

Now&Then 72 - February 2015

The latest issue features the Christmas Competition winners; Carrington albums on display; Last days of A Call to Arms; Treasures found in the records; Spotlight on correspondence records; our Flickr update and more!

- Christmas competition winners
- The Carrington albums on display
- Last chance to see A Call to Arms
- New WWI exhibition opening soon
- 2014 Customer Survey results
- Treasures found in the records
- Spotlight on: correspondence records
- Flickr update
- Upcoming talks and tours

Christmas competition winners

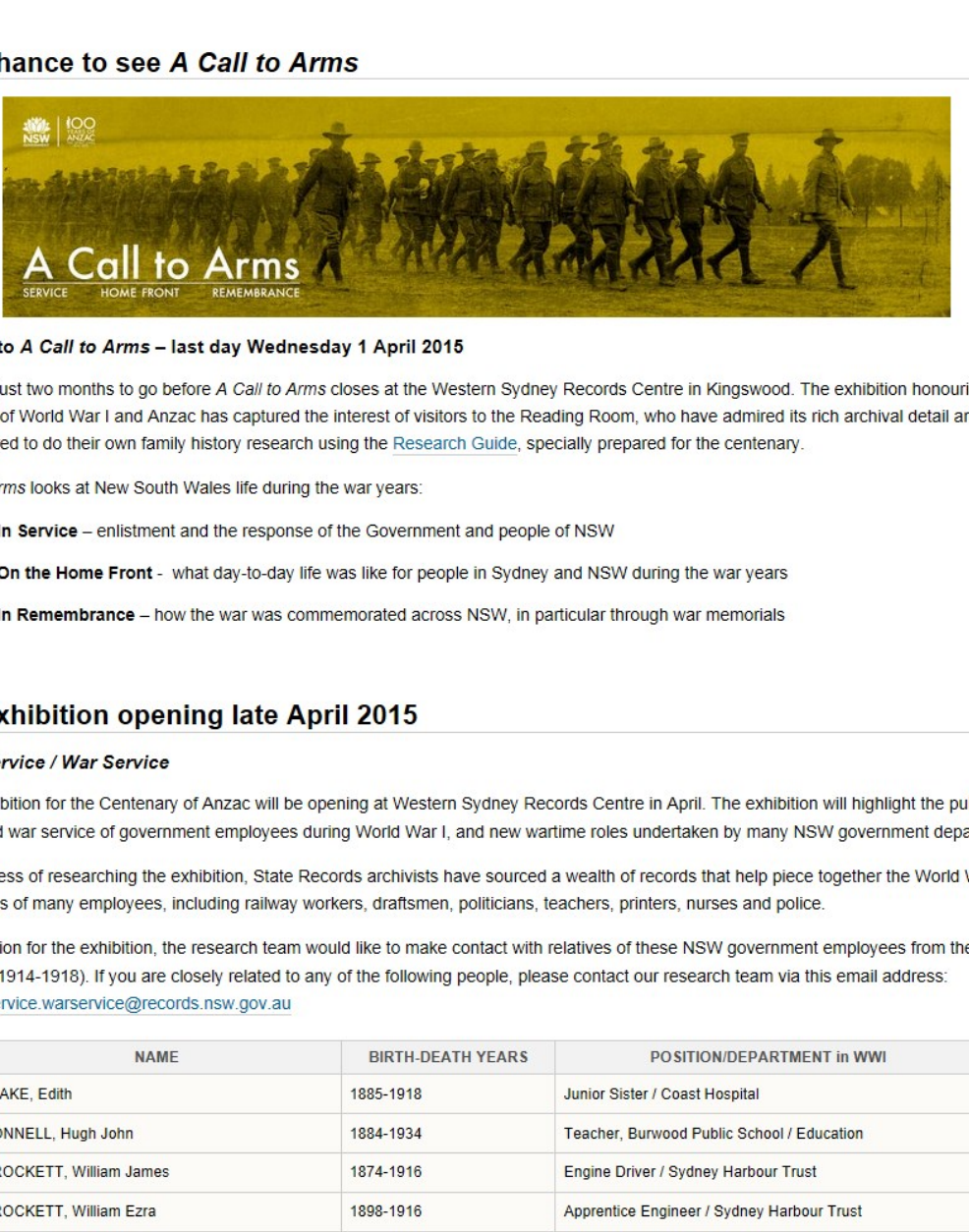
We continued our Christmas Competition tradition in our last issue of Now&Then, giving our readers the chance to win one of ten FREE copies of a file (probate packet, deceased estate file, divorce case paper, or primary application packet) of their choice. We had many, many entries, however the first ten correct entries were from:

