ARCHI FACTS

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Membership of the Association is open to any individual or institution interested in fostering the objects of the Association. Subscription rates are:

Within New Zealand: $60 (personal), $40 (students), $105 (institutions)

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Applications to join the Association, membership renewals and correspondence on related matters should be addressed to the Membership Secretary: membership@aranz.org.nz

Objects of the Association

The objects of the Association shall be:

1. To foster the care, preservation and proper use of archives and records, both public and private, and their effective administration.
2. To arouse public awareness of the importance of records and archives and in all matters affecting their preservation and use, and to co-operate or affiliate with any other bodies in New Zealand or elsewhere with like objects.
3. To promote the training of archivists, records keepers, curators, librarians and others by the dissemination of specialised knowledge and by encouraging the provision of adequate training in the administration and conservation of archives and records.
4. To encourage research into problems connected with the use, administration and conservation of archives and records and to promote the publication of the results of this research.
5. To promote the standing of archives institutions.
6. To advise and support the establishment of archives services throughout New Zealand.
7. To publish a journal at least once a year and other publications in furtherance of these objects.

ARCHIFACTS

2023

ARCHIVES & RECORDS ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND TE HUINGA MAHARA
ARCHIFACTS

Contents

Editorial

Linda Liddicoat

Kia ora tatou

Welcome to the 2023 edition of Archifacts

I would like to start by saying a heartfelt *thank you* to the editorial team who have contributed to the coordination of this issue. I am standing down as editor, as my three-year term is ending. However, the editorial team will stay on and I am sure, continue to give you interesting, quality and thought-provoking material.

The theme for this edition is around how we deal with issues that arise in our everyday work. In line with this, we bring you an opinion article on handling social media chat records. Further in, there is also a contribution on the case for standards when digitising records.

An interesting addition is a look behind the scenes at putting together an exhibition at Hocken Library, complete with colourful images from Chinese culture.

We also have two solo archivists featured in the Getting to Know You section which outlines their journeys to date.

The obituary features Mary Ronnie's eulogy by Allison Dobbie. Mary Ronnie was New Zealand's - and the world's - first female National Librarian. It is heartening to see the dedication, contribution, and determined innovation shown in her life and career.

We round out this edition with three more articles. The first, on the nature of objects as archival items. This topic stemmed from a conversation on the NZRecords mailing list in May 2021 and I felt it was worth getting experts to further explore the idea.

The second is a review on school archivist's experiences and the third is a report from the New Zealand International Review Group for Recordkeeping Standards (IRG) survey results.

In parting, I do have to say I have met some lovely people in this role. The pace of change in our professions continues to be rapid. My journey has involved working in libraries, recordkeeping, education, information management and information governance (in councils and central government). I suggest recommending careers in our sectors to people. Why we do what we do continues to be misunderstood I feel, but the

reasons and roles are varied and growing as are the tools we use to do our work. There is a whole continuum of different-sized archives and records agencies and institutions out there, and all are needed.

With that, as ever, each contributor writes from their own experiences and perspectives. Should you wish to contact the next editor or contribute comments or an article, please email: editor@aranz.org.nz.

Ngā mihi

Linda Liddicoat

ARANZ President's Annual Report 2023

Evan Greensides

ARANZ ARCHIVES & RECORDS ASSOCIATION OF NZ TE HUINGA MAHARA

Tēnā koutou, I hope this letter finds all ARANZ members, both across the motu and overseas, in good health and spirits. I am pleased to inform you that your Association has had another successful year, even as political, economic and sector winds continue to buffet our shores.

In this year's President's Letter we will have a look back at what the Association achieved in the past year and where we are headed in 2023-2024.

Another Year of Success

Your Council promised, and delivered, the following during the financial year:

Promises	Delivery
Lunchtime Kōrero sessions would continue to be hosted on our Zoom account and be open to all across the GLAMiR sector.	✓ 5 sessions delivered by our branches
Support our active branches to hold new, exciting events, both in-person and digitally.	✓ Digitisation Concepts, Born Digital and Back Capture Workshop with O/S Branch ✓ ARANZ Wellington Committee and GLAMiR Meetup ✓ ARANZ Auckland RIG meeting

Push for further collaboration with our GLAMiR colleagues, share resources and keep open our communication channels to seize opportunities as they arise.	✓ Joint events with NDF in Canterbury ✓ Joint events with RIMPA in Wellington ✓ Membership rates for workshops and events with RIMPA and ASA ✓ Continued discounts for IM courses at Open Polytechnic
Continue our focus on advocacy, providing an authoritative voice on matters of concern relating to archives and records.	✓ Letters of Support to Archives New Zealand, Chief Archivist and Information Studies Team at VUW ✓ Feedback to a wide variety of government organisations on retention and disposal projects ✓ Attending Open Polytechnic SAG meetings ✓ Feedback during review of Listed of Protected Records ✓ Meetings with Archives Council and Chief Archivist to advocate for member support

Your Council also delivered a bumper issue of *Archifacts*, quarterly versions of the ALERT newsletters and the awarding of both the Michael Standish and Ian Wards awards

Finally, I am pleased to announce that former Prime Minister, Helen Elizabeth Clark ONZ SSI PC agreed to take on the role of Patron to ARANZ. We look forward to working closely with Helen over the coming years.

Continuing from strength to strength

On the back of these successes, ARANZ Council will continue to advocate for Information Management professionals, hold events throughout New Zealand, create events and workshops tailored to our members professional requirements, and leverage our partnerships to achieve the best outcomes for the Association.

Our focuses for the coming year are three-fold:

- **Conference 2024** – the first ARANZ conference in six years, this will be held at the Te Pae Conference Centre in Christchurch in October next year, in conjunction with our friends and colleagues at ASA.
- **Incorporated Societies Act 2022** – this has involved a considerable amount of work from a subcommittee led by Claire Dowling. Implementation of recommendations will result in a changed Constitution and processes for the Association. We look forward to ratifying these at the 2024 AGM.
- **Expanding digital support** – our new website is up and running, and we are starting to roll out new additions to support our members.
- The future is always an exciting proposition. As we continue to see rapid developments throughout the IM, digital and heritage sectors, Council will keep abreast of developments, support lifelong learning and advocate for positive change.

Thank You

Every year members rotate in and out of Council. Volunteers bring to the table valuable sector insights, learnings from previous experiences, and commit valuable time and resources to ensure the Association is run smoothly and successfully.

I would like to thank the following members who have contributed to the Association over the preceding years and will be cycling off Council:

- **Abby Wharne,** Vice-President and Communications Portfolio – for tireless efforts and logistical skills keeping members, branches and other professional organisations informed of ARANZ activities and projects.
- **Jennifer Jeffery**, Membership Portfolio – for performing the crucial functions of maintaining the membership database and mailing lists, organising. subscription renewals, and dedicated member of Otago/ Southland Branch.
- **Danielle Campbell**, Awards Portfolio – for the organisation of the Michael Standish and Ian Wards prizes.
- **Nathan Chicken**, Treasurer – for ensuring the Association remained on track financially and bringing new ideas into the role.
- **Linda Liddicoat**, Archifacts Editor - for work in collating yet another bumper issue of *Archifacts* with interesting articles from across our sector.

I would also like to thank our Council members for staying on for another year: Kathleen Stringer, Secretary; Brad Wija, Webmaster; Jennie Hood, Vice-President; Haylee Alderson, ALERT Editor; Michael Upton, Records Management; and Irina Winsley, Membership Portfolio.

Thank you also goes out to our ex-officio members: Belinda Battley, for managing the Find & Connect Project, and Jenny Chen for keeping all members connected and informed via the ARANZ Facebook account.

We also welcome aboard Tom Riley from Otago/Southland Branch, as well as three new members of the Archifacts Editorial Team: Maja Krtalić of Victoria University -Te Herenga Waka, Sarah Welland of Open Polytechnic and Dr Ashwinee Pendharkar of Alexander Turnbull Library and ARANZ Wellington Branch.

Finally, a special thank you goes to Sue Hanham for quickly stepping back into the Treasurer role after retiring from Council in 2022. Sue has been a financially-savvy and eagle-eyed rock to the Association for many years. Her tireless support of the Association is always appreciated.

Change is a universal constant, and the Association could not have achieved what it has without the support of our dedicated membership. Council thanks all members for their invaluable support. We encourage you to advocate on behalf of the Association by talking to colleagues and friends about joining ARANZ, and to involve yourself in local and national activities.

Kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua.

Nāku, nā

Evan Greensides
President

Reviews Editorial

Dr Ashwinee Pendharkar

Recommendations for the Reviews section
Call for Archifacts 2024

As shared in the 2022 issue, the scope of the Book Reviews section, now called simply Reviews, includes new scholarly articles and theses, special collections, podcasts, blogs, repositories (digital archives/museums/corporate or smaller independent archives), and new initiatives and products (journals, platforms, tools, websites, software, etc.) in the GLAMIR sector.

This opens up the space for scholarly engagement with exciting new, or non-traditional, activities within the sector and also offers a platform for new and emerging scholars within the field (as reviewers) and their work (for reviews).

Preference is for the focus to remain on Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific in terms of area, communities, activities, and scholars.

This year's review section includes reviews of two books and a podcast. We are hoping to bring in more variety next year. This is a call for our readers and through them the GLAMIR institutions in New Zealand, to recommend 'material' for review and also establish 'reviewing' as a scholarly activity encouraged for assignments, course work and fieldwork.

Please email Ashwinee your recommendations or reach out for a conversation at reviews@aranz.org.nz.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Ngā mihi
Ashwinee Pendharkar

Dr Ashwinee Pendharkar is the current Editor, Reviews for Archifacts. She is also the inaugural Curator Contemporary Voices and Archives at the Alexander Turnbull Library.

Reviews

Podcast: Information Revolution

Since August 2022, Karl Melrose, Judi Vernau, and Michael Upton have created a series of podcasts[1] and companion YouTube videos[2] under the title *Information Revolution*. These cover "topics in information management practice"[3] that relate to government recordkeeping. The Podcast's introduction page[4] boldly states that topics "are relevant for today and the future", and "if we get this right, the next big gains in productivity and public good" will come from the information managers, creating a "revolution in information management" that everyone will be a part of.

This is a lofty aim, and one probably dreamt about by many records and information managers working in the government sector who face resourcing issues and misunderstanding about records on an almost daily basis. However, there are hints (for example in the job vacancies) that the records and information management sector is growing, possibly as organisations (re) discover that IT solutions need to be part of wider information governance that systemically embeds good records and information theory and practice. Accordingly, records and information management professionals across Aotearoa need all the free, local, help they can get.

There are now more than twenty *Information Revolution* episodes, many of which are a palatable (and work-day manageable) thirty to forty minutes in length, with a new episode uploaded every two to four weeks. Each podcast or video is presented around a certain theme, with past ones including stakeholder engagement, retention and disposal, information stocktakes, information culture, appraisal, needed skills, EDRMS, Microsoft 365, information architecture and knowledge management.

Information Revolution's most popular podcast so far (with the rather enticing title *The failure of EDRMS*[5]) has been downloaded eighty-eight times. This small number of downloads is no indication of lack of quality, and a listen / watch soon establishes that all episodes deserve wider reach. Each episode is presented in a way that is knowledgeable and easy to listen to, a bit like listening in on a relaxed but interesting tabletop conversation between professional colleagues. While the three presenters are consultants for two different companies with New Zealand presence (Castlepoint Systems https://www.castlepoint.systems/ and Metataxis NZ https://metataxis.com/metataxis-new-zealand/) they thankfully avoid sales pitches and vendor and affiliate-sponsored 'wisdom', instead giving well-rounded discussion based on the presenters' own broad

spectrum of practical experience. Episodes are strengthened by the presenter's refreshing ability to explain more complex IT, information governance and systems-based issues in ways that many records and information management professionals can both understand and relate to. The terminology is familiar, IT content translated well into records-speak, and the record is kept front and centre. For example, in *Getting seriously digital*[6], discussion of database issues was interspersed with comments around the nature of the record and record-related situations that commonly occur in the workplace. The speakers also demonstrate awareness of the end user (one quote from *The people stuff*[7] is "so many records systems or programs break when they meet users") as well as the necessary requirements around public archives.

The *Information Revolution* is highly recommended for anyone with responsibility and/or oversight for information and records within the government sector. Its collegial and conversational presentation style ensures that useful and understandable content is covered in a relatively short period of time. Listening will help records and information professionals (and learners) to see elements of practice from different points for view, think about potential solutions, get inspiration for explaining concepts to others, and realise they are not alone when it comes to recognising the value of records within and across organisations.

Sarah Welland

Endnotes

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2. Melrose, Karl et al., Information Revolution. YouTube. Accessed August 28, 2023. https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9wFnpNy7HZnPMFcylDKi7Qhttps://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9wFnpNy7HZnPMFcylDKi7Q
3. Melrose, Karl, Judi Vernau, and Michael Upton, hosts. Information Revolution (podcast). 2022. Accessed August 28, 2023. https://informationrevolution.podbean.com/
4. Melrose, Karl, Judi Vernau, and Michael Upton, hosts. Information Revolution (podcast). 2022. Accessed August 28, 2023. https://informationrevolution.podbean.com/

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Book: Archival Accessioning by Audra Eagle Yun

Society of American Archivists (2021) | 170 pages B/W | 978-1-945246-56-2 | Paperback $45.00

According to Audra Eagle Yun (2021, p.2) "robust accessioning is the keystone of responsible collection stewardship practice". Her book, *Archival Accessioning*, aims to show readers how to "develop an integrated accessioning program to consistently provide access to all holdings in an archival repository" (Yun, 2021, p.3). To achieve this Yun draws on not only her own expertise but that of other archive specialists whose credentials are established in the book's biography. Divided into two parts, the first (the Introduction and Chapters 1-4), are authored by Yun who focuses on accessioning history as well as the major concepts and best practices. The second features guest contributors whose chapters contain useful scenarios and suggestions on reducing backlogs, retrospective accessioning and digital archiving along with helpful notes and references for further research. Clearly, each contributor has thought carefully about how to convey useful information without overload as chapters are fairly concise. Another bonus is the relaxed style of the book, making it a valuable resource for new entrants to the profession as well as those seeking to gain some different perspectives. In our busy, time-pressured world, this book is easy to dip into for something specific or to read through in one or two sittings.

Yun stresses a holistic approach to collection management and encourages readers in this view, rather than seeing accessioning as a standalone process. She convincingly argues the merits of institutional collecting and retention policies with adherence by archivists viewed as fundamental for procedural consistency and transparency. Another important aspect is the influence of the 'more product, less process' (MPLP) method of Greene and Meissner (2005) notable in a number of suggestions made by Yun and other contributors.[1] The book's emphasis on finding aid development and minimal description practices dovetails with the focus on increasing access to backlogged and unprocessed materials. The book rightly casts this approach in a positive light, although there is little acknowledgment of scholarly criticisms regarding preservation (Phillips, 2015) for instance, well as the opportunity costs of implementing MPLP.[2]

There are two additional areas that would have benefitted from further discussion. Although Yun refers to marginalised communities in her introduction there is no expansion on the possible effects of an accessioning programme for such groups. Most of the contributors hold positions in university libraries while archivists from community or indigenous archives are not represented. More recognition of the diversity of institutions, communities and donors involved in archival practices and their accessioning perspectives would have been beneficial.

While not stated explicitly Yun's work is directed toward an American audience. All contributors are American as is the chapter on the history of accessioning. Other chapters, for instance, refer to DACS, the US descriptive standard for archives, as well as resources from the Society of American Archivists. Unfortunately, this US (rather than international) focus reduces the relevance of certain aspects thus lessening its overall value as an accessioning text for those working outside America.

Despite these caveats, *Archival Accessioning* is a book worth considering if you are looking to develop, review, or reflect on your accessioning programme and collection accessibility.

Alison Day

PhD Candidate, School of Information Management, Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington.

Endnotes

1. Greene, Mark A, and Dennis Meissner. 2005. "More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing." *The American Archivist* 68, (2): 208–263.
2. Phillips, Jessica. 2015. A Defense of Preservation in the Age of MPLP. *The American Archivist*, 78 (2): 470–487. https://doi.org/10.17723/0360-9081.78.2.470

Book: Ghosts of Archive: Deconstructive Intersectionality and Praxis by Verne Harris

Routledge Studies in Archives | Routledge 2021, 166 pp B/W Illustrations | 978-0-367-68114-2 | Paperback $73.59 Hardback $244.80 eBook $63.19

"*All societies are haunted. All societies struggle to find liberatory ways of responding to their ghosts*." (p.1). This quote, from the first page of Harris' book, sets out the central theme from the outset. Harris asserts that "*archive is fundamentally – that is, structurally – spectral…For me, the call of justice is the most important human imperative. It is a call which sounds spectrally. And the work of archive is, in a word, justice*." (p.1) Verne Harris has had a long career in archives, both as practitioner and academic, and in this book he considers the ghosts of archives through his own experience, with a lens strongly influenced by the concepts of deconstruction – specifically, the writing of Jacques Derrida and Hélène Cixous - and Harris' interest in Marxist, feminist and records continuum theory.

Harris has worked throughout his archival career in organisations set up within social justice, liberatory frames: The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Nelson Mandela Archives. This has given him insights into the dichotomy of "*…archive as at once an instrument of oppressive power and a potential weapon of liberatory struggle.*" (p.1). At the same time, the memory of his reaction to finding his own archive of time as a South African military conscript gave him a personal understanding of the hauntedness of archives and the imperative for forgetting.

Haunting, ghosts, spectres all permeate the text, which at first as a metaphor seemed to me a bit strange, for example when he argues that "*deconstruction is best understood as a 'hauntology'*" (p.38), but as Harris provides real-world examples his meaning becomes more clear. This 'hauntology' can be akin to the echoing-on of records as they continue to play their roles over years, "*always in a process of becoming*" (McKemmish 1994). Harris also uses the examples of the value of the "*haunting*" by the mothers of the disappeared in Chile, or the supporters of the incarcerated in South Africa, so the authorities are forced to acknowledge their existence. In the same way, archival texts, or even the awareness of absence of such texts, leave a trace or ghosts that can haunt the future:

"*In other words, when I leave a trace, it will speak for me when I am not present to speak for myself. It will speak for me when I am dead, so that the leaving of a trace and the process of archiving, whether I realise it or not, are haunted by the ghost that I will one day become and by the ghosts of those who will read the trace in the future and make sense of it in different ways. In ways that are unpredictable."* (p.38)

The dichotomy of presences and absences is essential to the argument of haunting – the contexts not recorded or reflected, the original places of creation of the records, the mechanisms by which they were made, unknowable future uses and users. Harris observes "*The archive, I am suggesting, in its structure, is spectral – always to be heard is the whispering of a presence that feels like an absence, of an absence that feels present. The whisperings of apparatuses, of creators, of readers, contents, contexts, uses and places."* (p.63)

From theory, Harris moves on to practice, and his question is one of significance: *"…how does one contribute meaningfully to the dismantling of an apparatus of oppressive power when one is implicated in it?"* (p.122) This remains a question for the writer and the reader, though ensuring spectral voices can be heard is a vital part of the answer, while at the same time he suggests forgetting may be as important as remembering, for healing. (p.91) He contrasts the kitsch of remembrancing with action and justice prompted by memories of the past. Rather than raising statues to heroes of the past, we can honour them through justice in the present: "*by making a liberatory world for the wretched of the present and for the generation to come.*" (p.91) He argues that meaningful change, however, is not granted by elites but must come from "*below*", and through action.

The last part of the book was written near the beginning of the pandemic, and this has influenced Harris's thinking, as he muses on what the "*ghosts of the future*" (p.142) will think of what we have done, in relation to environmental disasters, to climate change, to white supremacy and to surveillance capitalism. He wonders if, as with other periods of significant upheaval (ice-ages, for example) the pandemic will create an environment for social change. However, as he observes, optimism and hope are not useful in these circumstances. Rather, he calls for faith, which he says is "*an act of will, a positioning, a determination to be and to do, a daily discipline*" (p.142). The camaraderie of others working to the same ends is an essential support. Harris' description of his faith is one that all those struggling for social justice might take to heart: "*working for what is good matters, irrespective of what the future will bring. I have faith that striving to get it right is meaningful, even if the prospects of success*

are minimal. And I have faith that responding to the call of justice matters, even when justice seems always and only to be coming, never here." (p.142)

Harris' writing in this book is very dense, at times: dense and perhaps deliberately, as a stylistic feature, repetitive. When speaking of the concrete, with examples from his life, it becomes clear and powerful, but there are chapters of philosophical analysis that can become quite difficult to follow without close attention. I set the book aside for quite some time until I had sufficient head-space to read it carefully. After finishing it, I went back to the first chapter, and this brought the entire argument of the book together for me much more clearly than it had on first reading. This is an interesting and thought-provoking book.

Belinda Battley

Principal Advisor (Regulation and Royal Commission), Archives NZ, Auckland.

