

International Notes

Edited by Ewan Maidment

Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (PARBICA)

Correspondent: Evelyn Wareham, Secretary General

Alii! Tena koutou katoa! Warm Pacific Greetings!

In 2001, the Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (PARBICA) celebrates twenty years of representing the archival institutions and archivists of the Pacific Islands, New Zealand and Australia to the world. At PARBICA's 9th General Conference, in Palau from 30 July to 4 August, many reminisced about developments in the region over two decades. Old friends were missed, achievements celebrated, frustrations shared and new colleagues welcomed warmly.

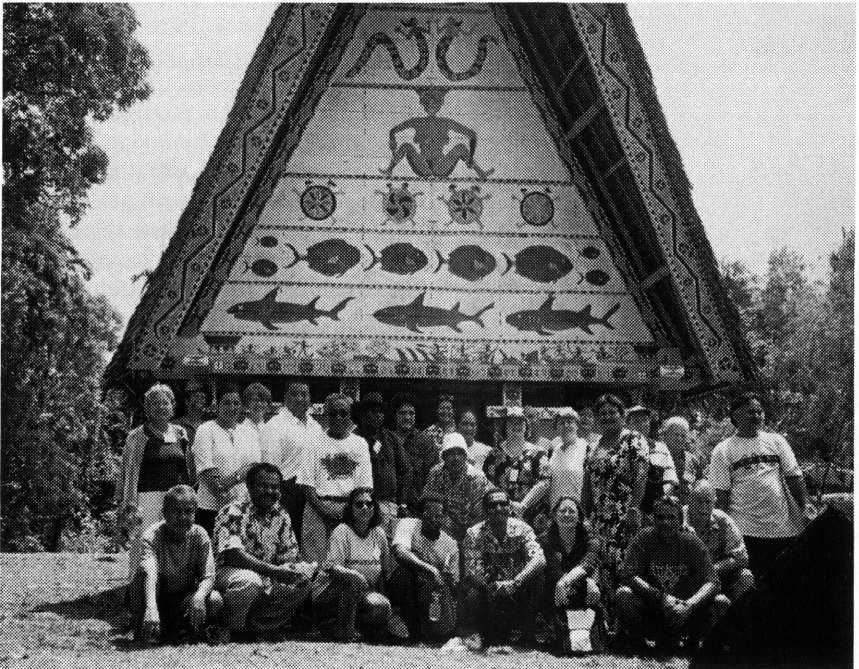
PARBICA received two new national archives administrations as voting members in Palau, bringing the number of nations, states and territories represented in PARBICA to 26, with 40 institutional members. The foundation of a new state or national institution is an exciting step for the region, which Guam has at last taken with the establishment of the Guam Archives in the new Department of Chamorro Affairs. The East Timor Archives was the first institution to take advantage of PARBICA's removal of geographic restrictions on membership, enabling countries to join the ICA Branch which they feel suits their needs. East Timor is a fitting colleague for our members, most of whom are from small island states in the tropical Pacific. Although East Timor's recent trauma had dramatically disastrous consequences for the nation's records, many Pacific island archives institutions face related threats on an ongoing basis. In the microstates of the Pacific, archives must find a path around key characteristics of the region, whether financial, cultural or environmental.

Statistical survey and country reports

In preparation for its biennial general conferences, PARBICA gathers written country, state and institutional reports and statistical information on archives in the Pacific islands. The collated results provide quantitative and qualitative

assessments of needs in the region which inform PARBICA's strategic planning and supply necessary data to ICA and potential sponsors. (Several reports are included in the International Notes following.)

The 2001 biennial statistical survey of PARBICA's Pacific island members demonstrated that 50% of institutions had less than five staff, and 43% employed only one archivist. The survey had a response rate of 65% of PARBICA's country, state and territory members (government archives administrations). Most had very limited funds: 83% of archives office budgets fell under US\$150,000. Almost all lacked technical equipment for preservation and reprographics. Many were under-equipped to serve public and government users, with 43% reporting no facilities for researchers to use their holdings. The tropical environment also contributes to rapid deterioration of paper and other media. As the President of Palau, Tommy E Remengesau Jr stated at the opening of PARBICA 9: 'In our tropical climate, paper is so fragile, sometimes more fragile than human memory'. Over one third of survey respondents were in the process of planning new repositories, due to the deficiencies of current arrangements.



Delegates to PARBICA gather in front of a *bai* (traditional meeting house) in Melekeok State, Palau.

In Palau, as in many other countries in the region, records which are vital to citizens' rights, entitlements and memories, including documents of land ownership, have been lost through neglect, destroyed slowly by the climate or relocated outside people's reach during colonisation and decolonisation. Pacific states have moved from the oral memory which supports traditional structures to documentary recordkeeping in current government systems. But this transition has often occurred without the development of best practice structures and policies for these records' creation, maintenance and preservation.

Because the majority of our member states face these problems, archival development continues to be PARBICA's leading focus. The last two years have been a very busy period for PARBICA's Bureau and Secretariat. As well as maintaining publications, organising PARBICA 9 and participating in the ICA Executive Committee and the International Congress on Archives, we have endeavoured to undertake a number of projects to address problems faced by many archives in the region. At times, running projects on top of ongoing activities has been a strain on the PARBICA Bureau's limited resources. PARBICA has performed best where others have volunteered their support, and we owe special thanks to Australia's Nancy Lutton and Ted Ling in this regard.

Legislation compendium

Nancy Lutton coordinated the publication of the PARBICA *Compendium of Pacific Archives Legislation* (Canberra, 2001) which we launched at PARBICA 9. This compendium supports our members' 1999 resolution to 'assist and inform future development of legislation for archives in the region through the publication of a compendium of Pacific archives legislation'. The purpose of this publication is to form a reference source for those who, at the moment, do not have a legal infrastructure for public records, for those planning to review their legislation and, of course, for those interested in the legal and administrative problems involved in the care of archives. While the International Council on Archives has published a series of volumes of *Archivum* dedicated to international archival legislation, only a few statutes from Pacific countries were included. A number of those Pacific laws have since been reviewed and amended. The PARBICA compendium is specific to the Pacific region and includes the most current legislation and a number of non-national laws. In future, a similar hard-copy publication of Australian state legislation may be considered, as this had to be excluded from the volume due to length.

