

UMMA



No. 10, JUNE 2002

2002....a very good year?

Although it is rash to generalise so early in the year, indications such as the first meeting of the new Archives Advisory Board on 22 March justify optimism. The meeting effectively represents the end of a process begun under the Library Committee's auspices two years ago. In the second half of 2000 a review of the Board's terms of reference was undertaken by consultant Judith Ellis and subsequently refined by a subcommittee of the Libraries Committee. The results were incorporated into a new Information Division Regulation.

The regulation summarises the Archives' two part core mission to be 'responsible for the University's own historical records', and to operate as 'a national collecting archive which develops, preserves, exhibits and provides access to its collections in support of the University's teaching and research programs and community development agendas'. Our dual role to both support academic teaching and research and be a public resource is thus officially acknowledged. A restatement of the Advisory Board's role underlines the need for renewal and a stronger strategic direction for the Archives. The Board now will advise the Library Committee and the Archives on developmental and policy issues; assist as a strategic partner to the Archives in the pursuit of its objectives, including external funding; and represent the Archives and promote its interests as appropriate.

Membership will continue to include an ex officio component (Helen Hayes, Vice-Principal, Information; Len Currie,

University Secretary, and myself); and appropriate academic staff (Associate Professor David Merrett, an existing Board member from the Faculty of Economics and Commerce and the new chair; Associate Professor Verity Burgmann from Politics, and Dr Shurlee Swain, an historian with this university and the Australian Catholic University). Among the external representatives are another existing member, Gil Ralph MBE from WMC Resources Ltd; Ross Gibbs, Director and Keeper, Public Record Office Victoria; Rob Evans, a partner with J. B. Were; and Dr Peter Love, Swinburne University of Technology and Convenor of the Melbourne Branch of the Society for the Study of Labour History.



Associate Professor David Merrett, new chair of the Archives Advisory Board.

We look forward to working with the new membership and place on record, as did the new Board at its first

meeting, our warmest appreciation of the work and support of the former members and in particular its immediate past chairman, Andrew Ray.

Of the other recent developments, none better represents our future than the Web Archive Project, which is examining how to select and preserve the University's websites. It is crucial for legal, accountability and historical reasons that this be achieved beyond the transitory practice of backing up to a server. A solution is to be sought which enables continuity of access beyond the next set of software and hardware upgrades, and which also addresses the complexities of so-called dynamic sites.

Work will focus on answering two *continued page 2*

from page 1 basic questions, what? (i.e. which websites and what features and functionality), and how? (existing solutions such as the National Library's Pandora project are being investigated). The project will draw on technical, cataloguing and archival expertise from across the Information Division, but there will also be consultations with the Legal Office, Risk Management Office, Records Services, the University Web Centre and the Information Strategy Advisory Committee's Web Advisory Group. A longer-term goal will be to 'archive' the websites (or parts) of organisations such as businesses, trade unions, significant individuals and University clubs and societies whose historical records the Archives collects.

Work on several other initiatives critical to our future aims to develop new statements of what we must target for collecting. These are urgently needed as our Dawson Street repository fills up, and will draw on growing understandings of the existing collection's strengths and gaps and of what our users want. In relation to our business collections, a funded research project to

adapt the 'Minnesota method' has already begun, as indicated in Jane Ellen's article on page 3. By year's end we will have collection policy documents for trade union archives and university academics' personal papers as well. Another urgent need is to better integrate our material into the University's teaching programs, fostered already in first semester through strong involvement with a 'Reading Between the Lines' archives assignment as part of Dr Andy Brown-May's first year Australian history subject. Over 80 students were enrolled, with 57 selecting material (diaries and minute books) from our collections. This builds on our support for the third year 'History in the Field' program in 2001, which Liz Agostino, Kate Leihy and Agata Kula describe on page 7, and ensures we will contribute to the program again next semester. We hope by then it will have been, indeed, a very good year. ❖

