

International Notes

Edited by Ewan Maidment

Association of Commonwealth Archivists and Records Managers (ACARM)

Correspondent: Michael Roper, ACARM Hon. Secretary

The Association of Commonwealth Archivists and Records Managers (ACARM) was founded in 1984 to provide a link for archivists, archival institutions and records managers across the Commonwealth. What makes this link especially important is the common heritage of legal and administrative systems, and hence of recordkeeping practices, which the countries of the Commonwealth share.

To further its objectives ACARM has established a network of Commonwealth professionals in its field and has used that network to develop a practical strategy for solving recordkeeping problems in public administration. This has involved a number of developmental projects concerned with promoting professional education and training through workshops and the production of training materials. In these activities ACARM has in recent years worked in partnership with the International Records Management Trust (IRMT).

ACARM issues a newsletter three times a year. Its format was updated and expanded in 1996/97 and it now contains up to forty pages of short articles on subjects of professional concern as well as news items from around the Commonwealth; indeed it is more akin to a journal than a newsletter. Among articles which have appeared in recent issues are: 'Images of the Liberation Struggle in South Africa: The Mayibuye Centre's Film and Video Archives'; 'The Public Record Office (UK) and the Safeguarding and Preservation of Electronic Records of Government'; 'Training at the National Archives of St Kitts'; 'Wanton destruction – how junta rule hit records management programmes in Sierra Leone'; and 'Access to Records in the National Archives of Australia by Indigenous Peoples'.

ACARM is currently preparing a manual to introduce archivists and records managers in developing countries to the potential of the Internet and a pamphlet on the basic requirements for preservation and conservation services. A similar manual is planned on legislation bearing on records and archives.

ACARM Newsletter

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"Wanton destruction" - how junta rule hit records management programmes in Sierra Leone

The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council's illegal seizure of power on May 25 1997 and the infrastructural collateral damage that ensued marked the most unprecedented destruction of the records and cultural heritage of Sierra Leone in recent times. Never have the records and facilities supporting documents evidence of this nation suffered such wanton destruction as was evidenced following the coup d'état.

The democratically elected Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) Government had initiated the need for a comprehensive records management programme. It is a task which requires the assistance of a national records management programme with support from the international donor agencies. For instance, the World Bank, through its Public Sector Management Support (PSMS) project, has been a major source of technical assistance in re-organising the records and filing systems of Government Departments.

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Technicians in the file section of the National Archives of Sierra Leone. The National Archives of Sierra Leone is a major source of technical assistance in re-organising the records and filing systems of Government Departments.

In this issue...

The 'Heiner Affair'

How far should archivists go in defending the integrity of the public record?

Bringing them home

Improving access for Indigenous and Aboriginal peoples in Australia and Canada

The ACARM Newsletter includes articles on contemporary archives issues.

ACARM enjoys good relations with the Commonwealth Secretariat and with the Commonwealth Foundation. The Foundation provides core funding for the administration of ACARM and both have made activity grants for workshops, manuals and other special projects. ACARM lobbied the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Edinburgh in 1997 on the implications for

public records of the electronic environment. The paper presented to the delegates has been published in the ACARM Newsletter.

ACARM is a category B member of and cooperates closely with the International Council on Archives (ICA). ACARM members have the opportunity to meet informally in the context of meetings of ICA's regional branches, as well as during meetings of its International Conference of the Round Table on Archives (CITRA) and International Congress on Archives, when ACARM's own Annual General Meetings are held. The AGM held during each Congress elects the officers and Executive Committee for the next four years and a new Executive Committee will be elected at the 2000 AGM to be held during the International Congress on Archives in Seville.

The current officers and Executive Committee members of ACARM are:

- Chairman: Charles Gibson, Director, Belize Archives Department
 Hon. Secretary: Michael Roper, formerly Keeper of Public Records, UK
 Hon. Treasurer: Helen Forde, Public Record Office, UK
 Co-editors: David Ward, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, UK
 Nicky Riding, Royal Free Hospital, London, UK

Executive Committee:

Andrew Evborokhai, Director, National Records Service of The Gambia
Mrs Ndiyoi Mutiti, Director, National Archives of Zambia
George Nichols, Director-General, National Archives of Australia
Mrs Sarah Tyacke, Keeper of Public Records, UK
Ian Wilson, National Archivist, National Archives of Canada
Garvin Wimalaratne, Director, National Archives of Sri Lanka
Mrs Habiba Zon Yahaya, Director-General, National Archives of Malaysia

Membership of ACARM is open to institutions and individuals. The current subscription rates, introduced by the Executive Committee in 1998, are based on a sliding scale which aims to keep subscriptions low for members in the less developed countries of the Commonwealth while making a significant contribution to the financing of the Association. For Australia the rates are National Archives UK£100; other institutions UK£50; individuals UK£15.