Low-cost storage options

Ted Ling has taken the lead in exploring possibilities for low-cost storage of archives and records in tropical regions, in support of PARBICA members' resolution to 'affirm the importance in this region of low-cost archival storage to assist the preservation of archives in the region and the need to identify alternative storage options for implementation in the Pacific and in other tropical areas'. Together

with Stephen Yorke and Pat Jackson, Ted developed the concept of using a shipping container without airconditioning for storage of archives. A trial of a modified shipping container began in Darwin in March 2001, with support and assistance from the National Archives of Australia and the Northern Territory Archives Service. The container is a standard 20 feet in size and is not airconditioned. Shelving and boxes of records (for the purpose of the trial, records due for destruction) have been installed and it will stay in place for a full wet season and a full dry season. Dataloggers inside the container measure temperature and relative humidity at 30-minute intervals and the results will be analysed against control data taken at nearby Darwin airport. An interim report on progress with the trial was provided at PARBICA 9 and a final report on the trial will be prepared in April 2002.

Future plans

PARBICA members have many areas on which we would like to focus our limited resources over the next two years. The core areas which members agreed were important at PARBICA 9 are outlined in the conference's resolutions below. I believe that for 2001 to 2003, improving communication and education will be our lead commitments. Communications are improving for the isolated archivists of the Pacific islands, with the gradual but steady spread of Internet technology. PARBICA is now actively working through email, which enables much higher involvement from the Bureau and members in our decision-making, as well as through teleconference. We are trying to promote Internet access to all of our members in order to enable full use of this technology. Education is a continuing need for PARBICA's members. Since 1999, the PARBICA Bureau has been investigating the possibility of a distance education program targeted at the needs of archivists and records managers in the region. We will continue to collaborate with related organisations to work towards this goal, as well as to facilitate training through other means, including consultancies and short workshops.

The contribution of Australian member organisations and archivists to PARBICA is substantial and greatly appreciated. Institutional support from the National Archives of Australia enables PARBICA's Bureau to meet by teleconference and supports other aspects of our work. PARBICA members are also very grateful for the continued generous support of the Australian Society of Archivists which has provided both professional publications and assistance towards workshop costs. This support, and the commitment of dedicated Australian archivists, are key to the success of PARBICA's activities.

Resolutions of PARBICA's 9th General Conference

On the occasion of PARBICA's 20th anniversary, from 30 July to 4 August 2001, archivists and records managers from throughout the Pacific meeting at Koror and Melekeok in the Republic of Palau send greetings to colleagues across the world through the auspices of the ICA and resolve to:

Archival development

1. express their satisfaction with the successful workshops conducted with this General Conference on archival digitisation, computerisation of control systems, marketing and communication strategies, records disposal and government accountability, and preservation and conservation techniques
2. affirm the importance of communications in the region between General Conferences, and commit to increased use of email and the Internet as information sharing and educational tools
3. acknowledge the fundamental importance of easily accessible training provided in the workplace and through educational institutions and agree to encourage new opportunities for training and education
4. prepare a comprehensive proposal for a new program at the University of the South Pacific to provide distance education in archives and records management to multiple Pacific island countries
5. recognise the urgent need to raise awareness of the challenges presented by electronic records, and affirm the importance of ensuring good records are kept in new information technology systems
6. encourage Pacific archives to promote their documentary heritage to their communities and to the world through marketing and communications and by participating in the UNESCO Memory of the World program and other similar initiatives
7. promote accountable public sector records management which will support implementation of archives legislation and good governance
8. continue to develop and implement options for records storage appropriate to the conditions of the Pacific region
9. work with others to develop a long-term strategy to improve the preservation of the region's archival heritage
10. seek information regarding the Western Pacific High Commission archives, and to recommend their return to the Pacific region

Special motions

11. express appreciation for the generous support from: New Zealand Overseas Development Assistance, Commonwealth Foundation, ICCROM, International Council on Archives, UNESCO, Australian Society of Archivists Inc., Paradise Canyon Systems, AusAid Small Grants Scheme, Lundia Shelving, Metal Edge Inc., and Muller Media Conversions
12. express special thanks to the following for the honour of their participation

and their support: High Chief of Koror Ibedul Yutaka M Gibbons, High Chief of Melekeok Reklai Raphael B Ngirmang, Chief Rengulbai of Aimeliik, President the Hon. Tommy E Remengesau Jr, Vice President Mrs Sandra Sumang Pierantozzi, Minister of Community and Cultural Affairs Mr Alexander Merep, Governor of Koror State Mr John Gibbons, Governor of Melekeok Mr Lazarus Kodep, Senator Surangel Whipps, Palau Visitors Authority, VIP Guest Hotel, Law Office of Oldiais Ngiraikelau, Law Office of Kirk and Shadel, Victor Hobson, Palau Association of Librarians, Moylan's Insurance, Bank of Hawaii, Carp Island Resort, Belau National Museum, and Palau National Communications Corporation

13. express their appreciation to Dr Susanne Ornager of UNESCO for her generous participation in the Conference
14. record their appreciation to the archivists and organisations that have contributed to the implementation of PARBICA's projects on low-cost records storage, publication of archives legislation, and development of distance education programs between 1999 and 2001
15. express their deep gratitude and appreciation to Naomi Ngirakamerang, Division of Palau National Archives, Bonifacio Basilius, Chair of the Archives Council, and the PARBICA 9 organising team for their magnificent efforts in bringing about this well-organised, interesting and educational conference and for the splendid hospitality they arranged.

9th PARBICA Conference, Palau, 30 July to 4 August 2001

Correspondent: Nancy Lutton, ASA representative

Forty-six delegates from eighteen countries, states or territories gathered at Koror, Palau, for the 9th Conference and the 20th anniversary of PARBICA. The theme of the conference was 'Pacific Archives: Capturing, Preserving, Connecting' and it was well chosen. Most branches of archival training fit well into it. In 'Capturing' we had Michael Hoyle from New Zealand and a panel, speaking on disposal and appraisal. For 'Preserving' there was the paper written by Ted Ling (unfortunately ill and unable to come), but delivered by Pat Jackson, both of the National Archives of Australia, on the NAA's experiment in low-cost storage for the tropics. 'Preserving' was also covered in detail by Vicki-Anne Heikell of New Zealand in a conservation workshop. 'Connecting' concentrated on electronic means of information retrieval with papers by Kathryn Dan and Anne-Marie Schwirtlich, both of NAA, and Ewan Maidment of the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau. A number of electronic archival packages used in the Pacific were also described and demonstrated by a panel. 'Connecting' also referred to a workshop given by James McKinnon of the Public Record Office of Victoria on marketing and communication in the archival context.

All of these speakers were excellent. I found these training sessions the most intensive I have ever attended at PARBICA, and this was my fifth conference. All of the Australians and New Zealanders attending had a role to play, and all had obviously spent much time in preparing their sessions. They deserve to be fully supported by their home countries. The Pacific archivists present were very attentive and asked many questions, and some also contributed on panel sessions. In general they are a much more confident and better educated group than those attending the earlier conferences, so clearly their knowledge of archival methodology is cumulative, even though there are now very few of the same faces as there were in the beginning. Positive training in archives management remains an essential element in PARBICA conferences.

