

Introduction

Records are part of everyday life: they are created, captured, maintained and used in government and business and in non-commercial organisations, for example educational institutions and not-for-profit organisations. Records are also created and managed in the private sphere of personal and family life. This subject explores the realities of recordkeeping in these different contexts, looking at the wider social and environmental factors that affect recordkeeping and at how different organisations deal with their recordkeeping responsibilities today and what challenges they face in the near future. We also focus on the roles and services of archival institutions, whether these are derived from legislative mandates (as for government archives), are run in-house (for example company archives) or are undertaken by specialised institutions which collect the records of other organisations (such as university archives or state libraries).

Visit

The Archives Association of British Columbia [Introduction to Archives](#) page which provides a comprehensive set of resources. These resources have been compiled for a Canadian context, but they should be useful throughout this subject.

One of our themes is the variety of recordkeeping and archiving contexts: government and non-government, traditional and digital, and large and small. As institutions with a mandate to serve governments and to deliver services to the public, government archives are giving priority to establishing digital archives programs and to digitising analogue (hard copy) collections. Smaller specialised archives such as church, school and activist archives are also pursuing digitisation programs.

Nowadays, digital recordkeeping systems are used not only by governments and large companies: small organisations, households,

families and individuals also create and require access to their own digital records in the short and long term. There is also a tendency for the recordkeeping systems of public sector organisations to be integrated to some extent with those of their outsourced private sector suppliers, for example in the online purchasing systems used in Australian universities. Solutions for digital recordkeeping and digitisation are often related to the size of the enterprise, as products and strategies tailored to the smaller organisation and personal records are appearing in increasing numbers. Having sufficient resources is one major factor affecting plans to digitise physical records and make digital copies of original records available online.

Web activity

Browse these digitisation projects and compare the approaches taken:

Public Record Office Victoria (2015) [Digitisation program](#) and [Jenny Pearce](#) (2010) of the King's School on the experience of digitisation in a school archives setting.

Read

Bishop, C. (2017). [The Serendipity of Connectivity: piecing together women's lives in the digital archive](#). *Women's History Review*, 26(5), 766-780.

For a user's perspective on the "pleasures and pitfalls of the digital archive" (Bishop, 2017 p.766).

References

AABC (Archives Association of British Columbia). (n.d.) *The AABC Archivist's Toolkit: Introduction to Archives*. Retrieved July 3, 2016 from <http://aabc.ca/resources/archivists-toolkit/introduction/>

ASA (Australian Society of Archivists). (2009a). *Fact sheet: Establishing an archive – getting organised*. Retrieved July 10, 2014 from <http://www.archivists.org.au/documents/item/44>

ASA (Australian Society of Archivists). (2009b). *Fact sheet: Establishing an archive – preservation*. Retrieved July 10, 2014 from <http://www.archivists.org.au/documents/item/45>

Bishop, C. (2017). The Serendipity of Connectivity: piecing together women's lives in the digital archive. *Women's History Review*, 26(5), 766-780.

Pearce, J. (2010, May 24). Digitisation and the small archive, in *Archives Outside*. Retrieved June 7, 2012 from <http://archivesoutside.records.nsw.gov.au/digitisation-and-the-small-archives/>

Public Record Office Victoria. (2015). *Digitisation program*. Retrieved June 10, 2019 from <https://prov.vic.gov.au/about-us/partnerships-and-collaborations/digitisation-partners>

Documenting society

Records created by governments, businesses and other organisations are understood by their creators and by recordkeeping professionals as serving as evidence of transactions of the bodies which create them. However, this perspective does not tell us everything about records and their place in contemporary society. In particular, it does not explain the longer term value of records for the organisation itself (for use and re-use), nor their value broader societal purposes, including memory. Some records have only a short-term existence, while others are deemed to be

worth retaining for the long term. These include the physical records usually associated with the word 'archives' and today they also include digital records of long term value. The concept of the records continuum seeks to explain how and why records originate and to categorise the actions taken to manage records. The records continuum is presented as a model in four dimensions: create, capture, organise and pluralise. In this subject, we look at recordkeeping in all these dimensions, with the emphasis on the **organise** and **pluralise** dimensions.

Reading

Chapter 4 of Alan Bell & Caroline Brown. (2013) [*The Recordkeeper's Bookshelf*](#) (pp. 61-75) for an explanation of the records life cycle and records continuum concepts. This is a useful introductory text that you might want to refer to throughout this subject.

The many organisations which maintain their own archives or transfer them to an organisation (for example a regional archives or the special collections branch of a state library) that manages them on the behalf of their creator/s enable us to document contemporary society. Government records are regulated by legislation concerning the creation, management and preservation of archives and they are vital for supporting our understandings of our past and our present. However, they do not document activities in business, the not-for-profit sector or the private and personal sphere of recordkeeping. Records from organisations and individuals outside the public sector help us to be able to document the breadth of commercial, social, sporting and personal activities that make up our society. Without them, our society is impoverished and individuals can be denied access to evidence that establishes their identity and rights, as has happened in conflicts such as the war in Iraq where records have been deliberately destroyed.

Web resources

... the [Scottish Archive Network Directory](#) (SCAN, n.d.)

What different types of information about the services provided by archives in Scotland can be located through this Directory?

In Australia today, there are a range of organisations which maintain their own archives. The following table presents a breakdown of archives by organisation type from a survey in 2006. This survey was not comprehensive, and required the organisations to submit their own responses. However, it is the most recent snapshot we have of the range of archival organisations in Australia.

Organisation type	Number	%
Private school	79	30
Church or religious organisation	29	11
University	22	9
Non-profit company/society/association	20	8
Historical society	15	6
Local government archives	15	6
Public library/gallery/museum (local government funded)	15	6
National or state/territory archive (government funded)	10	4
National or state/territory library/gallery/museum (govt funded)	10	4
State/territory government dept/agency	5	2
Private company	5	2

Organisation type	Number	%
Australian government dept/agency	4	2
Community organisation	3	1
Other	22	9
TOTAL	254	100

Table 1.1 Summary of responses to survey of Australian archival institutions by organisation type, 2006 (results published by the Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities as Archives Survey 2007). The [full report of the survey](#) is available on the CAARA website.

The variety of types of archives is a defining characteristic of the archival landscape today. The role of professionals working with archives is important in shaping the direction of the different kinds of archives and their programs. There are many factors unifying the profession, including common principles, professional ethics and standards.

Browse

the [Directory of Archives in Australia](#), produced by the Australian Society of Archivists to get a sense of current collections. NOTE: the directory is currently being updated and may not reflect the breadth of archives in the country.

References

Bell, A. & Brown, C. (2013). The recordkeeper's bookshelf. Dundee, Centre for Archive and Information Studies. Retrieved July 10, 2014 from <http://www.ica.org/download.php?id=3303>

CAARA (Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities). (2007). *Report on archives survey 2007*. Retrieved June 7, 2012, from <http://www.caara.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/Report-on-Archives-Survey-2007.pdf>

SCAN (Scottish Archive Network). (n.d.). The directory, in *Scottish archive network*. Retrieved June 7, 2012 from <http://www.scan.org.uk/directory/index.htm>

Convergence, collaboration or competition?

Now we look at the relationship between archives and other institutions within the broader cultural heritage sector. Taken together, these institutions are understood as sub-sectors (also called domains) with similar cultural preservation objectives but with responsibility for different types of cultural heritage materials. In some jurisdictions the different institutions are treated as part of ‘the arts’ or ‘culture’ portfolios by government. Sometimes they are referred to by the acronym GLAM – Galleries, Libraries and Museums.



Visit

Charles Sturt University Library’s (2019) library resource guide – [Information and Library Studies](#) for resources on the various domains.

In some countries resources for archives have generally been less generous than those for libraries and museums. In Australia it has proved difficult for non-government archives and local government archives to get more than an occasional piece of the cultural heritage funding ‘cake’. This situation is not peculiar to Australia as the following assessment from the UK [Archives for the 21st Century Report](#) (TNA, 2009, p. 11) shows:

Historically, the value of archives has not been recognised in the same way as museums and libraries and so they have received a lower priority within the process for setting budgets. They face complex challenges both in continuing to deliver on their core mission and in adapting to the changing requirements of service delivery and new ways of working in response to the current trends in society.

This report was refreshed in 2012 with a supporting report: [Archives for the 21st Century in Action: refreshed 2012-15](#). Have a look at the 2012-15 report and compare it to the 2009 report - where is the focus shifting to?

Converged facilities and services

So what is the solution in a world where the importance of archives may be recognised in principle but without the requisite resources to enable them to carry out their responsibilities and meet the expectations of stakeholders? Many organisations use volunteers to supplement the paid workforce, but this is not a sustainable answer for most archives. Volunteers need to be supported and given meaningful and satisfying work to do and they should not be expected to take on management roles. Cooperation and collaboration between institutions have long been hallmarks of the archives domain, one example here being the Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities (CAARA) and its predecessors. Other examples are the loose associations of archives covering the same industry or archivists working in the same type of archives, such as the Australasian University Records and Archives (AURA) network. However, there are now more formal moves towards convergence across the cultural heritage domains between previously standalone organisations. These new organisations go beyond traditional types of interinstitutional cooperation. Examples include [Library and Archives Canada](#), the [Hull History Centre](#) (UK) and the [Albury LibraryMuseum](#) (Australia). The latter includes local government and private archives from the Albury region.