For further information and a subscription invoice, please contact the ACARM Secretariat, c/o IRMT, 12 John Street, London WC1N 2EB, England; tel: +44 20 7831 4101; fax: +44 20 7831 7404; email jleijten@irmt.btinternet.com. ACARM has also recently developed its own website which may be seen at www.acarm.org.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Archives: PARBICA 8 country report

Correspondent: Mr Herbert del Rosario, Director, CNMI Archives

Historical Background and Administrative Basis

The CNMI Archives is a division within the Department of Learning Resources at Northern Marianas College. The CNMI Archives started upon my coming to Northern Marianas College in May 1984. In the absence of archives legislation the CNMI Government has Public Laws 4-34, Secondary Education, and 8-41, Open Government Act, to make sure that all CNMI government funded publications and minutes of all Boards and Commission meetings are sent to the CNMI Archives.

The CNMI Government has several archives laws dealing with the establishment of an archives institution in our governmental organization, however the legislation was disapproved by the Governor due to administrative concerns and other matters that were not addressed by the legislation.

Next, in the absence of archives legislation, I was able to convince our legislature to make sure that all government documents which possess historical, political,

legal significance and any other records that have archival value are sent to the CNMI Archives.

Aside from our membership status with PARBICA, we are also active members of PIALA, an organization of librarians, archivists and museum curators in the Western Pacific.

Accommodation

The CNMI Archives is sharing an office space with the Pacific Collections at the Northern Marianas College. However our government has serious concerns about the status of the CNMI Archives. I have stated in my meetings and monthly reports that the CNMI Archives is in dire need of space in order to be able to provide proper archival services to the CNMI Government. In my last meeting with our legislature, I was informed that the archives legislation will address all the concerns of the CNMI Archives. Presently our storage space is 1,000 square feet, plus the work space that covers an area of 3,000 square feet. The type of shelving that we use is steel shelving.

Staffing

At the moment the CNMI Archives has three professional staff and one technical staff member to handle all the work of the Archives. As part of the requirements of the Northern Marianas College all staff go through staff development training in whatever field their job requires for them to improve their knowledge.

Current Records Management

Our office is directly involved in decision making with regards to the retention and disposal of records. We are also responsible and in the current records management programs for the entire CNMI records management programs.

Nature and Extent of Records

Currently our collection includes: the microfilm of the former Trust Territory Government in the Pacific Islands; German New Guinea microfilm of the Pacific Islands donated by the National Archives of Australia in 1998; Covenant Negotiation Papers between the CNMI and the United States of America, 1976, 1985 and 1995; First, Second and Third Constitutional Convention Papers and other recorded documents about our CNMI Constitution; all District and Public Laws passed by the Mariana Islands District Legislature and the Commonwealth Legislature and all their supporting documents; microfilm copies of the *Marianas Variety Newspaper* from 1972–98; Commonwealth Register from 1978–99; Congress of Micronesia Laws & Resolutions; *Guam Daily News* on microfilm 1948–92; and over 100 videos of oral history interviews about the Japanese, US Military

Administration of the Mariana Islands and its customs and culture. Our office has recently acquired a computer capable of scanning photos for preservation purposes. At the present we have over 5,000 photos in our collection.

Use of Archives

The CNMI Archives serves the students of Northern Marianas College, the CNMI Government and the general public in the Northern Mariana Islands. However there are fees that our Board of Regents approved and are imposed on patrons who come to do research. Our office provides a lot of research assistance to off-island researchers. All researchers requesting assistance may call us at 670-234-7394 or fax us at 670-234-0759.

Conservation

In accordance with the grant that the Department of Interior gave the CNMI, FSM, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Palau Government, we were given the opportunity of preserving our original microfilm in Honolulu, Hawaii. We also made it a requirement to make sure that all our documents are placed in acid-free boxes so that they are properly protected.

Promotional Activities

The CNMI Archives is required to submit monthly reports. The report covers all the activities of the Archives including problems and the number of patrons we served and other matters. On several occasions my office provides lectures to students about the CNMI Archives and the types of services, the collection and other information about the CNMI Archives.

The CNMI Archives plays an important role in the Northern Marianas Government by providing preservation assistance to our government departments and agencies and advice on the necessary points in order to preserve government records that possess historical, legal, political value and other government documents that possess archival value.