Unfortunately, neither the President of the International Council on Archives nor any representative of ICA was able to attend, apparently owing to the difficulty of arranging flights from Europe to such a remote location as Palau. Where necessary, the PARBICA President, Setareki Tale of the National Archives of Fiji, filled in. PARBICA was pleased to welcome, however, Dr Susanne Ornager, the UNESCO Regional Advisor, stationed in Bangkok, Thailand. She spoke about the UNESCO Memory of the World Program and its aim to safeguard endangered documentary heritage. Delegates were asked to nominate projects and quite a number did so, though no decisions were made. It was clear from the suggestions that there is a great deal of heritage material in the Pacific in very fragile condition and at risk.

The PARBICA Bureau for the last two years has been an excellent one. Setareki Tale filled the role of President with aplomb and represented the region on the ICA Executive Committee. Tom Sakias of Vanuatu, made a worthy Vice-President. Evelyn Wareham of New Zealand has been a most efficient and responsive Secretary General, and her knowledge of Pacific affairs seems to be unlimited. Kathryn Dan makes a very competent Treasurer, while John Wright of Hawaii has kept the newsletter coming four times a year without fail. The President, Secretary General and Treasurer were all re-elected. The host of the Conference, Naomi Ngirakamerang of the Division of Palau Archives, was elected Vice-President, and John Wright was again appointed editor by the Bureau. A new honorary member was also elected. George Nichols was recognised for his outstanding contribution to archival development in the Pacific Region.

Apart from the routine business of the meeting, the main topic for consideration was the need to amend the constitution of PARBICA to bring it into line with changes to the ICA constitution passed at Seville in September 2000. The proposed amendments were agreed to. An amendment to note is that members of ICA may now join whichever branch they wish. PARBICA was therefore able to welcome a delegate from East Timor as a member.

A feature of PARBICA conferences has always been the institutional, state and country reports. Originally, they were always orally given, and took up a great deal

of time. It was always difficult to obtain written reports from each country about their activities and progress since the last meeting. Now most of them are with the Secretary General before the conference in time for a booklet to be produced and handed out. This volume, plus a supplement, makes most interesting reading and of course it becomes an historical record of progress in archives in the Pacific Islands.

PARBICA conferences have always been strong on ceremony, and the opening session was no exception with a Conch Shell calling the participants to assemble, and a Palauan Chant of Greeting. Speeches from the President of Palau, the Chair of the Palau Archives Council, and the High Chief of Koror followed. On another day, the whole group went to Melekeok, a state on Palau's largest island, where the new capital is in the process of being built. This visit was also accompanied by ceremony and speeches. Palau consists of hundreds of small but high wooded islands (very different from the low-lying atolls of Kiribati, for instance). The jungle is being removed at the highest point in Melekeok to build a huge Parliament House and new capital with superb views, as Koror, on a smaller island, is clearly running out of space.

The General Meeting was held on yet another island, Carp Island, which is an idyllic holiday resort, with waving palm trees and a glorious beach, safe for swimming. These island visits were by small launch, about 10 people to a launch, where we passed islands of unsurpassed beauty, especially what is known as the Rock Islands on the way to Carp Island. Fortunately, both the launch trips were made on perfect weather days, unlike the days in between, when heavy rain fell. Other visits included those to archival collections in Koror itself.

At the previous PARBICA conference held in Fiji in 1999, it was resolved to 'assist and inform future development of legislation for archives in the region through the publication of a compendium of Pacific archives legislation'. In August 2000, I was asked to compile and edit this volume. Because of size, the Bureau decided not to include the Australian state archives or record offices, which was a pity, as some of these have interesting variations on legislation. The Bureau felt that a second volume containing these might be attempted at a future date. As much of the archives legislation in force in Pacific countries is either inadequate or out-of-date, it is hoped the compendium will encourage some to be reviewed. The President, Setareki Tale, launched the compendium during the conference.

PARBICA has survived its first twenty years, shakily at times, but now seems to be gaining in strength. When one sees the eagerness and rapt attention in the delegates at the training sessions and workshops one can only feel how worthwhile it all is. Raising the finance for each conference continues to be a major undertaking. Many people, unfamiliar with the Pacific, do not realise just how isolated each country is, not only from each other, but in some cases, a country consists of isolated and scattered islands within a huge expanse of sea. Kiribati for instance

consists of 34 islands with total land area of 811 sq km, in a sea of 3,550,000 sq km, an area just slightly less than half the land area of Australia. Travelling from one island group to another often means two or three connections and frequently necessitating a journey via Australia, which is to the west of almost all the islands. All this adds to the costs.

It is pleasing that it has been possible to hold PARBICA conferences in a different country almost every time, Fiji being the only venue that has twice had the honour. Many of the smaller states would never be able to find the resources to do so. Palau is to be particularly congratulated and thanked for its efforts this year. The PARBICA 9 organising team was led by Naomi Ngirakamerang of the Division of Palau National Archives and Bonifacio Basilius, Chair of the Archives Council.

Association of Canadian Archivists

Correspondent: Bryan Corbett, President

The year 2000 marked the end of the Association of Canadian Archivists 25th year and its first five-year Strategic Plan. As a first step in the renewal of the Strategic Plan a select committee was established to develop Mission and Vision Statements for the ACA. These became the basis for a new Five-Year Strategic Plan, Three-Year Business Plans and one-year Work Plans for each of the committees and sections. The Three-Year Business Plan is intended as a rolling plan, renewed each year for the next three years thus going a significant way to ensure continuity as association leadership changes. To ensure growing confidence in the process and its further development, the Board and committee and section chairs will take part in an annual business planning workshop. The results of these endeavours are available on the ACA website.

Committees and Sections put significant effort into this process. It was particularly gratifying to see the creative and imaginative ideas and proposals which came out of this Strategic Planning Process. Building on its success in the past, it is anticipated that the ACA will be an even more dynamic and member oriented association than it has been in the past while at the same time recognising its role as an organisation which represents the needs of Canadian archivists regardless of membership.

Education continues to be an important activity for the Association. The Education Institute held in Edmonton was a significant success. And this year's Institute bringing the Australian experience to Canadian shores was a similar success. With the announcement of Canadian Archival Information Network (CAIN) funding, the Education Committee undertook a needs assessment. This needs assessment will lay the groundwork for the next several years of ACA educational and information dissemination activities.