Convergence is a major and continuing debate. If done primarily to save money or for administrative convenience, merged institutions may well not work. But if institutions are able to pool their resources and especially if their staff are trained across previously separate specialisations, there could be powerful advantages. Some commentators have argued that the move to convergence is inevitable: if the future for all GLAM institutions is to be digital content providers, then why not join forces? Is this a better solution than continuing competition between institutions on national, state or local levels?

References

Albury City Council Library. (n.d.). *Librarymuseum* . Retrieved July 6, 2015 from <http://www.alburycity.nsw.gov.au/leisure-and-culture/libraries-and-museum/librarymuseum>

CSU Division of Library Services. (2019). *Library Resource Guides: Information and Library Studies*. Retrieved June 11, 2019 from <http://libguides.csu.edu.au/subject-page/information-library-studies>

Hull History Centre. (n.d.). *Welcome to history* . Retrieved June 7, 2012 from <http://www.hullhistorycentre.org.uk/>

TNA (The National Archives, UK). (2009). *Archives for the 21st century*. Retrieved June 10, 2019 from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/archives-for-the-21st-century>

TNA (The National Archives, UK). (2012). *Archives for the 21st century in Action: refreshed 2012-15* . Retrieved June 10, 2019 from <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/archives21centuryrefreshed-final.pdf>

Standards and frameworks

Governments and companies operate under different rules and with different imperatives. Government recordkeeping is regulated foremost by comprehensive records and archives legislation, while regulation of business recordkeeping occurs through multiple legislative instruments and compliance reporting. Some legislation affecting recordkeeping such as privacy legislation applies to both government agencies and non-government bodies. While their goals and governance arrangements may differ, government agencies and companies often implement the same proprietary solutions to ensure they manage their recordkeeping effectively.

Nowadays, digital recordkeeping systems are used not only by governments and large companies: small organisations, households, families and individuals also create and require access to their own digital records in the short and long term. There is also a tendency for the recordkeeping systems of public sector organisations to be integrated to some extent with those of their outsourced private sector suppliers, for example in the online purchasing systems used in Australian universities. Solutions for digital recordkeeping and digitisation are often related to the size of the enterprise, as products and strategies tailored to the smaller organisation and personal records are appearing in increasing numbers. Having sufficient resources is one major factor affecting plans to digitise physical records and make digital copies of original records available online.

Regulatory frameworks

Government archives receive their mandate from legislation passed by the relevant parliamentary body (such as the Australian Parliament for National Archives of Australia, the Tasmanian Parliament for the Tasmanian Archives and Heritage Office and so on). However, the relevant records and archives legislation is not the only legislation that government agencies need to be aware of in creating and maintaining records.



Web resources

National Archives of Australia has compiled a [list of the key pieces of legislation](#) critical for recordkeeping by agencies of the Commonwealth of Australia.



Browse

The Public Records Office of Victoria's (PROV) [Digitisation pages](#), paying attention to the policies and standards developed to support the digitisation projects.

References

National Archives of Australia. (n.d.) *Legislation, Policies, Standards and Advice*. Retrieved June 10, 2019 from <http://naa.gov.au/information-management/information-governance/legislation-standards/index.aspx#section3>

Standards and their role

One important aspect of the professional work involved in managing records and archives is the use of standards. Standards guide practice across different areas of the profession and across the world. Standards set out principles that are sector-neutral. These common principles are routinely applied and adapted in different contexts. National boundaries are no longer so significant in a world where business is more and more international and government-to-government cooperation is increasing. And there are standards covering many areas of technical and professional innovation and practice, including several covering documentation, records, metadata and digital preservation. These have been adopted by

national standards organisations – for example ISO-AS 15489-2002 means the Australian standard for records management, but ISO-BS 15489 means the British one and so forth.

In April 2016, the long-awaited revision of the international standard on records management ISO 15489 was announced. The standard is in the process of being adopted as an Australian standard.



Read

This [short article](#) on the new international standard ISO 15489-1:2016.



Web resources

Visit the Charles Sturt University Library (2019) [Library Resource Guides: Information and Library Studies](#) and check out the abstracts for some international standards for ‘records’ or ‘metadata’. Note that you can download Australian Standards using your CSU login from the link provided. Note that CSU's subscription does not automatically include international standards.

One role of professional associations is to provide links to useful resources for professionals and students. In some cases, the resources will be available only to members, but in others, the links are to freely available online resources.



Web resources

Archives and Records New Zealand (ARANZ) has a useful page of [standards](#) that provides an indication of the range of standards relevant to our field.

Best practice guidelines: Access as an example

Standards are developed and adopted in a specific field of professional activity when there is agreement and processes can be defined. Some professional activities are more difficult to regulate, often because there is such variation in practice at the national and institutional level. In such cases, statements of principle and best practice (less powerful than standards) are developed to guide professional practice. Access to archives is a case in point. Providing access is a critical role for information professionals. The relationship between the information professional (whether that be records manager, archivist or librarian) and the public requiring access to information is evolving. Importantly, questions of access need to be considered when policies and strategies for making archives available online are planned.

In 2012, the International Council on Archives (ICA) as the international body representing archival institutions and archivists published the ICA Principles on Access to Archives (the Principles). The Principles were developed by the ICA's Committee on Best Practices and Standards to provide guidance on the expected behaviour of archivists in administering access to archives wherever in the world they may be and whatever their institutional setting. As of mid-2019, the Principles were available in 13 languages. Although the Principles are not meant to be limited in their application to physical archives, they are based on a custodial view of archives and of archivists as the people providing access. This is still an important part of providing access to archives, but increasingly public expectations are that access will happen without the intervention or advice of an archivist and that it will be online.



Browse

[The ICA Principles on Access to Archives](#) (2012). (**Tip:** the principles themselves start on page 6 - the first part of the document is all about how the principles were developed and adopted by the ICA).

It is important to be familiar with these principles not just because of their claim to universality, but also because they do provide sound advice on how access should be administered in traditional or custodial archives settings (see the use of the phrase 'institutions holding archives').



Read

A paper from Sigrid McCausland (2010) discussing [community expectations of access](#) to archives. This paper focuses on community attitudes to archives and how these need to be taken into account by both archival institutions and archivists when decisions about access are made.

References

ARANZ (Archives and Records Association New Zealand). (n.d.) Select list of national and international standards relating to records and archives. Retrieved June 10, 2019 from <http://www.aranz.org.nz/professional-resources/national-standards/>

ICA (International Council on Archives). (2012). Principles on Access to Archives. Retrieved July 27, 2014 from <https://www.ica.org/en/principles-access-archives>

ISO (International Organization for Standardization). 2016. Records management in the digital age. Retrieved June 10, 2019 from <https://www.iso.org/news/2016/04/Ref2072.html>

McCausland, S. (2010). Safeguarding access: Community expectations and access to online and local sources. *inForum 2010*, Gold Coast Convention Centre. 6 September. Retrieved June 10, 2019 from <https://researchoutput.csu.edu.au/en/publications/safeguarding-access-community-expectations-and-access-to-online-a>

Policy frameworks

Governments and businesses which employ professional records managers and archivists usually have policies that cover their operational activities: legislation rarely provides the level of detailed guidance needed to manage recordkeeping on a day-to-day basis. Policies may cover the entire range of recordkeeping and archiving activities, or more commonly, they may be developed to cover major responsibilities such as appraisal, description, preservation and public access in separate documents. Some policies have a strategic focus, while others guide operations.



Visit and compare

The Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities (CAARA) [policies page](#) (n.d.) and National and State Libraries Australasia [archival collections strategic framework](#) (2015). The former presents policies for specific functions and issues for CAARA members. The latter provides an overarching statement acknowledging the responsibilities of NSLA institutions for the archival collections in their care.

When an organisation is considering setting up an archives, policy considerations are an important part of the planning process.



Read

[Getting organised](#) (2009), a leaflet from the Australian Society of Archivists which provides advice on what an organisation should include in its planning for setting up an archives program.

References

ASA (Australian Society of Archivists). (2009). *Getting organised*. Retrieved July 3, 2016 from <http://www.archivists.org.au/documents/item/44>

CAARA (Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities). (n.d.) *Policy statements*. Retrieved July 3, 2016 from <http://www.caara.org.au/index.php/policy-statements/>

NSLA (National and State Libraries Australasia). (2015). *NSLA Archival collections strategic framework*. Retrieved June 14, 2018 from <https://www.nsla.org.au/publication/archival-collections-strategic-framework>.

Funding frameworks

All organisations need policy and funding frameworks and archives and other information agencies are no exception. Governments need records to conduct their business and generally fund their own archives (although instances of public-private partnerships for digitisation projects by government archives are increasing). Companies also need records to meet their responsibilities to their shareholders and government regulators. State and local governments provide most of the funding for local studies collections. However, there are many other organisations that need to seek grants to maintain their archives, especially for projects.



