

Reviews

Edited by Adrian Cunningham

Publications

Christopher Kitching for the National Council on Archives, *Archives - the Very Essence of Our Heritage*, Phillimore, Chichester, 1996. 80 pp. ISBN 1 8607 7018 5 (available from Phillimore and Co. Ltd, Shopwyke Manor Barn, Chichester, West Sussex, England PO20 6BG; price: 17 Pounds Sterling including postage).

This handsome paperbound publication was produced by the United Kingdom's National Council of Archives for the stated purpose of '... sharing with a wider public that sense of the grandeur but also the accessibility of our archival heritage'. The back cover describes it as a book which '... Will interest all who use archives, whether professionally or as a leisure pursuit, and indeed all who have wondered why we have record offices and what happens in a repository'. The book has illustrations on almost every page, many in full colour, depicting subjects ranging from archival items such as Papal Bulls, monastic charters, and historic photographs through archival repositories and their operations, including the perhaps inevitable depictions of archivists at work and the public in reading rooms. For the archivist, the temptation is to ignore the text and look at it for the illustrations alone. This would be a mistake.

The inclination when writing such a generalist book would be to dwell on the 'treasures' of archives and concentrate on the historical perspective. This can mean excluding most of the practical issues concerning archives and their functioning. Kitching does, however, attempt to cover the range of major archival issues in some 70 pages and the illustrations are relevant to the text at each point.

He starts out with 'what are archives?', their purpose (including the historical perspective and as evidence) through to the uses of archives, where archives are found, specialist archives such as film archives, archival buildings, preservation aspects, and so forth. In addition, he touches on the causes of loss to the archival record and describes some major losses as well as matters specific to the UK such as donations of archives in lieu of tax.

The book does not sheer away from the problems that archives face and is not afraid to make a forceful point. For instance: 'With a fully fledged profession . . . [and other developments] . . . there is no excuse of the kind that might have been wheeled out say forty years ago for neglect or other half-measures'. I was impressed by how the text is simple but not simplistic, striking the right balance between raising an issue and not becoming lost in the detail.

Kitching's discussion of archival issues focuses more on how these issues relate to institutional activities and their holdings, rather than on the perspective of the archivist. Given the sponsoring organisation for the publication, this is quite understandable. The non-archivist can relate most readily to the image and historical aspects of archives, rather than the more abstract functional approach to archives found in most written sources.

This brings me to my basic point. There is little if any literature about archives and archival issues of a general nature which is directed to the far wider world of the non-archivist. The closest that I have seen was *Keeping Archives* (1st edition). But the textbook approach is designed for the practitioner or novice in the profession, with no consideration for the outsider. The 'simple' literature that does exist relates more to individual institutions and their particular activities, more often than not being devoted to describing holdings in upbeat terms. None take up the advocate's role for the place of archives or go beyond the walls of the institution.

Archivists bemoan the lack of appreciation by the wider world for their efforts and the importance of archives generally. It is publications such as this one which go some way towards making the point to the world. There should be more of them. Other countries and professional associations should be doing the same. My congratulations go to Christopher Kitching and the National Council of Archives for doing their bit.

Stephen Yorke
Australian Archives

Alan Howell, Heather Mansell and Marion Roubos-Bennett (Compilers), *Redefining Disasters: A Decade of Counter-disaster Planning, Proceedings Wednesday 20-Friday 22 September 1995, State Library of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia,* State Library of New South Wales, Sydney, 1996. 260pp. ISBN 0731066022. \$A95.00 (available from Conservation Access, State Library of New South Wales, Macquarie St, Sydney 2000).

In the pre-conference publicity the organisers stated that the conference would 'look at what has happened in counter-disaster planning in the past ten years in libraries, archives, museums and galleries; and where do we go from here'. The title of the conference emphasises the developments that have taken place in counter-disaster planning in Australia since 1985, a significant date in the history of preservation activities in this country.

During the evening of 9 March 1985 a fire broke out on the top floor of the National Library of Australia and destroyed part of the library's air conditioning plant. Fortunately the resulting smoke and water damage was found to be 'astonishingly light'¹, but as Wendy Smith has pointed out in her history of preservation developments at the National Library, the fire served as a catalyst to crystallise the new concept of 'total collection preservation' at the Library². Other major cultural heritage institutions including the State Library of New South Wales also used this event to focus their attention on the urgent need for counter disaster preparedness in much the same way as the Florence flood of November 1966 had stimulated activities in Europe and North America. Sally Buchanan had coordinated recovery operations after the major flood at Stanford University's Meyer Library in November 1978³ and was brought to Australia in July 1985 to run a series of seminars and training sessions on preservation-related topics including disaster preparedness⁴. Karl Schmude, Chief Librarian at the University of New England and an important figure in national preservation activities, attended one of the seminars in Sydney and has written that the 'timeliness of this seminar, fortuitously held so soon after the National Library fire, was evident from the widespread interest it aroused among librarians'⁵. Since 1985 a lot of valuable work has taken place in counter-disaster planning and Australia is clearly in tune with current international developments.

The 30 papers presented at the conference covered a wide-range of topics under the umbrella term counter-disaster planning. Some of the major subject areas discussed were international and national historical perspectives, cooperative activities again at international and national levels, disaster prevention, disaster

plans, case studies of disaster recovery operations including information on the latest techniques and equipment for fire suppression and freeze-drying, human behaviour in disaster response situations, and training initiatives. The conference was a truly international event and included speakers from the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Australia.

It is impossible in a review such as this to give an adequate overview of the papers presented at the conference as different papers will appeal to different people. For instance as an educator I was particularly taken with the innovative training initiatives being pursued both here and abroad. By contrast a conservator with specific scientific and technical knowledge would be interested in the latest information about vacuum freeze-drying. Therefore I intend to focus on the keynote presentation - 'Reaction to Realisation'⁶ - made by John McIntyre, Head of Preservation at the National Library of Scotland and co-author of the influential publication *Planning Manual for Disaster Control in Scottish Libraries and Record Offices*⁷, as I believe this contains an important message for all of us with some degree of responsibility for the management and preservation of our documentary heritage.

John McIntyre asked himself a number of questions which related explicitly to the overall objectives of the conference: 'where have we come from?, what have we learned?, and where should we go from here?'. The disasters in Florence (1966) and Leningrad (1988) had generated an enormous international response which, for example, helped raise professional consciousness, led to the emergence of international experts on various aspects of disaster prevention and recovery, assisted with the development of strategies and techniques for managing disasters, and generated 'a rich amount of literature'. In spite of these achievements, McIntyre believes that an attitude of denial often prevails - 'it is not going to happen here so I don't need to worry'. As he pointed out, 'it is no coincidence that disasters strike mostly where there is no disaster plan in place . . . we are, I fear, still well short of an acceptable level of awareness'.

McIntyre stressed that a great deal of developmental work has already taken place, particularly at institutional and regional levels. He also believes that people now recognise that disasters are caused by a whole range of factors not just by floods or burst pipes. One of the most destructive of all disasters emanates from warfare. As McIntyre was speaking soon after a visit to Croatia in his capacity as Secretary of the International Council on Archives Disaster Prevention Committee, his words had a special poignancy.

As to the future, John McIntyre called for a greater concentration on developing

strategies for disaster prevention; a more thorough understanding of the threat of fire; an appreciation of the dangers posed to heritage materials by armed conflict; the need for coordination at local, national and international levels; and finally, more work 'to increase awareness and remove the 'it won't happen to us attitude'.

The papers in this compilation are arranged alphabetically by surname. This would suit a reader intending to read the proceedings from cover to cover. However, because of the specialised nature of many of the papers, first time readers are probably seeking pathfinders to particular subject areas. Grouping the papers thematically would in my opinion have enhanced access. For instance, John McIntyre's keynote address appears on pages 129-135 of the proceedings but it is only after reading this important paper that one gets a clearer picture of the aims of the conference. A brief introductory chapter which included important contextual information such as the objectives of the conference, its importance both nationally and internationally, some of the highlights, and any outcomes that may have emerged would have been useful.

What then is the value of these proceedings? In the short term it provides archivists, librarians, conservators and other professionals with important up-to-date information on theoretical and practical approaches. In the longer term I believe that these proceedings will be seen as a benchmark of thinking about the field at a particular point in its development. Thus the conference proceedings have made a valuable contribution to the professional literature. Nevertheless, I fear that the price might deter a number of people from purchasing a copy, especially as so much information is now available on this topic over the Internet.

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Endnotes

- 1 *Incite*, vol. 6, no. 6, 26 April 1985, pp. 1-2.
- 2 Wendy Smith, 'Practising Preservation: Library Preservation at the National Library of Australia' in Peter Biskup and Margaret Henty (eds), *Library for the Nation: National Library of Australia*, National Library of Australia, Canberra, 1991, p. 137.
- 3 'The Stanford Library flood restoration project', *College and Research Libraries*, vol. 40, no. 6, November 1979, pp. 539-548.
- 4 *Incite*, vol. 6, no. 13, 16 August 1985, p. 11.
- 5 Karl Schmude, 'Conservation Developments in Australia', *Conservation Administration News*, no. 27, October 1986, p. 5.

- 6 John McIntyre, 'Reaction to Realisation' in Alan Howell, Heather Mansell and Marion Roubos-Bennett (compilers), *Redefining Disasters: A Decade of Counter-disaster Planning, Proceedings Wednesday 20-Friday 22 September 1995, State Library of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia*, State Library of New South Wales, Sydney, 1996, pp. 129-135.
- 7 Hazel Anderson, and John E. McIntyre, *Planning Manual for Disaster Control in Scottish Libraries and Record Offices*, National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh, 1985.

