Reviews

Edited by Sue McKemmish

Publications

Elsie Freeman Finch, editor, *Advocating Archives: An Introduction to Public Relations for Archivists.* The Society of American Archivists and the Scarecrow Press, Inc., Metuchen, 1994. 198 pp. Hardcover. Indexed. ISBN 0 8108 2935 5. Approximately A$50 if ordered through James Bennett or US$45 if ordered directly from the Society of American Archivists.

A little over twenty years ago, a handful of archivists, I among them, met together to form the first special interest group on archival public programs and outreach within the Society of American Archivists. This modest act marked the first formal recognition of advocacy, an increasingly important, yet still largely unheralded, core function of all successful organisations, especially for lesser known ones like archives. Then as now, Elsie Freeman Freivogel Finch, dynamic educator, popular speaker and incisive essayist, was in the forefront, exhorting, inspiring, and, most importantly, DOING.

What exactly is *Advocating Archives* about and how does it fit in with existing literature on the topic?

Inversely proportional to its importance, the literature of advocacy for archives and records management is sparse. The most comprehensive treatment of the topic has been provided by the Society of American Archivists publication program. These are the pioneering Basic Manual on *Archives & Records Public Programs* (1982) which I co-authored with Gail Farr, now complemented by this very significant and distinctive book by Elsie Freeman Finch. While neither book specifically defines the terms 'advocacy', 'outreach' or 'public programs', there are basic outlines that we can discern.

Like recordkeeping, advocacy is a *metafunction* that serves/supports other endeavours. Imbedded within an organisation's infrastructure, advocacy only

achieves expression through particular applications, e.g. public relations, training/education, publishing, exhibitions and special event management. Advocacy efforts concentrate upon establishing and nurturing an effective relationship between the archives and its important 'publics', a term initially used to differentiate amongst the different groups that used archival records, e.g. students, academics, genealogists and administrators. In recent years, this notion of 'publics' has been expanded to embrace all parties with an interest or 'stake' in effective recordkeeping regimes, even extending to the cumulative archival record itself and/or the society as a whole as clients of the archives.

Neither book offers practitioners or educators any comprehensive models of content, levels of effort or methodology. Rather, they assert that advocacy plays an essential role in achieving the archival mission and proselytise readers to provide a professional and welcoming outcome oriented interface between archives and their 'publics'. Both texts underscore the importance of integrating advocacy within all archival functions and its central position within planning and management cycles.

The Pederson/Farr manual pioneered a management decision making 'checklist' approach to public program planning which later comprised the 'secret ingredient' behind the runaway success of the first edition of *Keeping Archives*. This simple, but highly effective, framework guided decision-makers through sequences of considerations, enabling them to select and customise or to design promotional or educational activities appropriate for their own archival needs. They also offered specific advice for undertaking common types of public programs. These 'how-to' books explain the mysteries of capturing community-based documentation (oral history, retrospective and survey photography), of preparing publications, exhibitions and slide presentations, and of organising educational activities (lectures, classes, workshops/conferences) and special events.

Finch's *Advocating Archives* assumes the existence of and builds upon the sound administrative framework recommended by Pederson/Farr with an emphasis on forging effective relationships with management and with key 'publics' (donors, media, users, volunteers) and on providing detailed advice for managing the critical enabling services of fundraising, media relations, marketing, managing volunteers and trouble shooting/damage control. Like the Pederson/Farr book, Finch also invites readers to 'shop its contents', i.e. to select the portions most useful to a one's own particular need or context. The desired outcome of both books is to equip readers to select/create an

advocacy regime appropriate for their own varied contexts and to encourage them to mine the literature specific to their chosen activities.

Aims and Scope of *Advocating Archives*

In her 'Introduction', Finch uses the terms 'advocacy' and 'public relations' as quasi-synonyms, asserting that the ultimate goal of advocacy must be enabling access to and use of archives. As Finch explains, it is usually the need for evidence-above-all that necessitates recordkeeping in the first place, whether it be to satisfy a business, regulatory or a personal need. Indeed, it is the integrity and continuing *usefulness* of archival records that transforms them into sources for research. Three case studies and four appendices replete with practical checklists and forms complement the seven formal chapters. She states clearly that *Advocating Archives* does not attempt exhaustive treatment of the chosen aspects of public relations, but rather provides readers with a basic overview from an archival/cultural heritage perspective.

Assessing the Content: Strengths and Weaknesses

Advocating Archives begins with an essay by Finch and Paul Conway, 'Talking to the Angel', which addresses the most basic ingredient in successful advocacy—developing a positive, welcoming and professional relationship with every person one meets inside and outside of the archives. As the Biblical reference to the angel implies, one never knows when, where or in what disguise one will meet an individual who can make or break one's program or career. Conway and Finch intentionally concentrate on the relationship between archives and the face-to-face researcher using archival materials, a choice which, though understandable, I found limiting. The in-person researcher is only one of our 'angels', albeit an important one, but many of our most influential 'publics', e.g. record creators, resource allocators and government regulators, rarely visit our reading rooms and often use facilities, services or expertise far more than records. Although foreshadowed, there is little guidance on providing and nurturing relationships electronically, an increasing feature of the archival landscape. The opportunity to identify the full pantheon of actual and potential archival angels and build relationships with them still awaits.

This stage setter is followed by cogent and authoritative chapters by Judy Hohmann and Megan Sniffen-Marinoff on fundraising and media effectiveness, respectively. Both chapters provide excellent and realistic advice designed to demystify the worlds of philanthropy and mass communications.

Hohmann's 'Money Talk' focus on private rather than public sector fundraising is especially useful. On the critical side, I wish she had included more advice on the specific points to be incorporated in the all important 'case statement', which explains the nature and worthiness of the archives and its particular need for support to prospective donors. Appendix Two offers very useful guidelines on how to approach donors directly and by mail, as well as a self-study questionnaire to assist archivists in designing their fundraising efforts, but the firm's Yes/No provide little useful information for program developers.

Sniffen-Marinoff's chapter 'In Print, On Air', combined with the examples of successful press releases from Appendix One, forms one of the book's strongest segments.

Phil Mooney's general chapter 'Modest Proposals: Marketing Ideas for the Expansionist Archives' exhorts archivists to make the most of their opportunities to educate and attract new audiences by exploiting essential tools such as publications, exhibitions, audiovisual productions and public relations. Whilst the information is helpful and well-presented, Mooney does not break new ground or treat any single aspect in depth. It strikes me as odd, considering his previous writings and background, that he missed the opportunity to fill a major gap in the existing bit by explaining how to develop a realistic and effective marketing plan, beginning with defining the archives' marketable products.

Tim Ericson's chapter 'Anniversaries: a Framework for Planning Public Programs' looks beyond the traditional twenty-five, fifty, seventy-five, one hundred year commemoration to identify opportunities for promoting and building archival awareness which occur as part of ordinary business. Even a cursory review will reveal so many, in fact, that even the most enterprising public programer would have difficulty exploiting them all. Using archival sources to celebrate and enrich public understanding of national, local community or organisational occasions or achievements is a terrific and cost effective way to introduce people to the archives and its work. Because special days, holidays and community festivals occur at predictable intervals, archivists can initiate involvement well in advance and plan to maximise archival benefits. Furthermore, involvement with established community or corporate events facilitates invaluable networking and affords access to influential partners, management infrastructures, funding and promotional expertise otherwise difficult to obtain.

While the use of volunteers and the formation of 'friends groups' are more established within libraries, galleries and museums, the care of archives within libraries, schools and historical societies depends heavily on the work of dedicated volunteers. And in today's stringent economic climate, many larger programs are seeking to develop external resources, either in terms of outright funding or in needed equivalent services, materials and/or expertise. Thus Audray Randle's chapter covering the basics of volunteer recruitment and management is most welcome and useful. Naturally, the advice will need to be adapted to the Antipodean industrial environment and one's own context. Appendix Four includes basic management tips, sample letters and applications forms for recruiting volunteers. Appendix Two offers very useful guidelines on how to approach donors directly and by mail. It also includes a self-study questionnaire to assist archivists in designing their fundraising efforts, but disappoints by directing respondents to tick Yes/No/NA to important considerations rather than to provide the explanations needed by program developers.

In the final chapter, 'Troubleshooting', authors James and Julie Blessor offer clear-headed advice for crisis avoidance, management and resolution. As they so cogently attest, disasters do not discriminate; they inevitably happen to everyone. Proactively identifying and hypothetically dealing with potential problems involving facilities, equipment, services, collections and/or people can often prevent and/or minimise resulting damage. Certainly an accident, blunder or oversight is bad enough in itself, but it is often the inept handling of information during the crisis that does the most damage. The authors pose short scenarios to support their points and encourage readers to evaluate alternative courses of action.

The three case studies, supplied by Matt Blessing, James O'Toole and Michael Kohl, narrate experiences of surviving and thriving media access to a colourful politician's personal papers, a visit by the Pope and a centennial anniversary, respectively. While these provide a 'reality check' for readers anticipating similar occasions, they provide generalist insights and lessons, not extensive 'do's and don'ts'.

Overall, *Advocating Archives* represents a strong and comprehensive addition to the literature of a vital, though poorly articulated function and I congratulate all associated with it. While it reflects its provenance, focusing on US situations, bibliographical sources and values, the clear, readable, authoritative advice

offered in *Advocating Archives* is appropriate for English speaking readers from any context. I strongly recommend it as a basic professional resource for both workplace and personal use.

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Documenting the Future: Policies and Strategies for Electronic Recordkeeping in the New South Wales Public Sector, Archives Authority of New South Wales, Sydney, 1995. ISBN 0 7310 5038 X (available from the Authority, Level 3, 66 Harrington Street, The Rocks, Sydney NSW, 2000).

Keeping Electronic Records: Policy for Electronic Recordkeeping in the Commonwealth Government—Exposure Draft Version 2, Australian Archives, Canberra, 1995. ISBN 0 642 23429 9 (available from Australian Archives, PO Box 34, Dickson ACT, 2602 or e-mail aasales@aa.gov.au).

These two publications represent another major milestone in the advancement of electronic records strategies not only within Australia but around the world. Both are similar in purpose, structure and content and both build on a common perspective of how archives should position themselves to deal with electronic records. Although both draw on the writings of international experts such as David Bearman and Margaret Hedstrom they also incorporate the most recent thinking of Australian experts. Above all, both are concerned about placing ideas and concepts that have been well documented in journal articles at a theoretical level into an environment where they can be applied in the real working world of records creating and recordkeeping.

The objectives of both publications are very similar. The objective of *Keeping Electronic Records* is 'to provide guidance to users and managers of computer systems in the Commonwealth public sector about: the problems associated with managing electronic records; recordkeeping and accountability in the electronic environment; and archival strategies for the management and preservation of electronic records in an accountable way (i.e. as evidence of agency business transactions)'. The objective of *Documenting the Future* is to 'identify, and propose for endorsement, a framework of policy and strategies for electronic recordkeeping in the New South Wales Public Sector'.

Both guidelines are very careful to set out the importance of records, not just from an archival perspective but from the perspective of the business

and accountability requirements of government organisations. In fact, unlike some North American guidelines, the archival requirements are carefully interwoven into the overall recordkeeping framework that institutions should be expected to establish if they are to carry out good government. As *Documenting the Future* explains, 'records and recordkeeping activities play indispensable roles in supporting the ongoing business of government and its agencies, in supporting organisational and public accountability in a democratic system of government and in enriching the cultural resources of the state'. An explanation of the role, relevance and importance of recordkeeping is critical if government officials are to share in the responsibility for the preservation of valuable electronic records as proposed in both guidelines.

They also share a similar perspective on the definition of 'record' and other relevant terms. In this respect, David Roberts' contributions to the terminology issue have been invaluable and have helped to break down the communications barriers with respect in particular to the information technology community. The focus on records as evidence and the role of records as instruments of accountability (based on concepts developed by Sue McKemmish and Frank Upward in particular) are important concepts that are at once understandable and relevant to the variety of communities with which the archives must relate.

At a broader level, however, it will be interesting to see how the definition of 'record' used in these documents is addressed in other jurisdictions either nationally or internationally. In Canada, for instance, both the National Archives of Canada (NAC) Act and the Access to Information (ATI) Act share the same definition of record. While we might argue that a record should contain content, context and structure and be part of a recordkeeping system, Canada's Information Commissioner, who is responsible for investigating complaints made under the ATI Act, would advocate a much broader interpretation—one that would mean that a piece of paper with someone's name on it could be considered a record for the purposes of the ATI Act and, as a consequence, the NAC Act (i.e. it has content, some structure and, with enough research, sufficient context to enable it to provide some evidence of at least one aspect of a given activity). This variation in interpretation reflects a far deeper public policy issue that touches on the choices that a society makes on the domain of recorded information—what should or, for various reasons, should not be considered as records for the purposes of archives, access or privacy laws. The implications of adopting a narrow or broad

interpretation of the concept of record can have a profound impact on how an archives' role in society is perceived.

