

FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETIES INC

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1) Historical thinking in higher education

The recent Australian Learning and Teaching Council Report for 2009 contains has produced a number of recommendations to government of relevance to history teaching and research:

- 1. The development of historical thinking and assessment standards.** It is proposed that universities offering history programs collaborate with the History Teachers' Association and the Australian Historical Association collaborate on assessment standards.
- 2. Working with primary materials.** Greater opportunities be provided for students to work with primary materials.
- 3. Disseminating Innovations in the Discipline-Based Development of Academic Literacy.** It is proposed that universities offering history programs collaborate with the History Teachers' Association and the Australian Historical Association collaborate on providing good examples of learning activities.
- 4. Working with Visual and New Media.** Examples of new media be developed for students to use.
- 5. Disseminating Coursework Experiences.** Academic staff to outline their own course work experiences to students.
- 6. Disseminating Innovations in Assessment.** Good examples of assessment tasks that align with assessment standards be developed.

The report is available at:

<http://www.altc.edu.au/project-historical-thinking-higher-education-macquarie-2007>

2) Digitised government records

The State Records Commission and State Records Office of Western Australia are pleased to announce the release of new recordkeeping publications:

GENERAL DISPOSAL AUTHORITY FOR SOURCE RECORDS (RD 2009027)

With the general shift towards a reliance on digital records, State organizations are digitizing records created or received in another format as part of normal business processes and activities. The General Disposal Authority (GDA) for Source Records enables the legal destruction of those source records that have been successfully digitized in accordance with certain conditions. This GDA may be applied by State and local government organizations within WA.

The GDA for Source Records includes a Digitization Specification which outlines the technical requirements for creating digitized versions of records.

The GDA may be found on the State Records Office's website at http://www.sro.wa.gov.au/pdfs/GDA_SourceRecords.pdf

State Records Office GUIDELINES

The State Records Office (SRO) has released two new guidelines for Management of digital records and Management of email records.

The guidelines have been developed to assist State government organizations to manage digital records and email records, created or received by the organization, in accordance with SRC Standard 8: Digital recordkeeping. Procedures for the management of those records must be included in the organization's approved Recordkeeping Plan.

The guidelines may be found on the State Records Office website at: <http://www.sro.wa.gov.au/>

If you have any queries about the General Disposal Authority for Source Records or the Guidelines, please contact the State Records Office by email at sro@sro.wa.gov.au or telephone on (08) 9427 3365.'

(Source: Archives List Serve – 9 July 2009)

3) National Library of Australia new service

The prototype Single Business Discovery Service <http://sbdsproto.nla.gov.au/> replaces their Register of Australian Archives and Manuscripts (RAAM) <http://www.nla.gov.au/raam/>

(Source: A Mailing List for Australian Archivists – 8 July 2009)

4) *Digital Standards Bibliography Version 3.0* published

The Collections Council is pleased to announce the publication of the *Digital Standards Bibliography Version 3.0*. This bibliography was initially developed in preparation for the CCA's Summit on Digital Collections in 2006, and was revised, updated and expanded throughout 2008. Comments were sought from the collections sector until early 2009, and our thanks are extended to those who contributed.

The bibliography is available online, and will assist the sector. Further feedback and contributions are welcome and will expand the CCA's Standards and Guidelines E-Directory. [Click HERE](#) to read the newly published bibliography.

(Source: Collections Council *E-Bulletin* No.42, 17 July 2009)

5) *Australian Year Books – 1908-2008 now available*

The Australian Bureau of Statistics' *Year Book Australia* is an extremely valuable research tool. It was first published in 1908.

It was published by the then Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics – noted in 1908 volume's preface as the first 'authoritative Year Book issued under the Federal Constitution'. The value of the *Year Book* is attributable to the reliability of the information it contains. Billy Hughes, Australian Prime Minister 1915-23, apparently once said that 'There are only two people I trust - God and the Commonwealth Statistician'.

As well as statistical data, each volume contains highly informative analytic essays describing the social, political, economic and environmental contexts of the information. Over the years many universities, schools and community groups have used essays from each *Year Book* to support education and community education, recognising the high level of scholarship provided through the contributors to each volume.

Access is through: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1301.0>
- select 'Past and Future Releases' - then select a volume - then select 'Downloads'

Each volume is able to be downloaded in parts or as a full volume in pdf (about 100Mb), and is fully word searchable.

The statistics are helpful for local and family historians, as they provide a context for population changes, birth rates, death rates, marriage rates, reasons for growth and distribution of the population, etc.

The yearbooks are not just statistics, but contain great summaries, and small overviews of Australian culture. There are histories of Land Tenure, in each State and Territory. The growth and history of pastoral industries, the growth of mining, the growth of railways, roads, tramways, shipping, education, commerce, post, telegraph, telephone, history of primary education, local governments, water supplies, irrigation, defence, pensions are included.