Federated States of Micronesia, Division of Archives and Historic Preservation: PARBICA 8 country report

Correspondent: Mr Jones George, Archives Specialist

Historical Background and Administrative Basis

This small Office of Archives and Historic Preservation was established in April 1988 although the legislation (FSM Code Title No. 26) establishing a National

Archives and a Historic Preservation program for the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) was enacted and existed way back in 1978. At first it was a branch of the Public Information Office until the President reorganized his branch of the government in 1988 in which he elevated it up to a division level and housed it under the arm of the Office of Administrative Services. Administration once again changed and reorganisation occurred again. This time, we were again swept under another new and bigger department and were downgraded to a unit. This new department is the Department of Health, Education and Social Affairs. All these reorganisations, changes and moves, seem to have no effects on our operation. Our responsibilities and mandates remain the same.

Over these long years we had established good working relationships and associations with most, if not all, educational institutions in this region including some outside. We are also a member of the Pacific Islands Museums Association (PIMA) and the Pacific Islands Association of Libraries and Archives (PIALA).

Accommodation

We still do not have a purpose-built building. A couple of proposals have been submitted to the National Congress and the President's Office, but are always listed on the low priority listing. We are currently housed in two small rooms – one serves as our processing, filming, research and reading room and the second one serves as our office. We are also using the government warehouse as a repository as well as a storage area.

Staffing

Currently there are seven staff on board, however there are only three of us involved in processing and retrieving the archives. We normally get very limited training offered by and during the annual conferences of Pacific Islands Association of Libraries and Archives and others from other regional organisations. We urgently need training in this area. The writer attended several training workshops in Australia, New Zealand, and New Caledonia mainly on conservation and preservation and also on disaster and emergency planning.

Nature and Extent of Records

With limited space at this time, we are concentrating mainly on microfilming. There are a limited number of originals and historic documents kept in the office. There are currently over 4,500 rolls of microfilm in stock which contain mostly government records and some private and special collections, i.e. the Reyes and J. DeBrum collections. These collections have been mostly used by lawyers, academics, students, government agencies, tourists and many others.

[Note: In addition to the country report above, the Division of Archives and Historic Preservation, Federated States of Micronesia, submitted a copy of the FSM Library Services Plan, 1999–2003, to the PARBICA 8 conference. The Library Services Plan is a strategic plan developed in 1998 to meet the requirements of the US Library Services and Technology Act and addresses basic needs for libraries as well as linkages between libraries, museums and archives. Much of the library, museums and archives development in the FSM is still in its infancy. Issues such as providing adequate facilities and trained staff, improving services and holdings, and ensuring that all islands and communities have access to basic library services are of major importance. Focus of the plan is on electronic linkages, which is of mutual interest and benefit to all libraries, museum curators and archivists throughout the Pacific Islands. For further information or a copy of the plan contact: Mr Jones S. George, Archives Specialist, Archives & Historic Preservation, Dept. of Health, Education & Social Affairs, PO Box PS70, PALIKIR, POHNPEI PM 96941.]

Republic of Nauru: PARBICA 8 country report

Correspondent: Ms Julie Olsson, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Republic of Nauru

At the end of July 1999 the Republic of Nauru completed a 5-week National Archives Survey. The project, sponsored by UNESCO, enabled us to engage Dr Peter Orlovich, a member of PARBICA, to conduct the survey assisted by four Nauruan project assistants. We also engaged two conservators through the Australian Expert Services Overseas Program to provide training on basic conservation techniques through a series of three 2½ day workshops.

The survey is a renewed attempt to provide the people of Nauru with the means of identifying our national archives and ensuring the preservation of our cultural heritage in the future, so that, through the transmission of our archival heritage, the younger generations of Nauruans will not be deprived of their cultural heritage.

Earlier initiatives have been made to establish a repository for the reception and keeping of the national archives and, later, to include a national library and museum. In November 1924, an Order of the Administrator, in the report to the League of Nations on the administration of the Territory, referred to the establishment of a native house as the permanent repository for historical records, Nauruan antiquities and other arts and crafts of old and present day Nauru. A National Library was subsequently established and maintained until World War II when it was apparently destroyed during the Japanese occupation. Re-established after the war, it was again destroyed in a fire which consumed the

government buildings in December 1988. In 1932, the Domaneab, meeting house for the Chiefs, was constructed. The main room in the building was reserved for the Chiefs and the other two rooms were used for a National Library and a National Museum, respectively. In September 1968, the first Parliament of the Republic of Nauru, in a unanimous resolution, recommended that Parliament elect a committee which would compile a history of Nauru and its people, and establish an archive in the public library of documents collected by it in the course of its work. In the newly constructed Civic Centre building in 1975, space was made available for a library which for some reason never did come to fruition.

