

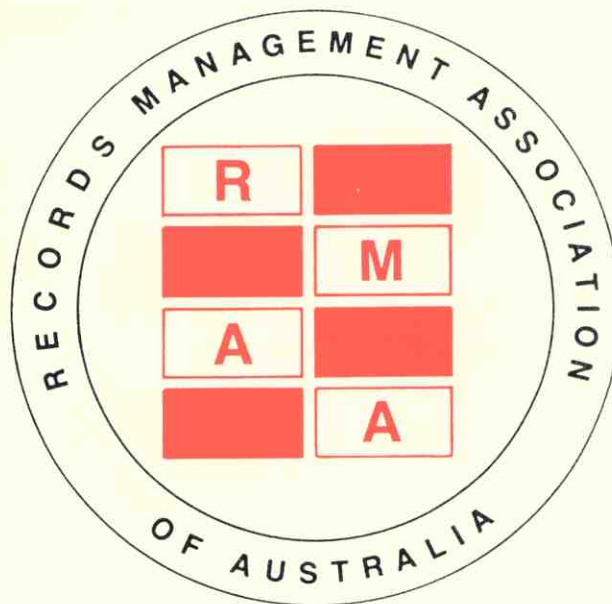
'THE **informaa**'

Quarterly

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EDITORIAL NOTES

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Future issues : Aug 1987 - ACT Branch

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FROM THE FEDERAL PRESIDENT.

Unashamedly, I feel like a man who has just put the last piece of a jigsaw puzzle in place - elated, satisfied, pleased and proud, having accomplished that which a year ago was a pipe dream.

This sense of accomplishment is not mine alone, but belongs also with the Association and all those people who have worked so very hard to make it possible for Tasmania to join the Association.

Almost ninety people were present at the inaugural meeting of the Tasmanian Branch which took place in Hobart on the 20th February 1987. It is important to me that this last piece of the jigsaw is in place, though not necessarily for just the obvious reason.

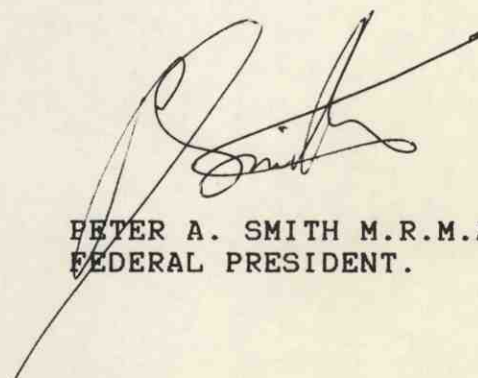
As the Association gains strength from the swelling of it's numbers, then the opportunity increases to develop the professional management of Records and Information as a corporate resource.

The continued improvement in the standard of education courses is paramount to recognition of academic qualification for Records and Information practitioners. The promotion of standard courses throughout our educational institutions at Certificate, Diploma and Degree level will enhance the opportunities of people working in this field, as well as attracting others to our ranks.

Academic qualification coupled with experience will make for a more complete manager in the area of Records and Information. Excellence in any field is a prerequisite for recognition.

The high standards and the objectives of R.M.A.A. will make the Association Awards and recognition of achievement, highly sought after and desirable.

By providing education in it's many facets - academic, seminars, workshops, lectures, conferences, conventions, articles and the like, the Association must grow and become stronger as people seek to improve themselves in this area.



PETER A. SMITH M.R.M.A
FEDERAL PRESIDENT.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In December, 1979, as a member of the South Australian Branch Council of the Records Management Association of Australia I was asked to co-ordinate the formation of a special interest group within Local Government.

On 5th February, 1980 a meeting was held at the Unley City Council Offices to gauge what interest existed for this type of group. Of the 31 local government staff, representing 17 Councils, who attended that meeting, less than one quarter were full time records officers, but sufficient interest emanated from that meeting for RMAA to present a proposal to the Local Government Association. Discussions held with LGA met with a positive response which in turn led to an invitation to Local Government bodies to meet in October, 1980. At that meeting it was resolved that a group be formed.

Several meetings took place during the development stage and in February, 1981, the South Australian Local Government Information and Records Management Group was formed.

The following objectives were adopted:

1. To encourage mutual aid and education
2. To encourage communication of records management experiences
3. To establish standardisation where practicable in records management to enhance communication both within the Local Government service and with society generally
4. To enhance the efficiency of Local Government
5. To assist Local Government through out the State.

A programme of meetings and workshops commenced in March, 1981 continuing on a monthly basis for the next 18 months. These meetings took the form of discussions on records topics, visiting speakers, visits to various Council offices, the AMP Society and Australian Archives.

Unfortunately the meetings and workshops gradually lost support with only a few Councils showing regular interest. Due to this the Group decided to go into recess in November, 1982.

In June 1983 the Group reformed and continued to meet at Prospect City Council offices every 3rd month, but with only a small number of records enthusiasts to keep the activities alive these meetings became discussion sessions with the exchange of information on the solving of problems, etc.

Gradually attendance increased and in June, 1986 discussions took place regarding the training of staff involved with records.

A series of workshops on Records Management in Local Government, aimed at introducing the basic principles of records management to clerical, secretarial and records staff, commenced in conjunction with the South Australian Local Government Industry Training Committee. The workshops were presented by Maureen Sipos (Happy Valley City Council), Carol Hannaford (Woodville City Council) and Margaret Mainland (formerly Adelaide City Council) with assistance from Peter Crush (Adelaide City Council) re Archives and Helen Onopko (MOA).

Six workshops were held of 3 hours duration on a fortnightly basis on the following topics:

1. Records keeping in perspective
2. Indexing and classification of records
3. Control of file movements
4. Systems and storage options
5. Records manuals
6. Disposal and retention schedules - Archiving.

These workshops have proved to be successful and enquiries have been received for them to be repeated.

One of the big problems of Records Managers and staff today is convincing 'TOP MANAGEMENT' of the importance of the efficiency of their information resources. These workshops are the first major step by the Group towards that goal.

SA LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CONT)

Several local government staff are individual members of the RMAA as well as a few Councils having Corporate membership. The original aim of RMAA was that eventually the Group would become a Chapter of the Association. To attain this it would need greater involvement in the Group by Councils, with

eventual membership of the Association with Council nominees applying for Professional status.

I hope that the Group will continue to take an active part in both Local Government and Records Management in Sth Australia and that the original aim of forming a Chapter in SA will gain momentum.

MARGARET MAINLAND, ARMA
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

This paper gives an overview of recent developments and current activities of the Public Record Office of South Australia.

Establishment

The Public Record Office of South Australia was established administratively as a Division of Local Government on 1st October, 1985, replacing the South Australian Archives, which was a branch of the State Library Division.

The establishment of divisional status and the separation from the State Library highlight both the fact that archival services are different from and separate to library services and the increasing importance to government administration of the availability of records storage, loan and retrieval services and records management advice and planning.

Legislation

Pending the introduction of separate legislation, the Public Record Office operates under the Archives section of the Libraries Act, 1982, and remains responsible to the libraries Board.

The Board is responsible for approval of disposal schedules and standing authorities to destroy public records. All state, local and semi-government agencies are subject to the present legislation, the main thrust of which is to enable public records to be collected by the Public Record Office and to prevent unauthorised destruction or disposal of public records.

Legislation separate from the Libraries Act is in preparation; currently the policy areas underpinning the proposed new legislation are being reviewed as part of the development of drafting instructions.

The aim is to produce a Bill which will formally establish the Public Record Office as an agency separate from the State Library and the Libraries Board, delineate the objectives and functions of the Office, clearly set out the responsibilities of government agencies (serving an educative as well as proscriptive role), and be capable of realistic, if gradual, implementation.

Objectives

The corporate objectives of the Public Record Office are:

1. To select, acquire, preserve and provide access to those records of state administration which have archival significance.
2. To provide a bulk storage and retrieval service for infrequently accessed government records which must be retained for legal/audit/administrative requirements or pending archival appraisal.
3. To provide a consultancy service to government agencies in the development of efficient records management practices.

4. To conserve all records in secure environmentally controlled conditions; undertake basic conservation measures during processing and co-ordinate programs of stabilisation/repair/restoration for selected archival records.
5. To provide public access to records through public reference and correspondence services, provision of finding aids, development of access policies and regulating access to restricted records.
6. To manage PRO resources and activities efficiently, effectively, within budget and following established principles for occupational health and safety, equal employment opportunity and equal service provision for all sections of the community.