Michael Piggott
University Archivist

Deputy University Archivist's Prize-winning Thesis

Congratulations to Suzanne Fairbanks, Deputy University Archivist, who has been awarded the Penny Fisher Memorial Prize for an outstanding Masters thesis in archives and records. Suzanne's 1999 thesis, *Social warrants for collective memory: Case studies of Australian collecting archives*, arose from the recognition that collective memory has been neglected by the profession's emphasis

on the continuum management of records, in turn threatening the legitimacy of collecting archives. Historical case studies of three archives were used to examine how the social warrants and purposes that have sustained each historically can reinstate their legitimacy as well as establishing their place in relation to the records continuum model.

The Penny Fisher Memorial Prize

is sponsored by the Australian Society of Archivists, and was established in memory of Penny Fisher, formerly Monash University Archivist and foundation member of the ASA. The Research Committee of the School of Information Management and Systems at Monash University will be organising an award ceremony later in the year.

UMA Bulletin

Editor: Liz Agostino

Layout: Jacqui Barnett

Produced by: Communications and Publications Section, Information Division

ISSN 1320 5838

The University of Melbourne Archives
The University of Melbourne, Victoria 3010, Australia

Opening Hours: Mon, Tue, Thu, 9.00 am–5.00 pm; Wed 9.00 am–8.00 pm
Summer Opening Hours: Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri 9.00 am–5.00 pm; Wed 9.00 am–8.00 pm

Phone: (03) 8344 6848

Fax: (03) 9347 8627

E-mail: archives@archives.unimelb.edu.au

Website: <http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/collections/archives/archgen.html>

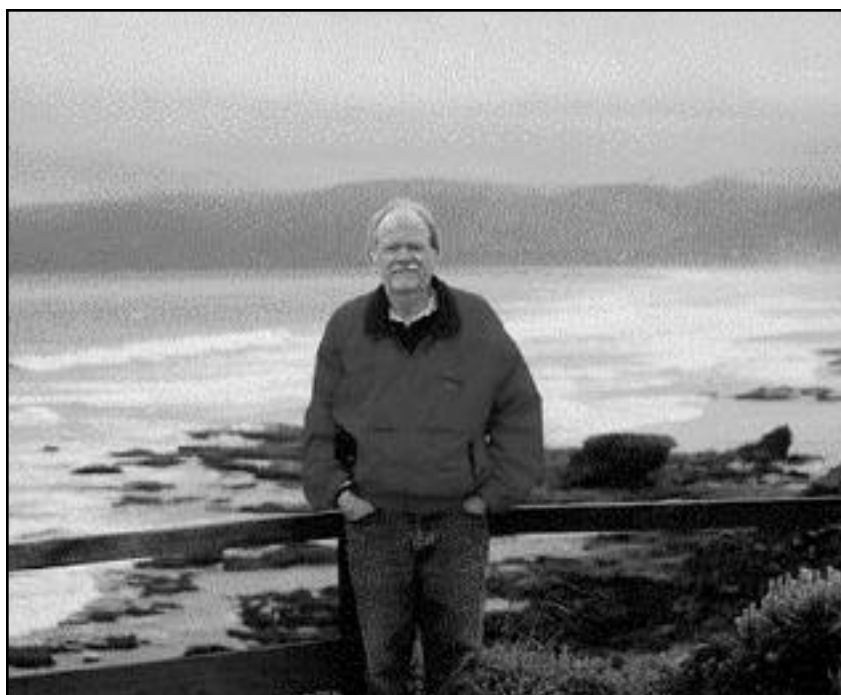
Digging Deeper for Richer Sources

Jane Ellen
Archivist

Unlocking corporate culture is one of the great challenges for a business historian, according to Dr Kate White at an address she gave to the University of Melbourne Archives' forum on business archives recently. Dr White, who has written histories of the State Bank of Victoria and of the Repco Corporation, went on to describe the essential records necessary to write business history: board minutes and reports, correspondence and private manuscripts. She also stressed the importance of conducting oral histories to capture aspects of a business that the written records cannot provide.