Regardless of the debate that terminology can generate or the deeper issues that it can reflect, the approaches that both guidelines use to clarify their terms will be extremely useful to any archives that is concerned about communicating the electronic records message to others. In fact *Documenting the Future* contains an excellent summary of key terms and concepts that should be a reference piece by itself. In the future, and as we gain more experience, it might be useful to build on this by clarifying other terms that are quickly becoming as important as 'record'. The definition of terms such as 'function', 'activity', 'process', 'transaction', 'action', 'task', and other related terms will be important if the concept of records as evidence is to have a proper and commonly understood context of its own. Another outstanding area of exploration is the concept of 'metadata'. Although both publications address its nature and importance, and although the work referenced at the University of Pittsburgh has already demonstrated its significance, I sense that our understanding of what it means to use metadata to ensure intellectual control over and access to electronic records through time is still in its infancy. Again, this is an area that could be explored further in future editions of the guidelines.

Both publications provide guidance on how, where, and at what stages the keeping of electronic records should be addressed. The stages include: preliminary investigation; analysis of business activity; identification of recordkeeping requirements; assessment of existing systems; identification of strategies for recordkeeping; design of recordkeeping systems; implementation of recordkeeping systems, and post implementation review. This discussion is combined with brief overviews of the strategies that can be employed based on the 'policy', 'design', 'implementation', and 'standards' perspectives articulated by David Bearman. As well as providing a useful and, again, highly relevant implementation framework, they underscore the need for archives to reconsider how they are currently positioned to meet the challenges presented by electronic records.

Both guidelines also deal with what seems to have become a rather thorny issue—custody of archival records in an archival institution vs distributed or non-custodial control where the records are left indefinitely with the creating agency. Some have argued that the Australian Archives is abdicating its responsibility by releasing a policy that places the care of archival records in

the hands of government agencies. They argue that the policy flies in the face of archival principles because it leaves records in an environment where they might be corrupted. They also question why organisations would want to pay for the continued retention of records for which they have no further use. Others would argue that to avoid becoming a museum of technology, archives will be required to depend on creating agencies for ensuring the ongoing preservation and accessibility of electronic records. They argue that the agencies are in the best position to migrate such records through changes in technology and that the only way that an archives will ensure the ongoing preservation of electronic records will be to work in partnership with others. In fact, they argue that the necessary compromises that would have to be introduced by an archives to ensure a consistent and cost-effective approach to the processing and storage of electronic records (e.g. conversion to standard formats) would far more compromise the integrity, authenticity and reliability of electronic records than any actions the agency might take to migrate and maintain them through time.

In my own view, the decision to adopt a custodial or distributed custodial role should be conducted on a case-by-case basis and should emerge as the outcome of a careful analysis conducted by the parties involved (i.e. the archives and the records creators). In some cases (e.g. atmospheric readings, patents records) organisations will keep records for the long term simply because they are necessary to support the business of the organisation. In other cases (e.g. policy offices, royal commissions) the records may no longer be of value after the policy has been developed or the commission has submitted its report and been disbanded. In either case, however, as soon as the business and accountability requirements of an organisation ceases, it likely will be difficult to convince such organisations to hold onto records simply because they are considered by the archives to have archival value. Many such organisations may question why they are being asked to assume ongoing accountability for records that should no longer be under their control. On the other hand, an archives might argue that the ongoing care of archival records should be a matter of public policy in much the same way as institutions respond to public policies related to bilingualism and employment equity. They might also argue that it would not make economic sense for the archives to absorb all of the costs of acquiring and preserving all of the archival records generated by the government.

Although the guidelines indicate that this has to be a shared responsibility, I think that it is an issue that needs to be lifted even higher than the archives and the creating institutions. It needs to be raised to the level of parliament which should be asked how much society is willing to pay to ensure that records of archival value are preserved. The question of who will look after the records will be irrelevant if the funds are not there to ensure that the records can be preserved at all. Unless such funds are accounted for in the overall costing of new or modified systems and programs or built into the budget of the archives, the issue of preserving archival records will probably be seen as an additional unforseen 'cost', a cost that few organisations will be willing to absorb. In order to overcome these challenges, archives will need to insert themselves not just at the records creation stage but at what the Dutch archivists call the 'conception' stage when program and systems planning are just getting underway. Such a positioning would enhance the opportunity for archival requirements to be blended more naturally into the overall recordkeeping requirements for new systems or programs. By working in partnership with creating organisations it may be possible to establish a single envelope of resources at the outset to cover the costs of caring for all records including those of archival value.

While the custody/distributed custody debate will carry on, the one thing that is clear, regardless of one's viewpoint, is that archivists cannot deal with the electronic records issue alone. Both guidelines recognise this by underlining the importance of cooperation and the need to establish close working relationships with a variety of communities. In the future, and as archives begin to reposition themselves, this will become more than just a nice thing to do. It will become critical to the continuation of the archives as a viable program. And as archivists gain a deeper understanding of the roles of these other communities, they will need to better understand the skills, knowledge and abilities that they themselves will require if they are to relate to these communities effectively. Education and training programs directed to archivists and others involved in the management of electronic records will be crucial if the implementation of these guidelines is to succeed.

As George Nichols states in the preamble to *Keeping Electronic Records*, 'it [the publication] also marks the beginning of a change in the way we go about the business of preserving our archival heritage'. As others (e.g. Bearman, Cook, Hedstrom) have also mentioned, electronic records can transform the way that an archives does its work. They are not a special media issue. They cannot be simply tacked onto an existing archival program.

Electronic records help inform us about how we should be carrying out the business of archives generally. To this end, both guidelines have provided a very useful starting point from which archives can begin to reposition themselves to deal with the modern record.

John McDonald
National Archives of Canada

Australian Council of Archives, *Corporate Memory in the Electronic Age: Statement of a Common Position on Electronic Recordkeeping, May 1996* (available from Executive Officer, Suite 4, 12 Ellingworth Parade, Box Hill Vic, 3128; email acarchiv@ozemail.com.au).

Queensland Information Policy Board, *Draft Information Standard 31: Retention and Disposal of Government Information,* January 1996. $20 plus postage and handling (available on disk from Government Bookshop, PO Box 364, Wooloongabba, Qld 4102).

The Archives Authority of New South Wales, *Policy on Electronic Recordkeeping: Revised Draft, June 1996; Policy on Electronic Messages as Records: Revised Draft, June 1996; Standard on Full and Accurate Recordkeeping: Exposure Draft, May 1996; Standard on Records Management Programs: Exposure Draft, May 1996* (available from The Archives Authority, Level 3, 66 Harrington Street, The Rocks, Sydney NSW, 2000; rmonsw@ozemail.com.au; http://www.records.nsw.gov.au).

Australian Archives, *Using Electronic Mail,* February 1996 (available from Australian Archives, PO Box 34, Dickson ACT, 2602 or e-mail aasales@aa.gov.au).

Ulf Andersson, *SESAM: Philosophy and Rules Concerning Electronic Archives and Authenticity,* Astra and the Swedish National Archives, February 1996 (available from http//:www.si.umich.edu/e~recs/ or contact the author at Ulf.Andersson@astra.se.astra.com).

[In the most recent issue of *Archives and Museum Informatics,* David Bearman reflected on 'the magnitude of recent developments in electronic records management' as revealed in numerous recent major documents. They included the final report on the *University of Pittsburgh Project on Functional Requirements for Evidence in Recordkeeping* and the Australian Standard AS 4390,

Records Management (reviewed elsewhere in this issue), the Archives Authority of NSW's *Documenting the Future* and Australian Archives' *Keeping Electronic Records* (which are reviewed elsewhere in this issue), and the papers referenced above. He went on to review the Australian Council of Archives' common position statement, draft guidelines from the Queensland Information Policy Board, the Archives Authority of New South Wales and Australian Archives publications, and a report from the Swedish pharmaceuticals firm Astra and the Swedish National Archives on their approach to electronic evidence (SESAM). What follows is an edited version of his comments.*]

ACA Common Position Statement

In October 1995, representatives of the national and state archives of Australia, professional associations (AIIM, RMAA, ACS, ACLIS and ASA), public sector agencies and large private companies, universities with graduate programs in archives and records administration, Standards Australia, and the National Preservation Office met to discuss a framework for electronic recordkeeping that could be adopted nationwide. This extraordinary gathering produced a document, issued in its final form in May 1996, which has considerably more specificity than anyone might reasonably have expected. Essentially it provides a context in which electronic recordkeeping regimes will be established with similar success criteria, and outlines key undertakings that will be required to get there. The common position statement identifies strategies relating to creating and capturing electronic records, designing, building and using electronic recordkeeping systems, and maintaining, managing and making accessible electronic records over time.

The real meat of this impressive statement lies in the principles which underlie these strategies and relate to defining corporate responsibilities for electronic recordkeeping in terms of boundary setting, risk assessment, the functionality of electronic recordkeeping systems, the specification and maintenance of metadata, the ongoing management of electronic records of continuing value, and the accessibility of electronic records, regardless of location, both as records and as information.

* See David Bearman, 'State of Electronic Records Management Worldwide: Spring 1996', *Archives and Museum Informatics*, vol. 10, no. 1, 1996. I am grateful to David Bearman for agreeing to the publication of this edited version of his comments in *Archives and Manuscripts*. The Australian Standard AS 4390, *Documenting the Future* and *Keeping Electronic Records* were also reviewed favourably by Bearman in *Archives and Museum Informatics*, vol. 9, no. 4, 1995. Reviews Ed.

The common position statement commits the institutions which were party to it to a legislative, standards setting, training, and monitoring agenda through independent and cooperative activity. If similar concrete commitments with explicit guiding principles could be forthcoming from organisations elsewhere, it would be a basis for implementations with a large common market—one of the real requirements for progress. As always, commercial reality will dictate the availability of off-the-shelf solutions.

State and Commonwealth Initiatives

The Australian National Standard AS 4390 unloosened a slew of state initiatives that in many ways go further than the standard itself in reflecting new attitudes towards electronic recordkeeping and methods for management of electronic records.

One of these is the Queensland Information Policy Board Draft Information Standard 31 which articulates principles relating to agency accountabilities for the retention, management and accessibility of records of continuing value, and for recordkeeping systems that manage record content, structure and context. The guidelines include an analysis of different tactics for long-term retention of electronic records.

Other initiatives include the Archives Authority of NSW's recently issued draft policies on *Electronic Recordkeeping* and *Electronic Messages as Records*, a draft *Standard on Full and Accurate Recordkeeping*, and another on *Records Management Programs*. These documents build explicitly on the Australian Standard and *Documenting the Future*. The draft policy on electronic recordkeeping stipulates that electronic recordkeeping should comply with best practice, be built into business processes, and satisfy operational, accountability and community requirements. It further provides for the maintenance of electronic records in accountable recordkeeping systems, their management as part of a comprehensive records management policy, and for the accessibility of electronic records over time to be a shared responsibility between the agency and State archives. The draft policies on electronic records as messages fit within the framework of the broader policy, and carries it to a more detailed and implementable level.* The draft standards of full and accurate recordkeeping will eventually be issued under the proposed new

* Bearman considered these two policy documents to be so good that he reproduced them in full in his review article. Reviews Ed.

State Records Act which will require state agencies to make and keep full and accurate records. The draft standard establishes principles to guide public offices in complying with this requirement and examples of how to comply. The principles, modelled on the Pittsburgh functional requirements and the provisions of the Australian Standard, state that recordkeeping should be compliant, reliable, systematic, managed and routine, and that records should be made, retained, usable, complete, comprehensive, adequate, accurate, authentic and inviolate. The draft standard on records management programs sets minimum requirements for the establishment and management of records management programs, outlining nine related principles that should be addressed by public offices—namely that records management programs should be identifiable, supported by policy, planned, assigned, located, organised, staffed, implemented and measured.

The Australian Archives' policy on *Using Electronic Mail* is an internal one, but serves as an excellent model for other agencies. Throughout the guidelines there is a straightforward recognition of the current rapidly evolving state of affairs, together with a clear understanding of what constitutes a record, what outcomes are desired and who is accountable for them.

The Swedish SESAM Report

The SESAM report, cooperatively developed by Swedish pharmaceuticals firm, Astra AB, and the Swedish National Archives, goes further in the discussion of implementation issues than virtually anything ever written about electronic records management. It is grounded in the principles that records are evidence of transactions and can be preserved and made available by capturing metadata documenting content, structure and function in encapsulated objects stored in distributed systems. The report addresses strategy, generic models, standards requirements, architecture issues, industry and organisation specific implementation problems (such as the requirements for evidence in patents, new drug applications, and requests for permission to conduct clinical trials), and technical implementation issues. While not explicitly introducing the concept of risk management, the report reflects a recognition of the reality that the strategies and tactics we adopt in every instance are reflections of judgements about risk. One particularly sophisticated discussion of these issues takes place within the context of determining how much metadata is required to ensure that any given record can be considered preserved after a migration. The report distinguishes between preservation for periods of time during which the organisational

and procedural structures that created the record still exist and preservation beyond that time. Eventually these discussions lead to how to structure the archives, and particularly how to insulate the archives from organisational changes and technical dependencies.

