

News Notes

Edited by Helen Yoxall

Archives Authority of New South Wales

Correspondent: Janet Knight

Standards and guidelines

In preparation for the new State records legislation, the Archives Authority drafted two of the key standards that need to be ready when the legislation comes into operation. Exposure drafts of the two standards, on Full and Accurate Recordkeeping and Records Management Programs, were released for comment to major agencies and to interested parties outside the New South Wales public sector in May 1996. The Authority also undertook substantial work on standards and associated guidelines for records storage and for the management of records of joint (particularly inter-government) bodies.

Electronic Recordkeeping Project

The Authority established its own Electronic Recordkeeping Project in November 1995. This is a two-year project to implement the strategies outlined in the discussion paper 'Documenting the Future'. As an early task in the project, exposure drafts of a general whole-of-government policy on electronic recordkeeping and of a policy relating to electronic messages as records were released for comment to major agencies and to other interested parties in April 1996. Other work in the project included drafting supporting guidelines and a strategy for developing the capabilities of Authority staff for archives/records work in the electronic environment.

Disposal compliance project

Another initiative by the Authority designed to assist New South Wales Government agencies to comply with the proposed State records legislation is the establishment of a disposal compliance project. This project will emphasise the Authority's new approaches to appraisal and disposal, based

on the records continuum and functional analysis. The project will be implemented through the provision of new and revised training courses and the release of publications, including standards and guidelines. Forthcoming publications will cover issues such as: the retention and disposal of records, Normal Administrative Practice and the compilation of records disposal schedules. For further information on the disposal compliance project please contact Leonie Jennings or Lisa Poulter on (02) 9237 0145.

Automated control system

Staff at the Archives Authority are also preparing for the introduction of an automated control system embracing both functional analysis and the series system of registration. The system selected is the Microsoft Access based Tabularium. Initially two project archivists have been appointed, one to work on the functional analysis and the other to prepare administrative histories of agencies. The project, which will eventually see all of the State archives controlled by the new system and which will bring enhanced access at the item level, is estimated for completion in ten years.

Australian Archives/Advisory Council on Australian Archives

Correspondent: Susannah Zweep

Australian Archives

Publications: A brochure entitled *Australian Archives: Holding on to Our History* has been printed and the *Australian Archives Handbook* which provides advice for government agencies was launched in July. Two guides to collections of records in the Archives have also been produced—*Royal Commission Into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody*, and *Chinese Immigrants and Chinese-Australians in NSW*. In addition to these guides, a wide selection of Fact Sheets about our collections have been introduced to the Archives collection of finding aids. Finally, the booklet *Using Electronic Mail at the Australian Archives* was produced for internal use, advising staff on electronic mail policy. This booklet is also provided to government agencies as a guide to policy and procedure on electronic records.

Exhibitions Program: The exhibition *Houses, Huts and Hostels: living in Canberra 1911–1933* was opened at Old Parliament House in July. The exhibition *Scene Stealers: Australian Theatre 1870–1955* was opened in the same gallery in October.

Overseas Visitors: Over the past six months the Archives has received several visits from representatives of international archives institutions including Simon Chu and Sarah Choy from the Public Record Office of Hong Kong, and Gerald Slater from the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland. Tukul Kaiku from the National Archives and Public Records Service of Papua New Guinea completed a two month training placement sponsored by AusAid. The Archives also received a delegation of eight archivists from China in July. Rick Barry presented a consultancy and workshop on electronic records issues at the Archives in mid September following his attendance at the RMAA Conference in Canberra. During the same month, the Archives was represented by nine staff at the International Council on Archives 13th International Congress in Beijing.

Advisory Council on Australian Archives

Two new members—Alex Somlyay and Senator John Faulkner—were appointed to the Council in July; at the same time Margaret Christie's term as a member of Council ended.

The Council has met twice since May. Among the major issues discussed were the proposed review of the Archives Act, for which the Council has established a subcommittee, and the disposal of name identified census returns.

Council of Federal, State and Territory Archives

Correspondent: Susannah Zweep

COFSTA last met in Alice Springs in May. At the meeting members agreed to establish a Reference and Access Working Group to reinforce the role, and professional recognition, of reference and access work in archives. The group consists of a representative nominated from each member. Anne-Marie Schwirtlich, Australian Archives, is the convener.

In June the inaugural Australian Archives–COFSTA residential school was held in Sydney, attended by fifteen participants representing all COFSTA organisations. The program was designed to provide an opportunity for experienced archivists working in government archives to examine a range of issues, trends and specific approaches relating to archives and records administration, and to explore the possibilities of greater cooperation between COFSTA members.

Archives Working Group

Correspondent: Susannah Zweep

The Archives Working Group was formed on 6 July 1995 under the auspices of the Cultural Ministers Council to promote the understanding and appreciation of the collections of archives as a national cultural resource. There are five members: Evan Williams (NSW Ministry of the Arts), Cathy Santamaria (Commonwealth Department of Communications and the Arts), George Nichols (Australian Archives), Ross Gibbs (Public Record Office of Victoria) and Michael Saclier (Noel Butlin Archives Centre).

Since its formation the Group has endorsed two major projects. The first is a guide which locates and lists all records held in archival institutions relating to indigenous Australians. In essence it is a consolidated guide to other guides and related source material that are already in existence. The guide has been prepared by Paul Macpherson from Stuartfield House Consulting Group and was recently submitted to the Group for consideration.

The second project is a market survey into the use and non-use of archives in Australia. The aim of the survey is to collect information concerning the awareness and knowledge of archives, effective promotion of archives, physical service requirements and intellectual service requirements. The survey was undertaken by Environmetrics Pty Ltd and its report was also recently submitted to the Group for consideration.

Australian War Memorial — Research Centre

Correspondent: Margaret Thomson

Printed and Written Records: The Private Records collection acquired several notable collections in the last six months. These include: PR00637 papers of Lieutenant W. H. Sticpewich, a POW in Borneo who worked with the 31 Australian War Graves Unit, Sandakan; PR00665 letters of Sergeant Billy Hacking, AATTV, Vietnam 1962–1963; PR00666 papers and diary transcript of Sheila Allan, civilian internee in Changi camp and PR00674 papers of Flight Lieutenant T. V. McCarthy ('G' for George).