Organisational Structure

The divisional manager of the Public Record Office is formally titled Manager of Public Records - in other jurisdictions known as the Keeper of Public Records or the State Archivist.

Following an organisational review in 1986, the Public Record Office Division is in the process of implementing both a Branch structure and a team structure:

- * Agency Services Branch - responsible for

- Technical systems
- Facilities management
- Transfer program
- Loans to and returns from agencies
- Records management training to Public Record Office Staff
- Provision of Records Management advice to agencies

- * Reference Services Branch - responsible for

- Public user services
- Reference correspondence
- Training of Public Record Office staff in reference and desk work and professional archival procedures
- Conservation programmes and activities

Agency Services Branch includes two teams, one of archivists/records managers, the other of repository clerical staff.

Reference Services Branch includes two teams, reference archivists and technician, and office-based clerical staff.

Both the branches and all the teams are newly established. This structure has been introduced to allow a period of concentrated development of expertise and teamwork and to clarify lines of communication. It must be stressed however that both Branches are inter-dependent and will work in close liaison, and that all four teams are vital to the Public Record Office's operational efficiency.

All team leaders - the two Branch heads, and the two clerical supervisors - with the Manager and an elected staff representative, constitute the Public Record Office Executive.

A third Branch which would specialise in Access/Disposal/Survey was planned during the 1986 organisational review, but has not been established due to staffing constraints. Hence access and disposal policy matters will be handled by the Executive and procedural matters on an ad hoc basis.

Liaison and Memberships

The Manager is on the Executive of the Department of Local Government, is a member of the Policy and Planning Committee of the State Conservation Centre, chairs the PRO/State Library Equal Employment Opportunity Committee, and is the observer on the State Library Executive.

Other PRO staff are members of the EEO Committee, the Staff Development and Training Committee, the Combined Union Committee and the department's group of contact officers available to staff affected by general and/or sexual harassment. Several staff are also involved in specific work-related groups such as the Bindery Committee, as the PRO is a client of the State Library's Bindery, Photographic and Micrographic Services.

For many reasons - history, proximity, efficiency, but mainly because of the overlaps in services - the PRO maintains close liaison with State Library branches, especially the Mortlock Library of South Australia.

Substantial administrative, financial and management services support is received from departmental units, but there is a move towards devolution to Divisions and Branches of the day to day procedures.

The Manager chairs the joint State/Federal Working Party on Public Records Management Programs. This is a body comprised of PRO and other state members and Australian Archives staff, and it was responsible for the submissions which led to the establishment of a joint repository facility, and for training and development assistance to the PRO from Australian Archives. This liaison has been extremely beneficial to the PRO during its development from Archives Branch, and the relationship continues to be very close and cooperative.

The PRO is a Corporate member of the Records Management Association of Australia, the Australian Council of Archives, the Commonwealth Archives Association and the SA Historical Society, with many staff also being individual members of such bodies and of the Australian Society of Archivists (including three members of ASA state executive). Contact is maintained with State Archivists both informally and through STAG, the State and territory Archivists Group. There is a close relationship with the History Trust of South Australia and less frequent but cordial liaison with the South Australian Museum, the Art Gallery of South Australia and various institutional archives.

The client agencies of the PRO number several hundred, (state government departments and local government authorities total over 150, plus all semi-government bodies).

Accommodation

The headquarters and public reference and reading facilities of the Public Record Office are located in the Basement of the State Library Building, North Terrace, Adelaide, adjacent to

the other institutions on the "Cultural Boulevard" of the City. At these premises are offices, Work-rooms and a stack with approximately 4,800 linear metres of shelving. This facility is air-conditioned and fire-protected, and is used to store high access and high-risk (fragile) material.

There is also an off-site repository at Netley (9,500 linear metres) which is airconditioned, humidified and fire-protected. It is used for the storage of permanent records which are less frequently retrieved.

The Joint State/Federal Government Records Repository at Gepps Cross was handed over in March 1987 to its joint tenants, the PRO and the Australian Archives. This repository was purpose-built and incorporates common foyer, staff amenities and undercover loading docks, and separate office and repository facilities for PRO and AA. The PRO facilities include a meeting room, agency visitors room, secure room, audio-visual materials storage (7 day 24-hour airconditioned), a large lending-processing area and space for later development of copying facilities. All these areas are air conditioned. The main repository space (potential capacity over 30,000 linear metres) is not air-conditioned but is of a high standard being designed for bulk storage of semi-current records, particularly those of temporary (non-archival) value. At the time of writing the repository was only partly shelved to the extent necessary to accommodate holdings (11,000 linear metres), relocated from former off-site repositories, but it is hoped that additional funds for shelving will be provided in 1987-88. The whole main storage area has been laid with compactus tracks and the building planned to allow development of specialised storage and treatment as funds become available. The opening of this facility has enabled the PRO to relinquish sub-standard off-site accommodation and hence to offer agencies a viable and cost-effective alternative to retaining their records in CBD office accommodation or renting their own



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(often unsatisfactory) storage.

It is believed that this joint State/Federal facility is unique in terms of public records storage and a rare example of a state government and the Australian Government cooperating to achieve cost savings by joint use of some areas and facilities, and economies of scale.

Through the development and commissioning of this joint project there has been a remarkable degree of cooperation between not only PRO and AA, but also the Federal and SA Departments of Housing and Construction, the Department of Local Government and Administrative Services and the developers, Consulere. Brownbuilt successfully tendered for the shelving contracts, including relocating and converting existing static shelving to compactus for both PRO and AA. The project was not only unique - it has been adventurous and given its scale and complexity, potentially perilous, but due to the enthusiasm and goodwill of all concerned it has proceeded without major complications and the result is an impressive new facility which neither the PRO nor AA could have achieved alone.

The PRO and AA are developing a joint management agreement for the operation of the building, including single contracts where feasible (eg. cleaning), shared use of materials handling equipment, and other cooperative ventures such as joint training programmes.

Budgetary Control

The PRO is allocated its own budget within the Department of Local Government and must manage three components - salaries, operating accommodation and services - being accountable to both the Libraries Board (for the operating budget) and to the Director of Local Government (overall) for budgetary control.

It is difficult to compare the present budget with that of the former Archives Branch (which had an operating budget of \$4,000 in 1983-84) because devolution of responsibility, funds and accountability has entailed giving the PRO control of money which was formerly spent on its behalf. There has however been a substantial improvement over the past three years, with

an upgrading of working conditions, furniture and equipment, the ability to buy storage boxes and conservation materials in bulk, introduction of staff development activities and many other benefits.

Nevertheless the budgetary constraints are considerable, particularly on staffing, and no funds are available to undertake any major records holdings surveys, to mount a publications programme, or to implement high-technology solutions to storage problems. Such activities await an upturn in the economy and "new initiative" funding in the future.

Systems

The PRO recently implemented a revised Government Record Group system. The GRS system is similar to the AA's CRS systems. It is unlikely that records accessioned under the old Group system will be converted except where they are small groups which can be readily converted while larger recent transfers are being processed. An Agency manual is being prepared and internal procedures are under review. The PRO has acquired a personal computer which is being used to assist with location and relocation records. It is anticipated that both location control and loans control programmes may be developed. Although the GRS system was developed with formats which are computer compatible, it is unlikely that detailed holdings inventories will be automated in the foreseeable future.

Jubilee 150

The Public Record Office was involved in many J150 activities, too numerous to list fully, but including a travelling exhibition mounted by the South Australian Department of Housing and Construction of the architectural plans of major public buildings. This latter exhibition featured some of the Public Record Office's "treasures", a series of 19th century hand-water-coloured architectural drawings. Copies of photographs, maps and documents were used in numerous exhibitions and included in various books published for the Jubilee Year.

The records of the administration of J150 have been transferred to the Public Record Office.

Conservation

Because of the past neglect of old records, both before and after transfer, there are still backlogs of material which require varying degrees of conservation work. However this problem is tackled in several ways:

- . improving the standard of storage facilities, eg. Gepps Cross project;
- . in-house programs such as mounting photographs on acid-free board, encapsulating documents
- . the State Library Bindery re-binds some material and undertakes some forms of conservation work;
- . the State Conservation Centre, with which the Public Record Office has full client status, undertakes complex and specialised conservation work;
- . a limited program of microfilming to provide use copies of heavily used material is underway.

