

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

Edited by Margaret J. Jennings

Parbica

Greetings from John Wright, Secretary-General

The immediate news item relates to our recent unwelcome visitor Hurricane OFA. Just two weeks prior to this indignity, we replaced a rotten wooden shingle roof with sheet iron roofing (which the building housing the archives of American Samoa originally had . . . the Old Jail, 1911), otherwise there would have been a disaster. Also, the town area is not in the path of winds. But my house is in one of the two hardest-hit areas, so have been calculating personal losses . . .

Pursuing funding for future plans . . . More news anon.

Sarbica

Correspondent: Ms. Azizah Bt. Kasah, Secretary-General

The National Archives of Malaysia is hosting a Seminar on ADP and the Eighth SARBICA General Conference in Kuala Lumpur, on 16-21 July 1990. The theme of the Seminar is Automation in Archives. The Seminar is jointly organised by the National Archives of Malaysia and Southeast Asian Regional Branch, International Council on Archives (SARBICA). Similar activities were organised by SARBICA in the past in its attempt to solve problem areas and to promote co-operation among member countries in the administration, conservation and use of archives and in information management.

The Seminar will provide a forum for discussion of new developments in information technology with emphasis on automation in archives administration. The overriding objectives of the Seminar are to activate interest and efforts in the application of information technology and to study the potential contribution of information technology towards archives administration. The resource person invited to conduct the Seminar is Mr John F. McDonald, Director, Automated Information Systems Division, National Archives of Canada. Mr Michael Roper, The Keeper, Public Records Office, London is also invited as a guest speaker and to present the keynote address for the Seminar.

International Council on Archives: Section of Professional Archival Associations

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Delegates held in Madrid on 5 October 1989. (Edited)

The editor of *JANUS* reported that from 1990 onwards the Executive Committee of the ICA has decided to use *JANUS* as a periodical to replace existing bulletins of individual committees. Each committee would be assigned a number of pages in each edition. The committees would thus be responsible for the publishing of their own texts. *JANUS* will continue to be published in English and French and the first edition will be on buildings and equipment. The editor believed that *JANUS* would succeed all newsletters. Associations and national directors will be invited to buy bulk subscriptions . . . Every professional archivist is still free to submit articles for *JANUS* on any professional topic. He was anxious to receive fresh copy. It was resolved that in conformity with the decision of the Executive Committee of ICA that the Annual Meeting of Delegates approve that *JANUS* will from 1990 onwards serve as a medium of communication for technical and other committees and sections who wish to participate, and that *JANUS*, the *Bulletin* and *Archivum* will be sent to all members of ICA of all categories. It was resolved that *JANUS* would be published twice yearly.

Mr Joan van Albada gave an account of the plans for the Netherlands Association's European Symposium to be held at Maastricht 2-5 October 1991, entitled "Archives without Boundaries". The event would form part of the Netherlands Association's centenary. The meetings would be conducted in French, English and German.

Mr Frank Evans informed the meeting about major publication programmes including new and revised manuals being issued by the Society of American Archivists. He also stated the NAS will publish a guide concerning preservation and disaster planning for smaller repositories.

National Archives of the Cook Islands

Correspondent: Kauraka Kauraka

The most recent additions to the Archives have been from the Prime Minister's Department and from the Education Department. A few items were received from private individuals.

Regulations for admission to Archives, for transfer of records and for the destruction of records have been drafted for presentation to the Minister of Arts and Culture.

Our short term project is to obtain funds and assistance for shelving. Our long term project is obtaining funds for the renovation of the whole building complex and even the building of a new one. One project, which

is tentative, is the creation of a government microfilming bureau under the administration of the Archives. No funds are yet available.

There are now two new members of staff—one groundsman/cleaner, and one Archivist trainee.

Also, we now have a separate budget for the Archives as a government department.