Printed and Special Collection staff are about to finalise an evaluation of the various Special Collections held at the Research Centre. The Special Collections consist of maps and aerial photographs, plans and charts, souvenirs, leaflets, sheet music, forms and books, newspaper clippings,

postcards, trade and cigarette cards and include AWM plans and specifications of the Memorial buildings.

The evaluation of each collection meets a number of needs; obtaining an overview of the state of the collections; the size, the degree of documentation and control, the accessibility through finding aids or through automated systems, and the condition of both the material and storage. The exercise also identified which material has potential for exhibition use.

Official Records acquired several small additions to the collection and incorporated an addition to the Memorial Council records and several estrays into the collection. A project to update all finding aids in the Research Centre was completed and a project to return to their parent series all documents brought together as AWM 181 Herbicide series, Vietnam was commenced. As part of the anticipated requests for Vietnam material, access examination has been completed of all 1965 material in two series of records related to activities in Vietnam: AWM 95 Australian Army Commander's diaries and AWM 121 Army Office Operations Branch records.

Information Services: The long awaited publication *Records of war: a guide to military history sources at the Australian War Memorial* by Ian K. Smith has recently been released. It provides a valuable and comprehensive overview of all the collections available in the Research Centre. Rather than just being a listing of our holdings, it indicates the strengths and weaknesses of the collections and reveals their potential usefulness to researchers.

The number of public and official information enquiries received by Information Services has continued to grow in 1995–96 to a record level of 32 600 requests. The expected abatement after the year of 'Australia Remembers' has not eventuated. Enquiries are received via visiting researchers, telephone, letter, fax and increasingly via the Internet. The Memorial's home page on the Internet may account for the latter. The number of visitors to the Research Centre also was at bumper levels—10 106 this year, 600 more than the previous year and over 3 500 more than 1992–93. Sales of photos, film and photocopying jumped by fifteen per cent to \$175 000.

Photographs, Sound and Film: Donations continue to be offered by descendants of men and women who fought in the South African War 1899–1902 and in the First World War. It appears that attics continue to be cleaned out, and we are the fortunate recipients of what are always interesting images, but sometimes are treasures in terms of gaps which we have in the collection. Interesting acquisitions in the past six months have included several

peacekeeping collections, of Somalia and Rwanda; portraits of the famous Fighting Leane brothers of South Australia for whom one First World War battalion was known as the Joan of Arc battalion because it was 'Made of all Leanes'; several RAAF collections, including that of an Intelligence Officer in New Guinea in 1944.

Work has been carried out on captioning and making accessible to the public some substantial backlogs of material. These include the Robertson collection of over 1 000 images of the Korean War and a large collection of nearly 200 images taken by photographer Keast Burke in Mesopotamia with the Australian Wireless Signals Squadron, a numerically small but important communications unit supporting the British, in particular Dunsterforce, from 1916. An important milestone was reached with the completion of duplicating and captioning of five large RAAF official collections. Work has now commenced on the remaining two.

Preservation of the collection has as always taken much of our time. A survey was carried out of all the official images, both colour and black and white, of the Vietnam conflict. Work has been completed on duplicating the colour, and is about half complete for the black and white. Captions will be entered shortly as the work returns from our darkroom. Our official Korean collection is exhibiting the classic signs of deterioration common to acetate collections worldwide. We began treating the first negatives some time ago but it is a tedious and time consuming process. A survey is almost complete of the 25 000 images, during which we extract those that need immediate conservation treatment. The captions for these have many gaps so we hope to enlist the help of local veterans to provide information.

A series of First World War material comprising prints from private donors (our H series) has been copied. It was found that in the seventy years since their acquisition some had abrasion or other damage to the surface, so a new gelatin layer was applied before copying. The results are very pleasing. In all we have over 160 000 images available on our digitized image database, accompanied by captions searchable by many means, including free text.

Brisbane City Council Archives

Correspondent: Annabel Lloyd

As I sat to write this news note I was horrified to realise that it is two years since I last contributed—how time flies when you are having fun! On a serious note I am pleased to report that the Brisbane City Council Archives is now up and running!

An on-line index to the holdings has been created as a part of the Council Libraries on-line databank. The main advantage in this is that the index is available for public access through any of the Council's thirty-two branch libraries thereby maximising community access to information about the Archives' holdings.

The catalogue module is a customised version of a newspaper index marketed by Dynix, the supplier of the Library catalogue system. This kept the costs to a minimum. The fields were based on a series description form. The series will remain the main level of control for the holdings. A subject index was created in preference to a functional index after consultation with the Archives' main client group who felt more comfortable with a subject search option. The subject index is authority controlled and incorporates keyword functional terms. The index was launched in January by which time eighty per cent of the Archives' holdings had been described. To achieve this figure in a year I created some broad series which may be further broken down later. In retrospect this had the added advantage of allowing additional material to be readily added to the descriptions when it turned up. Council records held by the Queensland State Archives have also been added to the index and it is hoped to add further material held by other institutions this year.

Not surprisingly reference demand has increased considerably over the past year. The Council libraries currently expend no resources on local history although a number of branch libraries have small ad hoc collections of material. This has resulted in the Archives serving a strong community need for local history information. It is hoped to take on extra reference assistance to help with this service, thereby permitting the archivist time to concentrate on records management issues. An oral history program is also being organised.

Monash University Department of Librarianship, Archives and Records

Correspondent: Livia Iacovino

Dr Donald Schauder has been appointed to the Chair of the Department and took up his new role in August this year. He was the university librarian at RMIT. His research has focused on the management of information services which will contribute another dimension to the department's expertise. During the interregnum, Sue McKemish as acting Head has moved the department into a number of exciting new directions including the implementation of the

undergraduate programs, the expansion and diversification of the postgraduate offerings, and preparation for a new Masters by Distance Education in 1997. Sue's contribution not only to the Monash educational programs but to the recordkeeping profession overall has been acknowledged by being offered a Laureate of the Australian Society of Archivists at the Annual General Meeting held at Alice Springs in May this year.