Conclusions

The Pittsburgh Project outcomes occupy a pivotal place in the evolution of ideas found in the plethora of recent reports on electronic records management. Taken as a group, these reports, including the papers reviewed here, strongly suggest that building electronic records management guidelines from axioms and first principles of records management, based on transactions and the concepts of content, structure and context, does enable archivists to move towards implementation frameworks that show considerable progress and to articulate policies that are internally coherent.

The next stage in our approach to electronic recordkeeping is to test architectural and systemic innovations which alone have the ability to scale up to manage the huge numbers of electronic transactions that will otherwise overwhelm us. Criteria for success in these implementations will be the amount of added effort that archivists have to make as opposed to the contribution made by computing standards, telecommunications and networking software, agency business process management, and standard work practices. The extent to which archivists can adopt approaches that insinuate themselves into these other domains of practice will simplify the archival role and will make success more likely.

David Bearman
Archives and Museum Informatics

Leslie R. Marchant, *Westminster or Whitehall; modern problems and issues in records management and preservation in changing British constitutional monarchies.* Library and Information Service of Western Australia, Perth, 1995 (LISWA Research Series, no. 6). 98pp. ISSN 1038-3530.

This slim volume, comprising six lectures written by a well-known Perth historian, has a misleading title. It is by no means confined to modern issues; in fact, there is a suggestion that many of the political problems that it discusses have existed for centuries. Moreover, the discussion often moves away from

the Westminster system of government and Professor Marchant devotes as much attention to European countries as to 'British constitutional monarchies'. He only occasionally refers to Australia and not at all to Canada, New Zealand and other countries that have followed the Westminster model. A whole lecture is devoted to the relations between Charles I and the English Parliament in 1625–40, but constitutional change in Britain in the twentieth century is largely neglected.

The tensions between legislatures (Westminster) and executive governments (Whitehall) are one of the basic themes of political writings in most countries of the world. Professor Marchant is deeply concerned about the excessive power of Ministers and officials and the threat of administrative lawlessness. Yet it is surprising that, while he identifies six principles as defining the Westminster system (p. 38), they do not include the principle of ministerial responsibility. Readers interested in the evolution, complexity and variations in the Westminster system will have to turn to other works, such as A. H. Birch, *Representative and responsible government* (London, 1964). Apart from a few allusions to 'WA Inc.', *Westminster or Whitehall* does not look at recent examples of the breakdown of ministerial responsibility and their connection with inadequate or fraudulent recordkeeping. In that respect, the case studies in *Archival documents; providing accessibility through recordkeeping* (Melbourne, 1993) are of much more relevance to Australian archivists and record managers.

Professor Marchant has spent 'his working lifetime with records' and his research and writings have been very wide, covering such subjects as French naval exploration, Protestant missions in Asia, early contacts with Australian Aborigines, and nineteenth century Chinese history. His erudition is evident throughout this book and, unlike some Australian archival writings, it could never be described as parochial. It ranges over 2 000 years and is enlivened by quotations from and references to figures as diverse as Solon, Aphra Behn, Edward Gibbon, the Emperor Yu Chen, Auguste Comte, Adolf Hitler and Brian Burke. The greater part of *Westminster or Whitehall* does not deal with records, but instead consists of reflections, with many historical illustrations and personal asides, of such topics as parliamentary sovereignty, written and unwritten constitutions, elected monarchy, bicameral parliaments, ideological parties, the rise of 'isms', delegated legislation, federalism and regionalism. The connections with records management are often tenuous. A lengthy passage on Nazi Germany, for instance, ends with the admonition, 'Record

keepers and archivists must take cognisance of such developments even when they are not clearly apparent'. Professor Marchant seems unsure of his footing in the morass of modern government records. Some passages read like an elementary textbook, while others contain questionable statements. He avoids such issues as the frequency of administrative change, the sheer bulk of modern records, the difficulties of appraisal and preservation, or the control of electronic records. Nevertheless, writings by researchers on archives are to be welcomed and perhaps Professor Marchant might consider setting down his reflections on the value and peculiarities of church, scientific, naval and other types of private records which he utilised in his long career.

The limitations of this idiosyncratic work are epitomised by the bibliography. The works listed, whether on political theory or records management, have a common element: they are all old. The most recent appeared in 1958. Only three Australian works are included; two are pamphlets, while the third, 'Quick and Garran', was published in 1901.

Graeme Powell
National Library of Australia

Tom Griffiths, *Hunters and Collectors—The Antiquarian Imagination in Australia.** Cambridge University Press, 1996. ISBN 0 521 48281 $34.95 (available from Cambridge University Press, 10 Stamford Rd., Oakleigh, Vic. 3166 or e-mail info@cup.edu.au).

The blurb on the back cover of this book states 'The urge to preserve, to search for the past in order to package and present it, is a powerful impulse. This act of making history is not only the domain of academic historians and professional myth-makers. Thousands of amateur enthusiasts, driven by curiosity and local knowledge, have explored documentary, oral and environmental sources to shape their own histories and perceptions of the land and its people, black and white'.

* Stop Press: It has just been announced that *Hunters and Collectors* won the Nettie Palmer Award for non-fiction at the 1996 Victorian Premier's Literary Awards. Review Ed.

Writing from the perspective of the historian, the author explores the 'why' of hunting and collecting, the reasons why people seek out, 'hunt', evidence of material culture and heritage and then hold, 'collect', that material in personal and institutional collections. Based primarily on Victorian examples (Griffiths has worked with both the State Library of Victoria and the Museum of Victoria) the book draws together many ideas and issues on the reasons why people collect. For example he looks at the motivation and collecting activities during the late 1800s of J. P. Archibald (father of J. F. Archibald first editor of *The Bulletin*) and his museum based at Warrnambool in Victoria's south west.

From an archivist's perspective the book is useful in that it helps to explain not only why individuals collect records and artefacts but also how collections have developed in both in museums and private hands. Griffiths examines the politics of collecting and the changing attitudes to collecting. He examines the attitudes and motivations of individual collectors and small groups of collectors who expressed similar motivation or based their activities on the ideas of influential scientists of their day. Influences on hunting and collecting such as Darwinism and the environmental movement are examined, as is the impact of Aboriginal rights.

It is pleasing to see that the author has used a variety of archival sources in his research and has provided the reader with extensive notes.

The book has 282 pages of text and illustrations. There are a further 79 pages, with in excess of 1 300 notes, many of which provide useful background material. The 39 pages of bibliography includes material from collections such as the University of Melbourne Archives, the Mitchell Library, the State Library of Victoria, the Museum of Victoria and the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies.

Many archivists will not see any benefit from reading this book. However, for those with an eye to examining the motivation and ideas of collection builders this book should be read. It provides many useful insights into how today's collectors think as well as their motivations. It is both thought provoking and relevant to the archival profession.

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Preserving Digital Information: Report of the Task Force on Archiving of Digital Information commissioned by The Commission on Preservation and Access and the Research Libraries Group. Washington DC, May 1996 (available from the Commission on Preservation and Access, 1400 16th Street, N.W., Suite 740, Washington DC, 20036-2217 for $US15.00 and on the World Wide Web at http://www.rlg.stanford.edu/ArchTF/).

For some years now both the library and archives communities have been heavily preoccupied with issues surrounding the ongoing management of information in digital form. By and large, however, these have been separate discourses. The archival community, for example, has rightly focused on strategies for maintaining the recordness of electronic records.

As a result it has been left primarily to the preservation community, both in Australia and elsewhere, to pursue opportunities for integrated cross-sectoral analysis of the challenges posed by electronic information systems. In the United States the Commission on Preservation and Access has joined forces with the Research Libraries Group to assemble a task force to formulate strategies and recommendations for preserving valuable digital information. This twenty-two member task force consists of preservation managers, IT professionals, librarians, publishers, scholars and two archivists, Margaret Hedstrom and Peter Hirtle. In 1995 the Task Force released a draft report on which comments were invited. Following consideration of these comments, some of which came from Australia, the report was revised, expanded and released in its final form in May 1996.

The report argues that the significant challenges in preserving digital information are not so much organisational or technological as legal and economic. As such the Task Force asserts that the key issue is the allocation of responsibility for the storage, preservation and provision of access to digital information. To deal with this issue the report recommends the creation of a distributed network of 'digital archives' with responsibility for collecting digital information resources, protecting their integrity over the long term and making them available for future use. Designated and accredited 'digital archives' could include some existing libraries and archives along with corporations and consortia ranging over regional, national and international boundaries. Certified 'digital archives' would have the legal right to take aggressive steps to save significant at-risk digital information.

This move towards coordinated, collective, distributed responsibility for preserving digital information is to be applauded. Although the distributed

custody model proposed by the report is somewhat different to that which has been proposed in the archival sector, the report recognises the pivotal role and responsibility of creators in ensuring the long term preservation of digital information. Also to be applauded are many of the report's recommendations for action in areas such as research and demonstration projects, standards and best practices, national information policy initiatives and intellectual property. Archivists will be pleased to see the recognition given by the report to the importance of such concepts as provenance, selection/appraisal criteria for determining the continuing significance of information, and the need to preserve the integrity and functionality of information systems through software migrations. The report argues that the integrity of digital information consists of content, fixity (i.e. authenticity and inviolability), reference (i.e. identification), provenance and context. The concept of identifying and preserving the structure of electronic information does not appear explicitly in this model, but presumably is addressed by the concepts of fixity and reference.

Despite all the good work that has gone into the report, I cannot escape the conclusion that, from an archival point of view, the report is fatally flawed. Many archivists will no doubt bristle at the use of the phrase 'digital archives', which adopts the IT community's understanding of the word archives in contrast to our own understanding of the word. This, however, is a minor quibble. My real concerns are more fundamental. The report adopts the life cycle model in examining digital information, demonstrating no awareness of recent continuum-based thinking. This approach has led the Task Force down some unfortunate paths. For example, although the important role of creators is acknowledged, insufficient attention is paid to the need for partnerships between archivists/librarians and information creators and systems designers. Likewise, virtually absent from the report is any consideration of strategies for capturing metadata as a part of the creation process. The overall thrust of the report is an entirely post hoc one, with the principal strategy being the pursuit of 'fail safe mechanisms' by accredited digital archives. While I have no problem with fail-safe mechanisms being proposed as part of a total preservation strategy, the approach recommended in this report relies almost entirely on rescuing records after the fact. Any such reactive strategy employed in the absence of more proactive creation/systems design strategies is doomed to failure.

Although Margaret Hedstrom is a member of the Task Force and the bibliography includes references to, for example, the Pittsburgh Project, the report demonstrates a dismal lack of awareness of recent thinking on electronic

recordkeeping. In presenting a unitary one-strategy-fits-all model, the report suffers by refusing to acknowledge that different categories of electronic information require different management strategies.

I cannot conclude this review without mentioning the report's extremely detailed, yet utterly useless costing model. The model proceeds from some very dubious assumptions to conclude that preservation using digital formats is more expensive that using analogue formats. This completely misses the point that, for information created in a digital form where there is a reliance on electronic systems functionality, preservation in analogue form is simply not an option.

Many of these criticisms were communicated to the Task Force in the Australian response to the first draft, coordinated by Keith Parrott. Although this Australian commentary is acknowledged in a number of places in the endnotes, our comments have, for the most part, been either rejected or misinterpreted. While this is cause for some disappointment, the Task Force report has nevertheless been of catalytic value in the Australian context. By focusing the minds of the Preservation of Australian Digital Information (PADI) Task Force, which is chaired by Keith Parrott, Australia is now pursuing a better informed cross-sectoral approach to the issues, an approach which has learnt much from the American Task Force.

Adrian Cunningham
National Library of Australia

Leslie Hansen Kopp, editor, *Dance Archives: A Practical Manual for Documenting and Preserving the Ephemeral Art,* Preserve, Inc, Lee, MA, 1995 ISBN 0 96466 06 0 1. Available from: Preserve, Inc., Jacob's Pillow, PO Box 287, Lee, MA 01238-0287, USA.

Australia does not yet have a collection like the New York Public Library's Dance Collection at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, or like any one of a number of other nationally significant, publicly accessible, discrete, named, archival dance collections around the world. It is a shameful situation. As this beautifully produced manual rightly points out, dance, without a widely understood system of notation and with its unique system of passing on its heritage from person to person is 'the ephemeral art' in a way that no other kind of theatrical performance can claim. In such a situation, enlightened

documentation and preservation of what does remain after the danced performance becomes critical—'creation in the absence of documentation and preservation only denies the future'.

