

nowandthen

news of the past, present and future from State Records

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Welcome to the first issue of *Now and Then*, State Records' new newsletter for users of the archives of the State of New South Wales. *Now and Then* will bring you news about services, activities and events, about newly received State archives, about on-line and hard-copy tools and publications to help you understand and use the archives, and lots more.

Now and Then will be published quarterly and distributed to public libraries and to local and family history societies around New South Wales, as well as to archives institutions and other organisations around Australia. Individuals can also have *Now and Then* posted to them. Please see the back page for details. *Now and Then* will also appear on our World Wide Web site at the same time as it is published in hard copy.

Now and Then replaces our previous newsletter, *ArchiVista*, which was available only by subscription. *Now and Then* will reach a much wider readership. It will play an important part in our outreach to the community and will help promote the use of the wonderful resource that is the State's official archives. *Now and Then* complements *For The Record*, our newsletter for recordkeeping practitioners in the NSW public sector.

For many readers, 'State Records' will be an unfamiliar name. State Records was established

on 1 January this year with the commencement of the *State Records Act 1998*. State Records replaces the former Archives Authority of New South Wales and its operational arms, including the Archives Office. While State Records remains the State's archives institution, our new name better reflects our full range of responsibilities, which extend well beyond the care of the State's archives. If you want to know more about what we do, see our leaflet *Introducing State Records*, accompanying this issue of *Now and Then*.

I am looking forward to being able to announce in coming issues of *Now and Then* some exciting new initiatives that will significantly enhance the accessibility of the State's archives, particularly outside the Sydney CBD. In this issue we announce three small but important steps in this direction: the extension of opening hours at our Western Sydney Search Room, the placing of microform copies on open access in both Search Rooms and the on-line publication of a key immigrants index.

I hope that you find *Now and Then* both informative and enjoyable.

David Roberts
Director



The Hon. Justice David Levine, RFD, Chairperson of the Board (centre), Mr Karl Schmude (University Librarian, UNE), Deputy Chairperson of the Board (left), and David Roberts, Director (right) at a reception to mark the establishment of State Records



STATE
RECORDS

NEW SOUTH WALES

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Public access to State records

As many readers will be aware, the *State Records Act 1998* commenced on 1 January 1999. Among other things, the Act has broadened our statutory responsibilities. Part 6 of the Act in particular will create a new framework for public access to State records.

Part 6, *Public access to State records after 30 years*, applies to all the records produced by public offices, including statutory authorities and by agreement with the Governor, courts and parliament. From the 1 January 2000 the records of universities, local government and the public hospital system will also be subject to the Act.

The framework includes an entitlement for public access to government records that are over 30 years of age. Records that are over 30 years of age are in what is known as the open access period. The open access period applies to records under the control of State Records or a public office and regardless of whether they are temporary records or State archives.

All records in the open access period must be subject to an access direction of which there are two types; open to public access (OPA) or closed to public access (CPA). CPA directions are reviewed every 5 years.

Public offices are responsible for making access directions. Access directions are made at record series, class or group level. Existing access conditions have been converted to equivalent OPA or CPA directions.

Attorney General's Access Guidelines

In the past, access decisions were usually negotiated with agencies when records were transferred to the Archives Authority. This procedure had the potential to create inconsistencies in access decisions to records across government and between other State governments and the Commonwealth. Put simply, one public office might close a class of record that another public office had opened to public access.

To ensure a consistent application of access directions the Attorney General has published guidelines under the terms of the *State Records Act* (s.52(3)). The guidelines identify the types of information in record series or classes that may make them open or closed to public access and address issues such as security, privacy, and confidentiality to help safeguard sensitive information contained in State records.

The guidelines can be inspected in our Search Rooms or on the Attorney General's

Department Web site at
<www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au>.

Register of access directions

State Records maintains a register of access directions for public inspection. Currently a hard copy of previous access conditions is held in our Search Rooms for the public to inspect. At the moment we are working on a register that will contain new access directions and include records previously not covered by access conditions. The register will be available electronically in our Search Rooms as well as on our Web site.

Applying to have an access direction made

If a class of records has not been given an access direction any member of the public can apply to have one made. The application is free and needs to be made in writing to the responsible public office. The public office has 30 days to make an access direction. If no direction is made in 30 days the class of records applied for are considered to be subject to an OPA direction.

