

Origins

Newsletter of the UNSW Archives

Archives News

Welcome!

Dear Friends and Colleagues,
A recent visitor to the Archives was the Wizard (UNSW 1968–70), alias Ian Channell, now long-time resident and figure of renown in New Zealand. One striking aspect of this most independent spirit, living a very anti-bureaucratic way of life, is his meticulous concern for the records of his own life which he has gathered together.

Many of us share such a concern in some degree. The maintenance of a body of personal and family records at home can be extremely important—as a source of memories, knowledge, anchorage and purpose.

Unfortunately the long-term physical preservation of such personal archives may prove a considerable challenge. Dangers are inherent in the very nature of some materials, for example any videotapes, colour photographic prints and 'sticky' plastic covers enclosing photographs or other documents mean serious consequences could lie ahead. Threats can also stem from environmental and storage conditions, ranging from high or fluctuating humidity to termites which enjoy devouring cardboard boxes. Sunlight will fade exposed valuables but so will ordinary fluorescent lighting over time.

The catalogue of potential problems for those concerned about long-term preservation can seem endless. Yet records, like humans, often have a remarkable capacity to survive given half a chance. To this end we would like to recommend, to those readers interested, the State Library of New South Wales' regular series of public workshops on preserva-



The Wizard was a prominent part of UNSW campus life in the late 1960s. (CN122/891)

tion matters, one of which is entitled: "Preserve your precious past—preservation of family history heirlooms, letters, diaries, postcards, memorabilia and photographs". The conveners welcome enquiries, including from outside Sydney, on (02) 230 1676. We also believe similar workshops may be conducted from time to time in some other capitals.

In addition, UNSW Archives staff are always happy to offer what preservation advice we can. Our contact details are included in this newsletter. We may also be able to provide referrals to conservators and allied professionals in both the public and private sectors.

We hope you enjoy the varied contents of this second issue of *Origins*.

With best wishes

Laurie Dillon
University Archivist

Activities in 1995

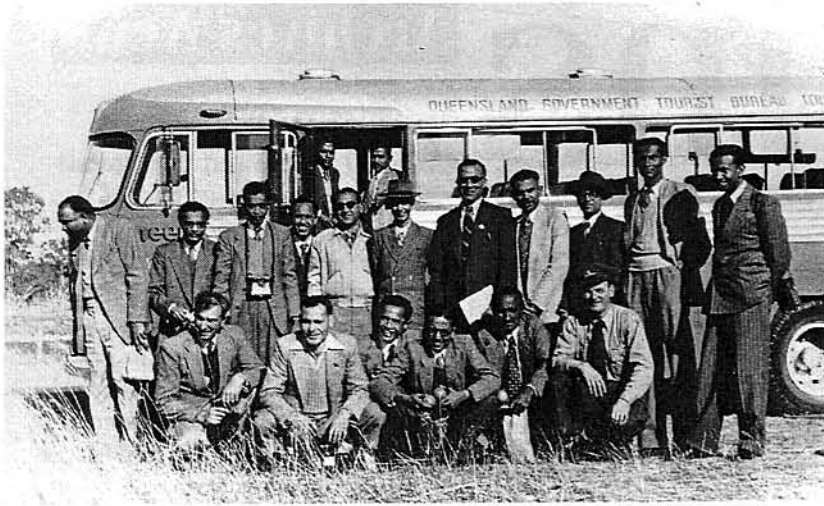
Over 120 alumni and their guests visited the Archives as part of two alumni reunions, one for 1952–56 graduates, and the other for 1965 graduates. Displays in the Archives sought to recreate something of the University in those two different eras. Many visitors even found their names in items on display. A valuable and greatly appreciated consequence of these events were the many significant donations of photographs and memorabilia received from alumni, as well as much valuable information forwarded in correspondence. Elsewhere in this issue of *Origins* are details of the donations as well as an article on how the Archives might help with historical items for reunions.

Research began in earnest both at the Archives and outside it for the proposed fiftieth anniversary history of the University of New South Wales (1949–1999), which will be written by Professor Patrick O'Farrell of the School of History. A companion pictorial volume is also planned. A new column in *Origins*, 'UNSW Fiftieth Anniversary History', will include news and other relevant information.