Web activity

Visit The National Archives (United Kingdom) [Finding funding](#) page to get an overview of the range of funding, advice and other support available for the archives sector in that country.

The Parliamentary Library has a [page about grants for community groups](#) - review the comprehensive list and see which could be used to fund records or archival work.

In Australia, with our federal system, state governments have the main role in providing funding and other support for small archives and other community collections. PROV (Public Record Office Victoria) has a [summary page](#) setting out the types of support they provide. At the national level, Community Heritage Grants are coordinated by the National Library of Australia. This scheme provides an opportunity for organisations to apply for grants to assess the significance of their collections and to devise preservation strategies.

References

National Library of Australia. (2016). *Community Heritage Grants*. Retrieved July 3, 2016 from <http://www.nla.gov.au/awards-and-grants/chg>.

Public Record Office Victoria. (n.d.). Community programs. Retrieved July 3, 2016 from <http://prov.vic.gov.au/community-programs>.

The National Archives. (n.d.). Finding funding. Retrieved July 3, 2016 from <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/finding-funding/>

Professionals who manage records and archives are impacted by the records they work with, and there is an emerging discourse in the profession on recognising this impact. It is important to question the professional neutrality of archival practice, and to value the impact of your role, and the role of the records, in shaping the archival experience. For example, Caswell and Cifor (2016) ask

What happens when we scratch beneath the surface of the veneer of detached professionalism and start to think of recordkeepers and archivists less as sentinels of accountability (or accomplices in human rights violations on the other, and less acknowledged, end of the spectrum) and more as caregivers, bound to records creators, subjects, users, and communities through a web of mutual responsibility?(p.25)

Further material to explore this topic can be found in this presentation from the 2017 Australia Society of Archivists/ITIC conference presentation by Hart & Laurent (2017). Please note that this presentation is about 45mins in length, but you are encouraged to watch this especially leading into Assessment 1.

References

Caswell, M., & Cifor, M. (2016). From human rights to feminist ethics: Radical empathy in the archives. *Archivaria*, 81(1), 23-43.

Government records and the relationship with government archives

As we know, governments create vast quantities of records every day. These records serve as evidence of their transactions and activities as governments carry out the functions for which they are responsible. This includes putting into effect the laws they pass and administer, and interacting with other governments, companies, individual citizens and other stakeholders to ensure rights are upheld and obligations are met. Nowadays in countries like Australia governments do this within frameworks of comprehensive recordkeeping legislation and policy administered by government archival authorities.

In pre-digital days, government employees created records as part of their routine duties, but they did not usually have a role in making decisions about when to capture a record into a formal recordkeeping system or on

assigning metadata, for example. Their role in appraisal and disposal would be limited to being involved in consultations about developing disposal schedules or approving transfer or destruction recommendations if they were in managerial positions. For most agency staff, records was a place where files were kept and where the records staff made up new files or retrieved files as required. The records staff also looked for missing files and performed other useful tasks such as opening and filing the agency's mail. Government archivists usually only became involved with records judged to be of archival value when they were transferred into the physical custody of the archival authority. However, archivists working for the Australian Government also inspected and documented records in their agency context prior to their transfer to a repository.



Read

A [summary](#) of Hilary Golder's *Documenting a Nation: Australian Archives - the first fifty years* (NAA, 2012).

Kim Eberhard's 2015 *Archives and Manuscripts* article [Unresolved issues: recordkeeping recommendations arising from Australian commissions of inquiry into the welfare of children in out-of-home care, 1997–2012](#) for an overview of the important role of recordkeeping in public inquiries and other investigations that have a large social impact.

Today's agency employees create and use records of many different types, from the most routine (such as updating details in databases) to the exceptional (such as drafting Cabinet submissions). A quick way to find out what the responsibilities of governments are and what records they create is to look at general disposal authorities which cover common functions and activities across a range of agencies. An example here is National Archives of Australia's [AFDA Express](#) General Records Authority (NAA, 2010) for Commonwealth Government records ([AFDA Express Version 2](#) will be released on 1 July 2019).

The specific recordkeeping responsibilities of each agency relate to their missions and service provision roles. These are outlined in legislation, agency recordkeeping policies and agency records management programs. Advice to agencies is published in guidelines and procedures from government records and archives authorities. There are also regular training programs.



Web resources

National Archives of Australia has a [range of resources](#) for agency staff who have records responsibilities.



Listen

To a [mini-lecture](#)

on government records by Sigrid McCausland.

Government agencies as cultural custodians

Some government agencies manage their own archives operations including providing public access under agreements with the relevant archival authority, sometimes called distributed custody agreements. Universities usually manage their own archives and provide research facilities for research on the history of the university (and often its predecessors) and on other subjects if the university collects archives (such as the University of Melbourne does for the records of Victorian business, labour and community organisations). Another example of a government agency which maintains its own archives is the City of Sydney. Their archives website provides information about the archives and history of Australia's longest continual local government administration which dates from 1842. The City of Sydney also provides online history resources

relating to inner Sydney, including a website that brings together resources about Aboriginal Sydney.



Web resources

The [City of Sydney Archives](#) (Sydney City Council, n.d.) website and The [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities](#) portal (Sydney City Council, 2013).

References

Eberhard, K. (2015) Unresolved issues: recordkeeping recommendations arising from Australian commissions of inquiry into the welfare of children in out-of-home care, 1997–2012, *Archives and Manuscripts*, 43:1, 4-17,

NAA (National Archives of Australia). (2010). *General records authority: AFDA express*. Retrieved July 10, 2016 from http://www.naa.gov.au/Images/AFDAExpress_tcm16-47393.pdf

NAA (National Archives of Australia). (2012). *National Archives of Australia: Our history*. Retrieved June 7, 2016 from <http://www.naa.gov.au/about-us/organisation/history/index.aspx>

Sydney City Council. (n.d.). *Archives*. Retrieved June 7, 2013 from <http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/learn/history/archives>

Sydney City Council. (2013). *The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities*. Retrieved June 7, 2013 from <http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/community/community-support/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-communities>

Public perceptions and expectations of government archives

Archival services provided to the public in the twenty-first century are more comprehensive than the traditional support for scholarly research typical of the mid-twentieth century. First came the extension of reference and access services to meet the demand from family history researchers which grew substantially from the late 1960s. By the 1990s, major Australian government archives were offering substantial and coordinated public programs. These included regular publication of guides to key collections, exhibitions, talks and specific programs designed for school students. Some archives also started volunteer programs (usually focused on facilitating access to ‘popular’ or previously poorly identified records) around this time. Government archives also increasingly delivered a variety of services to the public via their websites. And they acknowledged that the relationship with the public was a two-way one and began to seek public feedback about their services.



Read

The [CAARA Statement of principle](#) (2007) on providing public access to records in Australian government archives and note how it portrays the relationship between the archives and the public.

Public expectations of government archives

The National Archives of Australia’s (NAA) online initiatives such as the progressive digitisation of World War I and World War II service files have been very popular. However, in late 2009 there was considerable public dissent when NAA announced that it would have to close its offices in Adelaide, Darwin and Hobart in 2010-2011 for budgetary reasons. It expected to meet future need for public access in those states by providing online access. The announcement was met with opposition from concerned researchers, professional associations, local politicians and many others. A public campaign ensued. At the heart of the opposition was an expectation that NAA would retain its physical public access facilities in all states and territories.



Browse

This summary of what happened at National Archives, from their 2009-10 annual report, [Management and accountability](#). Think about this example of 'people power' impacting on government decisions.

Some of the commentary on the proposal:

The response and comments from [Adelaide](#) (Harris, 2009)

Nicolas Rothwell (2010) in *The Australian* shortly before the change of policy '[Budget cuts put recorded history of the nation under siege](#)'

Using new technologies to provide services to the public

Archives continue to look for ways to reach their potential audiences in ways that will attract and retain public interest in their activities beyond providing improved online searchable databases and digitised records. They are actively seeking ways to harness the potential of social media to enhance their efforts to communicate with and improve services to the public. They do this in various ways, for example by using email alerts (as the Queensland State Archives does to announce events for researchers) or regular electronic newsletters (such as State Records NSW *Now and Then*).



Activity

Browse the UK National Archives [Discovery](#) portal (TNA, 2013), which, while essentially a catalogue, also provides news and encourages users to share their knowledge of its holdings by tagging records.