Dance Archives is published by Preserve, Inc, an American, national centre for archival documentation and preservation of the performing arts. It is a very practical, easy to read, well-illustrated manual divided into sections based on the main media by which dance is currently documented: videotape and film, paper documents, photographs, oral and video histories. Each section discusses the ways in which material is best stored, contains suggestions for arrangement and description of the material, and usually gives sample checklists or some kind of descriptive diagram or illustration. The manual also provides a case study of the building of a company archive, that of the New York-based Merce Cunningham Dance Company, prepared by the company archivist, David Vaughan. There is also a useful bibliography of both general and media-specific reading; a glossary of terms relating to preservation techniques and archival methods; a list of names and addresses of relevant professional organisations, dance libraries, archives and collections in the United States and Canada; some brief notes on general storage and handling of items; and samples of *Afterimages*, the newsletter of Preserve, Inc.

In terms of format, *Dance Archives* is not a 'book' in the conventional sense but rather a collection of loose sheets contained in a sturdy ring binder. This flexible arrangement reflects the fact that the manual is essentially a practical tool. Pages, like the oral history interviewers' checklist, can be removed for fieldwork purposes. Other material can be added. The basic information contained in it can easily be expanded upon with more detailed material as and if required. It is somewhat frustrating, although probably not surprising, however, that the paper size, and the folder size of the manual are American standard. Those of us working outside America, and using international paper sizes, will inconveniently find that our A4 documents are slightly too large to fit the folder in an aesthetically pleasing way!

Despite the fact that our country does not have a discrete, named dance collection, Australia does have an amazing amount of archival material relating to dance scattered as part of performing arts collections or general Australian collections in various institutions around the country. There is, no doubt, at least as much again mouldering (probably) in garages, under houses, and even in filing cabinets in dance company offices. *Dance Archives* is an

ideal first guide both for large institutions that may have dance material within their wider collections of unique material, and for smaller organisations who may have little expertise in handling their dance material. If individuals with personal collections stored somewhere in their private homes also happen to come across the manual it may help them realise how fragile their collections are and encourage them to place them where they can be better cared for.

Michelle Potter
Freelance Dance Researcher

Peter Smith, Joy Siller, Tony Poynton, Maggie Exon, *Introduction to Records Management.* Macmillan Education Australia, Melbourne, 1995. 181pp. ISBN 0 7329 3198 3. $29.95 plus small orders surcharge (available from Orders Department, Macmillan Distribution, 467 Plummer St., Port Melbourne, Vic 3207; ph. 0396466100; fax 0396465946).

Reviewing this book places me in a quandary: how to welcome new texts in records management as a sign of the growth and maturity of the Australian records management scene, yet reflect my strong disagreement with some of the ideas contained in this text. Inevitably the latter theme dominates this review.

Introduction to Records Management does not explicitly locate itself in the market, claiming a broad audience as 'an introduction to records management for students and for anyone wishing to establish effective records management for their organisation'. The authors of the text are records management practitioners with varied experience: Peter Smith, both in the field as a records manager and more recently associated with the TAFE NSW course; Joy Siller, a Sydney based records management consultant with experience of teaching records management in courses at TAFE NSW and University of Technology Sydney; Maggie Exxon, an educator at Curtin University of Technology; and Tony Poynton, a well known developer and marketer of software and hardware associated with records management. Despite the breadth of authorial experience, this text must be placed at an introductory practice-based level, an impression confirmed by the cover reference to the national competency-based modules and outcomes adopted in the TAFE sector.

What should we expect of a text so located? I suggest: an emphasis on current practice, an attempt to place the practice within a lightly sketched

theoretical context and an enthusiasm for the subject inspiring readers to explore the field further. Texts at all levels also need to provide skills which can be seen to be of continuing relevance in the increasingly electronic future for records practitioners and professionals. While these elements are partially present in this text, I suggest it fails to make necessary connections to the future for readers, leaving them uncertain whether their newly acquired skills will continue to be relevant.

Readers are left with a confused impression of the relationship between information, records and library-based practices. Similarities are stressed but essential differences are not articulated, for example:

> Use, maintenance, control, preservation, archiving and organising are all functions carried out by information and records management, archives and libraries.
>
> They all ensure that the information is accurate, timely and useful...They cultivate strong lines of communications with their users. They promote their value and service to their user groups. The more that information and records functions embrace new technology, particularly telecommunications, the closer the relationship between the disciplines will become. It is this relationship with the tools and the systems that are common to all, that will create change. Change in attitude will see an evolution of a new breed of professional that will manage information into the future (p.12).

The book places much emphasis on physical processes which are already fading from relevance. It provides little understanding of the theoretical framework of records work. What, for instance, are students to make of this:

> If information is or becomes important and if recorded it becomes...accessible and available (sic). It becomes a record; created, processed, stored and maintained. This then allows the information...to be provided to others who may seek that information over time (p.4).

Basing its practice heavily around existing tools has already rendered some chapters badly dated, notably the one drawing heavily on the NSW Records Management Office GADM (general administrative thesaurus), a product now superseded by the new Keyword AAA thesaurus with its functional emphasis.

An 'information management' focus is strongly evident in the text. It demonstrates a misapplication of this powerful strategy for records management. Only after one has mastered the distinct elements of individual disciplines can the power of such strategy be fully exploited. Introductory

records management texts must identify and inform readers about those elements which are peculiar to records—their transactional nature, their role as evidence and corporate memory, their `natural' accumulation, their contextual significance—prior to emphasising commonality across disciplines. While some of these elements are present in the text if you go looking for them, the chapters themselves avoid making strong clear statements about the characteristics of records. Some of the best statements are to be found only in the summary points which conclude chapters. Muddying records waters with a vague information emphasis has, in this text, led to a devaluing of these distinct features of records and to a misplaced emphasis on the information content and accessibility of records as the primary management feature. This is demonstrated in passages such as:

> Content is imperative for the informational and transactional significance. The content, rather than form, determines the record's administrative, audit, legal and historical value to the organisation or individual (p.28).

A chapter on 'Records Management Principles' lightly sketches the theoretical background to records management. While the book uses the life cycle of records as the primary model for records management, it also reaches out to the records continuum acknowledging some of the inadequacies of the life cycle model. However, in doing so, it completely fails to understand the continuum model and so ends up distorting that model:

> ...a preferable model, therefore, is one which reflects records management in linear form rather than circular form. The model illustrates that the life of some records will end while others will continue indefinitely (p.32).

A diagrammatic representation of the continuum in a linear fashion is labelled: 'Life continuum model of records management', thus managing to embrace misconceptions of the life cycle and the continuum and records management within six words. Pointers are provided to the work of McKemmish and Upward for further information on continuum thinking, but no citations are provided. The book continues to use the life cycle model quite uncritically with occasional deference to the continuum, such as 'the records management life cycle (or continuum)' (p.126). It is clear that records continuum thinking is not yet clearly understood, but that the language is being adopted.

The records operations associated with each 'stage' of the life cycle are outlined briefly, with individual chapters devoted to classification and indexing. Classification is dealt with as a process entirely devoted to information retrieval. Even within this limited approach, the text offers little

emphasis on linkage of records or contexts of creation. Classification here, as in many of its American forbears, fails to make clear distinctions between location systems and classification schemes, with a significant amount of the chapter devoted to numbering or referencing schemes—'the main aim of many of these classification schemes is to keep files or documents physically in a fixed order' (p.84). The authors seem to have an unclear idea of the distinction between classification and indexing, arguing that 'there has never been an absolutely clear distinction between classification and indexing' (p.86), and that 'the automation of records management has led to a rethinking of the relationship between indexing and classification' (p.87).

Considerations of language controls are dealt with in the chapter on indexing, which is based strongly on library practice. The use of subject oriented library thesauri is advocated to 'index functional records of the organisation as opposed to administrative records...as a source of applied indexing terms to index the content of documents or files' (p.106), while acknowledging that thesauri used to determine file titles require separate development. No instruction is provided on how to construct an organisation specific thesaurus or classification schemes based on functions and activities. As indicated earlier, the now superseded NSW RMO general administrative thesaurus is used as the model for thesaurus construction and use.

The book acknowledges the growing electronic records and information environments and its early chapters emphasise change and rapid adoption of information technology in all areas of organisations. A pragmatic approach to the challenge of computerisation has been taken, reflecting the current workplace practice which uses computer assisted records management packages, rather than dealing in any significant way with electronic records themselves. A discussion of features of computer assisted records management packages includes a preliminary specification of features required in records management software. Document management systems and the development of mechanisms to manage electronic records within the traditional records management packages are not addressed. The text concludes with a detailed chapter on microfilm equipment, use and applications, which is perfectly adequate, although containing the dubious statement:

> microfilm may claim to be the only true archival medium as it can attain a completely stable internal state unlike most paper (p.142).

Introduction to Records Management is a disappointing text. While it would be unreasonable to expect a sophisticated analysis of records from a text aimed at a basic introductory level, it is clear that the authors' lack a unified

professional theory. Its emphasis on physical tasks and existing practices already appears dated. The advent of the Australian Standard on records management with its different articulation of basic records management tasks and methodologies and the total rewriting of one of the basic tools advocated by the book are two strong indicators of the limited usefulness of this text.

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Michael Piggott and Colleen McEwen, editors, *Australian Society of Archivists; Proceedings of the 1995 Conference; Archivists—The Image and Future of the Profession.* Canberra, 1996. ISBN 0 947219 09 9. 252pp. A$25 (available from the ASA, PO Box 83, O'Connor ACT, 2602).

The 1995 ASA conference held in Canberra marked the twentieth anniversary of the formation of the Australian Society of Archivists. As such it was seen as a perfect opportunity to reflect, not only on where the ASA and the archives profession in Australia has been and is now, but also a prime opportunity to set directions and professional goals for the future.

The format of the conference (reviewed by Jenny Edgecombe in *Archives and Manuscripts*, November 1995, pp. 382–85), held over two days, has been mirrored in the published proceedings. They cover the eight sessions in sequence, with the text of the papers followed by a transcript of the subsequent discussion. Each of the sessions is proceeded by a short editorial outlining the main issues discussed in the papers and giving some context to the session as a whole. As one who was not in attendance at the conference, I found this summary to be most helpful when attempting to digest some of the discussion at the end of each of the sessions.

Session One, Why do we have an ASA?, presents papers by Baiba Berzins and Andrew Lemon, which give an historical background to the conference. This outline of the development of the ASA, and as such, of the archival profession in Australia over the past two decades, both from a personal and professional viewpoint, was followed by a commentary from Barbara Reed (Monash University), which raised some of the issues that the conference was designed to address.

The following session, Image of the Profession, moved us in to the present with a report from Sandra Mowbray summarising a workshop held

immediately before the conference, entitled 'Directions for the ASA'. This paper raises a number of issues that should be of interest to all those involved with the ASA, proposing measures which have the potential to be of benefit to the entire archival profession. The second presentation in this session from Bill Nicol of Communication Concepts was the first of a number papers given by 'outsiders' to the profession. This paper gives an interesting insight into some of the commercial questions that need to be faced by the ASA and the archival community in Australia if we are to move beyond some of the age old issues related to the public image and accessibility of the profession. This led very nicely in to the third session of day one, Perceptions of Archives and Archivists. Two historians, Humphrey McQueen (a freelance historian) and Michael McKernan from the Australian War Memorial gave accounts of how things were in the 'good old days' when archives were only used by the few who fully understood their worth. The papers illustrate clearly the perception of archives and archivists by those who are still, to many archivists, their primary clientele.

The final session of day one, Resource Allocators in the Flesh, develops the theme of the previous session by maintaining a focus on the reality of the archival profession today. The session begins with a sobering paper by Graham Rawstron from the Reserve Bank of Australia. Rawstron provides a number of insights for those archivists wishing to improve their resource allocation from within their own organisations. His paper is followed by commentaries by Anne Cooke (archivist at Pymble Ladies College) and Sandra Mowbray, both of whom speak of the need to put forward a professional image if resources are to be channelled your way.

Session Five, Report from the Educator's Forum, marks the move in the conference from discussion of the present to that of the future of the profession. This session consisted of an outline of a forum held at the University of Canberra on 26 July 1995. The day had been divided in to a number of sessions, each of which was reported on. Opening the session was Karen Anderson (Edith Cowen University) with an overview of the forum, followed by David Roberts (Archives Authority of New South Wales), Sue McKemmish (Monash University), Mark Brogan (Edith Cowen University) and Richard Cox (University of Pittsburgh). This session covers the issues that had become themes of the conference including professional identity, and the impact of technology on the future of the archival profession. The session acts as a effective summary of how far the conference had progressed over the preceding days, and led neatly into the next session which presented papers by students entering the profession. The next session, on International Issues,

presented papers by Pham thi Bich Hai (a student from Monash University) who spoke on the issues of an archival professional image in Vietnam, Sophie Papadopoulas (a student from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology) who covered similar issues on an emerging archival profession in Africa, and Peter Sharpham (a student from the University of New South Wales) whose paper discussed the impact of the work of Luciana Duranti on the archival community in Canada.