Making the public aware of the importance of archival preservation and the role of archivists is a significant activity of the ACA. Following the successful launch of its

new displays at last years' conference, the Public Awareness Committee published the Business Archives Booklet and completed the text for two others which will be published this year. The display was sent to Vancouver for the Association of Archivists of British Columbia Conference, back to Alberta for the Conference of the Canadian Information Processing Society (CIPS), and was in Winnipeg for the ACA Conference. It will be at the ARMA International Conference in Montreal later in the year. The booklets will be offered to archival associations, councils and institutions in their public awareness activities. The series will include booklets on municipal archives, educational institution archives, and medical and hospital archives.

Archivaria continues with its record of excellence. The editorial board and volunteers ensure that Canadian archivists have a journal in which they may take great pride. The ACA *Bulletin* continues to provide our members with timely information about the Association and member activities. The ACA website remains as one of our most important means of communication. The ACA's mission and vision statements are there for all to see. And timely information on the ACA Conference is one of the website's most important documents. CAIN funding will enable our website to become even more effective as a communications and information dissemination tool and for e-commerce.

The Membership Committee has been actively recruiting student members from the archives schools as well as the National Archives. The President has the responsibility for ACA advocacy initiatives. As this can be an onerous task, an advocacy network of prominent archivists was established to be the eyes and ears of the ACA for issues or events on which it should have a position or make representations. Of significance was the work done on the 1911 census issue.

The Canadian Council of Archives (CCA) continues to provide welcome financial and moral support for the ACA. Our Institutes and our CAIN projects would not be possible without such generosity. During the past year the CCA and the ACA have developed common positions on several matters including the hiring of archivists at the National Archives and the establishment of a National Data Archives.

Likewise, the ACA's partnership with the Association des archivists du Québec under the umbrella of the Bureau of Canadian Archivists (BCA) remains on a positive level. Amongst other items, we have worked well in prioritising CAIN projects and in joint activities surrounding the ARMA Conference to be held in Montréal in September. Of particular note is the development of a BCA proposal to participate as full partners with the American Library Association and others in a new approach to the accreditation of Library Schools particularly for those which have archival studies components in their programs. The BCA will be vigilant in ensuring that Canadian standards and guidelines are used in judging accredited information management studies programs.

Records of the National Parliament of Kiribati

Correspondent: Nancy Lutton

In March 2001, I became an AESOP Business Volunteer for the second time. The previous occasion had been in 1995, when I carried out a project for the Lands and Titles Court of Western Samoa (see *Archives and Manuscripts*, International Notes, November 1995). AESOP stands for Australian Expert Service Overseas Program, and stood alone as the original title of the organisation, but more recently, feeling it needed more explanation, it became AESOP Business Volunteers. Basically, it provides aid to small businesses and institutions in developing countries in the form of volunteers, not cash.

The Parliament of Kiribati required someone to advise on keeping its parliamentary records. There were about twelve staff, headed by the Clerk, who was also the only graduate on the staff. All the others had secondary education. There was also a problem that public service staff tended to be moved frequently between departments, which meant a shallow depth of knowledge about any one department's functions. Of these staff, there was an Editor and two transcribers for Hansard, and a further transcriber of committee business. There were a number of typists, lower grade clerks, attendants and drivers. The Clerk had an Assistant Clerk, and there was a Clerk of Committees, and these three with the Editor comprised the senior staff.

The building was brand new, having been completed only in time for the South Pacific Forum held at Kiribati in November 2000. Architecturally, it was very striking with wings framing the main building. It was built on a small islet off a larger atoll, and connected by a bridge, so it was surrounded by water like a moat. The Parliamentary chamber was well equipped with comfortable benches, and a loudspeaker system which could be turned on from individual desks. All parliamentary proceedings were recorded and later transcribed; there were no shorthand reporters.

Quarters for the staff, however, were very bare by comparison, though spacious enough. Furniture was not new. Walls and floors were bare concrete, no floor coverings, but every room did have airconditioning. Computers were used for word processing only. None of the computers was installed with a database program or with the Internet. They did have a fax machine. The library was a shambles. It had apparently been moved from the old building the previous November without any effort to keep the books in any kind of order by using boxes. Armloads of books seemed to have been loaded onto trucks, transported to the new building, and then dumped on the floor of the library, and there they remained. The card catalogue had disappeared. An effort had been made to provide new shelving, the Clerk having saved some funds from other budget accounts. However, the new shelves had had to be made locally, and apparently followed a design used in all public service departments, fixed shelving, too wide and too low and unsuitable

for library shelving. Apparently, there was no budget for library purchases, and what was there all seemed to be exchanges, or gifts from other parliamentary libraries in the Pacific, mainly from Australia and New Zealand.

The Parliamentary records were, on the whole, being kept quite efficiently, bearing in mind that there were no records prior to Independence in 1979. Kiribati had been part of the British colony of Gilbert and Ellice Islands Protectorate and administered by the Western Pacific High Commission. The records of the latter had been taken to London post-independence of the various components of the WPHC. While the lack of access to these is of great concern to the National Archives of Kiribati and the other countries concerned, there did not seem to be a problem for the Parliament of Kiribati. When I noted a bound set of laws of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands in the library, it was dismissed as belonging to the old colonial days.

The Acts were being bound together annually with a numerical contents list in the front. Hansards were bound by session, two each year, with no index. Papers presented to Parliament were bound together in number order annually, with a numerical contents list. The Budget papers were also bound. There were four originals of each of the above kept in the custody of the Clerk, the President, the Speaker and one other. In addition printed copies were published, and there were plenty of excess copies of these to be found in the library, which because it was not organised properly, seemed to be the dumping ground for all excess publications.

There were a number of things that needed to be done and recommendations were made. Firstly, all the parliamentary papers, especially Hansard and the Papers presented to Parliament, need to be indexed. Since computers are already familiar to the staff as word processors, and the staff seem very efficient in their use, a database program needs to be added to some computers, especially those used by the editor and his staff. It might mean the appointment of one or more indexers.

Secondly, it was noted that there was only one tape recorder for the proceedings of Parliament. There was no tape copying machine, and consequently only ever one tape. It was this tape that was used by the transcribers. This must stop, as transcribing is very rough on the original tape and there is a very real chance of destroying parts of the tape. Indeed, I was informed that the tapes of one whole session of parliament had disappeared before transcription and they were left with no record except what the newspaper had reported. Transcribing was always a long way behind, so quite likely the same tapes had been used for a subsequent session. Recommendations were made for purchase of a tape copying machine, and if possible a second tape recorder.

Thirdly, there appeared to be no provision for keeping the original tapes in optimum conditions as sound archives. Recommendations were also made to that effect. Files from the Clerk's office which were not in current use were already being transferred to the National Archives of Kiribati, so that was satisfactory.