Archives and Records Management - The Future

The Public Record Office is tackling, albeit on a limited scale, records management issues within the South Australian Public Service. Its objectives include assisting in the improvement of the efficiency of public administration by advising on records management systems, and this service will be extended as resources allow.

The opening of the Gepps Cross Repository will enable transfer of sub-substantial quantities of semi-current records from Central Business District offices to appropriate and less expensive accommodation, and through liaison with the Government Office Accommodation Committee it is anticipated that some departments will be able to relinquish rented storage accommodation.

For much of the recent past the PRO has been occupied so intensively with re-organisation, major relocations (Netley, December 1984; Gepps Cross, March-April 1987) and other internal and "coal face" issues that there has been little time for policy review,

or consideration of national issues such as standardisation of archival terminology, or planning the long-term management of new information storage media.

Short-term priorities include completing the drafting of new legislation, developing and consolidating the skills and knowledge of staff (many of whom are recently recruited), and achieving higher morale and greater productivity after a period of almost constant change.

The PRO will also be promoting its agency and reference services more actively and measuring performance against its objectives.

The development of records management services to agencies will be gradual, and where possible will utilise cooperation between agencies to maximise impact. General disposal schedules and consistent access policies and procedures need to be developed by consultation between similar agencies, and between archivists and records managers, as well as between the PRO and its clients. Given limited resources in all sectors of government, re-inventing the wheel is an expensive luxury, and letting all known wheels roll in any direction they choose is wasteful and chaotic. The role of the Public Record Office in the Records Management area will be that of facilitator/advisor/coordinator/referral agency to those clients who want their wheels to run smoothly and in the desired direction of efficient public records management and hence, more efficient public administration.

And if records are managed efficiently during their active and semi-current states, the tasks of archivists - to select, acquire, describe, preserve and make accessible those records which are of archival significance - will be greatly assisted.

VAL SIEBERT, MANAGER, PRO

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WAY DOWN !!!!

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

I am dismayed to read the catch wording "The Big One", describing the Fourth National Convention, to be held in Melbourne later this year.

The use of such wording is derogatory to the best interests of R.M.A.A. conventions as it implies that all other conventions are inferior.

To allow this to continue will degenerate future conventions into an open sloggng with every state endeavouring to outdo the others. Whilst this may well be the subterfuge, it should not be permitted to be advertised as such.

The previous conventions have all had catch wording, but there has been no underlying comparative implications.

I call upon the Federal councillors to put a stop to this unethical practice now. The success or failure of any convention ought to be left to the delegates attending.

If states become so parochial and short sighted in their endeavours, then I fear the Association will never amount to more than a factional body of incoherent branches purporting to belong to a national body.

M.Nairn.
23/3/87

Dear Sir,

The end of another financial year is nigh, and I wish to put the following questions to the members of the R.M.A.A. and ask that careful consideration be given to the answers supplied.

Are you a SUPPORTER of the Association ?

Have you written an article for the Informaa ?

Have you offered your services to chair a meeting or to present a paper ?

Do you attend the meetings of the Association ?

Do you offer an apology if you cannot attend ?

Have you offered any suggestions to Branch Council for future meetings ?

Are you prepared to support the members who put in the time and effort to produce an event that is of national/international significance to the RMAA ?

I guess all of us have been guilty at one time or another but if we could all say yes to the above questions don't you think that the Association could be stronger and more united and present a more positive portfolio to participating firms/departments/councils than as is at present evident. Come on, it is you the members, who can answer these questions. Let's hear the answers.....
Please get in contact with YOUR Branch Secretary and make a positive contribution to your Branch's success in the coming year.

H. Francis.
25/5/87.

BRIAN TYNDALE A.R.M.A.

S.A. President

Brian Tyndale has been involved in the South Australian Branch of the RMAA since its genesis. Around 1975-76, some members of the Micrographics Association, spurred on by the NSW Branch decided to establish an RMAA interest in South Australia. Brian was duly appointed to the Steering Committee which operated for approximately 6 months up to the Inaugural meeting of the SA Branch in 1977.



At this time, Brian was Manager of the Micrographics Division at Kodak. He subsequently became Secretary of a Branch dominated by ex-microfilm people, but also including other members who are still active on the committee today, like Margaret Mainland. Brian also recalls a heavy representation on Branch Council from Adelaide City Council.

From Kodak, Brian progressed to Computer Microfilm of Australia where he was South Australian Branch Manager for 5-6 years. Brian has also been Major Accounts Representative for Olivetti and is currently Marketing Director of Communications and Peripherals Australia.

Brian led the team that hosted the most successful convention (to date !) in Alice Springs in 1986. He believes that Records Management will end up being a highly automated computerized discipline. Brian sees the problem of executive management as an evolution of office-based thinking. A determined move toward structural documentation ie, the concept of the need to have a piece of paper, the document life-cycle and the consequent need to recognize it and treat it as a life cycle, is necessary to make that paper as cost effective as possible. If we can define a life-cycle, we can demonstrate a cost to the organisation.

On a National scale, Brian considers that with total Australia wide representation as we now have, it is easier to achieve recognition particularly with Commonwealth Departments and large companies. As a lobby group, we now have the ability to approach State senators to promote legislation in areas like legality, retention, freedom of information. If these areas are addressed, REcords Management assumes a higher profile as a discipline and uniformity in recognized qualifications.

Brian has a Diploma in Business Administration, and a variety of Business Certificates. These days however, he is more often found teaching than learning - he has a considerable track record in lecturing at the South Australian Institute of TEchnology in micrographics, and currently does some seminars on data communications. Brian has a 24 handicap in golf and also enjoys wood turning and music.

SUPPORT

ARE YOU GIVING YOUR BRANCH, YOUR COUNCIL, YOUR EDITOR -
EVEN ONE TENTH OF THE SUPPORT THEY NEED - AND YOU CAN GIVE ?

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RECORDS MANAGERS

A special interest group meeting has been planned for you to allow you to discuss your particular concerns and problems with peers from around Australia and International (not just locally) in a total learning environment at the RMAA 4th National Convention 6-9 September, 1987.

This session will be jointly chaired by Mr. Bill Williams ARMA - Records Manager, Melbourne City Council, Mr. Peter Smith MRMA - Records Manager, Shorland Country Council, Mr. Jim Shepherd ARMA - Chief Clerk Administration Department, Brisbane City Council and Mr. Wayne Gardner - Supervisor, Records Management for Sack Tel in Regina, Canada.

Three short talks will be given, Records Retention in Victorian Local Government, Local Government Office Automation Case Study and Disaster Contingency Planning in Urban Municipalities.

Participants are encouraged to submit for discussion any topic or questions for the panel, just attach them to your registration form.

This meeting is an effective means of establishing a national/international network of RMAA members and contacts within your industry, all having common goals and objectives, and working together to solve your very unique problems.

For a copy of an Advanced Programme Guide and Registration Form, please ring (03) 417 3738 or write to:

RMAA
4th National Convention
GPO Box 2270U
Melbourne Vic 3001.

Meet you in Melbourne in '87.

ALICE SPRINGS REVISITED

An Audio Visual Perspective.....

The 3rd National Convention (along with the 1st and 2nd Conventions) is now part of the RMAA Dreamtime. The 4th is now on the horizon.

A timely occasion, perhaps, to relive for a few fleeting moments the unique happenings that were the "3rd National Convention".

As a member of the Convention Committee I heard and saw it all, (however as an Archivist my lips are sealed for the next 30 years !!!)

The Sheraton was a superb venue for the Convention and the ubiquitous Alex Van Kersen (now at the Sheraton Bangkok) always there to keep an eye on things.

The Poolside Cocktails, the lunches and the surroundings were positively idyllic. The atmosphere was very conducive to delegates and others forming small intimate groups to discuss vital issues :-

food, drink, Casino and...pool, spa....??

The trips to the Chinese Restaurant and the Mexican Steakhouse were quite unforgettable. I wonder if Maurice and Iain can still remember the hot peanuts!!!!

Who can forget the dinner at the Chateau Hornsby :-

casual, intimate, entertaining, and informative...

Rod Steinert and his Australian evening was an absolute gem of a presentation both audiovisually and gastronomically - (witchetty grubs notwithstanding).

His measurement of a "Metric Hand-full" for country cooking would have had the Metric Conversion Board turning in its proverbial grave!!!

I can taste them even now - the Spotted Dog sweet; the billy tea; the vegie soup country style...

Barney the Spruiker was an absolute delight; his rendition of Banjo's "Clancy..." was the best I've ever heardin such a setting in the middle of this great country it was almost as if Banjo and Clancy were right there with us.