The forum, called Business Archives: Collecting for the Future, was held as a day-long event at the Archives' repository in West Brunswick on 30 November. Its aim was to enable the Archives to canvas the views of a group of academic historians, business people and other archivists about which industrial sectors' records they believe must be preserved, and which activities within those industries were most essential to document. The outcome of the forum has provided Archives' staff with invaluable feedback around which to build future collecting strategies. Of the twelve invited participants, six gave presentations in which they described their own research in business history, what records they had used, or would liked to have used had they been available, and their own ideal research universe. Each presentation was then followed by a round-table discussion on the issues raised.

The date of the forum was chosen to coincide with the visit to Melbourne of Stephen Salmon, Business Archivist at the National Archives of Canada, who gave the keynote talk. In his opening



Stephen Salmon, Business Archivist at the National Archives of Canada (visiting the Great Ocean Road).

address to the forum, Dean of Arts, Professor Stuart Macintyre, commended the initiative and referred to the National Scholarly Communications Forum held in Canberra in 1999, which addressed the vital significance of archives in its Round Table on Archives in the National Research Infrastructure. Other speakers at the forum were business historian, Dr Bridget Griffen-Foley, of Sydney University; economic historians, Associate Professor David Merrett of the University of Melbourne, and Professor Simon Ville of the University of Wollongong; and Dr Charles Fahey, of La Trobe University.

Dr Bridget Griffen-Foley described the challenges she faced when researching her book on the Packer empire, *The*

House of Packer, due to the fact that virtually no Australian Consolidated Press archives for the period were extant and that none of the archives of the other big media companies are in public institutions or otherwise available.

Professor Simon Ville, whose published works include a history of the stock and station agent industry, described his own research and his firm belief that only by immersing himself in the archives could the business historian find the answers to central historical questions. He told the forum that he regarded records such as high-level correspondence and executive minutes an irreplaceable source in order to understand a company's decision-making processes, *continued page 4*

from page 3 while the aggregated financial records such as balance sheets and annual reports provided the essential information about performance.

Labour historian, Dr Charles Fahey made an impassioned case for the preservation of employee records, such as wage books and engagement books, and described how invaluable they were in shedding light on many questions concerning the labour market for the period before the 1970s, whereupon government statistics started to become sophisticated enough to answer such questions directly.

The Archives' business collections are especially strong in the records of Victorian-based mining companies, manufacturers, pastoral companies and retail trade from the late 19th to mid 20th centuries. Forum participants were given a guided tour of these and the repository by the Business Archivist, Trevor Hart, and their surprise at the richness and diversity of the six kilometres of business records led him to reflect that the Archives needed to market itself better. "In the past archivists have been backroom workers but outreach and promotion are now an essential aspect of archive management," he said.

The forum was held as part of a larger initiative, the Business Archives Mapping project, that UMA has been conducting throughout 2001, in partnership with Department of Management's Associate Professor David Merrett. The project is underpinned by a methodology pioneered by the Minnesota Historical Society known as the Minnesota Method. Its ultimate aim is to ensure that future acquisitions of business records adequately document business enterprises in Victoria and also meet the needs of our research community. ❖

Visit from Cambridge Archivist



Jn February 2002, the Archives and Special Collections were fortunate enough to host a visit by Dr Patrick Zutshi, Keeper of Manuscripts and University Archivist at Cambridge University.

Dr Zutshi's primary purpose in visiting Australia was to ensure the safe return to Cambridge of items on loan for the Treasures from the World's Great Libraries exhibition. Notable amongst these were several manuscript pages from Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*, 1858–1859. However, he was pleased to make a detour to Melbourne in order to visit the University.

Whilst in the Baillieu Library, Dr Zutshi spent time viewing items held in the Special Collections' Cambridge Collection. This collection, numbering some 1,300 volumes, consists of books about Cambridge University and the city of Cambridge, dating from the 16th century to the present. The collection was assembled by Dr Pierre Gorman who took his degree in Agricultural Science from this university and then went on to achieve the distinction of being the first hearing impaired student to gain a PhD at the University of Cambridge.