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A group of food technology students on tour in Queensland in 1953. Most of the students were in Australia as part of the Colombo Plan. (J C Anand. 96A32)



W. C. Lee at his graduation in 1956 with friends. (W C Lee. 95A77)

The Archives has continued to provide advice to those University Schools and Departments planning reunions. As well, the Archives receives many specific requests for information. For example, a member of the 1966 Intersarsity Rugby Team, who is organising a reunion, needed to know the names of all team members. There are frequent enquiries from graduates needing to know details of particular courses they had studied at UNSW. Another request was for photographs of UNSW Writers in Residence over the years, including Alex Buzo, Kate Grenville, Frank Moorhouse and Les Murray. However, we are still researching a query about the Hare Krishna movement on

campus in the 1970s: any offers on this one?

The Archives, in association with the State Library as part of the Landcare and Environment Action Program (LEAP) organised by the Department of Employment, Education and Training, provided work experience for four young people training in basic archival preservation procedures. They assisted the Archives with urgent preservation work such as removing rusty paper clips and pins, replacing material from torn and dirty folders into acid-free folders and envelopes, rehousing photographs and examining audio tapes for superficial damage.

In 1995 the University Archives

completed its inaugural year as part of the newly created Division of Information Services within the University. This Division draws together the central University information technology units responsible for computing, communications and management information systems/software, with certain central information and service units: the University Library, Audio-Visual Unit and the Archives. The first Director of the Division and Deputy Principal is Ms Christine Page-Hanify, formerly General Manager, Parliamentary Information Systems Office, Parliament House, Canberra. The Director is the presiding member of the University Archives Advisory Committee.

A World Wide Web Home Page entry has been established for the Archives and the University Oral History Project. Address details can be found on the back page.

Archives in the South Pacific

The 1995 annual conference of the Pacific Islands Association of Libraries and Archives was held in Yap, Federated States of Micronesia. Karin Brennan, the Assistant University Archivist, was invited, along with John Wright, the former Territorial Archivist of American Samoa, to present pre-conference workshops on the 'care of archives and books' and 'disaster preparedness and recovery and managing resources in libraries and archives'.

Tropical climates present particular nightmares for archival preservation: humidity encourages mould and insects which destroy paper; buildings where records are housed are rarely purpose-built and are not always strong enough to withstand cyclones, nor sufficiently secure against rodents and other small animals, nor built in such a way as to minimise the harsh effects of light, all of which can destroy paper-based records. Add to that

the region's geological instability and the limited availability of funds for research collections to prevent such disasters, and the problems facing archivists and librarians can seem insurmountable.

Yet an awareness of these potential problems can itself be a safeguard: vigilant observation might arrest deterioration before it's too late. The workshops also included practical demonstrations on the deterioration of paper-based records and how damage might be lessened. To simulate damage to paper caused by cyclones, the participants soaked books in buckets of water and then observed the changes as the books dried under different conditions.

The workshops preceded the three day conference, the theme of which was 'Preservation of Culture through Archives and Libraries'. Delegates included librarians, archivists and museum employees from Yap and its outlying islands as well as from other parts of Micronesia, including Guam, Palau, the Commonwealth of the Mariana Islands and the Marshall Islands. Of particular interest were the sessions on Yapese culture and traditions, including presentations of story telling, song and dance by members of the community. Other sessions included the relevance of research collections



Traditional stone money: an example of archival records peculiar to Yap. (K. Brennan)

to cultural development as well as addressing problems facing small institutions—in particular, how to consolidate a regional network and lobby for increased funds, and promote the recognition that archives, libraries and museums are important national institutions.

While in the region, Karin (who is also the Secretary General of the Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives) visited other research institutions: in Guam, the Micronesian Area Research

Centre at the University of Guam as well as the Guam Library Association; and in Palau, the Palau National Archives, the National Museum of Palau, its library and the Library of the Community College of Palau.

The trip was an excellent opportunity to observe first-hand not only the different and often difficult conditions facing archivists and librarians in the region, but also how a culture's historical record is enriched by reference to its live performances, its stories, songs and dances.

Thinking of Holding a Reunion?

The Archives can help!

