

NEWS NOTES

Edited by Judy Seeff

J. S. Battye Library of Western Australian History, Library and Information Service of Western Australia

Correspondent: Glenda Oakley

The Friends of Battye Library have published *Convict Records of Western Australia* by Gillian O'Mara. It is planned that this be the first in a series of reference aids, guides and bibliographies to support the J. S. Battye Library and State Archives of Western Australia collections. Funds raised from the program will be used in projects to support these collections.

Convict Records of Western Australia is the result of seven years' research into convicts arriving in Western Australia. The 52-page volume describes in detail how to go about researching convicts using the published sources, and finding the most elusive archival records. The records are carefully and fully described, including how to find the records wherever they are. Records are listed by title, and an index gives subject access. For researchers who may feel daunted, a suggested "plan of attack" is included. (See Publication Notes for ordering details.)

The Oral History Collection continues to receive interviews on a range of topics. Projects recently lodged include the Wheatbelt Wetlands Project and the Fremantle Prison Project. In the 18 interviews of the Wheatbelt Wetlands Project, wheatbelt pioneers talk about the salination of the wetlands, and the subsequent changes to the flora and fauna of the district. The Fremantle Prison Project is a series of interviews with people involved with Fremantle Prison over a period of time. People of all levels and occupations are interviewed, including prisoners, warders and spouses.

In a literary vein, an interview with Elizabeth Jolley has been lodged. This interview was a joint project with the National Library of Australia, as part of the Western Australian Author Project.

Australian War Memorial, Research Centre

Correspondent: Anne-Marie Schwirtlich

Information Services

After its five-month closure last year, the Research Centre has attracted a considerable number of visitors seeking access to the Memorial's collection. With the stricter limitations now placed on the service level accorded written and telephone enquiries, researchers are increasingly having to accept more responsibility for their own research.

The Education Section's innovative Discovery Room holiday program, which opened in January, provides orientation for school students and family groups seeking information about individuals who served in the 1914-18 War. The program encourages more independent enquiry in the Research Centre.

Printed and Written Records

Since last report, two leaflets have been produced for general distribution. The first, *Introducing the Research Centre*, was prepared primarily for the use of researchers. It provides general information about contacting the Memorial, making enquiries, opening hours and so on. The second, *Donating your records to the Australian War Memorial*, provides basic information about the material we wish to acquire, how potential donors can get in touch, what happens to donations; and raises a couple of legal issues involved in donation.

The project to review, standardise and automate collection descriptions for all Private Records is virtually complete — roughly 200 collections remain to be worked on and entered onto the database.

Private Records is also preparing detailed guides to a handful of collections — for example: Rosenthal, Berryman, Moten.

Official Records has issued the guide to the records of Gavin Long, General Editor, Official History, 1939-45 War (AWM 67). The preparatory work required to microfilm AWM 164, Roll of Honour circulars, 1914-18 War, supplementary series, is complete.

Notable additions to the collection include: the extensive letters of W. Olson, Small Ships Company AIF, 1943-46 (PR90/094); the papers of Driver Olive King, from her service in Serbia, 1915-20 (PR90/178); the papers of Sister Mabel Skerman, 2/5th Australian General Hospital, 1940-45 (PR90/141); the Changi Hospital register, 29 March-19 August, 1945 (incorporated in AWM 127).

Photographs, Sound and Film

Work continues on placing the core collection of photographs on laser disc. The core collection comprises 97,000 images, as at December 1990, approximately 10% of the entire collection.

Capturing the images for the new system has resulted in a "Clayton's" stocktake. This has highlighted gaps in the print collection, together with other collection management problems. While capturing images an effort is being made, simultaneously, to standardise spelling and forms of usage, especially acronyms, in photograph captions on the database.

The Section has noted with interest the comparatively large proportion of new acquisitions from private donors which relate to the South African War, 1899-1902, and to the Gallipoli campaign.

Mortlock Library of South Australian

Correspondent: Roger Andre

During the period under review, the Mortlock Library has been wanting the genial presence of John Love, now enjoying busy retirement from the Public Service. John was appointed State Archivist as successor to General Fisher in 1968, and in 1982 was seconded to work on Archives legislation, subsequently writing a history of the Lands Department. Following the creation of the Public Record Office (now State Records) and the Mortlock Library as separate entities, John's attachment was to Mortlock, where, for one thing, he masterminded a "conspectus" of collection strengths and weaknesses. He puts in an occasional appearance to process records of the Presbyterian Church on a voluntary basis, otherwise devoting his professional skills to university and school archives.

