is unlikely to benefit the more experienced genealogist or women's history researcher. Many of the sources are well-known (e.g. convict, BDM and immigration records) and adequately discussed in other handbooks. The geographical coverage is uneven, with N.S.W. records receiving the closest scrutiny, while the coverage of topics such as church records is very limited. Some subjects receive no mention e.g. women's political activities and trade union involvement while some professions e.g. librarianship are surprisingly omitted. People researching Aboriginal or non-Anglo-Saxon female ancestors are only incidentally considered.

Overall, the coverage of non-government archives is sketchy and the advice about caring for one's own records is slight. The text contains many typographical errors and the subject index is not only inadequate but also some references are incorrect. In short, it is not indispensable.

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Helen Price, *Stopping the rot: a handbook of preventive conservation for local studies collections*. Sydney. Library Association of Australia, NSW Branch, Occasional Paper No. 10. 48pp. ISBN 0 8604 067 3. \$8.00 LAA members, \$12.00 others (Available from LAA, 376 Jones St., Ultimo, NSW 2007).

For an archivist who has battled the Queensland climate (political and environmental) for a number of years, preservation and conservation have always been of major concern. During this time a noticeably increasing interest in the documentary heritage has been reflected in the number of local history societies who actively gather records. The common problem for archivists working in institutions without a conservator and for local history organisations has been a lack of references which offer an introduction to preventive conservation.

Stopping the rot was written to fill this void, providing a bridge between the professional literature and what I tend to call the *sticky tape brigade*. "It aims to offer a set of practical guidelines for preventative conservation that can be used by Library staff and community groups caring for historical records". (Preface p. vi). The handbook has its origins in a series of workshops conducted by the author, Helen Price, in her role as the consultant conservator to the *Conservation on the Move project*. (This project was funded by a Bicentennial grant and was supported and organised by the Library Association of Australia, NSW Branch.)

This publication provides an effective means of instruction by introducing concepts and practices in a clear and logical manner. It begins by explaining why materials deteriorate and then leads into a section of prevention and cure of problems. This section covers how to improve environmental conditions, control biological factors and improve handling techniques. It then deals with recording and marking, care and storage techniques, preservation through duplication, basic paper conservation techniques, disaster awareness, and concludes with several appendixes which include a glossary, bibliography, conservation survey forms and a list of suppliers of goods and services.

Each section is broken down into subsections which concentrate on particular aspects of the concept or procedure being explained. It is easy for the uninitiated to comprehend this information in chunks and then work their way onto the next section. This process is assisted by the layout and the numbering of each section and subsection.

The variety of materials dealt with is comprehensive and consistent with materials found in the community. The explanation of the cause of degradation and the outline of practical low cost solutions is excellent, for example, the advice on the reduction of pollution and control of biological factors. The section on care and handling succinctly outlines

techniques which are achievable by even the smallest societies, even if they cannot afford large quantities of materials.

I particularly liked the advice about recording condition together with the item by item approach to marking different types of materials. Marking of materials is of greater significance at the present time when considered in the light of the growing trade in documents. Preservation through duplication is a useful section as again it offers low cost alternatives especially for photographs. The section on basic repairs offers clear explanations and again low cost options, especially the tool kit list. Cost is an important consideration when funding is voluntary and dependent on lamington sales. The diagrams and explanations of phase boxing and encapsulation are well done and would be useful in training volunteers.

The appendices follow the pattern of clear information. The British Library rules speak for themselves and Anne-Marie Schwirtlich's glossary is clear and will be a very useful reference when readers progress to more advanced texts. The condition reports offer a range of choices so that their use can be tailored to the talents and or interest level of the compiler. The bibliography includes a variety of texts without overwhelming the naive reader.

The decision on the quantity and depth of information to convey to a broad audience without utterly confusing many readers is always difficult. On the whole the volume achieves its aim of introducing concepts but there are a few points which it would have been beneficial to include. The section on repairs could be improved by the inclusion of alternative methods such as the garbage bin method of humidifying material and another method for water solubility testing which is to use a quick test using a cotton bud before leaving the drop of water on the document for five minutes.

There is no warning about the dangers of commercial heat lamination in the body of the text, something which I personally feel should be written in large bold type. It would have been useful to have a section of what not to do, for instance not to use sticky tape, to avoid non-reversible procedures, and products such as the aforementioned contact. This section could have included a discussion of conservation ethics and guidelines on having conservation work carried out by professional conservators or specialists.