Now that the University is approaching its fiftieth anniversary many schools, departments, faculties and units are thinking about holding a reunion. University reunions come in many guises. They range from large-scale official functions for hundreds through to small local or overseas gatherings privately arranged. Whatever their scale, the Archives is confident it can offer something of interest to enhance most occasions.

Holdings

The Archives holds tens of thousands of photographs, many personally donated by alumni and featuring graduates and graduations. Early Yearbooks contain photographs and often humorous comments about graduates. Records and memorabilia of sporting interest are available. There are films and audio recordings, including graduation speeches, oral histories and even footage of the first Foundation Day Procession

(1961). Among official records and publications which are accessible and able to be copied are: examination papers of the day (try them again!), graduate registers for the 1950s and 1960s with names and signatures of the graduates, graduation ceremony booklets, press cuttings, lists of UNSW highlights for any year and much more. All can be guaranteed to evoke the flavour of the period concerned and to bring back many memories.

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Use

The use of copies of such archival material can be quite varied. Modern imaging technology can enable large blow-ups to be made for displays—or for distribution to those attending the reunion. Invitations can be designed using a period photograph or other historical graphic. Dinner menus can be done likewise. Menus can also be made part of a small booklet which can contain reunion names, illustrations, some written history or brief personal reflections on the past, or whatever else is feasible. Even videos can be made using the expertise of the Archives and the Audio Visual Unit. Such productions can become highly valued keepsakes.

Allow time

As Archives staff observe it, reunion organisers who allow plenty of time to explore, select and—of necessity—wait for suppliers to reproduce what sources are required, get the superior result. Copying archival

The program and menu for Food Technology's Reunion Dinner in 1995. (95A27)

photographs to requirements may take over a week, and then further work with them may be necessary. To help with early decision-making, the Archives often suggests that quick photocopies be made of a range of archival photographs and other material of interest. These copies can then be taken away by reunion planners and used to make the final selection of items to be reproduced. Film and sound recordings can be viewed and listened to in the Archives and we will note your selection

for use by the video production team.

Involvement

Our experience also shows that it is advisable for the same reunion representatives to remain closely and continuously involved in any planning, search and selection process using the Archives. Time and effort will be required, but the returns for this commitment can often exceed expectations and provide the reunion with a dimension which is particularly enjoyable and long-remembered.

UNSW Fiftieth Anniversary History

Can any readers help?

Professor Patrick O'Farrell and his researchers, who are preparing the fiftieth anniversary history of the University, are looking to add a measure of literary insight and colour to their account. They are keen to hear from anyone who knows of **literary representations** of the University, or University people, as might appear in a biography, novel, play, poem or short story. Four known works with UNSW references are: Alex Buzo *The Search for Harry Allway* (novel); Gabrielle Carey *In My Father's House* (memoir); Richard Neville *Hippie Hippie Shake* (memoir); Gerard Windsor 'The Professor and the Trumpeter' (short story).

The last of these is a whimsical tale based upon the author's recollections of a Randwick race-watching Arts professor and a jazz-playing member of staff of the 1970s. The names of more literary works with UNSW references would be greatly valued by the Project. (Contact details below)

The research team is also seeking to leaven the serious side of the history with stories of some of the more **eccentric personalities** of the University. All categories of University people are fair game: Council members, academics, administrators, general staff and students. Eccentric behaviour is largely absent from the records, although it can leave an indelible impres-

sion on those who experience it. The Wizard (1968–70) is probably the most public of University eccentrics and seems a special case. Project staff believe there are a number of others, less well known, whose ways are equally well worth recounting. They wish to hear from anyone who could offer such recollections, or who could suggest some good sources for them.

Please contact Project researcher: Damien McCoy (02) 385 1274

If the Archives can assist: Laurie Dillon (02) 385 2907

Did you know?



Members of the U Committee sorting books in the Chancellery basement in 1982. The bookroom has since moved to a much larger space in Unisearch House.