Joining our department in July this year to coordinate the distance education programs is Chris Hurley, on secondment from the Public Record Office Victoria. Chris's wealth of experience as a professional archivist and administrator will provide an invaluable input into these programs. The new DE Masters in Information Science by coursework will have provision for individual subjects to be taken as part of the degree, or to be taken as continuing education subjects, or be customised for delivery into a particular workplace or via another education provider. The degree will provide the knowledge and skills needed to manage records programs or virtual libraries. This expertise is in increasing demand in business, government and educational institutions.

The Masters in Information Science by distance education will be a one-year equivalent full-time program offered at the level of a fifth year. It can be taken part-time over eighteen months to three years. It will comprise six electives with the opportunity to specialise in either archives and records or librarianship, and the flexibility to take 1–2 subjects from other Monash offerings or from the offerings of other education providers. Prerequisites will be either an undergraduate degree and an archives/records or librarianship postgraduate diploma or a related discipline, or an undergraduate degree with 4–5 years of relevant professional experience. Delivery mode will be a mix of electronic delivery and short intensive workshops on or off campus. Subjects will be introduced in stages with Managing the Records Continuum and Business Records Management available in 1997. Proposed fees for local students are \$A7 500 (\$A1 250 per subject); continuing education fees \$A1 500 per subject. For further information please contact the Secretary, Department of Librarianship, Archives and Records, Monash University, Clayton, VIC, 3168. Tel: 61 3 9905 2959, Fax: 61 3 9905 2952; e-mail: secalr@arts.cc.monash.edu.au.

Also serving as pilots for the distance education program were two highly successful short intensive workshops (i) Managing the Records Continuum held in July in Canberra and Melbourne presented by David Bearman, Archives and Museum Informatics, Sue McKemmish, Barbara Reed and Frank Upward from the Department and other leading practitioners, and (ii)

Preserving the Memory, offered in September presented by Ross Harvey a former staff member and Jeavons Baillie of the State Library of Victoria in Melbourne. They provided a good indication of the complementary value of direct contact with students with other educational modes of delivery.

The undergraduate degree in Information Management has continued to flourish with a new intake of students this year and last years successful students moving into the second year of the program. In second semester this year, in addition to the compulsory subjects students undertake in first semester, they also select two out of three electives offered by our department. The electives offered for the first time this year were: Information Policies and Structures, Legal Systems and Recorded Information, and Electronic Information Sources.

A number of Master's theses were submitted successfully in 1996. These include Jan Riley's thesis entitled 'Integration of Archives Programs with the Core Functions and Business Processes of the Independent School', Carolyn Theodore's 'Assessment of Strategies to Identify and Specify Requirements for the Creation and Capture of Evidence in the Child Protection Function', Catherine Thomas's 'The Nature of the American Influence on the Evolution of the Access Policy of the Archival Authority of the Commonwealth of Australia, 1944-1973' and Livia Iacovino's thesis 'Legal Education for the Recordkeeping Professional: A Proposed Curriculum Framework within the Records Continuum-based Educational Model'.

Overseas knowledge of the Monash archives and records programs continues to grow, strengthened by trips such as that in August to San Diego by Sue McKemish and Frank Upward, who participated in the inaugural North American Educators Forum and presented papers on the records continuum and archival education at the Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting.

Monash University Records and Archives Services

Correspondent: Ann M. Mitchell

The Branch has been in continuous review mode for years but this is no reason for despair. The long-running saga of internal review last reported in these pages in May 1995, switched to external mode in the final quarter of 1995. I am now very pleased to state that the outcomes have been favourable to us, notwithstanding the troublesome politico-economic climate afflicting the tertiary education sector at the time of writing.

In August 1995 at the request of our superior and Academic Registrar, Olwen Cornelius, we adopted a *Management Plan 1995–98* intended to carry us through the most challenging period in our thirty-five year history. Happily, the consultant liked what he saw. The plan identifies five main objectives involving: (1) Recordkeeping Systems Policy university-wide; (2) Registry Systems Review/Conversion; (3) Community Service/Outreach having particular reference to the Monash University Archives; (4) Job Restructuring; and (5) Training Programs for Departmental Staff and their Clients.

All objectives relate to recent changes which have affected work patterns and client requirements. In turn, these have been influenced by the technologies employed to meet new circumstances so that, for example, new electronic records management and archives databases being developed will go on-line to allow user access for the first time. The records management system will permit some degree of user interaction hence the emphasis on client as well as staff training in the Plan. Senior Branch staff also are fitting themselves for crossover competence (multi-skilling) so that any client may soon expect informed systems advice—electronic, hardcopy, current, non-current, archival—from any one of a number of professional officers.

Another critical factor influencing the formulation of the Plan was the need to prepare for anticipated retirements of at least four long-serving Registry clerks, none of whom will be replaced immediately. Staff losses on such a scale certainly concentrate the mind. In the short-term they have created the necessary motivation for survivors—encouraging them to become more responsive to client needs, to abandon reactionary practices and to learn new skills. The losses also facilitated the transfer of certain functions traditionally performed by Registry but no longer relevant to its drastically modified core operation of file creation/maintenance/retrieval from the central records system e.g. processing mail and maintaining files for departments that are no longer prime systems users.

The Administrative Officer, Robyn Warburton, appointed in July 1995 to replace the Manager's clerk, is a well-qualified refugee from the secondary education sector who just happened to have specialised in computer studies. Robyn was promptly drafted into systems development and has since been reclassified as Resources and Systems Training Coordinator. Three staff, including Robyn, are enrolled in professional records/archives courses—one at Swinburne University of Technology, two at Monash. One will finish this year.

Two new full-time professional appointments have been approved in 1996. Archives Officer, Jan Getson, now has an assistant, Catherine Nicholls, fresh from Part 1 of the Monash Master's program in archives and records (Catherine started on a casual basis in December 1995). In August 1996 we were joined by Steven De Wit, who will complete his Master's program this year. Steven was formerly Manager, Archives and Museum, Melbourne Diocesan Historical Commission. Like Catherine, his first professional job after completion of the Diploma in 1991 was with Records and Archives Services. His new role with us is that of Records Manager and his first major project will be to steer electronic systems conversion to Windows, now that our keyword classification scheme has been brought up-to-date and is nearly ready to go. And yes, we did it ourselves! We also have an impressive list of clients queuing to help us pioneer our new records management systems university-wide.