The band, Blackwood, was very professional and most entertaining

with a wide repertoire and unique style.

Spare a thought for the last bus to leave the Chateau that night.....

---Some one who shall forever remain nameless (if not odourless) took literally the lyrics of Barney's "The night McArthur f....d and saved the town from drought".... and just about wrote off the bus and all passengers! Seriously though I thought the audio-visual presentation of PARL-AIRS system was ambitious and the audio-visual highlight of the formal convention programme:

Frontend PC (with BARCO display) connected to Brisbane (700 km) via a standard Telecom line and supported by slide and verbal presentation was Top Stuff !!

The success of the Convention was due in no small measure to the dedicated delegates, top quality speakers, confident and committed trade exhibitors and a top class Convention Committee with whom I was proud to be associated: - Helen Francis, Brigitte Kleinig, Maurice Andrews, Matt Selfridge and Iain Nielsen.

Certain Committee members did however leave themselves open for criticism.. Promises were made and not kept, over indulgence was barely noticed, sleeping during sessions was overlooked, midnight to dawn jaunts in the pool and spa were commonplace... much to the chagrin of Sheraton staff. However as delegates, none of these incidents would have been obvious - much !!! And so to Melbourne.....and other happenings.....

Spiros Sarris, ARMA
South Australia

QUOTE:

Please be patient.....the hurrier

I do.....the behinder I get !!!



AROUND THE BRANCHES

QUEENSLAND

A 1 day seminar is being held in late July/early August, aimed at management; to make them aware that RMAA does exist in Queensland and why they need Records Management. For further information, please contact Murray Stewart on (07) 2254060.

Alan Kavenagh has been appointed Records Manager at Albert Shire Council, and takes up residence on 18th May.

PSB in Queensland contacted Kangaroo Point TAFE to conduct an 8 week course for State Government Records Clerks. The course was conducted on a 2 day/week basis. 29 clerks attended and Harry Haxton was the lecturer. Queensland has just resurrected the Monthly Informaa - articles are welcome from all states !!!!

NEW SOUTH WALES

Membership of the NSW Branch is increasing. We have gained new members every month of this financial year.

A successful seminar was held on 23rd February at Shore Inn, Artarmon, with 86 people in attendance. The Keynote Address was given by the Honourable John Acquilina MP, Minister for Youth and Community Services. Subjects covered were Time Management, Critical Issues in Education for Records Managers; Archivists, Librarians and the Information Era and Documentation Charge Control.

NSW Branch has 12 councillors and meets monthly prior to members meetings. The February Meeting was an open forum and the March Meeting subject was "The Pros and Cons of Micrographics - How, When and Why."

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Spiros Sarris has been appointed Repository Manager for the Public Records Office' new joint Federal/State Repository at Gepps Cross.

Helen Francis has also left the Commonwealth Government and has taken up the position of Officer-in-Charge, Records at Adelaide City Council.

Defence Research Centre, Salisbury played host to approximately 20 members on 24th March. After a delightful BBQ lunch, members were shown a film on "Defence in the 80's" and then a demonstration of the Centre's computerised Records Management system. Many thanks to Andrew Wood and Alan Kappler !!

SA Branch recently celebrated a 10th Birthday. Members enjoyed a lively dinner at the API Commerce Club - and looking forward to the next 10 years !

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

The ACT Branch's main activity is conducting monthly workshops every second Tuesday of the month, except January. The workshops in the main have been very successful with attendance ranging from 30 to 90 people. Topics cover not only records management matters but also topics such as stress management, supervision etc.

The Branch has provided on records management for members/potential members. The ACT Branch will be producing the next Informaa Quarterly - all articles gratefully accepted !!!!

Considerable planning for the 1988 Convention has been undertaken.



AROUND THE BRANCHES (CONT)

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The Minister for Science and Technology, Mr Bryce, opened a historical and micrographic exhibition during a cocktail party at the Alexander Library on Tuesday 21st April. About 150 guests, many of them archivists from around the world who were in Perth for the Biennial Conference of the Australian Society of Archivists, were at the function. Among them were Jane Nokes, Margaret Medcalf, Michael Roper from London, Margaret Chambers, Christine Shervington, Kandy Henderson and Sam Kaima. The conference was staged to study the role of archivists in conserving the national heritage and the impact on new technologies on their work. It was the first archivists' conference held in WA.

TASMANIA

The Tasmanian Branch recently held a one day seminar titled "Records Administration and Today's Information Manager". Dennis Coomber gave the Keynote Address and David Hawkes from the Commission of Planning and Development delivered a paper on Management's Expectations from Registries. The seminar was well attended by representatives from Local, State and Federal Government departments and private sector. Some attendees travelled from Launceston and Devonport.

On 9th July a ½ day seminar will be conducted at Australian Archives Centre in Hobart topic being, "Archiving and Disposal Schedules."

Currently Tasmania has 50 members, with an average attendance at meetings being 85-90 people.

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Membership in the NT is steadily increasing, with additions from the private sector.

A Luncheon meeting was held in May at the Palmerston Room of the Don Hotel, to enable new members to meet other Branch members on an informal basis.

The June meeting will be a visit to the Medical REcords Section of the Royal Darwin Hospital on 26th June at 3.00pm. Drinks and eats to follow.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE RMAA WILL BE

HELD ON TUESDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER, 1987

REGENT HOTEL, MELBOURNE 08.45 AM

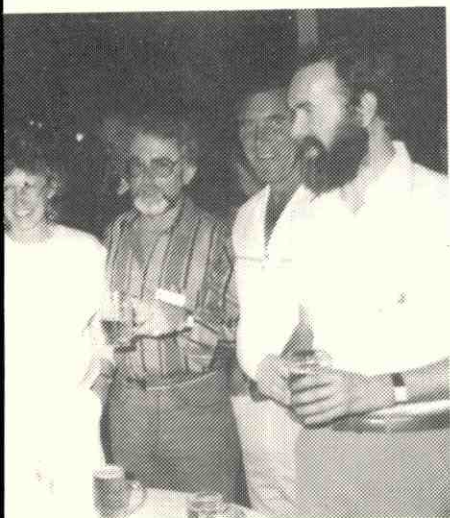
In accordance with the Articles of Association, notice is hereby given of the date and time for the AGM of the Association. A member wishing to bring before the AGM any motion or business not relating to the ordinary annual business of the Association, shall give notice thereof in writing to the Federal Council, not less than forty-five (45) days before the day of meeting and no motion or business other than the business brought forward by such Council shall come before the meeting unless notice thereof has been so given.

T. Tolhurst,
Federal Secretary.

Resum









RECORDS MANAGEMENT IN A TRADE UNION

The Municipal Officers Association in South Australia is a branch of a federally registered trade union representing the interests of members employed in local government, power industry and related public bodies. The South Australian Branch has a membership of some 5000 and is staffed by two elected officers and eight employees. In this paper I shall give an overview of the information management operations of the Association, and a brief view to historical trade union records in this state.

The current organizational structure of the branch reflects a commitment to, and recognition of one of its main resources - its information, which ranks alongside human resources and finance. Consequently, I, as Information Services Officer, am one of three managers, and preside over the administrative records system, intermediate records series, the library, and supervise the administrative staff. The Associations recognition is also reflected in my involvement in the creation of our Corporate Plan.

Our work at the union is dependant upon knowledge, and the management of the information is increasingly seen to be crucial to the effectiveness of the industrial relations officer. Recognition of this in 1985 and a great deal of preliminary work, led to the launch in the following year of a program, together with my appointment, to address the subject of information management. Specifically I regarded the task as one of transforming data into information via systems of control and management, identifying the quantum of redundant material and non-current records which were taking prime office space, and making arrangements for disposal and retention procedures.

The information services collections at the Union comprise (with the exception of data processing): 1) current correspondence, committee, and industrial case files; 2) intermediate and inactive records; 3) library and research material; 4) publications.

1. CURRENT RECORDS

Our current records series include administrative and correspondence files, and industrial cases. These are arranged in numerical sequence in vertical shelving and are accessed by subject and name indexes. The subject index is governed by a thesaurus of terms which are consistent with the usage in other industrial relations organisations such as Trade Union Training Authority. This list of indexable headings, is the authority and the tool which guides the action officer to the files on a given subject. Language control thus offered, action officers can have confidence in their search, although they are urged to participate in the constant development of the list.