Later, Dr Zutshi was taken on a tour of the Archives repository in Brunswick where he also inspected documents sent by Cambridge University congratulating the University of Melbourne on its 50th birthday celebration in 1906.

Dr Zutshi commented on the richness of material relating to Cambridge held with the Archives and Special Collections, which he described as 'impressive' and said would help foster the strong links between the universities. ❖

above: Inspecting 'Cantibrigia illustrata or views of the publick schools, librars, halls, colleges and other publick buildings of the University of Cambridge with an account of their foundations and endowments & c.,' ca.1741, from left: Dr Pierre Gorman, Mr Michael Piggott (University Archivist), Dr Patrick Zutshi, Mr Ian Morrison (Curator, Australiana) and Ms Merete Smith (former Curator, Rare Books).

The Archives of Dr Leonhard Adam

A Bountiful Collection

The Archives

Louisa Scott, Volunteer
The Ian Potter Museum of Art

The University of Melbourne Archives and the Ian Potter Museum of Art hold extensive archival material that complements the Leonhard Adam Collection of International Indigenous Culture. Accumulated by Dr Adam, these records include lecture notes, research papers and notes for publication, articles, reviews, journals and diaries. Also included are bibliographies, inventories, object lists, expedition notes, correspondence, documents associated with the University, newspaper articles, photographs and sketch books. The value of this archival material lies in the diversity of information it provides.

The Leonhard Adam Collection is significantly augmented by the existence of these records. The methods by which indigenous objects were acquired, for example, are documented in detail. In addition to supplementing Dr Adam's teaching resources, the archive is important in establishing the provenance of many of the objects. Source information is provided in diaries, notes and occasionally on box lids, and takes the form of written and illustrated information, including sketches and maps. Dr Adam was a superb draughtsman and illustrated his own published works.

The archive can also be utilised to provide evidence of activities, inter-relationships and information about associated people, organisations, events and places. For example, it reflects the academic life within the University during the 1940s and 1950s.

Similarly, the archive places the acquisition of the Leonhard Adam Collection within an historical and social context. Dr Adam corresponded regularly with many overseas associates regarding the acquisition of objects, anthropological research and indigenous culture. Often this correspondence incorporated personal communication, providing a vivid picture of major world events, such as World War Two. It is the multi-faceted nature of the archive that ensures it holds appeal as a resource to researchers from a wide range of disciplines.

This comprehensive archive reflects the versatile character of Dr Leonhard Adam's life and work and establishes his authority in the field. It also demonstrates his enthusiastic approach to building a significant international indigenous collection for the University of Melbourne.



*Papua New Guinea Wooden container n.d.
wood, pigment, 8.5 x 41.0 x 26.0 cm.
The University of Melbourne Art Collection
The Leonhard Adam Collection of International
Indigenous Culture.*

The Art Leonhard Adam at the Ian Potter

Lisa Sullivan
Collections Research Support Officer
The Ian Potter Museum of Art

Until July the Ian Potter Museum of Art presents *Bounty of the Sea: Selected works from the Leonhard Adam Collection of International Indigenous Culture*. The exhibition provides the opportunity for visitors to view a selection of works from this significant collection, which totals over 1,300 objects. Alongside the selected works, material from the archival collection of Dr Adam is exhibited, once again highlighting the collaborative potential of the collections of the Potter and the University Archives. Exhibition curator Christine Elias and volunteer Louisa Scott provide an insight to the collections and a preview of what the visitor to the exhibition can expect to see.

continued page 6

The Leonhard Adam Collection of International Indigenous Culture

Christine Elias
Assistant Collections Manager
The Ian Potter Museum of Art

Dr Leonhard Adam (1891–1960) was born in Berlin and studied ethnology, law and sinology at Berlin University and the Centre for Oriental Studies in Berlin. After completing a Law Degree, he joined the bar and served as Chief Judge of Charlottenburg (Berlin), while devoting his spare time to the study of primitive art, law and culture.