The revolution in staffing dynamics is by no means complete. Recent analysis has shown that the current staff establishment of thirteen persons in 12 898 EFT positions is almost identical to what it was in 1983. Yet workloads have multiplied at least fivefold since then and rather more than that for the unfortunate Manager. The university is also multi-campus—six instead of the one pre-1990. As late as 1988 only two persons on the establishment were university educated. By the end of 1996 more than half the staff will possess a base-grade professional qualification and five already have first degrees plus at least one postgraduate qualification.

Since establishment of the Monash University Archives as an independent entity early in 1995, archives reference work has more than doubled. Web watchers will already know that we can be found via the Monash University Home Page or direct at URL <http://www.monash.edu.au/magpie/>. Major current systems, and/or survey and appraisal projects still show a distressing stop/go tendency due to want of resources when and where needed. Important records surveys conducted on behalf of the Faculty of Education, School of Graduate Studies (Clayton Campus) and Gippsland Campus Administration either have been or are nearing completion. Jan Getson's *Select guide to Clayton campus records* has been published. An edited version can be inspected at our Web site. Another landmark document, our first GDS, has been given a test run and Version 2 will be prepared for distribution in a more attractive format shortly. We hope it will inspire clients to greater efforts at self-help, thereby preventing the continued accumulation of massive records survey backlogs to which we are condemned for the foreseeable future.

Clearly, none of the events reported have occurred by accident. After years of effort and indispensable assistance from an influential report by a respected outside consultant, the slow shift in cultural perceptions about recordkeeping systems management has become a slide. It is to be hoped that Records and Archives Services is now well-enough positioned to ride it out, at the same time avoiding the undertow from other stakeholder reviews that remain a fact of university life. Your correspondent has been nominated to full membership of the Computer Centre's DISC (Data Integrity Strategy Committee) by the Vice-Chancellor's Special Adviser on Communications and Multi-Media, which is encouraging. The Academic Registrar also has taken the bold step of requesting her University Archivist to share the very public official duties associated with that important symbol of the academic mainstream, the Graduation Ceremony.

Mortlock Library of South Australiana

Correspondent: Roger Andre

Titled *Architecture for Life*, an exhibition of architectural drawings from the Jackman Gooden collection attracted wide interest. The plans, complemented by photographs, were selected to illustrate the way in which architects have catered for the home, work, worship and recreational aspects of life.

More plans have since been donated. Of business records, the most significant accession would be records spanning 1879–1985 of the East End Market Company, deposited as a result of redevelopment of the market site. Society record groups included records of the 1849 Adelaide Benevolent and Strangers' Friend Society which survives to this day. An antiquarian book fair yielded papers, 1845–55, of Burra Mines storekeeper James Charles Coke and Governor Gawler's 1838 commission was acquired from the United Kingdom. With papers of Charles Harvey Bagot came an interesting 1848 letter from Caroline Chisholm. Of notable diaries, a posthumous entry in the 1872–73 diary of Daly Waters telegraph station master Charles Henry Johnston records Johnston's spearing in 1875.

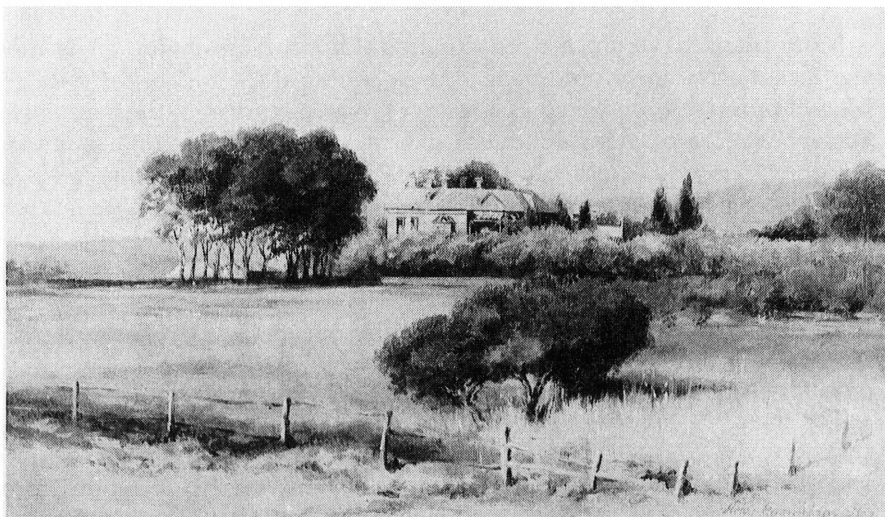
The pictorial collection has profited from the purchase of an album of caricatures of 1930–33 cricketers, the work of Adelaide botanist Jean Murray, and of three South Australian artworks, an exquisite oil painting by Helen Hambidge *Homestead at Felixstowe* 1896, a watercolour of Halletts Cove by H. P. Gill, and a portrait by May Grigg, thought to be a self-portrait. Helen Hambidge and her two sisters were accomplished artists who achieved acclaim at the turn of the century. H. P. Gill, 1855–1916, was appointed the

honorary curator of the South Australian Art Gallery and Master of the School of Painting in 1892; his guidance helped to develop the considerable talents of both the Hambidge sisters and May Grigg.

The J. D. Somerville Oral History Collection now exceeds 3 000 hours of recordings. The extent to which the collection is fulfilling its role as the central repository for oral history in South Australia has been revealed in statistics collated from the survey of oral history and folklore collections undertaken last year for the *Towards Federation 2001* directory. The Somerville Collections holds forty-two per cent of the oral history recording identified.

The Somerville Collection's secondary role as a general sound archive is being enhanced by the continuing work on the substantial, but previously inaccessible, collection of recordings accumulated by the State Library's former Research Service from 1961 to 1972. Due to the needs of a PhD scholar, the collection's comprehensive set of recordings of the Adelaide Festival of Arts' *Writers' Week* of the era are being processed as a priority.

The 1962, 1964 and 1966 *Writers' Week* recordings are now fully described on the Archival Collections Database and use copy cassettes are available to researchers.