Endnotes

McKemmish, S. (1994). Are Records Ever Actual? In S. McKemmish & M. Piggott (Eds.) The Records Continuum: Ian Maclean and Australian Archives First Fifty Years (pp. 187–203). Clayton: Ancora Press in association with Australian Archives

UNESCO Memory of the World 2023 Inscriptions

Jane Wild

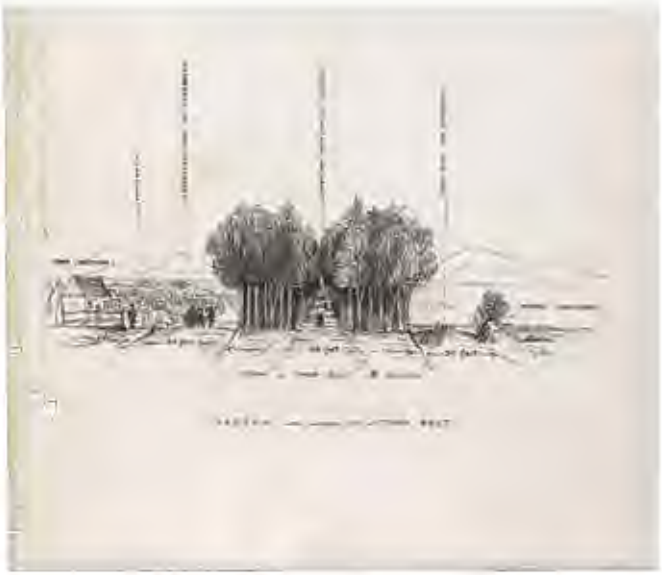
The **Memory of the World** programme was established by UNESCO in 1992. The objectives are to raise awareness of the significance of unique documentary heritage and to support preservation and access to these collections. The Aotearoa New Zealand register was initiated in 2010 by the New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO. The three inscriptions featured here bring the Aotearoa New Zealand inscriptions to 51.

The page works in Archifacts are available as posters on the Memory of the World website: https://unescomow.nz/ which can be downloaded and shared. Archives and libraries across Aotearoa are invited to contribute to building our unique documentary heritage register. Expressions of Interest for 2024 close on 1 March 2024 and nominations for the 2024 register close on 31 May 2024.

Memory of the World
Aotearoa New Zealand
Ngā Mahara o te Ao

2023

Arguably the most extensive extant example of our provincial government archives



"Sketch for Laying Out of Town Belt". [Part of] R26299938 - CH287 - CP594/d22 - PPC - Session 9 - Report on the State of Public Works - Edward Dobson, Provincial Engineer - 1858.

Canterbury Provincial Government Archives 1853-1877

These records were created within a classic mid-nineteenth century, registry-based recordkeeping system, typical of British colonial administration in Australasia.

The Canterbury Provincial Government had control of the following functions: land, immigration, public works (including railways), goldfields administration, education, public health and social welfare, police and justice.

The archives consist of some 470 boxes of papers, 240 volumes and 20 map folders, roughly 35,000 discrete, listed items.

Although containing hundreds of documents relating to Ngāi Tahu, the archives have to be recognised as the colonisers' recordkeeping system, and their content reflects this.

Without these archives, significant information about the early development of the settlement on the West Coast and the administration of its goldfields would be absent.

Held in the Christchurch repository.

Archive Location

Inscribed onto the UNESCO Memory of the World Aotearoa New Zealand Register in 2023

Discover more at unescomow.nz

Memory of the World
Aotearoa New Zealand
Ngā Mahara o te Ao

2023

Technical excellence, adventurous creativity, fearlessness and artist's eye

Reclamation work at Campbells Point, 1927. Auckland Libraries Heritage Collections 1-W0778.

The Winkelmann Collection(s)

The collections of Henry Winkelmann record the transformation of Auckland from a 19th century colonial settlement to a vibrant, modern and self-confident city.

The collections are tied to a specific place and time, essentially Auckland and the Waitemata Harbour from the late 1890s to 1928, a period of deep social change in New Zealand and the rest of the world.

Auckland Libraries' two thousand glass-plate negative collection is a visual time capsule of Auckland. It provides insight into the city and its life, through his images of the people, their houses, buildings, suburbs, bays and wharves. Winkelmann identified how and where the city changed by rephotographing the same places over time. His accession register is digitised with the photographs on Kura Heritage Collections Online.

The large collection of glass-plate negatives at Auckland Museum were taken from 1894 to 1928. Besides his superb yacht racing shots, Winkelmann's camera captured sailing ships, steamers, warships, launches, speed boats and rowing events. His photos taken around New Zealand feature a wide range of topics: people, their houses, workplaces, churches, townships and the natural environment.

Both collections are precisely recorded and dated, a valuable historical resource.

Archive Locations

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Discover more at unescomow.nz

Memory of the World
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Technical excellence, adventurous creativity, fearlessness and artist's eye

Off to the wedding, 1909, Winkelmann number: 2948,
Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira: PH-NEG-1290.

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Discover more at unescomow.nz

UNESCO Memory of the World 2023 Inscriptions

The UNESCO Memory of the World Aotearoa New Zealand Trust is pleased to announce the addition of two nominations in 2023. Jane Wild, the Trust's Chair, sees reaching over 50 registrations as a milestone for the recognition of our documentary heritage.

Jane notes: "The new registrations include a joint nomination from Auckland Libraries and Auckland Museum for Henry Winkelmann's photography of Tāmaki Makaurau, a significant visual record of the changing landscape and maritime views, and the extensive archives of the Canterbury Provincial Government, 1853-1877, held in the Christchurch repository of Archives New Zealand."

The Winkelmann Collection(s) exhibit technical excellence, adventurous creativity, fearlessness and an artist's eye. The collections of Henry Winkelmann record the transformation of Auckland from a 19th-century colonial settlement to a vibrant, moder and self-confident city.

The collections are tied to a specific place and time, essentially Auckland and the Waitemata Harbour from the late 1890s to 1928, a period of deep social change in New Zealand and the rest of the world.

Auckland Libraries' two thousand glass-plate negative collection is a visual time capsule of Auckland. It provides insight into the city and its life, through his images of the people, their houses, buildings, suburbs, bays and wharves. Winkelmann identified how and where the city changed by rephotographing the same places over time. His accession register is digitised with the photographs on Kura Heritage Collections Online.

The large collection of glass-plate negatives at Auckland Museum were taken from 1894 to 1928. Besides his superb yacht racing shots, Winkelmann's camera captured sailing ships, steamers, warships, launches, speed boats and rowing events. His photos taken around New Zealand feature a wide range of topics: people, their houses, workplaces, churches, townships and the natural environment.

Both collections are precisely recorded and dated, a valuable historical resource.

Canterbury Provincial Government Archives 1853-1877 are arguably the most extensive extant example of our provincial government archives.

These records were created within a classic mid-nineteenth century, registry-based recordkeeping system, typical of British colonial administration in Australasia. Canterbury Provincial Government Archives 1853-1877 had

control of the following functions: land, immigration, public works (including railways), goldfields administration, education, public health and social welfare, police and justice.

The archives consist of some 470 boxes of papers, 240 volumes and 20 map folders, roughly 35,000 discrete, listed items. Although containing over 150 documents relating to Ngāi Tahu, the archives have to be recognised as the colonisers' recordkeeping system, and their content reflects this.

These archives also provide a significant record of the West Coast goldrush and its attendant communities, an area which was part of Canterbury until 1867, and for which there is a notable lack of archives.

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Opinion: Chat and Instant Messages: Rubbish Records on the Rise

Michael Upton

Chat in public sector workplaces has substantially shifted from deskside conversation to something written down. An activity that did not create records now does, almost completely unintentionally. Of course, people still talk to their workmates, but in many public offices there is now a large amount of typing back and forth every day, peppered with links, jokes, emojis, animated GIFs, and references.

Instant messaging tools have been available on many workers' computers for years, but over the last few years there has been a great wave of increased use. The reasons are obvious: the massive increase in remote working and other flexible arrangements, with the ubiquity of Microsoft Teams a mix of enabler and catalyst.

When thinking about the benefits of chat you probably first think of working remotely or across geographic locations, but people are finding the same benefits apply when, for example, someone is in a meeting, away sick, or even on the other side of the floor from you. Sending a quick message to a colleague while you remember is often useful, "side chat" in meetings is often seen as less disruptive than talking over someone, and, even if most of a team is collocated, group chats can help to include those who are not present for whatever reason.

My aim with this article is to explore chat from a records management perspective and to argue that the best available option is to automate the deletion of chat after a fixed period of time. I hope this helps others to firm up their thoughts on how they want to manage these records – whether that is because they agree or disagree with what I am about to write.

I will use "chat" to refer to sending and receiving messages that the recipient can see as good as instantly via software. Both Microsoft Teams and Zoom allow for chat in this sense, but there is nothing in here that, in principle, could not be applied to any other application that serves a similar purpose. Many of the qualities of chat are also shared with emails, but chat is much more resistant to any kind of conventional records management. Microsoft Teams has a concept of channel posts and replies, which I still consider chat for the purpose of this opinion piece. There are some differences which I have chosen to put aside for the sake of keeping this brief.

I will refer to public offices and public records, but I expect anything I write will be equally applicable to local authorities and their records.

Chat messages are subject to the Public Records Act 2005, Official Information Act 1982, and Privacy Act 2020

There is no practical reason to debate that chat messages created by a public office are public records. We can just point to the fact that in 2013 the Chief Archivist saw the need to authorise the disposal of "Casual or instantaneous communications that contain information of an ephemeral, non-transactional nature" through General Disposal Authority 7 ("GDA7").[1] This class of records so neatly describes the vast majority of chat it sounds like fortune-telling. If such communications were not public records, there would be no need to authorise their disposal.

Where GDA7 may not apply, it would have to be because the content of the chat captures something more significant, not less, about the affairs of the public office: a not-so-ephemeral record of a decision, an action taken, or authority given. If the chat is the master (or only) record, that needs to be maintained and kept accessible, for all the usual good reasons.

Chat can also unequivocally meet the broad definitions of "official information" and "personal information" in the Official Information Act and Privacy Act respectively. Screenshots of Microsoft Teams chats are already showing up in published responses to Official Information Act requests. It is commonly understood that New Zealand's legislation related to information is not limited by the format of the information.

Unintentional, poor-quality records

There are several qualities of chat that make for poor-quality records, even if we decide some of the content is worth capturing and managing.

A key contributing factor to the poor quality is that almost all chat can be described as unintentional records. The records are not the planned product of a recordkeeping choice, but a byproduct of the combination of the relevant regulatory settings and the medium being used. For example, if a person chooses chat to ask a colleague how to use the printer or what time they are finishing work, it is incredibly unlikely that they made that choice because they wanted to keep a good record.

There certainly will be some occasions when people use chat because they see the value of putting something in writing – or, in other words, making a record. These are usually of short-term value.

So, while chat results in records, it is not designed with good recordkeeping or records management in mind. This is true of the technology and of how people use it.

Here are four factors that would make it hard to identify and manage higher-value chat messages.

Information is spread across many separate messages

There has been an ongoing trend in written communication towards sending smaller, more numerous messages. In chat, it would not be unusual for someone to convey one idea through a series of five to ten messages, with a sentence or fragment in each. Perhaps an emoji in one, a GIF in another.

It would be very hard and resource-intensive to apply management controls to these many small messages individually, beyond a single blanket rule. For other reasons that I will get to, I am not sure that searching chat content for keywords would ever reliably find messages that need to be retained, but the question of what you would do if you could make this work is complicated by the fact you are dealing with many, small messages. Would you only preserve the specific message which matched the criteria? Or would you keep some messages before and after? How many messages? From which participants? Can you picture one rule that would work in enough situations that you would consider it trustworthy and reliable?

No way to sort the wheat from the chaff

Chat has no meaningful aggregations or descriptive metadata that would allow us to infer connections between the many messages, beyond the order in which messages were sent and to whom. This would make it very hard to meaningfully apply different rules or controls to different subsets of chat messages.

Each message has some very basic technical metadata automatically attributed to it: who it was sent by, when it was sent, and who received it. There are some tools for labelling a chat or communication channel, but it is incredibly unlikely that such descriptions can be used to help with managing records.

Forever-changing topics, seriousness, and, in the case of group chats, participants

If some content of a chat is of value or well-considered, the chat as a whole is at best like a completely unedited meeting transcript that includes all the banter, interruptions and niceties.

A good meeting record does not look like a complete transcript – and, so, does not look like a chat – for good reason. People do not minute the small talk in the room before everyone has arrived or the jokes made when the meeting is interrupted by a fluffy cat, barking dog, or curious child, for example. Minutes intentionally contain a subset of what was said, focused on the information that is likely to have value for future reference.

This fluid nature of chat is another reason that it would be complex and challenging to apply different rules to different subsets of records. It is as good as certain that any valuable messages will be mixed in with many others that are of no ongoing value, even where metadata is available. For example, we cannot *reliably* say that all chat from one person is more important to retain than another, perhaps because of their role. That one person, if they use chat actively, may write all kinds of things in different contexts, because that is simply how chat works.

Chat is often only one part of a conversation

The information recorded in a chat may have both missing content and context. Quite often it is only one part of the communication between workers.

A chat could easily pick up again after days or weeks of nothing between participants with a message like:

- "Andy found it"
- "Done. Let me know what you reckon. 🙏 or
- "lol" (the evergreen favourite)

The sender may be following on from a verbal conversation, commenting on some event in the participants' workday like a meeting or an email, or picking up a thread from a different chat. The instant nature of the medium means participants do not need to explain what Andy found, what they have done or what is making them laugh out loud. A conversation may continue at length without even identifying its subject in writing.

Incomplete content and context raise questions about how much chat content could actually be of value. This factor undermines our ability to reuse the information in chats reliably.

What records and information managers could do

A rule of thumb about contractors

When thinking about what to do about a novel format of records like chat, one thing we can ask is what we would expect of the various kind of third

parties that public offices contract to deliver services. The Public Records Act is explicit that a public office is responsible for creating and maintaining records related to matters that have been contracted out. So, as a rule of thumb, any solution we propose to a records problem needs to work equally well for public office employees and for contractors and service providers of any kind.

It is unsurprising that when we come up with solutions we have in mind how we could influence the design of tools and systems within our organisations, where we hopefully have a greater chance of changing how people work than we might expect when contracting services to a third party. However, taking a moment to ask ourselves how a solution would work for contractors can often reveal what matters most and a simpler way of achieving a result that is a good fit for the significance of the problem. Of course, we may choose to take different approaches with employees, individual contractors, and other kinds of service providers, but I think we need a clear, compelling justification when doing so.

So, would we talk to a supplier about what they do with their chat records, specifically? Would we expect them to retain chat? Would we expect them to put in place technology solutions for capturing and maintaining access to valuable chat content over years?

To me, some kind of technical solution for capturing chat records feels like the wrong path to go down. The effort required to manage any chat records of value would be substantial and the benefit in doing so marginal. I would be looking for an alternative means to achieve the same outcome that did not require any substantial technology changes.

I think a public office should always give any third-party direction on what kind of information must be kept and arrange for how to receive such information, as required. In giving such direction, I would be thinking about the purpose of the Public Records Act that relates to being able to hold the government to account. I might consider contractual terms or at least guidance that is relevant to the activity. This already aligns with what Archives New Zealand asks public offices to do.

To be specific about how this relates to chat, in most cases I would not imagine even mentioning chat explicitly. If the above contractual arrangements were agreed, I would accept the residual risk that valuable information ended up in the contracted party's chat messages and nowhere else. That risk feels highly unlikely to come to pass, and it would be even less likely that it would cause a significant problem if it did.

If there was some reason why I thought there was a significant risk that we would not receive the records we need because of something to do with

chat, I might work with the contractor to specify those types of information I think are most at risk. I would set the expectation that the substance of those chat messages needs to be documented elsewhere and might be explicit about where and how.

If this is how I think about approaching the recordkeeping expectations for contractors, I need to have good reason to take a different approach for public office staff. Why would I ask them to do something different or configure the public offices systems to manage the information differently? But let us consider the available alternatives.

We could turn chat off

I cannot picture an office environment where chat will get disabled any time soon. I have read some good arguments for it, but they are as good as moot unless there is another dramatic shift in work culture. The extent to which chat is baked into the incredibly popular Microsoft toolsets would also make this a hard battle to win. And, regardless, you would still need to look at what to do with chat records that are being created now.

We could try to manage different subsets of chat, according to their value and/or risk

For all of the reasons outlined in the previous section, it is not currently practical to identify messages of value, maintain them to a different standard to others, and make them accessible over time. Or at least, we cannot do this is a way that is more systematic and reliable than having conversations with staff about good recordkeeping, about what makes for a good record, and about where and why to save such a record.

Technical solutions may make it easier to identify some key messages in the future, but I am not clear on what a desirable next step would be.

We could keep all chat messages indefinitely

If it is difficult or even impossible to distinguish high-value records in chat, one response is to say we will keep everything and perhaps even protect chat messages from being deleted. This is in line with established practice for, say, a collection of documents, if it is impractical or unhelpful to separate them: retain the whole collection for the longest relevant retention period.

If we did this, we would fail to realise any of the well-understood benefits of disposal and arguably would not meet the requirement on public offices to demonstrate routine disposal.

The organisation would be agreeing to an ever-increasing administrative burden of having to review all chat messages when responding to information requests under e.g., Privacy Act or Official Information Act. Chat's lack of context and often incomplete nature will mean it will get harder over time to successfully interpret information that can be found and evaluate it against a request. This will result in both more effort to complete the request and higher risks of not providing the right information.

Another, perhaps less significant, downside of retaining chat indefinitely is that people may decide chat is a useful knowledge base that they will rely on, ahead of other more suitable options. The consequence of this would only really be a missed opportunity to work more effectively, but that is still worth considering. I noted earlier that people do sometimes choose chat to keep a record of something, but that typically it is of very short-term value. The same reasons that chat results in poor-quality records are the same reasons chat would be a bad choice for a knowledge base longer-term.

There is one real upside to retaining chat that I have yet to mention: chat can be used as evidence for investigating misconduct. Consider bullying, harassment, fraud and what security professionals call "insider risks". Here chat's shift to a medium that unintentionally creates records may be of considerable benefit to an investigator. In my experience we do not normally consider this when appraising information: investigators are often looking for exactly the information that both general staff and information managers think of as "off the record".

There is a tension here. I have mentioned already that the free flow of chat carries high risks that whatever information we retain is hard to interpret or understand later. Flippant, throwaway comments and jokes in a low-context medium add up to a high likelihood that comments could be misunderstood or misrepresented, and this likelihood will go up over time.

So, on one hand, the decision to indefinitely retain chat could mean a public office has access to evidence they would otherwise not have and that they can use that evidence to hold people to account for causing demonstrable harm.

On the other hand, the same decision to retain chat could result in harm for chat participants, for people mentioned, and for the credibility of the public office, if chat is disclosed out of context.

It raises real questions for me about when it would be reasonable to ask someone to defend something they wrote in chat, given what we know about how the medium works. The answer is certainly that *sometimes* it would be reasonable, but certainly not all the time and arguably not even often.

So, I would say that retaining chat forever would only be the best available option in a public office where all of the following are true:

- There is high likelihood of misconduct occurring
- There are very significant consequences of misconduct, and
- Before the introduction of chat there was an unacceptable lack of evidence to identify misconduct and hold people to account

I can imagine that public offices whose functions relate to national security might at least meet those first two criteria, but I think the last point is significant. I would also have to trust that all organisations are working hard on minimising the first point, thus reducing the value of indefinitely retaining chat records.

We could automatically delete chat of a certain age

I have worked in some organisations, private and public sector, where chat messages are deleted after a short period of time, for example 90 days. This is at least possible in Microsoft Teams chats.

This is our best available option, in my opinion. It is getting rid of potentially high-risk and low-value collections of information that were never intended to be treated as records in the first place and requires very little effort to implement. Deleting the records periodically minimises the risks outlined already in this piece around retaining chat.

Arguably, even where there is evidential value in retaining chats in case of misconduct, the likelihood of that evidence being needed for an investigation will decrease over time, so I would still encourage organisations to implement such a policy even if the period for retaining chat is years rather than months.

We have the authority to dispose of "casual or instantaneous communications that contain information of an ephemeral, non-transactional nature". We can establish a policy internally that affirms that this is the only appropriate use of chat.

This would greatly increase clarity for staff about the appropriate use of tools and about when and where to create records because it takes away the option of ever using chat as a de facto recordkeeping system or knowledge base.

In line with how I might approach contractors, I am not suggesting just turning this policy on, without other controls or initiatives aiming to ensure people can easily do the right thing. I would establish and maintain processes that aid the visibility of the policy to everyone and that aims to ensure people understand

how to work with it. I would include content in staff induction about the topic, ideally tailored to the new starter's line of business, to minimise the risk that people put information only in chat that they need later. In any situation where we are disabling something, we should provide good alternatives, so, in the case of chat, people should know how to capture and share knowledge and significant records and have tools that genuinely help them to do these things.

Once again in line with working with contractors, we may identify particular circumstances in which there is a relatively high risk that valuable information could be lost when chat is auto-deleted, and we can target those sets of circumstances with appropriate solutions. For example, if we found staff who handle interactions with members of the public are less likely to make good records of those interactions outside chat, we could work with those staff to identify the reasons for that and come up with a way to improve their record keeping.

Summary

In this piece I have tried to convey the challenges of chat and my opinions on how best to address them, but I hope this content can be generalised to give you ideas for how to tackle any novel type of records.

To date, I have been in conversations about what technical solutions would be needed to manage chat, have read detailed descriptions of how chat data is held, and so on. I see these conversations as bypassing appraisal and good records management practices. These technical conversations are by necessity about how we manage records not about "what" we are managing or why. They are usually based on an incorrect assumption that we must manage all records to the same standard.

Information and records management professionals are well-positioned to determine the answer to the important question of what information needs to be kept and why. Before chat was commonplace, records managers were not running around public offices telling workers to capture their every thought and water cooler conversation. I believe the content of chat is of the same nature – and value – as those verbal conversations and that our decisions around how to manage chat records must take that into account.