The section on disaster awareness is rather short and could be improved by a check list of people to contact and a list of materials such as garbage bins and mops, buckets, paper towels, freezers and a supply of fans to keep air circulating. It is disappointing that there is no conclusion to pull the concepts and practises together and provide a summary.

I am well aware of the difficulties of introducing conservation concepts to the uninitiated. On the whole *Stopping the rot* offers a good introduction

to preventative conservation and is another tool in our collective battle against the enthusiastic but misguided wielders of sticky tape.

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Shane Simpson, *Museums and Galleries: a practical legal guide*. Sydney, Redfern Legal Centre Publishing, 1989. 147pp. ISBN 0 947205 10 1. \$29.95.

Legal advice is usually regarded as expensive, and this book does nothing to dispel that. It claims to have been "funded by the Law Foundation of New South Wales", yet this reviewer can discern no benefit from that flowing on to the purchaser (compare the price of *Keeping Archives*, which is three times as large).

Although it is aimed at museums and galleries, archivists will find much of practical use in this book. It covers a range of matters, starting with the advantages and disadvantages of incorporation, the different methods of incorporation, and the responsibilities of directors, board members and management (although, curiously, the responsibilities of committees of unincorporated bodies are not mentioned). Other chapters deal with the principles of contract and the effect of exclusion clauses, acquisition and disposal of collections, copyright, registered designs, merchandising, sponsorship, income and sales tax, public liability, insurance, statutory protection of cultural material, and ethics.

My feeling is that if I was the owner (or manager) or a museum or gallery, this book would answer most of my questions or point me in the right direction. But, as an archivist, I feel that some areas are not so well covered.

In particular, the chapter on copyright could do with a warning to the reader to read the whole chapter. In particular, the section dealing with copying for users makes no reference to the separate section on unpublished works (and archives are full of unpublished works) which follows on a separate page. A reader could quite easily overlook the fact that the section on copying for users really applies only to published works.

Archival material can contain libellous or defamatory statements. If the archives (or museum) makes this material available to the public, in accordance with its or a donor's access policy, can it be sued successfully for libel or defamation? Could an archives be reasonably expected to know everything contained within its collections? Can an archives obtain

from its users an indemnity against any liability arising from the users having access to its collections?

Some of my unanswered questions apply more generally. For example, the section on income tax states that "The courts have held that public museums are charitable in purpose and may therefore be eligible for exemption from the payment of income tax". But where does this leave their other activities, or other non-profit organisations?

What about activities off the premises? For example, many venue owners require hirers to sign an agreement containing an exclusion clause, purporting to make the hirer liable for any claims against the owner as a result of the hirer's use of the room. How enforceable is this clause? Should the hirer take out public liability insurance in respect of hired premises?

Nevertheless, I recommend this book, which has a lot to say to the archivist, but archivists (and museum curators with archival collections) will need to remember that it doesn't say everything. Perhaps a second edition will say more.

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Gregory P. Jones, *A Guide to Sources of Information on Australian Industrial Relations*. Sydney. Pergamon Press, 1988. 224pp. ISBN 0 08 034420 8. \$19.00.

This publication is the fifth of a series of neat pocket guides to information sources for Australian studies. So far these *Guides* cover sources of information on Australian business, Australian economic and social statistics, the arts in Australia and Commonwealth government information services. According to the series editor, D.H. Borchardt, the *Guides* are aimed at those students and members of the public not already expert in the various fields of Australian studies.

In his introduction to the *Guide to Commonwealth Government Information Services*, John Cook also recognises a need of librarians, archivists, lobbyists, social workers etc., to gain access to and use of information for their own professional interests or on behalf of their patrons and clients. In the field of industrial relations the Australian Trade Union Training Authority first recognised this need when it published several editions of its *Directory of Industrial Information Sources* between 1980 and 1983 with the trade union researcher in mind. The TUTA *Directory* concentrates on sources of documentation of the law in Australia and of industrial law in particular. It also provides a useful bibliography of books and articles relating to trade unions and industrial disputes.

Gregory P. Jones' *Guide to Sources of Information on Australian Industrial Relations* focuses on labour law too, and rightly so, as it has been observed that ever since the failure of the 1890's strikes Australian trade unions have been litigious, not militant.

Jones' *Guide* is, however, wider in scope than the TUTA *Directory* in that it provides a guide to the documentation of labour policy and the labour market, as well as labour law. The method of the *Guide* is to map out the "bibliographic infrastructure" of industrial relations. It does so by describing the organisational structures of the industrial relations system (a technique dear to the hearts of archivists) and its product is a clear concept of the administration of the system as well as of the printed records which document its activities.