'Once you're hooked on book fairs, you're hooked' (Jean Spooner in *Unique Providers** p43). On Sunday 21 April 1996 the U Committee opened its fifteenth **Book Fair** in Unisearch House Anzac Parade. First held in 1968 the aim was to organise one only and then move on to other fund-raising activities. But the financial success was impressive, so Committee members decided to hold a book fair every two years. But it was more than just the money. Committee members had realised that book fairs served the function of recycling important and useful books which might otherwise be destroyed. And the work itself was gratifying, as Bookroom workers sorted through donations determining their value and rarity. The general public has come to see the Book Fair not only as a place to pick up a bargain, but also to find books long out of print, and a place where they can send books instead of discarding them. In the early years targets were set at around 50,000 books and intense publicity campaigns were

launched to persuade the public to donate books. But now with more than 150,000 books sorted out for each book fair, the problem is not so much how to get more books but what to do if the Book Fair was no longer held: 'There's no way we can have the last Book Fair because I don't know what the University would do with the books ... [that] just automatically pour in here every day ... You just can't stop them.' (Jackie Samuels in *Unique Providers** p48)

* *Unique Providers: Money raising and the UNSW U Committee* UNSW Archives 1994. **Available from the U Committee shop, the Co-op Bookshop and the University Archives.**

★ ★ ★

Sir Philip Baxter, **Vice-Chancellor 1955-69** and Chairman, Australian Atomic Energy Commission 1957-72, wrote a three-act play around 1970-71. It remains unpublished but appears to have been given a private reading before the author by actors associated with the Na-

tional Institute of Dramatic Art. Titled *The Day the Sun Rose in the West*, it tells of a complacent, globally unaware Australia in the near future which is easily conquered by a confederation of Asian states. The new rulers institute a raft of changes, including a sixty-hour week. Sir Philip seems to have intermingled some of his fears for Australia's future, social observation and satire in a manner owing something to the plays of G.B. Shaw, which he admired. His life and thought are currently being examined as part of research for a doctoral thesis which has used the resources of the Archives.

★ ★ ★

In 1961 the legendary **John Anderson**, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Sydney 1927-58, wrote a wry song about UNSW which he would have known as that different, technological University established at Ultimo over a decade before. He called the song *Philosophical Blues*. Associate Professor Graham Pont generously donated copies of both the score and Donald Laycock's recording of the plaintive voice of Anderson passing comment among his friends about the new institution. Anderson died in 1962.

★ ★ ★

In the year John Anderson penned his song, the first medical students were enrolled at UNSW. A history of UNSW's **Medical School** is currently being prepared for publication and should be of wide interest. It was a School born amid much public debate, and it cut its teeth on the often crusty Sydney medical establishment of the day. The proposal to set up the Medical School was a major reason why the New South Wales University of Technology was renamed the University of New South Wales in 1958.

Recent Acquisitions

Below is a selection of records received by the Archives in 1995 and early 1996. Access enquiries are invited. Conditional or restricted access may apply in some instances. A special thanks to all donors.

1950s and 1960s Alumni

As a consequence of last year's reunions the Archives was very grateful to receive photographs, memorabilia and information relating to student days in the 1950s and 1960s.

Anand, J. C. Photographs of Food Technology students, 1953–55, part of the Colombo plan (96A32)

Anderson, B. Silk tie, Electrical Engineering student society. c.1955 (95A47)

Bendit, E.G. Original MSc testamur and statement of synonymity between NSWUT-UNSW degrees. 1950s (95A70)

Burdon, R. Photographs of early laboratories at Kensington, Council Room, visit of HRH Duke of Edinburgh in 1956 and other items 1950s and 1970s (95A71)

Comino, G. Press cuttings from Greek National Tribune relating to graduation of G. and P Comino. 1965 (95A48)

Copeland, W. Information regarding Rugby Club in the early 1950s. (SRF Rugby)

Dembecki, J. Biographical items, CV and photographs 1950s. (Mrs. N. Dembecki 95A72)

Frost, R. J. Photographs of Rugby team 1955, Civil Engineering graduation 1956 (Mrs. R. Frost 95A73)

Gatehouse, B.M. Photographs of staff of Applied Chemistry 1954, 1955 (95A74)

Lamb, C. St.J. Prizes booklet, Engineering 1952, photographs of Electrical Engineering graduates 1956 (95A75)

Lawson, E Life member certificate No.4, UNSW Sports Association. 1958 (95A76)