Neil Thomas, John Love's replacement of February 1990, has processed a significant body of records of the broad-minded Unitarian Church, spanning 1857-1989. Other substantial donations have included records of the lamented Miller Anderson Limited, whose department store was long an Adelaide landmark, records of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, 1908-1983 and records of the Stock Exchange of Adelaide, 1887-1987, which, in the main, survived disastrous fires of 1938 and 1983. Interest on General Motors Holden's donation to the State Library Foundation has enabled preliminary organisation of the huge Holden's deposit of records to be undertaken, with David Spencer employed especially for this purpose.

Photographic collections, for the most part in the process of being recorded on video disc, received considerable exposure through an exhibition of the work of F. A. Joyner, considered Australia's first pictorialist photographer. Mounting of prints from the original glass-plate negatives in hand-tooled albums has been funded by Rotary International.

Achievements of John Riddoch Rymill, who led what was probably the last, major Antarctic exploration, the British Graham Land Expedition of 1934-1937, were illustrated through a display of albums and artefacts lent by Dr. Eleanor Rymill, of Old Penola. Through the

generosity of Adelaide Brighton Cement, along with Friends of the State Library, three watercolours by Edward Snell, depicting life on the Yorke Peninsula in 1849, have been purchased.

The J. D. Somerville Oral History Collection, which observes its fourth anniversary in February 1991 as the central repository for oral history in South Australia, continues to expand rapidly. The holdings of the collection are now increasing at the rate of about 300 hours of material annually; the majority being donated, rather than commissioned, interview programs. However, the Oral History Officer, Beth Robertson, is closely involved as a consultant with a high percentage of the current interviewing programs entering the collection.

Projects of note in this category in 1990 included *Abortion in South Australia before 1970*, *Italo-Australian Women in South Australia* and *A History of the Le Messurier Family*, involved in shipping and timber companies. Beth Robertson has also developed ties with a number of community arts workers, and encouraged them to begin donating to the Mortlock Library the significant interview collections they create.

The Oral History Officer also conducts a limited amount of interviews, concentrating on life-story interviews, which are not well represented in the donated materials. Her latest interviewee was a professional racing cyclist during the 1920s and '30s, and a cycle shop employee and owner all his working life. His ten-hour interview provides detailed insights into this little-documented but very colourful area of sporting and business history.

The industrial scene for archivists has brightened, with the Director of the Department of Local Government reversing her position, and now giving full support to the inclusion of Archivists in the professional stream of the restructured Public Service, along with Librarians, Curators and Conservators.

Queensland State Archives

Correspondent: Linda Bell

Much change is afoot for Queensland State Archives this year. A change of department, separation from the State Library, a review and the construction of a new building will all take place within the next twelve to eighteen months, and we will never be the same again.

A review of the Premier's Department last year by the Public Service Management Commission recommended that Queensland State Archives separate from the State Library, be established as a separate organisation, and transfer to the Administrative Services Department. This is all to take place by mid-1991.

The Electoral and Administrative Review Commission *Report on Freedom of Information* was released in December 1990. Freedom of

Information legislation is now at the draft stage and will be implemented in the near future. Along with its FOI recommendations, the report indicated the need for "... a separate review of existing archives legislation and the administrative practices and resources of the Queensland State Archives" (Section 5.41), which will also take place about mid-1991.

Due to a recent initiative of the State Government to boost the building industry and employment in Queensland, the new archives building in Runcorn (which was shelved last year) has now been brought forward. A completion date of November 1992 has been suggested.

The recent transfer of Cabinet Minutes, 1957-1960 (the first official record of Cabinet decisions) will be the subject of a formal presentation by the Premier of Queensland, the Hon. Wayne Goss, MLA, on Wednesday, January 23, 1991, and an exhibition to be held in the foyer of the State Library.

At the moment we're not sure which is worse, the famine or the feast. Unfortunately, both put a strain on staff and resources, and some projects may have to be deferred. However, we are moving forward, and we're sure most of the change will be for the better.