Procedures established for the system of control and maintenance involve the action officers as participants. They are responsible for the filing of the correspondence and file notes they generate, and these tasks have now been accepted as an integral task in the carrying out of business. Both retrieval and tracking control are carried out manually using a card system, and it is an objective of our Corporate Plan for 1987 to investigate software options which will facilitate computerised recordings.

2. INTERMEDIATE

Since commencing at the MOA in January, 1986, I have embarked upon a program of sentencing files to inactive records storage. Some 1500 have thus been placed, following examination of the contents to determine relevance of the information therein. Decisions were then taken as to

whether the old file might be closed and referred to the new system file, or converted into the new system. The inactive files are stored in archives transfer boxes and when the transfer is complete, will contribute to the creation of a retention/disposal authority in conjunction with the Mortlock Library of South Australiana. The MOA indeed whilst some files and records may have been incomplete, revealed a wealth of data dating back to its beginnings in the State in 1943. Transforming that data into retrievable information has been rewarding and stimulating.

3. LIBRARY

Our library comprises approximately 35 metres of reference tools, monographs, serials, pamphlets, gazettes, bound cases and industrial prints. It is catalogued according to the Dewey Decimal system and indexed according to our list of indexable headings in addition to author and title entries. In this respect, a search of our indexable headings will produce all administrative files, industrial cases, books and journals that we hold on a particular subject. Both catalogue and shelflist are stored on computer. Formal budgetary allocations included on this current budget facilitated the implementation of a purchasing policy which is geared more closely to the needs of the industrial officer. Our collection of industrial court and commission prints is extensive and has been indexed and bound.

4. PUBLICATIONS

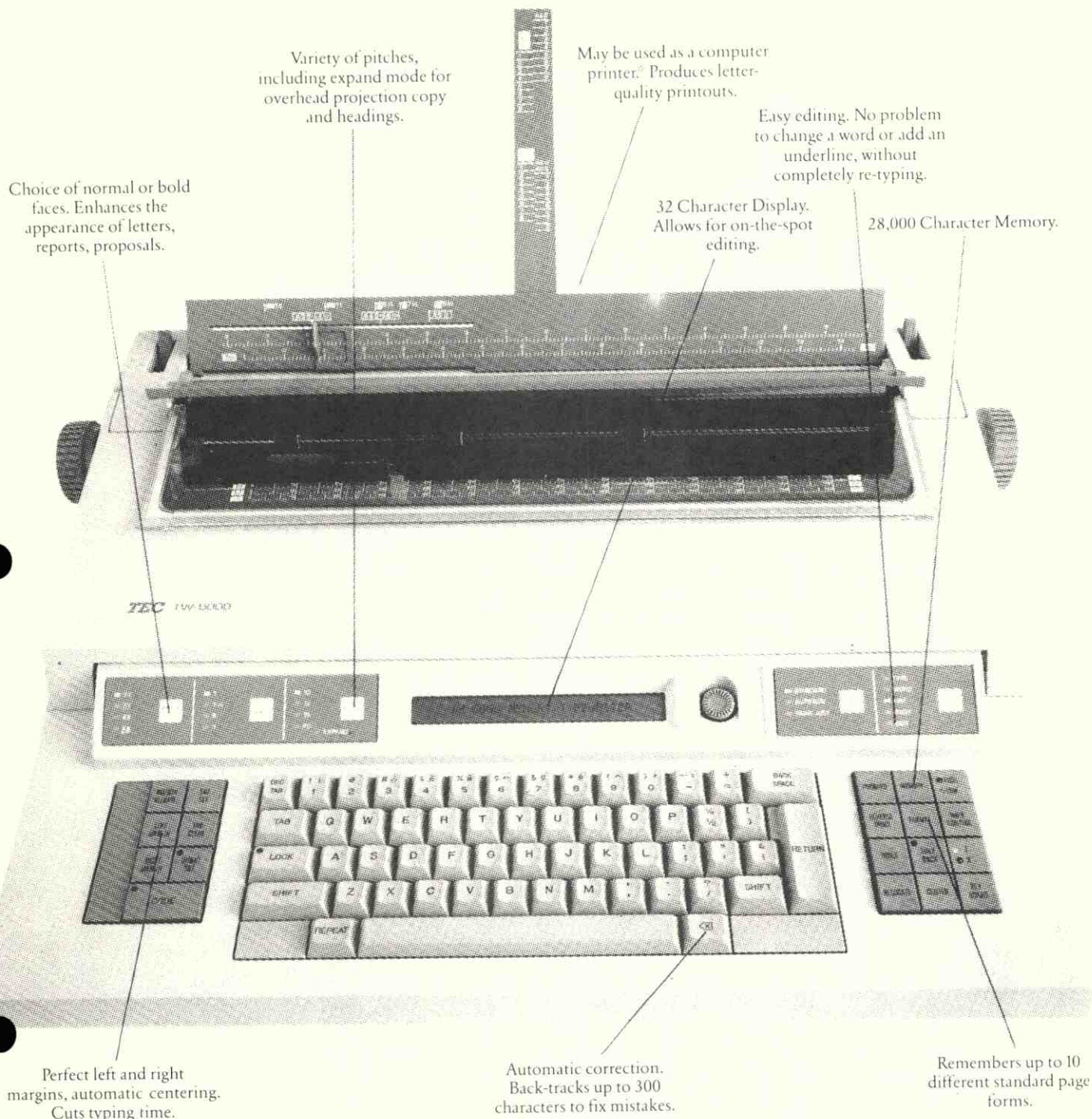
Sox newsletters a month on average, are produced by the MOA and disseminated to the membership. This correlates to two communications per month to every member in each area of the membership. It is this form of communication on a regular and frequent basis that presents the Union most visibly to the membership. As such, the newsletters need to lend themselves to updating recent events, contentious claims, workers rights, and progress in specific areas. In addition and on a macro scale, our quarterly journal serves more as an informative educational medium. The production of these communications is a cooperative effort of the whole staff. Layout and content is recommended by an Editorial Committee which has representatives from each area of the membership, and is coordinated by myself.

PRESERVATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S TRADE UNION HISTORY

South Australia's trade unions' archival material is preserved at the Mortlock Library of South Australiana. This library provides a major central location which ensures that South Australian historical material will be permanently housed in its home state as a vital resource for present and future generations. Its collection includes South Australian history from pre-settlement to the present day.

Many trade unions have transferred records to Mortlock - some collections of course being more comprehensive and better organized than others. Where the union prefers to keep its original records, microfilming is undertaken, with Mortlock maintaining a master negative, a working copy positive, and, where possible a duplicate negative. Such a procedure exists for the records of the South Australian Trades and Labour Council. Its records, including minutes of meetings, letter books and special committees (e.g., the eight hour day committee of 1894) date back to 1884, although some gaps do exist. This was quite an achievement in less than fifty years of settlement. Most of these records of the unions have restricted access.

Pictorial records have also been preserved at the Mortlock Library in the form of union banners. Five such works of art date around the turn of the century, the most recent I saw being a 1912 Bakers' and Carters' Banner.



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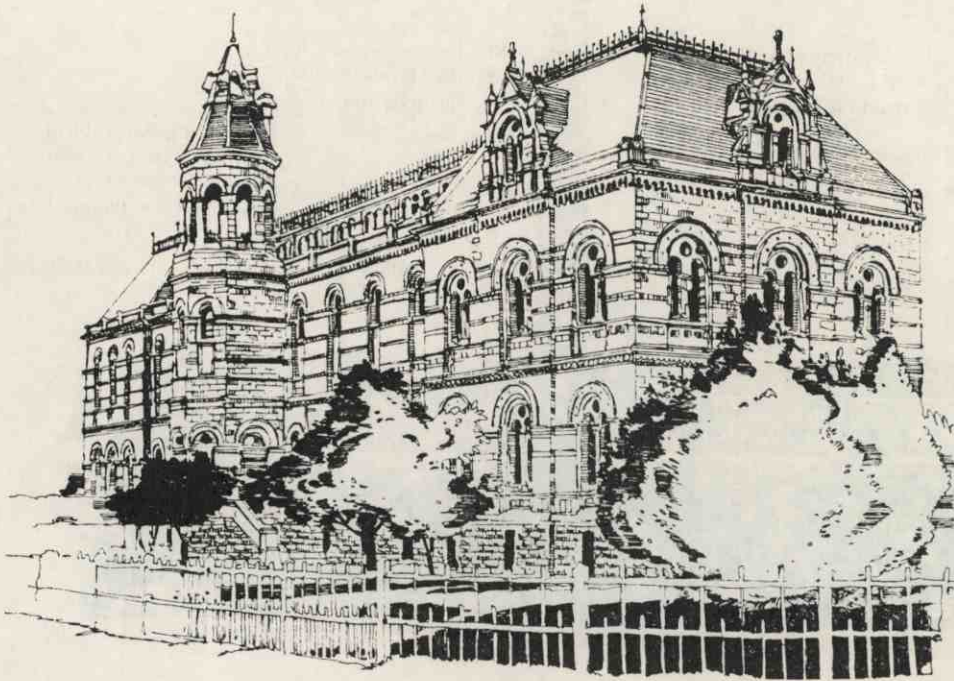
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"The interior of Mortlock has been fully restored to its original Victorian dignity and is reputed to be the best example of any mid-Victorian library in Australia."