Endnote

1. Archives New Zealand "General Disposal Authority 7" class 1.8.

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Archives New Zealand. "General Disposal Authority 7." 2013. Accessed September 5, 2023, https://www.archives.govt.nz/manage-information/how-to-manage-your-information/disposal/general-disposal-authorities

The Case for Nationally Recognised Technical Specifications for Digitisation in New Zealand

Andy Fenton

The information and records management (IRM) sector

Central and Local Government agencies have a key responsibility to preserve and make records that reflect our history and identity publicly available: their collections trace events and decisions that shape our nation and the lives of Kiwis. Further, as outlined by Archives New Zealand Te Rua Mahara o te Kāwanatanga (ANZ), information and records are key strategic assets at the core of public sector business and government accountability.

I contend there are some key areas warranting review and action, particularly the current lack of clarity regarding New Zealand digitisation standards. This is an area I have advocated for since my early involvement in developing a national standards framework in 1996. The present ambiguity surrounding digitisation standards has far-reaching consequences across the IRM sector, most noticeably when circumstances change. For example, digital objects that have not been digitised according to best practices (those that guarantee long-term preservation) experience downstream implications when intentions evolve.

This paper calls for a cohesive, national approach to the technical specifications contained within digitisation standards and guidelines in Aotearoa New Zealand. This will help ensure our national record is properly preserved and accessible long into the future.

In this context, records are considered any information, regardless of form and format, from documents through to data. Records serve both as evidence of business activity and as information assets. A record includes related metadata, which is also managed as a record. Information and records help organisations plan for and achieve outcomes that benefit businesses, government, and the wider community.

Archives NZ produced the Information and Records Management (IRM) Standard *(July 2016, V1.0), issued under section 27 of the* Public Records Act 2005, that describes how to manage information and records efficiently and systematically. It sets out the minimum level of compliance that organisations must meet.

The Public Records Act establishes the Chief Archivist as an independent information regulator within the government. In this role, the Chief Archivist and Archives New Zealand have a responsibility to support, monitor, and direct the public sector to facilitate compliance with information management requirements. These requirements are supposedly set out in the *IRM Standard*.

While this standard is designed to support organisations to meet their obligations under the Public Records Act 2005 (the Act), the major focus of the standard is to support effective information and records practices in complex business and government environments. Meeting the standard enables organisations to manage their information assets in a holistic, integrated manner. The standard should be read in conjunction with instructions, directions, and any other guidance under the Act.

However, across the IRM sector, unique and diverse analogue collections are physically deteriorating through age, continual use, inherent format instability, or have simply become inaccessible due to the technological obsolescence of their playback equipment. They might even be in danger of being misplaced, lost, or un/wittingly disposed of. Agencies therefore must consider a preservation-driven or access-driven digitisation program that ensures citizens and organisations have continued (online or physical) access to records and archives so they can better understand their heritage, wairua, and democracy. To achieve this a set of consistent technical specifications pertaining to digitising corporate or business or historical records will be an integral requirement. However, the IRM sector is under-served in this regard.

While the workflow process and considerations provided by Archives New Zealand are detailed and expert, advice regarding the technical specifications is scant or noticeably absent. This is important: if clear digitisation and metadata standards are not established, there is a risk that the digital files created today will not be good enough in the future. Conversely, organisations may spend precious time and funds applying standards that exceed requirements. Over the years many in the sector have heard me say, "quality digitisation is so much more than how many pixels per inch, it's about tonal fidelity." I am also frequently asked, "what file format should we use for our preservation master files?". I have long contended there is a need for a digitisation standard that provides sensible and straightforward technical specifications that can underpin fit-for-purpose digitisation.

The purpose of digitisation can be preservation (where you want to retain the digital records in perpetuity) or it can be simply for access (where the digital records simply offer access to information beyond the four physical walls of

the holding repository). The latter can be intended to meet an organisation's community engagement responsibilities — there is demand for the improved availability and access that the internet can provide. This has become particularly important in pandemic times where restrictive lockdowns can mean both staff and other stakeholders cannot access business data or collection material.

I have been involved in standards development since 1996, and 15 years ago I was a member of the sub-committee that drafted New Zealand's first digitisation standard as well its international successors (e.g., ISO 13028).

> Archives NZ Continuum Series *S6: Digitisation Standard (2007)*
>
> S-6 ARCHIVES NEW ZEALAND'S STANDARD FOR DIGITISING NON-ELECTRONIC RECORDS FOR RECORDKEEPING PURPOSES AND RETENTION OF NON-ELECTRONIC RECORDS IN ELECTRONIC FORM ONLY.

My firms collaborated with sector colleagues to shape Archives NZ's *Technical Specifications for Digitisation* in 2014 (known affectionately as *TechSpecs*) which, along with the *Digitisation Toolkit*, was the last document to offer technical specifications regarding resolution, bit depth, and file format against common business record types. Neither of these documents are available online now.

Therefore, particularly when reflecting on my earlier efforts in standards development, I find it concerning that in the IRM space NZ does not have a digitisation standard (or even a suite of guidelines) that provides technical specifications. The closest is:

> AS/NZS - ISO 13028:2012 Australian/New Zealand Standard: Information and documentation - Implementation guidelines for digitization of records

Standards NZ defines *ISO 13028* as 'current'— but in fact it has been revoked and replaced by the Information and Records Management (IRM) Standard July 2016, issued in July 2016. Nonetheless, *ISO 13028* supports the systematic and efficient management of government information and records, outlining the obligations of regulated organisations under the Public Records Act. Please note *ISO 13028* (which costs $NZ135 + GST), while providing some excellent guidance pertaining to IRM, specifically excludes technical specifications for digital capture of records (that the *Continuum S6* and the *TechSpecs* did have).

Further emphasising my point, I note that when records managers try to ascertain how to digitise their records, Archives NZ deflects the onus back on the public office/local authority/organisation. An example of this can be found on Archives NZ's website under the section Digitisation guidance — public offices and local authorities:

This means you need to know:

- which records you can and cannot replace with digitised versions
- the criteria and *technical standards* that digitised records need to meet before they can replace the originals.

You'll find this in our digitisation guidance below. This guidance covers both public offices and local authorities.

You should follow the guidance for all records you digitise. You must follow the guidance if you want to replace the original records...

Note the should and must in the final two sentences — vernacular that is typical in international standards. In short, it means the (minimum) technical specifications for digitisation are only mandatory if you are disposing of the originals.

Meanwhile, despite the directives: "the criteria and technical standards that digitised records need to meet", and "find this in our digitisation guidance below", the suggested technical specifications are scant and insufficient.

You can find these specifications in the August 2018/revised 2020 advice document (17/G13 - Destruction of source information after digitisation) and the accompanying October 2017/revised 2020 advice document (17/Sp7 - Authority to retain public records in electronic form only).

This is a grave weakness because it is unlikely that everyone will reference the *Destruction of source information after digitisation* document — quite simply because not everyone plans to destroy. A consequence of this is that even these minimalist technical standards may not be followed.

Recommended Minimum Technical Specifications

Bit depth		Resolution	File Format	Compression
8 bit	Greyscale or bi-tonal	300 ppi	PDF/A TIFF JPEG 2000	Lossless compression
24 bit	Colour	300 ppi	PDF/A TIFF JPEG 2000	Lossless compression

These technical specifications are applicable to the digitisation of text and photographic prints.

It appears that around the time the IRM Standard was published, Archives NZ removed the last remaining technical detail for digitisation (*Technical Specifications for Digitisation*) which had been part of the *Digitisation Toolkit* in 2016. The only direction from Archives NZ regarding technical specifications is maintaining adherence to *ISO 13028*, and it says:

> *The standard AS/NZS ISO 13028:2012, Information and documentation – implementation guidelines for digitization of records is recommended guidance for digitisation processes and policies.*

Once again, the onus is on the Public Office/Local Authority to sort out specifications. They are not documented.

Some believe the Archives New Zealand's Records Toolkit site provides the information we need: it is an initiative aimed at getting the information and resources Archives NZ produces to the people who require it. However, even with a section titled *Digital,* as well as the offer to "Find all information management guidance for public offices and local authorities" in an A to Z list of guidance, there is little or no guidance on technical specifications for digitisation amongst a wealth of other really useful IRM knowledge.

Other legislation

It is prudent to understand all relevant legislation when embarking on the digitisation of official records. While the PRA is inextricably linked with the likes of the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) and the Privacy Act 2020 (which came into effect 1 December 2020), I believe the Contract and Commercial Law Act 2017 (CCLA) 2017 is important in the context of *TechSpecs*.

Part 4 of the CCLA (sections 207-240) is the modern equivalent of the former Electronic Transactions Act 2002 (ETA). In terms of information and records management practices, it requires those bound by the CCLA to retain paper (or microform) originals unless they have electronic versions that maintain the integrity of the information digitised — e.g., it is a true likeness and it can be accessed reliably now, in perpetuity, or for as long as an organisation's official disposal authority permits.

The CCLA is referenced by 17/G13, which notes its importance, and 17/Sp7 lists the two conditions of CCLA 2017 section 229(1).

CCLA 2017 subsection 229 (2) states:

> *Subsection (1) applies to information that is a public record within the*

> *meaning of the Public Records Act 2005 only if the Chief Archivist has approved the retention of that information in electronic form.*

And subsection (3) states:

> *To avoid doubt, if information is retained in electronic form in accordance with subsection (1), the paper or other non-electronic form of that information need not be retained.*

So, part of conforming to CCLA requirements is the requirement to understand technical specifications pertaining to digitisation.

How about other countries?

United Kingdom

Archives NZ's British counterparts, The National Archives (TNA), offer more detail but also follow an A to Z on Guidance like Archives NZ. In fact their 2016 Digitisation Guidelines even references Archives NZ's (now withdrawn) *Digitisation Toolkit* and includes a significant amount of their own technical details. Apart from the reference to Archives NZ's Toolkit, it is a substantial and useful document.

Australia

In 2021 The National Archives of Australia (NAA) delivered an excellent, clear, and easy-to-locate web page titled Digitisation specifications for paper records in agencies. They still reference *ISO 13028* for its workflow and process information (e.g., quality assurance) but have gone to great lengths to give the sector clarity on technical specifications for typical record formats.

NAA's guidelines can be compared to those covered by FADGI, albeit scaled down. I recommend using FADGI for guidance in the absence of anything else because there are significant and useful overlaps into the IRM sector.

> ***NZMS recommend*** FADGI Technical Guidelines for Digitizing Cultural Heritage Materials 2016: Creation of Raster Image Files ***as a guiding principle for the work we do for cultural heritage institutions nationwide because, AudioVisual and 3D aside, we feel this best covers the application of Cultural Heritage collection digitisation in NZ.***

While FADGI specifications are openly targeted at the cultural heritage sector, NAA have tailored their specifications for the business records of anyone bound by the likes of the Public Records Act. I contend this is exactly what Aotearoa New Zealand needs.

NAA also stick to the mantra we started as far back as 2006 with Archives NZ's Continuum S6: that it is worthwhile having different digitisation technical specifications for items of permanent or non-permanent value:

- If the records are of permanent value, use the digitisation for preservation specifications.
- If the records are not of permanent value, use the business-as-usual specifications.
- If you are digitising a series of records with both permanent and temporary value, and those records will be destroyed after digitisation, the entire series must be scanned in accordance with the preservation specifications. Please consult your agency's information management team if this is the case.

This relates back to my point about fit for purpose digitisation.

In a nice touch, NAA offer a printable quick-reference guide, a two-page document that summarises the digitisation specifications for paper records.

A recommendation and a request for specific guidance from Archives New Zealand Te Rua Mahara o te Kāwanatanga

I argue that Aotearoa New Zealand's information and records management sector is under-served for technical specifications pertaining to digitising records. There is a need (and an opportunity) for our sector leader, Archives New Zealand, to provide more tailored and specific advice to ensure those entrusted with the responsibility can effectively preserve our national record.

Digitisation advice is increasingly sought by people and organisations interested in establishing their own digitisation capability — a common request is for clear information regarding technical specifications for digitisation that is endorsed or provided by our information and records management sector leader. In particular, people anticipate finding this information among the otherwise excellent and expert advice prevalent on Archives New Zealand's website.

There is a simple way forward: firstly, there needs to be emphasis on the

difference between digitising for preservation purposes (where you intend to keep the digital objects in perpetuity) and digitising for access purposes (where the immediate need is to make the information available and the original physical copy is still your preservation master). Thereafter I agree with others I have canvassed in the NZ standards world: we do not necessarily need to publish our own digitisation standards and guidelines. However, I recommend we should routinely review what is available internationally and endorse another country's specifications for use in Aotearoa New Zealand after thorough evaluation. On that note, it is recommended that the sector leader, Archives New Zealand, provides direction.

As a passionate advocate for this approach, I am willing to continue this dialogue and contribute as appropriate to reach a positive outcome for the IRM sector.

What do you think? I am very interested to hear what others think about this topic — please reach out with any feedback so we can continue the conversation.

‘Fortune’ by Bev Moon

Q&A with an Art Curator and an Archivist

Hope Wilson and Jennifer Jeffery

Fortune by Tāmaki Makaurau artist Bev Moon is on display at the Hocken Gallery in Ōtepoti, Dunedin from 12 August to 21 October 2023. *Fortune* is a touring exhibition, which was previously shown at Upper Hutt’s Whirinaki Whare Taonga gallery and Waikato Museum Te Whare Taonga o Waikato in Hamilton.

Figure 1. Lions from the Otago Southland Chinese Association Lion Dance Team perform at the opening of Fortune by Bev Moon. Photo: Dave Bull.

Moon’s work, a meticulously knitted life-sized replica of a yum-cha banquet, reflects on the journey of her mother and grandmother who were two of 500 wives and children permitted into Aotearoa New Zealand -between 1939-1941 during the Sino-Japanese War. *Fortune* is a nod to the women in Bev Moon’s family who overcame distinct challenges and isolation as Chinese migrants to Aotearoa New Zealand.

Figure 2. Bev Moon speaking at the opening of her exhibition Fortune at Hocken Collections, Friday 11 August 2023. Photo: Dave Bull.

How did you first learn about Bev Moon's 'Fortune' and what perspective did you bring to the exhibition?

Jennifer: I came to know about *Fortune* by Bev Moon when Catherine Hammond (Hocken Librarian) and I were having an introductory meeting at an Ōtepoti Café, quite soon after Catherine joined the Hocken whānau. Bev is a friend and former colleague of Catherine, and when I brought up my interest and engagement with New Zealand Chinese history to Catherine, it seamlessly slipped into conversation. After seeing photographs of Bev's knitted Yum Cha, I was eager to connect with her and seek out the possibilities of bringing *Fortune* to the Hocken Collections.

I had no previous experience working on any aspect of an art exhibition as my training is primarily in Archives and Records Management. I did see this as an extraordinary opportunity for me to explore and engage further with New Zealand Chinese social history, gain an understanding of the curation process for an art exhibition, and help to plant the seed to grow the relationship between the Hocken Collections with the Otago and Southland New Zealand Chinese community.

Hope: When I took up the role of Curator Art at the Hocken in February 2023 planning for Bev's project was already underway. Catherine Hammond, Jen Jeffery, Robyn Notman, and Victoria France brought me up to speed with the planning and Jen and I met Bev via Zoom in early June.

In previous roles, I have worked closely with artists to develop and install exhibitions so I understood the curatorial process and the practicalities of exhibition making but this project gave me a deeper understanding and appreciation of the Hocken's collections. Working with Anna Blackman, Head Curator Archives, Katherine Milburn, Curator Ephemera, Anna Petersen, Curator Photographs, and Kirstie Ross, Curator Published and Special Collections, on selecting, preserving, and presenting items from the Hocken's Collection was a great experience and I appreciated the support and knowledge shared by each person. *Fortune* was also my first full opportunity to work within the Hocken Gallery so there was a lot of anticipation and learning attached to this project for me.

In addition to the Hocken's collection, we also included some items from the New Zealand Chinese Heritage Research Charitable Trust Collection which is cared for by the Presbyterian Research Centre at Knox College in Ōtepoti. The expertise and support provided by the Trust, Jay Robinson, and Rachel Hurd was much appreciated and added a great deal to the exhibition.

What was your biggest hurdle, how was it overcome?

Jennifer: One of the biggest hurdles was trying to decide what complimentary material would be needed to support *Fortune* and to make it 'make sense'. *Fortune* projects strong themes of family, intergenerational knowledge, migration, and survival. Hope Wilson (Curator Art) and I decided that we want to expand on the original themes of *Fortune* and find material within the Hocken Collections as well as obtaining loans from other institutions like the New Zealand Chinese Heritage Research Charitable Trust and the New Zealand Chinese community. The items we selected needed to help contextualise these themes within the New Zealand Chinese experiences in Otago and Southland, both pre-1940s and post-1940s.

With the theme beginning to congeal, it was time to forage! From an archivist perspective, my mind raced with ideas of manuscripts which are rich with historical dialect, brimmed with a discourse of hope, and packed with emotional anguish. Alas, crunchy pieces of water-stained paper, that

Figure 3. Bev Moon feeding the one of the lions during the performance. Photo: Dave Bull.

Figure 4. Bev Moon, Fortune (a knitted yum cha for my mother's 90th birthday), 2021-2022, mixed media on a table with central rotating Lazy Susan. Photo: Dave Bull.

have been previously chewed by rodents does not always bewitch the eye. It is with the assistance of Hope and Robyn Notman (Head Curator, Pictorial Collections) that I began to look at archives with a curatorial lens. I began to see the potential of a collection item within an art context, and whether it could be used appropriately within this exhibition.

Navigating the exhibition space proved quite a challenge. Hope and I wanted to combine the collection items and Bev's *Fortune*, but also ensure visitors could distinguish the contextualising materials from the heart of the exhibition. Hope and I decided we would employ the exhibition space, with its centre room and two alcoves, to do this spatial work for us. This structural division assists us to write the contextualising chapters composed of complimentary material that surrounds *Fortune*. *Fortune* is also presented in a backdrop of deep-red walls, which enriches Moon's chapter.

Working on the exhibition provided me with a unique experience to establish foundations in an unfamiliar aspect of the Heritage and Culture Sector. I am incredibly grateful to Bev Moon who was willing of my engagement with this project, and I am also incredibly grateful for Anna Blackman, Catherine Hammond, and the Hocken Pictorial Team for allowing me this opportunity to engage with an unfamiliar aspect of the Hocken Collections.

Hope: Initially, Jen and I wanted to focus on collection material which told the stories of Chinese women in Aotearoa. Bev's work is full of admiration for the skills, passion, determination, and knowledge of her mother and grandmother, and we wanted to explore similar stories through the curated side galleries. As we explored the collection and began to understand the stories held here, we realised the strongest voices in the collection were the voices of Chinese men and this led us to instead focus on specific community groups, like the story of the Hanover Street Baptist Church Chinese Sunday School. Women's voices are still very much present in the exhibition—we see Dr Kathleen Anneui Phi-Chang, the first person of Chinese descent to graduate in medicine in New Zealand, Shirley Sew Hoy's pamphlet which offers a guide to Chinese cooking, and photographs of Mabel (Gee Fung) Chin participating in sports in 1960s Ōtepoti. One thing that emerged through this engagement with the collection was an awareness of the potential to develop future projects which tell local stories in more depth. This exhibition one way of opening a dialogue with the collection and the community.

Figure 5. Visitors examine a banner gifted to the Hanover Street Baptist Church by the Chinese congregation c. 1899. Photo: Dave Bull.

What was a personal highlight?

Jennifer: My interest in New Zealand Chinese history has enabled me the privilege of being a Trustee on the New Zealand Chinese Heritage Research Charitable Trust (NZCHRCT). The Trust helps to support a unique collection of New Zealand Chinese material which includes donations from the Wong family, and the 'Ng New Zealand Chinese Heritage Collection (UNESCO Memory of the World, Aotearoa New Zealand Trust)'. Several items from the Ng Collection feature in this Exhibition.

Hope: Working with private family photo albums and learning the connections and relationships which exist throughout the exhibition have been the biggest privilege of this project. For me, personally, it's been a wonderful experience working with this collection material and helping Bev to install and present her wonderful exhibition at the Hocken. The community response to the project has been fantastic and it is exciting to host the exhibition here in Ōtepoti—a place with so many strong connections and stories of arrival for Bev's family and many other Chinese New Zealanders.

Figure 6. Bev Moon, artist, and Catherine Hammond, Hocken Librarian, pictured with Bev's work, Fortune (a knitted yum cha for my mother's 90th birthday). Photo: Dave Bull.

In Closing

Our work on this project has been supported in so many ways by generous members of the local and national community including The New Zealand Chinese Heritage Research Charitable Trust, Otago Southland Chinese Association, the Presbyterian Research Centre, and the Chinese Poll Tax Heritage Trust. Thank you to Dr James Ng and Eva Wong Ng, Malcolm Wong, Jay Robinson, Rachel Hurd, Teresa Chan, Christine Wong, Erin Broughton, Kenny Yu, and Leo Li. Last but certainly not least, thank you to Bev Moon for sharing your beautiful exhibition with a spirit of enthusiasm and generosity and allowing us to host your work and your family's stories at the Hocken.

This project is an exciting opening of a conversation and we're excited to continue this work and explore more ways we can research and present Chinese stories and histories in the Hocken Gallery.

Figure 7. Opening night visitors in Fortune by Bev Moon, Friday 11 August 2023. Photo: Dave Bull.

Getting to Know You

Fono Talo

Can you tell us a little bit about the path that led to your current role?

In 2018, I started a part-time online course as an interest away from my full-time education role. My genealogy research interest increased as I continued with the course until 2021 when I decided to career switch and augment my studies with work in the industry. This led me to returning to New Zealand and working at Archives New Zealand.

What is your biggest challenge in your current role?

As an archivist in the Research Services team, I have had to shake off the cobwebs created from living overseas on and off for the last twenty years, to recall my knowledge of New Zealand history. Google has its limited place but the knowledge I've absorbed from my colleagues has been invaluable.