Reports

Open Government: A Review of the Federal Freedom of Information Act 1982, ALRC & ARC (Australian Law Reform Commission Report No 77; Administrative Review Council Report No 40) Sydney, 1995. 270 pp. ISBN 0 642 24477 4. Text of the report also available at: <http://uniserve.edu.au/alrc/report77/ALRC77.html>

In July 1994 the Acting Attorney-General assigned to the Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) and the Administrative Review Council (ARC) the reference to investigate and report on whether the basic purposes and principles of the Commonwealth freedom of information legislation had been satisfied and whether the legislation required modification or simplification.

The ALRC and ARC produced a Discussion Paper in May 1995. The Discussion Paper was followed up by public meetings around Australia. The two bodies also invited submissions from interested parties. The ALRC and ARC issued their final report in December 1995 under the title *Open Government*. The Report makes 106 recommendations many of them aimed at giving effect to the objectives of freedom of information.

The report is of particular interest to archivists for two reasons:

- it recommends a pro-disclosure culture in the Australian Public Service; and
- it places strong emphasis on good records and recordkeeping.

Pro-disclosure culture

The Report strongly recommends the retention of the FOI Act as an instrument

of public sector accountability and advocates that more be done to 'dismantle the culture of secrecy that still pervades some aspects of Australian public sector administration' (Chapter 4). It recommends that the 'access gap' between the FOI and Archives Acts be closed by extending the coverage of the FOI Act to records that are thirty years old (Recommendation 14; Paragraph 5.7). The Report makes recommendations about streamlining or eliminating certain charges.

The Report recommends the establishment of a new statutory office of FOI Commissioner to monitor and improve the administration of the FOI Act. There had, at one stage, been a suggestion that the role of the FOI Commissioner be undertaken by the Director-General of the Australian Archives.

Emphasis on records and recordkeeping

The Report stresses the importance of good records and recordkeeping to accountability and to the successful operation of the FOI, Privacy and Archives Acts (Paragraphs 5.8 and 5.10).

The Report makes one specific recommendation (Recommendation 15) about the Archives Act. The text of the recommendation is:

The Archives Act should be reviewed. In the interim, it should be amended to:

- require the chief executive officer of an agency to ensure the creation of such records as are necessary to document adequately government functions, policies, decisions, procedures and transactions and to ensure that records in the possession of the agency are appropriately maintained and accessible;
- authorise the Director-General of Archives to issue recordkeeping standards, to audit records and recordkeeping practices and to report to the Minister on inadequate practices.

In August 1996 the Attorney-General asked the Australian Law Reform Commission to inquire into and report on the basic purposes and principles of national archival legislation and whether the Archives Act 1983 requires amendment. The Commission circulated its Issues Paper on the review of the Archives Act in January 1997.

Coordinating information policy

Open Government makes a recommendation (Recommendation 26) with a view to achieving some coordination of national information policy. The

Recommendation reads:

There should be a standing arrangement for consultation between the FOI Commissioner, the Director-General of Archives, the Chief Government Information Officer, the head of the AGPS, the Privacy Commissioner and the Ombudsman.

The recommendation is made with a view to overcoming the possible difficulties stemming from the fact that there is no national information policy and there is no single office responsible for co-ordinating the organisations responsible for aspects of information policy.

Access to information about government and its records

The Report recommends (Recommendation 29) that the Australian Archives cease to be the organisation with which agencies are required to deposit for public inspection lists of decision making documents. Instead these lists should be available to the public at AGPS shops, public libraries and branches of the relevant agency.

Conclusion

Open Government is an important and welcome report because of the nexus it recognises and articulates between recordkeeping, accessibility and accountability and because of the role it sees for archives as standard setters, auditors and reporters. The Government response to the report has not been finalised, consequently the extent to which the recommendations and the proposals for legislative reform will be enacted remain unknown.

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Public Accounts and Estimates Committee [Victoria], *Inquiry into the Public Record Office Victoria*, Victorian Government Printer, Melbourne, 1996. ISBN 0730692175. \$11.00.

This Inquiry was first initiated by the Public Bodies Review Committee prior to the dissolution of the Victorian Parliament on 5 March 1996. The Committee's

draft report, evidence and research material was passed on to the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee for completion. The Inquiry was to review the Public Record Office Victoria under the following four specific terms of reference:-

- What options are available for the government and the Public Record Office to meet the future storage and preservation responsibilities for the State's public record?
- How can the government and the Public Record Office re-engineer the records management process to meet its storage, preservation and access responsibilities for the State's electronic records?
- What strategies may be used to manage the increasing quantity of records being generated by government in Victoria?
- How can the government and the Public Record Office better meet increasing demand for access to the State's archival records?

There are also six appendices which include excerpts from the *Public Records Act 1973*; selected publications; submissions to the inquiry; public hearings; a records management survey; and a list of respondents to the records management survey. The purpose of the fourteen page survey was to determine what records management policies are being used within the Victorian public sector, and what standards are being applied to the creation, management and storage of both paper and electronic records.

The Committee made a number of recommendations and these are grouped into the following five areas:-

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| • The Public Record Office | 18 recommendations |
| • Storage and Preservation Responsibilities | 11 recommendations |
| • Electronic Records | 6 recommendations |
| • Records Management | 7 recommendations |
| • Public Access | 15 recommendations |

Public Record Office recommendations include that the Public Record Office be retained but moved from the Arts Portfolio to the Treasury and Finance Portfolio. The position of Keeper of Public Records is to be renamed the Director of Public Records with four functional areas defined as:- Director of Public Records (Standards Development); Consulting and Audit Unit (Monitoring Records

Management Performance); Archives Management Unit (Storage of the Archival Record); and Public Access Unit (Provision of Public Access).

The Victorian standard for a records management system is to be based on the Australian standard and the PRO is to ensure that all agencies implement records management and disposal plans that meet those standards. There is to be a continuous cycle of random audits (the cost of which is to be borne by agencies) to ensure compliance. Agencies not meeting the standard will be given the opportunity to rectify the situation and, if unable to do so, the PRO will complete the task at the agency's cost. To enhance liaison between the PRO and agencies, positions titled Regional Record Management Consultants will be created and they will act as field officers to manage the records of a region, industry type or ministry on an on-going basis. Will the position descriptions be for archivists, records managers or a blend of the two?

This heavy commitment to current records management is also evident in the recommendations of other chapters and will require strong support from the Victorian government if it is decided to implement these recommendations across government. Agencies will more than likely require additional resources to comply with the new standards and the PRO will need additional staffing and resources to monitor compliance.

Storage and Preservation Responsibilities recommendations include that government agencies manage the storage of all active, inactive and temporary records according to PRO standards and that the records be held in conditions which meet the current storage and preservation standard of the PRO. The Chief Executive Officer of agencies will be held accountable for this requirement and each agency will be required to report annually on its level of compliance with these standards.

Another major recommendation in this section is the establishment of a new building within five kilometres of the Melbourne CBD to house all staff, public access facilities and the archives. The development of a regional archives network is also recommended.

Electronic Records recommendations include that electronic records be considered on the same basis as paper and that the PRO urgently develop an electronic records management standard that is hardware and software independent, and capable of being implemented over the whole of government. Agencies seeking to implement electronic records management systems will be

required to select software that has been accredited by the PRO according to the new standard. Perhaps the most controversial recommendation in this section is that agencies will be required to continually convert all electronic archival records in their care to the current software and operating systems of the agency to enable access by the PRO. This post-custodial stance raises many questions that have been debated at length recently on the aus-archivist listserv. Who will pay for this continual migration of records, will agencies co-operate, how will researchers access electronic records in agency custody, will the PRO be able to monitor all agencies and enforce compliance should agencies be unable to meet this recommendation?

Records Management recommendations include that the PRO develop standards for the care of each record from creation and that model records management systems, integrating the standards process, be prepared and released by the PRO. Disposal schedules are to be agreed on between agencies and the PRO as a matter of urgency.

There is also a recommendation that the government (Office of Training and Further Education and the PRO) develop an education program for all public sector records and information managers. A companion recommendation is that agencies appoint a senior officer, skilled in archives and information management, to implement an effective records management system.

Is this a blurring of the roles of archivists and records managers or the phasing out of records managers? How does this recommended emphasis on current records management as a priority function of the PRO sit with Victorian government records managers? What is the RMAA's opinion on these recommendations? This section of the report raises many questions, the answers to which will possibly only be known if and when the recommendations are implemented.

Public Access recommendations are also interesting. One of the more controversial recommendations is that fees be charged to access original records and for consulting services. Interestingly another recommendation is that the PRO negotiate with universities an appropriate scale of fees that would accommodate the need of academic researchers for access to original records and consulting services. Why differentiate between academic researchers and all other researchers? Should users pay?

Fees raised from access fees and consulting services are to be dedicated to converting popular records for public access into database, microfiche or CD Rom

formats. Popular documents made available in electronic or microfiche formats to be sold to users on a full cost recovery basis. This emphasis on full cost recovery also extends into the exhibitions area with the recommendation that 'travelling programs of archival material be carried out only when specific funding has been provided by budget, grant or bequest'.

This report is of interest to all archivists and provides an insight into the role archives could (or is that should) play in government. It will be interesting to see which recommendations are implemented, what the time frame for implementation will be, what resources are provided to the PRO to carry out the recommendations, what actual support the Victorian government (and future governments) gives the PRO and what co-operation the PRO receives from government agencies. Time will tell.

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Manuals

Archives Authority of New South Wales, *General Records Disposal Schedule for Administrative Records*, 1996.

Retention and Disposal Schedules are an essential tool in public record administration. The General Records Disposal Schedule (GRDS) for Administrative Records developed and published by the Archives Authority of New South Wales is a fully revised edition of the 1985 version of the General Records Disposal Schedule part 1.