In December 1998 the Cabinet approved the archive survey thus ensuring the cooperation of government departments and other entities. The survey team was able to visit most of the government departments, the Nauru Phosphate Corporation and other entities which are descendants of the Council of Chiefs-cum-Nauru Local Government Council.

Prior to the survey we conducted two consultation sessions: the first, with government personnel who were directly responsible for the care, control and management of records; and the second, with the general public. Support from the both public and agencies visited by the survey team for the first phase of the archive survey have been very encouraging.

It is also the desire of Culture and Tourism to take the lead towards the establishment of a national library to run parallel to the development of the national archive. To this end a submission has been made to Cabinet to endorse the project.

The Republic of Nauru became independent on 31 January 1968. Public records and archives, and other historical records have been accumulating since contact with the western world in the early 19th century. Nonetheless, at the present time, there is no agency responsible for the management of our archival heritage, a central repository in which to securely accommodate and consult the unique historical documents which reflect our emergence as a modern Pacific nation; and, furthermore, there are no trained archivists and suitable policies that will lend guarantee to sustained maintenance of a national archive.

Republic of Palau: PARBICA 8 Country Report

Correspondent: Ms Naomi Ngirakamerang, Divisional Chief

The Division of Palau National Archives is more than twenty years behind with its microfilming programs. There are 700 cubic feet of unprocessed documents stored at the Supply Warehouse holding area. Although we hold 2,200 rolls of microfilm

of Palau's historical documents that were microfilmed when Palau was still a Trust Territory under the United States' administration, these processed documents reflect only a small portion of what the Archives is entrusted to protect and preserve. The microfilms contain historical records from the German, Japanese and early American administrations but they do not cover the most important period in Palau's history – transition to independence. The Republic of Palau needs to have convenient access to the more than 20-year backlog of unprocessed documents.

In May–December 1995 the Archives office wasn't able to accommodate its researchers by providing copies of their desired information because the microfilm reader/printer was not functioning properly. In August 1995 the Archives applied to, and in March 1996 obtained, funds through the Palau/Australia Small Grants Scheme for its new microfilm reader/printer. The Archives has ordered and received this equipment and it is now available for the researchers' use. Also, in May 1998, the computer database system that contained the Archives microfilm information index stopped functioning. This type of computer is now obsolete and cannot be repaired. Again in June 1998, the Archives applied to, and in August 1998, obtained funding from the Palau/Australia Small Grants Scheme for a new computer system. The Archives is now able to accommodate public researchers (by reviewing the computer database system to obtain the microfilm roll and frame number for their desired information) with the small portion of Palau's historical information in the Archives' processed holdings.

The Nation has been administering its own archival records and documents (through the Division of Palau National Archives) since Palau became a Republic in 1988 and gained its independent status in 1994. Limited Archives staff and training, and lack of funding, have been the major source of problems when attempting adequate archives management.

Historical Background and Administrative Basis

The Division of Palau National Archives is under the Bureau of Community Services within the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs (Executive Order No.116 – the Executive Branch Organizational Structure). The Division of Palau National Archives was established in 1988 when the United States Trust Territory Administration office located in Saipan closed down along with the Trust Territory Archival Project. Two years later, in October 1990, the Palau National Archives legislation was passed and became Republic of Palau Public Law (RPPL 3–38). The Archives was closed from 1990–92 and in 1994 due to lack of individuals interested in being employed as Archives personnel. The Palau Archives Office has been operating since December 1994 up until the present. The Palau Archives

is in constant contact with the Belau National Museum Research Library and the Olbiil Era Kelulau (OEK) Palau Legislature National Library.

Accommodation

The Division of Palau National Archives office building was purpose-built. Even though it is a rather small office it has microfilm cabinet drawers that can hold 4,300 rolls of 16mm and 35mm cartridges of microfilm. We also have a secure room for the process of microfilming and developing films. The Archives office in 1996 finally acquired two sets of shelving with seven shelves each and also a wall shelf that contains 27 slots of two feet each. All the documents and files are now arranged in their alphabetical section on these shelves, so we don't have any more records in cardboard boxes on the floor. There is only one microfilm reader/printer located near the front door by the computer. This is where researchers review their desired information and obtain their copies. The Division of Palau National Archives has been applying for funding assistance to recover and preserve 700 cubic feet of records that have been neglected for the past twenty years. The Archives future plan is to establish a record centre and process these decaying documents.