Session Seven of the conference tackled The Future. This session presented a futuristic scenario which was commented on by panellists Clive Smith (World Bank) and Sigrid McCausland (University of Technology, Sydney). The discussion that followed this session is some of the most lively and diverse of the conference, highlighting the many different interests and points of view that make up the professional membership of the ASA. Each comment shows a different understanding of the issues that are being faced by archivists today, and which will be faced in the future, based on the widely varying experiences of those working in the profession today. Of all of the discussion sessions documented in these proceedings, this is by far the most telling.

Session Eight, the final session of the conference, was the keynote address by Richard Cox, A Sense of the Future: a child's view of archives. Although it takes a little bit of lateral thinking to see the real relevance of this paper, it does bring together a number of those issues that had become central to the theme of the conference; image and education. Commentaries by Bill Taylor (Archives Office of Tasmania) and Shauna Hicks (Queensland State Archives), draw out the issues in Richard Cox's paper well and pin point ways in which the profession as a whole could better educate both its own members and those outside the profession.

The final session of the conference was the Conference Summary presented by Richard Cox. This paper was both passionate and positive as it attempted to draw together the threads of the main issue of the conference, the Archival Image. Cox encouraged us to ensure that the many things that were discussed as being the archival mission should have a place in the future.

The proceedings provide a full coverage of the papers presented at the conference, apart from three papers that were considered by the editors to be outside the scope of the conference proper. One other paper, that was given by one of the student presenters, was also not included because of copyright issues.

I have only one criticism of the format of the conference proceedings, and that is in relation to the setting out of the papers themselves. The newspaper style layout, with its narrow columns of only 4–5 words, make the papers difficult to read and it is almost impossible to scan back to a reference read earlier in an article. In stark comparison is the far more accessible layout of the editorial summaries and discussion sections.

For one that is still new to this profession, this publication makes both an enlightening and informative read. It places into perspective a group that often seems fragmented, by giving an internal view of its development into a profession. The proceedings demonstrated to me that, while the archival profession is fragmented in what it does (as shown clearly by the summaries of the SIG meetings), it is nevertheless united in its desire to develop the profession into one that is recognised and respected by other professions, its users, and the general public alike. Moreover, the profession is united in its dedication to ensuring that in the year 2005 we are not, in the words of Chris Hurley, 'a group of irrelevant people...sitting down in a conclave...asking why we are disregarded...'. For that reason alone the proceedings of this conference are a worthy investment for anyone interested in our developing profession.

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Australian Science Archives Project

Redefining Records Management: Conference Papers: RMAA 12th National Convention, World Congress Centre, Melbourne, 18–21 September, 1995. Records Management Association of Australia, Melbourne,1995. $25 (available from Waldron Smith Management, 93 Victoria Avenue, Albert Park, 3206).

Redefining Records Management was the theme of the 12th National Convention of the Records Management Association of Australia, held at the World Congress Centre in Melbourne in September 1995.

The keynote address was given by Professor Ashley who discussed the attention being given to the function of information technology in modern business organisations. He pointed out that there had been some fundamental shifts in the role of the IT specialist in both public and private organisations and that, on the whole, information technologists had failed to see that the most important ingredient of their role was the information, not the technology. He went on to assert something very close to my own heart—the

fact that you do not need to be computer literate to manage information technology, you merely need to be information technology fluent, which is very different. I shall be giving this article to all my third year management students to read.

The session papers covered a wide range of issues from a number of speakers, many of whom came from disciplines outside records management. Dr Michael Barrett discussed the need to refocus our efforts from custody to business process support. While much of what he has to say is valid, I feel that he addresses only one side of the equation—missing, perhaps understandably, the importance we attach to the management of records as evidence. This is another paper my students will read, but balanced, perhaps, by one that presents some arguments on the evidential aspect.

I thought I had found such a paper with the next offering on challenges relating to organisational accountability, but I found it a little disappointing, as it is a detailed look at experiences of the Victorian Ombudsman which investigates matters involving issues of accountability. Most of the examples pointed to deficiencies with paper based records systems that made rather depressing reading.

David Moldrich provided a succinct summation of what is now an Australian Standard on Records Management AS4390 (1–6) 1996 (released subsequent to the publication of this paper). Kerry Gordon and Gary Noble's articles talk about refocusing records management practice on business processes and workflows, an idea that has been around for some time and has considerable merit. These articles also touched on some information resource and total quality management principles that deserve further investigation.

Anne Picot's article provides a clear exposition of the new Commonwealth evidence legislation and the questions this poses for the retention and disposal of electronic records.

I much enjoyed Karuna Raj's paper on the applicability of audit methodologies to recordkeeping. Karuna is using her valuable expertise to suggest new solutions to old problems and I hope that her innovative ideas will stimulate some lively debate in the records management community.

Peter Acres presented a report on progress with the ambitious South Australian Government initiative to deliver records management policies, guidelines and tools across the whole of government. I was impressed by the

professionalism of the business case that was successfully put up to support the project. In particular, the strong linkage of the project goals to the overall strategic direction for the State public service and the careful cost/benefit analysis that was subjected to third party scrutiny were particularly striking features. Another noteworthy feature was the strong strategic partnership between the project team and the Office of Information Technology. I would suggest that records managers look closely at this methodology if they want to have any chance of obtaining significant project funding in the present competitive environment.

Sue McKemmish has provided a substantial paper on the issues and challenges for recordkeeping professionals for the twenty-first century in which she again argues for the abandonment of the 'life-cycle' model in favour of the continuum approach and for the greater integration of the 'recordkeeping professions'. In her paper I found a counterbalance to the approach advocated by Dr Barrett, but I was a little uncomfortable with her total rejection of the life cycle model and with the information science/services aspects of records management. However, I have no quarrel with establishing a unique theoretical basis for the recordkeeping disciplines. I liked her identification of three specialisations within the discipline—those of current, regulatory and historical recordkeeping and I shared her concerns about the competency standards 'game'. I also believe we must take cognisance of what is happening in the worlds of information management and information science and make sure that recordkeeping principles and practice are integrated into educational offerings in these disciplines.

Margaret Sneddon's paper presents some standard management theories and shows how they can be applied in the records management setting. I felt this paper would be useful for those without formal records management education, but would hope that such topics are extensively covered in any recognised course.

Stephen Yorke's arguments in his paper on the role of the records manager raises more perceived threats than opportunities and I fear may fuel existing paranoia within the discipline. Personally, I would have liked to have seen him focus more on the opportunities that the challenges present.

It was nice to see a paper from the local government sector. Darrell Treloar traced the horrors of amalgamating disparate records management systems from the CEO's perspective and made some recommendations derived from bitter experience.

Conclusions? Well, the papers provide a wide range of opinion and are well balanced between the theoretical and the practical, between issues internal to the profession and those drawn from the wider community. I would have liked to have seen some more contributions from up-and-coming enthusiasts who are new to the discipline and who can bring in fresh ideas and new perspectives.

It was disappointing to find that several authors had not met the deadline for submission. If I was paying good money for the proceedings, I think I would be understandably grumpy about not getting them all. I sympathise with the publishers about the need to get the papers out promptly and the dilemma with which they are presented if papers are not submitted.

On the whole, this publication would be a useful addition to a library collection and some of the papers will provide worthwhile fodder for inquiring minds. If, like me, you were unable to make it to the conference, I suggest that you buy yourself a copy.

Vicky Wilson
Edith Cowan University

Adrian Cunningham, editor, *Personal Recordkeeping: Issues and Perspectives.* Archives and Manuscripts, vol. 24, no. 1, May 1996. 237 pp. Australian Society of Archivists. ISSN 0157-6895 (available from Australian Society of Archivists, PO Box 83, O'Connor ACT, 2602).

As a newcomer to the archival profession and an archives and records management student, I have wondered about the title of the journal *Archives and Manuscripts*. Why make this distinction? Are manuscripts not archives? Indeed, what are manuscripts? Must I become a manuscriptkeeper as well as a recordkeeper? This latest edition of *Archives and Manuscripts* (May 1996) has gone a long way to answering my questions. It is a collection of articles that focus on personal recordkeeping as opposed to corporate recordkeeping, which we have heard so much about in the last few years.

The greatest strength of these articles is that all of them highlight the common bonds between personal and corporate records. They all point to the fact that records are records and archivists keep records. I particularly liked Chris Hurley's expression 'Beating the French', that is, keeping records. Keeping records is what we do whether they are corporate or personal. Richard

Cox stresses that the core function of the archivist is to 'study, understand and manage records and recordkeeping systems'. That's right! We keep records. McCarthy and Sherratt bemoan the lowering of scientific recordkeeping standards because of the changing technological environment, and explore tactics that will reverse this trend. Again, this is common to all types of recordkeeping. Sue McKemmish makes it clear that personal records do fit into the continuum model. They begin as 'evidence of me', and became over time 'evidence of us'.

Another strength is the mix of practical and theoretical aspects of personal recordkeeping. Appraisal techniques are discussed by Paul Dalgleish, in particular the collection level appraisal of the personal records of members of parliament. It was interesting to read that his examination of constituent correspondence revealed only one case of a member of parliament in 'thoughtful correspondence' with a member of his electorate. In fact, he found that the personal records of members of parliament provided a lot of information about the electorate, but very little about the personality of the member. Arrangement and description of personal records is later discussed by Southcott, Andre and Thomas of the Mortlock Library of South Australia, which again links theory with practice. They use two case studies to describe how they use the record group system and the principle of original order to document their collections. It was interesting to see they have been required by the research emphasis of the library to give subject indexing a high priority. However, they claim this has not replaced the more traditional finding aids, but rather supplements them.

I found Graeme Powell's guide to the collecting of personal and private papers in Australia illuminating. It would appear from his survey that a large part of our collective memory has not been captured. While most archivists lament our inability to capture and maintain electronic records (and rightly so), there is a vast gap in our societal recordkeeping heritage which at the moment is paper-based. This would seem to be because archivists are not involved at all in the creation stage of the records. Does this sound familiar? While there are quite significant differences between corporate and personal records creation, there are also similarities. For this reason, I think that the corporate electronic records debate has been an excellent exercise in defining what it is that archivists do, and how they should be improving and advancing their profession. However, this rather sad picture of our personal recordkeeping collections would seem to point to an even more depressing future. If we cannot effectively collect paper-based records now, how can we capture and collect electronic personal records? Hurley and Cunningham offer

sound advice. We need to study and understand the functional requirements of personal recordkeeping. We need to 'develop and improve recordkeeping practices and software platforms', and to conduct research into what social evidence society wants or needs preserved. If we can achieve this, the future of personal recordkeeping, whether electronic or otherwise, will be bright indeed.

Maryanne Dever gives a very useful insight into the research uses of personal records. She reminds me that for all the theory we put forward, and for all the objectivity we espouse, recordkeeping and the use of records are still very much a subjective activity.

Adrian Cunningham set out to 'put the manuscripts back into Archives and Manuscripts'. I think he has achieved his aim. He has in the process opened up for me a vast and fascinating field of archival study that has been overshadowed by the electronic records debate. I hope that future editions of *Archives and Manuscripts* will continue the momentum, that we will see a more balanced mix of articles and that the journal will truly reflect its name.

Cunningham's edition has answered most of my questions. Manuscripts, or personal papers, are indeed records. And no, I do not need to become a manuscriptkeeper—to be an archivist is enough. Which leaves me with just one question. Is it good for the profession to have a journal with this divisive title?

Lyn Maloney
Monash University

David Horner, *Inside the War Cabinet: Directing Australia's War Effort, 1939–45.* Allen & Unwin in association with Australian Archives, St Leonards, NSW, 1996. xii+283pp. ISBN 1 86373 968 8. $34.95 (available from Public Programs, Australian Archives, PO Box 34, Dickson, ACT 2602 or e-mail aasales@aa.gov.au).

How hard they worked, the members and staff of the War Cabinet and the Advisory War Council. In the six years of the second world war the War Cabinet held 355 meetings dealing with 3 998 agenda items and recording 4 645 minutes while the Advisory War Council met 174 times with 727 agenda items and 1 618 minutes. Meetings were held in Melbourne and Canberra and occasionally in Sydney, with the necessity for long overnight train travel

between full working days. The key players, the Prime Minister and other War Cabinet Ministers, Frederick Shedden, secretary to both the War Cabinet and the Advisory War Council and his senior assistants all had a range of other extensive and pressing responsibilities and all for the period of the war perforce worked extraordinary and continuous seven day weeks.