The new schedule incorporates Keyword AAA file titling to update the terminology previously used in the GADM, whilst still providing enough comparison with the latter to ensure its broad functionality. This linkage between the extensively used GADM and the newer Keyword AAA thesaurus terms is a significant advantage which ensures the schedule will be of value to those agencies not currently using Keyword AAA terminology.

Although the arrangement does not facilitate updating or amendment, it is a

manageable document with a style and format which is clear and easy to follow. It is pleasing to find comprehensive instructions in the Guidelines for Use. Not least of these are the procedures for records which fall under more than one disposal action and records which may contain only a few archival documents. It is also encouraging to note that burying and dumping are discouraged as disposal methods and that significant emphasis is given to a register of destruction to prove accountable practices.

The schedule frequently refers to the terms 'general' or 'routine' correspondence. Whilst these terms are not encouraged in best practice recordkeeping it is recognised that they are in common use within some agencies and therefore perhaps justifiably included in the schedule. A definition at the beginning of the document gives some indication of how these terms are to be interpreted.

In the body of the schedule itself, excellent usage of alternative terms (eg. contracting out, risk management and marketing) to keep pace with current trends, coupled with explicit cross referencing with 'see also' annotations throughout the document, highlight the wide coverage of terms. The cross references skilfully lead the user to the keyword section and the appropriate subgroup within the section, providing an obvious economy of search time and frustration.

Criticism of the document centres on three issues. First, the treatment of electronic records; second, some retention periods; and finally, the index. Given the increasing prevalence of electronic systems in use throughout government it is puzzling that electronic records are not covered as widely as one might expect. The absence of an expanded example of electronic records to include e-mail, electronic faxes, and word processed documents including metadata such as indexes and directories is a significant oversight. Moreover, although it is stated that 'electronic records must be readily accessible for the length of the specified retention period' no indication of how this might be managed (eg migration over time and formats) is given. Clearly this schedule has been prepared principally for paper based records and will have limited value for those managing largely electronic recordkeeping systems. Whilst destruction of electronic records is given good coverage, agencies should be prepared to develop their own comprehensive approach to archiving procedures for electronic records to complement this schedule.

It might also be suggested that retention periods of 10 or 20 years before transferring to archival custody may be too long. It is possible that the physical integrity of records may be at risk within that time frame, thus rendering the archive less valuable than if transfer had occurred at the end of 5 years.

A comprehensive index is often the most valuable search aid of any document. It is a source of frustration to find that terms used within the body of a document do not appear in the index. A cursory search of the GRDS revealed that, whilst mentioned in the body of the schedule, the terms Brochures, Posters and Furniture could not be found in the index. It is assumed the user will know under which keyword term to find these items. In one instance it was necessary to flip from GADM to Keyword AAA terms and back to the schedule repeatedly, to track down the listings. It could also be argued that indexing in direct alphabetical order rather than by keyword would be more user friendly.

These criticisms aside, this publication has been thoroughly researched and well developed and will prove an invaluable tool in the disposal planning of administrative records throughout State government agencies. The Archives Authority of New South Wales is to be congratulated as it continues to produce valuable and effective management tools to serve the records continuum. This schedule achieves its stated objective '... to cover all general administrative records common to all or most State Government agencies ...' admirably.

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Anne R. Kenney and Stephen Chapman, *Digital Imaging for Libraries and Archives*, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York, 1996. 198 pp. (loose-leaf); ISBN 0 916 58202 3. \$US75.00 + \$US8.00 shipping, pre-paid (available from Dept. of Preservation, 214 Olin Library, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14853-5301).

This workbook, based on many years' experience in pioneering preservation imaging projects and in presenting related workshops, should be required reading for anyone seriously involved in digital imaging of archival holdings and library collections. It is an essential training manual, a reference guide, and a direction setter. At the very least it provides a language - both concepts and vocabulary - that is critically important in dealing with specialists and vendors, and in properly defining and managing projects. It may also help those offering digital imaging services to better understand the needs of archives and libraries.

It achieves this by presenting a wealth of technical detail, in contributions by the

authors and others such as James Reilly and John Dean, who possess impeccable credentials on specialist topics. But what is really pleasing - even exciting - about this book is that the technical detail is not presented as an end in itself, but always to address the principles and intentions that should drive any archive or library digitisation project and inform the decisions needing to be made along the way.

At the technical level this is a complex field. There are resolution levels, tonal depths, scanning thresholds to be juggled, database structures and user interfaces to be designed, and capture, delivery and archiving systems to be set up. (And not forgetting the 'm' word: metadata.)

Kenney and Chapman take us through all of this in a structured, clearly explained manner, with 'reality checks' along the way - short exercises that help reinforce the reader's learning - and case studies for those of us who need our information in concrete terms.

That isn't to say that the technical detail is easy: it still requires commitment to tackle and master it, but it has the great virtues of being set in context and of making sense. So, when the book talks about scanning, pixels and dpi, it is in the context of 'full informational capture' - what is needed to capture the significant detail of the original.

Despite the technical content, the book should be accessible to any reader with a basic understanding of what is happening in archives and libraries, a desire to understand and time to engage with it. This is helped by well-written sections on optical character recognition of text, graphic materials, photographs, and microfilm as source documents.

The weakest section of the book is the chapter on systems requirements for imaging and image delivery. By focusing on specific types and pieces of equipment the information is immediately helpful, but it is also likely to date fairly quickly. Even when dated, however, it will remain useful in emphasising that there is a system that must be made to work as a system, and the loose-leaf format of the book does allow superseded information to be updated.

One of the main strengths is the explanation and promotion of the QI (Quality Index) approach adapted from preservation microfilming as a way of optimising the long term usefulness of the images. This is a fruit of the authors' benchmarking approach - working out what quality is needed if digital imaging is to serve a useful preservation function. So central is this that the authors have developed a series of formulas that link identified variables with desired outcomes, and presented

them both in the text and as separate reference sheets.

Some of the issues raised are truly difficult, such as the ethics of image enhancement. It is relatively easy to take a discoloured, faded, torn and obtrusively repaired original and make it look on screen like a crisp, clear impression on perfectly clean, undamaged and undegraded white paper. There is an obvious dilemma between capturing evidence and making the image as accessible and legible as possible. The 'enhancement' end of this dilemma may also be driven by the economics of imaging: background 'noise' takes disk space to store, time and dollars to deliver. There can be strong incentives to limit the information captured and to define the essential informational content more narrowly than we may have originally intended.

We should not however be too precious about some of these hard issues. We have faced similar dilemmas with preservation microfilming and have generally learned to deal with them in thoughtful, accountable ways. A major burden of this book is to bring a similar level of responsibility to digital reformatting.

I have already suggested the book's value goes well beyond the detail it presents. Even the introduction is full of wise words about critical issues such as the need to assess the value and information content of the original documents, to think about the way users will want to use the information, to make a sober assessment of capabilities and commitments, advantages and drawbacks of imaging, and to define the value of the digital copy in terms of how well it reflects the essential features critical to the meaning of the original. Similar challenges and wisdom flow through most of the book.

The effect is not doom-saying, but a responsible and clear-sighted perspective which informs the appropriate use of digital imaging, in place of wishful thinking.

This leads Kenney and Chapman to discuss what have become known as hybrid approaches, in which the great accessibility benefits of digitisation are supported by more stable and reliable analogue formats for preservation purposes. The comparisons of hybrid approaches with purely digital solutions, and of the film-then-scan vs scan-then-generate-film approaches that Cornell and Yale University Libraries have explored over recent years, are enlightening.

I found the final chapter especially relevant. The section on maintaining digital information is relatively brief and at first glance looks superficial: it mentions migration and some of the potential difficulties, points to a few models, and refers to a short list of resources for further discussion. This suggests little more than a view that much remains to be done before we can ensure long term maintenance of digital files.

However, the discussion then takes what I see as a constructive - and brave - turn to look at the serious possibility that some existing material will be destroyed once it has been digitised. This is brave because it is an issue that is hard to get right. Those of us struggling to manage heritage collections will have to accept that some material will not survive in its original form - a fact already widely accepted in the records management field. But there is a minefield of issues in assuming that digital imaging will provide an easy alternative to buildings, environmental controls, preservation expertise and resources. It is mentally easy but ultimately misleading to see the only choice of roles between Luddite and appeaser, and we should be grateful to Kenney and Chapman for providing us with some starting tools to inform that profoundly important but largely unspoken debate. The flow chart they propose for decisions on the disposition of original materials is a simple but significant contribution.

The book is well laid out and easy to use. While not inexpensive, prospective readers should not expect to see impressive colour matching or high-end printing possibilities reproduced in this book. It makes up for that deficiency in so many other ways that it remains a far better investment than all of the glossier manuals that I have seen. Certainly the cost of information and training in this field is high, reflective of the steepness of the learning curve and the very high cost of trial and error.

If we can master and build on the technical detail, and deal seriously with the matters of principle discussed here, digital imaging has the potential to vastly expand accessibility to the collections we hold in trust. It may also offer impressive, if as yet uncertain, preservation benefits. Without the kind of foundation this book offers, it also has the potential to be a very expensive white elephant masquerading as preservation.

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School Records: Their Management and Retention, Society of Archivists Records Management Group, London, 1995. ISBN 0 902886 52 5. (available from Society of Archivists, Information House, 20-24 Old Street, London, EC1V 9AP, UK.)

It is rare to find a publication on school archives. This 'booklet', which comprises

100 pages of A4 size, was the work of a group of archivists from local and national record offices in the United Kingdom. Their aim was to produce an 'aide mémoire' for head teachers, bursars, secretaries and others involved in the management of school records. As such the market for this booklet is quite clearly government schools, under which school records are clearly public records and, consequently, under the jurisdiction of local public record offices.