Staffing

At present, the Division of Palau National Archives has only two dedicated staff: Chief/Archivist, Naomi Ngirakamerang, and Clerk II, Daniel Adachi.

Current Records Management

The Division of Palau National Archives has recently submitted its draft Archives Regulations policies to the Attorney-General's office. It will be reviewed by Assistant Attorney, Janine Udui, who also represents the AG's office as a member of the Archives Council. The Archives regulations include the retention and disposal schedule of records and also its records management programs.

Nature and Extent of Records

There are 2,200 16mm and 110 35mm cartridges/rolls of microfilm records at the Archives office. All records maintained at the Archives office are government records.

Use of Archives

Lawyers researching land matters for their clients nowadays frequent the Division of Palau National Archives. At present land records are usually what bring researchers to the Archives office. Government staff usually donate office supplies for copies obtained for their office programs. Researchers who cannot locate

their desired information are usually referred to the OEK library, the Belau National Museum Research Library and the Division of Land and Survey. All records maintained at the Archives are open to researchers. There are no restrictions on any records and they are considered public information. Public and private researchers have full access to obtain any desired copies of records with a minimum fee.

Conservation

The Division of Palau National Archives has available microfilming equipment that is in perfect working condition. In July–December 1997 we microfilmed and developed five 16mm rolls of film for the Palau Public Land Authority office. These films contained all their land information records. Our next scheduled microfilming project is the Ministry of Education records and at present they are still trying to get all their records in order and boxed up before being transferred to the Archives Office.

Promotional Activities

The Division of Palau National Archives is required to submit its monthly report to the Director of the Bureau of Community Services.

Project Proposal

The Division of Palau National Archives in October 1998 submitted a project proposal for funding assistance to the Administration for Native Americans, Department of Health and Human Services, in Washington DC. The project proposal summary is to process 700 cubic feet of the government's 20-year backlog of unprocessed documents located at a Supply Warehouse holding area. The project requires an archival consultant to coordinate and help identify the major steps in accomplishing this archival project and also improve the in-house capability of staff for archival work by conducting training in archival procedures. The project also proposes to hire a computer information management specialist to design an appropriate information management database, install and network the computer, and train the Archives staff in their use.

Republic of Vanuatu: PARBICA 8 country report

Correspondent: Mr Sakias Tom, Records Officer

The Vanuatu National Archives occupies a key position in Vanuatu's documentation and information network as the centralising agency for both official and unofficial, published and unpublished documents relating to the country.

It provides records management services to central government, local authorities and others to ensure the controlled creation, utilisation and disposal of records while arranging for the permanent preservation of those identified to be of historical value. The National Archives facilitates research through public archives and undertakes records management programs for government departments and statutory bodies. Over the years the National Archives pursued and actively advised government staff throughout the country on the good care and of handling their archives.

Historical Background and Administrative Basis

The National Archives was established in 1982 under the National Cultural Council under the provisions of Act 30 of 1985 [CAP 186]. In August 1992 new Archives Legislation was passed by the National Parliament of Vanuatu following the Council of Minister's decision No.17 of meeting No. 8/7/3/91.

After the departure of the two colonial powers (France and England), when the New Hebrides became independent, most of the nation's archives were shipped to the Western Pacific High Commission Archives and to England, others to New Caledonia and France. The rest are preserved in the Vanuatu National Archives. One of the priorities now of the government is to have those important documents back in Vanuatu.

The Vanuatu National Archives is associated with the Department of Culture and Religion and the National Museum.

Accommodation

The Vanuatu National Archives has a building in which all public records are kept. Therein we have seven storage rooms including a search area and a sorting room. All documents are boxed and stored on wooden shelves and the whole building is airconditioned. The building looks old now and there was a submission made by the department to the National Planning Office for a new archive complex to be built. National Archives hope that with its future permanent building it will create more units such as microfilming, binding etc. The plan is also to create mini-archives offices in our six provinces throughout the country to enable them to preserve for a long-term period their valuable archives and to employ more staff to take care of them.

Staffing

There have been five staff in the Vanuatu National Archives since 1994. But after Vanuatu's reform policy to reduce the public service, the bureau was left with only one record officer. A few years ago the present staff undertook records

management training in the Territorial Archives in Noumea and other local courses like 'projet de plan'. But to enable the archives to develop, staff will need training in the areas of record management, administration, conservation, binding, microfilming and other new technologies for preservation.