Balancing my time between multiple projects at work that I enjoy as well as time for my passion for travelling! Archives New Zealand currently has limited research guides on the finding aids for Pacific Island resources. We are working on updating them but looking at the resources and the cold weather here is making me anxious for a quick Island getaway in the sun!

What is your favourite archive or collection you have seen or would like to see?

My favourite archive is the one a current reader is looking for and it contains information required for their research needs. It means I've helped someone, and archives are getting accessed!

What do you most enjoy about the work you do?

I enjoy the detective work feels of researching and finding archives that support potential answers. My colleagues are amazing people who make coming to work a joy. Every day brings new opportunities for me to learn about different areas of archives such as provenance or regulations.

Can you tell us about where you see current trends in Archives taking us in the next few years?

I started in the Digitisation – Te Maeatanga team at Archives New Zealand and I caught the vision! The need for virtual access to documents will increase in the future as people are more aware of what is available but have less time or opportunity to visit in real life. It also means putting more thought into the kaitiaki of digital storage and platforms.

Getting to Know You

Rachel Bell

Can you tell us a little bit about the path that led to your current role?

Like many people, my path to becoming an archivist was a fairly circuitous one. I have a background in the arts and jewellery trades but became increasingly conscious that this may not sustain me long-term. I had also done some work in galleries and libraries, and wanted to pursue this further but wasn't sure which direction to take. After a lot of research, a lot of cold-calling, and some volunteer work, I decided to re-train, and embarked on the MIS at Victoria University. Towards the end of the MIS, I began doing some research work for staff in the department, then got my first job managing a small archive at a private school in Auckland. This was quickly followed by the opportunity to work with the Fletcher Trust Archive. I loved it from day dot and am so appreciative of how kind and encouraging people already working in the field have been.

What is your biggest challenge in your current role?

I'm largely sole charge in the role, and while I'm very happy to work alone, it can feel a bit isolated at times. The bigger issue though is that without colleagues to confer with, decision-making can be slow, and as someone so new to the profession, I sometimes experience uncertainty about the choices I'm making. In saying this, I'm very lucky to have some generous mentors, and it has taught me to get very comfortable asking questions and getting advice from others in the industry. It also means that I have to really think through and understand the processes I'm carrying out, rather than doing them because it is existing protocol, or because I was asked to.

What is your favourite archive or collection you have seen or would like to see?

It's archive adjacent, but the most exciting collection I've experienced was the Museum of Anthropology (MOA) at the University of British Colombia, Vancouver. As a textile enthusiast, I particularly loved the incredible weaving and basketry, coupled with the feat of also having storage areas on display. The aspect that struck me most, however, was how the accompanying text thoughtfully discussed very complex issues around museums and colonisation, indigenous knowledge, and the sometimes problematic nature of collecting.

What do you most enjoy about the work you do?

Although the Fletcher Trust Archive began as an in-house corporate archive, and we do have a lot of administrative records, because of the enormous scope of Fletcher Challenge and their related businesses, we have material related to the built environment and industry across Aotearoa. As such, there is a lot of social history embedded in this too, and I really enjoy this aspect of my work. I find the 'puzzle' of the archive and of responding to research requests satisfying, and love connecting people with information, especially where it is meaningful and relates to their own family or community history.

Do you have any recent notable acquisitions or taonga that you'd like to highlight to ARANZ members?

Last year I worked on a small project to digitise Arrowhead magazine, the Fletcher Holdings company magazine from 1954 to 1980. It is a delightful trove, containing images of Fletcher Construction projects at the time and a wide range of content related to various industries they were involved

in. Each issue usually included ‘personalia’ pages with information about events, staff marriages and family additions, and they are wonderful examples of graphic and publication design of the day. They are worth a look, are great resources for family and community history researchers, and full, word-searchable PDF files are available at

https://collection.fletcherarchives.co.nz/highlights/arrowhead-mag/objects

Obituary: Eulogy for Mary Ronnie (1926-2023)

Allison Dobbie

Farewell to Mary Ronnie, the first woman national librarian in the world when she was appointed head of the National Library in 1976. Thank you to Allison Dobbie who delivered this eulogy at Mary Ronnie's funeral and has kindly allowed us to share it.

Paying tribute to Mary Ronnie

Today it is my great honour to pay tribute to Mary Ronnie as a legend of the library world. Miss Ronnie as I first knew her. I will try to do this in my own words and with the help of other people and organisations that Mary worked with. However, it is simply not possible to do justice to the breadth and impact of Mary's career in libraries or to her legacy which continues strongly in so many services and in all of us.

I have worn my handknit stranded colourwork cardigan in special tribute though.

I first met Mary in the spring of 1969 as a 7th former when I applied for the Dunedin Public Library scholarship. This supported students through their university studies and library school so that we would then return to work at Dunedin Public. Mary met me and welcomed me very warmly. She showed me all around the Carnegie Library, introduced me to lots of people whom we chatted to, and we had a cup of tea. I was concerned after I left because I hadn't been interviewed. So you can imagine my surprise when I received a letter awarding me the scholarship a couple of weeks later. Of course I had been interviewed, it was just that Mary had done it her way, as she did instinctively in so many aspects of her leadership. We would see Mary every day in the library, she would stop and chat and we would always share with her what we were working on and how things were going. This was long before "walking the floor" became an official and sometimes awkward management practice.

Mary instilled in her staff a strong belief in the importance of public libraries and a set of values relating to equity and service that she inherited from her predecessors – W.B. McEwan (a Scot), Archie Dunningham and Ada Fache, and she passed these on to us with equal passion. These values also had their roots in deeply held Scottish beliefs about education and human rights which were part of Mary's DNA.

As Sally Angus says in her online tribute, Mary was way ahead of her time in the highest ideals of customer service. We were there to serve the customers, the people who owned the library, and to make it easy for them. We never pointed – we walked with the customer and made sure that we understood exactly what they needed and how we could help them. We were thoroughly trained, mentored, tested and partnered before being let loose on the reference desks on our own, and the accuracy and thoroughness of our research mattered.

Mary was way ahead of her time in so many other areas. She cared deeply about the library collections and about making every cent of limited budgets count in terms of ensuring that collections were of high quality and met customer needs, and were properly displayed. She was innovative and introduced a number of ground-breaking services and systems, especially in relation to community outreach. She was particularly proud of the first computer-generated listing of the library's magazine holdings, a huge awkwardly shaped document which was a first for Dunedin City Council and a remarkable feat involving thousands of punch cards. This was but the first of many forays into adoption of new library technologies in her subsequent roles.

She implemented clear succession plans for the future. She had a clear vision and a powerful ability to communicate and persuade. Town Clerks and Councillors were in awe of her and thought her formidable. She was mischievous and canny, and irreverent when necessary. At her farewell before leaving to take up the role of National Librarian, she said of the public service 'there is only one rule, and that is don't read the rule book.' A practice I have tried to follow but largely failed.

I wanted to paint the picture of these strong characteristics of her leadership that I experienced at DP because they are evident throughout her career. Along with dedication – total dedication and love for the role and the people she worked with.

Let me go back to the beginning

Mary arrived in Dunedin from Glasgow in 1937 with her mother and brother. Her father had died around 1932 when Mary was 6. She loved reading and loved books, sometimes more than she liked going to school. She started working as an after-school assistant in 1942, then as an assistant in the Commercial and Technical Room when she left school and in charge there from 1946. Following part-time study for a BA and a year at library school in Wellington, Mary returned to Dunedin Public Library in 1952 as Head of Lending and then became Head of Adult Services in 1960. On the eve of her departure to Glasgow in 1960, she was appointed Deputy reporting to Ada Fache, and assumed this role on her return in 1961 until the retirement of Miss Fache in 1968 when Mary was appointed City Librarian.

As City Librarian, Mary's momentous achievement was her planning, advocacy and dedication which resulted in Council approval for a new City Library building at 230 Moray Place. Incredibly this was achieved while at the same time Mary was also President of the Library Association and a member of the University of Otago Council.

While the construction and relocation of the new building was not completed until 1981, Mary laid the groundwork and was heavily involved in its design. I recall a summer day sitting in some sort of book caravan in the Octagon when Mary arrived suddenly and flung herself into one of the chairs. She had just left a meeting in the Town Hall. "We're in a pickle," she said. "The architect has just realised the mobile library won't fit. Don't tell anyone." Then she disappeared and somehow, she must have ensured it was fixed, because both mobile libraries move in and out of the lower basement perfectly well.

The long-standing friendship and trust between Mary and Sir A.H. Reed were also notable and have been significant factors in the unprecedented donations and bequests to Dunedin Public Library over many years. Mary was a frequent visitor to Sir A.H.'s home, often to return with further treasures for the collection. She described such visits with much delight, including the ever-present pot of porridge on his stove, and she always made a special effort to make Sir A.H. welcome amongst his collections in the library. Notably, in his nineties, he could bound up the stairs at a faster pace even than Mary.

National Librarian

In 1976 Mary moved to Wellington to take up the role of National Librarian, the first woman to be appointed to the role in New Zealand. Subsequently it was found that she was also the first female National Librarian anywhere in the world. Before she departed, Mary told us she had ensured her service in local government would count as part of her public service and had worked out her pension eligibility in case she didn't take to Wellington. It was a big move because many of Mary's views in relation to regional services, services to schools and the Country Library Service differed from the National Library practice. The Otago Southland branch of the Library Association, especially with Archie Dunningham's influence, had always believed that a strengthened network of public libraries operating locally was better placed to deliver such services. All this is captured later in her book, *Books to the People*. Mary was delighted when I let her know that the LIANZA submission on the Future for Local Government, delivered just last month, was advocating for a strengthened public library role in relation to school libraries.

Anyway, as it turned out Mary thrived in Wellington and as National Librarian. The following tribute is from the National Library Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa, I thank them and acknowledge the National Librarian Rachel Esson who is here today.

There is a photo gallery of former National Librarians on the third floor of the National Library building in Molesworth Street in Wellington. The photograph of Mary shows someone with character and a twinkle in her eye. Mary is remembered by those who knew her at the library as "a breath of fresh air".

She was a National Librarian who was deeply connected to the sector and actively participated in discussions concerning all parts of the sector not just public libraries. During her time she encouraged the Library to think strategically about the future of its services and the value they added

to their communities. Typically, she initiated an automation planning programme which over time became NZBN.

Debbie Roxborough from our Services to Schools team recalls Mary as a pragmatist who was passionate about libraries and reading, with an abiding interest in young people.

Debbie was a school library adviser, based in the Christchurch centre, and was asked to take Mary on some visits to school libraries. At the end of the visits, she asked Mary what she had found most interesting and was surprised when Mary said that it was the visits to schools whose libraries were not perfect but showed great potential. She said, 'People always take me to see libraries that are perfect, and what I enjoy seeing most are libraries that may not be perfect but are used and valued.'

Jock McEldowney's book about Geoffrey Alley describes Mary's time at the National Library as *"...important, not only because some longstanding problems had been tackled and at least opened up for discussion, but also because she had brought an outside perspective to what had become a somewhat inward-looking organisation."*

> This engagement and openness to ideas is something that the library continues to aspire to today.
>
> — Rachel Esson, National Librarian

When Mary left the National Library in 1981, aged 55, she was looking for new challenges, and by this time she had reconnected with Peter O'Connor whom she had known in her youth in Dunedin.

The Auckland years

In July 1982 Mary started work as City Librarian for Auckland City Council, following in the footsteps of the equally wonderful and long-serving Bob Duthie. Again, she brought the same style of leadership and vision that she had displayed at DP, with a focus on developing staff training, succession planning and budget delegation. Auckland had some similarities, in particular strong collections and research focus, heritage collections and a Central City Library with building challenges. It also had many differences, in particular a network of branch libraries, a more political Council and significantly, a much more diverse population.

Mary's time as National Librarian had no doubt grown her awareness of the library and information needs of Māori and Pacific communities, as that wonderful photograph of her surrounded by children in Ōtara library shows.

Therefore, she took great pride in the move to make Māori material more accessible, and in reaching out to people who had come to New Zealand from the Pacific Islands. In an oral history interview, she also mentions appointing a Māori librarian and the installation of Māori carvings into the Central Library.

Her other main focus was to plan and supervise the relocation of library services within the newly expanded central library building to achieve a more modern form of customer service.

My thanks to David Verran who worked with Mary at Auckland City Libraries during this time and who as its official historian has helped me with this record from Auckland, which was well before my time there.

Research in Wellington

In July 1985 an exciting new opportunity to work with Peter on a history of electricity generation in New Zealand proved too enticing and they left Auckland to return to live in Wellington. I occasionally bumped into Mary at this time, and it was clear that she was fascinated by this topic, keen to share what she had discovered. The Electricity Corporation history of electricity development in New Zealand was completed during 1987-88. Mary is not listed as an author, but she was heavily involved in supporting Peter, as shown in her papers from this time which are deposited in the Alexander Turnbull Library.

Role in LIANZA

Mary was actively involved in the Library Association at branch and national level throughout her career. The following tribute is provided by LIANZA for me to read. Ana Pickering, Executive Director, LIANZA Te Rau Herenga o Aotearoa is here to represent the Association and pay their respects today.

Mary Ronnie was an astute and capable leader in the library world.

Mary was a New Zealand Library Association (now LIANZA) president from 1973 to 1974. Mary became a LIANZA Fellow in 1975 and was made an Honorary Life Member in 1986 in recognition of her distinguished service to the association. In her retirement she was an active LIANZA Murihiku committee member and writer about libraries. She was awarded LIANZA's John Harris Award for her book 'Freedom to Read', the 2008 Dunedin Public Library centenary publication, written while Mary was in her 80s.

Mary was a crusader for libraries, believing they needed to be made more attractive to all sectors of the community and she had no time for the librarian who hid behind a desk and piles of books.

She used these words on the centenary of LIANZA in 2010 using a comment from her presidential address in 1974: "It seemed clear then, and still does, that "unless the librarian is accepted as an authoritative professional figure, freedom to act will be restricted to the most trivial matters rather than extended to areas where knowledge and experience have outlet."

"And a word of warning from a Luddite – don't get too firmly behind a computer screen or your muscles might atrophy. People are better understood when visible and audible. Energy is still essential."

LIANZA President Kim Taunga adds this personal note about Mary. "She left a legacy for all LIANZA presidents to aspire to. A legacy of service and library professionalism and moving the profession forward. I absolutely remember as a library assistant the respect and awe the profession held her in, she would have been in her mid-60s then and in her prime."

Mary Ronnie will be remembered as a pioneer in the library world.

— Ana Pickering, Executive Director, LIANZA Te Rau Herenga o Aotearoa

Monash and Melbourne

In 1987 Peter and Mary moved to Melbourne for another exciting new challenge. The following tribute is provided by colleagues and friends who worked with Mary at this time – Ross Harvey, Rachel Salmond, Brian McMullin and others, so I read this on their behalf:

Retirement at 60 held little attraction for Mary. In 1987 she was one of three new lecturers appointed to the Graduate School of Librarianship at Monash University in Melbourne. Two years later she became Head of the School and remained so until early 1992.

In challenging circumstances, as tertiary education in Australia was radically overhauled and as the School moved from one faculty to another, she oversaw, with her characteristic energy and good judgment, the expansion of its offerings. She was instrumental in establishing the School's archives and records programmes, which have had a significant impact on recordkeeping thought and teaching internationally. She also broadened the School's outreach within Monash, including through her own teaching into the university's nascent postgraduate public history program in the early 1990s.

Her enthusiasm for and advocacy of public libraries, already so well-known in New Zealand, inspired many Australian students who were working in public libraries in Victoria and encouraged many others to seek employment in that sector.

Of course, there was much more to her life in Melbourne ¬– lots of Scottish country dancing and some very adventurous exploration of the Australian outback with Peter in his Toyota Troop Carrier four-wheel drive. When it was sold Mary became great friends with the young family who bought it, of course, and they continued to take her out on mini-adventures in it.

— Ross Harvey, Rachel Salmond, Brian McMullin and other colleagues and friends

Those of us fortunate to be in contact with Mary during these years remember the vivid retelling of those stories of outback adventures, she loved them.

Return to Dunedin

Following her retirement from Monash and return to Dunedin, Mary remained actively involved in her own research and writing, as well as the activities of the Dunedin Public Library and LIANZA, particularly the local Murihiku branch.

Mary was a prolific researcher, writer, teacher and speaker throughout her life – her papers in the Alexander Turnbull Library are testament to this. This did not stop after retirement and she remained active in publishing articles and books on libraries and librarianship, including *Books to the People: A History of Regional Library Services in New Zealand* (1993) and *Freedom to Read: A Centennial History of the Dunedin Public Library* (2008), among many others.

In addition to the LIANZA awards, Mary's impact and achievements in librarianship have been recognised through the award of the Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Medal in 1977 and her appointment as a Companion of the Queen's Service Order in 1982. In 2007 Dunedin Public Libraries awarded Mary the Library Citation, it is a wonderful tribute to her.

I was City Librarian here when Mary returned to live in Dunedin – you see the 1969 scholarship achieved its intended purpose twice in my case. Anyway, I was very impressed by Mary's integrity and professionalism at this time. Although it was clear she did not agree with everything that was happening in the public library, she never said so to me or in public, and she was always 100% supportive personally and in public. This can't always have been easy.

Bernie Hawke who has only just retired as Dunedin City Librarian has shared these memories which I read on his behalf:

For about a year into her work on Freedom to Read, Mary worked from the small office next to mine and while initially hesitant about intruding onto another 'City Librarian's' turf, she soon became comfortable and delighted about being back in the hubbub of a working library, being part of the passing office conversations, sharing coffee with staff and having a free reign over the building and its resources. This was a lovely time.

I remember a conversation with Mary while she was writing Freedom to Read when she came to the end of the physical Council reports in the DCC Archives and was somewhat flummoxed by the bewildering maze of digital files to work through. It was also around this time that we provided Mary with a laptop computer to complement her boxes of 5 x 8 cards. Naturally we provided her with all the help we could navigating the digital records, but regardless she would shake her head and comment on the difficulties of digital records for future historians.

Around this time, Mary also came to me with a special and unexpected request. During her movement around the library, she noticed that Archie Dunningham's former desk was upstairs in the McNab New Zealand Room and asked if she could use it (even though it was smaller and definitely not ergonomic like the newer ones). We of course said yes to this request.

Mary remained active in LIANZA, she continued to attend AGMs and special events. I remember a spirited discussion she had with Chris Szekely at a National Library event hosted in Dunedin for the 100th anniversary of the Alexander Turnbull Library. Mary also regularly attended DP events, Reed Gallery openings and literary events. She was delighted with the strengthened links with Edinburgh through the City of Literature designation and was an active supporter of the Dunedin Public Library Association, regularly attending member events and AGMs.

I remember personally taking Mary to the official opening of the South Dunedin Pop Up Library in September 2017, and she was beaming with satisfaction that this direction was eventually progressing.

— Bernie Hawke, former Dunedin City Librarian

In Conclusion

How is it possible to sum all this up and do justice to a woman whose career spanned more than seven decades. I remain ever thankful to Mary for the opportunities and support she showed to me. There will be thousands of librarians of all ages in New Zealand and Australia that she has taught, or addressed, or worked with who can say the same. There are library services

everywhere that are better because of her innovation and influence and spirited defence.

We remember Mary for her unswerving passion, her belief in libraries and the freedom to read, her pride in her work, her inspiration, her support. The twinkle in her eye and the mischief.

She loved her work and she loved the people who worked in libraries.

We loved her in return. She is in our hearts and her memory and influence will live on. She is truly a legend.

Thank you, Mary, for everything. Go well. God bless.

Allison Dobbie delivered this eulogy at Mary Ronnie's funeral on 24 March 2023 at Hope and Sons Chapel in Dunedin and has kindly allowed us to share it here.

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Objects or archives? Redeeming the object in archival thinking

Sarah Welland and Amanda Cossham

Introduction

While most archives house objects that are managed archivally (for example, uniforms, cups, badges, council seals, and mementos), "the status of these objects is often ambiguous."[1] This ambiguity was highlighted in May 2021 when the NZRecords mailing list debated whether objects in the form of three-dimensional things could be included on a list of 'Protected Records for Local Authorities' and whether objects had informational, accountability, administrative, research or heritage value. Some wrote that objects can be records since accepted definitions of records (and archives) allow it and are format neutral; others disagreed, saying objects can only relate to the 'real' archives as a form of evidence; others suggested that objects per se do not need to be retained unless they meet the definition of 'public record' under the Public Records Act. The question of whether historical objects were appealing to retain and who should retain these (and how) was also raised. One person commented that "one can't automatically assume a non-documentary object such as one would typically associate with a museum collection isn't a record and, therefore, couldn't also potentially be a local authority protected record".[2]

Using this debate as a starting point, this article explores theoretical perspectives on the nature of objects as archival items. It looks at the different perspectives around the nature of the document and the record as well as archival canon (such as it can be said to exist) to discuss how objects can be archives, and archives can be objects, but this is not true in all instances and contexts. We specifically acknowledge Sanderson's research, which not only examines the nature of archival understanding

and thinking but also provides analysis around the interpretation of heritage objects in the design of knowledge enabling systems.[3]

In this paper, the terms used are: *archival item* – a single thing; *archival collection* – fonds; *archives* – archival items and collections within or across repositories; and the *Archive* (or *Archives*) – the organisation(s) responsible for managing the archival collection(s).