Archives Outside, [State Records NSW blog](#) (2014) has the subtitle ‘A meeting place for people who manage archival collections’ but it also seeks researcher input

[Vancouver City Archives](#) (2012) uses twitter

References

CAARA (Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities). (2007). *Statement of principle – providing public access to records in Australian government archives*. Retrieved June 7, 2016 from <http://www.caara.org.au/index.php/policy-statements/statement-of-principle-providing-public-access-to-records-in-australian-government-archives/>

Ellis, K. (2010). *Newsroom: Media releases - Rudd Government listens to Adelaide on National Archives*. Retrieved June 11, 2019 from <https://web.archive.org/web/20150318160725/http://www.kateellis.com.au/newsroom/288/> (archived)

Harris, S. (2009). Threat to State home for National archives, in *Adelaidenow*, November 18. News Limited. Retrieved June 10 2016 from <http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/south-australia/threat-to-state-home-for-national-archives/story-e6frea83-1225799046971>

NAA (National Archives of Australia). (2010). *National Archives of Australia and National Archives of Australia Advisory Council annual reports 2009-01*. Retrieved June 11, 2019 from http://www.naa.gov.au/Images/2009-10_tcm16-95947.pdf

Rothwell, N. (2010). Budget cuts put recorded history of the nation under siege, in *The Australian*. Retrieved June 7, 2016

from <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/budget-cuts-put-recorded-history-of-the-nation-under-siege/story-e6frg6nf-1225832363511>

SRNSW (State Records NSW). (2014). *Archives Outside*. Retrieved July 6, 2016 from <http://archivesoutside.records.nsw.gov.au/>

TNA (The National Archives, UK). (2012). *Your archives*. Retrieved June 8, 2012

from http://yourarchives.nationalarchives.gov.uk/index.php?title=Home_page

Vancouver City Archives. (2012). *Vancouver Archives: Tweets*. Retrieved June 7, 2012 from <http://twitter.com/#!/vanarchives>

International and intergovernmental organisations

Recordkeeping in a globalised world

Globalisation is a feature of our everyday life. Instant communication across the globe for commercial and personal purposes is one demonstration of this. International trade is nothing new, but economies are becoming increasingly integrated and governments cooperate and collaborate in many different areas with other governments and with the private sector. An example of the latter is the public-private partnership model for the construction and maintenance of major infrastructure projects.

In this section, we look at recordkeeping and archiving in some key international organisations. It raises issues about the internationalisation of recordkeeping practice, in a world where national sovereignty and national boundaries still prevail in terms of the legal and cultural environment for recordkeeping. Questions to consider are:

- Is the world coming closer together in recordkeeping and archiving practice?
- Or is there merely more information available about what is happening?



Browse

[UNESCO Archives](#) to get an idea of the range of international organisations within UNESCO, their mandates and their records.

The [International Organization for Standardization](#) (ISO) is a significant international organisation. Like most organisations, its website tells you something about its purpose and history.

In our own field, there is the [International Council on Archives](#) (which covers both archives and records management). Note the logos of ICA's partner international organisations near the bottom of the home page.



Listen

To [Clive Smith](#)

(an Australian archivist) talking about the decade he spent working in the World Bank Archives.

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The UN and related organisations

The United Nations system

The United Nations (UN) is at the centre of most global international and intergovernmental activity. The UN itself has extensive records and these go well beyond historic paper records of its activities since its foundation in 1945. It creates and maintains records relating to its responsibilities for international negotiations and their formalisation as international treaties. Treaties are published on the UN website, as are the deliberations of the General Assembly, Security Council, Economic and Social Council and Trusteeship Council, as well as many reports relating to key programs such as the economic and social program. The UN's Dag Hammarskjold Library has a digitisation program that has brought digital versions of 'landmark' documents that chronicle events in the UN's history to a worldwide public.



Browse

The UN [Documents](#) page. This page gives an overview of the structure and key responsibilities of the UN, as well as links to documents and the search function for locating online published materials.

Contemporary archiving at the UN

The UN has ceased internal distribution of its routine printed documents, preferring to make them available on the website or through the official documents system database (searchable online). Meanwhile, like many other large organisations, the UN has its own TV channel. Daily webcasts of meetings as they happen and media briefings are webcast.

The UN is also building a 21st century archive where stories on selected events or issues, such as the effect of rising sea levels on island nations in different parts of the world have been archived. The film and video archives are another rich source of history of the UN. However, format compatibility issues mean that being on the Internet does not always mean accessibility anywhere, anytime.



Browse

The UN (n.d.a) [webcast archive](#) page to find links to webcasts made in the last decade. This complements the live [UNWebTV](#) which records meetings and other events as they happen. As might be expected, video recordings are made in different languages.



Watch

A couple of videos from the [21st century](#) series at the UN (n.d.b).

Browse through the [Audiovisual Library](#) (UN, n.d.c) page. Note the many different formats held in the archive and think about how these issues may affect copying and viewing of the visual history of the UN.

UNESCO

The United Nations Educational Social and Cultural Organisation – better known as UNESCO – as the cultural arm of the UN hosts a range of archives initiatives. For example, UNESCO has programs for oral archives, digital

archiving and multimedia archives. In addition, UNESCO is an enabler of recordkeeping and preservation activities by other organisations. [UNESCO](#) aims to assist with the safeguarding of national heritage, standardization of recordkeeping and archival management practices, and promote debate on the main issues in this field.

UNESCO's possibly best known archival contribution is the [Memory of the World](#) program. This program aims to preserve valuable archival and library heritage around the world and to disseminate information about it. This is done through the maintenance of an international register of valuable documentary heritage, supplemented by [national registers](#) (UNESCO, n.d). National Memory of the World Committees assess applications from institutions and items or collections which meet the criteria are then inscribed on the national register and on the international register if their significance is considered to be of international status.



Browse

The UNESCO (2015) [Digital Heritage 2015](#) conference page (archived) for the background to an event that aimed to pull together a wide range of participants to consider the challenge of preserving the digital heritage.

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International sport

Sport in the twenty-first century is a truly global phenomenon and the Olympic Games are a stellar global event which are held every four years. The Olympics are not just about elite sport and national pride, they are also about marketing, sponsorship, event management, international relations, doping, travel and politics. The Olympic Games are a supra-national enterprise with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) at the centre. Other key players are the national Olympic bodies (over 200 of these are now recognised by the IOC – the Australian Olympic Committee among them) and the international and national peak bodies for each sport. Then there are the temporary administrative structures created by governments to organise the running of each games. Progressively the bureaucracy required to stage the Olympic Games has become more and more complex, as satirised in the Australian television program *The Games* about the Sydney Olympics in 2000.

The IOC recognises the importance of Olympic heritage and history and there is an Olympics Studies Centre at the Olympics Museum at its

headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland. Here the emphasis is on scholarly research in a traditional framework. The LA84 Foundation was set up from surplus funds from the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics 'to serve youth through sport and to increase knowledge of sport and its impact on people's lives'. LA84 is also interested in the documentary heritage of the Olympics in the USA.



Browse

The IOC [Historical Archives](#) (2019) and the [LA84 Foundation](#) digital library (2019) pages to get a sense of the range of Olympics-related historical documents available online.

More international sport

Tour de France

The Tour de France is a major sporting event that is held every year. It is 'owned' by one country, but it has a powerful international presence. As is the case for many other organisations, the Tour de France website includes a section on its [history](#). Cultivating a sense of history is important for such a major event, to project a sense of continuity and progress over a century. 'History' pages like these have other purposes, including promoting a positive image that seeks to downplay scandals that have occurred over the years (and for incidental purposes such as providing material for sports statistics enthusiasts and trivia questions).

The [World Anti-Doping Agency](#) (WADA) has the responsibility of regulating and monitoring the use of drugs in sport. It administers the World Anti-Doping Code and has education programs for athletes as well as publicising the results of research on drugs and maintaining a list of substances banned for participants in sporting competitions. Good recordkeeping would seem to be essential to WADA's operations.



Browse

The WADA [ADAMS](#) site to get an idea of the database that supports WADA's anti-doping activities. What do you think are some of the advantages and disadvantages of ADAMS?

The World Cup

The FIFA World Cup is another world event held every four years. FIFA (Federation Internationale de Football Association) can hardly be mentioned without reference to the major scandal around bribery at its highest levels. FIFA's [official documents page](#) gives information about its structures, programs, operations and history. You can also find a [statement](#) from the President on May 27, 2015 that acknowledges that other less public documents have a role in the unfolding FIFA saga.

For fans, the World Cup is about sport, not sport politics. After the 2014 World Cup, FIFA announced that [all records](#) (N.B. records in another sense of the word!) for TV viewing and live streaming had been broken. It is not surprising that the World Cup is a massive multimedia event: but how much of the whole social and political as well as the sporting experiences of the World Cup can and should be captured as an archival record?

The Commonwealth Games

In 2014, the Commonwealth Games were held in Glasgow, Scotland. While not as significant as the World Cup, the [Commonwealth Games](#) also have a wide reach. The Commonwealth as an organisation includes about one-third of the world's population and more than one million tickets were expected to be sold to 250 events. As with the other sporting events discussed here, the Commonwealth Games website provides a mix of information from commercial and accountability perspectives. Among the list of [corporate documents](#) is an Information Disclosure Policy that indicates Glasgow 2014 Limited, the key body running the Games, chose to

abide by the requirements of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 in the interests of openness and transparency. The [archives](#) of Commonwealth Games Scotland are held by the University of Stirling Library. As with the Olympic Games, the Commonwealth Games involve multiple local, national and international organisations, each of them creating records.

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Introduction

This module is intended to provide an overview of contemporary recordkeeping and archiving issues involving Indigenous Australians. It gives some historical background, acknowledges different perspectives and identifies key stakeholders. Recordkeeping issues have emerged as critical for Indigenous Australians in recent decades as public debate has come to focus on identity, land and human rights.