The first sections of the booklet introduce the non-archivist to archives and records issues. An historical background outlines the basic statutory requirements for school record keeping, in England and Wales, and Scotland. A simple checklist page of *Managing your Records* outlines the benefits of the proper management of records, faced with an all-too familiar photograph of 'an untidy storage area' making poor use of the available space. This is followed by brief descriptions of filing systems, storage, retention, scheduling and destruction. A photograph of a secure and properly organised archives storage area amply contrasts with the mess on the previous page. A straightforward section on *Preserving Your Archives* specifies a practical list of dos and don'ts. The section on *Access and Confidentiality* clearly outlines the need to ensure that personal sensitivity and confidentiality issues are properly handled. The issue of the proliferation of accessible databases is highlighted as one of concern and basic steps are provided on ensuring proper disclosure of personal information. The next section on *Computerisation* gives guidance on electronic records management in schools and clearly states the need for a record retention policy for data held on computers.

Following these introductory sections, the summary of retention recommendations follow, providing the Retention Schedule paragraph number, the title of the record series, the retention period in the school, the action required after the retention period has expired (such as transfer to Archives), action in the Records Office (such as P, preserve permanently) and a notes column (such as these records are no longer kept).

The Retention Schedule provides more details on the main records series specified in the summary of retention recommendations, providing information on how and why the record series might be created. I was particularly interested in the treatment of pupil records, given the main function of a school is student education. Section 8 of the Retention Schedule covers pupil records.

A significant issue for archivists and records managers is the management of files, most particularly the quantity created. Pupil files have been of great concern and discussion amongst many school archivists in Australia and it is interesting to see the retention recommendation for these vital records as being 'preserve a

sample'. Pupil files, at least for secondary students, usually comprise all information generated by the school about the pupil, whether the information is of long-term value to the school or pupil, or not. Whilst the pupil is a current pupil, pupil files, which contain personal information, are of prime importance to the school administration. The longer term value of pupil files is to the individual themselves, unless the school wishes to undertake biographical research on the individual (such as a public relations article on former pupils). The very personal information retained in such files, which could include staff comments on behaviour, letters to or from parents and even information on the expulsion or suspension of pupils, is information of a highly sensitive and personal nature. Such pupil records are records of the identity of individuals second only to their birth certificate. Often adults seek confirmation from schools that they are in fact who they claim to be, as a birth certificate may not be obtainable.

Given the differences in governance and statutory requirements between the United Kingdom and the various states in Australia, it will be very interesting to compare this publication with any future similar retention and disposal publications governing public education in Australia. I understand that Victoria and Western Australia have similar publications, and that in New South Wales substantial work has been undertaken to pull together all the disposal recommendations made, and decisions taken, about public school records, with the aim of producing a disposal schedule for public school records.

For those involved in school archives this publication is worth looking at in order to gain insight and guidance about school records.

Janet Howse, Archivist,
SCEGGS Darlinghurst (Sydney)

Nancy McCall and Lisa A. Mix (Eds), *Designing Archival Programs to Advance Knowledge in the Health Fields*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD, USA, 1995. xxiv+232pp. ISBN 0 8018 4761 3. \$US38.50 (available from The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2715 N. Charles Street, Baltimore MD 21218-4319, USA).

It is heartening to see such a substantial and attractive volume on the broad subject

of how archivists can respond to the challenges facing them in the contemporary health field.

This book is tightly structured into three main sections, each of which begins with a summary. Each chapter within the sections begins with a sequential list of topics covered and some introductory paragraphs; and each chapter ends with a conclusion and a list of references. The entire volume starts with an introduction and ends with a conclusion. A side effect of this formal structure is a certain amount of repetition but the volume is probably best read, not from cover to cover, but by skimming the introductions and conclusions and using the index then homing in on the chapters most relevant to the reader at that time.

The structure and the narrative form would have assisted the editors to produce a reasonably cohesive whole from the contributions of fourteen authors, writing sometimes alone and sometimes in collaboration, from a range of disciplines (archivists, librarians, record managers, physicians, scientists, historians). The mammoth tasks of coordinating and editing must partly explain the lack of current material in some reference lists. Most of the references are American, with some Canadian and Australian.

The three main sections are 'The broadening base and changing media of evidence in the health fields', 'Preparing archival programs for the health fields' and 'Standardising and unifying the management of holdings'. Each takes into account contemporary records, historical records, personal papers and artefacts. Themes include the need for expanded collections (modern material and the increasing varied formats of health information) but with stricter control and selection; rational planning based on available resources; the quality and standardisation of documentation across the disciplines; and the advance of knowledge in the health field.

The text would assist any practitioner in the disciplines which manage records, archives and objects in the health field, even though it is, by its title and stated objective, addressed to archivists. Many of the chapters would be relevant to non-health facilities: for instance, those dealing with context for archival programs, those promoting the use of archival holdings, and those dealing with computerised records. Other chapters would have relevance for those organisations which have holdings of current and non-current records, personal papers and objects, as the authors concentrate on the need for co-operation between the disciplines which manage records, archives and objects. The authors discuss how this 'curatorial consortium' exists in, and interacts with the administration of the institutions.

Various models are offered for the relationship of the various parts of the integrated program. Because the authors' intention is that the different areas continue to exist separately, they emphasise the need for standardisation of documentation across the disciplines.

Because of the emphasis on co-operation between the disciplines, I was disappointed (as a medical record administrator, or health information manager as the profession now calls itself) that the authors did not include that specialist category of record manager working in hospitals. I could hope the omission is because the intended readership, archivists, already know about that profession but I am not re-assured by the list of associations that specialise in health documentation (p. 92) which gives the American professional association by its pre-1991 name.

My background also explains my particular interest in the chapter (written by a doctor) on 'Preserving patient records to support health care delivery, teaching, and research'. For many years I have been hoping there may be a simple solution to the problem my hospital colleagues face in selecting patient records for permanent retention (or at least for longer than the expected period of patient care), so it was with some anticipation that I turned to this chapter.

The text provides useful notes on defining selection size and a brief discussion of a few selection methods. Two methods are recommended: the 'fat file' selection method (please, Australian archivists, do not adopt this here or you will chose mainly dialysis records) and systematic sampling. This is taking every kth record to arrive at the total number (or percentage) of records desired for retention. This would work reasonably well for archivists selecting from a known population of records, arranged randomly, and all eligible for selection. However, there would be problems for a health record manager applying it in the functioning medical record department. The periodic cull of shelves involves checking each cover for the mark representing the year on which that record became inactive (being the year the record was last used for patient treatment or in relation to the patient, say for preparing a report) and removing from the shelf any record now eligible for culling (the period depending on whether the patient was under or over fifteen years of age at last attendance or died in hospital). The current Victorian method of selecting for permanent retention, although crude, was recommended because no other workable technique could be found. It immediately identifies whether a culled record is for retention or for disposal: if the culled record's number ends in 999, it is for permanent retention (the terminal digit filing system used in most medical record departments has all records ending in 999 in the same shelf area) while all other records are destroyed. This results in eventual retention

of every thousandth record. For systematic sampling to work in a functioning department, the hospital would need to collect all culled records in an orderly fashion (no mean feat) then separate each kth record from the rest. Calculating k would not be easy because the number of records eligible for disposal is not known until completion of the cull. Would k relate to the total holding (which each year goes up by the number of new patient registrations and down by the number of records already culled) or to the number eligible for culling in any given year, both of which vary?

Useful as this text will be in the broad area of health documentation, it does not provide all the necessary answers for the functioning medical record department.

Another recent publication which concentrates entirely on the topic of retention and disposal of hospital patient records is a booklet published by the Health Archives Group in Britain (*Hospital Patient Case Records: A Guide to their Retention and Disposal*, by Hamish Maxwell-Stewart, Julia Sheppard and Geoffrey Yeo, 1966). While some of the detail is relevant only to Britain, the authors pack into 28 small pages a great deal of generally applied information and advice, using a structure of paragraph numbering and dot points. The bibliography is mainly British and American with a couple of Australian references. The authors discuss a broad range of selection methods, identifying the advantages and disadvantages of each. While there is still no easily applied selection method, this booklet would be more useful to the functioning patient record department.

Irene Kearsy
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Victoria

Conferences and Seminars

**The XIII International Congress on Archives, Beijing, 2-7 September 1996:
Organising a Conference Chinese Style**

This was the first ICA Congress held outside Europe and North America and the Chinese organised up a storm:

- the Deputy Premier of China opened the Congress;

- the press conference about the Congress drew some 80 members of the media and resulted in one front page story in the *China Daily* and several other stories scattered through the paper in the week of the Congress;
- the Department of Posts and Telecommunications issued four stamps to commemorate the Congress, featuring ancient archives (documents recorded on tortoise shell, bamboo slips, stone-iron scrolls and paper books);
- the convoys of buses taking us to various events had police escorts and did not have to trifle with the tedium of traffic as all other vehicles were brought to a standstill for the ICA convoy; and
- various buildings (department stores, apartment blocks), in Beijing and in other cities to which delegates travelled, were festooned with enormous banners welcoming archivists from all over the world.



Beijing International Convention Centre. Photo Stephen Yorke.

The Australian contribution

The 20 Australian delegates were engulfed by the 2600 participants in the XIIIth

ICA, but nevertheless made important contributions. For example, Kathryn Dan, our President, represented and spoke about the ASA at the meeting of the Section of Professional Associations. Ann Pederson (University of NSW) and Karen Anderson (Edith Cowan University) delivered papers at the meeting of University Educators. Steve Stuckey (Australian Archives) presented a short paper at the last plenary session of the Congress. George Nichols (Australian Archives) chaired the Resolutions Committee and became a member of the ICA Executive Committee.