Records Management

The Records Management Unit has been kept busy over the years implementing its records management programs. Public awareness workshops on how to preserve archives have been held and visitations to government offices were encouraged. These programs resulted in effective and efficient maintenance of records in offices and good working relations. The records centre provides both intermediate storage and loan facilities to government departments and statutory bodies. National Archives have recorded over 30 retrievals of inactive records since 1994.

With the recommendations of the Archivist and the Heads of Departments concerned, as required under the Act, 100 to 200 linear metres of Public Records have been identified as not valuable to the national interest and were destroyed, resulting in savings in terms of space.

Use of Archives

Local users, including foreigners, are allowed, as stated in the Act, to access the National Archives Office for research purposes. Research is facilitated through records and references. We have recorded 60 researchers since last year and this was the largest number compared with those of previous years. The Archives may withhold access to any specified class of public archives in its custody, subject to the rights of the person denied the access.

Promotional Activities

The National Archives Office usually produces a report at the end of the year. This is to monitor its programs' activities and to see how far they have been implemented. The report is also submitted to the Ministry concerned for its comment. The National Archives plans to produce leaflets for information about archives for government departments and for the public in general.

Project Proposal

A plan for a new National Archives building was forwarded to the appropriate bodies for endorsement in 1999 through the National Planning Office. It has been prepared by the Vanuatu Cultural Centre based on its original plan for the National Cultural Complex.

Tonga Traditions Committee, Kingdom of Tonga: PARBICA 8 country report

Correspondent: Hon. Tuivanuavou Vaea

Historical Background and Administrative Basis

The Tonga Traditions Committee whose Chairman is His Majesty King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV was established in 1954 by Her Majesty Queen Salote Tupou III (1918-1965). His Majesty The King's Department consists of two elements, the Royal Palace Office under the direction of His Majesty The King's Private Secretary who is also the Clerk to Privy Council and the Tonga Traditions Committee governed by a board of trustees chaired by His Majesty King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV. The relevant legislation is the Preservations of Archaeological Objects of Interests (Chapter 90, Laws of Tonga).

Accommodation

The original building still in use was not designed for archival preservation – it was an extension of the Palace Office and the Traditions Committee Office was housed within. Limited funds restricted the resources of the archive, especially the luxury of airconditioning and steel shelves. Thus the office for the Tonga Traditions Committee which houses the archives and records has been located in a wooden building since 1954.

The 1981 cyclone damaged part of the archive and library and, although work was carried out, the proper facilities for the archive were not determined as a priority. However the attitude towards archives and records changed greatly in 1997 when fire consumed some of the records under the custody of the Ministry of Justice and therefore a change in attitude, to look after the current records and safeguard them in view of possible repetition, was determined favourably.

The French Government in 1997 assisted the Tonga Traditions Committee with funding amounting to TOP62,000 (approximately US\$50,000) which enabled the construction of an airconditioned brick building, 5 metres wide and 20 metres long. The archive and library were opened jointly by Her Royal Highness Princess Pilolevu, in her capacity as Princess Regent, and Mr Jolivet, the French Ambassador, on 17 June 1999. The opening ceremony was timed so Mr Jolivet, passing through Tonga with the French Rugby Union team, could watch the game and open the archive building. There were other projects such as the water system in Ha'akame and the school building in Niuafou'ou which Mr Jolivet had assisted and which were formally opened during his presence.

Staffing

Staff training through both long-term and short-term courses is required. The continual flow of periodicals into the office allows us to know the events and occurrences overseas.

Current Records Management

Records management has been a weakness within the civil service. Current upgrading of ministerial libraries and archives has indicated that records management is very much part of good administration.

Future plans for the records and the availability of the new building will not only allow the staff better opportunities to review the current records in stock but also to observe other records that were difficult to retrieve, due to space and lack of reading tables. The number of readers of records and other documents will no doubt increase in the near future which means that photocopying of materials must be made available for accessibility. The fragile nature of the documents means that they must be safeguarded at all times.

Nature and Extent of Records

Records include correspondence, photos, oral records, kava ceremony records, maps, and private papers. Artifacts include war clubs, stone adzes, plumes, and old photos.

The Royal Palace Residence holds a great deal of records which will be returned to the Archive. Many of the records already held in the Archive consist of the current monarchy's correspondence which may be made available for researchers to review if the government authorises access to such documents.

The Royal Palace is an historic building which is high on the list of visiting foreigners. The historic and cultural value of the Palace must be preserved to avoid the experience which the Royal Chapel suffered in the early 1980s when the hurricane blew the Chapel down and it was finally pulled down. The historic nature and value of the Chapel was not appreciated, for the cost of reconstruction overwhelmed its historic value.