Read

The [Introduction](#) to the special issue of *Archival Science* (Vol 12, Iss 2) 'Keeping cultures alive: Archives and Indigenous human rights' for a broad perspective on current issues in Indigenous recordkeeping in both Australia and internationally.

Historical background

Since European settlement of the Australian continent, many records about Aboriginal people have been created by governments, churches, charities and other organisations such as pastoral companies, as well as

anthropologists and other academics. Similarly, records have been created by governments and other organisations about Torres Strait Islander people who have a separate identity from Aboriginal Australians and whose islands lie off Cape York between Queensland and Papua New Guinea. It should be remembered that the lives of the Indigenous people of Australia were changed irrevocably by European settlement and many of them have endured long periods of dislocation and disadvantage. Government records often document the detailed operations of their agencies which directly or indirectly affected the lives and livelihoods of Indigenous people, as well as the broader policies on which these operations were based. They can also contain important information that can help Indigenous people establish their rights and identity.



Browse

The [AIATSIS](#) (n.d.b) and [Indigenous Australia](#) (n.d.) websites to get an idea of two different kinds of resources relating Indigenous culture, one more scholarly and the other more popular.



Browse

The RNLD (Resource Network for Linguistic Diversity) [Repatriating language material](#) site which gives an idea of the role archives can play in such endeavours.



Listen

To [Kirsten Thorpe](#)

discussing her work for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Data Archive (ATSIDA). Kirsten was recently the head of the [Indigenous](#)

[Services](#) team at the State Library of New South Wales, and is now a Cultural and Critical Archivist at UTS: Jumbunna.

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Recordkeeping and Indigenous communities

Indigenous people around the world are involved in recordkeeping as the creators as well as the subjects of records. In Australia, many Indigenous communities run keeping places and cultural centres that collect and provide access to material relating to their history. Some of these centres

are attached to library services in regional towns and cities. Professional associations in Australia and other countries try to ensure that Indigenous community records are preserved and that Indigenous voices are heard in their own organisations, for example the [Indigenous Interests Special Interest Group](#) of the Australian Society of Archivists.



Read

This publication [Aboriginal Archives Guide](#) (2007) from the Association of Canadian Archivists which includes advice on setting up an archives program.

One of the programs run by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Studies (AIATSIS, n.d.) is the [Return of Materials to Indigenous Communities \(ROMTIC\)](#). This service provides free copies of audiovisual materials held in the AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive (now increasingly in digital form) to Indigenous individuals and communities. As with its other programs, AIATSIS provides advice to ensure that appropriate permissions are sought and given before copies are provided.

In some remote Indigenous communities, modern technology is being used to capture, store and provide access to digital archives. Some of this material consists of copies of documents and photographs held in other archives, libraries and museums. Other material such as videos and audio recordings of interviews with community elders is being generated by the communities themselves.



Browse

The [Cherbourg Memory](#) site, the digital archive initiative of the Ration Shed Museum in Cherbourg, Queensland
and

the [Keeping Culture](#) (formerly Ara Irititija) site to find out more about the software being used and about how Aboriginal people are using it in their everyday lives



Read

[An \(archived\) excerpt](#) from the final report of Monash University's [Koorie Archiving Trust and Technology project](#) (2008). This project was a collaboration between Koorie people and academic researchers in Victoria whose recommendations have been influential in the field of archiving in Australia.

There are still many challenges facing Indigenous communities in Australia wanting to manage their own records or to create keeping places, but there are also increasing resources available to assist them, including the expertise of information professionals.

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Records relating to Indigenous people

Personal records

The passage of the Commonwealth Aboriginal Land Rights Act in 1976 was a milestone for Indigenous Australians. The name Mabo is well-known because Eddie Mabo's case was the first to succeed in the High Court in 1991. Unfortunately, Eddie died a few months before the case was completed. His efforts to secure recognition of native title as an owner of Mer (Murray Island in the Torres Strait) are documented in his personal papers which are held in the National Library of Australia. The [Mabo](#) papers are considered so significant that they have been inscribed in the International Memory of the World register.

Campaigns, Inquiries and their records

During the 1990s many Australians joined in the campaign to press for a national apology to Indigenous Australians, in acknowledgment of the

injustice of past policies, particularly those involving removal of children from their families, and as a first step towards meaningful reconciliation between non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians. The then Federal Government did not support this idea and individuals and local groups began to take their own action to apologise. The Sorry Book was one manifestation of this movement in support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In 2004, the collection of [Sorry Books](#) held by the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies was placed on the Australian Memory of the World Register. The citation for the Sorry Books reads in part ‘[t]he collection of 461 Sorry Books has powerful historical and social significance as the personal responses of hundreds of thousands of Australians to the unfolding history of the Stolen Generations.’

The [Bringing Them Home](#) report of 1997 (its full title is Bringing Them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families) provided the impetus for some major projects in government archives in Australia. The Inquiry identified records as one of the issues that had to be addressed. It recommended that governments fund their records agencies ‘to preserve and index records relating to Indigenous individuals, families and/or communities and records relating to all children, Indigenous or otherwise, removed from their families for any reason’. Other recommendations included requiring governments to cooperate in their indexing and related projects, training for Indigenous archivists, facilitating the transfer of historical information to Indigenous cultural centres and establishing family tracing and reunion services. The National Archives of Australia has a permanent [disposal freeze](#) (meaning no relevant records are to be destroyed by Commonwealth agencies) on records that could assist Indigenous families reconnecting.



Read

National Archives of Australia's (2012b) [response](#) to the Bringing Them Home report, summarised in this fact sheet

Supporting research

Research into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander native title claims has involved long-term, detailed work by anthropologists, historians and lawyers to establish whether particular Indigenous groups could substantiate their claims to ownership and association with specific areas of land or sea. The work of locating records that document personal lives can be complicated, for example, by the effects of removal of Aboriginal people to central missions distant from their own country. Identifying records likely to be relevant from lists of records (paper or online) created for different purposes many decades previously is one of the challenges here.

There have been various government projects to index records that can help in the processes of rebuilding identity and reconnecting people with their long-lost families. One of these was undertaken by the Department of Community Services in New South Wales to help all people, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal alike, who had been separated from their families and had been in state care. The result, *Connecting kin* (1998), is a large conventional archives finding aid that provides contextual information about the various bodies that created records, lists of records and advice on how and where to do the searching.



Browse

[Connecting kin](#): A guide to help separated from their families search for their records (NSW DoCS, 1998).

To get a feel for the work that goes into a major project, think about some of the disadvantages of a guide like this.

The AIATSIS '[Finding your family](#)' resources. Reflect on the language used in the resources presented here.

Records relating to Indigenous people were and are created by organisations of many different kinds outside government including pastoral companies which employed Aboriginal people. Maps of pastoral holdings can be important sources for documenting Aboriginal sites. Records about Aboriginal involvement in economic, social and political activity are held in collecting archives such as the Noel Butlin Archives Centre (NBAC) at the Australian National University (ANU). There have been fewer indexing projects for non-government records, so guides to relevant records are shorter and provide pointers rather than detailed information.



Browse

The [subject guide](#) (2010) to Aboriginal-related records for examples of records relating to Aboriginal people found in company, trade union and personal records collections at ANU.



Read

Archivist Margaret Reid's (2008) discussion of evidence and the processes involved in assisting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander claimants to benefit from Queensland Government reparation schemes in '[When too many records are never enough](#)'

Access

Access is a key issue in library and archival research by and for Indigenous Australians. Some indexed records are available only to family members,

but many other records that can be distressing to relatives and descendants are available more generally. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library and Information Resources Network (better known as [ATSILIRN](#)) was established in the 1990s to support Indigenous people working in libraries and other information agencies and to support information professionals whose work involves providing information resources to Indigenous people. ATSILIRN is a national network and it holds annual conferences to discuss access issues. ALIA first published protocols to guide information agencies in interacting with Indigenous researchers and with content relating to Indigenous people in 1995. The Protocols were later endorsed by ATSILIRN and were updated in 2005 and 2010 (a project commenced in 2018 to review and revise the Protocols once again).

There are government and non-government organisations whose work includes providing research and support services to enable access to relevant records. Link-Up is an Aboriginal organisation that helps Aboriginal people affected by separation from their families. [Link-Up New South Wales](#) was set up in the 1980s to support Aboriginal people who as children lost their family connections through government policies and practices including fostering and adoption. The [Community and Personal Histories](#) unit of the Queensland Government helps Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people by providing research support for family and community history, drawing on the records of the Queensland Government created last century when the Government closely controlled the lives of most Indigenous Queenslanders.

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Introduction

In this context, private records refers to records created by individuals. They may be notebooks, letters, photograph albums, diaries, and increasingly, digital objects such as emails, Facebook pages, blogs and so on. Usually, the physical items were created with no intention of them being made publicly available, raising considerable ethical and logistical issues when such records are offered to archives or other collecting institutions. The digital records may be different – emails certainly would usually be considered to be relatively private, whereas a Facebook page or blog is a deliberate attempt to put the individual's opinions and thoughts out there in the public space, encouraging others to comment and contribute. Thus these can be treated differently... maybe!