Federated States of Micronesia

Correspondent: Jones S. George

There are two items which I think are newsworthy at this time and they are as follows:

First is the move to the new National Capital and its dedication in the State of Pohnpei. Over 4,000 people from all four states of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and foreign dignitaries which included the Vice President of the Republic of Kiribati; new Australian Resident Ambassador to the FSM; the U.S. Representative and Rear Admiral T. J. Johnson; the Israeli Ambassador to the FSM; the New Zealand Representative and Consuls General from Japan, Korea, and the Philippines and representatives from China, Britain, Republic of the Marshall Islands and the United Nations gathered on November 3 1989 to dedicate the new impressive \$11 million nine-building Capitol in Palikir, Pohnpei State. A festive two-day celebration was highlighted by traditional dances from all four states, including a Yapese dance which has been performed in Yap itself for decades but never before performed outside of Yap State.

“Unity” was the main theme of these celebrations and for two days the concept was embraced by the enthusiastic participants who also were celebrating the third anniversary of independence and the implementation of the Compact of Free Association with the United States.

Second is my ongoing Records Management training. More than thirty (30) FSM National Government Executive Branch employees mostly the Secretaries, Administrative Officers and Assistants and Clerks are currently attending a one-month training course held at the FSM National Capital and contacted by the Administrator for the Division of Archives and Historic Preservation (Jones S. George). This course was mainly to train everyone, especially those who are involved daily with records management, in a new file classification system as well as files disposition procedures. Training got underway on February 1 1990 and will continue until March 1 1990. A pilot implementation period will follow right after the completion of the training and if it (classification) turns out to be workable, then the President will be requested to issue a Presidential directive to regularize it for appropriate implementation.

French Polynesia

Correspondent: P. Morillon, Chef du service des Archives

Report to PARBICA, 1989. Translated by M. Roper. Reproduced by kind permission of the PARBICA Journal.

The preservation and development of archives are recent pre-occupations, inherent in the great upheavals experienced by our society over the past thirty years. They are tied more to the concept of administration than to Polynesian civilisation itself, which at heart has always remained an oral civilisation.

History

Historically one can say that it was in June 1859 that the colonial administration became interested in the preservation of its archives by creating the post of "conservateur", but it must always be recognised that concern for the preservation of this archival heritage was not one of the major pre-occupations of that administration. In fact, the Territory of French Polynesia had to wait until 20 June 1962 before it was finally endowed with an archive service. The mission of this service was to manage and control the public archives and to safeguard private archives of historical interest. In April 1983 Polynesia was given archival regulations and at the same time the functions of the archive service were brought up-to-date.

Today we are approaching with confidence the last phase of our archival plans with, on the one hand, the construction of a modern archive repository with a capacity of 12,000 linear metres, co-financed by the State and the Territory; and, on the other hand, by the clarification of relations between the State and the Territory in relation to the development of public archives.

The Present Position

Public Archives

Administratively, French Polynesia is both a part of the French State and the Territory of French Polynesia. These are two quite distinct entities which, for practical and economic reasons, have both agreed to regard the archives produced by each of the entities as a common heritage, preserved in the repository of the public archives of the Territory (having agreed that the transfer of documents will be governed by clearly defined procedures). Thus, for the State, we can say that with the exception of archives relating to sovereignty (the archives of the High Commission), all the archives produced by the services of the State proper, like the "communes", will in future be controlled and preserved by the territorial archive service. Similarly, in respect of the Territory, the control and preservation of the entirety of the archives of territorial services will be

within the exclusive competence of the archive service. It should be noted that the archives of ministers and their private offices ("cabinets") are still not assimilated into the public archives.

The present archive repository, which has a capacity of 1,000 linear metres, is full and not well adapted for the preservation of our heritage. All transfers of archives by the administrative services have been forbidden for more than five years. The archival heritage preserved in the repository, especially the newspaper collections, is in general in a deplorable state of preservation. The conservation treatment of this mass of documents, and in particular those prior to 1940, is a pre-condition of their description and consultation.