In my report to AESOP Business Volunteers, I was able to describe the state of the Library and what was needed to set it up. It had already been accepted as another AESOP project, so shortly after my return, a librarian volunteer proceeded to the Parliament of Kiribati especially to work on the library and train one of the staff.

National Archives of Malaysia

Correspondent: Dato' Habibah Zon, Director-General, National Archives of Malaysia

The National Archives of Malaysia strives to strike the right balance between core activities, such as the acquisition of archival materials and the need to educate the people on the importance of such materials through various outreach programs such as exhibitions. In reference to both these objectives, I wish to highlight our acquisition of the Borneo collection from a private source in London and a major exhibition entitled *Malaysian History from Dutch Sources* that we had the privilege of organising in cooperation from the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Malaysia.

The Borneo Collection: A History in Literature

In 1996, the National Archives of Malaysia managed to acquire more than 1,000 items comprising books, materials, letters, a photographic album, pamphlets, periodicals and papers relating to the Borneo collection from Mr John Randall, an antiquarian book dealer based in London.

Researchers will be happy to know that the collection contains some unique and many rare items, covering many different areas of interest including voyages and exploration, natural history and ethnography. The collection includes: one of the earliest Western works to describe a visit to Borneo, Ventimiglia's *Compendio da Relacam, que veyo da India o anno de 1691* (Lisbon, 1692), *Voyage to and from the Island of Borneo* (London, 1719) by Daniel Beeckman, the Batavia first printing of John Leyden's *Sketch of Borneo* (1812), Sir James Brooke's scarce *Vindication of his Character and Proceedings* (London, 1853), the co-author's own copy of Motley and Dillwyn's *Contributions to the Natural History of Labuan, and the Adjacent Coasts of Borneo* (London, 1855), and Sir Charles Brooke's *Queries: Past, Present, and Future* (London, 1907).

The collection also includes material relating to voyages, exploration and ethnography, a large number of books on the history of the island, from the earliest times to the present day, as well as most of the archaeological works on Brunei, Sabah and Sarawak, and many books on the arts and products of the whole island of Borneo, including the pioneering nineteenth-century works by Heinz and Schmeltz.

The history of the Sultanates of Brunei and Sulu and their influence as centres of power in the region are covered in the fine copy of Saleeby's *The History of Sulu* (Manila 1908), Alexander Dalrymple's essay, *Towards an Account of Sulu* (London 1792), and the *Silsilah Raja-Raja Berunai* (Kuala Lumpur 1968). Scholarly editions of the *Hikayat Bandjar* and the *Tuhfat Al Nafis* and a wide range of recent academic

studies focus on the Islamic groupings that have ruled the island for several centuries. A particularly fine original letter from the Sultan of Sulu concerning the attack on Marudu Bay provides a vivid illustration of the perception of power.

The history of the early Chinese and Western contacts with Borneo is dealt with in depth in such prime sources as Groeneveldt's *Notes on the Malay Archipelago and Malaca*, Tome Piers' *Suma Oriental*, and no less than six versions of the account of Magellan's voyage by Pigafetta. The collection contains one of the earliest printed works on Borneo describing the mission of Dom Antonio Ventimiglia on the island in 1688, as well as the early accounts by Jacob Jansz Roy in 1691 and Daniell Beeckman in 1714. Thomas Forrest's voyage from Balambangan to New Guinea in 1774 is also included.

The nineteenth century is well covered with two classic voyages of Keppel in HMS *Dido* and HMS *Meander*, and that of Mundy in HMS *Iris*. Belcher's celebrated voyage in HMS *Samarang* is represented with the copy the author presented to his sister. There are also a number of lesser-known accounts of visitors, such as those of Delano and Lay. All of these include much valuable information on the history of Brunei and Sarawak and, particularly, the activities of Sir James Brooke.

The collection is rich in material on the First Rajah of Sarawak. It includes Templer's edition of his *Private Letters* and Rutter's edition of his *Correspondence* with Baroness Burdett Coutts, as well as biographies by Jacob, St John, Hahn, Runciman, Tarling and others. A complete set of Parliamentary papers relating to the first Rajah's activities in Borneo are included. Contemporary portraits of the first Rajah and his benefactor, Baroness Burdett Coutts, are present. A collection of original letters in Sir James Brooke's hand shed light upon aspects of his private life and character.

The second Rajah of Sarawak, Sir Charles Brooke, is also well represented with his first book, *Ten Years in Sarawak*, and the exceedingly scarce pamphlet, *Queries: Past, Present and Future*, which he published in 1907 to express his own strong views on, among other things, the best methods of colonial rule. The Brooke aspect of this collection is rounded off with autobiographical and literary works by the two Ranees, books on the third Rajah, Vyner Brooke, and the scarce first edition of Anthony Brooke's protest against his uncle's action in handing over Sarawak to the British Crown. There is also a fine photograph album documenting the third Rajah and his family at leisure.

The particularly rich natural history of the island is described in many of the great works on the exploration of Borneo, including Beccari's *Wanderings in the Great Forests of Borneo*, Burbidge's *The Gardens of the Sun*, Molengraaff's *Geological Explorations in Central Borneo*, Posewitz's *Borneo*, and Whitehead's magnificent folio, *Exploration of Mount Kina Balu*. Wallace, whose work in southeast Asia inspired Darwin's ideas on natural selection, is represented with the rare first edition of his *Malay Archipelago*, with its important account of Sarawak during the reign of Sir

James Brooke. The full scientific description of the 270 Longicorns he collected in Sarawak is also included. The first recorded ascent of Mt Kinabalu, by Low, is present, as are more recent explorations such as those of Helbig and Harrison.

Bock's *The Head-Hunters of Borneo*, covers natural history as well as ethnography, as does Lumholtz in his *Through Central Borneo*, and Nieuwenhuis in *Quer durch Borneo*. The collection contains virtually all the great work on Bornean ethnography, including Ling Roth's *The Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, Hose and McDougall's *The Pagan Tribes of Borneo*, Evan's *Among Primitive Peoples in Borneo*, and his *Studies in Religion, Folk-Lor, and Custom*.

The spectacular natural scenery and wildlife of Borneo, and the eccentric reputation of its 'head-hunters' and 'pirates', have inspired a wide range of Western fiction based on the island almost from the days of its discovery. This aspect of Bornean studies is represented by some fifty novels of varying literary quality. Authors range from the well-known Joseph Conrad and Somerset Maugham, to both Ranees of Sarawak, and include Brereton, Blundell and Greenwood. Seven of Owen Rutter's fictional writings are included, as are his original manuscript notebooks for his novel, *Clear Waters*.