Read

Rachel Buchanan's article '[Sweeping up the ashes](#)': the politics of collecting personal papers. In *Australian Book Review*. December 2011-January 2012, 40-52.

As well as articulating the perspective of an informed outsider on this important issue, Buchanan's article introduces some key Australian individuals in this field (note: some of the professionals she mentions have changed jobs or retired since the article was published).

Generally, private records are acquired by public institutions due to their relevance to the aims and objectives of the organisation. They bring with them a different, personal viewpoint that may help in better understanding the official record. Thus a soldier's diary maintained while at the front may hold very different views and see things quite differently to the published official communications supplied by a government department for public consumption. Both sets of records help someone, remote from the event, gain a better understanding of what occurred and how it was perceived. Indeed, today there is a growing acceptance – and interest – in these private records as intimate, personal glimpses from 'ordinary people' involved in extraordinary situations or of the unexpected family stories of famous people. The success of television documentary series, such as [Who do you think you are?](#) (2008-) and [Finding Your Roots](#) (2012-) which rely heavily on such records, testifies to the strong link they make with the general public.

Even government or official archives with their focus on official activities and the documentation created by government in the course of conducting its business acquire some private records. These might be the notes and diaries of senior officials such as judges or, in Australia's case, the Governor-General, ministers and senior public servants. As the National Archives of Australia (2012) puts it in the preamble to

their [collecting policy](#), in order for such records to be acquired they must "complement the official record".

Most state archives hold some private records (again usually related to high profile individuals) and other major institutions such as universities, big business or larger schools will also hold relevant private records. For universities in particular, holdings can be quite substantial.



Read

The [National Records of Scotland Private Records policy](#). This provides a good overview of what they acquire, and why, and raises issues that will be discussed further in this module

and

Browse The [Australian War Memorial's blog](#) which gives you an idea of the range of material they acquire - and its impact.



Listen

To this [mini-lecture](#)

from Bob Pymm

Personal recordkeeping and organisational recordkeeping

Personal records are connected to organisational records in different ways and at different levels. We know from our own experience as employees, students and health consumers, for example, that records essential to our identity, health and ability to function within our society are maintained by

the many organisations we deal with. In earlier modules, we have noted that the lines between previously entrenched categories have become blurred, particularly with the advent of sophisticated digital recordkeeping systems that can bring together information and processes from various enterprises. The development of standards and best practice guidelines for recordkeeping that apply to organisations, both large and small, in different sectors is another major indicator of change here.

Until about twenty years ago, it was common to see personal records as relating to the private sphere and organisational records as relating to the public sector (government records) or the commercial sector (business records). However, our understanding of personal records and their relationship to organisational records has been shaped by developments in recordkeeping practice and theory since the 1990s. Leading recordkeeping practitioners and thinkers have worked to present explanations of the nature and role of personal recordkeeping and how it intersects with organisational recordkeeping, for example Sue McKemish (1996) in 'Evidence of me'. Other aspects of the personal record created in an organisational context were also challenged, resulting in fundamental shifts in thinking about appraisal. Terry Cook (1991) argued for a change in the way records documenting individual 'cases' in organisational records should be understood. He considered that they should be treated as important sources for confirming individual rights, rather than multiple instances of routine transactions, with little continuing value.



Read

[Section 2](#) of *The archival appraisal of records containing personal information: A RAMP study with guidelines* for Terry Cook's (1991) analysis of the types of personal information found in organisational records and the appraisal challenges they present.



Read

[Evidence of me](#), Sue McKemmish's (1996) influential article on the impulses and reasons for personal recordkeeping and how it links to social memory and the role of the archivist.

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Personal records

Personal recordkeeping is something familiar to all of us, as we undertake it every day. We are also aware that most of the records we create are not destined to be anything more than ephemeral evidence of mostly mundane transactions. Often we do not pause to place the activity and meaning of personal recordkeeping in the broader context of the whole records 'universe'. Our society would be the poorer and we would have incomplete understandings of the world if we relied only on organisational records. This module looks at how personal records are created and how they interact with and complement organisational records. The next module in turn focuses on personal – or private – records when they become part of public collections.

Just about everyone with a computer or a mobile device is likely to create records they may wish to keep for some time, even if they do not think of them as 'archives'. Yet there has been little authoritative professional advice on what institutions or individuals should do if they want to archive personal records. The Paradigm Project (2005-2007) was a major British project that looked at issues of preserving personal digital archives in archival institutions. It had its origins in concerns about the preservation and future availability of the personal papers of British politicians. However, it had broader usefulness as a source of advice for archivists in other countries facing similar issues, with its workbook and policy templates.

More recent advice is available, for example the following resource which was put together by archivists and their technical staff in Spain.



Web activity

'What will be remembered about us?' an extensive [personal archives resource](#) (2014) from the Girona City Council Archives in Spain. It was prepared as a resource for citizens who want to preserve their personal archives.

Do you think this resource would be useful for you or for a friend or family member interested in preserving 21st century personal archives?

Diaries and daily life

When we think of personal records, we sometimes think of records that we create to record our reflections and thoughts, such as personal diaries and journals. These have long been an important form of record for literate societies. And now they appear likely to continue in the wired society, with the blog taking its place as a widely-read and sometimes influential information source. Twitter can take personal or organisational forms, in fact it can be argued that many organisations (including archives and museums) took up Twitter because it was so successful as an instant medium of sending information to a vast audience.



Browse

Peter Timmins' (2019) [Open and Shut](#) blog for an example of an expert's blog. This one charts news and events of interest to records managers and archivists concerning freedom of information and privacy

and

LeFurgy, Bill (2013). [Someone help: a personal digital un-archive](#) - an amusing but thought provoking blog post, based on a comic by Doghouse Diaries.

Diaries preserved in archives are important sources documenting the personal lives of ordinary people as well as the rich and famous.



Browse

The University of Melbourne Archives website and read Michael Piggott's wide-ranging discussion of the diary as a record in the exhibition essay '[Inscribing the daily](#)' (2002).

The [Mass Observation Archive](#) at the University of Sussex as a different take on recording everyday life - this time as part of a massive research data collection project.

Another type of personal record that has popular roots is the scrapbook. Originally, individuals kept scrapbooks as a means of preserving scraps of personal written material they wished to have as keepsakes. They often included compilations of printed material, such as newspaper cuttings of local or personal interest to them. Similar types of records were also maintained in many offices as a means of keeping track of particular topics of interest to a business or to a government department. Those that were preserved often appear as 'newscuttings' or 'newspaper clippings' in archival finding aids. However, the personal or family scrapbook combining different record forms such as handwritten diaries, photograph albums and newspaper cutting books, gradually grew in popularity. The multimedia scrapbook now has a treasured place in many family archives. Today 'scrapbooking' has become a booming craft form with conferences, exhibitions and specialist suppliers. It intersects with recordkeeping in multiple ways, notably the acts of making and keeping records and efforts to preserve them for future use. Suppliers to the scrapbooking community often stress the archival nature of the materials required for long term preservation. Anecdotally there have been cases reported that once images have been printed onto fabric, a family has decided to destroy the photographic record in favour of the multimedia version. This may lead to different preservation problems later on.



Read

The Wikipedia (2018) entry on [scrapbooking](#) for an overview of the history of this phenomenon and its popularity. Do you think personal digital scrapbooking will have the same impact on traditional scrapbooking as digital photography has had on traditional personal film photography?

Katie Day Good's article '[From scrapbook to Facebook: A history of personal media assemblage and archives](#)' for an interesting comparison between the analogue and digital forms of scrapbooking. What impact is social media having on how relationships are recorded and on how we preserve them?

Good's article introduces the idea of social media as another form of personal recordkeeping, and builds a relationship between scrapbooking and social media services such as Facebook. This raises interesting questions of technology and obsolescence and preservation; how are archivists responding to this challenge?



Read

Acker & Brubaker's 2014 paper '[Death, memorialization, and social media: a platform perspective for personal archives](#)' and think about the different ways social media is shifting archival practices, especially with regards to personal records.

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The personal records of political leaders

Personal records of national leaders inspire interest in contemporary society, both for the interaction of the personal and the political in the lives of politicians and for the stories of their private lives. The records of politicians have usually been well represented in government archives and in public collections, such as those of the National Library of Australia and the various state library manuscript collections. In the United States, the

presidential library system is maintained as part of the responsibility of the National Archives. In Australia, it has been universities which have set up prime ministerial libraries, while the National Archives of Australia maintains a brief to document the lives of prime ministers and their spouses. The Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House is now home to the [Australian Prime Ministers' Centre](#) which aims to support research and to cooperate with other cultural institutions, not to compete with them to collect personal records of politicians.



Activity

Compare the online resources and the approach taken to presenting the life of Australian Prime Minister John Curtin on the [National Archives of Australia's Prime Ministers](#) (n.d.) website and the [John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library's](#) (2012) site.



Activity

Visit the [Paradigm](#) project website (University of Manchester, 2008) for the eleven top tips for preserving your personal data. Do you think the advice here is easy to carry out for creators? What do you see as the role of digital archivist for personal archives? How different is this from the role of managing digital organisational archives? **Post** your answers to the discussion forum.