Thus the *Guide* explores documentary sources of the industrial relations system not only in the context of the industrial courts and tribunals, but also in the machinery of government and administration, in the organisations of employees and employers, and in programs for industrial compensation and reform, such as workers' compensation, superannuation, health and safety and equal employment opportunity.

Gregory Jones' documentary surveys of these focal points of industrial relations usually cite official government and legal reports and abstracts, academic and professional journals, major works of historical and general analysis, and existing bibliographies and literature surveys. Articles in the periodical literature are not cited, but reference is made to appropriate bibliographies and indexes. The result is a practical and extremely useful handbook for anyone undertaking research or working in the field of Australian industrial relations.

A third of the *Guide to Commonwealth Government Information Services* is devoted to Michael Piggott's exposition of the impact of the Archives Act, 1983, on the keeping of government records and their availability to readers. Gregory Jones, on the other hand, pays scant attention to non-printed sources in general, and gives little consideration to the internal records of industrial organisations in particular. As a consequence his *Guide* seriously underestimates the archival resources of the protagonists in the industrial relations system.

Brief reference is made to the major archival repositories of industrial records—the Archives of Business and Labour and the University of Melbourne Archives, but there is no reference to the archives of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission held in Australian Archives, nor to the deposits of trade union archives and related records at the Mitchell, La Trobe and Fryer Libraries or the Wollongong and Newcastle University Archives.

Perhaps this is a calculated omission of non-printed sources for labour history in the interests of a clearer focus on contemporary industrial

relations. If so, it shows a misunderstanding of the richness, depth and availability of relatively recent operational records of major trade unions and employer organisations.

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John Cook, Nancy Lane and Michael Piggott, *A Guide to Commonwealth Government Information Sources*. Sydney. Pergamon Press (Australia), 1988. 89pp. ISBN 0 08 034421 6. \$16.00

John Cook indicates in his introduction that this particular *Guide* is to the unpublished information and "... value-added information services available through Commonwealth departments, statutory authorities and agencies. Excluded, however, is the unpublished information extracted and provided by the Parliament, the Courts, Royal Commissions and other enquiries." (p. ix). The target users are librarians, archivists, social workers, lobbyists, journalists, teachers, members of industry and public interest groups.

It has often been the criticism of archives' guides, that a user must almost be a trained archivist to fathom their mysteries. The same cannot be said about this guide, which, to someone who is not and never has been a member of the APS, comes across as extremely accessible. Compact in size but full of information vital to researchers, the guide provides everything from the basics of surviving that initial background phone-call, to the more complicated legal procedures for making requests about a particular topic under the Freedom of Information Act. It is precisely because of the attention to detail by the authors that this publication succeeds in its objectives, which are to provide information and be relevant to many varied groups of people.

The first section, by Nancy Lane, Head of the Centre for Library and Information Studies at Canberra College of Advanced Education, deals with Commonwealth Government Information Services provided by government departments, agencies and statutory authorities to the public. An indispensable chapter lists *Agencies and Their Information Services* in alphabetical order, with their addresses, a brief description of their function, whether they have a library and/or databases which can be accessed by the public, and whether publications such as booklets, posters, newsletters, manuals, or audio-visual aids, etc., are available. (The author notes that the Royal Australian Mint provides no free samples!)

Section II: Freedom of Information, is a masterful contribution to its own topic! It's all very well to promote full participation by all citizens

in the political process (see p. 40 for a summarization of the purposes of Freedom of Information, by Senator Gareth Evans when Attorney-General) but, for a layperson, only with the help of a section like this, can this right be guaranteed. John Cook, who has worked in administrative law and broadcasting policy and legislation, in the Australian Public Service, sets out clearly the *raison d'être* of Freedom of Information legislation, comparing the Act's provisions to other avenues of scrutiny of government administration, and finding it serving the 'public interest' in a way that the other laws mentioned may not.

Cook's second chapter contains practical advice on how to go about making a Freedom of Information request. An official FOI request form is reproduced, as well as Parts I and II of Schedule 2 to the Freedom of Information Act, which comprise a list of agencies exempt from providing information under the Act, and a list of agencies exempt in respect of particular documents, respectively. The similarities and differences in regulations applying to requests for personal documents are also outlined. Exemptions and appeals are addressed, with a list of grounds for refusal as provided for under the Act, and a description of the various options open to an applicant who wishes to appeal against a decision.