Inside the War Cabinet makes use of the handwritten notebooks of the War Cabinet and the Advisory War Council, first released for public access at the end of 1993, to tell the story of the ministers, senior officials and generals who directed Australia's war effort from 1940, through the threat and fear of invasion in 1941 and 1942 to the end of the war and the resumption of a more normal pattern of government.

Sir Frederick Shedden is, along with John Curtin, the hero of this book. The War Cabinet was in many ways his creation and he was the driving force behind its successful operation. Orderly, efficient and extremely hardworking, Shedden was seen by many knowledgable commentators of his time and later as the ideal senior public servant. Secretary of the Department of Defence from 1937 to 1956, he was an apolitical administrator and policy advisor who, in the jargon of a later generation of bureaucrats, was entirely outcomes focused. He had no desire to take public credit for his or his Department's considerable achievements. As a result, despite his innovations in higher level defence structures and administration and the importance of his role in Australian war time policy making, he is little known outside a small group of specialists. At least he was until the publication of this book, which may well restore his status and give him belated recognition among a wider audience.

Shedden had brought the idea of a War Cabinet to Australia from his studies at the Imperial Defence College and attachments to the War Office. In March 1938 the Government agreed that it would form a War Cabinet on the outbreak of war to ensure timely, high quality decision making about the conduct of the war. With the parties finely balanced after the 1940 election, Prime Minister Menzies tried to form a National Government, an attempt rejected by Labor. As an alternative, however, Curtin proposed an Australian War Council to which the Opposition would nominate members to assist the Government with the war effort. Following the transition to a Labor Government in late 1941, the Advisory War Council was continued in such a way that, for practical purposes, unanimous decisions by the Council were adopted as the Government's decisions.

This is a very good book indeed. It is of obvious interest to those who wish to know about Australian history, government or public administration. It also deserves a wider readership, for it explains how Australia made the important decisions of the second world war, an event which the author suggests was perhaps the most influential in Australian history .

It also has particular interest to the primary audience of this journal. It is published in association with Australian Archives in part to celebrate both the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the second world war and the fiftieth anniversary of Australian Archives which grew out of Australia's War Archives Committee. It includes a useful appendix describing Australian Archives holdings on the second world war.

And, although it is not its primary purpose, *Inside the War Cabinet* also adds to the archival history of Australia. It reveals, for example the importance and status given to records management by the War Cabinet. Shedden knew the importance for good administration of good recordkeeping and it is improbable that any other Australian departmental secretary's personal staff has ever included six specially selected and qualified female librarians who were responsible for maintaining 'personal files' as did Shedden's. They were not mere juniors on the staff. Three of them travelled regularly to Canberra with Shedden when the War Cabinet met there. Like the rest of such staff, they were issued with official interstate priority transport cards giving them precedence equivalent to ministers, members of Parliament and high ranking service officers and officials. If only such high level attention to records management was the Australian norm!

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Memory of the World: General Guidelines to Safeguard Documentary Heritage, prepared for UNESCO on behalf of IFLA by Stephen Foster, Jan Lyall, Duncan Marshall and Roslyn Russel, Paris, UNESCO, 1995. 77p. (available free of charge from the National Preservation Office, National Library of Australia, Canberra, ACT 2600; phone: 06/2621357; fax: 06/2734493; e-mail: npo@nla.gov.au).

UNESCO launched the Memory of the World Program 'to protect and promote world documentary heritage' in 1992. The program is administered by the General Information Division of UNESCO. It is managed by an International

Advisory Committee (IAC), appointed by the Director-General of UNESCO, which has held two meetings, in September 1993 and May 1995. Seven pilot projects have been commenced in Eastern Europe, Spain, Yemen, Turkey and South America. In February 1996 thirty others were waiting for funds and fifteen national committees had been established.

At its last meeting in Paris the IAC adopted the General Guidelines to Safeguard Documentary Heritage which lays out the scope, objectives and strategies of the Memory of the World Program. It sets out the program's managerial and financial structures and specifies the process of selection and registration of world, regional and national documentary heritage. It also gives specifications for projects, preservation, access, distribution and marketing. The General Guidelines include the report on digitisation of the program's subcommittee on technology.

The main strategies of the program are: to compile authoritative registers of the documentary heritage of the world (modelled on the World Heritage List); to identify endangered documentary heritage; to instigate preservation copying projects, especially digitised copying; and to market digital (and other) documentary products.

In short, the program has two arms: production of documentary heritage registers and production and distribution of digitised copies of parts of that documentary heritage.

The world, regional and national registers of documentary heritage are to be compiled and maintained by the General Information Division of UNESCO. As well as manuscripts, books, newspapers, posters and other rare and valuable documents in archives and libraries, documents in any medium, particularly audiovisual materials, computerised recordings and oral traditions, may be registered (A. Abid, 'Memory of the World: preserving our documentary heritage', 1996, at http://www.unesco.org:80/cii/memory/mempage.htm). According to the General Guidelines a single document, a collection, a record group, or an archives holding all three may be registered.

The process of selection determines the scope and form of the registers. The Director-General of UNESCO registers nominations in the Memory of the World Register on the recommendation of the IAC. Nominations for the regional and national registers are assessed by regional and national committees. Nomination forms gather data on the identity, provenance and location of the documentary heritage together with an assessment against the Memory of the World selection criteria.

The registers, which are to be made accessible on-line, will become very useful guides for researchers if they include the detailed descriptions and inventories required on the nomination form. However, the registers are primarily designed to bestow status on the material listed in them, to raise awareness of the national and international significance of the documents and to assist in obtaining funds for their protection and preservation.

The creation of a heritage list in the conservationist model (protecting the endangered documentary heritage of the world) is designed to produce political leverage. The danger of singling out and ranking documentary heritage is that the process of selection and registration will privilege certain dominant discourses and marginalise others.

The selection criteria for inclusion of material in the World Register are historical rather than ethnographic. They are aimed at identifying documentation of momentous transnational events or movements in world history, not at documenting the diversity of communities and cultures on Earth. Under the selection criteria, a wooden tablet carved with Easter Island script or a manuscript in Mangarevan would be unlikely to be registered as a world heritage document. Yet such documentary heritage, which does not document 'a crucial contribution to major developments in world history or culture' (General Guidelines, p. 17), is frequently at highest risk and has strongest need for the kinds of protection that a world documentary heritage list might offer.

The other aim of the Memory of the World Program is the production and distribution of digitised copies of the listed world heritage documentation. The Memory of the World Program is distinguished from the multiplicity of recent digital documentary copying projects, such as the British Library's 'Initiatives for Access', the Ferguson 1840–1845 Project in Australia, and the Mitchell Library's Banks Papers digitisation project, by its ambitious scope. One has splendid visions of a vast digital repository of the discourses of the world, the Memory of the World, opened to democratic access by the program.

Digitisation is a valid and exciting method of bulk preservation of material on woodpulp paper. It is a wonderful way of physically enhancing and improving access to documents such as the Beowulf manuscript. It will also facilitate access to remote and rare documents. Furthermore, digitisation produces marketable material, sales of which, the General Guidelines indicate, may go some way towards funding other Memory of the World projects.

The IAC Technical Sub-Committee notes, however, that on a conservative estimate digital copying onto magnetic tape has a safe life of two years and three to five years on optical disk (General Guidelines, p. 56). That is, digital reformatting may not provide secure long-term preservation of documents. The General Guidelines therefore recommend a 'hybrid approach' to reformatting manuscript, printed and still-image documents, 'involving the production of a microfilm version of the material as well as a digital one' (p. 30). Microfilm has a life expectancy of 4–500 years. It should be noted that the hybrid approach does involve two separate processes (photography to film and scanning to magnetic tape or optical disk) and as far as I can find out, there are no 'digital cameras which...make it possible to do both at once' (p. 30) on the market in Australia. Some digitisation projects microfilm in the first instance to achieve a standard format and then scan the microfilm, but generally speaking microfilming as a backup would be an additional task and may therefore be neglected. There is no indication that microfilm backups are routine practice in the digitisation projects already being undertaken under the auspices of the Memory of the World. In practice digitisation of documentary heritage will require systematic and disciplined arrangements for storing, refreshing, maintaining and authenticating digital sources and for maintaining associated hardware. Democratisation of access to documentary heritage will be facilitated by digitisation, but it will also present many challenges to established methods of control over access which, perhaps paradoxically, have done much to protect archival heritage.

The General Guidelines construct an operational framework which will enable the Memory of the World Program to become a powerful international force for the conservation of the world's archival heritage. This potential is recognised by the alliance of international cultural conservation organisations which have supported the development of the program, particularly the International Council on Archives (ICA) and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), but also the international organisations of museums, conservators, music libraries, and film, television and sound archives. It is a good indication of the depth of the Australian cultural conservation industry that it has had such a strong hand in the formulation and writing of the General Guidelines.

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Standards Australia, *Records Management*, Standards Association of Australia, Homebush, 1996. 6 parts. ISBN 0 7337 0306 2. $70 (available from Standards Australia, PO Box 1055, Strathfield, NSW 2135).

Standards promulgated by national and international standards bodies generally fall into two distinct categories, those which relate to product outcomes and are concerned with technical specifications and those which offer generic business system approaches.

The AS 4390 Records Management series falls into this latter category. It provides organisations with a definition of a generic records management regime. It does this by establishing:

- a clear statement of the purpose of recordkeeping;
- an instructional tool for establishing recordkeeping programs; and
- a basis for benchmarking recordkeeping programs.

In the private sector recordkeeping requirements are often less 'overt' than in the more regulated public sector. While there are specific records creation and/or retention requirements, expressed in a multitude of acts and regulations, and enough horror stories of litigation and compliance activities jeopardised through lack of evidence, there is no one regulatory authority setting standards for corporate recordkeeping. In the government arena, the various state and Commonwealth archives authorities have some form of legislative reinforcement for their activities. They can use this as a basis for developing and implementing their programs; as a foundation for the recordkeeping requirements they expect of the bodies that fall within their ambit; and, ultimately, as the justification for their existence.

Those concerned with recordkeeping in the private sector must persuade the decision-makers within their organisations that the capture and maintenance of accessible evidence (recordkeeping) is itself a strategic activity focused on minimising risk and optimising opportunities. Having an Australian standard covering what I believe to be the distinguishing features of our professional competence, will make this job somewhat easier. Compliance with the standard should be one of many in a 'bag' of convincing arguments, but it is a significant weapon within our armoury.

In fact the standard, by establishing the three points mentioned above, will do more than provide justification for the establishment of a good

recordkeeping regime. Beyond getting recognition for the need for capturing and managing 'evidence', not just information, the standard also outlines strategies for achieving good recordkeeping. It identifies the basic elements of good recordkeeping practices, and assists in developing and implementing optimum records management systems, and in evaluating and monitoring those that have been put in place. It also provides definitions of key terms used in our industry, something long required, if nothing else as a point of reference for the inevitable arguments over definitions we always seem to be having!

The standard synthesises the thinking that has been done over the last decade within our profession. It articulates the key elements of the nature and value of evidence, as well as the connection between the act of creating evidence of activities and the role of recordkeeping systems in capturing and maintaining it. Following exposition of the Upward-McKemmish records continuum during an intensive workshop held at Monash University in June this year, I have revisited the concept of corporate memory. Within my own work environment, I believe this concept provides a strong basis for the need for evidence in the longer term. Beyond the immediate administrative, legislative and risk management requirements, an organisation requires a certain body of evidence of itself as an evolutionary entity. This is, in essence, the sanction for 'archives', those records kept on a continuing basis. Sue McKemmish recently referred to this element as experiential knowledge. Interestingly this focus ties in with the growing interest in the concept of corporate knowledge management. The foreword in Part Two of the standard is particularly useful in this context as it provides a succinct yet comprehensive rationale for corporate recordkeeping as essential to support corporate memory.

The combined standard provides a concise yet detailed 'how to' for those faced with responsibility for recordkeeping practices within an organisation. I have found Part Four (Control), Part Five (Appraisal and Disposal) and Part Six (Storage) of particular help in my own work. In developing the company wide records disposal standard; establishing guidelines for specific aspects of electronic recordkeeping; training individuals to implement departmental disposal plans; assisting sites make sense of their records storage options; and, more recently, working with a team of information systems specialists to establish a generic company wide classification system, the standard has provided me with an invaluable reference work. Part One (General) and Part Two (Strategies) are also proving of great assistance in the development of the Company's own recordkeeping standard.

Appendix C (Check List for Performance Testing of Records Management Systems) provides a thorough basis for the audit of an organisation's records management system. This also serves as a good introduction or overview of the necessary elements of a records management system for someone who is not familiar with the concepts and practices outlined in the body of the Standard.

The standard should be viewed as a great achievement on the part of its developers and reflects positively on the Australian recordkeeping profession. The onus now is on us to make sure it is known and referenced by the information technology industry in the design and development of recordkeeping systems where these are necessary.