For example, Year Book No.1 1908 contains a summary of the Goldfield Water Supply in WA.

For example, the section on 'Tramways' in No.1, 1908, provides a comparison of the mileage in each state, broken down by ownership (government, municipal, private) and type (electric, steam, cable, horse). Detailed descriptions explain the history and operations in each area, including rolling stock, number of employees, growth, etc. There is a comparison across all states for 'electric tramways'.

The digitised and indexed versions unlock the richness for research of historical material in these *Year Books*, in a way that was not possible in the printed and bound copies.

(Source: Summary made of entry on ASHA; Ticcih-in-oz List Serv – 18 July 2009)

6) The value of Pandora – the National Library’s web archive

Annabel Lloyd, the archivist of Brisbane City Council Archives has reported on the value of archiving websites. This is carried out by the National library of Australia under the Pandora project.

For almost a decade the Brisbane City Council Archives has managed a small and popular local history website `BRISbites’ which contains a short introductory history to each of the over 300 suburbs of Brisbane mainly aimed at school students but enjoyed by the wider community.

BRISbites was hosted by a series of external providers. They were progressively taken over by larger companies who maintained access to the site. Early in 2009 the provider went bankrupt. The site disappeared overnight. The receivers were not helpful to Brisbane City Council Archives who then became creditors.

Pandora has archived BRISbites. In less than 24 hours Pandora provided Brisbane City Council Archives a complete version of the site less than 10 months old.

Brisbane City Council Archives is now working with the Council corporate website area to make the information contained on the site accessible through Council's corporate website. The original site will still be preserved by PANDORA.

(Source: aus-archivists List serv – 20 July 2009)

7) Queensland’s icons for the 150th year

On the 10th June, the Premier and Minister for the Arts, The Honourable Anna Bligh revealed the winners of the top 150 icons of Queensland. For many months now, the Public of Queensland has been voting for the icons and the winners are listed on the Q150 website.

Source: <http://www.q150.qld.gov.au/CelebrationHighlights/q150Icons.aspx>

8) Endangered sounds – Australian Sound Recordings Association – 2009 Conference

Thursday 20th and Friday 21st August 2009 - National Library of Australia – Canberra.

`In an age of rapid environmental, social and technological change, the sounds of our world are noticeably disappearing. These sounds form an essential component in the fabric of our cultures, and the ability to preserve these sonic environments is a necessity. Conference themes include capturing the shifting soundscapes of humanity,

vanishing natural environments, impermanence of installation and performance works, virtual sounds in virtual spaces, endangered languages and community collections. Selected Australian professionals and practitioners will present powerful ideas regarding the past and future of our sounds.

Composer and sound artist William Duckworth will deliver the keynote address entitled Endangered Sounds of the Future, with Indigenous curator Liz McNiven delivering the annual Alice Moyle Lecture. Drawing together a wide range of knowledge and experience, conference papers will be presented by curatorial, technical and archival experts, as well as creative and academic practitioners in the sound arts. The speakers include sound recordist Greg Simmons, Aboriginal language linguist Michael Walsh, innovative environmental recording system designer Neil Boucher, Vincent Plush, Kevin Bradley and more.

The 2009 Endangered Sounds conference will be held in the National Library of Australia's theatre in parallel with the National Film and Sound Archive's 2009 Sound Week activities. Of special interest is the announcement of the 2009 selection of ten Sounds of Australia for inclusion in the National Registry of Recorded Sound, announced by the Honourable Peter Garrett, Minister for Environment, Heritage and the Arts at the NFSA on Sound Day, Wednesday 19th August.

For conference registration please see the website: www.asra.asn.au or for more information contact: Shelly Grant: sgrant@nla.gov.au

(Source: aus-archivists@archivists.org.au ListServ – 28 July 2009)

9) Chrysler's archives

There has been extensive debate on the Archives Discussion Board about the future of They are said to be housed now at the Chrysler Museum [in a] move to protect the historical collections.

Experienced archivist, Chris Hurley, has summarised the outcome of the discussion in the following way:

The upshot appears to be that documentary materials have been dispersed and the "archival records" put into cold storage. In a commercial context, the documentary (library) materials constitute an important archival source in their own right. There was a debate in Canberra when an attempt was made to treat banned books at Customs as library material separate from the "archival" censorship files that deal with the administrative process of banning each volume. Patents are another obvious example from government. But even where such an obvious connection does not exist, documentation can be as significant as transactional records, depending on circumstance.

Also, the separation of records as historic assets has some interesting consequences. The former archives of the State Bank of Victoria were "saved" in 1990 from relocation to Sydney when lodged on permanent loan with Public Record office of Victoria. But there was lots of stuff still sloshing about in the premises and business

operations acquired by Commonwealth Bank of Australia at that time that had never reached the State bank of Victoria Archives at that point. It is still turning up even today. Getting a grip on the historic assets without sufficient regard to their connection to the process of which they are the residue has problems also.