Exhibition on Malaysian History from Dutch Sources

On 27 February 2001 the National Archives of Malaysia launched an exhibition with cooperation from the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Malaysia. As a consequence of the overwhelming support from the public, the exhibition will be taken to all parts of the country in the course of 2001 and 2002. The exhibition, which consists of photographic reproduction of historical documents, illustrations and artifacts, provides a broad introduction to Dutch sources for the study of the political and socioeconomic history of Malaya in the 17th and 18th centuries.

The exhibition recalls an age only weakly represented and remembered in contemporary, indigenous historical writings. The few Malay chronicles that relate to this period in history were written much later than events described in them. In these chronicles common people have no place except as silent observers of events as they appeared to the eyes of the ruling elite. Therefore, in order to study the political and socioeconomic history of the common people in the Malay world, we needed to consult the records of the Dutch, English, Danish and French trading companies, all of which were active in the region during the age of commerce from the 1590s to the 1820s.

In addition to displays of original Dutch documents available in Malaysia and some Dutch documents from Indonesia, there are a large number of documents in this exhibition from the VOC archives in the Netherlands which contains a great deal of information on the Malay Archipelago in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Marshall Islands: Country Report for PARBICA 9 Conference

Correspondent: Terry Mote, Alele Museum, Library and Archives

National Archives Act of 1989

The Marshall Islands Archives Act of 1989, as amended in 1992, established an Office of National Archives to make provision for the custody and preservation of public records and for other matters connected herewith. The Archives Office is an attachment to the Historic Preservation Office (or 'Cultural Affairs') which operates directly under the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The Historic Preservation Office is further authorised to contract out for services to administer this Act. Alele Incorporated is currently and has been the contracting institution which has the qualifications necessary to carry out the functions and duties of the Archivist as described in this Act.

National Archives Office

Since its establishment, and directly in line with the processes required under the Act, the National Archives Office is a working body having links with the National Alele Museum and National Library, which make up the Alele Museum, Library and Archives Incorporated. These three linking partners work together to collect, preserve, advance and develop the historical and cultural affairs of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI). The National Archives Office is currently located in a very small area in a trailer which was remodelled into a working space. The trailer-like office is not a purpose-built building and was not designed as a repository, but to provide enough space for an office. However, the space underneath the library portion of the Museum and Library complex is now being enclosed and renovated to make more room for a bigger archival office. It is intended that all the collected government documents that are being stored in this tiny trailer-office will be transferred to this new and bigger room. With this additional space for the archives, there will be more space for storage and processing. There is neither a conservation room nor a reading room in existence. However, future plans include funding development schemes to accommodate such needs.

Staff and training

There is only one person working in Archives and he has had no formal education on the subject. With limited funding, meeting the training needs for the Archivist is a major problem. In addition to the archival work, the Archivist is also involved in doing artwork for the Museum and Library. He is very well known for his artworks.

Records in custody and management

The Office of Archives has in its possession over two thousand rolls of microfilm, which the RMI government inherited from the old Trust Territory Government of the Pacific Islands (TTPI), and another thousand or so have been accumulated

from the Republic of the Marshall Islands government since becoming constitutionally independent. In addition, the Archives holds recently made microfilms of records of closed Marshall Islands High Court cases, together with some books, local newspapers, health services records, land records and aerial photos of the individual atolls throughout the Marshall Islands. The Archives also holds other records produced by various government ministries and agencies, as well as records of private citizens, such as genealogy charts, and the Joachim de Brum Collection of glass plate negatives from Likiep Atoll. Aside from the government collection of records, safekeeping of privately owned genealogical and land records is being encouraged so that people can begin to record their family history. Also included in these records are the government, church and private land leases, together with maps and land boundary lines. The Office of Land and Survey is undertaking a project of mapping all land boundary lines, using the GIS mapping system, which will document the legal standing and status of land holdings. For the RMI to retrieve or recover all records overseas pertaining to our history and culture, it would require us to secure a bigger space to accommodate the influx of information. One of our biggest problems is space.

Archival use

The Archives Office is widely used by government as well as private people and citizens. Once in a while, requests from overseas do come in seeking information mostly related to the events leading to, during and after World War II, and sometimes even before that, such as events during the Spanish, German and the Japanese eras. The Archives Act allows the Archivist to exercise discretion to give researchers access to records upon request, but no records under 25 years old are released by the Office.

The current equipment used by the Archives is the microfiche reader and printer. Later models of this equipment are needed to replace the existing ones in order to meet the demands of this century. The RMI has not been very active in the promotional aspects of archival work. However, publicity brochures and press releases on archives-related activities are the visible informational aids currently being used.

Alele does have an email address <alele@ntamar.com> which works for all three divisions of Alele Incorporated. Although the Archives Office does not have its own web page, there are plans to include all three divisions on the Alele web page, but funding will be required for regular updates and upgrades.

Archives in the Republic of Nauru

Correspondent: Peter Orlovich

As a result of discussions in 1997 with Ms Olsson, then Senior Project Officer, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Culture and Tourism, Republic of Nauru, it was agreed

that Dr Orlovich would undertake to draft a project proposal for an archival survey of government departments and agencies in Nauru. After some initial delay, and following the receipt of funding from the UNESCO Office for the Pacific States in Apia, Samoa, the project was undertaken over a period of six weeks from mid-June to the end of July 1999. It was agreed that the participation of a Nauruan person in the survey, preferably with a specialised knowledge of, and experience within, the various government departments of the Nauruan public service, and with some experience in the management of records, would facilitate the work of the survey.

Soon after the commencement of the survey, a seminar was held on the Nauru Archive Survey project. Approximately 25 people attended, including the Hon. Godfrey Thoma, Minister for Culture & Tourism, and the Minister of Internal Affairs, who had Cabinet responsibility for the national archives, library and museum. Julie Olsson and Peter Orlovich also addressed the 'Teaching the Pacific' forum at the University of the South Pacific Nauru Campus on copyright of cultural property and on archives and education respectively.

The archive survey was undertaken with a series of visits to government departments during which consultations were held with departmental heads, and inspections made of the records, of the following agencies: Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages; Lands and Survey Department; Nauru Lands Committee; Nauru Rehabilitation Corporation; Office of the Chief Secretary; Office of the Secretary to the Clerk of Parliament; Nauru Police Force – Central Police Station; Nauru Court House; Ministry of Works, Fisheries, Culture and Tourism; Office of the Secretary for Health; Nauru Phosphate Corporation (NPC), including the NPC Labour Department, Personnel Section Archives at 'Location' and the NPC Survey Office at 'Topside'; Nauru General Hospital; Nauru Lands Committee (located in the Domaneab); Nauru Works Department; and the Nauru Local Government Council.