Congratulations to each of our winners!				
David Morris Venetia Dench	Sue-Ann Burton Steven Rickell	Jayna Hansen Chris Davies	Judy Daworth Jan Grant	Sherry Crowley Edwina Shooter

The Carrington Albums on display

The two Carrington Album volumes which have been on display in the Reading Room at Western Sydney Records Centre since Monday 15 December have been received well and are a welcome addition to our public space. They are striking examples of the highly skilled illumination work employed to convey the very best wishes of the people of New South Wales to Lord and Lady Carrington, as they prepared to return home to England after five years at Government House. Digitised copies of the albums are also available to view in Archives Investigator including Volume 2, Volume 4, and Volume 14 from NRS 20455, and Volume 1 from NRS 20454. The volumes will be on display until the end of March 2015.

In addition to the volumes, we have installed a vibrant and colourful Carrington-themed decorative display in the Reading Room (two examples below). The detail and beauty captured in this display can only truly be appreciated by visiting us at the [Western Sydney Records Centre](#)



Last chance to see A Call to Arms



Farewell to A Call to Arms – last day Wednesday 1 April 2015

There are just two months to go before A Call to Arms closes at the Western Sydney Records Centre in Kingswood. The exhibition honouring the Centenary of World War I and Anzac has captured the interest of visitors to the Reading Room, who have admired its rich archival detail and have been inspired to do their own family history research using the [Research Guide](#), specially prepared for the centenary.

A Call to Arms looks at New South Wales life during the war years:

- In Service** – enlistment and the response of the Government and people of NSW
- On the Home Front** – what day-to-day life was like for people in Sydney and NSW during the war years
- In Remembrance** – how the war was commemorated across NSW, in particular through war memorials

New exhibition opening late April 2015

Public Service / War Service

A new exhibition for the Centenary of Anzac will be opening at Western Sydney Records Centre in April. The exhibition will highlight the public service and war service of government employees during World War I, and new wartime roles undertaken by many NSW government departments.

In the process of researching the exhibition, State Records archivists have sourced a wealth of records that help piece together the World War I experiences of many employees, including railway workers, draftsmen, politicians, teachers, printers, nurses and police.

In preparation for the exhibition, the research team would like to make contact with relatives of these NSW government employees from the World War I era (1914-1918). If you are closely related to any of the following people, please contact our research team via this email address: publicservice.warservice@records.nsw.gov.au

NAME	BIRTH-DEATH YEARS	POSITION/DEPARTMENT IN WWI
BLAKE, Edith	1885-1918	Junior Sister / Coast Hospital
CONNELL, Hugh John	1884-1934	Teacher, Burwood Public School / Education
CROCKETT, William James	1874-1916	Engine Driver / Sydney Harbour Trust
CROCKETT, William Ezra	1898-1916	Apprentice Engineer / Sydney Harbour Trust
DAMMAN, William Henry/Wilhelm Heinrich	1889-1965	Train Conductor / Tramways Sydney
DELMERGE, Kenneth Charles Guthrie	1890-1966	Teacher, Uralla Public School / Education
FERN, Charles Stuart	1884-1918	Member of Legislative Assembly, for Cobar
HOLMES, William (Major General)	1862-1917	Metropolitan Board of Water & Sewerage
KOESTER, Romola / Rosella	1896-1973	Junior Clerk, Hurstville Railway Station / Railways
MILNE, Edward Osborn	1886-1963	Traffic Inspector, Goulburn / Railways
RHODES, Ludwig Marion	1878-1956	Police Woman, Sydney / Police
SCHULZE, Auding Emil	1853-1928	Contract Draftsman / Lands
TUCK, Albert Victor	1881-1915	Pressman / Government Printing Office
WHITE, Thomas Alexander	1886-1962	Teacher, Hiltonton Public School / Education
WILLIAMS, Herbert Edwin	1894-1915	Survey Draftsman / Sydney Harbour Trust

2014 Customer Survey results

Thanks again to the 1700 people who completed our customer survey late last year.

