

Editorial

I am pleased to present this volume of *Archives and Manuscripts*, which celebrates the diversity of the archival profession at the end of the 20th century. From the broader context in which archives and archivists function, through to the practicalities of recordkeeping, the authors reflect on past practice and tackle the issues facing archivists now and into the future. These include: issues relating to access, the use of archives, the education of reference archivists, electronic recordkeeping and functional analysis.

Richard Summerrell has written a thought-provoking article on the education and professional development of reference archivists, focusing on recent initiatives at the National Archives of Australia. Summerrell contends that at present, *use* of archives is commonly viewed as secondary to management, particularly as reflected in the scholarly literature and in current teaching programs in this country. While archival institutions fail to exploit technology in order to facilitate access and use, reference archivists will remain a primary means of accessing collections. The author hopes to foster debate about how the initiatives he describes might be built upon cooperatively. One might take the question further and ask what qualification should be the minimum for any archivist. This question provoked lively debate at branch level last year (VIC branch, September 1998), the nays winning by a narrow margin.

Articles by Hanlon, Jury, and Maidment and Wehner highlight issues of access and use and remind us strongly that the archive is not a dispassionate place.

Fran Jury takes up the call of Cunningham and McKemmish in the Personal Recordkeeping issue of *Archives and Manuscripts* (May 1996); she examines the recordkeeping practices of Adelaide ethnologist Norman Tindale (1900-93) and the idea of creating 'trustworthy' records. Documenting these practices has proved crucial in recent cases where Tindale's records have been used in native title claims.

Ewan Maidment and Monica Wehner investigate issues relating to the control, possession and dissemination of archives in the Pacific Islands and the implications for social memory and knowledge, describing the fate of indigenous voices as 'captured', rather than silenced in official colonial

discourses. The authors question the ‘manuscripts library’ approach of Harry Maude, whose work was the basis for the formation of the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau, and detail the principles now guiding the Bureau.

A strong position on issues of access and use in Pacific collections is taken by Professor David Hanlon of the University of Hawai’i in his paper, ‘The Chill of History’. As Maidment and Wehner state, the author calls for “a repatriation of knowledge and democratisation of history”, reminding us that there is a cultural politics in the use and administration of archives, and that the two are inextricably linked. He reminds us that the archive is more than the written word, but can be spoken, chanted, sung, danced, painted and carved too.

Professor Eric Ketelaar’s thoughts on *archivalisation* - the conscious and unconscious choices made in considering something worth archiving - are expressed in a concise yet sweeping account using a breadth of sources, which provides a counterpoint to the issues raised by Hanlon, Maidment and Wehner. His sources remind us too of the depth in Australian archival writing over the years, and had me dipping into *Debates and Discourses* with interest on a number of occasions.

Another international contribution comes from the pen of Peter Horsman, now working for the Netherlands Archives School and fondly remembered from his visit to these shores in May last year. We reproduce a paper presented last October to mark the centenary of the publication of the Dutch Archives Manual, in which the author looks at concepts of original order(s) in relation to the Manual and presents a case study of the Dordrecht archives.

In other papers Danielle Wickman from the National Archives of Australia looks at the place of functional analysis in the life cycle and records continuum environments, and the Victorian Electronic Records Strategy (VERS) team report on the outcomes of their project examining the capture and long term preservation of the electronic records of the Victorian government.

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