

Editorial

There would be very few archivists in Australia today who would be content to accept into custody merely what is given to them. For most of us, the appraisal and disposal of records (both in our custody and in the custody of their creators) is an important part of our work because we cannot risk anyone else making the selection for us nor can we afford repositories full of records of doubtful long-term value. But why has it taken so long for disposal to become a “popular” topic for articles in this journal? In the ten issues of this journal prior to the last (Vol. 17 No. 2), only two articles out of forty-seven were related to disposal. Perhaps to compensate for that, we now have an explosion, with two articles in the last issue, and three in this issue. Not that I am complaining; on the contrary, I am very pleased to see this important aspect of our work being given the attention it deserves.

Two of the articles (one in last issue, and one in this) arise directly out of work being done in Australian Archives (and I hope these won't be the last). Anyone who has seen the *Technical Guidelines* volume of the Australian Archives' *Disposal Manual* will be aware of the work being done in their Disposal Section, which has otherwise received only modest mention in the News Notes section of this journal. I hope that more of this work can form the basis of articles for the benefit of our readers, or that it can otherwise be made available to the profession generally. Certainly, it deserves to be more widely known.

Elsewhere in this issue you will find mention of awards made recently to Australian Archives and to Peter Scott. Both of these are, I feel, long overdue recognition of their contributions to archival science. Peter Scott's retirement last year has also provided a reason (if one was needed) to persuade three people to contribute their recollections of what it was like to work with him. In the meantime, Peter has not, of course, stopped working—among his current projects is a revision of his series of articles on archives and administrative change and the genesis of the series system.