Your positive and negative responses have given us plenty to think about and act on.

About the survey

The survey identified respondents as being promoters, passives or detractors according to their response to how likely they were to recommend our services.

Scale

- 0 – extremely unlikely
- 10 – extremely likely
- 9 – 10 – Promoters (25%)
- 6 – 8 – Passives (67%)
- 0 – 5 – Detractors (8%)

Overall themes

The three key themes from the scores given and comments made were the same across the three groups of promoters, passives and detractors:

- Support from staff
- Online services
- Location

Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages

In addition to themes relating to State Records' services, there was strong evidence that many respondents mistook our services as being related to the Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages (BDM). The BDM at the same time as the survey changed their online search facility. Over 50 people indicated in their comments it was the reason they scored as detractors.

Satisfaction Drivers

Positive drivers

Positive drivers and areas most often selected as most important:

- Quality of service (23%) – Staff assistance in the reading room
- Our efficiency (17%) – Ease of access to services
- Our value offering (17%) – Understanding of the collection
- Our Effectiveness (15%) – Ease of locating the record you were after
- Your relationship with us (11%) – Understanding your needs

Negative drivers

Negative drivers and areas selected as needing the most improvement:

- Quality of service (4%) – quality of online services
- Our effectiveness (4%) – Ease of locating the records you were after
- Our value offering (4%) – convenience
- Our efficiency (3%) – Ease of locating catalogues and indexes (online)
- Your relationship with us (2%) – Understanding your needs

Comments

Themes

781 respondents provided comments. Across all three groups, promoter, passive and detractor, there were very similar themes in the comments.

The most common theme was a high level of satisfaction with assistance provided by staff. Common words used were helpful, friendly and knowledgeable.

After positive feedback about staff there were three main themes:

- Request for more online resources with a majority requesting for more records to be digitised.
- Frustration with our website and online finding aids.
- The location of the Western Sydney Records Centre (WSRC) – difficulty in getting there by public transport – lack of amenities such as cafes.

Suggestions

There were suggestions for:

- More amenities at WSRC – food/coffee facilities – outdoor areas for researchers
- Alternative transport options from train station to WSRC
- Changes to reading room processes to reduce waiting times
- Structured introductions for first time visitors/users

Key actions

From the results of the survey we identified key actions to address the concerns raised by respondents and improve access to the State archives collection.

- Digitise more records for online services – we are currently working on a project to document archives to a standard that will allow for an extensive digitisation program
- Improve online services – review website for public customers
- Improve facilities/amenities at WSRC – we are currently working on a master plan for our Kingswood site including new public spaces and amenities
- Consider alternative transport options from the train station to WSRC
- Promote access to microform resources in Community Access points and the State Library