In a chapter on charges for access, the detached, academic tone alters slightly to include criticism of the Government's push for increases in the fees charged, which, Cook argues, surely runs counter to the spirit of Freedom of Information. Given that the Government is attempting to finance the machinery of access with the user-pays system, Cook observes that it "... may be more effective to reduce the costs of administration by streamlining decision-making and by releasing more documents rather than spending valuable time seeking dubious grounds for denial of access." (p. 56).

Anyone wishing access to Commonwealth Government records must be acquainted not only with Freedom of Information aspects, but with the "... legally enforceable public right of access to Commonwealth records" (p. 65) provided by the Archives Act, 1983. In his section on the Act, Michael Piggott, a Program Director at the Australian Archives, traces the development of the legislation, and describes the role of the Australian Archives in the appraisal and disposal of vast amounts of public records. To those unfamiliar with the process involved, the knowledge that there is an Advisory Council appointed by the Minister, to which the Archives reports on disposal decisions, may allay any fears of arbitrary destruction.

Piggott describes three types of access that are available to the public, and examines restrictions allowed under the Act, listing the 15 grounds for refusal to grant that access, contained in Section 33. He details the various channels of appeal against restrictions which include the

responsibility of the Archives to advise researchers of their rights in this area, and how to exercise them.

An illuminating chapter on four types of information sources held by the Australian Archives, in addition to purely Commonwealth records, completes the picture for the assiduous researcher. These are, briefly:

- Complementary records, donated “personal and corporate archives”;
- Australian Archives administrative records and publications;
- Information about Commonwealth records and creators, *Australian national register of records* (ANRR);
- Finding aids produced by Australian Archives, *Australian national guide to archival material* (ANGAM).

Both Cook and Piggott furnished bibliographics for further reading about their topics; there is an appendix listing the addresses of major agencies and the index provides an *entre* to the guide for browsing or for those with specific areas of interest.

All in all, a comprehensive, utilitarian reference work on government operations, which will go a long way to demystifying Commonwealth Information Sources and public access thereto.

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Diana Meads, Philip Rainer and Kay Sanderson, *Women's Words: A Guide to Manuscripts and Archives in the Alexander Turnbull Library Relating to Women in the Nineteenth Century*. Wellington, N.Z., National Library of New Zealand. 1988. 137pp. ISBN 0 477 07412 X. NZ\$22.00 (Available from National Library Bookshop, Molesworth St., Wellington, New Zealand).

This volume is the third in a series of publications to commemorate the end of the United Nations Decade for women. The first commemorative work was a special “Women’s Studies” issue of the *Turnbull Library Record* (1986) which was followed by a series of photographic prints entitled *A Women’s Work* (1988).

In the middle 1970’s a major change in demand meant that a number of researchers became interested in the lives and experiences of women in New Zealand. The Alexander Turnbull Library responded by building research collections in this area and by devising new systems to provide better subject access to its existing and new collections. The publishing of this guide promotes the collection in a way that is impossible for inhouse card catalogues and inventories, and increases the collection’s potential for researchers.

The scope of the guide is to list every collection catalogued up to the end of 1986, in which nineteenth century writings by or about women were located. It is intended that a companion volume will detail twentieth century material. Every woman, regardless of nationality, is included if the Library holds her papers or if mention is made of her in any papers.

The entries are arranged in alphabetical order and are numbered. The first part of each entry consists of the main entry, title, inclusive dates and location symbol. This is followed by a brief description of the subject matter. There are additional notes at the end of each entry drawing attention to the form of the material if other than original, location of the originals if not at the Turnbull, restrictions if applicable, and availability of microfilm copies. The length and depth of detail in each entry varies considerably depending on the size and the nature of each collection. While the format remains standard there is a good degree of flexibility allowed to describe each collection to its fullest. The anecdotal extracts in many of the entries make for entertaining reading and provide enlightening glimpses into the lives of the women. A good deal of creative thought has gone into making each entry as informative and imaginative as possible.

The index includes both names and subject headings and is very comprehensive being 37 pages long. (The entries themselves consisting of 99 pages).

The Alexander Turnbull Library is to be congratulated on this most attractive publication. The use of illustrations is very pleasing, providing suitable breaks to the text. The description of each collection provides much more than just a listing of contents and is a style I would recommend.