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Issues for collecting institutions

Copyright

Unlike official records where ownership and copyright are clearly determined (they belong to the creating agency), the position with private records can be a lot more complicated. Consider these situations:

- A judge makes notes during a high profile trial in the Federal Court which he uses subsequently for writing up his official judgments. Are they his personal records to deal with as he sees fit or, because they were created as part of his work, do they belong to the agency for whom he worked and he has no right to dispose of them without permission?
- An oral history recording between an interviewer employed by the National Library, and a famous author. Before conducting the interview, the interviewer did considerable research in order to develop his questions. Obviously the interviewee (the author) has rights in the recording, but what about the interviewer who has put quite a bit of effort into this? Or does the National Library own it all?
- Consider photographs taken by a soldier on active service when this was expressly forbidden under defence regulations. Can the soldier hold rights in something created as a result of illegal activity?
- And what about a diary, created by a woman living in the bush in the early 1930s. It is an interesting account and a documentary maker would like to use part of it in a television production. Because it is an unpublished work,

copyright resides indefinitely in its creator until the work is published (and then for another 70 years). The creator is long dead and her descendants unknown... could the filmmaker use it?

Thus acquiring and then making available private records can be fraught with difficulties involving copyright and care needs to be taken when acquiring material that all copyright issues are resolved at that time. It is far easier to sort out these things at this time rather than trying years later to determine rights holders and their claims. Ideally, copyright in materials acquired is signed over at the same time that the physical items are acquired. This makes the provision of access (and use for exhibition purposes) so much simpler.

To confidently answer the above situations you would need more information and quite possibly legal advice if all the parties involved were no longer contactable. However, as a starting point you may consider:

- The judge's notes were created as part and parcel of doing his job. They are thus likely to be seen as records belonging to the government and thus not his to dispose of at will.
- Generally, the interviewer in an oral history recording may well have some rights if they have put effort and research into framing their questions. If the interviewer was freelance then they would need to sign over a 'release form' (the same as the interviewee), but if employed expressly by the National Library to do this work then again, they will have no rights as it is part of their normal contract of employment.
- Talk to a legal person!
- The problem with the diary is that it remains in copyright in perpetuity until, ironically, it is 'published' (which putting it into a documentary would amount to). The archive owning the diary could refuse access, or agree to the filmmaker signing an indemnity to cover them if in fact the rights holder suddenly appeared.



Browse

This page from the University of Sydney Library (2017). [Copyright services - Introduction](#) - (refer in particular to the who owns copyright and duration of copyright advice).

[Cultural gifts donations](#) and the National Centre for Australian Children's Literature (formerly the Lu Rees Archives) at the University of Canberra (2015) which covers many of the issues relevant to private papers.

Donation, deposit or purchase?

Another issue that looms large with private records is the method of acquisition. Are the owners wanting to sell the material? Are they offering it as an outright gift or donation of the physical items (ideally including the transfer of copyright), or is the material being placed on deposit with the institution? This latter option, placing on deposit, is an option whereby the owner of significant materials offers to deposit them with an institution with no transfer of ownership at all. It may be that they are held by the institution, essentially for safe-keeping, for a fixed period before they revert to the institution; or the owner is charged a fee for the material being stored by the institution. The aim is that long term, the institution will acquire this material. Such arrangements are negotiated at the individual level and are usually only entered into for important, iconic or valuable collections.

Rather than an outright purchase which is undertaken only in exceptional circumstances (due usually to the extremely small acquisition budgets of most organisations), owners of material can donate (not deposit) their collection to an institution and may be able to claim a tax break under the Australian government's Cultural Gifts Program (as long as they are a tax payer). Essentially this is an incentive program to encourage donation of material to organisations who could not afford to purchase it. The value of the material is assessed by independent valuers (and obviously, if

copyright is transferred at the same time, the value is much increased) and the owner is able to claim this value against their tax bill for that year. This approach has proven relatively successful in encouraging some large donations of material but is also applicable to more modest donations such as collections of private records.



Browse

The Commonwealth Government website (2014), [Cultural gifts program](#), which explains the program more fully and provides some recent examples and

The Australian Tax Office (2017) advice on [Cultural Gifts](#) and valuation and

The '[Collection Offers](#)' page of the National Film and Sound Archive, based on their Collection policies, which distinguishes between donation and deposit.

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Acquisition and access

Terms and conditions of acquisition

Unlike the acquisition of traditional archival records where the processes and forms are established and consistent, each acquisition of private records is a unique undertaking. Usually, the terms and conditions under which the material is acquired will need to be negotiated with the owners in some detail and as already noted, it is really important to sort this out at the time of acquisition. There are ownership-type issues such as donation or deposit, copyright or not. And related to this - does the donor have the legal right to be offering up the materials? If they were not created by the potential donor how does the organisation know that they have any right to be disposing of them? This can be a tricky and sensitive issue, and it does need to be tackled up front before proceeding too far with negotiations. It is certainly not unknown to find material being offered for which the 'owner' has no right to dispose of. Disputes in families in particular are far from uncommon.

In addition, the terms of acquisition need to be clearly understood. In taking in the material, does the organisation agree to preserve it "for ever"? Can any/all of it be disposed as the organisation sees fit? Does the organisation have to take it all in the first place or is picking and choosing acceptable (many donors find this approach particularly hard to accept). Ideally, the organisation will want as free a hand as possible - we can deal with it as we wish - rather than find itself bound by restrictions that may prove difficult in the future.

Another issue is whether the donor requires recognition in some form. Will this material be known as the "Joe Bloggs" collection? Will the organisation put the material on display; or provide any other form of public recognition for the donation? These are matters that need to be raised when the terms of acquisition are being discussed, in order to avoid problems further down the track.

There are no right or wrong answers. Each acquisition will be negotiated separately; restrictions and conditions will vary according to the desirability of the acquisition, but in the end, an archivist should aim for simplicity in meeting the donors' demands and be careful to meticulously record agreements, have them signed off appropriately by both parties and ensure the donor receives a copy for their own records.



Review

The [State Library of South Australia's Archival Donor Pack](#) (2011) and reflect on the way the information in the pack addresses the issues discussed above.

Simpsons Solicitors (n.d.) [Acquisition of collection material](#) checklist for museums

Access

Providing access is a key role for institutions which acquire personal records. As suggested above, there are a range of issues that need to be addressed when personal or private records are offered to an institution whose mission includes providing public access to its collections. Behind the legal niceties and appraisal issues (such as, is the whole donation appropriate for our collection, and so on) is the ultimate question of access. There is no point in agreeing to acquire a collection if it is not going to be made available for research use. Sometimes past practice was not ideal and access conditions included in acquisition agreements may have

been inadequately documented. This can create problems when there is a demand for access. Some years ago, the International Council on Archives undertook a major project to identify principles intended to be applied in archives worldwide, including those which collect and provide access to personal records.



Read and familiarise yourself with

The International Council on Archives (ICA). (2012). [Principles on access to archives](#).

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Business recordkeeping – roles and responsibilities

Companies need records to carry out their functions and they need good recordkeeping systems if they are to carry out those functions efficiently and are if they to meet legal requirements. This might sound obvious, but there have been corporate scandals in Australia and overseas in recent

years which have highlighted poor or illegal recordkeeping practice. These include the case of deliberate destruction of potentially incriminating records by British American Tobacco after they were sued by an addicted smoker dying of smoking-related causes. In the United States, several high-profile business failures, including Enron, led to the Sarbanes-Oxley Act which demands much stricter standards of corporate reporting than previously. In Australia, there have been several general influences pushing companies towards improved recordkeeping, including the increased application of risk management strategies, greater emphasis on good governance and increased public scrutiny of big business. In other cases, practice has changed after data loss through IT disasters or adverse experience in a court case due to poor past recordkeeping.

What sort of records do companies typically create? They include: board minutes and other records of decision-making, annual reports, financial records documenting investments and other financial activities, taxation records, employee records recording pay and other entitlements, records of dealings with suppliers and clients, to name just some of them. These records are created and maintained to serve the mission of the company and to comply with legal requirements. They document its functions, activities and transactions. They also document how the company operates, for example how the different divisions work with each other and the relationship between the head office and its regional branches. Recordkeeping in private enterprise has traditionally been less formal and more decentralised than in government, although increasing government regulation and the problems of managing electronic records effectively are factors pushing companies towards centralised solutions.

The same imperatives for collaboration on records-related matters do not exist for companies as they do for government bodies, but there are common interests and problems. Many company records managers are active in Records and Information Management Professionals Australasia (RIM Professionals Australasia). The Australian Records Retention Manual (ARRM) provides advice on disposal of common company record types.

Many companies outsource the storage of their temporary records to commercial storage providers.

For small business, there are different issues – they still need to keep records, but they do not usually have specialised records managers and recordkeeping is one of the roles done by administrative staff. The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) now takes a proactive role in providing support and advice to different categories of taxpayers. This includes a [recordkeeping evaluation tool](#) to assist small business owners in meeting their legal recordkeeping responsibilities.