We acknowledge that objects may be excluded in the Archive because they do not have a close relationship to the archival collections which they accompany such as would necessitate retention. We also acknowledge occasions where objects cannot be defined as an information object or do not have documentation to support their inclusion, or that a collection policy may explicitly exclude objects (however, that begs the question of whether such a policy might benefit from reconsideration). Rylance notes that despite a wide variety of materials being found in the Archives, "archival acquisition strategies have privileged medium over message" with paper-based formats often being explicitly specified and textual forms preferred.[4] Sanderson expands on this in discussing digital convergence, saying that "objects kept in heritage sector institutions were treated as goods to be divided, and where notions about the nature of those goods, their use, and practices facilitating their use, were imagined in terms of the norms for each institution type".[5]

An archival item is an object

Most existing discussion around archives and objects stems from general acceptance that an archival item is 'an object' in the sense that a document is an object, like a vase is an object. Te Tiriti is both a document and a historical object and is perceived as both. New Zealand's Protected Objects Act 1975 uses the term 'object' to include a variety of forms that would also (depending on the situation) be archival items, such as photographs, film, maps and digitally born objects.[6] The term 'object' can be a handy one to use when dealing with general concepts and questions around the form, format, meaning, and use of archives in both digital and physical contexts, particularly when those archives are image or text based.[7] Any archival item can be (and indeed, is) an object; we choose as archivists to focus on what it says or the evidence it provides rather than what it *is*. Notions of what is an archival item have changed and expanded over time: palm leaf books, papyrus rolls, bark and clay tablets are no longer used as archives (or records), while the 19th and 20th centuries saw a proliferation of record formats including photographs (prints, and acetate and glass plate negatives) and various ways of storing sound and moving pictures,

such as film, wax cylinders of audio, vinyl records and cassette tapes. These changes can create questions around what an archival item is by the way it is represented. For instance, more recently there have been discussions about whether e-books and audio books (and e-audio books) are 'really books'; the format seems in some way to call into question the form of the book and the nature of the content because our engagement with it is different. It is the same with archives. Rylance notes that the UNESCO Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity:

> *renders legitimate the safeguarding of those cultural manifestations that defy the traditional archives' notion of enduring value and simultaneously lends credence to a transmutation of the archive.*[8]

In turn this leads to the preservation of "culturally meaningful expressions regardless of either the physicality of the expression or of the archives itself."[9]

However, use of the term 'archival object' seems more common among users of archives than archivists, being only occasionally used in archives-related discourse relating to photographs.[10] There is little evidence of archival definitions pertaining to 'archival object' outside that of specific digital practices (for example, the use of the term 'digital object') or discussion of ontological aspects around classification or description.[11] The term 'information object' does not seem to be used as a substitute, even though archives are undoubtedly information objects and the term is applied in a variety of other information management and ICT contexts. The closest common term relating to 'information object' seems to be 'artefact', which is occasionally used in New Zealand. The Society of American Archivists defines artefact (artifact) as "a physical object that is made or modified by human culture."[12] However, this is usually contextualised as appended content to archives rather than the archives themselves.[13] One of the most common terms for generally describing an archival item is 'archival document'. This term seems to have transitioned successfully from a paper-based to a digital environment and is often used in discussion relating to the concept of 'archive (or record) as object'. For example, New Zealand's Public Records Act 2005 lists 'a document' as a first example of a public record.[14] However, use of the word 'document' can be and often is interpreted as referring to text-based archives, although Ketelaar claims that "objects can be archival documents".[15] We pick up on this point below.

Mental models and prototypes

The question of whether objects can be archives may be determined by how archivists conceive archival items or archival documents. Often a mental picture relating to these concepts is used to help understanding and explanation. This mental picture supports but may also limit and constrain our understanding because we expect all instances of the concept to conform to that picture, even if this is our unconscious assumption. This form of conceptualising is referred to as a mental model in cognitive psychology.[16] Mental models are "constructed by individuals based on their personal life experiences, perceptions, and understandings of the world. They provide the mechanism through which new information is filtered and stored."[17] Mental models can help explain how individuals make sense of the world and make meaning in ways they can express to others.

According to Johnson-Laird, mental models are varied because they can "take many forms and serve many purposes."[18] One form is that of prototypes; accepted examples of typical things that support shared understandings and enable engagement with the world. Broadly speaking, these are our mental pictures of the world. Prototypes act as short-cuts and determinants of how we understand simple and complex concepts, objects, relationships, and so on. They help us to understand, formulate and talk about things and concepts. Prototypes are heavily embedded in individual, disciplinary/domain, social, and cultural contexts. For example, the typical bird to someone British might be a robin while the typical bird for a New Zealander might be a tūī. Some things may be non-prototypical, i.e., less likely or less common instances of a category of things. For example, someone may 'see' in their mind a penguin rather than a tūī when talking about birds, although a penguin is a less-good example of birds generally because it doesn't fly, doesn't live in trees, nests on the ground, and can dive and swim. Thus, penguins are not likely to be the prototypical bird for most people.

Some prototypes come down to disciplinary agreement. Bowker and Star's book, Sorting Things Out: Classification and its Consequences[19], explains how communities of practice (including disciplines or domains) categorise and classify information, determining how they see the world and interact with it. Individuals learn how a discipline 'thinks' (domain knowledge, canon) through study or work within that discipline. They then adopt ways of conceptualising their discipline and its practices in line with that domain knowledge. Specific language and terminology are used, which facilitates understanding of the domain and makes it harder for those outside the discipline to engage with it (e.g., medical professions). Within

the domain knowledge, certain ways of classifying and conceptualising are more prototypical, more likely to represent an understanding held by a wide range of those engaged in the discipline, and more useful to the discipline's practice. A domain knowledge determines how the community of practice understands the discipline, and at the same time is determined by those within the discipline.

Our mental models and our prototypes do not have to be fully formed to be useful, and they can and do change over time as we learn more or experience more of a particular phenomenon, or as the accepted patterns of thought in a discipline change. People will have mental models of information, of archives, of archival items, of information as a 'thing'[20] that are quite different in 2023 to those held by people in 1923. These changing models determine how people respond to, use, and work with archives and objects. They can also influence how archives and objects are 'seen' within the Archives. For example, as archivists, our mental models can affect how we select, arrange or describe the archival items in our care, and consequently influence how users will conceive different forms of information 'thing' as archives. 'Information as thing' is a theoretical concept, and includes data, text, documents, objects, and events, i.e., things that are informative, according to Buckland.[21]

Documentality and document theory

Two related theoretical areas that contribute to our understanding of the nature of objects as archives and archives as objects are documentality and document theory. Both discuss some of the theoretical concepts behind how people make sense of the world by focusing on how a document can be defined and perceived in relation to our interaction with it, our understanding of it, and our own subjectivities around it (For example, through "cognition, emotion and motivation."[22]) The term 'document' is the term used by these theorists to describe any type of information 'as thing' or item. Documentality and document theory are briefly discussed below.

Documentality argues that documents are separate evidence of the 'independence' of social reality[23]. That is, documents are the recorded (or symbolic[24]) result of a social act that "establishes the nature" of the tacit and explicit constraints (for example, through mutual agreement by both parties to do something) and "guarantees the endurance" of that act.[25] For example, a marriage is a marriage because there is documented evidence of an agreement to wed, framed within a country's legislation, authorised by an individual with the legal power to authorise it. A couple is not married because they decide they are married; they are married because they

have a document that says they are married.[26] A document encompasses written forms as well as graphic and non-verbal (such as tattoos[27]) or inscribed objects.

Document theory sees the document as a variety of things including constructed meaning, cultural code, media type, and physical media.[28] The question of what a document is and whether objects can be documents is covered well by one of the founders of documentation theory, Paul Otlet.[29] Otlet's work is summarised by Buckland as follows:

> *Graphic and written records are representations of objects, [Otlet] wrote, but the objects themselves can be regarded as 'documents' if you are informed by observation of them. ... Otlet cites natural objects, artifacts, objects bearing traces of human activity (such as archaeological finds), explanatory models, educational games, and works of art (Otlet, 1934, p. 217; also Otlet 1990, pp. 153, 197, and Izquierdo Arroyo, 1995).*[30]

Based on this explanation, documents are not just restricted to written and drawn "representations of objects" or any set format, even if we might have in our heads the prototype of 'document' as a paper with written text on it.

In *Qu'est-ce que la documentation?* (*What is documentation?*)[31] Briet explains that while a living animal in the wild is not a document, animals that are catalogued and shown in zoos are forms of documents because their existence has been documented in an informed way. Notably, an antelope could be 'a document' if it was catalogued (the initial document) and had secondary or derived documents (such as press releases, news articles, written studies, recordings of its call, its stuffed form in a museum, paintings, photographs etc) arise from that initial catalogued document. However, a document (even an antelope document) only 'becomes' a document when people gain information from it. This information may not be content-related but may relate instead to their perceptions to and experience of it. This indicates that, theoretically at least, if an antelope can be a document in some contexts, other objects that are catalogued and have secondary or derived documents can also be documents in their own right. Buckland gives the example of dinosaur fossils to illustrate how objects are potentially informative, noting that objects are "collected, stored, retrieved, and examined as information, as a basis for becoming informed."[32] Another example is objects presented as evidence in a court case. By themselves, they are objects; with inclusion in the court case and the secondary documentation, they are documents (and therefore records and potentially, archives). In the NZRecords discussion, items mentioned in this context included sculptural coats of arms, seals,[33] mayoral chains,

historic uniforms, flags, and briefcases containing items of significance to the local authority.

Record prototypes and their relationship to archives

Records, like documents, tend to be understood according to how we engage with them. As a result, whether (or how) we see records as objects affects how we see archives and whether (or how) we see objects as archives. Yeo notes that as we talk about records, we often have a prototype in our minds that means 'record' to us, even though other disciplines conceive the nature of 'record' differently.[34] If an object fits into the definition of being an informational object and/or is documented in ways similar to Briet's antelope, it would be reasonable to expect it would be included as a record or an archive. As a result, we cannot definitively say that objects are not records or archives, but rather we are less likely to *think* of them as records or archives; they are non-prototypical archives. Ketelaar notes that "the meaning of a record or of any other cultural artifact must be understood in two different ways—first, the meaning of the record and second, the meaning for someone or for an occasion"[35]; he emphasises that there are multiple meanings for records within each of these ways, depending on the context of use and the users. Additionally,

> *Meaning as such is never fixed once and for all, but is something that happens in the way events, texts, and other cultural products are appropriated (over and over again, always with a difference).*[36]

How we view these two aspects (that is, the meaning of the record and its applied meaning for other people and contexts) will determine how we form our own prototype of what is a record, and whether we include the notion of 'object' within it. While the term 'record object' can be used conceptually to describe the nature of the record (see for example, Sanderson, 2017), it is rare for a record to be defined purely as an object. Like with archives, 'where evidence is frequently used in the archives domain as a means of differentiating records from purportedly other heritage objects'[37], people tend to privilege the content of the record (and what it can explicitly tell us as evidence) over the form (and what it can tacitly symbolise), regardless of the format involved, or whether 'the thing which speaks of the past is itself the past of which it speaks'.[38]

The NZRecords discussion participants appeared in agreement that objects had to fit into the Public Records Act 2005 interpretation of 'record' in order to be kept as records (or archival items) although several seemed generally reluctant to retain objects that might be considered museum items. Participant disagreement was more around how, when,

and whether objects could be deemed to be records. The context of the original question was local authorities, but the discussion was widespread and included what Archives New Zealand actually holds. Their holdings, it was suggested, could be considered as precedent for keeping objects, although that was contentious to those challenging the fundamental notion of whether an object is an informational item.

With this in mind, it's possible that community archivists are more amenable to the notion of objects as archives, because there are fewer constraints around standards relating to what a record is (for example, they may not be concerned about or aware of ISO 15489 and its definitions of the business record). They may also experience less movement of records into archival collections because their archival collections may be deliberately created and format neutral in ways that traditional Archives are not. There may be no alternative mechanism for keeping objects of significance to the community involved with the Archive (e.g., cups in school archives; honours boards; newsletters; membership lists).

More generally, it is also possible that different Archives may choose to retain objects in museum-style collections adjacent to archival collections to make them more accessible and increase the prestige of the organisation (e.g., for exhibition or teaching purposes, as cultural artifacts), rather than as core archival items subject to (potential) constraints or regulations from external bodies. On a practical level, this approach may also free up space for archives storage: organisations may simply not have room to manage objects, nor the expertise needed to preserve or store certain kinds of object (e.g., garments, briefcases, hats, works of art). Sanderson notes that while attention may focus on consciously collected objects,

> *behind the scenes ways of thinking, ways of talking, and habits of practice play a part in determining the nature of physical and digital assemblages of those collected objects; and so, subtly, influence how they are perceived and how they can be used.*[39]

Mental models, prototypes, and archival objects

Prototypes help us to picture a record or archival item in our mind to help us make meaning about it and discuss it with others (see for example, Yeo [40]). These prototypes can be the result of perception (how we establish it based on the understanding we gain from our own experience) or prescription (how we establish it based on how others describe it to us, including disciplinary or domain knowledge and categorisation). For instance, a paper file may be the 'prototypical record' for many archivists. Along with prototypes, there are also non-

prototypical understandings). This means there can be considerable fluidity around how a record or archival item can be perceived and conceptualised, depending on the archival repository, country, purpose of the archive, and individuals involved (archivists, contributors, users) – even depending on the time period. Objects are 'symbolised' as records or archival items in our minds due to our real and perceived experiences with their existing content, use, metadata, and purpose.[41]

Comparing two editions of the textbook *Keeping Archives* provides a useful example of changing perspectives when it comes to objects. The second edition said:

> *If records are defined as 'documents containing data or information of any kind and in any form, created or received by an organisation or person in the transaction of business and subsequently kept as evidence...'[then] An object...is not normally attached as a record – unless it forms part of or is attached to a record item or series.*[42]

In comparison, the third edition said:

> *Objects – non-paper items in a collection – are traditionally regarded as museum items, that is, the items are managed and cared for separately to archives... while objects in archives exist in many different formats, they usually do not form a large proportion of the overall collection... but are significant nonetheless for the information they hold, the event they captured, or the 'story' they tell of a certain aspect of an organisation's history.*[43]

Both descriptions demonstrate changing prototypical views of objects that stem from changing concepts around records. Views may change again in a future edition. Our understanding of what a record or an archival item is, is never static.

As archivists, our mental models of objects, records, and archives, including prototypes of each, and indeed, disciplinary or domain understanding of such things, need to be amenable to expansion over time and as a result of the needs of the archival collection, organisation, and developing shape of the archives repository in question. Our mental models may be heavily focused on documents as archival items, but not objects as archival items. However, we have illustrated how an object can be a document and we contend that an object can also be an archival item (or record).

Archives and objects

The statement that 'archives are objects' is one that is well supported by archival theory, and in many cases, by archival practice as well. Archives, as records, can be comprehended as documents and therefore as objects, both generally and as part of our meaningful interaction with them, and as sources of evidence and through subjective response.[44] This is demonstrated (as mentioned earlier) by document theory and documentality, by related areas such as diplomatics,[45] and other heritage-related discourse.[46]

Archivists' mental models will also be influenced by the archival canon (domain knowledge), which in turn will affect whether they conceptualise a prototypical archival collection as being text-based and excluding objects, or more encompassing of objects. For example, an archivist who works predominantly with government records may be less likely to see objects as archives because the records created by government are more likely to be textual and to document decision-making. On the other hand, an archivist who works with community archives may be more likely to see objects as archives because there is no canonical understanding of what a community archive is; the community Archive becomes a place that manages things the community considers necessary to capture the essence of that community. This can result in individuals managing community Archives who may not be familiar with canonical understandings accepted by archivists in other kinds of Archives.

Reflecting back on the variety of opinions in the NZRecords list discussion, archivists may see 'an archival item as an object' or 'an object as an archival item' based on the mental models they have developed. These mental models will be formed by individuals' experience and how they have been taught as much as (or even more than) domain knowledge. In turn, these mental models will influence whether they look at an object and think of it as an archival item (or record), whether they consider it on the "edge of the archive",[47] or whether they choose to exclude it from the archive based on its nature as object. These mental models will also influence whether they see objects as evidence that links to a record or an archive, or as documents in their own right, or as discrete things that are more commonly found in a museum. In fact, the existence of museum collections may lead individuals to think of objects as explicitly *not* being part of an archival collection, even when such objects manifestly fit within accepted definitions of archives and records.

Additionally, individuals' mental models may affect decisions that are made about objects that are acceptable to include as archives (e.g., photographs) while similar objects may be excluded (e.g., paintings). Our perceptions

may be the result of successful persuasion,[48] domain knowledge,[49] or imposition by one party rather than any concrete or complete evidence or agreement. They can even be at odds with the requirements of the Archive or the types of materials deposited or even the disciplinary understanding of what 'an archival item' is. As we have demonstrated with Briet's antelope, an object 'in the wild' (e.g., an item found at a crime scene) is not a document (e.g., police evidence); it requires collection, documentation, analysis, and context for it to become one. Ultimately, it is our mental models that constrain us to see certain objects as archives.

User perceptions of objects in the Archive

Users' personal conceptions of archives are determined by their own mental models of archives, just as archivists' conceptions are. Many users accord value to an archival object because it is an 'old object' which happens to contain information, rather than an archival item that demonstrates evidence according to the archival organisation's definitions of archival value.[50] Although users' mental models of an archives may align with the cliche of 'cool old stuff', they may be closer to the disciplinary canon in not differentiating between objects and non-object archival items.

When objects are treated as archival items in the Archives, the archival collection provides their arrangement, description, context, and meaning as determined by the Archives and/or the archivist, and transforms them into 'acceptable' archival items. An object within an archival collection provides different opportunities for user-based interaction compared to text and adds to the archival story by providing a different kind of experience for the user. [51] Interaction with an object can become a mental, physical, spiritual, or emotional experience much as viewing a painting in person is different to looking at a reproduction of it.[52] Objects in archival collections can create pathways to a greater user experience and understanding of the text (which can represent the memory being interacted with).

Objects and archival practice

Limiting the scope of an archival item to (for example) 'something written that is not an object' (as some collection policies do) can limit the archival collections that are formed, providing only a partial understanding of the memories, testimonies, events, decisions, experiences, and personal and cultural expressions documented by these collections. Even when objects are included in archival collections, they may still be treated differently because they are primarily seen as objects rather than as archives. Our mental

models can affect how we apply the principles of provenance and original order to objects so we see them as challenging to arrange and describe effectively. The evidential value of objects as records may be deemed different to that of more traditional documentary archives. As a result, objects within archival collections can be side-lined from the archival story or treated within finding aids as ancillary items, making them harder to locate and associate.

Darms states that

> *... frequently, archivists separate objects both physically and intellectually from textual or visual materials, even when they arrive as part of a larger fonds. To arrange and describe objects as something distinct from documents is to implicitly claim that they do not play a role within the fonds, and do not provide evidence of, or information about, the actions of a creator.*[53]

Darms uses the example of a wooden box called the Magic Box, which is part of a collection by David Wojnarowicz, an "artist, writer, musician, performer, photographer, and activist".[54] The box itself was not written on but it was part of the Wojnarowicz's personal expression. He stored it under his bed, "adding objects to it occasionally".[55] While the individual items in the Magic Box have no original order, the box as a collection assembled by a creator does. The potential archival treatment of the Magic Box as an object represents two fundamental archival principles at odds with one another: to preserve the intellectual or physical arrangement of collections (the fonds), and to preserve the physical objects within collections.[56] This is something Lord reflects on with regards to the Official First World War Art Collection at Archives New Zealand:

> *in an archival setting, all artistic and artefactual significance becomes superfluous to the primary function of an archive as the repository of historical records. This begs the question: Does the artistic, cultural and commemorative value of the war art collection remain intact within ANZ [Archives New Zealand], or has it been lost?*[57]

Archival discourse shows that archival collections are often constituted as they are because archivists have discounted (for reasons practical and theoretical) the value of objects as signifying or displaying other forms of cultural expression such as dance, cultural display, weaving, oral stories and whakapapa, or buildings such as wharenui. One result of this is the marginalisation and alienation of non-western cultures and other groups from archival collections, and the silencing of their memories where memories are contained in and transmitted through sequential works of duration such as oral stories and poems, or music, dance, and film.[58]

Conclusion

There is nothing in the archival canon which says that objects can't be archives and quite a lot that says that they are. Maybe we as archives professionals need to be less precious about holding on to our mental models of what is and what is not an archival item, and more open to experiencing the archival item as object and all that it can represent. While objects in archival collections may be considered unnecessary or extraneous, this may be because of our praxis-based understanding rather than any theoretical purview. As a result, we may be guilty of thinking that 'an object cannot be an archival item because it would be inconvenient for 'my' institution to keep it' or 'because I consider it does not fit well with the rest of the archives'. Overall, there may be no practical nor theoretical reason to exclude an object from an archival collection and quite a few archival principles which demand objects are included. Restricting items for resource-based reasons is understandable, but just because we can't (or don't) select and maintain an object in an archival collection, we can't assume it's wrong to do so generally speaking. Objects *are* archives no more or less than documents *are* archives.

Allowing an archival item to *be* an object may also open the way for further questioning of the limitations of more traditional archival praxis. It can help address whether the archival principles of province and original order can still define and defend the Archive and examine any selection and description bias. Accepting both the archival item as an object and the 'object as archival item' may also help to support a more reflective process around how mental models can delegitimise other perfectly legitimate views and step the discipline further into a place where the archival collections can be comprehensively experienced on a broader level.

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Endnotes

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3. Sanderson, "Digital Materiality, Heritage Objects, the Emergence of Evidence, and the Design of Knowledge Enabling Systems".
4. Rylance, "Archives and the Intangible," 106.
5. Sanderson, "Digital Materiality, Heritage Objects, the Emergence of Evidence, and the Design of Knowledge Enabling Systems", i.
6. New Zealand, "Protected Objects Act," schedule 4.
7. Rylance, "Archives and the Intangible."
8. Rylance, "Archives and the Intangible," 104.
9. Ibid., 104.