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W. Boyd Rayward, editor, *Australian Library History in Context: Papers for the Third Forum on Australian Library History, University of New South Wales, 17 and 18 July 1987*. University of New South Wales School of Librarianship. 1988. 145pp. ISBN 0 85823 747 4. \$15.00.

Australian Library History in Context is relevant for review in these columns because of its having within its soft covers at least two papers of interest to archivists: Michael Piggot writes on *Library control of archives: an historical debate and its current relevance* and Peter Orlovich writes on *The Destruction of public records in the Garden Palace Fire [Sydney] of 1882*. There are, however, quite a number of articles in this work which introduce issues about which most archivists will have done some thinking—Australian parliamentary libraries (Greig Tillotson), Reading (Martyn Lyons), Book collections in New South Wales (Wallace Kirsop),

Australian publishing and book importation (James Cleary), Censorship in Australia (Brian Hubber) the Free Library Movement (Rodney P. Snibson) and the Institutes [i.e. Schools of Arts] in South Australia (Michael Talbot).

The Editor emphasises the relevance of the study of archives in the wider world of the teaching of, and research into, philosophies relevant to what is often called *Information studies*. He tells us that the Forum Organiser "deliberately tried to ensure that this Forum embraces the history of archival institutions in this country". It was also an objective of the Forum to ensure that established scholars from related disciplines were represented: thus John Fletcher, a senior lecturer in the Department of Germanic Studies at Sydney University gave a paper on the visit of the Royal Austrian Frigate "Novara" in Sydney in November and December 1858. Fletcher's work provides an interesting insight into the sources that a scholar uses, and the ways in which he gains access to those sources. He certainly presents us with a fascinating view of colonial society in the "as yet unspoiled" Sydney of the time.

But for the archivist there are fascinating insights into the history of archival provision in Australia. In Michael Piggott's paper on the library control of archives he uses a lot of material that is new to me, including Commonwealth Records Series A462, item 168/3 from the Australian Archives ACT. This file records the arrangements that were made in the Prime Minister's Department to bring into being the Paton Committee, or Committee of Inquiry into the National Library. Piggott's work, in so far as it is revealed to us here, centres very much on Commonwealth arrangements relating to its public records and archives institutions. It has to be read in the context of his research into the significance of the 1954 visit to Australia of Dr T.R. Schellenberg, Director of Archival Management in the United States National Archives and Records Service. The author does not deal in any detail with the part that librarians played in the 1940s in raising national and state consciousness about public records, nor with events that took place in the 1970s and later, when State archives institutions, beginning in New South Wales, began to achieve meaningful separation from their library masters.

Old controversies die hard, and there are bound to be many disagreements about the part that individuals have played in the history of archival provision in Australia. I would suggest that the following are the four most significant achievements of the Australian society in relation to archives provision in the past thirty years:

1. The profession of archives administration has come of age;
2. The Australian Archives (formerly Commonwealth Archives Office) is now of real significance in the Commonwealth Government area;
3. There has been a proliferation of archives institutions in business, education, the professions etc.;

4. Access conditions of government records have become (a little) more liberal.

I think it could be shown that Schellenberg's visit had a profound effect on the first two achievements, an indirect effect upon the third and was not without significance on the fourth.

With respect to the Archives profession, there are several separate strands which need to be examined; the teaching of archives management at university level, with the University of New South Wales setting the lead, the establishment of a professional association, and the publication of a professional journal. But all of these were really dependent upon archivists in Australia, knowing, believing and feeling that they were members of a distinct profession. I believe that Schellenberg's visit achieved this, or at least set in motion the thinking and the action that ensured that, eventually, Australian archivists would think of themselves as belonging to an identifiable group with a body of professional knowledge of which they had command or to which they could gain access, sufficient to back up their claims to separate status.

Peter Orlovich's account of the effects upon public records of the Garden Palace Fire in Sydney in 1882 is drawn, to a large extent, from the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Votes and Proceedings of the NSW Legislative Assembly*. It is enlightened, however, by his own firm commitment to the value of archives, and his insights into New South Wales history. The Garden Palace had been erected in the south-west corner of the Royal Botanic Gardens for the International Exhibition held in Sydney in 1879 and 1880. From mid 1882, alterations were made to the building to enable it to accommodate several colonial government departments. Orlovich lists these, and provides information on the sorts of records that were accommodated in the building. On 22 September 1882, a fire broke out which consumed the entire building, including the paper records stored therein. As far as I can gather from reading the paper, destruction of the potential archival material was complete.