These are magnificent works of art and their current state of relative good repair is testimonial to the labour spent on them so long ago. Most are huge works, measuring up to 3.5 metres by 4.5 metres, are stitched in panels, and are double sided - differing pictorial representations on each side.

Storage methods in the past not conducive to proper preservation and conservation of such art work has encouraged cracking in the oil paint, patches where the oils have become too tired to hang on any longer, and of lesser import, a withering of the acrylic silken border, and stitching between panels. The latter two conditions will more easily be rectified. A conservation program is planned to reinstate the former glory of the art work. Due to impending damage prevailing light conditions may engender, these banners will only present themselves to the public at exhibitions and will otherwise be stored appropriately at Mortlock.

The records of trade unions are an integral part of the history of society. They provide for current and future generations a history of labour, developmental changes in the workforce, and the changing character of the industrial relations arena.

HELEN ONOPKO, ARMA
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

● **T**he RMAA 4th National Convention Committee is proud to announce that:

Mr. John W. Grace, Privacy Commissioner of Canada, has accepted to be the keynote speaker at the RMAA 4th National Convention 6-9 September, 1987.

Mr. Grace will speak on Privacy Legislation and Access to Information - the Canadian Experience.

This topic should be of great interest to all Records Managers and others both in government service and private enterprise.

● Mr. Grace has also agreed to take part in a special workshop for FOI officers on Tuesday pm, this will give those in

attendance the opportunity to discuss in more detail how Privacy and FOI legislation has affected Records Management in Canada. Time will also be set aside to discuss your particular concerns and problems with your peers from around Australia in a total learning environment.

Participants are encouraged to submit for discussion any topic or questions for Mr. Grace, just attach them to your registration form.

For a copy of an Advanced Programme Guide and Registration Form, please ring (03) 417 3738 or write to:

RMAA
4th National Convention
GPO Box 2270U
Melbourne Vic 3001.

Make it to Melbourne in '87.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

NSW: 8th July at: Conference Room
NSW State Archives
2 Globe Street
The Rocks, Sydney

Time: 5.30pm

SA: 23rd July at: API Commerce Club
Industry House
12 Pirie Street
Adelaide

Time: 5.30pm

NT: 7th August at: Conference Room
Department of Lands & Housing
Sturt House
Casuarina, Darwin

Time: 3.30pm

WA: 20th July at: Alexander Library Complex
Francis Street
Perth

Time: 12.30pm

QLD: 15th July at: Carawah Women's Club Inc
The Mansions
George Street
Brisbane

Time: 7.30pm Dinner Meeting
Guest Speaker: Ros McCormack, Archivist, John Oxley Library

VIC: 9th July at: 27th Floor
35 Collins Street
(BHP Petroleum Lecture Room)
Melbourne

Time: 4.00pm

TAS: 24th July at: Hydro Electricity Commission Conference Room
4 Elizabeth Street
Hobart

Time: 6.00pm

DON'T FORGET YOUR STATE'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - SEE YOU THERE !!!!!!!

CD-ROM: Possible Implications for Records Management

John Goodell, Ph.D., ARMA, AIMM

Introduction

This paper will briefly review CD-ROM and related technology before discussing a few examples illustrating current uses which may have implications for records management operations. The final section will examine the characteristics of CD-ROM and consider how they fit records management needs.

Laser Technology

Before going into CD-ROM's applications and potential applications a brief description of the technology is in order. In general, it is like the production of phonograph records where a master is made and copies pressed from it. The master is normally glass which has little holes, called pits, burned into it by a high power laser. The areas between the pits are called lands. The pits and lands are arranged in a spiral pattern on a 120mm disc with a 15mm hole starting from the inside edge of the disc. The spiral is about 5 kilometres long which gives an idea of the smallness of its width (0.6 of a micrometer which is 1/1000th of a millimeter). The pits are 0.12 micrometers deep.

After the master has been made, plastic copies are produced using an injection molding process. The information surface is covered with transparent plastic and backed with a reflective material. Finally, a lacquer coat is applied to protect it and the disc is labelled.

In order to play the disc a lower power laser is used to read the pits and lands. When it passes over the pits and lands, varying amounts of light are reflected and these variations are translated into digital data used by the computer.(2)

What is CD-ROM ?

CD-ROM stands for Compact Disc - Read Only Memory and is one of a number of optical media for the storage of information. Probably

the one familiar to most people is the compact audio disc, but there are others.

The videodisc and the related laser technology were developed in the late 1970's, about the same time that video tape recorders/players were being marketed, which accounts for the lack of commercial success of videodisc players. After all, who would purchase a machine which could only play pre-recorded programs when you could purchase one which would let you record as well as play ? However, it is significant the original work on optical storage was done with a view towards the entertainment market, because the funding for the R-& D involved most likely would not have been as readily forthcoming for other applications.

Write Once Read Many (WORM) discs are, as the name implies, discs which can be written upon only once. But, of course, once the data have been placed on the discs they can be read many times. They are not erasable and so are secure.

Another medium is the optical card which is about the size of a credit card but holds 2 million bytes. A United States health insurance company plans to use this technology to record each of its customer's medical history on a card. The customer will be issued the card and when requiring medical services will present it to the hospital or doctor who will have a reader/writer. It seems apparent that other applications will be found in the near future.

CD-ROM, though, is the medium which is receiving considerable attention at present. In appearance the standard discs are similar to compact audio discs, 120mm or 4.72 inches in diameter. (the reason for this size is that it holds about one hour of music). Yet, CD-ROM discs hold approximately 550 megabytes --no, that is not a misprint. This is equivalent to approximately 1400 floppy discs or about 250,000 A4 pages.

If one disc will not hold enough data for a particular application, it is possible to use optical disc libraries or "jukeboxes" to assist with the physical handling of numerous discs. These devices operate something like the musical jukebox where a mechanical arm retrieves a phonograph record from its storage position, puts it on the turntable, removes it from the turntable after playing, and returns it to its storage position. Jukeboxes can contain several hundred discs.

Creating a master disc can be expensive perhaps as much as \$8000 dollars. But, copies are cheap, about \$5.00 each, and they should be reasonably durable. Laboratory tests indicate a life span of at least five years, but experience with videodiscs shows they have been around for ten years and are still useable. Of course, the actual life span is unknown and, with proper care, could be much longer. For example, there are 78rpm phonograph records which have been around for decades and are still useable. With are CD-ROM's could last quite a long time because, unlike phonograph records, the playing of them does not involve physically touching the surface of the disc where the information is stored. Only the laser beam touches the information surface.

CD-ROM discs are secure --- as the name says, "read only memory". Users cannot alter data on the discs as they can on magnetic media. Further, the master should always be kept under tight security so it can be available for making additional copies if required.

Players vary in cost, but are about \$1,500. For this you set the player and an interface card for your microcomputer. It should be noted that the microcomputer may be used for other purposes when not required for accessing information on CD-ROM.

In order to make use of the hardware, you will need software to get at the information. This software should have features designed to meet your needs. For example, if users are novices or only occasional users, a menu driven retrieval system probably would be better than a command based one. On the other hand, if they are experienced or frequent searchers, a command based system probably would suit them. Other features which should be considered

include free text-searching, use of Boolean operators, ability to save search strategies, etc. Although retrieval software is important, it is not the focus of this discussion which is the storage medium, CD-ROM.

Some Current Uses

Basically, CD-ROM is a storage medium which allows a large amount of data to be placed in a relatively small space cheaply. Because it generally has not been practical to put the full text of records in machine readable form and access it directly, many computer applications in the past have consisted only of high powered indexes which access information about information (ie bibliographic information). In fact, many CD-ROM applications involve transferring bibliographic databases to disc and selling them to users, thus eliminating communication charges. With CD-ROM full text data bases are a practical reality.