Felixstowe, the Hambidge family home. Oil on board by Helen Hambidge 1896. The site has long been overtaken by suburbia. (Mortlock Library of South Australiana B67379)

National Library of Australia, Manuscript Section

Correspondent: Graeme Powell

Among the most unusual single documents acquired by the Library was a letter proposing marriage by the politician, lawyer and littérateur Patrick McMahon Glynn. Addressed to 'Miss Dynon', it is a long and eloquent plea expressed in the rounded phrases of a more leisurely age. What is extraordinary was that Glynn wrote the letter while sitting in Parliament House in Sydney, half-listening to speeches on trade and taxes by other members of the 1898 Federal Convention. The proposal was accepted.

Another artefact of exceptional interest is the diary that the patrol officer John Black kept on the famous Hagen-Sepik patrol in New Guinea in 1938–39. This was the longest patrol ever undertaken in the Territory and one of the great exploring journeys of the twentieth century. The two heavy volumes, which Black carried in his rucksack, are extremely detailed and full of maps, photographs and later annotations. The diaries will join the other papers of Black, which he bequeathed to the Library.

One of the finest collections of personal papers of a scientist have been received with the help of the Australian Science Archives Project. A. J. (Jock) Marshall was an outstanding zoologist, explorer, soldier and author and the papers cover most aspects of his varied and colourful life. Other new acquisitions have included the personal papers of the artists Clifton Pugh and Noel Counihan, the writers Russell Braddon, Helen Garner and Nadia Wheatley, the chemist Francis Lennox and the lawyer Ian Temby. Les Murray, David Martin and Lindy Chamberlain have made substantial additions to their papers. The records of the Australian Library and Information Association have also been placed in the Library.

As foreshadowed in the last report, a good deal of thought has been given to the future of the *Guide to collections of manuscripts relating to Australia* and the general question of the exchange of information about holdings of collecting archives. A proposal has been formulated which would replace the Guide with an on-line directory or register, which would provide summary information about collections or items, and which would be mounted on the Library's information server. The Library is currently seeking the views of contributors to the Guide and other archivists, librarians and user groups.

Northern Territory Archives Service

Correspondent: Greg Coleman

After a comprehensive program evaluation exercise, the Northern Territory Archives Service (NTAS) review team together with other government business units, presented its evaluation report in May. The evaluation examined the following six services provided by the NTAS:

- records policy and standards
- archives collection and preservation
- records storage and disposal
- oral history
- public information service, and
- Northern Territory history awards.

Many of the findings came as no surprise, but it was a valuable exercise in finding out more about our client requirements, and in having an impartial team use concrete facts, figures and dollars to explain the shortcomings and the benefits of the services which the NTAS provides. Changes are afoot, and we hope to be in a position to advise of various operational initiatives in the next issue.

Promotional activities which have been keeping staff busy have included production of the regular newsletter *Records Territory* and the first two leaflets in a series about the management issues relating to electronic records in the Territory. Staff have also assumed greater involvement in various local groups including the NT Information Management Reference Group, the NT Government Stolen Generation working party and a committee to investigate new strategies for service-wide records management. The NTAS also took a major role in convening the national conference of the Society at Alice Springs in May.

The NTAS has now relocated to new premises located at 25 Cavenagh Street in the heart of Darwin. The postal address remains GPO Box 874, Darwin, NT 0801. The new phone number is (08) 8924 7666 and the fax number is (08) 8924 7660. Individual staff can be e-mailed as follows: first name.surname@nt.gov.au.

Public Record Office of Victoria

Correspondent: Ian MacFarlane

Following the recent state elections, the Premier of Victoria also took on the Arts portfolio. The Public Record Office thus is now part of the Premier's Department. During the election campaign, Mr Kennett announced an intention to provide \$20 million to establish an electronic archive system. The funding will provide a purpose built archives for Victoria incorporating such a system.

A strategy for the management of electronic records is being completed by the IT division of Ernst and Young, the international firm of chartered accountants and management consultants. Several PRO staff have been involved.

Storage facilities at the Ballarat Repository are to be completed. A government allocation of \$300 000 over the next two years will complete the necessary shelving, and enable the transfer program to recommence.

Statistics provided by the Australian Council of Archives continue to show that the Public Record Office is the most used archives in the country—with 27 372 researcher visits and over 71 000 research enquiries during 1995.

It was reported in the last issue that the Public Record Office was under review by the Victorian Parliament's Public Bodies Review Committee. The Committee's report was to have been presented to Parliament on the first sitting day of the 1996 Autumn Parliamentary Session. However, the Committee itself has been dissolved. The matter has been referred to the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee for presentation to Parliament on the first day of the Spring Session, 1996.

The PRO's Local Government Records Transfer Kit and supplementary training sessions were introduced to local government records managers from throughout the State in April and May. The Office's *Local Government Schedule* is presently being revised following a major consultative process with local government officers in country and metropolitan regions. These PRO initiatives follow the extensive restructuring of local government in Victoria during the past three years.

The APROSS scheme (Approved Public Records Storage Suppliers) enables government departments and agencies to negotiate the cost of storage and the type of services they require with approved storage suppliers. Processing,

retrieval, return of records and destructions can be handled through the scheme.

Only unsentenced and sentenced temporary records can be stored with APROSS suppliers. Records sentenced 'permanent' can only be transferred to the Public Record Office or stored by the agency itself. A kit will soon be available introducing APROSS to government departments and agencies. Further details can be provided by Chris Papagianopoulos on (03) 9369 3244.

The barcoding project, which will automate part of the services operated by the Issues Office, is presently being trialed.

Total holdings (including Ballarat) is now 66 563 shelf metres. Archival transfers during the last six months totalled 2 738 metres. An additional 65 metres is awaiting processing. These transfers included records from the former State Bank (900 metres), Education (600 metres), Director of Public Prosecutions (400 metres) and the City of Whitehorse (350 metres). Reprocessing of Law Printer and Treasury records took place earlier this year.

The Office's *List of holdings*, amongst other things, is available on the Internet via VICNET, the Victorian Government information network. The PRO Home Page address is <http://www.vicnet.net.au/~provic/>. The PRO Home Page can also be found in the VICNET index, and via the Archives of Australia Home Page (under State & Territory Archives).

