

ARCHIVES  
AND  
MANUSCRIPTS

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### **The Archivist's Mission**

Archivists ensure that records which have value as authentic evidence of administrative, corporate, cultural and intellectual activity are made, kept and used. The work of archivists is vital for ensuring organisational efficiency and accountability and for supporting understandings of Australian life through the management and retention of its personal, corporate and social memory.

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*The fiftieth anniversary of 'Archives and Manuscripts' warrants a celebration, in which the multitude of A&M's Australian readers will be joined by their overseas colleagues. Presently more than 150 individuals and institutions outside Australia receive Archives and Manuscripts, either as a member of the Australian Society of Archivists or as a subscriber to A&M.*

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*The second of a two part article, this piece will extend the topology presented in the first article by looking at archivists as museum curators or as they are called here in one place without the least bit of intentional irony, cultural enshrinement officers. In outlining a Cultural Heritage Continuum Model Frank Upward has given a brief overview of the modelling process so if anyone wants to fill gaps (such as the gap in respect of hermeneutics) they will have some idea of how they might do so. The article will conclude with a few brief but heavily academic comments on the cognate disciplines approach that has been presented across the two parts.*

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*This is a continuation of the article on 'Parallel Provenance' that appeared in the previous issue of this journal. The sub-title above refers to 'Part 6' of the author's article 'Relationships in Records' that bore the title, 'Everything is Related to Something Else' ('New Zealand Archivist' Autumn 2004).*

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*This article is concerned with some of the unexpected ways that a sense of significance is created around archives. It takes as examples the records of some Australian soldiers who died during or shortly after the First World War. In the late 1920s, these soldiers' next-of-kin were asked by the Australian War Memorial to donate the records to the Memorial. The records that were received might seem, at first glance, rather meagre. But are they? The author suggests that if we listen carefully to the voices of the donors, we might hear a more complex story, one that enhances our understanding of the role that archives play in people's everyday lives.*

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*The Australian Memory of the World Program uses significance assessment methodology to provide an objective framework for decisions relating to registration. This paper argues that while the concept of significance may be a useful tool with which to address issues of access, identification and preservation for the built heritage and for some individual items or collections, it is not useful as a generic construct. Further, the hierarchical and exclusive nature of the framework on which the program rests could, in some circumstances, run counter to its stated aims.*

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