Marion Renehan
BHP Archives

Exhibitions

Post Office Style: Architectural Drawings in the Australian Archives. Casselden Place, Lonsdale St, Melbourne, 15–26 April, 1996. Curated by Myrna Deverall, Assistant Director Access and Information Services, Australian Archives Victorian Office.

Developed by the Victorian Office of the Australian Archives as a contribution to the Victorian Heritage Festival 1996, this exhibition featured a small selection of architectural drawings held by the Archives which in total include plans for lighthouses, custom houses, aerodromes, munition factories and other government buildings and facilities. It was on display in the foyer of Casselden Place, the location of the Australian Archives Victorian Office reading rooms. Casselden Place also houses the Taxation Office—amongst others—hence a reasonable number of potential viewers could be expected.

The drawings ranged in creation dates from 1884 to 1911 and in proportions from humble country facilities to the far grander buildings of the late nineteenth century. All featured the gorgeous detail and colours one would expect from the period of their creation and, although I admit a certain inclination towards the beauty of such items, I believe them to be of such aesthetic quality as to appeal to those not so inclined. All drawings were mounted, protected copies of documents held in Commonwealth Record

Series (CRS) B3712, complete with stamped and handwritten annotations. Pre-federation drawings were created by the Colonial Architects Office for the Colony of Victoria. These drawings were inherited by the Commonwealth Government at Federation, along with the accompanying public function. Post-federation drawings were created by Commonwealth Government architects.

Printed material was available to viewers of the exhibition. The collection of drawings may have been left a little out of context without this information, particularly with the absence of text on the panels. I do not imagine many casual passers-by would pick up this material, but those who did would have gained a valuable insight into the significance of the drawings and their series of origin.

In contrast to the subtle colourings of the drawings was a bright, well-positioned Australian Archives promotional poster. The layout featured just enough photographs, cartoons, brightly coloured tea boxes, political posters, advertisements and glimpses of 'top secret' cabinet records to appeal to the Aussie iconographer in us all. The promotional text gave an overview of the what, where and how to, of Australian Archives, including a web site address.

The exhibition may not have made any statements of academic importance to those in the archival know, but that was not the intended purpose. The exhibition was developed as a contribution to the Victorian Heritage Festival, and although I am not entirely convinced of its value as such a contribution, it gained the Australian Archives some public attention. I asked what reaction the exhibition had received and was a little discouraged to hear a worker from the building say she had not stopped to look at it, and neither did she know of anyone who had. I much preferred the answer of the attendant at the information desk who told me he had noticed many people stop and look (mainly visitors to the building) and some had even enquired about further information. These responses say more about ignorance of one's everyday environment than to any success or failings of the exhibition!

In the Archives' order of priority, general public awareness and use may never supersede 'keeping one's house in order' and possibly it never should. Nevertheless, through the increase of products and services directed at increasing the use of the Archives by the hobby researcher and interested members of the public, the Archives is fulfilling all its aims as laid out since its beginnings. By association with groups and events such as the Heritage Festival, the Archives expresses its holdings' cultural significance and place in Australia's heritage. This exhibition of very modest proportions is both an

attempt to contribute to the Victorian Heritage Festival and a means of raising public awareness of the Australian Archives and the material that belongs to all Australians.

Helen Cross
Monash University

Conferences and Workshops

Managing the Records Continuum. An intensive workshop by Monash University with the sponsorship of the University of Canberra, Faculty of Communication and the support of the Australian Archives and Records Management Office of NSW. Monash University 24–28 June; University of Canberra 1–5 July.

Those like me who attended this week long workshop in Canberra may have benefited from changes to structure and content from its first presentation in the preceding week at Monash. At least we did benefit, as I understand it, from more attractive surrounds and better catering. I feel these are underrated components for the success of any intensive or extensive course of this nature.

The workshop sessions were mainly presented by Monash faculty members: Sue McKemmish, Barbara Reed, Frank Upward, along with Chris Hurley. David Bearman from the USA coordinated the presentations and discussion in addition to presenting several sessions. Staff from Australian Archives, National Library, and the NSW Records Management Office (RMO) contributed to particular sessions. The twenty or so Canberra attendees were a mix of staff from Australian Archives and other Commonwealth agencies, the RMO, archival educators and consultants.

Space precludes a listing of detailed workshop contents, presenters and outcomes of the sessions and group work. I will therefore concentrate on what I saw as the key aspects and outcomes. For me, the structure of the workshop was anchored on two key 'rocks':

- Frank Upward's model (diagram) of the components of the records continuum and their inter-relationships; and

- David Bearman's presentation of his work and that of the University of Pittsburgh on the functional requirements for evidence in electronic recordkeeping systems.

The contents and implications of each of the above were examined throughout the week in various ways and from different angles. Ancillary issues such as distributed custody versus archival custody and GILS progress were dealt with in special sessions.

The concept of the records continuum posits that all record related processes and activities are linked in what I would describe as a 'great chain of being' for which the various components are capable of being identified and described. The Upward model of the continuum was first presented in 1995 and has undergone - and is undergoing - refinement. It is essentially a schematic diagram consisting of cross axes which represent evidence requirements, identity of participants in recordkeeping, recordkeeping requirements, and how record based transactions are linked. The model then has various 'dimensions' which incorporate the various stages along the way from the particular to the very general. For example, how the creation of an individual record is linked via the 'chain' to a constitutional or other legal requirement.

This review is not the place to discuss the continuum model in any detail. But I would say that, while difficult to grasp in all its detail, I found it very useful in assisting debate about issues and how the various identified components of the continuum interrelate.

The other major highlight of the workshop was the running involvement of David Bearman, who amongst other things presented a detailed explanation of the functional requirements for recordkeeping systems. In brief, these see the requirements for acceptable records in an electronic environment in terms of a Metadata Encapsulated Object (MEO). The MEO is an electronic record which contains all the necessary authenticating and other evidential requirements along with the details of the transaction being documented. A MEO has various defined 'layers' in it:

- handle layer
- terms and conditions layer
- structural layer
- contextual layer
- content layer; and
- use history layer.

These cover the mandatory and optional elements and values down to a detailed level. Actual requirements for each depends on business and other evidential needs.

When I first heard of the MEO in 1994 I was somewhat sceptical of its applicability in the practical world. Something which is only a concept can achieve or provide whatever you want it to. Now I am a believer. I can see no really significant problems with it given the detailed work that has been done. I am even further convinced that decision-making about the recordkeeping requirements (and the archivist's input) has to be at the system design stage. The real problem is going to be convincing or selling it to those who currently control these areas in terms of resource allocation and systems implementation.

On a related matter, I was quite taken by Frank Upward's and Chris Hurley's separate expositions of how metadata elements have been present not only in paper file systems but in the earlier more complex docket systems used to control related papers. The terminology is new but perhaps that is only because we now have to explain requirements in a more precise way if systems are to capture much of it automatically.

Bearman also made the pertinent point that there was confusion over custody and custodianship. The latter can perhaps be better conceived as 'guardianship'. Records ought to be created in such a way that they can care for themselves rather than requiring an archivist to come along afterwards and pick up the pieces. We cannot afford to waste resources managing bad records. To put it another way: the real debate should be about implementing proper recordkeeping systems rather than arguing over who should have custody of the records created by them.

It has been pointed out by several writers that the simpler or the more routine the tasks which a profession undertakes the more likely it is not to survive in the long run. Professional groupings need continually to seek out the 'higher value' tasks. To put it another way: professions continually have to look for new lands if they are to remain viable or for its members to retain their common identity.

This visit to Australia marks the farewell of David Bearman from archival matters. He is moving on into new territory related to the art world. While he says he changes his direction every ten years or so, I hope there is no moral in it for the rest of us.

Stephen Yorke
Australian Archives

Archives at the Centre: Australian Society of Archivists Annual General Meeting & Conference. Alice Springs, 23–25 May 1996.

The Society of American Archivists 60th Annual Meeting. San Diego, 25 August–1 September 1996.

The ASA offered its 200 participants a set menu, not necessarily catering for all tastes, but providing a shared, communal 'dining' experience. The SAA's 1 200 delegates chose from a tantalising smorgasbord of offerings, but we 'ate' at different tables, only coming together for the opening and closing formalities.

A common theme which strongly flavoured both programs was that of documenting diversity. In his keynote address to the ASA conference, long-time Aboriginal activist Charles Perkins, challenged archivists to play their part in documenting the history of race relations in Australia and witnessing to the lives of black as well as white Australians. The SAA keynote speaker, Dr Johnnetta B. Cole, the first African American woman president of the black women's Spelman College, addressed issues of discrimination and diversity in the twenty-first century workplace, and the role of archivists in ensuring that the historical record reflects diversity and 'speaks in many voices'.

The theme of the impact on the archival record of race and ethnicity in the context of the changing demographics of American society was woven through the SAA program in sessions on documenting discriminatory practices, African Caribbean culture, Asians in America, the lives of free people of colour, life in the US-Mexican Borderlands, African American music, and the Mexican American and Puerto Rican experience in the US. Related sessions dealt with the use of archival records in shattering stereotypes, identifying and serving ethnic and culturally diverse researchers, diversifying the profession, and accessing documentation relating to Native Americans.

Some of the issues raised strongly paralleled those explored at ASA sessions featuring Rosie Baird, Link-Up Coordinator for the Northern Territory, Kathy Frankland, Queensland Department of Family and Community Services, Melissa Jackson, State Library of NSW, David Hugo, Research Director of the Strehlow Research Centre, and Ted Egan, researcher, singer, entertainer and storyteller extraordinaire. Baird spoke about researching the stolen generation and reuniting families torn apart by the brutal and racist Australian government policy that took Aboriginal children from their mothers, placed

them with white families and denied them their Aboriginality, illuminating the role of recordkeeping in both destroying and restoring identity. Frankland and Jackson provided insights into the development of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protocols for Library, Archives and Information Services* (http://www.ntu.edu.au/library/protocol.html) and the challenges that lie ahead if they are to be implemented. Hugo highlighted issues relating to secret and sacred materials, while Ted Egan, living proof of Graham Swift's claim that man is indeed the storytelling animal, spun a yarn for us around the Caledon Bay and Woodah Island killings in the NT. He also spoke of what is involved in enabling Aboriginal people to tell their own stories in voices that are acknowledged and heard.

These presentations raise pressing questions for us as archivists, educators and Australians. Does the Australian information community collectively have the will to take up the challenges they embody? Is the archival community prepared to commit itself and its resources to empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by negotiating issues of ownership, custody, arrangement and description, use and accessibility, by involving them in programs to sensitise archivists and students in archival programs to the cultural issues associated with records of and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and by diversifying the profession itself?

Similar questions arise in the North American scene. In an SAA session on records relating to Native Americans, the fundamental nature of the challenges involved was powerfully reinforced for me by Native American speaker Willow Powers. Her presentation demonstrated how cultural differences can challenge archival principles and the concept of an archive itself in communities which value the spoken word and question the legitimacy of the written record for the very reason it is so valued by others—its immutability.

Clear parallels also emerged in sessions on the recordkeeping issues associated with the privatisation and outsourcing of former government functions. In Alice, Kerrie Scott of Australian Archives spoke of that institution's attempts to set some ground rules for the long-term management and accessibility of the records associated with these functions. Her message was strongly and clearly conveyed by her parodying of the NT tourist slogan—if archivists don't act now in relation to these records, in future 'If they ever ever go, you'll never never know'. Joanne Evans and Michelle Novacco's co-presentation on the involvement of staff from the Australian Science Archives Project (ASAP) as consultants to Generation Victoria provided some

micro-level solutions, but revealed the absence of any macro-level action in Victoria, where it would seem Kerrie's version of the NT tourist slogan is already a reality. The San Diego session was equally thought-provoking and featured ASAP's Lisa Enright, as well as Canadian and US archivists working in the power industry.

While a sprinkling of sessions at SAA dealt with more 'traditional' topics such as appraisal, the provision of reference and access services, collection development and acquisition policies, there were lashings of presentations on electronic records and digital archives. Locked into life cycle mindsets, most of these sessions dealt with either the management of electronic records or the issues associated with preserving and making accessible digital archives collections, e.g. the arrangement and description, standardisation and technical issues associated with taking archival records 'in digital form' into custody, digitising historical collections, and re-presenting archival records and archival descriptions in digital form for delivery via web sites and the internet (with much emphasis being given to the Encoded Archival Description and Text Encoding Initiative protocols). With few exceptions, integrated continuum perspectives, which would suggest that archival descriptive metadata should be captured along with the metadata needed to manage preservation and migration at the time of records creation, were absent. Missing too was the kind of unifying vision that Chris Hurley and David Roberts brought to their ASA presentations on archival descriptive standards, and the involvement of the Australian Council of Archives in the development of recordkeeping standards and policies (see David Bearman's review in this issue). Notable exceptions were in the presentations given by David Bearman (http://www.lis.pitt.edu/~nhprc/item-lvl.html) and Margaret Hedstrom, and by Frank Upward and Jay Atherton in sessions on item level control and the archival record, and life cycles and continua respectively.