An example of this is The Electronic Encyclopedia produced by Grolier. Essentially, this is Grolier's 20 volume approximately 10,000 page Academic American Encyclopedia on one CD-ROM disc with an associated retrieval system. The text and index occupy only about 110 megabytes. It is planned to produce a new edition each year, not just an update of selected parts, but an entirely new edition of the complete encyclopedia. Cost ? About \$300 for the initial encyclopedia and \$40 for the annual, updated editions.

Another CD-ROM publication is the Datext Corporate Database. It consists of four discs each of which contains business information on a broad sector of the business world. Together they cover 10,000 US public companies, 900 lines of business, 50 industries, and 8,000 executives. The information on the discs comes from six separate databases and includes company financial statements, excerpts from annual reports, biographical data on key executives, management policies, stock prices, and many other details.

CD-ROM is not limited to text. What is believed to be the first Australian CD-ROM system contains census and mapping material and is called Supermap 1. It was developed by Dr. Jack Massey at the University of Melbourne with

support of the Baillieu Library as a practical means of dealing with the heavy demand for this kind of information. (3)

These uses are merely illustrative of what is being done.

In the very near future, perhaps Spring 1987, we should see the introduction Compact Disc/Interactive (CD/I). Whereas CD-ROM is a computer peripheral, CD/I will be a complete system. CD/I players will contain their own computer and screen or may be connected to the home television set. In addition to text, CD/I will permit audio, still video pictures, and animation thanks to special chips which will be built into the players to decode and decompress the audio and video. CD/I audio can have a number of levels of quality ranging from speech through to very high quality stereo music. Alternatively, a disc could be used to store from 5,500 to 60,000 video frames depending on the number of colours used. CD/I players are likely to be able to handle CD-ROM because the formats are similar, but a CD/I disc is not likely to be able to be played on a CD-ROM player. CD-ROM and CD/I probably will co-exist and support one another because the technology is similar and the markets are different. CD/I is aimed at homes and educational institutions where audio, video stills, and animation are desirable. CD-ROM fits the needs of paramount requirement. (4)

Possible Implications

One of the possibilities for records management which first comes to mind is archival collections. If documents can be stored in such a compact, stable format, the demands on physical storage space and related equipment will be greatly reduced. This may encourage records managers to review their retirement programs because it is now feasible to retain machine readable versions of documents which have a potential future demand close to nil. They should exercise caution, though, and avoid the "pack rat" syndrome of saving everything regardless of its value. If the system becomes cluttered with useless records, retrieval of relevant records will be

much more difficult. Still, we should be in a better position to meet demand for older records if we put sufficient effort into assessing that demand.

Another aspect of archival collections is security. As mentioned earlier, the master is usually glass which should last far into the future if properly cared for. The copies, though can be seen as expendable to a certain extent. If one is lost or damaged, either other existing copies will fill the need or another copy can be made. Security is also enhanced because they are far less susceptible to wear and tear from playing due to the fact that only the laser beam touches the information surface. The possibility for distortion and loss of information from outside influences to which magnetic media are prone simply does not exist for CD-ROM. It is not affected by magnetic fields, X-rays etc. which can play havoc with magnetic media. Finally, the read only nature means the integrity of the data are protected from user alteration.

The management of current records also may benefit. Even though the turn around time to transfer information from magnetic storage to CD-ROM may be as long as six weeks, this delay can be overcome by using paper of some other format for the most current materials. Since the original is likely to be paper, this should create few problems. However, there are other advantages of CD-ROM, some of which apply to archival records as well.

The ease of making copies of CD-ROM discs means they can be made available at more than just one location. It will be possible for each branch to have its own CD-ROM copy of relevant documents. "Relevant" is the key word. There is little point in disseminating records in CD-ROM, or any other media, unless there is a need. With some care and after a period of experience it should be possible to isolate the subset of records which meets a particular need and prepare a copy of that subset only.

Aside from distributing records on CD-ROM, there is the possibility of demand publishing. The large storage capacity coupled with better software and hardware mean we are likely to see records managers producing copies on

demand for users. These copies will be retained by the users for as long as required and discarded by them when no longer needed. This will eliminate much record keeping and the need to track down a particular record which should improve interpersonal relations between records managers and others in their organizations.

It also should be possible to use appropriate software to reconfigure copies of records to meet specific requests. For example, because the entire text is in machine readable form and, hence, searchable, relevant parts could be extracted to save time and then reassembled to fit the request. Copies of records could be arranged in any manner desired eg; by emanating office, receiving office, subject, or date. Such reconfiguration may well result in the creation of new records !

Before CD-ROM can be used as a storage medium, the information must be in machine readable form. For current records this may not be too much of a problem due to the popularity of word processing and Computer Aided Design (CAD). Many of today's records begin life in machine readable form. For older records this could present problems. It is probably impractical and unjustified to put them in machine readable form unless the need is great, or technological advances make it a cheap and fast procedure. Optical character recognition devices may provide the answer as refinements expand the range of printing and handwriting which they can read.

Although CD-ROM can store graphics and CAD means more and more graphics will be in machine readable form, there are some difficulties. These relate to output devices more than the storage capacity of CD-ROM. Present printers have difficulty handling half-tones, and colour is even more of a problem, although we can expect to see progress in this area. Another aspect is the physical size of the graphics which is limited by VDU and printer sizes. To some extent this overcome by dividing the very large graphics into sections. It would seem that the storage capacity is here and waiting for improved out put devices.

All of what has been said so far assumes an original paper record is

not required. However, our society is still very strongly paper-based and is likely to remain so for some time to come. There may be legal requirements that paper records be retained as the "final authority". And then there is the sense of security and well-being people feel when they can hold a piece of paper in their hands.

In conclusion, I believe it is important to stress that CD-ROM is a storage medium like paper, micrographics, and magnetic tape and disc. It will not solve problems related to poor quality retrieval software, clumsy distribution systems, or inefficient management practices. Nevertheless, as a component of a total records management system, it will allow us to store more records efficiently.

REFERENCES

1. Unless otherwise indicated, information in this article is based on that obtained from attendance at the American Library Association Conference held in New York from 28 June-3 July 1986 and the associated Preconference Institute on optical information systems, 26-27 June 1986.

Readers interested in an in-depth treatment of CD-Rom may care to read CD-ROM: The New Papyrus edited by Steve Lambert and Suzanne Ropiequet and published by Microsoft Press in Redmond Washington USA. It costs about A\$35.00 for the paperback.

Another useful source is CD-ROM Review published by CW Communications/Peterborough Inc., Elm St., Peterborough, New Hampshire, USA.

2. Dixon, Bradford N. "Making Miracles," CD-ROM Review. Premiere issue, p. 20.
3. "Supermap a CD-ROM First", The Australian. July 29, 1986. p.30.
4. Brewer, Bryan. "Compact Disc/Interactive (CD/I)," CD-ROM Review. Premiere issue, pp 54-55.

YOU ALWAYS REMEMBER WHEN I'M WRONG -

BUT NEVER WHEN I'M RIGHT !!!!!!!



Dear Colleagues.

The time to plan and prepare yourself for this great experience is now.

Planning for the RMAA 4th National Convention - **The Big One** - to be held at the Melbourne Regent Hotel during 6 - 9 September in conjunction with a Trade Exhibition is now well advanced. Most educational and workshop speakers have been confirmed.

We are pleased to advise that the keynote address on 7 September will be given by Mr John W Grace, Privacy Commissioner of Canada. He will speak on 'Privacy Legislation and Access to Information - the Canadian Experience'. This topic should be of great interest to all Records Managers and others both in government service and private enterprise.

A highly professional educational program, workshops and special interest group meetings will give you the total picture of current and future Records, Information and Image Management techniques.

The special interest group meetings (Local Government - FOI Officers - Secondary Storage) will allow you to discuss your particular concerns and problems with your peers in a total learning environment.

Attendance at the convention will help you improve your skills in the basic fundamentals of Records Management, we have also included sessions that will assist you in selling and using your newly obtained knowledge which should lead to your advancement.

At the trade exhibition you will be able to compare and evaluate first hand the latest in Equipment, Integrated Systems and Records Management Services available.

Enclosed is an advanced program guide and registration form to enable participants to obtain early approval and take advantage of the 10% discount if registration is paid for by 1 June.