Watch

This [video clip](#) from the Australian Taxation Office on tax basics for small business. It includes a section on recordkeeping (from about 1:59 to 2:54). Do you think the presentation as a whole is effective? Is the message about recordkeeping sufficiently clear? Why or why not? **Post** your responses to the forum.

Sources of information about business records and archives

The incentives for cooperation between government archives are reasonably strong. They have similar roles and responsibilities, especially when the legislation they administer is similar as is the case in Australia. There is competition between governments in some fields, but each government records or archives authority serves the government in its own jurisdiction and there is no overlap. However, the same is not true for business where companies compete for contracts, customers and profits. This means that cooperation between professionals is essential if there is to be an overview of the recordkeeping landscape for a particular industry or for the business sector as a whole, as we have seen with the national

strategy for business records in the United Kingdom. There is also international cooperation, notably through the International Council on Archives (ICA) [Section on Business Archives](#).



Explore

the resources available on the Society of American Archivists Business Archives Section [Advocating Business Archives Toolkit](#) site. The site emphasises proactive advocacy for business archives, but also provides material designed to help archivists to respond to threats to their operations.

There have been a number of projects which bring together information on business records. One of these was the Guide to Australian Business Records (GABR). The GABR is not only a guide to business records, but also provides other resources, for example links to government company registration records, published material on archives and biographical information about business leaders. A more ambitious project was the guide to records of an entire industry, the shale oil industry in Scotland. The records are held in many different archives, libraries and museums. The Internet makes it easier to undertake projects like the survey of Scottish shale oil documentation and to update guides after their initial online publication, but such projects usually depend on special funding, at least during their early stages.



Activity

Browse the [Guide to Australian Business Records](#) (Archive Research Consultancy, 2009) and the [Scottish Shale Oil Industry Collections Survey](#) (Almond Valley Heritage Trust, n.d.).

What are some of their good features? How effective do you think these guides are for information professionals? What might be some of the issues facing users?

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Relationships with stakeholders

Internal stakeholders are the key recordkeeping stakeholders for business. They include executives, directors, current and former staff and shareholders for public companies. Relationships with providers of outsourced services including advertising, IT and records storage are also important. Among external stakeholders are regulators, courts, governments (most companies will have dealings with local, state and federal government agencies), industry peak bodies the company is affiliated with, and unions where there is an enterprise agreement

covering some or all of the company's employees. There are more. The public and researchers are usually out of the picture. In fact, much research by management consultants and organisational behaviour experts into current company management practice is carried out by interviewing staff rather than by using company records.

For many Australian companies archives are not a priority. Their core business is elsewhere and if they have an interest in their past, this is often summed up in a few more or less accurate paragraphs, perhaps accompanied by some historical photographs, on the company website. Some companies maintain their own archives to use for marketing or branding purposes or to introduce new staff to the company culture. Australia's oldest company, Westpac, has a substantial archives operation, under the banner of [Westpac Historical Services](#). But some companies are wary of public interest and are reticent to make their archives available in case research sheds unfavourable light on past actions that might damage their current reputation. However, some companies value their archival records sufficiently to outsource the management of their archives to archival institutions. These are usually university archives, such as the [University of Melbourne Archives](#), the [Noel Butlin Archives Centre](#) at the Australian National University and [Charles Sturt University](#). Some state libraries have company records in their original materials collections and some local government libraries have records of local companies as part of their local studies collections.

In other English-speaking countries, the business archives scene is more lively. For example, The National Archives in the United Kingdom has taken a leadership role in developing a national strategy for business archives in England and Wales that involves companies and archival institutions working together to ensure that business archives are identified, managed and preserved appropriately for future access.



Read

[The national strategy for business records in the UK](#) (TNA, 2009). Note the emphasis on the relationship between business and society and the variety of stakeholders involved in preserving business records.



Listen

To this [podcast](#) from Northumbria University (2009) which discusses the launch of the national strategy and the value of business archives to companies in the UK. You might also want to refer to the related [Managing Business Archives](#) (2018) website.

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Corporate organisations

We have used the term 'corporate organisations' here for non-government organisations that have corporate structures and effectively operate as businesses, although they may not identify as businesses. Their recordkeeping needs are often complex, with responsibilities for reporting to government and to a variety of international and external stakeholders. Examples here are large charity and welfare organisations, as well as trade unions.



Listen

To this podcast from [Andrew Warland](#) (2014) explaining how Microsoft SharePoint was introduced at UnitingCare. This is quite a long podcast, but it is a valuable case study of how a large non-government organisation implemented Microsoft SharePoint to improve its recordkeeping practices.

Membership organisations

The term 'membership organisations' encompasses many different types of organisations which can include cooperatives and mutual organisations, as well as sporting clubs. Membership organisations exist to provide services to their members (rather than to government or to shareholders). Many not-for-profit organisations are membership organisations and began as self-help or mutual organisations. For example, today NRMA Motoring and Services (in motoring) and Australian Unity (in health, retirement living and financial services) are large services providers and large organisations with complex recordkeeping needs.

They have in common an interest in their own history and use this as a way of connecting with their members. In the case of the NRMA, motoring has changed beyond recognition since 1920 and the organisation has grown and diversified and de-mutualised, but the image presented relies on history and the notion of members sharing the benefits of belonging.

Australian Unity, on the other hand, is a company that has grown out of several different organisations. Important amongst the predecessor organisations of Australian Unity's health insurance arm are several friendly societies. Friendly societies were self-help health, sickness and burial fund organisations based on models imported from Britain, some as long ago as the 1840s. Now no longer a feature of Australian social life, friendly societies were once very common and their surviving records are useful for local and family history as well as for longitudinal research on the health of the Australian population. Australian Unity prides itself on its heritage and promotes this on its website.



Watch

The video on 90 years of the history of the [NRMA](#) (2010) to see how the NRMA presents its role in the motoring and broader social history of New South Wales. Note the variety of records and objects used to illustrate this presentation of organisation's history.



Read

Visit

The [Australian Unity](#) (2012) heritage webpages for an overview of the history of friendly societies and an example of how records are viewed by one organisation as important to its identity and continuity.

You might also want to browse the [Australian Credit Union Archives](#) website for an example of member based organisational collections.

Trade unions

Trade unions are another type of membership organisation. They have been a significant force in the development of Australian political, economic and social life since the mid nineteenth century. Their records are extensive. They document not only union governance and membership processes, but also wage and salary cases before industrial and judicial tribunals and union involvement in social justice campaigns. Surviving union records have become a substantial source for historical and social science research. One example here is the use of union membership records of waterside workers to substantiate their claims for compensation for exposure to asbestos in the workplace in the mid twentieth century. The workforce was a casual workforce and employer records were ephemeral and incomplete. However, union membership was compulsory. The membership records of the Waterside Workers Federation were methodically maintained and accessible decades later when legal firms acting for the former workers (or their widows) sought compensation from the Dust Diseases Tribunal.

Most unions chose to deposit their records in collecting archives including university archives, state and local libraries. The records of the Australian Council of Trade Unions and those of the national bodies of several large unions are deposited in the Noel Butlin Archives Centre (formerly the Archives of Business and Labour) at the Australian National University in Canberra. However, union records are held in many other repositories. Some years ago, archivists and researchers collaborated to develop a gateway for trade union archival resources, with one of its objectives being to enhance support for research using union records.



Browse

The [Australian Trade Union Archives](#) (2010) gateway to get an idea of the number of unions in the manufacturing sector during the twentieth century and the range of activities documented by their records.

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Professional associations

Professional associations are membership organisations which usually require their members to have qualifications or specific knowledge in a professional area. They provide services to their members, including advocacy. They take public positions on issues of concern beyond their membership. For example, the Library Association of Australia (LAA), the predecessor of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) supported campaigns for free provision of public library services. The records of the LAA and the personal papers of some of its leaders are among the many collections relating to professional associations in the

State Library of New South Wales (SLNSW) Manuscript collection. Another organisation with extensive records held by the SLNSW is the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA), New South Wales Branch. Their records have many connections to wider social and political life in Sydney, as well as including significant research material relating to individual architects such as Harry Seidler.



Search

The catalogue of the [State Library of NSW](#) for the records of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA, NSW Branch). Note the many different formats of records created by or relating to this organisation held by the Library.

Associations for the information professions

ALIA, like some other professional associations, provides simple [guidelines](#) concerning its archives on its website. These indicate that the archives documenting ALIA's national activities will be deposited in the National Library of Australia, while those relating to regional activities may be deposited in other repositories. The Australian Society of Archivists (ASA) deposits its archives in the Noel Butlin Archives Centre at the Australian National University. The ASA's [disposal schedule](#) has been updated recently. Naturally enough, this is a very thorough document and could serve as a model for recordkeeping for other professional associations.

As part of its work in providing support to organisations which represent archivists around the world, the International Council on Archives (ICA) [Section on Professional Associations](#)(SPA) has developed detailed advice for recordkeeping professional organisations on how to keep their

records. SPA has been involved in many major projects of the ICA, including the development of the Universal Declaration on Archives.



Read

The introductory pages of the [ICA Guidelines for developing a retention schedule for professional associations](#) (2009). Do you think the advice here would be suitable for associations in fields other than records management and archives?

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