Lee, W.C. Graduation photographs. Include G. Aylward of UNSW staff. 1956 (95A77)

Livingstone, S.E. Doctoral student, Professor of Chemistry, UNSW. Graduation photographs for PhD, DSc. Include sister, Lillian Livingstone, first Women's Warden at UNSW. 1955, 1960s. (95A78)

Long, F UNSW Rugby team, survey camp and graduation photographs, Electrical Engineering. 1951–55 (95A79)

Pengilly, C.J. Photographs of Marshall steam engine, Thermodynamics Laboratory, STC/NSW University of Technology, Ultimo. c.1950 (95A80)

Pilgrim, D. Student, later Professor and Head, Water Engineering. Photographs of 1953 graduation ceremony taken inside Great Hall, University of Sydney; Civil Engineering graduates. 1953 (95A81)

Quinlan, K. Full set of *Unilogic*, first paper of the NSW University of Technology Society of Students. 1950–51 (V181)

Sapsford, C.M. Graduate student, staff member Mechanical Engineering. Photograph of rooftop research experiment. c.1960 (95A86)



One of the photographs collected for the History of Medicine. (95A39)

Savage, D.L. Yearbooks. July 1950 issue of *Sporting Life* containing illustrated article about UNSW Rugby coach Bryan Palmer. Early 1950s (95A83)

Tipping, G. Student lecture notes and drawings, Geology (L. Waterhouse); photographs of UNSW graduates working at MWS&DB, Ashfield. 1958; 1960 (96A21)

Wallis, A. Graduation photographs. 1954 (95A84)

Whatham, R.P Graduate photographs, Civil Engineering. 1956 (95A85)

Personal papers, items

Anderson, J. Professor of Philosophy, University of Sydney. Music score and recordings of Anderson singing his composition about UNSW, *Philosophical Blues*. 1961 (D. Laycock / G. Pont 95A59)

McDonald, J.M. UNSW secretarial staff. Files relating to the Drama Society and to work at UNSW, e.g. for Professor Max Hartwell. 1954–70 (Ms L. Dunstan 96A23)

Metcalf, J.W. First University Librarian and Director, School of Librarianship. Copies of correspondence setting out why he did not wish to receive an Order of Australia award. 1975 (A. Horton 95A51)

Milner, C.J. Professor of Applied Physics. Illuminated retirement address by artist Roderick Shaw. 1976 (95A37)



John and Norma Dembecki at the Graduation Ball in the 1950s. (N. Dembecki. 95A72)

Reuter, FH. Foundation Associate Professor, Food Technology. Papers relating to Food Technology teaching and research, food legislation and food standards in Australia; with 90th birthday tribute. 1944-75; 1995 (95A27)

Governance and Administration

Government Architect's plans for early UNSW buildings. 1955-59. (NSW Public Works 95A1)

Faculties, Schools and academic organisations

Civil Engineering. *The Professorial Board*, a play by staff. 1956 (V51)

Industrial Relations—Department, Research Centre. Records of Professor J. Niland as Head and Director (IRRC), with related IR matters. Mid 1960s-1980s. (J. Niland 95A11)

Institute of Administration. Profile: organisational summary including corporate plan. 1993. (95A68)

Medicine. Editor's file of photographs for forthcoming history of Medical School. 1950s-1990s. (K. Burgess 95A39)

Postgraduate Extension Studies. Videotape lectures for use by UNSW Television and on close circuit. 1970s-1980s. (K. McGuffin 95A53)

Zoology / Biological Science. Photograph of members of early research excursion at Smith's Lake. Includes K. O'Gower, E. Shipp. 1964 (R. King 95A56)

Other University organisations

The Asia-Australia Institute. Certificate of Registration of Trade Mark (Property Administration 95A36)

Sports Association. Club files 1991-93 Blues Committee records 1967-77 Soccer Club records 1980-82 (CN 1265)

University Library. Photographs of building opening 1966, Library strike 1974. (A. Dobrovits 95A44)

Student or alumni related

Alumni Relations Office / Association. Photographs and display items relating to various alumni events including Awards dinners, overseas graduations and a reception given by the Korean Chapter. Late 1980s-1995 (95A30 & 50)