The *Eureka Stockade Travelling Display* was exhibited at two locations in Beechworth (the Robert O'Hara Burke Museum and the Historic Courthouse museum) during December 1995 and to early February. During April it was exhibited in Bendigo. It has gained extensive coverage for the Office in local and regional media. The associated book *Eureka: from the official records* now reprinted continues to sell well.

Reference Services' travelling display *Bigamy, Theft and Murder. The Extraordinary Tale of Frederick Bailey Deeming*, dealing with nineteenth century serial murderer Frederick Deeming, has been displayed at Bendigo and Warrnambool. Exhibited documents reveal Deeming's personal details, use of aliases and criminal record.

PRO's Head Office is located on level 3, Rialto South Tower, 525 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria 3000. All correspondence should be addressed to PO Box 1156, South Melbourne, Victoria, 3205. The Head Office telephone number is (03) 9628 4555, facsimile (03) 9628 2028.

Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston

Correspondent: Lorraine Macknight

The QVMAG was associated with two quite different and unusual events in July this year.

The first occasion was a workshop titled *Red Gold*, presented by Queensland's Pullenvale Environmental Education Centre. The Centre is active in teaching environmental history through story and drama. *Red Gold* is a teaching tool for teachers (and others), drawing extensively on local history resources of the late nineteenth century to create an imaginative dramatic scenario. Ostensibly the story is about a child lost in the bush, and the characters playing out the sequence of events include a concerned school teacher, a local busybody, the widow of a sawmiller, and a somewhat shadowy exploiter of valuable local timber. As the drama unfolded, we became that small community of bygone days, experiencing the conflicts and tensions existing between people (and their contemporary views and backgrounds), and between people and the land. Brought back to the present day, we considered the potential of the QVMAG Community History Collection's maps, photographs and documents to apply the experience, initially at local primary school level. The germ of an idea came to mind using an 1885 Town Surveyor's report in the Launceston City Council records, which records labourers pegging out the Cataract Gorge's Zig Zig track in cold July weather. What a challenging and imaginative way to use archival resources to interpret a favourite local scenic spot.

The second event was a symposium organised by the Royal Society of Tasmania's Northern Branch to celebrate its seventy-fifth anniversary. Nearly fifty people attended, representing over fifteen organisations. The diversity and complementary range of interests and resources in the state's north, unfortunately also including some obvious overlaps, was shared in a very positive (and Tasmanian) way. We heard about the QVMAG's Friends, the Industrial Heritage Group (originally a QVMAG initiative), the Railway Preservation Society, the National Trust's northern regional group, the Australian Society of Archivists (Tasmanian Branch), the Historical Committee of the Launceston General Hospital, the local branch of the Genealogical Society, the Northern Tasmanian Camera Club, and the Launceston Historical Society. All these groups impact on the resources of the QVMAG's Community History's staff and collections.

More about the collections next time.

Queensland State Archives

Correspondent: Lynda Barraclough

The Arrangement and Description Backlog Project officially came to an end with the closing of the financial year. The Project managed to eliminate the larger part of QSA's backlog, with over twelve kilometres of records being processed. Temporary and casual staff employed on the Project were farewelled, from both the Arrangement and Description and Preservation Services Branches. This was a sad day for many at QSA as some staff had been employed throughout the Project's two-year term.

During 1996 the Archives is trialing Saturday openings. Traditionally, QSA is open only on weekdays, during standard working hours. That these times are not convenient for many researchers has long been recognised. Five Saturdays have been selected for the trial. The Public Search Room has so far opened for one Saturday in April and one in June. To the potential disappointment of staff both days turned out rainy, but luckily the weather did not deter the researchers. Sixty people visited the Archives on the first Saturday, and eighty-six researchers came through the doors on the Saturday in June. It seems there is no better place to spend a rainy Saturday than at the Archives. QSA will be open for three more Saturdays during the year: 10 August, 5 October, and 14 December.

Automation of the Archives' finding aids and control procedures is moving ahead. A significant component of this project will see QSA changing to a series registration system based on the Australian Archives CRS system. Staff involved in the project have been busy designing forms and rewriting procedures. A trial of the new system by the Arrangement and Description Branch will commence in July. An Agency Thesaurus has been developed as part of this project to impose strict control over the use and form of agency titles.

It was proposed late last year that storage facilities be extended by enclosing the area at the back of the building. Plans for this extension have recently been drawn up, and staff comment sought. Construction work is expected to begin later in the year, with the work being completed about April 1997. The area is to be turned into two new repositories, one to be used for the storage of maps and plans and the other for general storage.

Several QSA staff members have enrolled in the Australian Archives Technical Training Scheme, studying a range of subjects which cover basic archival techniques, finding aids and control systems, etc. Michael Rogers was the first staff member to complete a course. Meanwhile Shauna Hicks, Manager, Arrangement and Description, and Nola Fulwood, Manager, Public Access, spent a week in Sydney attending the COFSTA residential, with thirteen other members of the archival community.

QSA lost two staff members during the early part of this year. Monica Skladowski returned to Poland after three years working for QSA, while Lisa Poulter left to take up a position with the Archives Office of NSW. Michael Rogers joined QSA as a permanent staff member on 1 July. Michael was previously employed as a temporary archivist working on the Backlog Project.

The Public Access Branch has so far held three seminars in 1996. The first of these was titled *Back to Basics* and focused on the rudimentary aspects of archival research. The seminar included a session on basic preservation techniques for ensuring that paper and photographic records survive for as long as possible. This was presented by Leonie Bausch, Manager, Preservation Services. The whole day was a huge success, with over 100 participants. The seminar was repeated early in July, and was the third seminar held by the Public Access Branch. The second seminar had *Maps and Plans* as its topic, and was held in conjunction with an exhibition on display in the Archives foyer.

The ASA Conference in Alice Springs, *Archives at the Centre*, was attended by four staff members from QSA, all of whom benefited from this opportunity to hear about new developments and to mingle with colleagues.