In the final report on the project, recommendations were made to the government of Nauru, amongst the more important of which were:

- the urgent provision of necessary, adequate and suitable accommodation for the reception, preservation, management and use of the national archives of Nauru;
- an appropriation of funds by the government to defray the expenses incurred in employing an archivist and of establishing, operating and maintaining a national archive service for Nauru;
- the appointment of an archivist;
- as an interim measure, pending the drafting of archival legislation, the issue of a Cabinet Directive concerning the protection and management of the public records;

- the drafting and implementation of archives legislation; the identification of vulnerable records within government departments;
- the acquisition of copies of archival sources relating to Nauru from other National Archives (archives relating to Nauru Island can be found in the Bundesarchiv, Potsdam [Imperial German archives]; Public Records Office, England; National Archives of Australia; National Archives of New Zealand; National Archives and Records Administration, United States of America; Mitchell Library Manuscripts Department; National Library of Australia Manuscripts Department; and the Australian War Memorial Archives); and
- in connection with the last-mentioned, the procurement of a micrographic reader and printer.

Recommendations were also made to assist in formulating a strategic plan, in two phases, initially over two years, and extending to five years, to establish control over the records and archives which are presently located in the custody of government departments, and for the development and operation of the National Archives of Nauru. The aim of the strategy was to identify the 'elements' or components which would need to be incorporated in any plan to establish and maintain a national, state or territorial archive service to a standard which would conform to internationally accepted levels of competence and proficiency.

In drafting the strategic plan, the opportunity was taken to attach a timeline indicating the various administrations which have exercised territorial jurisdiction in Nauru since the time of the German administration. This attachment has particular relevance to the important task of establishing *physical* and *intellectual control* of the archives. It is imperative that the archivist engaged to manage the National Archives of Nauru should possess a sound knowledge of the constitutional and administrative history of the Republic of Nauru.

No attempt was made to place the elements or components of the strategic plan in any strict or inflexible order, but to suggest an approximate order of priority for the various elements. In fact, it will be desirable for several, if not most of the elements listed to be continuously under consideration and review as the two-year and the five-year plans unfold, and it will probably be necessary for several elements or components to be activated simultaneously. Accordingly, an assessment of conservation problems and remedial actions and treatments which are required to be taken in respect of vulnerable and severely damaged records is a task which emerges from the records survey of government agencies and demands urgent follow-up action, and should be accorded the highest priority.

The public records and national archives of Nauru are an irreplaceable asset of the government and the people. Their deterioration, loss and destruction diminishes the national cultural inheritance of future generations. In order to

prevent this, consideration needs to be given, as a matter of urgency, to remedial action to address the following problems and issues identified during the survey of the national records and archives:

- neglect and abandonment of public records in government agencies and offices;
- the vulnerability of the public records to loss, theft, alienation, destruction and deterioration;
- the prevalence of biological agents (mould) in storage environments exposed to moisture and dampness, silverfish, cockroaches, and rodents amongst the public records stored within government agencies and offices, and the consequential damage to the records;
- the future additional costs to be incurred for the conservation repair and treatment of the public records which have deteriorated as a result of their exposure to damaging and destructive environmental and biological processes, arising from inadequate and inappropriate storage environments and lack of proper cleaning and maintenance of record storage facilities over long periods;
- the absence of any coordinated and systematic control over the retirement of inactive and non-current public records from government agencies and offices when no longer frequently referred to in connection with the public business to which they relate;
- lack of centralised record and archive storage accommodation;
- the fragility, disintegration and, inevitably, imperceptible loss of unique, irreplaceable and historically significant documentary sources for the study of the history and culture of Nauru and the Nauruan people, and ultimately, of the archival heritage of the nation;
- lack of facilities for providing Nauruan citizens and others with access to government information in records and archives, and for consulting the public records;
- the inaccessibility of many public records which, although of potential interest to the public, either in connection with defence or protection of their lawful rights, entitlements and obligations as Nauruan citizens, or for purposes of research, because of the difficulty of establishing the existence of such records, the nature of the information comprised within them, and procedures for making them available to all citizens in accordance with a uniform, consistent and equitable policy; and
- the importance of the national archives of Nauru for the citizens of other island nations, especially Kiribati, Tuvalu and Ocean Island (Banaba), and

the wider social and cultural obligation to maintain records of 'indentured' or 'expatriate' workers in Nauru.

Niue National Archives: Country Report for PARBICA 9 Conference

Correspondent: Diamond Tauevihi, Acting National Archivist of Niue

Background and basis of archival operations

National Archives of Niue is under the Community Affairs Department in association with the National and Public Library. Since PARBICA 5 in 1991, Niue's archive development has had some progress, which proves that the Government does value archives. In 1992, the Archives Act was passed and the Government also during the time approved the establishment of the National Library and Archives.

Accommodation

National Archives was finally allocated a unit on its own in 1999. It is a government residence unit which is only suitable for processing and storage of records. Land lease is another guiding factor, as this will expire in 2004. Permanent accommodation is a long-term plan for the Archives and Library, but that remains to be seen under government priority needs. Unfortunately the Library and Archives are on the bottom of the list.

Staff and training

As from December 2000 the Librarian/Archivist Mrs Ligi Sisikefu retired from the service. The Archives Assistant has temporarily taken over responsibilities in the Archives and Library but this appointment has yet to be finalised officially. We have also yet to finalise the appointment of one other staff member to work in the archives.

Training is needed in archives and records management procedures for staff, as they are new to the field, as well as in appropriate software for archives records and the operation of electronic equipment for archives.

Current records management

Retention and disposal schedules have been discussed and a draft outline completed but we are yet to finalise policy with department heads. The two manuals drafted on Records Management Procedures and Registry Procedures are completed and ready to be distributed to individual departments. Follow-up visits to records officers in departments and an update of records disposal schedules are planned.

Records held in custody

The bulk of the closed records are still in the departments. Closed records in the archives are being sorted out slowly as they were transferred into the repository to create space in the departments before the Archives Assistant received records management training in Malaysia in 1997. The collection is mostly closed files and national reports. There are only a few photographs and there are no private collections.

Use of archives

Local and government departments mainly use the archives. A lot more research was conducted this year due to the centennial commemoration. There were a few overseas enquiries. Archives staff are the only people with access to records. The public have no direct access to records.