Australian Archives

Correspondent: S. B. Skrzypek

Mr. George Nichols, Director-General of the Australian Archives, attended the 27th International Conference of the Round Table on Archives, in September 1990. The theme of the conference, which was held in Dresden, Germany, was *Archives and archivists serving to protect the cultural and national heritages*. Prior to the conference, the Director-General made brief visits to the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, USA, the Canadian National Archives and the Public Record Office in the United Kingdom.

In November and December 1990, Ms. Ina Koneczna, the Archives Chief Preservation Advisor, travelled to North America and Europe. The purpose of her visit was to obtain information on government policies and practices relating to the use of recycled, permanent and archival papers. Ms. Koneczna's research was undertaken to support the Archives' work on developing standards for papers.

The Australian Archives has issued two Paper Specifications — 1990/91 *Permanent Copy Paper for Use in Records*, and 1990/2 *Permanent Bond Paper for Use in Records*. These specifications, which are intended for use by Commonwealth agencies, cover fibre content, alkaline reserve, strength and other requirements, which must be met by paper which is to be used for records purposes. Copies of the specifications are available on request to the Director, Storage and

Preservation, Australian Archives, in Canberra. In addition, the Australian Archives, in conjunction with Standards Australia, is developing an Australian standard for permanent paper, and through its connection with the International Standards Organisation, is involved with the development of international standards for both permanent and archival papers.

Tasmanian Regional Office

Recent additions to the Australian Archives holdings in Tasmania include Officers' Service Records of the 6th Military District, which have a date range of 1894 to 1944. Microfiche copies of these records are available for public use. Records from the Australian National Railways Commission, which include many drawings of buildings, bridges, ways and works dating from the 1880s to the 1920s, are being progressively transferred to the custody of the Tasmanian Regional Office.

Western Australian Regional Office

The Australian Archives Regional Office in Western Australia has recently ensured the preservation of a rare radio message log book. The South Western Area Combined Headquarters Log Book, a Commonwealth record (CRS K809) records messages transmitted at the time of HMAS Sydney's loss, and the Japanese entry into the 1939-1945 War. No previous or subsequent volumes are known to exist. The Australian Archives arranged for the Log Book to be microfilmed, and a copy of the microfiche was presented to the RAAF Association of Western Australia. Copies of the Log Book have also been made for the Australian War Memorial and the Maritime Museum in Western Australia. The original log book is now held in Australian Archives custody in Western Australia.

Northern Territory Regional Office

Construction of an extension to the Archives Northern Territory Office at Nightcliff, Darwin, was completed on 7 January, 1991. The extension is designed to house temporary-value records, and includes a self-service storage facility. It provides an air-conditioned environment which is appropriate for the storage of temporary-value records in a tropical climate. The additional space will enable the existing storage area to be dedicated to permanent-value and security-classified material. Total capacity of the extension is 9800 shelf metres.

National Library of Australia, Manuscripts Section

Correspondent: Graeme Powell

Writers continue to be conspicuous among the recent manuscript acquisitions of the National Library. In addition to the papers of such contemporary writers as Peter Porter, Kevin Hart, David Brooks, Elizabeth Harrower and R. F. Brissenden, the very fine archive of Katherine Susannah Prichard was transferred to the Library. Personal records were also received relating to the artist A. H. Fulwood, the musicians Rex Hobcroft, Patrick Thomas and Ernest Llewellyn, the academic R. S. Parker, the politician Athol Townly, the diplomat Sir James Plimsoll and the former Governor-General Sir Zelman Cowan. Two major organisational archives acquired were the records of the Australian Photographic Society, and the files of Currency Press, the firm which has specialised in publishing Australian plays.

A major project, since the beginning of 1990, has sought to convert entries for all of the Library's 8000 manuscript collections to MARC format for loading onto the Australian Bibliographic Network (ABN). The entries are based either on the *Guide to Collections of Manuscripts Relating to Australia* entries, or the accession register entries. They are transferred to the AMC format developed by the Society of American Archivists and the Research Libraries Group in the United States. So far, about 6000 entries have been converted and a small proportion are already available on ABN. Although descriptions are limited to collection or record group level, the implementation of Supersearch, in September 1990, will give researchers access through almost any of the data in the entries.