Access to records held by public offices

Public offices will become access providers to records in the open access period in their control. Section 60 of the Act places the same responsibilities and rights on public offices as on State Records in providing access to records in their control.

Please contact us if you would like further information or have enquires about public access under the *State Records Act*.

Web site news

Launch of new site

The commencement of the State Records Act in January 1999 provided us with an opportunity to re-launch our presence on the Internet with a newly designed Web site. This new site better reflects our strategic goals and directions and it aims to provide you with enhanced 'user-friendly' access to information about our holdings and in due course some of the records themselves.

The new site features on-line finding aids to our holdings, information about our services and access to archives, information about our activities program, our publications and other products for our clients.

We are regularly updating the *What's new* section with information on State Records' current projects. The *Coming events* section has a list of our extension activities as well as our training calendar for staff of Government agencies.

A selection of our publications are available on the site for on-line searching. These include the *Concise Guide*, the *Guide to New South Wales State archives relating to Aboriginal People*, our *Archives in Brief* series, as well as publications for Government agencies.

Immigrants on-line

The *Index to Assisted Immigrants Arriving in Sydney and Newcastle 1844-59*, went 'live' on 16 April 1999. This index has been available for

a number of years in book form in our Search Rooms and in libraries and societies as part of our *Genealogical Research Kit*. Some of you had a 'sneak preview' when we were testing the index prior to launching it. Thanks to everyone who made such favourable comments on its initial brief appearance.

This is the first of our indexes to be available on-line. Future additions will include the *Index to assisted immigrants to Moreton Bay, 1848-59*, *Index to assisted immigrants, 1860-79*, and the *Index to assisted immigrants, 1880-96*.

We have included an introduction which gives background on assisted immigrants, the list of series indexed, indexing procedures and reasons for unsuccessful searches on the site. For first time users of the index there are *Tips for Searching* which will guide you through the search procedure. If your search is successful the index will show the immigrant's name, age, if travelling alone or with spouse or family, ship and year of arrival and microfilm reel or fiche numbers on which additional information about the immigrant may be found. You may then like to view this information by visiting our Search Rooms or using the *Genealogical Research Kit* which is widely available throughout the State.

To find the *Immigrant Index 1844-59* go to our Web site at <www.records.nsw.gov.au> click on 'Publications' and then go to on-line indexes and click on 'Immigration'.

As always, we are happy to receive queries or comments.

State Records NSW - Microsoft Internet Explorer

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Address <http://www.records.nsw.gov.au/> Links

Please enter your search terms in the fields below (use % for wildcard)

Surname: % First name: %

Vessel name: %

From year: 1844 to: 1859 (To search the whole index leave year range as 1844-1859)

Submit Reset

[Home] [ServiceNSW]

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Out of the swamp...

State archives can be immensely valuable in the pursuit of local history research. However difficulties are often experienced in locating the material as the records are not extensively indexed by place. An overlooked series of records with valuable local history information is the Public Works: *Drainage ('D') files*, 1904–74 (SRNSW ref: 17/1268–92, 17/1254–670, and Public Works: *Register of drainage trusts and drainage unions*, c.1922–1960 (SRNSW ref: 6/13745). These records are held in our Western Sydney Records Centre at Kingswood, and may be accessed in our Western Sydney Search Room.

Drainage trusts and unions

Drainage trusts and unions were established in areas of land that were susceptible to flooding. The inundation of salt water, decaying vegetation, stagnant water and flooding rendered these tracts of land useless for grazing or agricultural purposes, while draining the areas increased the value and productivity of the land. For example land in the area of Cudgara Swamp around 1909 was valued at £1 per acre and valued at £20 per acre when drained (SRNSW ref: 17/1271, file no. F13/1566/88). Commonly drainage involved work such as the excavation of channels, monier piping, culverts, the erection of fencing, cleaning out creeks and constructing crossings.

The *Drainage Promotion Act*, 1865 provided for the establishment of unions of landholders in these flood prone areas and the compulsory drainage of such lands. The *Water and Drainage Act*, 1902 authorised the expenditure of £200,000 per annum for five years on water supply, conservation, irrigation and drainage works and provided for the constitution of trusts to administer the works. Drainage unions appear to have been formed in areas such as the Tweed, Richmond, Clarence, Bellinger, Macleay, Manning, Hunter, Shoalhaven, Crookhaven, Moobal, Dugden, and Cudgero Rivers. The final trust was converted to a union in 1962–63.

