

ARCHIVES  
and  
MANUSCRIPTS

*The Journal of the Australian Society of Archivists*

### **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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This paper has been prepared by the ASA IISIG on behalf of Loris Williams who sadly passed away on 28 August 2005. With input from staff at Community and Personal Histories, where Loris was employed as an Archivist, and with the support of the Williams family, this paper is based on concepts originally conceived by Loris for presentation at the ASA's 2005 *Archives and Communities* Conference. It is hoped that the paper is able to express the deep passion and sentiment Ms Williams felt for her work and the importance of records and history for Indigenous peoples.

*Lynette Russell* Indigenous Records and Archives: Mutual  
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Archives house records about and of interest to Indigenous Australians. This paper outlines a large collaborative and multidisciplinary project entitled Trust and Technology which aims to find ways to include, within archives, (and in culturally appropriate manner) Indigenous knowledge, narratives and records. The three phased approach is discussed with an emphasis on the initial stage which endeavors to understand how Indigenous people want to record and access their oral memory. The project is presented within a historical background which has important implications for understanding the issues of developing trust.

Stuart Orr

Functions-based Classification of Records:

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Functions-based classification was given prominence by the 1996 *Australian Records Management Standard (AS 4390)* and the subsequent *International Standard, ISO 15489: Information and documentation – records management (ISO 15489)*. Since then, functions-based classification has been strongly promoted. Before this relatively recent change of focus, records were commonly classified by such characteristics as subject, organisational structure or geographical location. Functions-based, or functional, classification has been strongly promoted particularly in Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom. However, its practice has raised a number of significant issues and dissent in the archives and records management community.

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Libraries, archives and museums have long collected physical materials and other artefacts. In so doing they have established formal or informal policies defining what they will (and will not) collect. Currall, Moss and Stuart argue that these activities by their very nature privilege some information over others and that the appraisal that underlies this privileging is itself socially constructed. They conclude that developing these ideas is an important part of placing the concept of a digital or hybrid paper/digital library on a firm foundation and that information professionals need to learn from each other, adopting elements of a variety of different approaches to describing and exposing information.

Ciaran B Trace

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Research about archival reference is said to fall into four categories: research about use of archival material, research into the accuracy and effectiveness of reference, studies about the impact of technology on reference service, and research about the interaction between researcher and reference archivist. This article reports on a pilot study conducted to

ascertain what contribution naturalism could play in giving archivists a deeper and more nuanced understanding of archival reference. In using ethnography to study the reference process, the author sheds light on the nature of the interaction and relationship between researcher and reference archivist. In particular, this study looks at how one reference archivist creates meaning and import in his work and what makes for a successful and effective relationship between an archivist and a researcher during the reference process.

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In March 2002 the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) held a meeting of people from outside nuclear industry to examine issues surrounding the preservation and transfer to future generations of information important to the safety of radioactive waste disposal. This paper summarises the outcome of what became a series of meetings over the subsequent four years and draws heavily on the report of the working group by the IAEA under their Safety Report Series.

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