Among the researchers in the Manuscript Reading Room in the first half of 1990 were four Harold White Fellows. The poet, Dennis Haskell, worked on the manuscripts of Kenneth Slessor; the linguist, Anna Shnukal, examined documents relating to the Torres Strait Islanders; the historian, Julian Thomas, has been studying the career of the photographer Frank Hurley; and the writer, Roger Millis, has completed the transcription of the 1839 diary of Lady Franklin. The Franklin diary, written in miniscule hand, has been an important but frustrating source for historians for fifty years and it is to be hoped that Mr. Millis' work will result in it being available in published form.

State Archives of Western Australia

Correspondent: Janine Douglas

Establishment of Records Management Branch

In 1988, the Western Australian Public Service Commission conducted a Functional Review of the State Archives. The report of that review, released in 1989, made recommendations concerning the need to engage more actively in public records management matters.

State Archives responded to these recommendations by planning for and establishing a Records Management Branch within its organisational parameters. On November 5, 1990, this branch officially came into being with the appointment of a Manager: Records Management.

The Branch, under the direction of its Manager, Janine Douglas, will focus on the management of current and intermediate records and records systems. It will provide comprehensive professional support and assistance for records management throughout government agencies. This assistance and support will be provided through:

- advisory and consultancy services
- training
- intermediate storage facilities
- resources (texts, guides, publications).

Issues and Priorities

The number and range of issues in relation to records management raised by the Functional Review and associated surveys and reports, is quite daunting. Nonetheless, with good planning and the support of the Archives Branch and government Records Managers, the Records Management Branch is embarking on a systematic path to achieving them all.

Priorities for the Branch relate to standards for records management, training programs and the provision of adequate and appropriate storage for intermediate records. Much valuable work has already been undertaken on rationalising and optimising the current available facilities. The Branch will also be encouraging and assisting agencies with the formulation of Retention and Disposal Schedules.

The existing Archives Branch and the new Records Management Branch will work cohesively to contribute to the essential components of the records life-cycle that begins with the creation at source and ends with the delivery of a record to the client. While some aspects of this cycle are more or less exclusive to one or other of the Branches, some are not. One area of overlap will be the issues associated with appraisal.

Appraisal Process

Until recently, appraisal has always been done by the Archives Branch, but the establishment of the new Branch has revealed that some records management involvement is also warranted. In appraisal there is potential for every record to become an archive, and therefore archivists need to enter into the situation. By the same token, records managers have a good understanding of the factors leading to disposition decisions. They know what precedents there are in the

nature of legislation and/or pre-existing schedules, and they can offer valuable input on the design and formulation of schedules.

It has been possible for State Archives to formulate an appraisal process which revolves around an interface between the two Branches.

Awareness of records management is growing rapidly today. Managers and executives are increasingly aware that the efficient control of records leads to effective management.

The State Archives of Western Australia is pleased and excited to be involved with this most important area of information management, and we are all committed to a Branch which aims to support and encourage the advancement of records management.

Archival Heritage Program, Victorian Public Record Office

Correspondents: Tony Leviston and Diana Barrie

The Archival Heritage Program was established by the Minister for Property and Services, Ian Baker, in October 1990. The Program is composed of the Public Record Office, which handles the core of the Program's responsibilities as set out by the *Public Records Act, 1973*, and the Policy and Planning Unit, which is responsible for the promotional and display aspects of the Program.

The Program aims to increase public access to the Public Record Office's holdings and to develop public and government awareness of the role of the Public Record Office, through a range of self-funding programs. This will include the seeking of corporate sponsorship and public donations.

Loretta Hambly, formerly Director of Corporate Resources in the Department of Property and Services, was appointed Director Archival Heritage/Keeper of Public Records, in October 1990.

Chris Hurley has been appointed Chief Archivist in the Archival Heritage Program.

A major task of the Archival Heritage Program has been the development of a business plan. The plan is expected to be finalised and released in February or March 1991.

In late 1990, two significant publications emerged, providing staff with reasons to celebrate.

The first was a *Report on State Government Metropolitan Storage Needs*, researched and written by Dr. Jane O'Brien. Commissioned by a Government Accommodation Task Force and submitted to Cabinet, the report has limited circulation, although certain findings were included in a Special Report on Accommodation Management presented to Parliament by the Attorney-General. The report focuses on the Ministry of Education as a model and case study, outlining the major records storage problems identified within the agency, and the

associated costs. The report provided detailed analyses of the comprehensive costs to Government of public records storage in Victoria. It also demonstrates significant savings to Government through the centralisation of non-current records storage (with an agency like the PRO) as opposed to individual agencies maintaining in-house storage facilities. Negotiations between the PRO and the Ministry of Education concerning implementation of the Report's recommendations have been initiated.

