

Editorial

This issue of *Archives and Manuscripts* has a dual purpose; to celebrate the contribution to our profession by one of Australia's most distinguished archivists, the late Ian Maclean, and to focus our attention on a key professional skill for archivists and other recordkeeping professionals; appraisal.

The life of Ian Maclean is commemorated by Bob Sharman and David Roberts elsewhere in this issue, and I do not propose to add to their tributes here. I will, however, make the observation that even as a relatively new member of our profession, his work and writings have been instrumental in helping me to develop my understanding of records and archives management. His legacy will undoubtedly endure for many more generations of archivists. Ian's contribution to the profession is also marked in this issue by the announcement of the Ian Maclean Research Grant Scheme, an annual grant scheme that will enable researchers to make use of the National Archives collection for work that will enhance the public's understanding of the contribution the Archives makes to Australian society.

The idea to produce an appraisal-themed issue of *Archives and Manuscripts* had its beginnings in the round table on appraisal convened by the Council of the Australian Society of Archivists in 2002. This event was an opportunity for members of the ASA working in a range of organisational settings to come together to consider the formulation of a policy position for the ASA on appraisal. Discussions that started at that meeting have continued electronically and have been broadened across the Society to the point where a draft policy on appraisal has been circulated for all members' consideration and comment. I was present at the round table and have an interest in appraisal that has been further stimulated by my involvement, as Secretary, in the International Council on Archives' Committee on Appraisal, formed in late 2001. The Committee is working towards a set of best practice guidelines on appraisal for the international archives community, due for initial release at the 2004 ICA Congress in Vienna.

What emerges from all of the contributions to this issue is the extent to which the appraisal process is increasingly shaped by influences that are outside of the traditional worldview of the archivist. In some cases these influences are required as part of redesigned consultation processes, in others they occur without premeditation as a natural part of the organisational context of the appraisal process. In most cases they add value, but in some instances influences can have a negative effect on the outcome of the appraisal.

All the authors in this issue address the concept of influence on appraisal, from a range of different points of view. In their article on appraisal in the independent schools environment, Sarah O'Neill and Julie Gleaves describe the role of school communities; alumni, benefactors, school councils and headmasters, in shaping a collection. Stephen Twigge of the National Archives of the United Kingdom recounts the efforts of that institution to involve groups such as local history societies, government departments and history teachers in the process of the selection of National Archives. In his piece for 'In the Agora', Kevin Lindeberg makes a powerful statement, within the context of a discussion of the role and form of archival legislation, about the influence of the citizen as a partner in accountable appraisal decisions by the archivist.

An acknowledgement of the significance of certain external factors in affecting appraisal outcomes has, in some cases, the effect of reshaping the way in which we conduct the appraisal process. I am particularly pleased that in this issue these matters are explored in the private and non-government environments as well as in the government sphere. In her article, 'Political Archives: Defining key issues in a significant private records arena', Joanne Anthony describes how collecting bodies such as the Original Materials Unit of the John Oxley Library have sought to apply tools more commonly deployed in the government environment to more systematically approach the appraisal of the records of political parties. Michael Piggot's review article on diaries challenges us to consider the ways in which the appraisal of that most personal of records, the diary, can best be approached, particularly given the diversity of its forms – from Samuel Pepys to Jennicam. In taking us on a guided tour through the appraisal techniques and methods which have shaped and influenced contemporary Australian practice, Barbara Reed sets the scene for an important exploration and analysis of Australian approaches to appraisal in the latter part of the 20th century and into the 21st in Part One of her article 'Diverse Influence: An exploration of Australian appraisal practice'.

News Notes in this issue includes news of the departure of Anne-Marie Schwirtlich, Acting Director-General of the National Archives of Australia from 2001–03, and a long standing and highly valued member of staff for some years. Included with the report is a photograph which captures the gathering of four previous Directors-General of the Archives, to wish Anne-Marie well in her new role as CEO and State Librarian of the State Library of Victoria. Eagle-eyed readers will no doubt spot the New Zealand-themed International News Notes in this issue. This extends to a report from a Kiwi in Europe, in the form of Evelyn Wareham's news from the International Council on Archives Paris Office. The private archives sector is again represented here, with news from Pauline Porteous of the Westpac New Zealand Archives.

I am very grateful for the willingness of my colleagues both at home and abroad to contribute to this issue of *Archives and Manuscripts*. It was an honour to be invited to put together a journal on such a significant professional subject and to be permitted to dedicate it to such a distinguished archivist.

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