The Congress program

The theme of this Congress was *Archives at the End of the Century - Taking Stock and Looking Ahead*. A total of 21 papers were delivered in the plenary sessions - a list of the papers and their authors is included at the end of this piece.

Plenary sessions (when all 2600 delegates congregated in one hall) constituted the core of the Congress program. These sessions featured a principal speaker (who spoke for thirty minutes) followed by three or four subsidiary speakers (who spoke for around ten minutes each). The remaining hour of the plenary session was devoted to 'making interventions' - an extraordinary ritual.

The ICA General Assembly met through the Congress week to conduct the business of the ICA. For example, it passed the Ethics Statement, considered budgetary issues and membership fees, and discussed archival terminology. The numerous Branches, Committees, Groups and Sections of the ICA conducted business meetings and ran sessions to explain to interested delegates what they have been doing over the previous four years.

To balance the excessively formal and imposing plenary sessions the Montreal Congress introduced and Beijing continued to feature Agora sessions. Each Agora session runs for an hour and consists of a thirty minute paper followed by thirty minutes of questions or discussion. Agora sessions are run in smaller venues accommodating around 150 people only.

The focus of the Congress

The papers delivered at the plenary sessions concentrated more on taking stock than on looking ahead. The exceptions were the papers by David Bearman, Terry Cook and Jan van den Broek.

The relative informality, currency and immediacy of the Agora sessions can mean that papers are a deal more engaging. The Agora sessions included papers on the new archival legislation in South Africa, recent archival buildings, archival databases, the ICA today, recent comprehensive archival manuals and uniform records classification.

Lilly Koltun, of the National Archives of Canada, who delivered the paper at the Agora session titled Archives and Mass Culture, raised issues, mainly about the use of film, of fundamental interest. She talked about the uses of archival footage in contemporary commercial film. She argued that archival segments are used in order to make a contemporary production look original, authoritative and authentic even though they are being used:

- completely out of their original context;
- as evidence of something which they actually contradict; and
- in ways that are possibly manipulative and ideological.

She contended that in such situations archives are not history but polemic and this has implications for archives and archivists. Some of the discussion following the paper was about whether such use of archives could or should be prevented or



Marie Allen, Sharon and Ken Thibodeau (NARA, USA) in front of banner saying 'Opening China Welcomes Friends of Archives Circles All Over The World' Shanghai 11.9.1996. Photo Stephen Yorke.

managed. A more significant point may be how we communicate the properties of archives and how we teach people to understand and evaluate evidence so that they are aware when archives are being manipulated.

Resolutions of the Congress

The Congress passed 21 resolutions grouped under the following headings:

- international cooperation;
- protection of the archival heritage;
- standardisation;
- education and professional development; and
- ICA structures.

CITRA

The International Round Table on Archives finalised and issued its triennial program in the course of the Congress. The next three CITRA meetings will focus on three aspects of access to information:

- legal questions;
- technological challenges; and
- preservation issues.

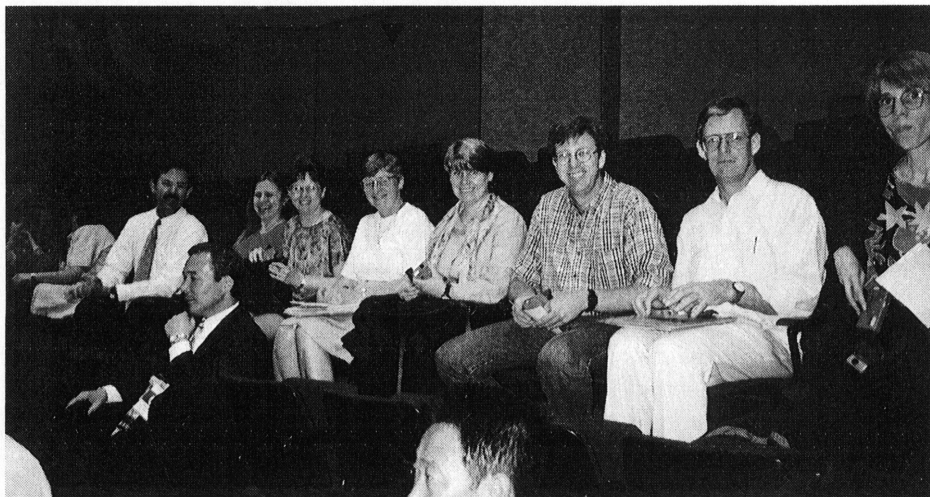
ICA and IFLA

The meeting of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) preceded the ICA Congress. Representatives of IFLA and ICA met to debate the future of the information professions. A result of the meeting is a document, known as the Beijing Agenda, which sets out the principles for cooperation between ICA and IFLA and areas for joint work, for example:

- access;
- ethics;
- new technologies;
- resource sharing; and
- standards for electronic records.

Archives in China

A country with one million archivists conducts the archival enterprise on an enormous scale. We were told there are 3574 archives in China (by comparison the last ASA Directory listed 458 in Australia). The institutions offering archival education are numerous - 29 colleges or universities, 57 adult education colleges and 35 technical secondary and vocational schools. Around 70 archival journals are published in China - at least one of them is published weekly.



ICA Congress 7.9.96. L to R: Steve Stuckey; Karin Brennan; Fiona Burn; Kathryn Patterson (NZ); Kathryn Dan; Greg (last name unknown); Clive Smith; Anne-Marie Schwirtlich. Photo Stephen Yorke.

Each delegate was provided with a copy of the Archives Law of the People's Republic of China and with a compendium titled *Archives Work in China* (Beijing, 1995) which consists of 8 booklets:

1. A Survey of Archival Enterprise in China
2. China's Laws, Regulations and Standards for Archives Work
3. China's Archival Repositories
4. China's Archives Offices
5. China's Archives Work in Enterprises and Urban Construction
6. China's Archival Education
7. China's Archives Scientific and Technological Research
8. China's Archives Publications and Periodicals

Several members of the Australian contingent were advised, by those hopeful of some antipodean travel, that having organised the Olympics we should be ready to host the Congress in 2004 (the XIVth Congress will be held in Seville, Spain). Most of us had only an inkling of the planning and logistics required to host an ICA but even an inkling was enough to make us feint incomprehension in order to avoid any commitment.

Anne-Marie Schwirtlich
Australian Archives,
Canberra

Papers delivered to plenary sessions of the ICA

Michael Swift, Archives at the End of the Century: Taking Stock and Looking Ahead (Keynote Address)

Jan van den Broek, From Brussels to Beijing (Principal Paper)

Jerzy Skowronek, The Role of the Archivist: The Archivist as Preserver of Culture and National Identity Specific Example in Central and Eastern Europe in the XIX and XX Centuries

Almayy Stell Conte, North-South and South-South Cooperation for Archival Development

Axel Plathe, Structures for International Cooperation in the Archival Field

Vladimir Tarasov, Cooperation in Crisis: International Actions to Save Archives

Antoine Fleury, Archives of International Organisations

Wang Dejun, Continuity and Change in Archives Legislation, Institutions and Infrastructures (Principal Paper)

Edward Higgs, From Medieval Erudition to Information Management: The Evolution of the Archival Profession

Lars Wessman, Archival Expansion Outside the Traditional Government Field

David Bearman, Virtual Archives

Virginia Chacon Arias, Archives Legislation and Archives Administration Duties, Objectives and Priorities for the Modern and Scientific Administration of Archives and for Archives Legislation

Terry Cook, Archives in the Post-Custodial World; Interaction of Archival Theory and Practice since the Publication of the Dutch Manual in 1898 (Principal Paper)

Feng Huiling, An Assessment of the Archival Literature

Michael Muller, A Question of Ethics: Administration Versus Scholarship

Antonella Mule, The Principle of Provenance: Should it Remain the Bedrock of the Profession?

UOA Esse, Archival Science: National and Cultural Traditions or International Discipline?

Christine Nougaret, The Impact of Information Technology on Archives and Archival Work (Principal Paper)

Habibah Zon Yahya, Preserving Television Transmissions: Strategies for Acquisition, Appraisal, Storage and Use

Kenneth Thibodeau, International Research: Appraisal and Preservation of Scientific Databases

Theo Thomassen, Getting Your Drivers Licence on the Electronic Highway

National Metadata Seminar, National Library of Australia, Canberra, 6 March 1997

The National Metadata Seminar was held following the conclusion of the 4th Dublin Core Workshop, Canberra 3-5 March 1997.

The workshop and seminar were sponsored by the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), Dublin Ohio (hence 'Dublin Core'), the Distributed Systems Technology Centre (DSTC), Brisbane and the National Library. About 275 people attended the seminar, of which roughly 25 were archivists.

The 'Dublin Core' invitational workshop series brings together selected professionals from the diverse but related fields of computer science, librarianship, online information services, abstracting and indexing, imaging and geospatial data, museum and archive control, and others. Its aim is to address and advance the state of the art in the development and extension of methods, standards, and protocols to facilitate the description, organisation and discovery of networked information resources.

Metadata provides a consistent way of describing Internet information (and any other information) which improves the reliability and efficiency of searching, a major Internet problem at the moment.

The Dublin Core international workshop series promotes and develops the metadata elements required to facilitate the discovery of resources (documents and images) in a networked environment such as the Internet and support interoperability amongst heterogenous metadata systems. In essence the Dublin Core is a standard set of metadata elements (currently 15 - title, creator, subject, description, publisher, contributors, date, type, format, identifier, source, language, relation, coverage and rights) designed to be imbedded into HTML web documents or at the front end of web resources, where these are not HTML based, to improve search capability.