The second publication was the *Summary Guide 1990*. Representing three years of extensive (and painstaking) research into the administrative development and structure of the Victorian State Government, *Summary Guide 1990* is a finding aid to the Victorian Government administration and to the holdings of the Public Record Office of Victoria, and will eventually supersede the List of Holdings 1985. Although not yet officially launched (at the time of writing), *Summary Guide 1990*, which comprises an Inventory of Agencies, an Inventory of Series, Group and Agency Indexes and a How to Use It Guide, will be available for purchase in a combined hardcopy and microfiche format during 1991. It is expected that the Summary Guide will be updated periodically.

Complementing the first edition of the Summary Guide is the first edition of the *Digest of the Public Records of Victoria*. This publication maps out the structure of Victorian Government administration in a more abbreviated form than in the Summary Guide, providing a starting point for researchers to focus on their desired field of research. It also reports on the current state of Victoria's public archives (including disposal arrangements). The digest is already available for purchase in PRO search rooms.

Other news includes the official opening of the Conservation Centre, at the Laverton Repository, which provides joint laboratory facilities for the PRO and the Victorian Centre for the Conservation of Cultural Material.

Graduate Department of Librarianship, Archives and Records, Monash University

Correspondent: Sue McKemmish

One of the primary aims of our courses is to integrate theoretical studies with practical work and exposure to the real world of archives and records. Practicum placements provide an excellent opportunity for our students to begin to apply their theoretical understandings and newly developed skills. Our practicum comprises a six-week placement in an archival or records management environment. It can be taken as a continuous period of six weeks or broken into two three-week placements, either during the mid-year or Christmas-New Year

vacation. Last year's students were placed with the State Bank of Victoria, the Public Record Office, Victoria, the Victorian Ministry of Education, the Melbourne City Council, the ANZ Bank, and Monash University's own Archives and Records Administration. One lucky student, Carolyn Theodore, completed her practicum placement earlier this year with Jan Nokes at the Bank of Nova Scotia in Toronto.

In addition to practicum placements, institutions such as Australian Archives, Victoria, Public Record Office, Victoria, BHP Archives and Monash Archives and Records Administration, have provided valuable work exercises for students undertaking the subject LBD/M454 Handling Recorded Information, and students in this subject were also involved in an extended survey of records management practices at the nearby Outer Eastern College of TAFE. The survey results provided the basis for teaching practical skills in systems development, records storage, records appraisal and disposal and survey techniques.

A number of students also participated in a field trip to Canberra where they were warmly welcomed to the Australian Archives (Central Office and ACT Regional Office), the Manuscripts Section of the National Library of Australia, the Australian National University Archives, the Australian War Memorial, the CSIRO Archives, and the National Film and Sound Archives.

Support by the major archival institutions and the records management industry has been a critical factor in the success of these programs, as has the establishment of close links with the Monash Archives and Records Administration.

One of our diplomats, Winnie Pang, has been recruited by the Department of Administrative Services in Canberra as a graduate administrative trainee and her program this year will include a placement with Australian Archives. Winnie is the first recipient of the ASA prize for an outstanding graduate of the course.

A submission has been prepared for the Inquiry into Australia as an Information Society being conducted by the House of Representatives Standing Committee for Long Term Strategies, chaired by Barry Jones. The Inquiry's terms of reference do not directly address archives and records issues. The main purpose of the submission is to draw attention to an essential component of a National Information Policy: the "archival document" and its management by records managers, who look after current archival documents, and archivists, who are responsible for those archival documents selected for archival documents selected for permanent retention. The submission is published elsewhere in this issue of *Archives and Manuscripts*.

University of New South Wales Archives

Correspondent: Karin Brennan

During 1990, archives staff completed a major records survey of schools and other academic units on campus. Eighty-two per cent of the departments responded and supplied detailed information which will form the basis for some Archives planning and activities in the near future.

