

## Editorial

Before I begin, I would like to thank Maggie Shapley for her hard work and devotion to the job as Editor of *Archives and Manuscripts* over the last four years (and thank her for not sighing too loudly with relief when handing over the quill and inkwell). Her dexterity and enthusiasm have shone, and continue to shine in her ongoing and varied contributions to the Australian Society of Archivists. Maggie is certainly a valued member of the Editorial Board and I thank her again for my thorough induction into the role. I would also like to welcome Pat Jackson as the new International Notes Editor and wish our 'Archives Queen of the Desert' the very best of luck gathering International contributions from the Northern Territory. Pat plans to provide a 'double-feature' of International News Notes in the next issue.

As Maggie mentioned in her last Editorial, this edition of *Archives and Manuscripts* is born from the theme of standards, and we have some fantastic contributions from Jackie Bettington, Alistair Tough and Julie McLeod from all very different parts of the world dealing with very similar records management problems. Interesting to note is the way Alistair's insight into the use of ISO 15489 in Commonwealth Africa and Julie's update on current attitudes in the UK intersect and parallel with each other on many different levels. The use of questionnaires is dominant in this edition of *Archives and Manuscripts* and appears to be the preferred methodology for gauging attitudes and perceptions of archives and records management professionals. This issue of *Archives and Manuscripts* includes the outcome of our own ASA member survey, and Rowena Loo reflects on these findings.

What began as a 'standards' issue of *Archives and Manuscripts* has almost become a survey report special. The surveys formulated by the authors in this edition, and the topics they cover, should remind us of our close ties with other professional bodies — in particular the RMAA. This issue is an example of different people from varied sectors and regions engaging with and questioning current practice, conceptualising solutions, identifying areas for improvement and analysing benefits for our everyday use. The amalgam of ideas and interests should encourage

all readers of *Archives and Manuscripts* to collaborate both internationally and across all professions.

On questioning current practice, the 'In the Agora' section of *Archives and Manuscripts* has been resurrected from dormancy just in time for Ray Edmondson to express his concern about ScreenSound re-igniting the debate over its future. Not short of debate over the past few issues, I trust that all budding and veteran authors will be as passionate as all of our current contributors to this edition – whether it be Hoyle and Millar conveying the challenge of distance education in the Pacific at the ICA congress in 2004, or Camille Cameron warning of 'legal' destruction implications at the ASA *Challenges in the Field* conference. While the impact of ISO 15489 is strongly felt by archivists and recordkeepers, it is important to note here the scope for further articles on other standards relevant to these professions. Authors are welcome to contact me if they have ideas in the germination phase (or if you were as intrigued as I was by metadata standards issues such as those raised at the recent Monash University *Recordkeeping Metadata Briefing* in Melbourne). I hope you all enjoy reading the articles in this edition, and I look forward to the next *Archives and Manuscripts* in 2005.

Katherine Gallen