After fleeing Germany in the late 1930s, he taught in London before being deported on the 'Duneera' to Australia in 1940. Dr Adam was interned at Tatura for a short time before going on to study and catalogue a collection of stone implements at the Museum of Victoria. He was appointed to a lecturing position in the Department of History at the University of Melbourne in 1942, a position he held until his retirement in 1957.

During his time as lecturer at the University, Adam began collecting objects as examples of indigenous art and material culture to aid in his teaching and understanding of indigenous cultures. Upon his death in 1960, this collection was presented to the University to be used to continue research into indigenous cultures.

The Leonhard Adam Collection of International Indigenous Culture is now housed at the Ian Potter Museum of Art, and includes a wide range of objects from a large geographical area encompassing Australia, New Zealand, the Pacific, North and South America, Africa, South East Asia and Papua New Guinea. Dr Adam collected this material through a variety of means, including the exchange of items with overseas museums and universities and purchase from dealers and other collectors.

The exhibition at the Ian Potter Museum of Art focuses on the relationship between indigenous communities and the sea. The sea is used by indigenous communities as a source of food and trade, as a means of transport and as a tool for education and enjoyment. The sea plays a vital role in the everyday lives of many island and coastal peoples around the world, and in particular, the communities who live in Oceania.

The items in this exhibition were collected by Leonhard Adam from communities within the region of Oceania and encompass a variety of uses, materials, techniques and methods of manufacture. In their own way, each of the items is related to the sea and reflects the diverse ways in which the sea is a major part of life. ❖



*Australia Arnhem Land Model canoe n.d.
wood, pigment — ochres, clay
11.4 x 48.4 x 10.5 cm
The University of Melbourne Art Collection
The Leonhard Adam Collection of International
Indigenous Culture.*

Exhibition Details

BOUNTY OF THE SEA

SELECTED WORKS FROM THE LEONHARD ADAM
COLLECTION OF INTERNATIONAL
INDIGENOUS CULTURE

The Ian Potter Museum of Art
The University of Melbourne

4 May to 7 July 2002

Hours
Tuesday to Friday 10.00 am to 5.00 pm
Weekends 12.00 pm to 5.00 pm

Enquiries
Tel. 8344 5148

History in the Field: A Study of Diaries at the University of Melbourne Archives

Kate Leihy and Agata Kula

History in the Field is a subject offered to third year students by the Department of History at the University of Melbourne. The aim of the course is to introduce students to the practices and concerns of conservation, communication and public heritage that are a part of working within the area of historical research and analysis. Students are expected to participate in a work placement in a public or private sector environment in order to obtain an understanding of ethical standards, collaborative approaches and client demands as well as experience in interpreting history for different audiences.

In 2001 two students, Kate Leihy and Agata Kula spent their placement designing and compiling a comprehensive and informative inventory of diaries held with the University Archives. Kate and Agata write here about their experience.

History in the Field allows and encourages students to undertake hands-on work within an area of public history. Students are required to complete an internship with an organisation of at least 60 hours and develop a project to suit the expectations of their host. As part of our internship, we examined and made an inventory for a selection of the diaries held as part of the University Archives collection.



A glimpse of the range of diary formats examined during the History in the Field project.

The process of selection and analysis of diaries was a challenge from the onset. Bearing in mind the vast array of material in the collections, our foremost priority was to achieve a balance in selection so that various subtypes of diaries would gain equal representation in our research. In order to attain such balance, a three-step process of categorisation was utilised. Initially, the diaries were categorised by overt 'type' such as 'travel', 'war' and 'personal'. Secondly, the diaries were assessed via sub-categories that related to the characteristics of the author and alluded to possible motives behind the composition. Finally, the diaries were assessed in terms of their significance. This process involved an

investigation into the multidimensional nature of significance, and the complexities of assessment. Overall, during the course of the project, we aimed to place each source into its historical and political context, allowing the diaries to speak to us through their own conceptual frameworks. This approach allowed us to explore the interpretive potential, and the problematic nature, of diaries as historical sources.