Transfers to the archives by the administrative services will resume on the opening of the new repository 1990. Although prescribed by the regulations, transfers will depend in future more on our effectiveness in processing, arranging and describing the information, that is to say on our ability to provide a service which will ensure the better management of administrative information, rather than on the formalities of administrative control.

Private archives

I remarked at the beginning of my report that Polynesian society was a society of oral traditions. The taste for the written word is still little developed. I would go so far as to say that the ordinary person experiences a certain fear when faced with the written word. What then of private archives?

They are underdeveloped, indeed non-existent. The service has received to date only two deposits of important private archives (150 linear metres of records of assistant judge-advocates). A collection of oral traditions is in hand and, in the interest of the preservation of the oral patrimony, a copy is always sent as a matter of course to us. So far as oral life-histories are concerned, they are not very numerous.

For the rest, if there is no doubt that the large commercial institutions (e.g. banks) possess archives, it is not certain that business companies, like trade unions, set a high value on their records or consider them, on a par with their staff and equipment, as one of their business resources.

This is then totally virgin territory and it is up to us to make those concerned more aware of the need for the better management and preservation of this heritage.

Problems of Resources

With the opening of a repository for the territorial archives in December of 1989, we are going to be confronted by a lack of qualified technical personnel. We have to tackle this fundamental issue, on which our future

depends. In this respect, we can say that we are seeking the establishment of a training course. Given the state of our records, a technical training course aimed at the repair and rebinding of the records would be welcome.

That is briefly the present position. "The store house of history"—we were that yesterday; to be sure we were frequented by academic researchers, but we were almost ignored by the administration and the public. On our willingness to integrate ourselves into the administrative process, on the resources which we will employ in providing a service (I mean by that the capacity which we will have to provide the benefit of a service which is widely recognised) will depend the outreach of our service within our society.

Hocken Library, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand

Correspondent: Peter Miller.

Stage two of the move of all holdings of archives and manuscripts to premises at 137 Leith Street, Dunedin, duly took place during January and February 1990. The result is that for the first time in over ten years virtually everything is now housed in the one building, albeit not for long as shelf space has already run out.

1989 was a very busy year with stage one of the move in April/May, and preparations for the second shift commencing in November. Despite this, the archivists still found time to receive 380m of archives and manuscripts.

The Otago/Southland Branch of the Archives and Records Association of New Zealand ran a very successful two-day introductory seminar on records management last November. It drew registrants from local and central government as well as business firms and larger community organisations. Topics covered included mail management, classification systems, records storage, and retention and disposal. There was also a visit to the records and archives sections of the Dunedin City Council.

National Archives and Public Records Services of Papua New Guinea

Correspondent: Nancy Lutton

The new Chief Archivist, Nancy Lutton, took up her position 4 October 1989. All the Port Moresby staff are now located in the new building, though it is becoming increasingly apparent that a presence needs to be kept in the old. The old repository is now designated for semi-current records, and there is a great deal of re-organisation of space required, not to mention cleaning out the dust of many years, before all is ready for reception of consignments of records from departments.

A bitter blow was experienced when the administrative wing of the

old building, which had been redesigned to house a conservation laboratory, was by ministerial direction handed over to the National Intelligence Organisation. The latter had been burnt out of their quarters and had nowhere to go. We hope it will not be forever, and meanwhile we are planning to make a temporary laboratory in the old workroom area of the old repository.

The Archives Services staff spearheaded by Gabriel Gerry are working steadily on Series Descriptions, and this particular finding aid will be the first to be computerised. We are somewhat limited in our choice, but we are using UNESCO'S CDS/ISIS software which is free and on which a two-week course was recently held in Port Moresby to familiarise librarians and archivists with it. The National Archives hopes it will not be too long before an IBM compatible micro-computer with hard disk can be obtained, and meanwhile the Series Description data base is being established on one of the National Library's micro-computers, next door.

Work has also begun on the Photographic Archives, a large collection from the former Officer of Information. A volunteer, Carol Dalziel, a qualified librarian with computer experience is working on this and also establishing the Photographic Description data base using the same software.