A complete program guide will be forwarded at a later date to enable selection of sessions and workshops desired.

On the subject of costs (not shown on the registration form), full registration includes the Official Opening and Reception, both Happy Hours, Convention Dinner Tuesday Night and all lunches, morning and afternoon teas for the duration of the Convention and Exhibition. It does not include the Monday Night Yarra/Bay Cruise, dinner and entertainment, to take part in this fun night (**with out cost**) you must make your travel and accommodation arrangements through the ANZ Travel Servies. Day registration includes only the morning, afternoon teas and lunch on the day.

The Victorian Branch Council, Convention Committee Members and myself look forward to meeting you in Melbourne.

Peter W McDonald

Peter W McDonald ED MRAA
President Victorian Branch

RMAA 4TH NATIONAL CONVENTION 1987

AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF ARCHIVISTS
6TH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

An Overview by Marita Hoo

The 6th Biennial Conference of the Australian Society of Archivists was held in Perth from April 21-25 1987. The very pleasant venue was that of the Alexander Library which is the new purpose built building of the State Library. As if to further emphasize the close relationship that exists between archivists and records managers I noticed that a number of RMAA members were in attendance including Val Seibert (SA), Janet Howse, Bill James and Denis Rowe (NSW), Kim Bolton, Ian Hooper, Graham Dudley and Jane Tija (WA). In addition, a number of the conference committee are members of both associations. Margaret Medcalf and her committee are to be congratulated on the superb organization and smooth running of the conference. Obviously there is some excellent talent there that hopefully can be tapped for the RMAA '89 Convention in Perth !

The conference was opened by His Excellency the Governor of Western Australia, Professor Gordon Reed. Clive Smith followed with his Presidential Address in which he stated that although it was important for the association to participate on the international scene it should not be to the detriment of the grassroots of the association. He called for associates to seek professional membership and for there to be a liberal interpretation of professionalism. Records managers having archival responsibilities and experience should be encouraged by his call.

The following session "Why Belong ? National Archival Associations and their International Applications " I found most interesting. In particular the paper by Lindsay Cleland, Secretary General of PARBICA. PARBICA is the Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council of Archives. Lindsay gave a brief overview of the archival situation, individuals involved, existence of archival legislation and the influence of the old colonial powers on the development of archival programs in the major member countries. He felt that whilst Australia had a responsibility in the area as a developed country it was important that relationships that were established should be on the basis of sharing and not of dependence. Fortunately he accompanied his presentation with a map of the region. It is rather sad that his audience needed to refer to it so frequently. We, as records managers, should be considering how we can contribute to this region also.

The international guest speakers Jane Nokes (Bank of Nova Scotia, Canada) and Michael Roper (Public Record Office, UK) also spoke about their respective national associations during the session. Both speakers also addressed the conference in later sessions and participated in panel discussions.

Other papers included "The role of archivists in the conservation of the National Heritage," "Small Archives : Designing for growth," "Influence of new technologies on research trends," "Australian Science Archives Project : its role, its future " etc. The final session saw three papers presented by Glenda Acland, Janet Howse and the writer on "The interface between archivists, librarians, records managers and information managers". There appears to be little doubt in anyone's mind that there is a close relationship between the disciplines and that in the case of archives and records management the relationship is to a high degree, symbiotic. It is fairly well recognised that each discipline has its own particular areas of expertise, interest and emphasis. Yet is also recognised that the activities in one can affect, either negatively or positively, the activities of another and so there is a need for communication, consideration and joint endeavours.

April the 23rd was devoted to the sixth biennial general meeting of the ASA. I attended it as an associate member with the right to speak but not to vote. The minutes of the previous meeting and documentation relating to the association's activities were well prepared in a 69 page booklet and forwarded to all members in advance.

A break of an hour was taken early in the afternoon for a presentation by Ms Jan Edwards, Project Officer, Australian Bicentennial Authority with responsibility for the Historic Records Search. It was a most lively session with attendees expressing their concern about a number of aspects of the search including the safety and preservation of historic records uncovered in the search the lack of appropriate regional repositories for them, and the areas of overlap with activities of archivists as well as lack of consultation with archivists. Margaret Medcalf sounded a positive note by saying that the windfall of commonwealth money should be viewed positively and archivists should be ready to follow up on any historic records identified in their area and to work closely with the Historic Records Search field officers.

The morning of April the 24th was devoted to annual general meetings of the Special Interest Groups and I enjoyed the opportunity to get to the Business Archives meeting, as normally my only contact with this group is through the news-sheet. Other SIGs include Science and Technology, School Archives, Local Government Archives. Membership of SIGs is open to members of the ASA. As well, though-out the day, tours were taking place to various institutions throughout Perth with archival collections.

That afternoon I took my place as the RMAA observer at the Australian Council of Archives (ACA) annual general meeting. Items on the Agenda of relevance to the RMAA were machine readable records, ALIC/AACOBS intergration and the possibility of a shared secretariat between collecting and conservation associations. I shall be reporting on these aspects and others in detail to all fellow RMAA directors separately. In that report I shall be recommending that we seek permission of the ACA to attend these annual meetings as observers in future.

After such a hectic week I was looking forward to a change of pace on the Saturday when the visit to New Norcia was scheduled. Despite the rain and the early start I was not disappointed. Although I have been in WA ten years now it was the first time that I had visited the monastery. I feel certain that it will not be the last. However we were particularly honoured on this occasion as it was only the second time that the library with its fine collection of rare and old books, and certain sections of the monastery, were opened for women visitors.

The Seventh Biennial Conference will be held in tasmania in 1989 at a date yet to be determined.

Copies of the proceedings of the conference can be purchased for \$15.00 (\$20.00) non ASA members) by writing to:

ASA Inc
6th Biennial Conference,
PO Box 327, Claremont, WA 6010

Tapes of sessions are also available.

There was mention and publicity at the conference for the recently published "KEEPING ARCHIVES" which covers the basics of archives administration in a practical and informative way. Copies of it are obtainable now at a special pre-publication price of \$25.00 (the offer ends June 1, 1987). Orders should be sent to;

Keeping Archives,
ASA Ince
PO Box 83, O'Connor ACT 2601

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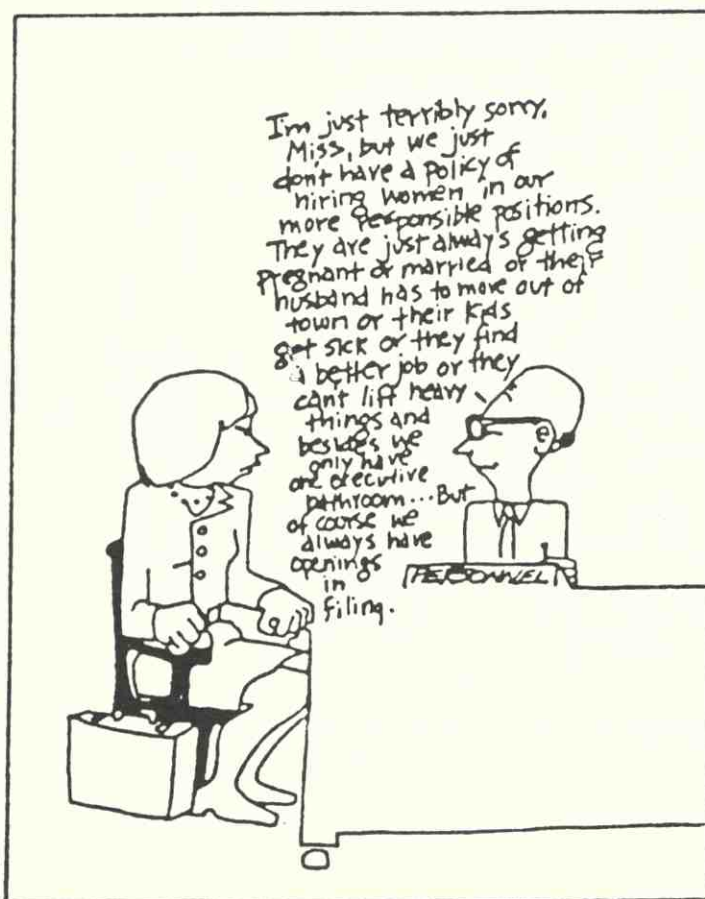
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**FOURTH NATIONAL
CONVENTION
6-9 SEPTEMBER, 1987**

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"I know he's a retriever, but this is ridiculous."