10. See, for example, Schlak, "Framing Photographs, Denying Archives."
11. See, for example, Anderson & Allen, "Envisioning the Archival Commons."
12. Society of American Archivists, 'Artifact' *Dictionary of archives terminology*. https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/artifact.html
13. Dept. of Conservation, *Artefacts and archives*; Lord, "Artwork, Artefact or Archive?"
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15. Ketelaar, "Cultivating archives," 28.
16. See, for example, Johnson-Laird, *Mental Models;* Lakoff, *Women, Fire and Dangerous Things;* Rosch, "Cognitive Representations of Semantic Categories" and "Principles of Categorization."
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18. Johnson-Laird, *Mental Models*, 410.
19. Bowker & Star, *Sorting Things Out*.
20. Buckland, "Information as Thing."
21. Ibid.
22. Ketelaar, "Cultivating archives," 24.
23. Ferraris & Torrengo, "Documentality," para. 18.
24. Darms, "The Archival Object."
25. Ferraris &Torrengo, "Documentality," para. 17.
26. Ferraris, *Documentality.*
27. Fortier & Ménard, "Inked in Time and Space."
28. Buckland, "Document Theory."
29. Le Deuff & Perret, "Paul Otlet and the Ultimate Prospect of Documentation."
30. Buckland, "What is a 'document'?," 805. *Italics* in the original.
31. Briet, *What is Documentation?*
32. Buckland, "Information as Thing," 354.
33. Seals are listed as a specific example of a record in Section 4 of the Public Records Act 2005, but the context of the discussion implied that the poster meant 'matrix', i.e., the thing that creates the seal.
34. Yeo, "Concepts of Record (2)."
35. Ketelaar, "Cultivating Archives," 23.
36. Rigney, "The Dynamics of Remembrance", 348, as cited in Ketelaar, "Cultivating Archives," 30.

37. Sanderson, "Digital Materiality, Heritage Objects, the Emergence of Evidence, and the Design of Knowledge Enabling Systems", 3.
38. Ibid, 135.
39. Ibid, 1, chapter 7.
40. Yeo, "Concepts of Record (2)."
41. Lester, "Of Mind and Matter."
42. Ellis (Ed.), *Keeping Archives,* 413-414.
43. Bettington et al. (Eds.), *Keeping Archives,* 508-509.
44. See, for example, Sanderson, chapter 4.
45. Roeschley & Kim, '"Something That Feels Like a Community'."
46. De Nardi, "An embodied approach."
47. Edwards, "Thoughts on the "Non-Collections" of the Archival Ecosystem," 67.
48. Yeo, "Concepts of Record (2)," 122.
49. Bowker & Star, *Sorting Things Out.*
50. For example, Watson, "Please Stop Calling Things Archives."
51. For example, Barros et al., "Organizational archives and historical narratives," Gloyn, et al., "The Ties That Bind," and Ketelaar, "Cultivating Archives."
52. Benjamin, *Illuminations.*
53. Darms, "The Archival Object," 143-144.
54. Ibid., 144.
55. Ibid., 146.
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57. Lord, "Artwork, Artefact or Archive?," 487.
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Understanding the issues facing school archivists

Eric Boamah

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to explore the issues facing school archives (henceforth, archives) and highlight the resilience of school archivists (henceforth, archivists) to effectively maintain the value of records in New Zealand schools. It supports existing research on New Zealand community archives, some of which outline similar issues.[1] It also provides some further context for more generalised discussion around community archives.[2]

The archives play an important role in the school system, including supporting the delivery of the school's curriculum. Archivists require integrity to ensure the lasting value of the records. The role of the archivist is key to the successful functioning of the school. Nevertheless, archivists in schools do not appear to receive the needed recognition and encouragement to perform their roles effectively. Also, it is unclear how well archivists receive support to effectively keep the records of archival value in the school for as long as needed. Furthermore, apart from a few more general exceptions[3] there does not appear to be enough research conducted in New Zealand with a specific focus on archives in schools. The overarching aim of this article is to promote the role and functions of the archives in the school. It is also to attract attention from the archival research community to the challenges affecting archives in the school sector and how archivists in this area can be equipped to perform their roles effectively. In the book *Informing New Zealand* information professionals discuss several information management topics, including archival concepts and issues in New Zealand. One of the chapters of this book is dedicated to discussing the different types of records and archival organisations in New Zealand,[4] but there was no mention of school archives. Examples like this suggest that archives in the school sector are either forgotten or often neglected in local discourse. This article, therefore, seeks to encourage all archivists in schools to keep up with their good works, particularly as there doesn't seem to be many archivists in the school sector in New Zealand. Information on the Special Interest Group (SIG) page of the website of the Archives and Records Association of New

Zealand (ARANZ) reveals that there are only about 50 members in the 'school archives SIG'.[5] There are some archivists in schools who may be a member of ARANZ.

Archives in schools appear to face many challenges in different forms. The seemingly few available archivists appear to manage to achieve their purpose in the face of the challenges they encounter. It is unclear what motivates them to build courage, integrity, and passion for their work. Their ability to consistently push through the challenges they face needs to be encouraged through research that explores their issues, and their efforts need to be commended through publications like this. In this study, engaging with archivists in some New Zealand schools has helped this author to understand how archivists demonstrate integrity to achieve their purpose. Thus, the interest is to explore a deeper understanding of the issues affecting archives and archivists in schools.

Approach

This article is part of a research project in progress that employs an interpretative qualitative approach to engage with archivists to collect their perspectives on the issues affecting them. Qualitative approaches are found to be effective in exploring and understanding people's perspectives on issues that affect them.[6] The main population for the study is school archivists in New Zealand. Efforts are being made to reach as many archivists as possible. Initial contacts are archivists identified from some secondary schools in the Wellington region. Data is collected through semi-structured interviews to gather perspectives from school archivists and relevant stakeholders where appropriate. A snowball sampling technique is being used to identify more schools and archivists as interviewees. Details of the methodology used will be presented in the publication of the main study. The perspectives presented in this article come from the initial contacts of seven archivists. Thus, the ideas presented in this article may not fully represent the general perspectives of archivists on the issues archivists face in schools in the whole of New Zealand. A generalised perspective may be realised at the end of the main project. Nevertheless, publishing this paper is key to attracting more archivists to take part in the project.

School archives

Schools generate different types of records, some of which is of archival value. The schools need to keep their records to comply with

legal requirements. They also have the responsibility to retain some of the records for archival purposes. The Public Records Act (2005) does not provide specific guidelines on how schools are to keep school records, but the Ministry of Education Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga provides schools with guidelines on how to manage and access school records.[7] Under those guidelines, school administration staff, school librarians, school archivists, principals/tumuaki, boards, and proprietors are all required to learn about the appropriate ways of archiving and disposing of school records following the Public Records Act 2005. Based on this provision, the Ministry of Education has grouped school records into six major categories. Any other specific records a school may create that are not already indicated in the guide will need to fit in one of the six categories. Records that are considered to have archival value are eventually required to be sent to Archives New Zealand to be kept for the long term. The archivist (or the person with responsibility for school records) has the responsibility to decide which records to retain and which ones need to be disposed of, and after what period should they be disposed of based on the guidelines.[8] Disposal in this case can mean destruction, discharge to the care of another individual or organisation, or transfer to Archives to New Zealand.[9]

A careful look at the Ministry of Education Fact Sheet on the school records retention and disposal schedule reveals three ways the archivists can plan the retention and disposal of school records.[10] This distinction between records retention and disposal shows that establishing an archive in a school is different from keeping and maintaining official records of the school. Specific materials kept in the school archives comprise of mainly historical records, which is the sixth category of records described in the Ministry of Education Fact Sheet.[11] This material can be collected or donated and may not be generated by the school. A school archive can, therefore, be defined as the collection of historical records of the school and their associated backstories. The Society of American Archivists identifies two elements that define the primary purposes of an archive in a school:

- a repository for the collection and preservation of historically valuable documents relating to the history of the school or the community, which otherwise would be lost.
- a programme for teaching research-related skills to students.[12]

While school archives in New Zealand can be different, this is a good place to start for describing the school archive as a place to preserve the memory and identity of the school, and to a larger extent, its community.

The Society of American Archivists states that the core function of a school archives is to collect and maintain records of enduring value to provide

administrative, research, and educational services.[13] Here in New Zealand, the situation can be similar. Thus, obtaining records of value to the school and preserving them for as long as needed is the key function of the school archivist, particularly when collecting and documenting school history that helps to build an important memory programme for the school.[14] But highlighting and promoting the importance of the functions of the archive to the school's community can be a daunting challenge. The archives provide tangible evidence that can exist for a long time to demonstrate memories and meanings of significant events in the lives of participants, especially alumni.[15] How people habitually project emotions onto artifacts as a means of managing inexpressible feelings offers some explanation for their collection, as memories are triggered by people's reactions to such objects.[16] The archives reveal how an institution's legacy is cultivated and preserved and how all the 'stuff' the school collects over time can reveal the culture of the place.[17]

Core functions

Perspectives of the archivists engaged so far in this study reveal certain key functions of the archives in the school system, particularly in the following three areas:

Sources of information

The archive in the school is an important source of information for researchers wanting information about the history of the school, staff, or students. According to the archivists, most researchers are usually previous students wanting information on some memories of their time in school to share. Sometimes families of old students who have passed on contact the archivist for information about the school life of their loved ones during their time as students. There are also times when family members pull information from the archive to surprise their loved ones on special events such as their birthdays. For instance, an archivist in a school in Wellington explained, "we had one major project recently where a mother was putting a book together with a professional photographer for her son's 50th birthday celebration. That was a lot of work for me."

The engagement with archivists further revealed that the archives in schools are also a source of useful information for people requiring information about past staff members, particularly if they have gone on

to great things. Another archivist gave this example, saying, "one time, I was contacted by the literary executor of… [a named estate]. One of our teachers used to work with him and continued correspondence. But alas, we don't hold the letters."

The archive as a source of information is useful to both internal and external members of the school community.

Supporting teaching

Within the school, the archives provide useful information to teachers to support curriculum delivery. Some of the materials in the archives are used by teachers as teaching aids. Such teaching materials help students to relate to some of the experiences of historical events of the school and help transform their learning. Where necessary, some of the archivists are invited to the class to talk to the students about some of the histories of the school. One of the archivists engaged in this study so far explained that this way of teaching history does not mean that the archives can fully support the delivery of the new history curriculum the government has recently developed for New Zealand schools. That is a different form of history with a broader narrative that goes beyond the specific history of the school. The history curriculum includes the history of the community and the whole country, whereas the history of the school is unique to only the school. One archivist described this function in these words:

> *"Whereas I would love to think that the archivist would be involved in the new school history curriculum, I do sort of wonder in real terms. I guess it will be different for all schools. Yes, I sometimes 'teach' the history unit of this to year 7s, but that is more to inculcate them into the [school] environment, traditions, and history than the school's place in NZ's history or local community – and [the person this school is named after] himself was a very complicated character for 11-year-olds to deal with. However, this is not a reason not to promote school archives."*

In other words, even though the archives support teaching with materials in their collection, including the teaching of history, it can only effectively support the teaching of the history of the school rather than the history of the whole community or nation. This is because the narratives of history can be different from school to school and community to community.

Preserving identity and memory

Another function of the archives is to preserve the school's identity and memory for the future. The uniqueness of the school and its distinctive characters, values, and principles can be maintained over the years through the memorabilia, records, and artifacts that are kept in the archives to remind students, staff, and all stakeholders of what the school stands for. This helps the school to improve, cherish, value, or do away with principles that are no longer working because of changes in the community in which the school is located. The archives, therefore, perform several tasks and roles to ensure that materials in the archives and their backstories are preserved for as long as needed to effectively support the life of the school. The archivists ensure these functions by performing a series of specific tasks.

Key tasks

The author's engagement with the archivists revealed several specific tasks performed, including both archives-related and non-archives-related tasks. Analysis of the comments shows the following archives-related tasks:

Collecting

The archivists interviewed collect materials and information relating to the school that are not part of the Ministry of Education guidelines and after assessing their archival value, process them for long-term keeping. The materials they collect can be anything the school regards to have heritage significance. These materials can come in both physical and digital forms. The ability of the archivist to collect any of these forms of archival materials for keeping depends on their individual skills and interest in the use of specific technologies. For instance, some of the archivists identified past students in their 70s, 80s, and 90s and then travelled to their homes to listen to their stories about life in school during their time as students. They then videoed these stories and kept them on the school's websites and social media platforms. These archivists are technology savvy and enjoy working with digital technologies to collect their materials. The other archivists however do not trust digital platforms, preferring non-digital materials. So, even if some of the materials come in digital forms, they convert these into print forms for safe keeping. In describing some of the processes they follow to collect materials for the archives, one of the archivists said that "…I take a proactive approach to history. That is a

great deal of collecting items, particularly as I am trying to print some items like COVID-19 emails. I don't trust the cloud. We accession donations only now. But this is in a Word document, so they are searchable, and I am also creating finding aids for collection items and research I have done to date, so easy to check if we hold anything. Work in progress!"

In other words, the archivist's discretion is instrumental in the collecting process of archival items, and the form of the materials collected depends more on the interest of the archivist in the specific types of technologies used in collecting and keeping the archive.

Organising

The archivists followed various processes to organise and maintain their collections. They apply different forms of cataloguing, listing, indexing, and adding metadata to order the school's historical information. To them, any process that may enable easy access and use of the archives by those who need them is useful. Because of their level of skills and training, not all of the archivists can follow these tasks effectively based on more mainstream archival practices. But they find their own ways to ensure that materials are well organised and made as easily accessible as possible. One archivist said: "I am amazed other school archivists find time to catalogue their documents. I try to keep up with filling and running a database which means uploading all the photographs and adding metadata each year. But also trying to get previously digitised materials as well as historical items that have been scanned or are new donations. Big job."

Organising the materials improves access as it enables the archivist to provide swift and effective responses to requests.

Reporting

A key task performed by the archivists is to write reports in various forms on their work and about their activities to different stakeholders. Apart from writing formal reports to update principals and boards of the school on the activities and the state of the archives, the archivists also write articles for school magazines, yearbooks, and newsletters. These articles help students, staff, and other members of the school community as well as stakeholders to understand the nature and purpose of the archives. The reports and newsletters also clarify for readers the importance of keeping the materials as the school's heritage and memory. These reports and articles are important ways for the archivist to create awareness of the archives in the school community.

Display

Another way of creating awareness of the archives in the school is through displays. The archivists periodically display the school's heritage to the school community and the public. Most of the archivists said that they plan to maintain such exhibition events as they not only enable the school community to be mindful of the archives, but they also help people to know about things they can request from the archives and how they can search for them. The displays also help the archivists to understand which of the materials may be the most requested or used and how best they can preserve such materials for as long as needed.

Enablers

Certain factors enable the archivists to perform their tasks effectively and help them to achieve the core functions of the archive. Some of the enablers identified through the engagement with archivists so far include the provision of key resources by their schools. Such resources include computer tablets and pc's, storage spaces, workstations, file cabinets, storage boxes, and display cabinets. The provision of these types of resources helps the archivist perform not only their archival work but also other related projects the school sometimes asks them to do when needed. Although some of these resources are considered by the archivists as inadequate and/or challenging to work with, they still enable the archivists to achieve their purpose.

Also, most of the schools have specific pages on their websites that are dedicated to the archives. Such online spaces help with the online display of some of the archival materials and provide a useful opportunity to share information about the archives and the work the archivists do at the school. In addition to these websites, most of the schools have dedicated social medial platforms which not only can be used to share information about the archives but also enable engagements between the archivist and users of the archives both internal and external to the school. Social media platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter are used by the archivists to initiate discussions about some of the materials in the archives and attract contributions of ideas from users and stakeholders on their value and how to preserve them.

Some of the archives receive support in terms of funds and aid from old students' associations of their schools to augment what the archivist receives from their schools. The archivists explained that building communities such as archivist groups, student associations, and boards have been very instrumental in enabling them to achieve progress in the management of their archives.

Above all, the passion of the archivist has been the key enabler to pushing them through all the challenging situations they face in maintaining the archives in the school. Because of their passion, they have a few concerns about most of the issues they face.

Challenges

From the perspectives of archivists interviewed in this study so far, the main challenges they face in the performance of their tasks related to expertise. This is the lack of professional training and skills development, resourcing, time, space, recognition, and the lack of awareness of the existence of the archives on the part of key stakeholders. These issues affect the effective maintenance and preservation of their collections.

Training and skills development

Most of the archivists in this study do not have professional qualifications in archives administration. Based on initial findings, there seems to be a serious lack of skilled archivists in the school sector.[18] According to the interviewees, most of the schools they know share the same professional archivist for a while. Most school archivists learn archiving skills on the job by taking advantage of training opportunities through professional development workshops and conferences to develop their knowledge and skills. One archivist described how they received some training and skills development through ARANZ conferences and workshops, saying "I have attended several ARANZ conferences, especially when they dealt with education matters…used to be every second year…I am not a member. I have also attended several workshops days up in Auckland with the school archivist there and I learned a lot. But somehow, the archiving of school history has been subsumed into school records management and the last Auckland session was totally on that… the retention and disposal schedule." The line between the role of school administration and archiving is not always a clear one. Thus, school archivists need to be supported with resources to develop their skills and expertise to enable them to effectively manage their archives.

Resourcing

Resources are key to the success of any venture, and they come in different forms including time, space, funds, collaboration, and many other forms of support. The archivists interviewed reveal that they can see a lot of training opportunities, but they require financial support from the school.

However, not every school has enough finances to support its archivists to attend professional development programmes. Each of the archivists emphasised that funding is one of the major issues as most schools are expected to pay their archivists from the schools' operational grants. One of the archivists for instance stressed that "having also been a school librarian for many years, I know that funds for the archives have been one that has been cut back significantly in schools' operational grants. Some schools get support from the pupils' associations. But not all schools have wealthy past pupils' associations to make up the difference, and there will always be the issue of succession planning, which continues to affect funding."

Other archivists also commented that their principals have explained to them that the school's budget is not enough to fully cover the archives. They receive promises every year that the school archives would be included in the next year's budget, but it never happens. Despite the limited support, some of the archivists use their own resources to attend training workshops and conferences to develop skills in managing the archives for their schools. Using personal funds to support training and development is a gesture that needs to be recognised and commended. But the archivists interviewed believe they have issues with how their efforts are recognised in the school community.

Recognition

The archivists interviewed in this study perceive that stakeholders do appreciate them enough. However, they believe they are not given the needed recognition for the task they are performing. Most of them were concerned that they are usually not involved in the decision-making processes by the school, especially when it comes to what records to keep in the archive or destroy. This issue also affects the collecting process of materials and their value for the archives. In some of the schools, the administrators or other staff members keep what they want in separate places. The archivist only looks after some memorabilia of the school's history that have been handed to them and does not have access to other forms of records they can collect for the archive. One of the archivists for instance, lamented that "without my two volunteers, it would be a lonely job since there is not a great deal of engagement and appreciation from the school. Nobody recognises that we are here. Fortunately, I get some support from the Old Boys Association. They come here most of the time for different types of information to enable the organisation of their

events. Apart from them, it does not look like other people in the school know that we are here. Things may change with a new Headmaster."

Another archivist indicated that when they started their work, everything was scattered. The staff of the school just located an unused space in the attic and dumped any material they were no longer using there without telling the archivist. It takes the archivist a lot of time to arrange the materials as the dumping does not stop. Staff and stakeholders do not seem to recognise that a lot of work is being done here to put some order in the arrangement of these materials. In other words, not every record of enduring value in the school finds its way into the school archives because some the schools do not recognise the importance of involving the archivist in the effective collection of materials. Also, archivists do not have much authority in the school to determine what type of record goes in the archive, although the Ministry of Education Fact sheet states that schools collect and maintain all school records following the Public Records Act (2005) of New Zealand.[19]

Inadequate facilities

Because the majority of the materials in the archives are in formats that do not require strict preservation conditions to maintain (for example, some forms of memorabilia) most archivists believe that they do not require sophisticated facilities to keep their collections. Yet, the current facilities available for the majority of archives are woefully inadequate. There are inadequate storage rooms and spaces, limited or no storage cabinets, poor room temperature and storage conditions, all of which are causing the faster deterioration of the materials. Most of the schools visited have had their archival spaces constantly moved from various rooms, chambers, or parts of buildings, none of which are conducive for keeping archives, including old toilet spaces.

Inadequate collaboration

Working together with other key stakeholders is essential for the archivists interviewed, as most of them are new to the archival profession. Some of the people archivists want to collaborate with include teachers, school administration staff, school librarians, principals /tumuaki, boards, proprietors, and other archivists' groups. But most of these stakeholders do not even know that their schools have an archive or think of collaborating with the archivist. Most of the archivists engaged so far are working in

secondary schools. Some of them were not sure whether primary schools also have archives or not. But they collaborate better with other archivists from secondary schools. This is because they understand the issues they face better. Some of the archivists also indicated that they have attended workshops where the presenters were school archivists from primary schools, and they found the issues discussed at those workshops to be completely different from what they are facing in the secondary school. This makes it more difficult for archivists working in primary and secondary schools to collaborate.