Register of drainage trusts and unions

The *Register of drainage trusts and drainage unions* lists drainage trusts and drainage unions in alphabetical order. Each trust or union has a separate section in the volume under which is recorded a wide range of information about estimates, costs, financial agreements, by-laws, trustees and officials of each trust or union. Copies and dates of relevant Gazettal notices and some plans of trust are also included. Names of individuals, addresses and references to the land they held, including parish, portion and tenure, are often mentioned in both the *Register* and the files. The files also contain

records relating to the election of trustees, and occasionally rolls of eligible voters with addresses and occupations. Maps of the areas may be included in the files, with annotations of flood prone areas, proposed drainage works and land holdings of residents. Gazettal notices are also often included in the files as are records relating to the constitution, by-laws, administration and dissolution of drainage trusts and unions.

Often residents banded together and wrote petitions concerning the formation of drainage trusts and unions. For example residents at Gladstone, Macleay River were to be included in the drainage scheme for Kinchela Creek, however they petitioned in 1919 to form a trust 'of their own'. The petition stated that 'differences have always arisen and will always arise between residents of different localities, and we feel that our interests and those of Kinchela Creek lie not in the same direction'. (SRNSW ref: 17/1283, file no. D27/1332). Swanpool Drainage Union was eventually formed and proclaimed in the *Government Gazette* in 1925.

Drainage 'D' files

The *Drainage 'D' files*, 1904–74, often include correspondence, rating and assessments, investigations and reports of proposed and established drainage trusts and unions. Reports of surveyors visiting flood prone areas where drainage trusts were proposed are detailed, providing information about the local area such as the following concerning Louth Park: 'in its original state it was an extensive swamp covered in parts with several feet of water and rarely dry. With its gradual cultivation steps were taken to reclaim it and some 30 years ago - assisted by Government the owners interested expended some 1200 pounds in the construction of a drain...' (SRNSW ref: 17/1291, file no. 37/740).

The files also contain descriptions of the drainage works to be undertaken, contracts, tenders, estimates of costs and materials involved. Complaints and conflicts occasionally arose, and these, as well as inquiries, may be located in the files. For example in June 1912 an inquiry into 'objections made to the proposal to carry out certain works of drainage in the Louth Park Drainage Trust' was carried out and is included in the relevant file 37/740 (SRNSW ref: 17/1291, file no. 37/740). Again the inquiry contains detailed descriptions on the condition of the land involved. As a result of the inquiry the drainage works were amended.

Responsibility for administering drainage trusts and unions rested with the Public Works Department. The Department continued to provide technical and engineering advice to drainage unions until 1987 when these functions were transferred to the Department of Water Resources. Currently responsibility for administering drainage unions rests with the Department of Land and Water Conservation.

Accessing the records

The files date from 1858–1989. All records over 30 years are open to public access and a list of the files is available in both of our Search Rooms. To access those records less than 30 years old, please contact Tony Mitchell at the Department of Public Works and Services on (02) 9372 7058. Plans of the Drainage Trusts and Unions are available at the Department of Public Works and Services.

1999 Heritage Festival – Towards 2000 – The Century in Review

This year the annual 'heritage week', which has been presented by the National Trust of Australia (NSW) since 1981, was expanded into a nine-day Heritage Festival. The theme of the Festival was *Towards 2000 - the Century in Review*. State Records took advantage of this extended timeframe to offer three separate events.

Sites of Learning

On Wednesday 21 April 1999 we presented our *Sites of Learning* workshop in the City Office. It was a full day workshop on sources for research into school buildings and residences and was a joint initiative with the Royal Australian Historical Society. The workshop was conducted by Gail Davis from State Records and Mari Metzke of the Royal Australian Historical Society. We were very fortunate in having Mary McPherson of the Open Training and Education Network and Peter Chadwick of the Land Titles Office as guest speakers.

Local Know-how

The second workshop, *Local Know-how: A workshop on sources for local history research*, was held at the Western Sydney Records Centre on Friday 23 April 1999 and consisted of presentations by Emily Hanna of State Records and our special guest speaker, local historian Megan Martin. This was a free seminar and related particularly to the use of State archives in local history research.