The 4th workshop addressed major open issues concerning deployment of the Dublin Core and afforded developers and planners an opportunity to share their perspectives and experiences with others.

Agenda items included:

- Extensibility Issues - To solidify the DC as the Core on which others may build to satisfy their own requirements. Without it, other groups will find some key element lacking, and will be compelled to 'reinvent the wheel'.
- Element Structure - Identification of default schemes and Sub-element conventions.
- Element Refinement - Semantics and clearer definitions for certain of the elements (for example, coverage, relation, and rights management).

The aim of the National Metadata Seminar which followed the workshop was to provide Australians with a first hand opportunity to learn about the wide range of international developments in metadata standards and to discuss possible ways of encouraging the use of standard metadata elements by Australian creators of electronic publications and other documentary objects.

This event was and is of significance to archivists for a number of reasons. First and foremost Dublin Core is about improving accessibility, metadata being the key to improving searching through the increasingly vast quantities of material available on the Internet. At first glance we might not see the Internet as a records issue, but already some jurisdictions are requiring appropriate metadata to be built into document creation. The Danish Government, for example, has recently mandated Dublin Core for all new networked documents. In other words core metadata is added at the beginning not at some future point.

Other developments covered during the seminar were the Government Information Locator System (GILS) and the Platform for Internet Content Selection (PICS). GILS is a locator system and PICS a system for filtering out or filtering in information/sites (as opposed to Dublin Core which is the establishment of standard metadata elements for 'digital objects' to enable individual objects to be found more easily).

I do not intend to summarise the day session by session but rather to give an overview. If you wish to follow up the detail I would suggest a visit to the DC4 website at <http://www.dsc.edu.au/DC4/> or the National Library of Australia seminar site at <http://www.nla.gov.au/niac/metadata.html>.

For a relative novice on this issue I certainly came away feeling much more comfortable about metadata issues generally and the Dublin Core in particular. It was one of the few occasions where I have witnessed such a large cross section of 'information professionals' gathered together in the same place with a common interest. The library community are clearly taking a lead on this issue and it is one which the archival community needs to address from a strategic viewpoint. We have to take concrete steps to ensure our interests are considered and acted upon otherwise we face the danger of being ignored. These developments are not part of a fad. Governments in particular are taking a great deal of notice. For example, cultural electronic networks (eg Australia's Cultural Network) are currently on the agenda and generating potential resources. These networks need standard metadata requirements to be established at the outset. Archival metadata while it exists (in abundance) has yet to be refined into a universal set of core elements (à la Dublin Core).

Perhaps a Dublin Core style process needs to occur for the archival sector? Certainly in his summing up of the day Eric Wainwright, NLA, suggested action needed to occur at the organisation, sectoral and cross-sectoral levels to ensure progress is made and that it is done systematically.

It is worth noting in that context that Dublin Core is not designed to and could not

possibly satisfy all sectoral metadata requirements. The Dublin core and the related 'Warwick Framework' are designed to establish a generic set of metadata elements and a cross-sectoral framework in which those elements can be applied. It is up to each sector, such as archives, museums etc, to define additional elements that meet their own needs.

It is also worth noting that OCLC have started a process to 'marry' Dublin Core with US MARC and EAD (Encoding Archival Description). The latter is being run out of the Library of Congress and developed I understand for networked description of library collections of archival materials (ie manuscripts). It would be interesting to know what involvement, if any, the archival sector proper had in these processes? Not having an intimate knowledge of the ICA Descriptive Standards process and not being aware of a collective archival approach in other jurisdictions I am not in a position to comment. Perhaps the metadata developments emanating from Vancouver and Pittsburgh need to be 'standardised' and offered up as the archival core metadata set?

Greg O'Shea,
Assistant Director,
Electronic Records Project,
Australian Archives

Evidence and Accountability in the Electronic Communications Environment,
Seminar organised by the Australasian Institute of Tertiary Education
Administrators, New South Wales Branch, Sydney, 14 February 1997.

Over the last couple of years, information technology has advanced to the point that it now offers considerable benefits in efficiency and effectiveness for records management. However, with those benefits come some legal and administrative pitfalls.

The purpose of this seminar was to highlight some of the challenges facing recordkeepers as we enter the second millennium. Why is recordkeeping important? The answer is obvious to archivists, records managers and (hopefully) lawyers. Although most administrators would acknowledge the importance of recordkeeping, it is probably fair to say that they would be hard-pressed to explain why. One answer is that records are evidence of transactions. However, that answer

is too simplistic. Another answer is that recordkeeping provides an historical context for an organisation - a corporate memory, if you like. Certainly, records should be capable of providing the rationale behind transactions, long after the persons involved have departed the organisation.

Most people conceptualise records management as filing pieces of paper somewhere in a filing cabinet. In this electronic age, we need to re-conceptualise the way we think of records management. According to Barbara Reed, AS4390 provides an essential framework based on four principles: first that everyone is a recordkeeper, secondly that records are evidence of transactions, thirdly, that organisations exist in a web of regulatory and social relationships, and lastly, that the same recordkeeping procedures apply to all records in all media. AS4390 is designed as a flexible standard, and possible amendment will occur in future to deal with issues of access, workflow and maintenance of meaning over time. Barbara Reed argued that we need to apply 21st Century thinking in relation to recordkeeping and presented a case study of a virtual university in the year 2009.

Recordkeeping also brings with it responsibility for issues of privacy. As Graham Greenleaf argued, society's expectations of organisations that collect, store and manage personal data has changed considerably in the last 10 years, but the law has been slow to recognise this. Although the Commonwealth Government has enacted the *Privacy Act* 1988, States and Territories (with the exception of the ACT) have been very slow on the uptake. The European Union Directive on Privacy prohibits the export of data from EU countries to countries without adequate privacy laws. This has prompted the NSW Attorney-General to announce draft legislation to be introduced into Parliament in about April 1996. Presumably, other States and Territories will follow suit. However, it is clear that, once privacy laws are enacted, organisations can face severe penalties for non-compliance.

Phillip Argy focused on evidentiary principles that apply in relation to the storage and reproduction of information by electronic means. For example, the Corporations Law and most tax legislation require corporations to keep accessible records that are translatable into English. Just when you thought it was safe to throw out that microfiche reader or that computer terminal that reads 5 1/2 inch disks! Phillip Argy also outlined the new Evidence Act which abolishes the original document rule, as well as some of those more anachronistic hurdles needed to establish a document as a legitimate piece of evidence.

We in New South Wales are still waiting, with bated breath, for an exposure draft of the State Records Act. Alas, at the time of writing, it is still not ready. However,

David Roberts from the NSW Archives Authority outlined some of the principles behind the proposed new Act. In particular, it is designed for the electronic environment and contains a flexible concept of storage. Importantly, the Act will require organisations within its ambit to make and keep records and accurately document the operations and administration of an organisation in accordance with specified standards. It is proposed that the Act will be implemented in stages. As far as universities are concerned, the Act will operate in a minimalist fashion.

With advanced computer technology comes exposure to attack from various sources. Thomas Hardjono outlined the types of attacks to which systems and data can be exposed, and outlined some of the ways that electronic data can be protected, with particular focus on encryption and digital signature technologies. The problem with most software however, is that vendors do not warrant the security of their software from attack, and it is unlikely that they can be prevailed upon to do so.

No seminar would be complete without a real (as opposed to virtual) case study, and Anne Picot from the Roads and Traffic Authority of New South Wales gave her perspective on the RTA's establishment of a centralised system of electronic records management. The lesson to be learned from this is that dramatic changes to systems have considerable practical and political consequences. This means that properly planned implementation (preferably in stages) is essential.

Helen Fleming
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The University of Sydney

Labour and Business Archives as Cultural Heritage and Collective Memory,
Forum held by the Library Society of the State Library of New South Wales
and the Industrial Relations Research Centre of the University of New South
Wales, Sydney, 19th October 1996.

The Labour and Business Archives as Cultural Heritage and Collective Memory Forum was designed to bring together creators, custodians and historians of labour and business records.

The Forum was initiated by Lucy Taksa, Deputy Director of the Industrial Relations

Research Centre at the University of New South Wales, to coincide with the visit to Australia of Marcel van der Linden, Deputy Research Director of the International Institute of Social History (IISH) in Amsterdam. Dr Taksa's main focus was nevertheless on the need to build an arena for discussion between those who have a common interest in defending labour heritage in Australia. She observed that there had been a narrow view of heritage amongst architects and others in the heritage industry in the 1980s which had resulted in little interest in industrial buildings or buildings used for labour activism. While this had changed in the 1990s, there was still a lack of funding and political will to preserve labour buildings and archives, and a need for a forum in which to mobilise and defend this heritage.

In order to illuminate the heritage theme, Dr Taksa had asked the 'custodians' to address the relationship between their archive and 'cultural heritage'. Underlying many of the papers presented by the five archivists who spoke before lunch were meditations on various problems facing collecting archives in both defining and defending their heritage role and on the place of continuum records management strategies in providing solutions.

The morning session on 'International Developments' was addressed by Dr van der Linden and by Ewan Maidment of the Pacific Manuscript Bureau, who both presented broad outlines of the programs run by their organisations. Coincidentally they both raised the issue of the importance to creators of their own records as one basis of their group identity, and ways to reconcile this with the interests of programs which collect records for research and preservation purposes.