The archives also experienced a major staff change. Dr. Linda Bowman, Coordinator of the University Interview Project, left us to take up a lecturing position at the Australian Defence Force Academy. Our new Oral Historian is Victoria Barker. Her first task was to get the Archives third oral history interview ready for publication. The 128-page illustrated account by Sir Rupert Myers, entitled *Rupert Horace Myers: Vice-Chancellor of the University of New South Wales, 1969-1981*, was launched by the Chancellor, Justice Gordon Samuels. The launch proved a happy occasion for staff new and old to keep contact and share reminiscences of times gone by.

In mid-year, the Assistant University Archivist, Karin Brennan, went to Western Samoa to take part in an "historical records" survey undertaken by PARBICA members, for the Western Samoa Government.

The Archives have been fortunate in receiving the nationally sought-after private papers of Emeritus Professor, Sir Philip Baxter. Sir Philip played a dominant role in forming and shaping the University of New South Wales, first as Director and then as Vice-Chancellor of the then newly established university.

University of Queensland, Archives and Records Management Services

Correspondent: Glenda Acland

The strategic plan for Archives and Records Management Services is working well, and a total time-line management system for the continuum of records of the University is being progressively put into place. Staff members for the three units within ARMS — Records Administration, University Archives, Convocation Registry — now total twenty.

Major progress has been made on our appraisal project for the Central Administration's subject files, 1965-1985. Some 20,000 files have been processed to date, and a retention and disposal schedule is now operating for a significant portion of the series. A disposal schedule for staff files has been approved and is being implemented. Some 15,000 files will need to be examined in the application of this schedule.

A new system of current record-keeping was introduced during 1990, supported by the computerised Records Management and Information Retrieval System, ParlAirs. Significant additions to the University's computer hardware early in 1991 will enable more effective use and further development of this software. A *Records Administration User Information Guide* was produced mid-year, and a *Records Administration Procedures and Operations Manual* (some 250 pp.) has just been completed. Both publications are "firsts" for the institution.

The Vital Records Micrographics Program was disrupted by the non-availability of the Micrographic Bureau, and by increasing costs. However, the Senior Examination Registers are now nearing completion, and the program has been funded again for 1991.

Accommodation and space remain a problem. The intermediate storeroom had airconditioning installed in 1990. This room is now being used for some archival material, owing to the shortage of space in the University Archives repository. Searchroom numbers remain relatively high but searchroom space had to be reduced to one place (from three) during 1990 to accommodate the additional professional position and computer hardware.

The University Archivist is convening a University Working Party to consider the impact of Freedom of Information on University policy and record-keeping procedures, in the light of proposed State Government legislation.

Australian Joint Copying Project

Correspondent: Margaret E. Phillips

Since the last report in May 1990, two consignments of film have been received from London, the second of which is currently being prepared for despatch to partner libraries. The Public Record Office has been slow to supply film, and only two classes, Air Ministry, Air Historical Branch Records 1911-31 (Air 1) and Treasury, Chancellor of the Exchequer's Office Miscellaneous Papers 1853-1949 (T. 172), have been received.

The Miscellaneous Series film received covers a fascinating diversity of subjects from diaries and letters of early travellers to Australia and the records of the Valley of Lagoons, an early grazing property in North Queensland, to the scientific papers of men such as Sir Baldwin Spencer (biologist and ethnographer) and Ernest Westlake (geologist) which were filmed at the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford. The records of the Aborigines Protection Society, which document race relations in Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific in the second half of the last century, are a particularly important acquisition. Further instalments of film from the Hydrographic Department at Taunton have arrived.

Surveyors' letters 1828-1909 include correspondence from Captains P. P. King, J. Wickham and Owen Stanley. The Remark Books 1833-61 of ships such as HMS *Rattlesnake*, Buffalo and Fly were kept by commanders or masters recording discoveries and other matters of hydrographical interest. Survey Data Books 1801-1946, including those compiled by Captains Matthew Flinders, P. P. King, Owen Stanley and F. Blackwood, have been filmed. Detailed descriptive lists are available for any of these collections, upon request.

In order to publicise AJCP microfilm more widely, a program of creating descriptions at class and collection level, for entry onto the Australian Bibliographic Network (ABN), is underway. At the time of writing, slightly more than half of the PRO classes have entries on ABN. The M Series is still to receive attention.

In *News Notes*, May 1990, it was reported that two additional parts of the AJCP *Handbook* were in preparation. Part 9, which lists personal collections filmed at the Public Record Office, London, is expected to be available by April, and Part 10, which lists Dominion Office classes filmed, will be available in the second half of the year.