Records on the Road

Our Executive Officer, Martyn Killion travelled with Robert French and Fiona Burn from the National Archives of Australia to the south coast for the annual community awareness tour.

This was one of our most successful tours yet. The 'travelling trio' addressed a total of 270 people in Kiama, Nowra, Ulladulla, Bermagui, Pambula and Cooma and were also feted to morning tea and a tour of the Killer Whale Museum at Eden. The media attention for the tour also proved most successful in attracting an audience from over 47 different localities in the region.

We will feature details of next year's tour in *Now and Then* as they come to hand. In the meantime, we would like to express our thanks to those individuals and societies that were instrumental in helping us to conduct the tour.

This year's Heritage Festival was a busy but successful time for us. It was also a great opportunity to help our clients learn more about the records and to increase community awareness of our services and products.



*Emily Hanna,
Senior Archivist, Reference speaking at the Local
Know-how workshop at the Western Sydney
Records Centre*

Visitors from Chinese archives

Earlier this year, we were pleased and honoured to host two separate delegations of archivists from the People's Republic of China. The delegations were from the State Archives Administration of China and the Beijing Municipal Archives. During their half-day visits, members of the delegations had the opportunity to speak with staff as well as being conducted on a tour of both our City and Western Sydney facilities.

These visits provide us with a valuable opportunity to learn about the policies and practices of other archives and records institutions as well as to share our expertise and knowledge.

Archives in Brief

A new series of fact sheets is now available. Called *Archives In Brief (AIB)*, they are designed to provide information about our facilities and procedures, as well as to give an indication of our holdings on particular topics or groups of records in a concise way. The topics covered to date include:

- AIB No. 1 Shipping and Arrivals Records
- AIB No. 2 Convict Records
- AIB No. 3 Naturalization Records, 1834-1903
- AIB No. 4 Inquest and Coronial Records
- AIB No. 5 Electoral Rolls
- AIB No. 6 Sources for Local History Research
- AIB No. 7 Tracing Your Family History
- AIB No. 8 Addresses and Hours of Opening
- AIB No. 9 State Records Act
- AIB No. 10 Citing Records
- AIB No. 11 Guidelines for Publishing State Records
- AIB No. 12 The Genealogical Research Kit
- AIB No. 13 Search Room Procedures

We are planning additions to the series and these will be available regularly in our Search Rooms and electronically on our Web site to enable our remote clients to make use of this new research resource. Collecting the whole series as they become available should provide a convenient and useful means of accessing many of our records.

New accessions

Two large accessions (AK698 and AK713) from the Department of Education and Training have been received this year. These two accessions constitute the most significant addition to the State archives relating to school education for many years.

The records cover a wide range of educational subjects from the sites of schools (County maps, 1850-1991 showing sites owned) to subjects taught.

These accessions include basic research tools like *Annual Reports*, 1867-1990 and the *School Gazette*, 1891-1973. More detailed information on specific areas is also available in records such as in the *Registers of Geographic Positions of New Schools*, 1885-86. These later volumes record the name of the school, location, name of the inspector submitting the location details, date and occasionally the number of students in attendance.

One of the most interesting series of records is the *School or Principal Registers*. These registers commenced in 1912 but cover all schools since 1848. They record starting and closing dates of schools, the school's classification and each principal teacher's name.

The accessions also include three substantial series - *Curriculum*, 1914-, *Syllabi*, 1920- and *Subject manuals*, 1974-94. These records demonstrate the evolution of education, incorporating alterations in curriculum emphasis and complete changes in the subjects taught over the years.

The accessions are held at the Western Sydney Records Centre. Should you wish to have access to these records, please contact the Western Sydney Search Room. However, any records less than 30 years old are closed to public access.

Indigenous Cadetship

We are delighted to announce that Ms Kirsten Thorpe joined State Records on 22 March 1999. Kirsten was recruited as part of the Indigenous Cadetship Project (ICP) – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Recruitment and Career Development Strategy. The Strategy is an agreement between the Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs and the Australian Library and Information Service (ALIA). ALIA works with the Australian Society of Archivists in applying the strategy in the archives sector.