Reserve Bank

Correspondent: Stephen Bedford

Records Management has been involved in the preparation of public exhibitions in the RBA's recently opened Currency Display and Visitors' Centre. The 30th anniversary of the introduction of decimal currency was celebrated by an exhibition including posters and audiovisual material from the Bank's archival collection. Photographs featured prominently in the *Picturing Martin Place* exhibition, which complemented similar exhibitions held at the State Library of New South Wales, the Art Gallery of New South Wales, and the S. H. Ervin Gallery.

As part of our contingency planning process, we have recently revised our Counter Disaster Plan for Records. We have also incorporated a brief precis on recovery of water damaged records in each of the Records Handbooks for decentralised records areas. This is particularly useful in providing a quick source of advice for Bank branches.

Work is being undertaken on updating the Bank's computerised records management system (known as RID). Enhancements include a direct link between classifications and disposal classes, which will automatically supply sentencing details when records are registered in the system, generally at the point of creation.

Our repository lending service is now receiving e-mailed requests for records from our customers. This service is innovative because we have incorporated barcodes for both the records required and the borrower's identity in the request form which is received by e-mail. This process greatly increases the speed of the retrieval service.

We have also recently undertaken two in-house training courses for records staff. They are Records Management Fundamentals and Records Management for Business Units which were conducted in conjunction with the Records Management Office of New South Wales. The Bank has also adopted the Australian Records Management Standard AS 4390, as representing best practice in records management.

On the electronic records front, the Records Management Office's Keyword AAA has been assessed for its suitability as the foundation for an electronic records thesaurus. We now intend to complete a Request for Proposal for an Electronic Document Management System which will shortly be issued. The next step is to run a pilot system in early 1997.

Appraisal criteria have been compiled for artworks and designs relating to the production of Australian currency notes currently held by Note Printing Australia.

As part of our long term vital records program, Reserve Bank board records have been microfilmed up to the end of 1995. Master negatives of these films are held offsite.

Sydney City Council Archives

Correspondent: Mark Stevens

This report covers the year ending 30 June 1996. During this period our staff numbers remained at four, and we responded to the levels of demand shown in the table. The big increase in research inquiries is partly because we have begun counting the more significant inquiries received by telephone, rather than only mailed and faxed enquiries as before.

Item	1994	1995	1996
Lending transactions	6 147	8 159	7 882
Records accessioned or destroyed (metres)	747	802	387
Documentation projects	386	382	422
Responses to research enquiries	369	510	817
Research visits	286	294	283
Items produced for visiting researchers	2 763	2 660	5 065
Records in custody at end of year (metres)	8 151	8 098	8 371

During the year we completed a disposal schedule for CRS 326 (the current central system of correspondence and subject files which has been in operation since 1988) and the General Manager is expected to approve it in July. Disposal action has already commenced and we expect to receive further large backlog consignments of semi-current records from this series over the next year.

The Archives is also involved in the selection of a new electronic system to manage the central paper files. Other records management related initiatives include making a button available on the computer network to give officers direct access to the process of records disposal, and pushing for development of a policy on electronic mail.

Plan records received some overdue attention during the year. We have made a beginning in reactivating the disposal program for Building Application plans, and during 1996–97 we will complete disposal for a further thirty years' accumulation (to 1950). The Fire Insurance Block Plans, one of the series most heavily used by researchers, was retired from use and replaced with full-size colourchrome copies. We also acquired additional plan storage

cabinets and a supply of the archival-grade plan storage boxes produced to Australian Archives specifications.

In August 1995 we received back from the Mitchell Library several hundred glass-plate negatives taken by Council photographers during 1900–1930 of buildings about to be demolished. The negatives were given to the Library in 1971, before Council established an archives program, and we are grateful to the Library for preserving them and agreeing to return them to us. Angela McGing has completed the job of documenting them and matching them with the photo albums (which did not go to the Library), and they have also been given basic conservation treatment and reboxed.

Other long-term projects undertaken during the year included completion by Renato Perdon of a control system for Council's printed publications, and the production of further annual indexes (up to 1991) to the *Proceedings of Council* by Samantha Hughes on contract.

In addition to keeping up to date with new documentation projects (accessioning of records, registration of series, agencies and so on), the job of upgrading older documentations completed before we had our own computers has continued. We have also now completed documentation of functions and commenced documenting activities. Function documentation was enhanced by administrative history research assignments produced by some public history masters degree students at Sydney University, relating to the public health and parks management functions of the Council. Documentation of activities has been delayed but the model is ready and the project will reboot shortly.

Council managers are also beginning to show interest in our tracking of administrative change, especially the timelines drawn up by Angela McGing last year, and there may be an opportunity over the next few years to give focus to the Archives as the place in Council that creates and maintains the authoritative record of administrative structures and functions.

During 1996–97 we will be transferring a lot of our documentations to a new electronic system developed in Sydney using the database software ACCESS. This will be a sort of large scale field trial of the new system.

Public program activity continued to be an important part of our operations during the year. In February 1996 we launched three new books: *Sydney's Aldermen* (a biographical guide, by Renato Perdon), *Sydney's Streets* (a guide to street names, by Shirley Fitzgerald), and *Sydney's Elections* (a history of Council's electoral systems and their political significance, by Hilary Golder).

From April to June we mounted an exhibition at the Town Hall about the Chinese community in Sydney during the period 1880–1940, a joint undertaking with Australian Archives. This exhibition, *Sydney's Chinese*, resulted in significant media coverage, including radio and TV as well as the mainstream and Chinese-language newspapers.



The Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Henry Tsang OAM, at the launch of the Sydney City Council Archives - Australian Archives exhibition on the Chinese community in Sydney (7 May 1996).

Current books being prepared include a history of the Chinese community in Sydney (due in late 1996), a Chinese-language edition of this, and a book on the built and social history of the Town Hall, due out during 1997. Council's historical publications program is managed by the Archives and carried out mostly by contract historians.

The City Historian (Shirley Fitzgerald), who is also part of the Archives, continued to provide policy and advisory services to the Lord Mayor and Executive during the year. The Council decision in June 1996 to abandon the 1908 Council arms in favour of a simplified redesign, which attracted local media controversy including tabloid 'historian bashing' (archives bashing by proxy), has been one of the higher-profile issues we have been involved in through this service.