Student badge: "I was There!" Library sit-in, 1983. (M. Bate 95A16)

Special interest and historical accounts

Windsor, G. 'The Professor and the Trumpeter'. Short story. Based upon certain UNSW Arts personalities of 1970s. (P O'Farrell 95A55)

Wing, P *This Gown for Hire*. A history of the Australian Tertiary Institutions Commercial Companies Association. 1993. 77p. Includes reference to the foundation of Unisearch (V693)

General publications, printed items

These are selectively acquired from UNSW units, private donors and government agencies. Examples of material received in the period:

UNSW Statement of Affairs, UNSW Undergraduate Prospectus 1995, International student information; annual reports, newsletters—various UNSW units; items relating to UNSW openings, reunions and other celebratory events; newspapers *Uniken*, *Tharunka*; publications of the Student Guild, and of student clubs and societies.

Oral History in the Archives

News

Staff in the University Oral History Project worked on three main projects in 1995 which will continue into 1996. An index to the oral history collection was established (see below) as were two major surveys of aspects of University life, one on the history of women academics and the other on the experiences of students.

The aim of these surveys is to add to the Archives' collection on students and create a new collection on women. The first groups to be surveyed will be women who are or have been at the level of senior lecturer or above, and of the students, those who graduated in the 1950s or 1960s. We are always looking for more people to be included in the surveys. If you belong to one of these groups and have not already indicated your interest, yet would like to be involved, please contact Julia Horne at the University Oral History Project. Your contributions would be most welcome.

Index to the Oral History Collection

The major achievement for 1995 was compiling an index to the oral history collection. Although there are still many interviews to be indexed the topics now emerging show how wide-ranging University life is. Not only do the interviews cover particular events and people on campus but also include references to circumstances outside the University.

There are references to other Australian universities (the Universities of Queensland, Sydney, Adelaide and



A badge commemorating the 1983 library sit-in, a protest about declining library funds. (M. Bate. 95A16)



Pamela Rickard joined UNSW as a lecturer in the Faculty of Biological Sciences in 1965. She was promoted to Associate-Professor in 1975, then to Professor in 1981. She retired in 1988 and was awarded the title, Emeritus Professor. Her research interests include enzyme technology and microbial metabolism. Her interview, part of the oral history collection, is available in the Archives.

Wollongong are a few) as well as those in other countries (MIT in the United States, Oxford in Britain).

References to private companies and government organisations crop up, such as BHP, the Department of Main Roads, IBM, the National Health & Medical Research Council, the ABC, and even the United Nations and the Sydney Opera House.

Other topics include 'women', 'student activism' (and 'student pranks') and 'networking', which deals with politicking as well as the more informal social contacts between people at UNSW. There are even references to the hotels where some of this socialising/networking took place!

The University is well-documented with references to faculties, departments, their foundation professors, secretaries, students, the staff association, *Tharunka* (the newspaper of the students' guild), as well as accounts of the general atmosphere over the years. The index is now available for use in the Archives Reading Room, and soon there will be a shorter version on the Project's Home Page on the World Wide Web.

Spotlight

Optometry was one of the first courses offered at the University of Technology (before it became the University of New South Wales in 1958). Yet it was not until the early 1970s, when changes were made to the national health system, that optometry came to be accepted as an important part of the Australian health system, valued for its professional and scientific contributions to eyecare. The development of optometry as a scientific discipline in Australia had been occurring for years before, and the establishment of schools of optometry in Australian universities helped provide a more supportive environment for scientific research and training. Interviews with Josef Lederer (Foundation Professor of Optometry at UNSW) and Lloyd Hewett (Editor of the *Journal of Australian Optometry* 1962-79) examine these events as they occurred in New South Wales and at this University—both the acceptance of optometry as an important part of the health profession and some of the scientific developments within optometry as a scientific discipline. The interviews can be consulted in the Archives.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES



When are the Archives open?

Hours of opening are
9am-5pm Monday to Friday.
Closed weekends, public
holidays and from Christmas
Day to New Year's Day.
Advance notice
of your visit will enable us to
assist you better.

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World Wide Web

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archives.html](http://www.library.unsw.edu.au/archives.html)
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