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Correspondent: Warwick Hirst

The latest spotlight in the Mitchell Library is shining on our small and eclectic oral history collection. Like Topsy, it has been left to grow, and has done so slowly. The interest of the State Librarian in this important area, coinciding with the completion of a survey of oral history in New South Wales, has resulted in the appointment of Rosemary Block as Oral History Project Officer. This decision, to take a larger part in the oral history arena, has been received with much interest — and some relief — by institutions and oral history librarians. The Library will offer itself as a central repository for the many significant oral history projects which are being conducted in NSW by individuals and institutions. It is not anticipated that the Library will establish its own major interviewing program. It will also provide a range of technical services to guarantee an archival level of excellence in recordings. The Oral History Project Officer will work closely with the NSW branch of the OHAA.

The mutiny on the *Bounty* will be the subject of an exhibition to be held in the galleries of the Library, from 26 February to 23 June 1991. The State Library, in its Dixon and Mitchell Libraries, holds the world's pre-eminent collection of material relating to the voyage. This collection has been supplemented for the exhibition by key items from other institutions including the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, National Library of Australia and Museum of Queensland.

Nel Nuovo Paese (In This New Land), a display celebrating the first anniversary of the launching of the Italians in New South Wales Project, was held in the lobby of the Mitchell Reading Room, from November 1990 until March. The display reflected the contributions of some prominent and lesser known Italo-Australians to our development as a multicultural society. A selection of diaries, letters and photographs acquired through the project, was showcased for the first time. Included were items from the personal papers of former Sydney radio broadcaster Mama Lena Gustin, and watercolour cartoons painted by Lamberto Yonna while he was interned in Australia during World War II.

Mitchell Library Manuscripts Guide No. 14, to the papers of May Gibbs, has now been published, and is available in the Library Shop for \$8.50. It was launched at the opening of *At Home with May Gibbs*, an exhibition celebrating May Gibbs Week, 1990, held in the Mitchell Galleries.

Recent significant acquisitions have included the two earliest surviving letters written by Patrick White as a six-year-old child in 1918; the personal papers of Dr. Terry Metherell, former State Minister for Education; the papers of the novelist Amy Witting, including literary manuscripts, correspondence and diaries; and a report on whaling at Jervis Bay in 1912, by the distinguished naturalist, David Stead.

The filming of manuscripts from the Angus and Robertson archives is proceeding, along with that of records from the Benevolent Society of NSW. Numerous immigrant journals, ship-board diaries and ships' logs have been filmed in recent months.

Other microfilming projects have included diaries, field-books and sketch books of T. L. Mitchell, correspondence 1819-1877 of Alexander Berry (being filmed for the Shoalhaven Historical Society), and twelve volumes of NSW Governor's Despatches, 1848-1854. Microfilm copies of the many immigrant lists from these latter volumes will be a useful addition to the Ships Index on cards kept at the Reference Desk.

Westpac Banking Corporation

Correspondent: Clive Smith

Following a review of the Archives' operations by the former General Manager, Group Audit, the Archives has been renamed Group Archives and Records and has assumed responsibility for records retention and records security policies group-wide. Priority will be given to developing records disposal schedules for those areas of the bank that have not had schedules prepared to date, and Group Archives and Records will take a more active role. To raise Group

Archives' profile within the Bank, the title of the unit head has been changed to Chief Archivist.

A diskette-based system for listing of records for transfer to archival custody has been successfully tested and has now been adopted for general use by Head Office departments in Sydney. Paper-based transfer lists are no longer accepted. The diskette system involves Group Archives and Records preparing a customised diskette for each Head Office department. The diskette contains the relevant records disposal schedule and a program to control listing of records for transfer. These lists are subsequently downloaded into Group Archives' databases and will eventually form the basis of descriptive inventories. Bank staff who were formally reluctant to type or write records transfer lists have taken to the new system with enthusiasm. The new system has also significantly decreased the error rate in setting destruction/review dates.

Senior Archivist, Lyn Milton, has been busy preparing for a major exhibition of archival material at the Westpac Museum in The Rocks, Sydney. Documents relating to the founding of all banks in the Westpac "family" are being exhibited, including the first Minute book (1816-1819) and the charter granted by Governor Macquarie in 1817. The exhibition opened in April 1991 and will run until after the ASA's conference in June 1991.