Kirsten's family is part of the Worimi people of the Port Stephens area, New South Wales. She grew up in the Singleton in the Hunter region and completed her final year of High School in Port Macquarie. Kirsten began study at Wollotuka Aboriginal Education Centre, University of Newcastle in 1993 and completed a Diploma of Aboriginal Studies (Administration) and a Bachelor of Social Science (Sociology).



*Kirsten Thorpe,
Aboriginal Cadet Archivist,
Public Access*

Before starting the Cadetship at State Records, Kirsten had been working at the Koori Centre, University of Sydney and is currently enrolled in a Graduate Diploma of Science (Archives and Records) at Edith Cowan University, Western Australia) as a full-time student.

Self-service microforms

If you are visiting the Search Rooms after 1 July this year you will notice that we have placed a

selection of our most heavily-used microforms (film and fiche) together with shelf (item) lists on open access. Other microforms will be added to this selection over time, depending on demand.

Our aim in introducing this 'self-service' facility is to improve our Search Room services by providing you with ready access to these records.

To help you take advantage of the new arrangements we are preparing a special *Archives in Brief* describing and listing the reels and fiche which are out in the Search Rooms. The *Archives in Brief* will also provide guidance on the use of this material and assist you in identifying the correct item. It will be available in our Search Rooms or on our Web site.

Finally, we know that many researchers need to discuss their research with our staff. We will still be on hand to assist and advise you about the records you require.

Western Sydney (Kingswood) Search Room to open on Mondays

Also as part of our aim to improve our Search Room services, from 1 July 1999 the Western Sydney Search Room will open on Mondays (other than public holidays).

The opening hours for both Search Rooms from 1 July will be:

Monday - Friday 9 - 5

Saturday 10 - 4

Closed Sundays and public holidays

Relocation of State archives to Western Sydney – Update

The relocation of the five kilometres of State archives from the State Archives Building in the Rocks to the Western Sydney Records Centre at Kingswood has now been completed. A summary list of the records remaining in the State Archives Building is available in our Search Rooms and on our World Wide Web site. We have also updated the site with the details of the records that have been relocated to Western Sydney. Our URL is <www.records.nsw.gov.au>.

We recommend that you contact us on (02) 9237 0254 or e-mail us at <srecords@records.nsw.gov.au> prior to paying us a visit to confirm the availability and location of the material you wish to access.

Activities Program July - December 1999

NAIDOC Week (4 - 11 July 1999)

We are hosting a free workshop - *Ethical practices in Indigenous research* - on 6 July at 2.30pm in the Rocks Building which will be presented by Associate Professor Wendy Brady. Please contact Laraine Tate on (02) 9237 0128 or e-mail: <refsercity@records.nsw.gov.au> for further information.

Also as part of NAIDOC Week, a free workshop for Coomaditchie United Aboriginal Corporation in consultation with the Centre for Community History (UNSW) and AIATSIS (Canberra). This will be held 10 - 11 July. To book contact Lesley Heath (Centre for Community History) on (02) 9385 2379 or e-mail: <community.history@unsw.edu.au>.

History Week (18 - 26 September 1999)

We will be presenting two free seminars on the use of original source material for local and family history.

Sources for Family History at the Rocks Building 10am - 12pm on 21 September.

Sources for Local History at Western Sydney Records Centre 10am- 12pm on 24 September.

Bookings are essential. Please contact Laraine Tate on (02) 9237 0128 or e-mail: <refsercity@records.nsw.gov.au>.

On 18 - 19 September a free workshop will be held for Bathurst and surrounding Aboriginal communities in consultation with the Centre for Community History (UNSW) and AIATSIS (Canberra). To book contact Lesley Heath (Centre for Community History), on (02) 9385 2379 or e-mail: <community.history@unsw.edu.au>.

More Forgotten Treasures from the Past

In October State Records presents *More Forgotten Treasures from the Past*. A chance to find out about some of those important but often forgotten records.

City at 10am - 12pm on 6 October

Western Sydney at 10am - 12pm on 7 October

The cost of the seminar is \$8.00, morning tea is provided.

Bookings are essential. Please contact Laraine Tate on (02) 9237 0128 or e-mail: <refsercity@records.nsw.gov.au>.

Now and Then is distributed free of charge to family and local history societies, local libraries and other groups. Please contact us if you would like your organisation to receive it. Individuals can also have *Now and Then* posted to them for \$15.00 for two years. *Now and Then* is also available on our World Wide Web site.

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