... The first duty of a corporation is to survive. But the issue is not a simple one.

(Source: aus-archivists@archivists.org.au ListServ – 29 July 2009)

10) Heritage significance – Snowy Mountains Engineering – Lambie Gorge, Cooma

‘In the late 1950s the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Authority developed a revolutionary technique of installing rock bolts in a designed pattern that made the rock in its tunnels and underground power stations self supporting.

The technique saved many millions of dollars in construction of the Snowy Scheme, speeded up work and vastly increased safety in underground excavations. As a consequence this Australian innovation was rapidly adopted world-wide.

It has been described as "probably the most significant engineering development made on the Snowy scheme".

On 18 October 2009 the site in Lambie Gorge, Cooma where the new rock bolting techniques were tested will be recognised as a National Engineering Heritage Landmark. The award ceremony will be part of the reunion celebrations on the 60th anniversary of the start of the Snowy scheme.’

For details visit <http://www.snowyschemecollection.com.au/snowy60th>

It may take the New South Wales Heritage Branch time to recognise the site with a listing of its own as it doesn't fit into any of the "Heritage themes" that are the basis for the Heritage Branch's assessment and listing program.

(Source: ticcih-in-oz@googlegroups.com – 11 July 2009)

11) Victoria's \$2 million Heritage Grants Program

Victoria's Heritage Grants program, an initiative of the strategy *Victoria's Heritage: Strengthening our communities* provides funding for:

- Repair and conservation of heritage places and objects
- Community collections management
- Interpretation of heritage places and objects
- Local government heritage studies and advice

Information brochures and application forms are available for download at <http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/Funding/Heritage-Grants.aspx>

Enquiries about the program should be directed to Heritage Victoria on (03) 8644 8909 or via email at heritage.grants@dpcd.vic.gov.au

Please note applications close on Thursday 6th August 2009

(Source: ICOMOS Email News – No. 396 – 24 July 2009)

12) *Illustrated Glossary of Australian rural fence terms*

A 7.5 MB PDF of *Illustrated glossary of Australian rural fence terms* is now available for free download at the web site of the Heritage Branch, NSW Department of Planning:

http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/03_index.htm Click on "Publications G-I", and scroll down until you find it under "I"

The glossary is 170 pages, and is arranged alphabetically, with definitions, quotes from primary and secondary sources, illustrations (both contemporary and modern images), and a rather exhaustive list of references.

The glossary will be useful to anyone conducting heritage work in rural NSW, and to those interested in the history of rural fences in Oz.

The author, John Pickard, distributed CDs of earlier versions (notably at the ASHA conference in Adelaide in 2008) which are now superseded.

If anyone has any corrections / comments / additions etc. please email John Pickard john.pickard@bigpond.com

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(Source: Australian Society of Historical Archaeology Email List – 31 July 2009)

13) Local History – 120th anniversary of completion of the Palmerston and Pine Creek Railway, Northern Territory

2009 is the 120th anniversary of the completion of the Palmerston and Pine Creek Railway by Charles and Edwin Millar for the South Australian Government. The construction work was completed on 15 June 1889 and the official contract handover

was 30 September 1889. The last three months were spent constructing station buildings, fettlers accommodation, watering points, and refreshment rooms such as at Adelaide River. Test runs were undertaken and equipment sold.

Celebrations were held in Pine Creek on 25 and 26 July 2009, and at the Adelaide River Railway Heritage Precinct on Picnic Day, Monday 3 August 2009.

(Source: Notice on 18 July and 27 July 2009 by Friends of North Australian Railway, P.O. Box 3504, Darwin, NT 0801; www.atr.org.au/fnaraar.htm; www.northernexposure.com.au/rail)

14) Family History Week 2009

Family history and genealogy are proving the most popular hobbies around the world. Family history is the second biggest subject on the web with sites receiving billions of hits per year. There are over 250,000 Australians who are members of family history related organisations so the week will have broad appeal across Australia.

National Family History week is an initiative of AFFHO (Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations). This popular initiative has received broad support from some of Australia's leading government and non government organisations. Sponsors include:

- o Ancestry.com.au
- o FindMyPast.com
- o The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
- o FamilySearch.org
- o National Archives Australia
- o The Australian Bureau of Statistics
- o Businesses like Joy Murrin Family History Services and Hamlin Printing.

During the week events are conducted across the country that focus on genealogy, family history, heraldry and related subjects including family reunions, seminars, talks, open days, history walks, book launches, film evening and expos.

For events in your State, go to <http://www.familyhistoryweek.org.au>.

(Source: Australasian Federation of Family History Societies - Family History Week 2009 <http://www.familyhistoryweek.org.au>)