Lack of awareness of the archivist role

From the perspectives of the archivists interviewed so far, there is a lack of awareness on the part of stakeholders about the importance of the role of the archives in the school. The archivists believe the archives are very significant in supporting the successful delivery of the curriculum. This belief stems from the way they have seen some teachers making use of some of the materials from the archives to support teaching and learning in the classroom. But they observe that most school stakeholders do not appear to see the importance of the archives. According to the archivists interviewed, some school leaders believe that anybody can manage the school archives. So, they do not see the need to spend other resources to equip the archivist. Because the archives are not seen as very important, school leaders are not willing to give archivists a lot of working time. Most archivists are allocated 4 hours two times a week. Also, the Ministry of Education Fact Sheet stipulates that it should be the discretion of the archivist to determine which materials should be stored as an archive or not.[20] It is not appropriate for other staff members to decide what should be kept and what not to keep. But in most schools, the archivist is just given the records that others have decided to keep. In most cases, the school leader decides or delegates other staff such as ICT staff, librarians, or school administrators to make that decision and not the school archivist. But school archivists believe that at least they should be contacted for their opinion or be involved in the decisions to determine what needs to be kept in the archive or not. Sometimes some archivists come to work and see some materials just dumped around their working area. When they ask, they are told a teacher, or a staff member came by to drop off the materials. Sometimes it is difficult to locate who brought in the items in order to find out the backstories of those materials.

So what?

Based on the interviews so far, the archivists demonstrate clear passion and spirited effort to consistently push through obstacles to maintain the value of school records and archives. This also means that when the school archivists are well supported, they will achieve more benefits for the schools. At the moment, the archivists emphasised that their passion is more about their school than the archive, which is often seen as a thankless task. One archivist explained that "we all do different things and are at different places in our projects and that have different backgrounds. The sharing of it all is valid."

Through the author's initial engagement and observations in this project, some new initiatives have started to support the school archivist. For instance, there are efforts by a group of stakeholders to create a stronger School Archivists Community to strengthen collaboration and support for one another. Through this initiative, some past principals, teachers, archivists and other stakeholders have started regular meetings to discuss the issues they face and find possible ways to address them. Also, suggestions for training opportunities have been discussed with the archivists by the author. So, engaging the school archivists through projects like this is important. The hope is that this will generate more conversation in the wider archival community. Such conversations can create awareness of the integrity of the role of archives in schools and the resilience the archivists are showing to maintain value of school records to benefit the schools and members of the community, especially those with links to the schools. The majority of the school archivists are not Archives and Records Association of New Zealand (ARANZ) members. So, through the engagement in this project, they have been encouraged to take ARANZ membership. This way, they can take advantage of some of the training opportunities ARANZ provide. In 2022 the ARANZ Council signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Open Polytechnic. In the MoU, the Open Polytechnic provides a 10% discount on all course fees for ARANZ Members for the *NZ3467 New Zealand Diploma in Records and Information Management (Level 6)* and *OP7040 Bachelor of Library and Information Studies*. In addition, *LIS507 Principles of Records Management* and *LIS610 Archives Management* courses are provided fees-free under a relevant qualification. So, school archivists are encouraged to take ARANZ membership so that they can take the free courses with the Open Polytechnic. This will create a useful step in addressing the lack of training and qualification issues that most school archivists are facing.

Conclusion

The overarching aim of this article is to promote the importance of the functions of archives in the school and to advocate for the recognition of the role of the school archivists in New Zealand. Despite the important functions of the school archives and the useful roles of the school archivists, most of them are not usually supported by key stakeholders to mitigate the challenges they face. Based on earlier findings, this is a situation that does not seem to have changed much over the last ten years.[21]

Although most of the archivists interviewed receive their training on the job, most schools' budgets do not cater to their needs, including training support through workshops and conferences. Where budgetary needs are met, some secondary school archivists face the issues of effective collaboration with other school archivist groups. Archivists also report a lack of respect for the archivist in the school system and they have inadequate storage facilities and resources to enable them effectively to preserve the materials. Each of these aspects were raised by Welland in 2015, showing little has changed since.[22] Even though these challenges can be overwhelming, the passion and belief of the school archivists demonstrated by those interviewed enables them to show integrity and resilience in the face of all the issues. They show they adapt to the challenges and achieve their purpose of maintaining the value of school records to support the effective delivery of the school's curriculum. Because these archivists are passionate about their school and their archives, they achieve progress even with limited resources. They demonstrate that where there is a will, there is a way. They have their will, and the way is opening for them to achieve their purposes for the archives in schools. This resilience is the key factor that is motivating most of the archivists engaged in this study. When they are well supported, and given needed recognition by key stakeholders, they will be fully equipped to maintain the value of the records to support the schools. Archivists talked to so far believe that they can be more effective if school authorities and other staff support them to attend workshops and conferences and take up training opportunities both online and through other means. They also believe that involving them in schools' decision-making processes will provide useful perspectives that can contribute to the effective development of the school.

This article has been written to encourage all school archivists on the work they are doing, and to initiate a conversation that will bring all New Zealand school archivists together. Hopefully it will inspire further, more effective, collaboration between them and their stakeholders to address issues of common interest to them and their various schools.

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Endnotes

1. See, for example, Welland, "The Role, Impact and Development of Community Archives in New Zealand"; Newman, 'Sustaining Community Archives'.
2. Two useful articles introducing the literature are Poole, "The information Work of Community Archives" and Welland and Cossham, "Defining the Undefinable".
3. For example, Welland covers the perspective of the school archivist in her research, "The Role, Impact and Development of Community Archives in New Zealand" and summarises some access-related issues in "Some Issues of Access". There are also

occasional articles in Archifacts discussing elements around school archives. For instance, Goldsmith, Battley, and Tamaira cover "Native Schools to Kura Kaupapa Maori" and Charlton mentions school archives in "Working with Legacy Media". Miller also mentions the running of school archives workshops in "Ingenuity, Persistence and Hard Labour".

4. Sanderson, "Types of Records and Archives Organisations".
5. Archives and Records Association of New Zealand (ARANZ), https://www.aranz.org.nz/membership/special-interest-groups-sig/.
6. For a useful overview of this aspect, see Walsham, "Doing Interpretive Research"; Creswell, "Research Design"; Kaplan and Maxwell, "Qualitative Research Methods for Evaluating Computer Information Systems".
7. Ministry of Education, "School Records Retention and Disposal Schedule Information Pack".
8. Ibid.
9. Ministry of Education, "School Records Retention and Disposal Schedule Information Pack". 5-7.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Society of American Archivists, "Core Archival Functions".
13. Ibid.
14. Fernekes et al. "Building a High School Archives Programme".
15. Mackey, "Of Lofts, Evidence and Mobile Times".
16. Ibid.
17. St. Germain, "Remembering the Backstory".
18. This area seems to be one of ongoing concern for many archivists involved in small community archives in New Zealand. See Welland, "Us and Them" as an example.
19. Ministry of Education, "School Records Retention and Disposal Schedule Information Pack".
20. See Ministry of "School Records Retention and Disposal Schedule Information Pack.
21. See Welland's findings in "The Role, Impact and Development of Community Archives".
22. Ibid.

New Zealand International Review Group for Recordkeeping Standards - Results of Stakeholder Survey

Paddy Power

Introduction

This paper summarises and analyses the results of a survey conducted by the New Zealand International Review Group for Recordkeeping Standards (the IRG). The IRG is a group set up by Standards New Zealand, with funding from Archives New Zealand. It is a group of experts that represents the records and information management community in New Zealand. Most members represent industry organisations such as ARANZ (Archives and Records Association of New Zealand), RIMPA (Records and Information Management Practitioners Alliance), ALGIM (Association of Local Government Information Management), and Archives New Zealand.

The key role of the IRG is to review draft international standards and other guidance documents about records and information management and to 'establish a New Zealand position'.[1] To do this well, the IRG needs to clearly understand the perspectives and needs of the community it represents. How and why are standards for records and information management being used in New Zealand? What do people think are the key gaps and priorities for future work? The survey was intended to address this information need.

The research questions were:

- Which of the key standards for records and information management (including archives management) are people aware of, and which have they used?
- What barriers have people experienced to using standards?
- What did people use the standards for?
- Where people have used standards, did they find them useful?
- What are the key gaps that people see in the records/information standards/guidance available at the moment?

- What things do people think the IRG should be working on?
- What are people's preferences for communication about the IRG and standards?

Given the practical focus of the survey and the limited resources available, we did not complete a formal literature review. However, the approach and method were influenced by Gillian Oliver and Fiorella Foscarini's 2014 survey on the use of ISO standards by records management educators and trainers around the world. This study found that the standards were well used in that context but identified several barriers to use: the cost of standards, the difficult language and style of the documents, and a lack of practical guidance.[2]

This paper has been structured in three parts. First, a methods section outlines the target population, the questionnaire design, the mechanics of the survey and some of the limitations of the data gathered. Second, a results section presents a summary of responses to the survey questions. This section includes descriptive and thematic analysis of survey responses, as well as listing the many individual items mentioned by respondents. The third section seeks to interpret the results, discussing the key findings, the implications, and the actions the IRG is proposing to take in response.

Methods

The survey was intended to gather information and views from the New Zealand Recordkeeping Community – the group of people that the IRG seeks to represent. In general terms, these are the people and organisations in New Zealand who have an interest or stake in standards for records and information management. Note that this was a survey of practitioners, not organisations. Several organisations have a significant influence or stake in standards for records and information in New Zealand, including Archives New Zealand, Standards New Zealand, the Office of the Auditor General, the Ombudsman, and the Privacy Commission. It could be useful to seek their views via a separate exercise.

The target population for the survey included the following groups:

- People who had already expressed an interest in the work of the IRG, particularly members of the IRG LinkedIn Group.
- Records and information managers.

- Curators and archivists – people within art galleries, museums, archives, and libraries that might have some responsibility for managing and preserving records.
- People that provide records and information services - consultants, staff at technology vendors, storage providers, etc.
- Students of information and records management.
- Academics, teachers, and researchers in information and records disciplines.
- Given that the IRG LinkedIn Group had around 130 members, we set a target of obtaining 100-150 responses to the survey.

A questionnaire was designed to gather information on the research questions, as well as the demographics of respondents and the organisations they worked for. This draft questionnaire was then piloted with a small group of records and information management practitioners and adjusted to reflect feedback. A copy of the final questions used is included as an Appendix.

The survey was administered via Google Forms. It was promoted via messages to the IRG LinkedIn Group, to Members of RIMPA New Zealand, to the NZ-Records and NZ-Libs Listservs, the GOVIS mailing list, and relevant ALGIM mailing lists. We also promoted the survey to Information Management students at Victoria University and the Open Polytechnic. Unfortunately, we were not able to send a message to ARANZ members, as the timing of the survey did not coincide with the issue of an ARANZ Alert. The survey opened on the 19th of August 2021 and closed on the 30th of September 2021.

There were 93 responses to the survey. However, one response was a duplicate and has been removed from the analysis, leaving an overall count of 92 responses. This was fewer responses than we had aimed for, and it is likely that some groups within the New Zealand Recordkeeping Community are over- and under-represented. We have therefore been cautious about drawing too many general conclusions from the data, especially where something was only mentioned by a few individuals.

Note that all information that would identify any individual or any individual response has been removed from this report. This reflects our undertaking to respondents that the information they supplied would be kept confidential.

Results

Who filled out the survey?

91 of the respondents identified their role. Multiple roles could be selected. The majority identified themselves as Information/Records managers (61 people). The next largest groups were Archivists (18 people) and Librarians (13 people). The table below gives more details. It is worth noting that almost all the ICT Professionals – 6 out of 7 – also described themselves as Information/records managers.

Table 1: The roles of survey respondents

	Number	Percentage
Information/records manager	61	67%
Archivist	18	20%
Librarian	13	14%
Consultant or vendor	8	9%
ICT professional	7	8%
Student	3	3%
Curator	2	2%
Academic	2	2%
Other	11	12%

90 of the respondents identified the kind of organisation they worked for. More than one could be selected. They largely worked in the public sector, with most responses being from people working in central government and local government. Smaller numbers of respondents worked in the non-government or private sector. Table 2 summarises responses.

Table 2: The organisations where survey respondents worked

Type of organisation	Number of responses	Percentage
Central government organisation	36	40%
Local government organisation	19	21%
Tertiary education institution	13	14%
Library	7	8%
Museum	6	7%
Consultant	8	9%
Vendor	1	1%
Professional association	2	2%
Private sector organisation	12	13%
School	0	0%
Other	2	2%

Awareness of standards

We asked respondents which standards they were aware of. Four standards were specifically asked about, and table 3 summarises the results.

Table 3: Awareness of four specific standards

	Total	%
Archives New Zealand's Information and Records Management Standard	76	83%
ISO 15489 - Records Management	66	72%
ISO 23081 - Metadata for Records	56	61%
ISO 30300 Series - Management Systems for Records	32	35%
Other	26	28%
Don't know	8	9%

Respondents were also asked to nominate other standards for records and information management (including archives management) that they were aware of and other standards that influenced the way information was managed in their organisation. These questions produced a variety of responses, which are summarised by category of standard in the table below.

Table 4: Other standards and requirements people were aware of

Category	Items mentioned	Frequency
Legal requirements	• Public Records Act • Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act • Privacy Act • Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act • Resource Management Act • Building Act • Relevant legislation relating to specific museum requirements • Health and Safety at Work Act	11
Archives New Zealand guidance and disposal authorities	• Microsoft 365 guide • General Disposal Authorities • Retention and disposal schedules • Rules for naming; transferring records to archives • Information Management Maturity Assessment	9

Category	Items mentioned	Frequency
Digitisation standards and guidance	• ISO 13028:2012 Information and Documentation - Implementation Guidelines for Digitization of Records • Specific Archives New Zealand digitisation guidance • FADGI (Federal Agencies Digital Guidelines Initiative) • Metamorfoze (Netherlands' national program for the preservation of paper heritage) • National Archives of Australia Preservation Digitisation Standards	7
Archival description standards	• ISAD(G): General International Standard Archival Description • Other International Council on Archives standards for description of archives • DACS (Describing Archives: A Content Standard) • EAD (Encoded Archival Description) • EAC-CPF (Encoded Archival Content – Corporate Bodies, Persons, and Their Families)	6
ALGIM (Association of Local Government Information Management) Toolkit	• ALGIM Information Lifecycle • ALGIM Disposal Schedule	4

Category	Items mentioned	Frequency
Digital recordkeeping standards	• OAIS (Open Archival Information System) • Victorian Electronic Records Strategy (VERS) • ICA-Req (Principles and Functional Requirements for Records in Electronic Office Environments) • ISO 16175 - Principles and Functional Requirements for Records in Electronic Office Environments • ISO 30301 Management Systems for Records - Requirements	4
Metadata standards	• AS/NZ 5478:2015 Recordkeeping Metadata Property Reference Set • Records in Contexts • Dublin Core Metadata Initiative • W3C (World Wide Web Consortium) PROV-O • schema.org. • Linked data standards and ontologies • Ngā Upoko Tukutuku Māori – Māori Subject Headings	4
Security and privacy standards	• ISO 27000 Information Security • PSR Protective Security Requirements • NZISM - New Zealand Information Security Manual • ISO 31000 (Risk Management)	4

Other topics and standards mentioned by fewer than four people were:

- SPECTRUM (Museum Collection Management Standard)
- ISO 19115 Geographic Metadata
- AS/NZS ISO 9001:2016 Quality Management Systems
- SA/SNZ HB 168:2017 (Document Control)
- Audit and compliance requirements for medical, laboratory, and research records management
- Building standards
- Roading standards
- Planning standards
- Cabinet Office protocols
- Code of Practice for learners
- Health and safety standards
- Environmental standards, including AS/NZS ISO 14001:2016 Environmental Management
- Engineering standards
- ISO 8601 (Date and time format)
- Audit standards
- Law Society guidelines
- IMO (International Maritime Organisation) Conventions
- MARPOL and A.741(18)-1993 (International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships)
- SNOMED (Global standards for health terms)
- ISO TC46 Library standards
- RDA: Resource Description and Access (Library cataloguing)
- Digital standards (not further explained)
- Government standards for website accessibility
- Library shelving standards
- US Federal Government standards on document legibility
- Museum collection care standards

- BS EN 16893 (Conservation of Cultural Heritage)
- BS 4971 (Conservation and Care of Archive and Library Collections)
- NFPA 40 (Standard for the Storage and Handling of Cellulose Nitrate Film)
- ISO/TR 19815 (Management of the Environmental Conditions for Archive and Library Collections)
- ASHRAE (American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers) Handbook Chapter 24 (Museums, Galleries, Archives, and Libraries)
- 'NZ storage' – this was not further explained.

Barriers to standards use

We asked people about the key barriers that they had experienced to finding and using records and information management standards and guidance. 74 respondents provided comments on this. The most significant barrier was clearly cost. 37 people – 50% - identified the cost of standards as a barrier. This was by far the most common problem identified. Other barriers identified by multiple respondents included the following themes:

- Not being aware of the standards in the first place.
- That standards were too hard to find online.
- Restrictions on the use of standards.
- That the standards are too hard to understand.
- That the standards are impractical and not flexible enough.
- That the standards are not specific enough.
- Lack of support or buy-in from the organisation.
- Lack of compliance with the standards.
- Capability to develop and use standards.
- The approach that Archives New Zealand has taken to standards and guidance was criticised by some respondents and they saw this as a barrier. However, it is worth nothing that this criticism was limited to those who said they were not aware of, nor familiar with, the relevant ISO Standards.

Use of standards

We asked people what standards for records and information management their organisation had actually used. 65 people answered this question. The most common responses were:

- Archives New Zealand Information and Records Management Standard – 78% (51 people)
- ISO 15489 – Records Management - 25% (16 people)
- ISO 13028 – Implementation Guidelines for Digitization of Records - 6% (4 people)
- ISO 23081 – Metadata for Records - 6% (4 people)

We also asked people what standards for records and information management (including archives management) they had personally used. 76 people answered this question. The most common responses were:

- Archives New Zealand's Information and Records Management Standard – 75% (57 people)
- ISO 15489 - Records Management – 39% (30 people)
- ISO 23081 – Metadata for Records - 21% (16 people)
- ISO 30300 Series - Management Systems for Records – 7% (5 people)
- ISO 13028 - Implementation Guidelines for Digitization of Records – 7% (5 people)
- ISAD (G) – 7% (5 people)

Other standards mentioned by smaller numbers of people included:

- Historic deprecated Archives New Zealand Standards
- ALGIM Guidance
- The OAIS (Open Archival Information System) Standard
- Metadata and descriptive standards, including EAD (Encoded Archival Description), EAC-CPF (Encoded Archival Context for Corporate Bodies, Persons, and Families), ISAD-G (General International Standard Archival Description), DACS (Describing Archives: A Content Standard), Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH), Ngā Upoko Tukutuku Māori subject headings, PREMIS (Data Dictionary for Preservation Metadata), MARC21 (Machine Readable Cataloging), Dewey Decimal System 23rd Edition; Iwi Hapū Names List, Dublin Core Metadata Element Set.

- ISO 19115 Geographic Information
- Museum thesauri such as Chenhall's nomenclature, Getty thesaurus of art terms and place names.
- ISO standard for imaging materials
- IASA guides for audiovisual materials
- ISO 16175 (Processes and Functional Requirements for Software for Managing Records — Part 1: Functional Requirements and Associated Guidance for Any Applications That Manage Digital Records)
- New Zealand privacy standards
- New Zealand accessibility standards
- FVEY (Five Eyes) and NATO Standards
- ISO 8601 (Date and time format)
- Australia New Zealand Lab standard
- Internal standard
- The Section 46 Code of Practice from the UK.
- Standards and guidance from other jurisdictions
- BS 4971 (Conservation and Care of Archive and Library Collections)
- SAA/SNZ Handbook 168 - Document Control
- MOREQ (A records management specification published by the DLM forum)
- DoD 5015.2 (United States Department of Defence Design Criteria Standard for Electronic Records Management Software Applications)
- METS (Metadata Encoding and Transmission Standard)
- MODS (Metadata Object Description Schema)
- ISO 30401 - Knowledge Management Systems
- ISO 27001 - Information security systems
- ISO/TR 26122 - Work process analysis for records
- ICA-Req (International Council on Archives: Principles and Functional Requirements for Records in Electronic Office Environments)
- Keeping Archives 2nd Edition

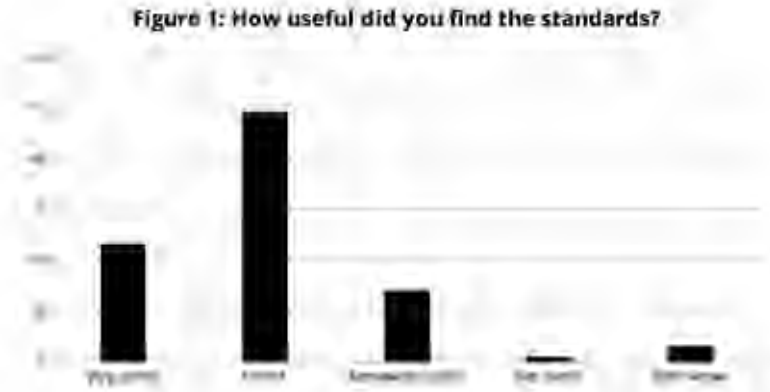
We also asked people what they used these standards for. 92 people answered this question. The results are summarised in table 5.

Table 5: Use of standards for different purposes

What did you use the standards for?	Number	Percentage
To understand best practice	79	86%
To enable compliance with relevant laws and regulations	67	73%
To communicate requirements	64	70%
To measure maturity of practice	53	58%
To assist with the purchase of technology or services	34	37%
To ensure interoperability	31	34%
To introduce innovation	18	20%
Did not use standards	5	5%
Other	4	4%

The 'other' responses identified three other purposes: to offer advice to others, teaching, and producing procedures.