University of Adelaide Archives

Correspondent: Kylie Percival

The University had been without an archivist for nearly two years when I was appointed to the part-time position in November 1994. Naturally there was much to be done after my appointment and the waiting pile of research inquiries was given precedence. I can also report that the backlog of records awaiting processing has finally attained manageable proportions.

The major achievements of the past eighteen months include the extensive refurbishment of an existing repository. This transformed an unlined, very dusty area complete with ancient library shelving into a presentable storage site with a ceiling, lined walls, floor coverings, lighting and new compactus and static shelving. The new shelving increased the storage capacity of the room by more than forty per cent, providing the Archives with much needed room for growth.

Another significant development has been computerisation of the archives documentation to replace the previous manual system. Accession, series, inventory and provenance databases have been developed using Claris' Filemaker Pro. This general database software was already licensed to the University, it was flexible enough to adapt to an archives application and seemed preferable to the other general database packages available. I had envisaged that Filemaker Pro would only be a short-term solution for the archives documentation, but the resulting databases have truly exceeded expectations. The basic databases which were initially developed, have become increasingly sophisticated in themselves and as they relate to each other, in response to the needs of the archives.

The twin developments of repository space and effective documentation have established a foundation from which to build-up the University Archives and the services it provides.

University of Sydney Archives

Correspondent: Ken Smith

We alluded to staff changes in our last entry in 'News Notes', and since then we have become used to having 1.4 full-time professional archivists, instead of three plus administrative help. We have managed to do this with the very

welcome assistance given us by some highly professional and dedicated archivists, on a part-time basis. These good people have included Patricia Jacobson, Andrew Wilson, Samantha Hughes and Angie Rizakos. As we indicated last time, the University Archives was required to take on FOI and Privacy work on behalf of the University of Sydney, and this resulted in Tim Robinson spending up to sixty per cent of his time on this work, this institution being a most litigious one. Whilst such responsibilities are appropriate for an archives to oversee, it would have been nice to receive some commensurate help to fill the gap, but I am being naive here. With the sterling assistance of our part timers, we have managed to carry out more descriptive work than at any time in the Archives history, and at the same time accession some interesting administrative records, particularly from the Conservatorium of Music and the College of the Arts. We now have all pre-amalgamation records from most of the institutions the University took over in 1990, with the exception of Cumberland College of Health Sciences and Orange Agricultural College.

Space will soon be something that will exercise our minds, as we are now eighty-seven per cent occupied, with over 1 400 shelf metres held. This matter was brought to the attention of the management a year ago, but it would seem that archives are not a high priority at the present time, and we are not expecting more storage for a while yet. We may have to consider sending records back to University Clubs and Societies at some point, as the University does not own them, keeping them only as a favour to the various student bodies. We have long ceased to take in records of the academic departments, keeping all available space for the records of the central administration. We still manage some space for personal archives, however, and hope that we never have to refuse space for them. For the statistically inclined, we now have 880 shelf metres of official records, and 263 metres of personal archives, the rest being taken up with society records, official publications, and miscellanea. Some interesting preservation work was carried out on 309 glass negatives of Harold Casneaux, whereby the negatives were copied, creating a master positive and a duplicate copy negative, at a cost of \$1 467.

In our last entry, Tim Robinson mentioned the University Archives involvement with 'the net'. The University of Sydney Archives had its own Home Page before the University itself got around to it, which only shows that archivists lead the pack. We got a favourable mention of our 'entry', if that's the right word, from *Archives and Museum Informatics*, where the

commentator remarked that we were alone in putting some explanation of what archives are for the general, non-professional reader. If any of our professional colleagues do happen to read this, please remember that it is a 'Dummies Guide', although probably useful when you consider that many of our users are not hot-shot records continuum experts, and may sometimes need something simple.

We do have to report one area where we have, so far, had less success, and that is in the creation and management of electronic records. We have tried hard to live up to the expectations of those of our colleagues who insist that all archivists must be involved in the very creation of electronic records, and to be guiding our administrations in the way they should go. If anyone else has indeed managed to do this, then I for one would like to hear from them. We have so far been informed that these areas are not our domain. The Administration of the University of Sydney seems not to want us to be 'records auditors', which is the line that we have been taking.

University of Technology, Sydney Archives

Correspondent: Olga Doubrovskaya

The new archives repository and search room facilities at UTS are now well established. Currently, archives staff are involved in installing more effective climate control in that area and in developing a Disaster Preparedness Plan with the assistance of the Materials Conservation Division of the Australian Museum.

In 1995, and again this year, UTS has been the sole university providing field work experience to graduate diploma students in the archives and records management course at the University of New South Wales. This year three masters students from UNSW have completed projects with UTS under the supervision of the University Archivist.

The Archives' Oral History Project is growing. Interviewees have generally been senior and foundation staff with a priority given to those recently retired and to senior women. A proposal to produce a publication based on the oral history and photographic collections is being considered. The Archives is also working with the University's Equal Employment Opportunity Unit to record the experiences of recipients of the UTS Women's Re-Entry Scholarship in science and technology. These oral histories will be used by the EO Unit to

improve and promote the Scholarship, and will extend the Archives' oral history collection.

In April, archives staff mounted a major exhibition at the Kuring-gai campus. The exhibition was one of a series of events celebrating fifty years of teacher training at UTS and its predecessor institutions. The selection of material, drawn mainly from the Archives, but augmented by a number of donations and loans, aimed to reflect the history of teacher education, and with it the experience of staff and students. The exhibition also formed the background for the launch of a history of teacher education. *To Enlighten Them, Our Task: A History of Balmain and Kuring-gai College 1946 to 1990*, a collaborative effort by Cliff Turney and Judy Taylor who made extensive use of reference services provided by the archives staff. At the conclusion of this exhibition, the Archives received as a donation the professional and personal papers of George A. Cantello, Inspector of Schools for the NSW Department of Education and foundation Principal of Balmain Teachers' College.

An exhibition of archival material depicting the student experience and the built environment during the 1970s was staged in May, as part of UTS Day. Viewers found echoes of the present threats to university budgets in depictions of the then Coalition government's cut backs to higher education in the late 1970s.

The UTS Archives provides support for the University's FOI function. The University Archivist assumed responsibility for the implementation of a project whose objective is to put on-line the full text of all official University policies listed in the *Summary of Affairs*.