Recording the kava ceremony, in which the King, Nobles and Matapules [talking chiefs] participate, is a traditional role that we attend to. The ceremony is highly valued and remains Tongan, alluding to status based on clan and kinship links.

Use of Archives

Local use of the Archive has been recorded over the past 3 years and the demand is high, especially from March to June. Users are secondary students, theological students, genealogists, Matapules, estate holders and interest groups.

Foreign scholars such as Meredith Filihia (La Trobe University, Australia), Elizabeth Wood Ellem (Australian National University) and David Burley (Simon Fraser University, Canada) have used the office to carry out research in 1999. Filihia's interest is the Chiefly Kava Ceremony, Ellem's interest is Queen Salote, and Burley's is the Tongan settlements along the coastal area.

Better access is required, especially an improvement in the state of the documents. In the future, therefore, there will be a need to review the handling of the documents and the availability of lists to facilitate access to them. It will be necessary to develop these improvements in stages and assistance will be required.

Conservation

It was acknowledged that the Tonga Traditions Committee archive could be put through the same procedure as the Ministry of Justice, under the condition that the negatives would remain with the owner. The costs could amount to US\$45,000. Thus microfilming was undetermined. The Latter Day Saints have approached the archive to carry out the same role as PAMBU and the response was the same. Both cases wanted to share the information, but this was not possible.

The arduous task of typing the documents and information is a long process and will take a very long time to complete. Digital scanner recording could be a viable option.

Promotional Activities

Her Majesty Queen Halaevalu Mata'aho opened the Matapule seminar with very strong support from the Ministry of Labour Commerce and Industries, and Prime Minister's Office. Eighty Matapules attended on the first day and over one hundred in the second day. The Prime Minister of Tonga attended for the whole day, Deputy Secretary to Cabinet, Princess Pilolevu, Princess Nanasipauu, Hon. Fanetupouvavva'u, Hon. Governor of Vava'u, Hon. Fusitua, Hon. Vahai'I, Hon. Malupo, Hon. Tu'ivakano and Hon. Lasike all attended the two-day seminar at some time or another. The success of the first seminar ever held in Tonga proved fruitful. The northern group will experience the same exercise in the future.

Yap State, Federated States of Micronesia: PARBICA 8 country report

Correspondent: Mr Gabriel Ramoloilug, Archives Division, Department of Administrative Services, Yap State Government

Historical Background and Administrative Basis

Prior to statehood the islands of Yap were a district of the US Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. At the conclusion of the Trust Territory era the administration in Saipan microfilmed its records and each of the new entities within Micronesia, i.e. Northern Marianas, Guam, Palau, FSM, and the Marshalls received a copy of this microfilm, a computerized index, and microfilming equipment.

The Yap State records program commenced in 1989 along the lines of other facilities in the region. The Office of Microfilm, as it was then known, struggled along with minimal experience, only a vague idea of objectives, scant understanding of the records being filmed and little authority to access resources.

In hindsight, the outgoing Trust Territory administrators did Yap, and possibly Micronesia generally, an unintentional disservice. The technology adopted as a tool to satisfy the particular Trust Territory requirement (to share one set of records among several users) was seen to be 'the way to handle records'. The microfilming equipment and the filming process itself became the focus for the ongoing preservation of information. As a result:

- the concept of preserving records in original form was denigrated;
- the desirability of assessing records was overlooked;
- the need to develop finding aids was not promoted.

Accordingly, time and resources went into creating microfilms from records of mixed but generally low-grade informational worth, and with little or no description appended.

To correct this situation legislation cited as the Yap State Archives and Records Management Act was passed in 1998. The legislation came about through the efforts of Gabriel Ramoloilug (Manager Computer & Archives, Office of Administrative Services – Finance) encouraged and assisted by John Wright. John contributed from afar and made two journeys to Yap to provide advice, give direction to the program, conduct records surveys and implement disposal action. Possibly his most significant achievement was in promoting 'the archival cause' to State leaders. The drafting of the legislation received support from a number of people within Yap State.

The Act establishes the Office of Archives and Records Management (OARM) headed by the State Archivist. OARM is created within the Department of Administrative Services and has responsibility for advising government agencies on all matters relating to public records. A State Archivist is yet to be appointed. OARM receives administrative support from the Director, Office of Administrative Services, and the actions of the State Archivist will have the authority of a three-person Archives Advisory Council appointed by the State Governor.