This article is a vehicle for Orlovich to proclaim certain beliefs about the importance of the public record. These are so well stated—and early in the article, so that they ring in the ears, as it were, as one reads the rest—that they should be committed to memory. Every student of archives administration should be obliged to learn them by rote, and reproduce them in *viva voce* examinations. I will not quote them in full in this review—I do not want to save the reader the expense of buying the work in question—but I will reproduce Orlovich's own summary:

“In short, the public records are at once, the bulwark against encroachment on the rights, privileges and entitlements of the private citizen, which the State exists to protect, and the evidences upon which the State relies to assert or defend its own authority, power, duties and functions under the social contract between the government and the governed.”

The summary is but a pale shadow of the full statement. Purchase this volume to read something that might well widen your intellectual horizons.

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Graeme Aplin, editor, *A Difficult Infant: Sydney before Macquarie*. Sydney. New South Wales University Press. 1988. 169pp. ISBN 0 86840 171 4. \$19.95.

The subject matter of *A Difficult Infant: Sydney before Macquarie* creates a happy marriage of topicality and history. Conversation topics such as home ownership, property investment, homosexuality, architecture and money are as much part of the furnishings in certain Sydney restaurants as their marbled walls, parquet floors, convex mirrors, lattice and inaccurate bills. *A Difficult Infant* places these topics in their original Georgian setting.

The book is produced by the Sydney History Group, which was formed in 1975 to encourage interest in Sydney's history. It is the second in an annual series of publications. The idea of a collection of essays focusing on Sydney from the governorship of Arthur Phillip to the brief, convulsive reign of William Blight promises a degree of drama and cogency similar to a collection of short stories which is thematically linked. In the flyer for the book Max Kelly promises "Nothing comes closer to describing the reality of very early Sydney than this book". The editor's preface pronounces "Although definitely scholarly, the contributions are certainly not dull". It was with these hopes that I approached the book. After looking at its cover, I began to doubt them.

A Difficult Infant presents a countenance of informed elegance. Dwell too long on it, however, and its pretty deception becomes transparent as more and more of Macquarie's buildings appear in the well-known section of Major Taylor's panorama of Sydney, a work which celebrates the culmination of Macquarie's administration. Certainly it is an unusual choice for a text dealing exclusively with the period prior to Macquarie, and perhaps not even worth commenting on, were it not emblematic of many of the book's flaws and insensitive uses of original sources.

Inaccuracy continues in the book as the reader is misdirected to maps and illustrations (e.g. pp. 22, 24, 66), and asked to read incorrectly captioned maps (e.g. figures 1.5, 1.6). While original letters, documents and journals are invoked in the essays, they are usually seen darkly through source books and secondary sources. Most of the book's seven contributors rely heavily on *Historical Records of NSW and Australia*, although they

are very well placed in Sydney to use the original documents, either in manuscript or microfilm through the Australian Joint Copying Project.

Professional historians who continue to utilize late nineteenth, early twentieth century transcriptions of original documents, which are faulty and partial, risk comparison with scientists who conduct experiments with corrupted or impure elements.

Other source books, such as John Copley's *Sydney Cove* are chosen in lieu of original material, as in the book's first chapter by the editor, Graeme Aplin (p. 28)

"This was certainly the case in 1791 when Copley, writing of the period to that October, recognised that: '... the Wheat has suffered very much from the great Droughts, for 16 months scarce any Rain ...'"

Neither in the text nor in the footnotes is it stated that it is Lieutenant King who comments on the wheat in writing to the Marquis of Buckingham. Copley, the editor of documents, has been placed centre-stage while the creator of the document seems to have been ushered from the theatre.

One of the book's strength is the harnessing of different writers with different areas of expertise. The discussions of Blight's deposition and Helen Proudfoot's description of early Sydney buildings are lucidly and purposely stated. In general, however, the book's style suffers from unevenness between the writers' expression and a lacklustre quality. Some attempts to arrive at a closer understanding of the period will be thrown on reefs of infelicity (p. 135):

"Despite continued dominance of relatively small grants, grants were increasing in size over the period with the increasing trend to pastoralism, with better knowledge of the local climate, soils (and pests) and hence of the economically viable size of a farm, and with the movement to poorer soils."

The Sydney History Group and its publications are undoubtedly an excellent idea, but it is disappointing that *A Difficult Infant* as a whole does not do justice to a complex and fascinating subject. Too frequently do we hear the chains of 'scholarly research' being heaved and dragged across its pages. Too rarely is insight into Sydney and its past delivered with the apparent effortlessness which results from rigorous research.

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