Five members of National Archives staff recently gave lectures at an Archives and Records Management Workshop conducted by Library Studies Department at the University of Papua New Guinea. National Archives will also be involved in the introductory course in Archives and Records Management to be held the first semester 1990, both in giving lectures and providing work experience for the students.

The Patrol Reports, some of our most sought after and interesting archives are now being microfilmed in their entirety under the direction of Dadara Kanaroua, Chief Micrographics Officer. There is a happy liaison with the University of California, San Diego, Melanesian Studies Research Center, which is supplying the films and chemicals for processing. On receipt of the microfiche, they are then indexing the reports onto Pro-cite software and providing us with a disk which we can access here.

The Chief Archivist recently visited the Lae Branch of the National Archives. The repository there is badly sited and there has been a recommendation to close it down. However, talks were held with various parties in Lae and we hope there will be some support for upgrading the services provided and relocation of the accommodation.

The Bougainville Mining crisis has severely affected the public service in Papua New Guinea by cutting the funds available, and for 1990, the Archives is allowed no capital equipment purchases at all. However, so far the staff is not affected, we do have our new building and enough funds to keep operational for the time being. Savings may need to be made in reducing the hours the airconditioning is on, for instance rather

a worry in this climate. The assistance of support groups such as the Friends of the National Library, who recently presented us with a light table for viewing photographic slides, is greatly appreciated and in these circumstances, of great importance.

New Guinea Collection, University of Papua New Guinea

Correspondent: Sam Kaima

A short three-day workshop on archives and records management was sponsored by the University of Papua New Guinea's Department of Library and Information Studies from November 31 to October 2 1989. A record number of twenty three participants attended the workshop representing different government departments, the two Universities and several other private organizations. In three short days, a lot has been discussed and recommendations made for future.

The workshop has been successful and participants have recommended the need for such workshops in the future to assist them. A lot of the participants have never had any formal training and they have expressed that further workshops be run in the future. Future workshop topics have been identified, all based on the needs of the participants. These workshops will be run not only in Port Moresby but attempts will be made to go out of the city to the other provincial centers to meet the records officers in the entire country.

Vanuatu National Archives

Correspondent: K. Willie Toa

The number of staff remains the same: Chief Archivist, Assistant Archivist, Secretary Typist, and one Clerk/Conservator. In April this year, we will employ two students from one of our Colleges on a temporary basis who will assist in cataloguing. The programme will be for this year and early January 1991. The British High Commissioner in Port Vila has agreed to fund this project as a gift to the Vanuatu Government for the Tenth Independence Anniversary celebration. The total money requested is VT.222,000. This amount will go towards allowance and stationery.

1990 Budget: This year the Government of Vanuatu has allocated VT.7,000,000 for the running of the whole Cultural Centre, which comprises the Archives, Museum and Library. Therefore this VT.7,000,000 is being divided between each Section and each will receive VT.2,33,333.

Extensions: N.P.S.O. have sent a request to the Swedish Government for funding. The estimated cost is over VT.4,000,000 and this includes air-conditioning, mobile shelves, lighting and other equipment.

Legislation: The Legislation is still held up in the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Government Records Service, Hong Kong

Correspondent: Don Brech

Following restructuring of the Government Records Co-ordination Unit and the Public Records Office, the Government Records Service was established on 1 September 1989 in the Office of the Chief Secretary. The re-organisation is aimed at providing a more effective administrative structure to advise on the formulation of Government records policy and undertake the planning and implementation of records programs and the delivery of records services.

The Government Records Service comprises a Special Duties Unit with responsibilities relating to the transfer of records to the future Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong in 1997, a Public Records Office concerned with preservation and administration of archival records and a Records Management Office to provide support for a Government-wide records management program.

A review of records management in Hong Kong Government has recently been undertaken as a basis for policy development and forward planning.

Within its first month, the Government Records Service was pleased to welcome two visitors from Australia, Dr Stephen Ellis of Central Office, Australian Archives and Bruce Burne of Melbourne.