One of the most important aspects of the project has been learning about the worth and significance of diaries as historical sources, a process that raised several pertinent questions: How representative are the writers' experiences in the diaries of the time periods and places they describe? What limitations can be seen when considering collections of diaries? How can we use diaries as historical sources given the limitations that we can identify? Whilst it is agreed that diaries are important records in many ways, there appears the need to address problems involved in accepting their worth without considering the potential biases and limitations they may embody. It is important to realise

continued page 8

from page 7 that diaries as sources only represent certain people and, more specifically concerning this project, that any one collection is further limited to the holdings that have survived and are available.

Alongside these questions surrounding generalisability and representativeness, the present study highlighted a second potential limitation of the study of diaries, inherent in the source itself — namely, problems of interpretation by the historian analysing the material. Indeed the policy of restricted access to sensitive material does address privacy issues. Despite this, further considerations need to be taken into account, particularly in the case of diaries which are very often personal records not intended for public viewing. In addition, the motives of the historian, selective editing of the text and misconstrual of the past via editing out of context, are issues that all researchers should be wary of. This is particularly pertinent in the case of diaries which may be hard to decipher and ambiguous at times. This, coupled with

time pressures, may lead to a misinterpretation of both the context and the views expressed in the source. Throughout the course of this project, we have been aware of such difficulties, and have aimed to rectify these by looking carefully at processes of memory, by looking not simply at what the diary records, but what is omitted and why.

History in the Field has provided us with an invaluable opportunity to become involved in the production of public history. At the University Archives there has not only been the chance to become familiar with and involved in the examination of the diary collection at first hand, but also in more general concerns of both public history and using historical research skills in the workplace. The skills that have been learnt, people who have shown an interest in the project and confidence that has consequently been gained is unforgettable and very much appreciated. In particular, we would like to thank Fay Anderson for her assistance, guidance and support in every stage of the project. ❖

The Archives and Special Collections Reading Room Welcoming Researchers

The steady flow of visitors to Archives and Special Collections Reading Room in the first half of the year indicates that recent attempts to promote the collections accessed through the Room have been successful. Promotional ventures targeted at the university level as well as at the wider research community have also ensured that the researchers attracted are diverse and representative of a range of research interests.

A number of tours of the Reading Room were offered this semester with the aim of familiarising students with access procedures and introducing them to some of the riches within the collections. These tours were particularly well attended and have already inspired several return visits. At a forum held recently postgraduate students were encouraged to discuss their own particular research needs and were shown how to conduct effective online and in person searches. At the same session, the curators of the Medical History Museum and the Grainger Museum spoke about access to their respective collections. Overall, the idea of uncovering hidden treasures within the university and fostering cross-collection use was advanced.

Promotion via exhibitions, internal and external publications and enhanced web pages also seem to have boosted

Reading Room visits. In terms of Archives use, the online accessions database is currently attracting over 500 hits per week and this is reflected in the retrieval traffic. Orders generated from the Archives image database (UMAIC) are also arriving steadily.

As part of a collaborative effort to promote the University's sesqui-centenary in 2003, *UniNews* is running a fortnightly series highlighting the lives of 150 University-related individuals. Archives are contributing to this series by providing many images to accompany the biographical summaries and is expected that this series, as well as the busy schedule of events planned for the 150th celebrations will spark additional interest in the university's collections.

It is encouraging that researchers are increasingly attracted to Archives and Special Collections, especially given that several factors in the past few months such as space restrictions, maintenance work and the implementation of new security measures have impacted somewhat on the day-to-day running of the Reading Room. Of course, these factors are only temporary and, as most visitors acknowledge, necessary to improve service, safety and the security of the collections.