We also asked people how useful they found the standards for these purposes. 90 people answered this question. 72, or 80% of these people said they found the standards useful or very useful. The graph below shows the full results.



The ratings of the usefulness of standards varied by the type of use. The table below summarises the differences in the proportion rating standards as very useful or useful. It appears that those who used standards to ensure interoperability, measure maturity of practice, and understand best practice were more satisfied. Those who used standards to ensure compliance, introduce innovation, and communicate requirements were less satisfied. This is an interesting finding. However, it should be noted that at this sample size, the differences are not large enough to be statistically significant.

Table 6: Usefulness of standards for different purposes

What did you use the standards for?	% rating very useful or useful
To ensure interoperability	90%
To measure maturity of practice	89%
To understand best practice	86%
To assist with the purchase of technology or services	85%
To communicate requirements	84%
To introduce innovation	83%
To enable compliance with relevant laws and regulations	82%

Gaps in records and information management standards

We asked people the key gaps they saw in the records and information management standards and guidance that are available at the moment. This was a free-text response. 62 respondents identified gaps.

The most common area highlighted was the need for more examples and practical guidance. This was mentioned by 16 different people, or 26% of those responding. Comments mentioned the need for examples, checklists, workflows, implementation guidance, measurement tools for compliance, and clear and plain language. Several respondents suggested that standards were too aspirational and not practical or realistic enough.

Another common theme was the need for standards that were fit for application in modern digital business environments. This was mentioned

by 14 different people or 23% of those responding. Comments included the need to reflect up-to-date technology such as cloud storage and processing and explain how the standards can be applied in such environments. There was a perception from some that records and information management standards are still written for a paper world rather than digital one. More guidance was requested on data management, metadata, information architecture, digital archiving, and incorporation of recordkeeping into business applications.

It was also clear from many comments that there is a need for guidance about what standards to use in what circumstances. However, this was not usually explicitly stated. People were not clear on which standards were current, which ones were being applied in practice, and which ones were deprecated. Some people also indicated that they struggled to locate and find relevant standards and guidance for their situation.

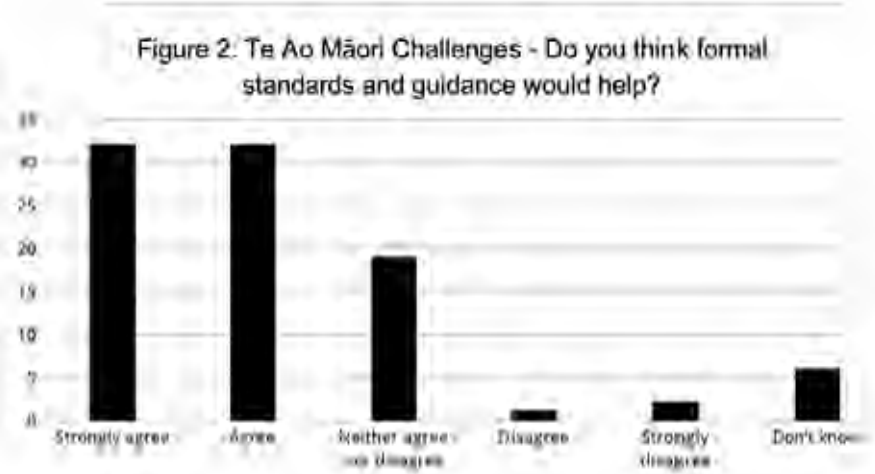
Some of the comments on gaps were focussed on aspects of the Public Records Act or Archives New Zealand's approach to regulation under that Act. The matters mentioned included:

- The lack of mandatory Public Records Act audits for local councils.
- The lack of authoritative advice from Archives New Zealand around digitisation technical specifics.
- That the mandatory standard is too general and not prescriptive enough. There are no definitive lists and requirements which can be used to 'tick off' compliance.
- That software vendors ignore some of the mandatory requirements in the standard.
- That the Public Records Act should be updated to reflect changes in technology.
- That there should be more practical guidance on how to implement the standard.
- That there is a lot of information on the Archives New Zealand website which is not specifically referred to in the standard.
- The perception that there has been a lack of strong leadership from Archives New Zealand.
- Other gaps and opportunities that were identified by smaller numbers of people included:
- That there doesn't seem to be an overall strategy for records and information management standards.

- Recognition of cultural requirements and the practices required to meet them.
- How to identify and manage records of importance to Māori iwi and hapū in different contexts, and honour Treaty of Waitangi commitments in an information management context.
- Archives management and administration as a topic.
- The need for more support and outreach especially for smaller organisations. It was suggested this could be done by working with professional organisations such as ARANZ and RIMPA.
- That management do not recognise the value of records and information management standards.
- The need for a preservation management standard like BS 4971.
- That some standards are too specialised, specific, or granular and can only be applied in one jurisdiction or situation.
- That some standards are too dense and technical and so very hard for small organisations to apply.
- The relationship between overseas standards and New Zealand standards can be unclear, especially where the New Zealand standard is less demanding.
- A desire for more standards that are specific to the New Zealand context.
- Guidance on resourcing for records, information, and archives management.
- Some standards are too focussed on records management. A broader approach that included data, information, and content management would be useful.
- The need to raise awareness of standards and willingness to comply with them.
- The lack of a group to promote the standards and demonstrate their use.
- Material to support implementation of standards in organisations where compliance is not an important driver.
- The cost of purchasing compliant systems.

Te Ao Māori

One of the unique aspects of records and information management in New Zealand is that many organisations need to manage records in te reo Māori, and to reflect te ao Māori in the way they manage information. We asked people whether they thought formal standards and guidance would help with this challenge. 92 people answered this question and 64 of them (70%) agreed or strongly agreed. The chart below shows the distribution of responses.



What do people think the IRG should be working on?

We asked people what they thought the IRG should be working on. We received 46 responses to this question. There were a wide range of sometimes contradictory suggestions.

The themes included suggestions to:

- Develop more detailed guidance on core recordkeeping subjects – e.g. appraisal, disposal, metadata, naming conventions, digital archives and digital preservation.

- Develop guidance and standards on specific technologies – e.g. Microsoft 365, Artificial Intelligence and machine learning, SMS, digitisation, social media, video.
- Develop standards and guidance on physical storage, including specific formats such as nitrate film.
- Support effective governance including audit and accountability tools.
- Work with information and communications technology professionals to develop understanding and shared approaches.
- Share information to help people identify and select standards well.
- Ensure that standards and guidance are practical and realistic.
- Develop standards and guidance to support indigenous information and records management, including data sovereignty.
- Develop standards and guidance for non-government organisations.
- Consider sustainability in records and information management.
- Work in an open and transparent way.
- Develop guidance on implementation and change management.
- Develop guidance on data management as well as information management.
- Share case studies of successful implementation and adoption.
- Develop guidance on privacy and confidentiality in recordkeeping.
- Promote standards.
- Reduce the price of standards.
- Develop or adopt interoperability standards.

Preferences for communication from the IRG

We asked people what their preferences were for communication about the IRG and standards. 92 people answered this question. They could select more than one option. The table below summarises the results. There is a clear preference for the NZ-Records Listserv as a communication channel.

Table 7: Communication preferences

Communication preferences	Number	Percentage
NZ-Records Listserv	75	82%
Government Data & Digital Standards Community of Practice	37	40%
Linked In Group	32	35%
RIMPA	18	20%
Other	15	16%
I am not interested	1	1%

The 'other' responses included the following general suggestions:

- Archives New Zealand communication channels such as newsletters, website, email groups, and the 'Recordkeeping Forums', which used to be run every three months.
- ARANZ (Archives and Records Association of New Zealand).
- Wellington Information Management Community of Practice (Mezzanine Meeting).
- NZ-Libs Listserv.
- Creating a specific community around records and information standards.
- A Github or Gitlab repository.
- Direct communications from Government Departments.
- Emails.
- Some sort of web forum.
- Many channels would be good.
-

Other comments

We asked people if there was anything else they wanted to add. We received 21 substantive responses. To preserve confidentiality, the responses are not provided in this report. Most expressed support for the IRG and the survey process or provided additional information to support their overall response.

Getting in touch

The last question asked people if they would like us to get in touch and if so, to enter their name and email. 23 people answered this question, of which 17 provided an email address. To preserve confidentiality, the responses are not provided in this report.

Local authority responses

Responses from people who said they worked for a local government organisation were analysed to see if there were any significant differences from other groups. No statistically significant differences were found.

Discussion

This section seeks to interpret the results outlined above, outlining the key findings and the actions the IRG is proposing to take in response. It is organised around the key research questions.

Awareness and use of standards

We wanted to know which of the key standards for records and information management (including archives management) people in the New Zealand Recordkeeping Community were aware of, and which standards they had used. The key finding here is that people are aware of and use a wide variety of standards and guidelines. More than eighty different laws, regulations, standards, and sources of guidance were mentioned by the people who responded.

The standard which has the highest levels of awareness and use is Archives New Zealand's Information and Records Management Standard – the mandatory standard issued under the Public Records Act. For many respondents, this was the only standard they had used. ISO 15489, the international standard on records management, also had reasonably high levels of awareness and use. Other standards such as ISO 23081 (Metadata for Records) the ISO 30300 Series (Management Systems for Records) and ISO 13028 (Implementation Guidelines for Digitization of Records) were less well known.

Another key finding is that people do find these standards useful for a variety of purposes. Of the 90 people who had used a records and information management standard, 72 or 80% said they found it useful.

Only one person said it was not useful. The most common uses for standards were to understand best practice, to enable compliance, to communicate

requirements, and to measure maturity of practice. People used standards less often to help with procurement, to ensure interoperability, or to introduce innovation.

What does this mean for the IRG and for the New Zealand Recordkeeping Community? Firstly, it seems clear that the volume and variety of standards and guidance available is itself an issue. People need help to identify, locate, and assess the usefulness of these standards and guidance. This should be a continuing focus for training and education of archivists and curators, records and information managers, and other relevant professionals. Standards bodies and other groups should consider developing guidance on this topic. The IRG itself proposes to create a guide to standards and guidance which are relevant to records and information management in New Zealand and what they can be used for. This would build on the results of the survey and ideally include an infographic and links to more detailed information. We intend to get people from different sectors and groups, such as the Health Sector and Local Authorities involved in this work.

Secondly, Archives New Zealand's Information and Records Management Standard has a keystone role. It is largely within the context of compliance with that standard that other records and information management standards are being implemented in New Zealand. However, the IRG has generally focussed on supporting the use of ISO and AS/NZS standards. Given the importance of the Information and Records Management Standard to our stakeholders, the IRG has agreed to examine the content of Archives New Zealand's Information and Records Management Standard and consider how it can be supported and enhanced. We will share this work with Archives New Zealand and the recordkeeping community in New Zealand.

Barriers to standards use

We wanted to know what the key barriers were to standards use in the New Zealand recordkeeping community. It is clear from the survey that the key barrier is the cost of accessing ISO and AS/NZS standards. Half of the people responding identified this as an issue. Other barriers included awareness, findability, restrictions on use, the difficult concepts and language used, impracticality, specificity, capability, capacity, and a general lack of support. The general tone of the comments also reinforces that the volume and variety of standards and guidance available is also a key problem, as was discussed above.

What does this mean for the IRG and for the New Zealand Recordkeeping Community? Firstly, the current model of ISO and AS/NZS standards provision is creating a barrier. ISO standards are seen as costly and behind the times, especially compared to other documents published via Github[3] or W3C.[4] We should consider other options for developing and publishing standards and guidance. The IRG will continue to work with Standards New Zealand, Archives New Zealand, and other key stakeholders to advocate for more cost-effective access to standards for records and information management. One possibility we could explore would be to move to a whole-of-industry subscription model for key documents, as is done for building standards.[5]

Secondly, the findings support a focus on simplifying the standards landscape. The ISO Committee on Archives / Records Management (TC46 SC11) has now published a total of nineteen standards and technical reports.[6] It appears that people find these standards hard to find, understand and use, and as a result they are not using them. We should think carefully before supporting the development and publication of yet more standards. What might be more useful for the New Zealand recordkeeping community is guidance which explains the existing standards landscape. This is discussed further below.

Key gaps and areas for more focus

We wanted to know what people thought were the key gaps in the standards and guidance available. The most important gaps identified were the need for more practical examples and guidance, the need for standards that are fit for application in modern digital business environments, and the need for guidance about what standards to use in what circumstances. People also agreed that it would be useful to have formal standards and guidance to help organisations manage records and information in a way that reflects te ao Māori.

What does this mean for the IRG and for the New Zealand recordkeeping community? These themes will inform the way the IRG votes on ISO documents and the comments we provide to working groups. The IRG will also consider what else we can do to help meet these needs – both through contribution to international work and the development of New Zealand-specific guidance. These priorities will directly inform our work and our focus over the next 2-3 years. With reference to te ao Māori, the IRG agrees that this is an important issue that we cannot ignore. However, we are also conscious that we have a great deal to learn. We will seek to develop our capability and relationships in this area, so that we can support the development of New Zealand-specific guidance, working closely with relevant Māori partners.

Communication

We asked people about their preferences for communication about the IRG and standards. People had a clear preference for the IRG to communicate via the NZ-Records Listserv, although a number of other channels were also popular. The IRG has agreed that we will post quarterly updates on the IRG's work to the listserv and also send them out via other channels where appropriate.

Conclusion

The survey has provided very useful insight into the nature, needs, and priorities of the recordkeeping community in New Zealand. The results show that this community is using records, archives, and information management standards and is finding them useful. However, it also shows that the volume, variety, and cost of standards are key barriers to access, and that people are looking for practical examples and guidance about what standards to apply in what contexts, particularly in modern digital business environments. There is also a strong desire for guidance that better reflects te ao Māori.

In response to these findings, the IRG is planning to:

- Create a guide to standards and guidance which are relevant to records and information management in New Zealand, and what they can be used for.
- Examine the content of Archives New Zealand's Information and Records Management Standard and consider how it can be supported and enhanced.
- Continue to advocate for more cost-effective access to standards for records and information management.
- Consider what we can do to address the key gaps: more practical examples and guidance, standards that are fit for application in modern digital business environments, and guidance about what standards to use in what circumstances.
- Seek to develop our te ao Māori capability and relationships.
- Post quarterly updates on the IRG's work to the NZ-Records listserv and also send them out via other channels.

Appendix: Questionnaire

International Review Group -Stakeholder Survey

The International Review Group for Recordkeeping Standards (the IRG) is a group set up by Standards New Zealand, with funding from Archives New Zealand. It is a group of experts that represents the records and information management community in New Zealand. The role of the IRG is to review standards and guidance about records and information management, and to advise how Standards New Zealand should vote on proposed changes to international standards. As part of that work we are conducting our first stakeholder survey. The information you supply to this survey will be kept confidential to the IRG and will only be used to inform our standards work. We will post a summary of findings on the IRG group on Linked In.

Q1: What standards for records and information management (including archives management) are you aware of? Please indicate which of the standards listed below you are familiar with, and add any other standards you are aware of.

- ISO 15489 - Records management
- ISO 23081 - Metadata for records
- ISO 30300 Series - Management systems for records
- Archives New Zealand's Information and records management standard
- Don't know
- Other:

Q2: What other standards influence the way information is managed in your organisation? For instance, these could be standards that are specific to your core business, your industry or your sector.

Q3: What are the key barriers you have experienced to finding and using records and information management standards and guidance?

Q4: What standards for records and information management has your organisation actually used?

Q5: What standards for records and information management (including archives management) have you personally used?

Q6: If you have indicated that you used records and information management standards, what did you use the standards for? (you can select more than one option)

- Don't know
- Did not use standards
- To introduce innovation
- To understand best practice
- To communicate requirements
- To measure maturity of practice
- To ensure interoperability
- To enable compliance with relevant laws and regulations
- To assist with the purchase of technology or services
- Other:

Q7: How useful did you find the standards for these purposes?

Mark only one oval.

- Very useful
- Useful
- Somewhat useful
- Not useful
- Don't know

Q8: What are the key gaps that you see in the records and information management standards and guidance that are available at the moment?

Q9: One of the unique aspects of records and information management in New Zealand is that many organisations need to manage records in te reo Māori, and to reflect te ao Māori in the way they manage information. Do you think formal standards and guidance would help with this challenge?

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Q10: The role of the IRG is to review standards and guidance about records and information management, and to advise how Standards New Zealand should vote on proposed changes to international standards. What kinds of standards and guidance do you think the IRG should be working on? We welcome your ideas.

Q11: What are your preferences for communication about the IRG and standards?(you can select more than one option)

- I am not interested
- NZ-Records Listserv
- Linked In Group
- Government Data & Digital Standards Community of Practice
- RIMPA
- Other:

Q12: What is your role? (you can select more than one option)

Tick all that apply.

- Information/records manager
- ICT Professional
- Archivist
- Librarian
- Curator
- Student
- Consultant or vendor
- Other:

Q13: What kind of organisation do you work for? (you can select more than one option)

Tick all that apply.

Library

- Central government organisation
- Local government organisation
- Museum
- Private sector organisation
- Consultant
- Vendor
- Professional association
- School
- Tertiary Education Institution
- Other:

Q14. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Q15. If you would like us to get in touch, please enter your name and email.

Endnotes

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Notes on Contributors

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Dr Amanda Cossham

Dr Amanda Cossham is a lecturer in Library and Information Studies and information management consultant. She is regional editor for two scholarly journals. Her research interests include continuing professional development, knowledge organization, information management and community archives.

Andy Fenton

Andy Fenton has always been driven to make digitisation, workflow, and online community engagement accessible for individuals and organisations. He is the founder of three digital transformation companies (NZMS, Recollect, and Desktop Imaging) where he spearheads the application of standards and the advice given to clients and partners. He consults on the digitisation of both heritage records and corporate records – including those described in the Public Records Act (2005). Andy's involvement in standards work dates back to 1996 when he was invited to join the Australia/New Zealand Joint Standards Committee (MS/4) for Information and Image Management. He is currently a member of Standards New Zealand's International Review Group IT-021 (part of ISO TC46 - SC11 Archives/Records Subcommittee, administered by Archives NZ), as well as the Australian IT-021 Records Management Systems Committee, which engages with the development and drafting of records management standards, liaising with overseas counterparts. As a group, they ensure that new international records management standards meet the requirements and needs of the sector in Australia and New Zealand.

Eric Boamah

Eric Boamah is a Principal Lecturer in Information and Library Studies at the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand. He was President of ARANZ from 2018-2021, and a Council Member of the then New Zealand Branch of RIMPA from 2017-2021. Eric is a Professional Member of LIANZA, and also a member of the International Review Group of New Zealand. He is a Steering Committee Member of the ICA Section for Archival Education.

Eric holds a Bachelor of Arts in Information Studies and Linguistics from the University of Ghana. He obtained a Joint Master of Arts in Digital Library Learning from a consortium of three European Universities, including Oslo University College, Norway, Tallinn University, Estonia, and Parma University in Italy. Eric received his PhD in Digital Preservation and Cultural Heritage from Victoria University of Wellington.

Hope Wilson

Hope Wilson took up the role of Art Curator at Hocken Collections in February 2023. Prior to this, she was Director of Blue Oyster Art Project Space from 2020-2022. Over the past eight years she has held positions at Eastern Southland Gallery, the New Zealand Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, The Physics Room, and City Gallery Invercargill. She holds a BA (Hons) in Art History and English from the University of Otago and a Postgraduate Diploma in Museum Studies from Massey University.

Jane Wild

Jane Wild, Chair of the UNESCO Memory of the World Aotearoa New Zealand Trust, sees reaching over 50 registrations as a milestone for the recognition of our documentary heritage. The new registrations include a joint nomination for Henry Winkelmann's photography of Tāmaki Makaurau, a significant visual record of the changing landscape and maritime views, plus the extensive archives of the Canterbury Provincial Government, 1853-1877. These records include records relating to Ngāi Tahu as well as the West Coast.

Jennifer Jeffery

Jennifer Jeffery is on secondment to the Tertiary Education Union as Branch Organiser, but was working at the Hocken Collections as a Collections Assistant - Archives whilst assisting with *Fortune*. For nearly three years, Jennifer was the Secretary of the Otago/Southland Committee of the

Archives and Records Association of New Zealand (ARANZ), and held the position of Membership Secretary for several months on ARANZ Council. Jennifer is also a current Trustee of the New Zealand Chinese Heritage Research Charitable Trust. Jennifer previous publications include 'Hewitson Library' in *Australia and New Zealand Theological Library Association Ejournal*. Jennifer holds a BA(Hons) in History from University of Otago, and a Diploma in Records and Information Management from Open Polytechnic |Te Pūkenga.

Michael Upton

Michael Upton is currently holds the Records and Information portfolio on ARANZ Council. He is an information management consultant, which mostly involves either showing up to public offices to help review something or joining a project delivering a big system change, typically software. He used to run training for Archives New Zealand on topics related to managing digital information and sometimes has to be reminded about paper records! Michael also co-hosts the podcast Information Revolution, reviewed in this issue.

Paddy Power

Paddy Power is currently Pouwhakahaere | Senior Manager – Data, Information, and Publishing Services at Tatauranga Aotearoa | Stats NZ. He previously worked as Principal Advisor Sector Information Management at the Ministry of Justice, and at Archives New Zealand as an Archivist, Senior Advisor, and Manager. He has been a member of ARANZ for more than 20 years and has been a member of the New Zealand International Review Group for Recordkeeping Standards since its inception.

Sarah Welland

Sarah Welland is a lecturer in Library and Information Studies, teaching online courses in records management, archives management and information management. A qualified archivist, she has worked as a public-sector archivist, records manager, and information management consultant. Her research interests focus on community archives and community heritage information.

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