Dr van der Linden's opening address detailed both the history and current practice of the IISH, which was established in 1935 to rescue and preserve endangered records of social and labour movements and persecuted groups such as the German Social Democrats under Hitler and Anarchist Trade Unions after the Spanish Civil War. The IISH is now supported as part of the Dutch Royal Academy of Arts and Sciences, and has offices in Moscow, India, China and Turkey, where it attempts to assist local archives care for their own records, using records rescue as a last resort in cases of political suppression. The records of the Communist Party of Iran, for example, are held for safekeeping in the Netherlands, but will be returned to their creators after microfilming by the IISH, once political circumstances change.

Ewan Maidment's address alluded to a similar experience when he discussed the value which Pacific trade unions place on their records as part of their identity, and their preference for setting up their own internal archives rather than

transferring them to a central collecting agency. PAMBU documents the political and social life of the Pacific region by microfilming records, while encouraging a better recordkeeping culture in situ amongst Pacific Trade Unions. Much later in the day, John Shields, Lecturer in Industrial Relations, University of New South Wales, returned humorously to this ethical theme when speaking of the difficulty he had as a researcher in gaining access to records of trade unions held by their creators in the Broken Hill Trades Hall. His experience attested to the jealously guarded value placed on these records by local trade union officials as the record of their history and identity. As a consequence he reassessed his belief in the role of centralised collecting archives, becoming more supportive of the importance of local archives where the contextual meaning of records to their creating community can be retained.

Discussion then turned to the current concerns of Australian archives which collect trade union and business records. Michael Saclier of the Noel Butlin Archives Centre spoke on the origin of that archive, the recent review of its activities and consequent changes in its direction. He reflected that the NBAC had been founded on the research needs of the Australian National University, and the danger was that it would now share in the decline of research into Australian history within the University. Michael Organ of the Wollongong University Library spoke on the difficulties of running a one person archive which had also been established to serve particular research needs. The persistent themes of both speakers were the financial pressures to do more with fewer resources, and the need to remain relevant as research needs changed.

In the same session, both Jim Andrighetti of the Mitchell Library and Christine Yates of the Archives Office of New South Wales revisited the connection between the keeping of current records and the practice of archiving, although from very different starting points. Jim Andrighetti spoke on the example of the Australian Labor Party and the difficulties presented to the Library's collecting program because the Party had no responsible internal records management. He used the opportunity of the Forum to urge them to adopt such recordkeeping in their own interest and that of researchers, although he did not foreshadow a role for the Library in teaching or otherwise becoming involved in this new practice. Christine Yates spoke on legislation currently being considered in New South Wales, which would change the emphasis of the archival authority to being a whole of government records manager rather than a repository of treasures. She noted the role which electronic records had played in this shift towards continuum management. Promotion of better records management amongst the creators of records, better statistical analysis of the use of collections, promotion of under-utilised records, and better use of information technology were seen as necessary steps forward.

In the afternoon, the uses of oral history as collective memory were addressed by Rosemary Block, State Library of New South Wales, Julia Horne, University of New South Wales and Sigrid McCausland, Ph.D. student and Archivist at University of Technology Sydney. These papers provided a reminder that records as they are now defined as evidence of transactions provide no more than a partial account of particular kinds of human experience. Historians' tales of the discovery and use of archival resources followed, with one case where government archivists had failed to locate records for a user providing an opportunity to reflect on the difficulty users still have in comprehending archival systems.

Creators of records were less well represented at the Forum than historians and custodians, but Peter Sams, Secretary of the Labour Council of NSW, spoke on proposals to revitalise the Trades Hall by establishing a Museum of labour history and memorabilia. Helen Smith, BHP Archives, emphasised that the role of her archives in supporting BHP's legal, business and internal research needs must receive a higher priority than any cultural role. If BHP's approach seemed restricted from a heritage point of view, many of the archivists at the Forum had already made the point that good evidence will only be retained for heritage purposes if trade unions and businesses adopt good recordkeeping practices for their current records, protecting and managing them as a valuable resource for their own business needs and sense of identity. Professor Michael Quinlan, UNSW, closed the Forum with a final evening address on archives in the electronic age, demonstrating that he was well aware of both the potential advantages of the Internet for bringing researchers and archives together, and the difficulties which archives face in dealing with records created and maintained exclusively in electronic form. In the hope that the Forum will generate a continuous arena for discussion of common interests between historians, archivists and creators of business and labour records, Dr. Taksa plans to publish the proceedings of the Forum this year.

Suzanne Fairbanks
University of Melbourne Archives

Seventh Australian Library History Forum, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Melbourne, 12 October 1996.

included a stream specifically devoted to archival history. Some 25 people attended this stream, along with the temporary presence of a Records Management class from RMIT, and thanks are due to Bruce Smith and Graeme Johanson for their organising work.

In the opening paper to the combined audience of librarians, archivists and others, Dr Michael Talbot (State Library of South Australia), presented a history of the rise and demise of the Library Association of Australasia, from the 1890s until it petered out in the 1920s-30s.

Michael Piggott (Australian Archives) opened the archival day with 'The history of Australian recordkeeping: a framework for research'. While acknowledging the work that has provided the outline of a traditional history of archives, in the sense of studies of 'archival institutions, professional organisations, laws, events and practitioners', he nevertheless pointed out four major deficiencies in the historiography of our profession:

- the tendency to assume that recordkeeping in Australia began only in 1788, whereas Aboriginal rock art, message-sticks, and the just-announced discoveries at Jinmium show a much broader view is possible;
- the narrow definition of archives and archivists, starting 'at the repository door', which has marginalised the story of recordkeeping in all parts of society, from the government department to the company office, and the professional organisation to local registrars, and much besides;
- the neglect of the history of recordkeeping systems: for example, the last archival writer on the Torrens system of land registration was Theodore Schellenberg!; and
- the absence of a history of the record, how records have formed part of social, business, political and personal activity, influencing and shaping them and us.

Piggott's paper was a call to all of us to read and write more of our own history, the history of recordkeeping in the broadest sense as well as the more traditional history of archives institutions and holdings. If I may repeat a quotation made from Kathy Baxter 'the historian is the interpreter of the past, the social critic of the present, and the prophet of the future'. On this basis, and as the profession that enables the making of other people's history, we would serve ourselves well by working harder on our own history. Truth to tell, I was somewhat surprised at how

few people attended the Forum. Nevertheless, I hope the published papers will receive a wide reading.

The day's other speakers included Jock Murphy, who spoke on 'The progress of a collection: the La Trobe Manuscripts Collection', which received its first deposit in 1872, followed in 1874 by the records of the Burke and Wills Expedition, thence to grow into one of the most important collections of private (and for a time also public) records in Australia. Bruce Smith (RMIT) spoke on 'Lost memory: the paper drives of World War II', in which he outlined the scanty evidence of loss of records to the recycling drives - and the sometimes surprising survival of records despite these drives. This in turn led to a discussion of the writing of history based on the absence as well as the presence of records. It is worth noting here also that Bruce and his students are developing a bibliographical database of archival writings as a basis for future research, and any contributions would be welcomed by them. Unfortunately missing through illness was Gavan McCarthy, whose paper, 'Documenting science in Australia', will appear in the published proceedings.

A discussion at the end of the day between all participants focussed on the future of the Library History Forum, and in particular on the impact of holding a separate archive history forum within it. It was generally agreed to keep the link between the two streams. Thus, the next Forum in 1998 will include a stream on archives history. However, Bruce was also urged to contact the organisers of this year's ASA conference in Adelaide with a view to arranging a meeting of people interested in archival history.

Patrick O'Niell
National Library of Australia

Recordkeeping Educators' Forum, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology,
Melbourne, 12 December 1996.

Maintaining the impetus generated at the inaugural forum of records and archives educators held in Canberra in July 1995, a second meeting was convened in Melbourne on 12 December 1996. Hosted on this occasion by the Department of Information Management, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) and

Monash University's Department of Librarianship, Archives and Records, the second Educators' Forum attracted representatives from Edith Cowan, New South Wales, Curtin, and Canberra Universities, together with education representatives from the Australian Society of Archivists Inc. and the Records Management Association of Australia.

An important outcome from the 1995 Canberra meeting was the decision to convene the Educators' Forum annually. That decision acknowledged that the Forum provided the only real opportunity for this comparatively small, dispersed group of academics and others involved in training and education to share their experiences and ideas about future directions in archives and recordkeeping.

The agenda for this second gathering made it clear that the day's program would be wide-ranging and busy, with an emphasis on 'working sessions'. The greater part of the morning was devoted to reports about recent international conferences. These included the 8th International Symposium on Archival Education, and the Archival Education Seminar of the International Council on Archives (ICA), both of which were held in Beijing, China in September 1996, and the Society of American Archivists' (SAA) Conference and the Archival Educators' Meeting sessions held in San Diego, California in late August 1996.

Karen Anderson (Edith Cowan) and Ann Pederson (UNSW) opened with reports on the two Beijing activities, providing thought-provoking and stimulating comments about the need for a collaborative approach to greater involvement in the work of the International Exchange and Co-operation in Archival Education Steering Committee. As a representative on that Steering Committee, Ann Pederson identified challenges for Australian educational institutions to become involved in a wider world of teaching and assisting practitioners in archives and recordkeeping work.

Distance education programs already being offered have been designed to meet specific local needs. These, together with student populations, have influenced methods of delivery and the types of supporting materials used. The development of courses for paraprofessionals was considered to be urgent, as was the need for continuing education in recordkeeping and archives. The demand for archivists with university qualifications was said to be increasing world-wide.

Both Karen's and Ann's presentations made it clear that much could be done in China, in particular, if a collaborative approach to the development of research projects, case studies and model curricula could be achieved. The Educators' Forum unanimously supported any move to achieve this type of collaboration.

Sue McKemmish (Monash) provided news of the Society of American Archivists' Conference, and the Archival Educators' Meeting sessions at which archival educators in North America met for the first time to share views, visions and achievements.