In Alice, Australian Archives' Dagmar Parer's report on the work of the Technology Committee of the Commonwealth Information Management Steering Committee, raised, but did not answer, the question of the relationship between issues to do with the transparency and accessibility of current government information, recordkeeping processes and archival purposes. The role that archivists can play in developing metadata specifications as a strategy for making government information more transparent and how this might relate to initiatives in the electronic recordkeeping area demand further exploration.

Sessions at SAA on electronic recordkeeping updated the report given in Alice by University of Queensland Archivist Glenda Acland on the University of British Columbia and University of Pittsburgh research projects and related implementation sites, including the US Department of Defense, City of Philadelphia and University of Indiana. Unfortunately for progress in this area in North America, the Pittsburgh and UBC projects have tended to be cast as providing alternative, even incompatible solutions to the problem of electronic recordkeeping. From an Australian, continuum-based perspective, they provide parts of a solution, and appear to be more complementary than contradictory.

Two thought provoking sessions in San Diego that did look at integrated recordkeeping and archiving processes open up areas crying out for further exploration—perhaps, amongst other places, in Adelaide? One featured John McDonald of the National Archives of Canada, Gregory Anderson of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Philip Bantin of Indiana University (http://www.nimrod.mit.edu/archives/saa.sessions/). The aim of the session was to further understandings of functional analysis and business process modelling to assist archivists in working with automated systems that can meet archival requirements and business needs. The other, which focused on documenting invention and innovation, featured a paper by Massachusetts Institute of Technology Archivist, Helen Samuels, on her involvement with Mechanical Engineering staff and students in a project to document the teaching and learning processes associated with a subject about industrial design. Initially, Samuels saw the project as an archival documentation exercise, aimed at capturing a representation of an innovative teaching program for future research purposes. She found, however, that the teaching staff involved came to see the project as to do with capturing records that supported their primary business purpose—teaching. The project resulted in the capture of records not previously created as part of the teaching process, records that were valued by staff because they provided evidence of what actually happened in class, and could be used as a basis for analysing and improving the teaching and learning processes at MIT. Samuels' appraisal of what records should be captured for long-term archival purposes, identified gaps in current recordkeeping and revealed that it had not been particularly supportive of quality teaching, a major business function of MIT.

The rest of the ASA conference offered us sessions ostensibly on contemporary issues, but featuring a mixed bag of presentations. Papers by Chris Coggin, State Archivist of WA, archival educator Bruce Smith, Charles Sturt University Archivist Don Boadle, and Ted Ling of Australian Archives

reported on new team based structures in the WA Public Record Office, archives collections in museums, the history and future prospects of regional archives, and the design of archival repositories, respectively. Don Boadle, who engaged in the debate about the future of collecting archives in an electronic environment and the functional requirements for historical evidence, was the only speaker in this group who really focused on what I would call critical contemporary issues. In Chris Coggins' case in particular, I would have liked to have heard more of the current developments in WA. The lowest lights of these sessions were the reports from the Special Interest Groups, a ragbag of comments about SIG activities and their viability. The opportunity to bring to the wider forum key contemporary issues in their areas of special interest was largely lost. The highlight was Adrian Cunningham's fascinating paper on the recordkeeping behaviour of two Australian icons, Lindy Chamberlain and Eddie Mabo, and on the symbolic significance of their records, witness not only to their lives, but to definitive experiences in the lives of many other Australians, individually and collectively (http://www.nla.gov.au/staffpaper/acunning4.html).

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Re-engineering—the Electronic Records Future. Records Management Association of Australian 13th National Convention, Canberra, 8–11 September 1996. (Copies of the papers may be obtained from the ACT Branch of the RMAA, GPO Box 2591, Canberra City, ACT 2601. The price is $50. All papers, except Macdonald's and Siller's are included.)

This year's RMAA conference was full of promise. The title linked electronic records with the future, change and a management technique which is affecting records managers everywhere. Perhaps some participants were disappointed that there were few papers describing the successful implementation of systems or techniques. The conference organisers should be congratulated for highlighting the nature and functions of records in relation to their strategic uses within organisations.

The first speaker was Dr Ben Graham, a Canadian consultant, who believed that there was a moral imperative to conduct the re-engineering process with concern for the people involved. He contended that staff reduction was not the goal. His example of the glass manufacturer, Corning, finding that they no longer needed glass blowers and sending them to a warehouse to work

away until they developed a productive business seemed somewhat remote from the current Australian climate.

It is always salutary for archivists to hear the difficulties which researchers, such as Dr Gwynneth Singleton, Senior Lecturer in Politics at the University of Canberra, face in finding records. Perhaps records managers were also interested to hear about some of the functions which records are expected to perform outside the business context. Singleton argued for good records management as a contribution to understanding society, but her anecdotal approach did not really explain how this could be achieved.

Murray Jackson, Commissioner for the Snowy Mountains Hydro Electric Authority, stated that information resources were critical in positioning the Authority to succeed in the deregulated national electricity market. He spoke of re-engineering the corporate memory and of developing systems which would add value to it. He believed that the corporate memory was now more complete and usable because of the integration of sources of data and the specific decision to manage this resource. The notion of using the past to influence the present is not a new one, but it would have been interesting to delve more deeply into the Authority's use of these concepts.

I was unable to attend the session led by the Australian consultant, Joy Siller but I understand that it provided a sound introduction to the Internet and, at the end, provoked some discussion of interesting uses of the Net by records managers.

Rick Barry, an American consultant in information and its management, saw the integration of the archives and records management function with the information management and technology function, as essential to the proper functioning of business. He listed some mechanisms for integration, leaving no doubt that the optimum was for both functions to report to the same manager, who could as well be a records manager as an information technologist. He urged archivists and records managers to recognise the opportunities in alliances with information managers and technologists and stressed the disservice that they would do to their organisations if they did not take up the challenge of putting the recordkeeping perspective on the corporate agenda. This is a message that needs to be understood and acted on.

Bruce Cann, Frank Wood and Cheryl May, from the Publishing and Visual Communications area of the Department of Defence, provided a practical demonstration of an electronic forms system and a practical discussion of a document generator which facilitates the production of standardised corporate documents.

Eric Wainwright, Deputy Director of the National Library of Australia, who chairs the Commonwealth Information Management Steering Committee, discussed the report 'Management of Government Information as a National Strategic Resource' which will be presented to the Government Information Services Policy Board. To increase the visibility, accessibility and interoperability of government information, the report recommends a government information locator service, a common thesaurus for records classification, the development of search engines to allow whole of government searching, a single Commonwealth entry point on the Internet and, if possible, a joint Commonwealth/States entry point. Wainwright did not underestimate the magnitude of this task and he saw records managers as having a key role to play in achieving the desired goal. This paper was particularly worthwhile for the current perspective it provides.

Dr Andy Macdonald, the Commonwealth's Chief Government Information Officer, spoke of his vision of giving everyone access to the government information that they want. He covered the one-stop-shop for government services, the value that could be added by an enterprise wide approach and the possibility of government influencing industry to provide better technology. Wisely, he recognised the scale of his task in bringing about the cultural change to realise the vision.

Carl Newton, now a British consultant in electronic document systems, was once an archivist. He pointed out that records management is not a universal cure-all. Nevertheless, he agreed with Barry that records management was both integral and critical to business processes. His emphasis on the value of documents to organisations as both evidence and data was most welcome. Newton suggested that records managers should use a more interventionist approach to establish the evidential quality of documents and abandon subject based text retrieval systems in favour of identifying documents by their object or purpose to facilitate pertinent recall. He urged records managers to see their role not as 'passive defenders of corporate integrity' but as 'aggressive promoters of competitive advantages'. This, too, is a challenge which needs to be accepted.

Laurie Sletten, Lecturer in Information and Records Management at the University of Canberra spoke of her dual career as an archivist and records manager. She noted the importance of records managers contributing to the efficiency and effectiveness of their organisations, but did not have the same focus on integrating records management into the structure of business as Barry and Newton.

The paper given by Paul Heath who manages Eastman Kodak's Consumer Digital Imaging businesses in Europe, Africa and the Middle East, took a conceptual view of the technological challenges for records managers. For document capture he suggested that it was necessary to advance with the technology; for document storage he suggested that outsourcing could protect against obsolescence; and, to ensure access he suggested harnessing the technology. This demands a level of sophistication from records managers but it does provide a model which would allow them to concentrate on 'the processes of record flow'. It would equally allow them to concentrate on the integrity of the record.

In his excellent conference summary, Barry drew out four significant threads: the importance of linking documentation to business processes; the implications of emerging information technologies; the challenge of integrating legacy and emerging electronic systems; and the question of losing sight of the human and social dimensions.

He closed the conference with a quotation from Sir Peter Lawler's opening address. Sir Peter referred to the present as 'a daunting, unfamiliar world onrushing, seductive but lush with promise'. It was intended to be a challenging conference and certainly Barry meant to send participants away with a sense of post-conference excitement. My own feeling was that they were somewhat daunted, rather than inspired, by the conference, but this is not a criticism of its content. It provided an opportunity to consider issues which were of fundamental and practical significance and there was a willingness to consider the nature of records in relation to the management issues facing records managers. This made for a satisfying conference.

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Guides

Ian K. Smith, compiler, *Records of War: A guide to military history sources at the Australian War Memorial.* Australian War Memorial, Canberra, 1996. $8.95 plus $3.00 postage within Australia, $10.00 overseas (available from the Australian War Memorial, GPO Box 345, Canberra, ACT 2601).

This new guide to the collections of the Australian War Memorial is puzzling in that it makes no reference to the Memorial's earlier but similar publications. These included *A General Guide to the Library Collections and Archives in the Australian War Memorial* by Michael Piggott in 1982; *Roll Call!: A guide to the genealogical sources in the Australian War Memorial* compiled by Joyce Bradley and others in 1986 and *A Chronological Guide to Official Records in the Australian War Memorial's Collections,* no author given, 1993. Presumably these earlier works are out of print, hence the new publication which is not as detailed, although emphasis now seems to be on strengths and weaknesses in the various collections. There is still a chronological approach to the records held, further subdivided by the various formats such as official records, private records, printed and special records, photographs, film and sound collections. A useful guide to anyone planning research at the Memorial, especially if they do not have the earlier publications.

Rowena MacDonald, compiler, *Between Two Worlds: The Commonwealth government and the removal of Aboriginal children of part descent in the Northern Territory.* Australian Archives, Canberra, 1995.

This book was written to accompany the exhibition 'Between Two Worlds' which looked at two Northern Territory 'half caste' institutions run by the Commonwealth government: the Bungalow in Alice Springs and the Kahlin Home in Darwin. By using primarily Australian Archives documents and photographs together with oral histories the book reveals what happened to children placed in these institutions. The appendix includes a useful list of Link-Up contact groups throughout Australia and the bibliography refers to both primary and secondary sources for further reading. *Between Two Worlds* succeeds in its objective to raise community awareness of just how disastrous government policies were on Aboriginal families and as such is an important contribution to the reconciliation process. Not everyone had the privilege of viewing the exhibition but everyone should read this book.

Peter Nagle and Richard Summerrell, compilers, *Aboriginal Deaths in Custody: The Royal Commission and Its Records 1987–1991.* Australian Archives, Canberra, 1996.

This guide is a comprehensive listing of the records of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody and as such is essential for researchers wanting to use these records. Each series is clearly outlined with all relevant information including location of the records, access, quantity, series descriptions and so on. There is also a useful set of appendices including the Commission's terms of reference, names of deceased persons, further reading and other records in Australian Archives relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Also, where appropriate, World Wide Web sites have been listed including the Aboriginal Studies Virtual Library, the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation and the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody home pages.

Australian Archives Fact Sheets

A number of government archives are now publishing fact sheets to inform researchers of the services offered and records available at that particular institution. In the Australian Archives series of fact sheets basic topics covered include addresses and opening hours, reading room rules, search agents plus specific topics such as the Commonwealth Film Unit, PNG Patrol Reports, Security Intelligence Records, the wine industry in South Australia and so on. Two fact sheets that I have not seen produced by other government archives include quarterly updates of record transfers and descriptive work undertaken. These are an excellent way of keeping researchers up-to-date. As well as being available in paper format, the fact sheets are available from the Australian Archives web site http://www.aa.gov.au. By making these fact sheets freely available Australian Archives is serving its clients' needs by providing them with relevant information before they turn up on the doorstep to start their research. It would be interesting to see a survey of client response to these fact sheets, both the paper format and the electronic version.

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