Conservation requirements

Archives are not able to do any conservation work as there is no facility as yet. Conservation knowledge and training is most necessary to preserve records. There are a lot of fragile records, especially written in ink, that need to be treated and preserved. We also need assistance with reel-to-reel sound tape recordings of old local songs and tapes of Assembly proceedings. There is no playback machine that would be able to play or allow transcription of these tapes which contain a lot of historical information.

Promotional activities

These are relayed through monthly progress reports, annual reports and the monthly radio program.

Unfortunately, the Archives does not have access to a computer to be able to have a network with other archival institutions via the Internet. We have asked the department and government but finance is very tight, and Archives' low priority status does not warrant a computer as other sectors of the department do.

National Archives Project, Samoa: Country Report for PARBICA 9 Conference

Correspondent: Ulrike Hertel, Chief Museum & Archives Officer of Samoa

Background

The Ministry of Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs (MYSCA) is responsible for the preservation of cultural heritage, including the museum and archives project. The lack of a National Archives institution for the Independent State of Samoa has

been a continuous worry for several years. The main problems were the lack of repository space and the lack of resources to provide this space.

At the PARBICA 8 Meeting in Suva, Fiji in 1999, we had the hope that we could find a repository space in cooperation with the National University of Samoa (NUS), that the National Archives of Samoa could be established within the compound of the NUS. This project did not become reality. The University administration finally informed us that they cannot provide the space for this project, neither a room nor an area of land for a building.

For most of the remaining year 2000 there was very little movement in this project. Literature resource material increased at the other project of the archives team, the Museum of Samoa, and the Ministry's staff was introduced to the computer scanning of documents and photographs. MYSCA now has a flatbed scanner and a CD writer, which are mainly used for the publication of youth policy papers.

At the end of the year, the Archives project finally had a major breakthrough. There are now two rooms available to start the National Archives:

1. A small storage room at the new MYSCA Culture Section Office, FMFM II Building, 2nd floor. After a new office building had been erected in Apia, some departments moved out of the Government Building into the new premises. Part of the vacated space was given to the MYSCA Culture Section. A small room (10 square metres) is now available for archival storage. The room is inside a concrete structure and can be locked; part of the partition is a metal grid. The building has a central airconditioning and a fire alarm system. The building airconditioning is switched off after hours and on weekends.

2. A storage room at the Nelson Memorial Public Library (32 square metres) has been offered to the Archives project. The room was formerly used to store old magazines and school films. It will have to be upgraded to provide suitable archival storage conditions. The place will have to be sealed off, windows closed with fire-resistant material and a split airconditioning unit installed. The cooperation with the library will also include sharing public reference resources, such as their computer index system.

An action plan based on the use of these two storage facilities was submitted to the Samoan Cabinet Development Committee and the first phases approved for immediate action. The main steps of this action plan were:

1. Request for an Archives Consultant by MYSCA through Foreign Affairs
2. Rescue of material in unsuitable conditions (Vaimea prison files), first rescue treatment (MYSCA Archives Rooms FMFM II Floor 2)

3. Removal of old magazines and films by library staff; renovation work to create suitable archives environment (Nelson Memorial Library Storage Room)
4. Establishment of Archives Management Plan, registration rules and procedures, review and presentation of Archives legislation draft (with the archives consultant)
5. Pilot project: accessioning, registration and creation of finding aids for Vaimea files and German Colonial records (with the consultant)
6. Computer scanning and indexing of other records (with the consultant); this part of the project is continuous
7. Once rules are set which can establish if a document is confidential or free for access, begin serving researchers; this is a continuous part of the project, in cooperation with the Nelson Memorial Library and their customer services system
8. Building plan for archives repository, suitable for the land given by government (with the consultant)
9. Establishment of Government Records Retention Schedules (with the consultant)
10. Building of National Archives repository.

The Terms of Reference for the archives consultant were given to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to look for assistance in this matter. The renovation works for the library storage room have been specified and prepared for tender; the works will be initiated in the beginning of the new budget year (June 2001), if the budget provision for this item is approved. Some files at risk can be shifted at the same time to the small archives room at the Government Building. Once the consultant arrives, we can start working on organising management plans, legislation, accessioning and finding aids.

Archives staff

The staff of the archives project is made up of two staff members and one casual worker. They also run the Museum of Samoa, which means that at least one of them has to be present at the museum every working day from 12 noon to 3.30 pm at opening hours. In the first two years of operation (from May 1999) much time had to be spent in developing the displays and upgrading the museum premises. Now the staff will have to shift their attention to the archives project, but make sure the museum is still looked after properly. None of us have a professional

archival training; this is why we regard the assistance of an archives consultant in the establishment of the National Archives as especially important.

Tuvalu National Archives and Library: Country Report for PARBICA 9 Conference

Correspondent: Mila Tafao, National Librarian and Archivist of Tuvalu

The Tuvalu National Archives is still a part of the Tuvalu National Library and Archives which is under the Ministry of Education, Sport and Cultures. The archives stores and preserves land records, important government documents, such as closed files, reports and a few photographs. The Librarian and Archivist who heads the library and archives is responsible for the management and overseeing of the institution under the direction of the Ministry's Secretary. The archives still shares the building with the library, in which one room is used to accommodate archives.

Since 1999, from PARBICA 8 to the year 2001, there have not been many changes seen in archives development. This is mainly due to the shortage of staff and lack of funding. However, the archives is striving to survive on very limited funding allocated from our government and its staff continue to offer services to accommodate the needs of the public.

Archives responsibilities and activities

Our activities include:

- acquiring public records (closed) over 5 years old which are of sufficient historical value for retention
- transcribing of very fragile documents
- photocopying and direct copying of old births, deaths and marriages registers
- disposal of public records
- collection of government departments' annual reports, consultants' reports, etc.
- radio talks and interviews, and
- visits from primary and kinder school.

Use of the archives

The public is aware that the archives exist. We received lots of enquiries from the public regarding information on their land rights and family genealogies to settle disputes in the Lands Court. Government departments requested certain

consultants' reports, closed files and annual reports. We have some overseas expatriate scholars doing their research in the archives.

Staffing and training

The library and archives is manned by Mila Tafao and her assistant, both without formal training. During this period from 1999 to 2001 no training was attended by our staff. Training is imperative and is a requirement that we have to look into for archives staff as it builds the officers' confidence and ability with their work.

Government closed files

A lot of closed files are found dumped in one corner or in one room in certain government departments. The departments are requested to deposit them straight to the archives. We advise them to prepare checklists for all their closed files, arrange them in the order in which they were created, then store them safely in a secured space within their office.

The quantities of closed documents are increasing. Applying appraisal techniques is not easy, as no formulated policies are set that may give us a guideline. However, quite a number of records have been disposed of from the Treasury Department after consultation with the Audit Department and the Chief Account clerk.