Accommodation

The Office of Archives and Records Management has two rooms within the Government Supply Building. The building is an old US Navy stores facility constructed of concrete. The rooms serve administrative, microfilming and repository uses. Being airconditioned and surrounded by a mass of concrete the space is secure and maintains reasonably constant temperatures – as a repository this is fine, but people access via the Stores area is inconvenient and the lack of natural light and contact with the outside world makes working there oppressive. A shopfront office and reading room would be a nice addition to the facility. A secured space within the Stores area has recently been reshelved and is dedicated to intermediate records storage.

Staffing

At the present time Assistant Manager, Phillip Raffilpiy, working under the direction of Gabriel Ramoloiug, staffs OARM. A budget has been submitted, hopefully to be approved in full by the State Legislature in September this year. The aim is to engage a qualified expatriate archivist to continue developing the archives program. It is hoped that within two years a local counterpart can gain experience and be accepted off-island to higher education in archives and records.

Current Records Management

Commencing March 1999 the Office had professional assistance from Garth Crockford an Australian archivist. Garth was supported by Australian Expert Services Overseas Program for three months to provide planning and procedures, and commence a program to move inactive records from public offices to intermediate storage and the Archives. At this time:

- an overall plan has been drawn up;
- procedure manuals written and forms drafted;
- a records disposal schedule established for OAS, Finance records;
- records from OAS, Finance listed and moved to storage;

- records coordinators appointed within agencies and given instruction to prepare a draft disposal schedule appropriate to their agency's records for review with OARM; and
- disaster preparedness manual written.

Nature and Extent of Holdings

Archives holdings comprise:

- **Office of the Governor**
Master files/subject files/ephemera (47 boxes), 1976–97
Constitutional Convention – plenary verbatim journal, plenary summary journal, proposals, committee reports, financial status report, audio and video tapes, photographs (16 boxes), 1982
- **Office of the Attorney-General**
Master files/civil cases series/subject file series (8 boxes), 1983–95
- **Judiciary: Yap State Court**
Civil and criminal case files (26 boxes), 1957–83
Case hearings – audiocassettes, some transcribed (c.300 items), 1982–90
- **Office of Planning and Budget**
General files/correspondence/US grants and programs (9 boxes), 1980–91
- **Land Resources**
Aerial photographs 10" x 10" black & white of: Yap proper, Ulithi, Ngulu, Sorol, Fais, Faraulep, Gaferut, Woleai, Eauripik, Olimarao, Ifalik, Elato, Lamotrek, Satawal, Pikelot, West Fayu (2 sets), Oct 1995
- **Office of Administrative Services: Finance: Payroll**
Employee Payroll Register – computer report (15 linear feet), 1993–96
- **Office of Administrative Services: Finance: Computer Room**
Finance records [access to tapes not possible – hardware & software not available – condition of information is unknown] (119 reel tapes, 74 cassette tapes), 1990–97

Intermediate storage holdings comprise 51 linear feet of listed records and 269 linear feet of unlisted records.

Use of Archives

Reference levels are very low. There has been little attention given to promoting the use of archives as a resource. Some enquiries requiring reference to Trust Territory records have been redirected to the FSM National Archives in Pohnpei where the Trust Territory microfilm records are held.

Conservation

The archives rooms are airconditioned by in-wall units. In the past airconditioning has only been used during office hours but is now running 24 hours, 7 days a week. Relative humidity fluctuates between roughly 60% and 80% and a dehumidifier is on the wish list. Active conservation is not on the agenda.

Promotional Activities

An archives report is included in the overall Office of Administrative Services annual report submitted to the Office of the Governor which is in turn submitted to State Legislature.

In Yap State today, in general terms, there is an overall lack of awareness of the role of a State Archives as a legitimate 'tool of the people'. Public accountability generally extends only so far as satisfying the requirements of external funding agencies. The concept of the public service being accountable to the general populace is rarely considered.

Yap continues in the oral tradition in that much general knowledge is transmitted verbally. The practicality of creating and using records as a component in everyday business is accepted, and future administrative and informational needs are sometimes considered, but the notion of records for research purposes has barely been contemplated.

There is however a widely and strongly held understanding that cultural knowledge is being lost and traditional values are fading. A number of agencies are involved in programs supporting traditional matters but they appear to be working in isolation and outcomes could be described as short-sighted.

Hopefully an established archives program can demonstrate a bigger picture in Yap State and bring together the output of the State agencies into a usable and accessible resource.

Looking to the future, a site has been identified in central Colonia for which concept plans for an integrated archives, library, museum (to be developed), and tourism facility have been drafted. The next step is to detail each facility and identify funding sources – no small task, but there is a will to succeed.