Sue's paper delivered at the SAA Conference again pointed to the need for a cohesive, collaborative approach to education and research by records and archives educators. She highlighted the opportunities which exist for a broader view of life-long learning, including workplace-based training programs, and the need for courses which are 'flexibly structured and delivered'. She pointed to a 'grand vision' for collaborative educational action leading to 'national or global virtual records and archives schools'. Her paper outlined a thought-provoking list of questions to be addressed, including the need to consider 'current structural and economic barriers' to achieving a workable and collaborative approach to training and education.

In response to the agenda item 'What's happening in Australia', questions were raised on the way records and archives educators see themselves, extending even to the name of the group. This prompted the decision that from now on the group will be known as the 'Recordkeeping Educators' Forum'.

The reports of the overseas events stimulated brief comments by each of the participants about programs in their own institutions. These illustrated that similar concerns in terms of funding and limitations on staffing levels exist here. A shared enthusiasm to move ahead with curriculum development and to engage in research was also apparent.

Research issues and approaches to achieve greater success in sourcing and acquiring funding for research projects were the focus of the afternoon sessions. Representatives from the Australian Council of Archives and Gavan McCarthy (who has been involved in a major research project as a result of a successful Australian Research Council grant) attended to offer guidance and support for research.

The need to articulate and agree on a prioritised research agenda was highlighted by these discussions. To carry this forward a Research Sub-Committee was formed to promote research activities in recordkeeping. This Sub-Committee comprises Mark Brogan (Edith Cowan University), Gavan McCarthy (University of Melbourne), Lee McGregor (representing the ACA), Sue McKemmish (Monash), Ann Pederson (UNSW), Dennis Wheeler (representing the RMAA) and Elaine Eccleston (University of Canberra). Amongst other activities, this group will work towards the inclusion of a specific classification related to records and archives for

consideration in ARC grants funding. The group will also identify possible research areas and opportunities to apply for funding, and provide support for those preparing funding applications.

Examples of projects that could be pursued through a research agenda include the development of a national electronic recordkeeping standard, and a review of the practical effects on agencies which implement the Records Management Standard, AS4390. Other proposed research topics included the development of appraisal techniques for multimedia records, and the development of migration criteria for software developers.

Mark Brogan (Edith Cowan) provided a status report on the Archival Educators' home page, highlighting the opportunities for promoting records and archives issues that the home page offers. These include the publishing of case studies and research opportunities and findings, together with listings of theses and dissertations, both completed and in progress. The success of the home page was reflected in the number of 'visitors' it has received since it became available, and enquiries lodged about specific issues.

Outcomes from the day's work included: the identification of areas for collaborative action, both nationally and internationally; an endorsed research agenda; and an articulation of the first steps in putting in place mechanisms for joint and supportive action to achieve common goals. The establishment of links with the international community was seen by the Forum as an imperative.

The third Forum is scheduled to be held in Perth, WA on Friday 12 September 1997.

Elaine Eccleston
University of Canberra

Exhibitions

John Murphy, Curator, Possessed: An Exhibition of Treasures, State Library of New South Wales, Sydney, 4 March to 29 June 1997.

Does an exhibition have to be accessible? Does it have to appeal to today's

sensibilities? Does an encounter with superbly-displayed old, rare and curious objects increase our sympathy for or interest in their previous owners and past practices of collecting? Does the viewer have to feel that there is any link between their experience and the material being displayed? These are some of the questions that occurred to me as I progressed through this exhibition.

You are prepared for something different even as you approach the exhibition. The walkway from the Macquarie Street wing has been enclosed and you enter a darkened, almost vacant environment. Once inside, there is a sense of detachment and unhurried calm about the exhibition space. The intention is to instil a sense of growing wonderment as you progress through the three galleries, from the Wunderkammer (cabinet of curiosities) to the blossoming of the book to the grand scale of the large folio volumes and oil paintings.

Possessed offers a challenge to the viewer: to follow the curator's lead in interpreting and making connections between an assemblage of almost one hundred and sixty disparate items, many of which are objects or paintings or rare and magnificent books, together with the occasional elucidating document. Appreciating the ambience and design of the exhibition spaces and the beauty and whimsy of the items selected for inclusion is not difficult. But accepting the concept behind the exhibition is another matter.

I suspect that this exhibition more than most reflects the curator's personal tastes, while at the same time confirming the institution's corporate pride in its treasures. Promoted as a treasures exhibition, 'the first time on public display' (not strictly true of all the items), it delivers the unfamiliar from the past to a contemporary audience. Here, the Library is achieving two objectives: it is sharing its riches, long maintained largely at public expense, with the general public and simultaneously pleasing its aficionado. For it has established an audience for its treasures, through talks and other events presented by its friends organisation and through several support programs.

Possessed focuses firmly on a privileged past. 'Inspired by the theme of European collecting', it suggests rather than reveals the processes at work in collecting. Objects, books and artworks originally intended for the private pleasure of the collector are now set before the public. But questions of provenance and ownership and especially of how the items came into the Library's possession are secondary to the appreciation of beauty, violence, romance or quirkiness in the individual item.

This is not to deny that there are discernible links or themes, but they tend to be

subtle and for the initiated. The elegant catalogue, subtitled 'a book of treasures', is a brief disquisition on the history of the book which cleverly draws the exhibition together through its discussion of selected pieces. To make a coherent selection out of the Library's holdings of miscellanea from the blood of Charles I to the work of Andy Warhol is indeed difficult. John Murphy's deployment of objects from the spectacular to the bizarre and the prosaic has much to show archivists who are custodians of those eclectic, often unwanted 'other items' received with collections of paper records.

I found the last gallery the most satisfying, because I found the various displays more engaging and more contextualised (I confess that I am more enticed by nineteenth-century works of bird and botanical illustration than by medieval illuminated manuscripts). Despite the promotional material, I found my experience of the exhibition to be more cerebral than emotional and I did begin to wonder whether there is a strong future for exhibitions which focus on the habit of private collecting. What do we know of today's collectors? Do most people, especially young people, revere the old and the precious in the way that this exhibition assumes? Will even such well-resourced institutions as the State Library of NSW continue to accumulate new treasures? In these days of very defined collecting policies and careful consideration of long-term preservation needs, not to mention shrinking government funding, most libraries and archives no longer happily collect objects, rare or ordinary.

This exhibition shows us that there are many unexpected treasures to be found under the State Library's roof and it shows that they can be sensitively and lavishly displayed. But it should also remind us that there are diverse riches of information to be found elsewhere in its many less visually captivating collections.

Sigrid McCausland
University of Technology, Sydney

Ageing with Attitude: The Private Lives of Museum Objects, a temporary exhibition at the Powerhouse Museum, Harris Street, Ultimo, NSW, October 1996 - March 1997.

This exciting and innovative exhibition looks at the conservation of museum

collections, from past and current treatments through to storage and display issues. It begins by comparing past and current practices for displaying palm-leaf manuscripts, repairing ceramics and treating tarnished silver. The curators of the exhibition have avoided presenting past practices as inappropriate, even though some of the results look dreadful, taking the line that 'although the methods used may seem crude and obtrusive, they helped ensure the object's survival until the museum acquired it'.

The restoration debate is well presented by comparing two motorcycles. One is 'well used and well loved' (and comparatively shabby) while the other restored model gleams. While the latter 'may be shinier now than it was in real life', evidence about the bike's manufacture and maintenance may have been lost as a result of the restoration.

Storage materials and systems feature strongly in the section on 'current approaches' to conservation. The point that conservation aims to control deterioration while minimising changes to appearance is constantly reinforced.

One of the highlights of the exhibition is the inclusion of a conservation work station. Here conservators can be seen undertaking a variety of treatments to conserve and restore a Japanese shrine which is due to go on exhibition in the museum's new Asian gallery this year. A conservator is available at the help desk to answer questions, and is kept very busy, particularly on the weekends.

Humour is evident throughout the exhibition, particularly in captions like 'Objects from hell!'. This display focuses on some of the more complex problems that conservators grapple with, such as the use of incompatible materials, like silk and metal threads in embroidery, and ephemeral materials, like a pair of shoes made for Mardi Gras.

Deterioration caused by heat, dryness, light and handling (fingerprints) are all well presented. The importance of controlling relative humidity (R.H.) is displayed with stunning simplicity and clarity. Three tubs are presented, one with an internal relative humidity of 30%, one at 50% and the other at 80%. The following items have been placed into each tub : a yoyo, a *Phantom* comic, a piece of wood, a pair of bamboo chopsticks, a pair of leather baby shoes, a container of metal screws and washers, a sheet of stamps and some string. By comparing the materials in the 3 tubs it can be seen that dry conditions (30% R.H.) cause wood to crack and distort (especially in the case of the chopsticks) and the sheets of stamps to curl up into a roll. The humid conditions (80% R.H.) have caused luxuriant mould on everything and corrosion of the metals,

although it is difficult to see through the condensation on the lid of the display!

Current pest management practice is shown in a display in which a motor car is sealed in a polyester enclosure with pheromone traps. It is predicted that this treatment will dispose of the moths which have been dining on the upholstery within several months.

This is the most innovative exhibition on conservation that the reviewer has seen to date. It provides a good model for anyone proposing to put together a similar exhibition. The conservation department of the Powerhouse has photographically recorded the exhibition and will retain many of the exhibits and labels for future use and for loan by other organisations. If you are interested in further information on the exhibition please contact Pat Townley, Head of Conservation, Powerhouse Museum on (02) 9217 0265.

The Powerhouse Museum and the people involved in curating the exhibition, Pat Townley, Roger Parris, and Gerry Hunt, are to be congratulated.

Tamara Lavrencic
Conservation Access
State Library of New South Wales