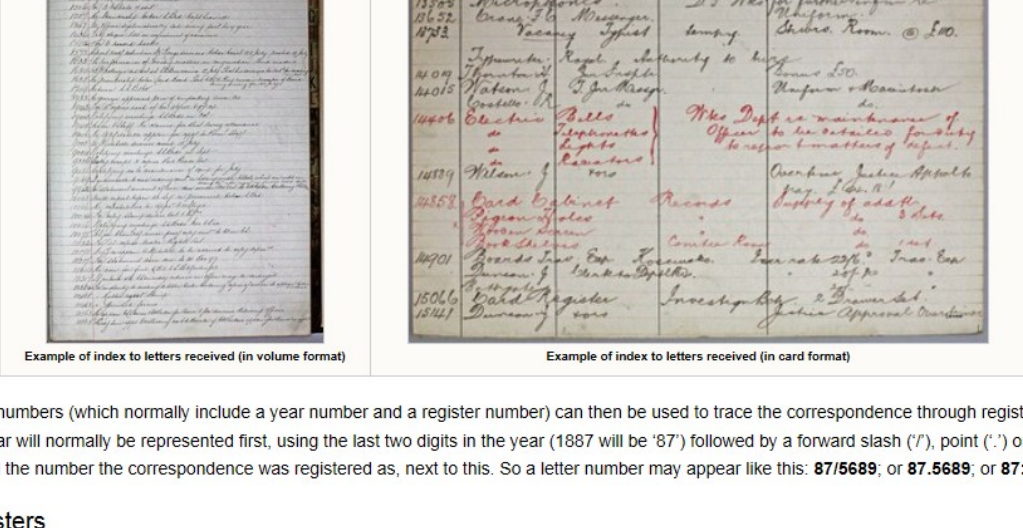
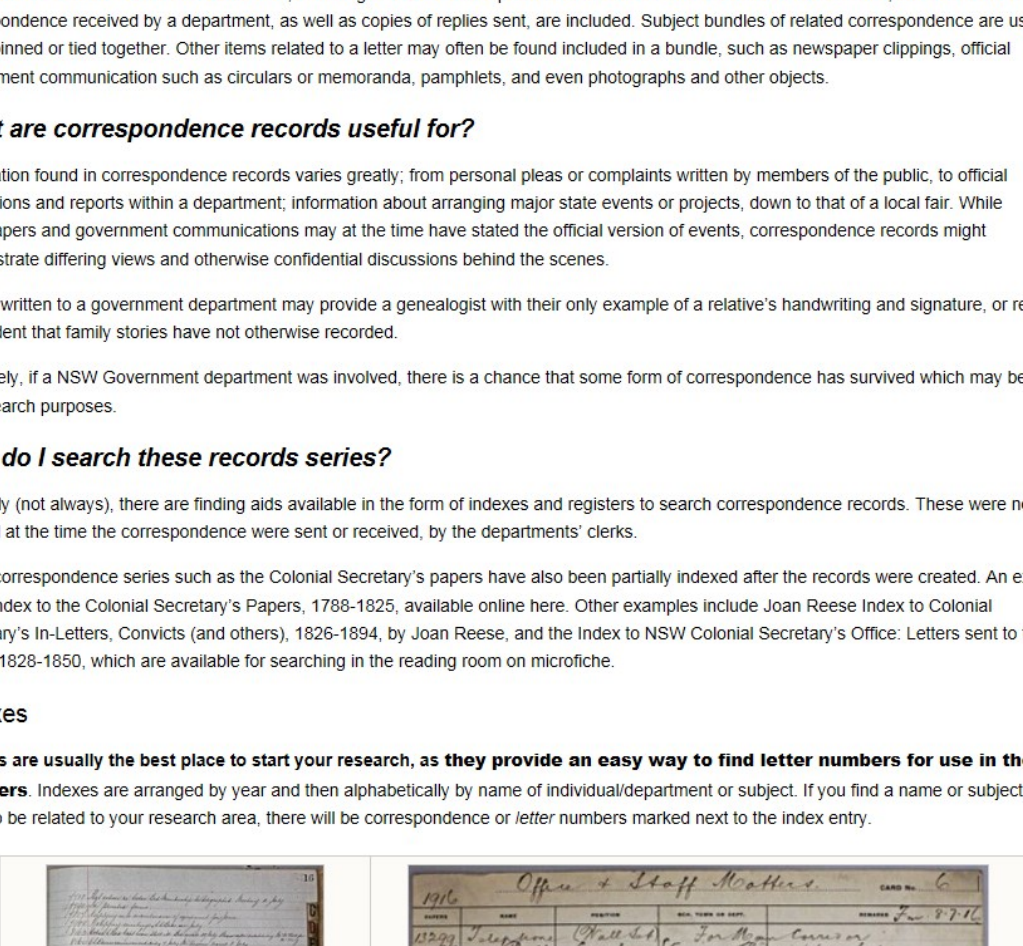
We will also be looking at your suggestions relating to reading room procedures and introductory material and help for first time visitors.

We will let you know how our projects progress.

Treasures found in the records

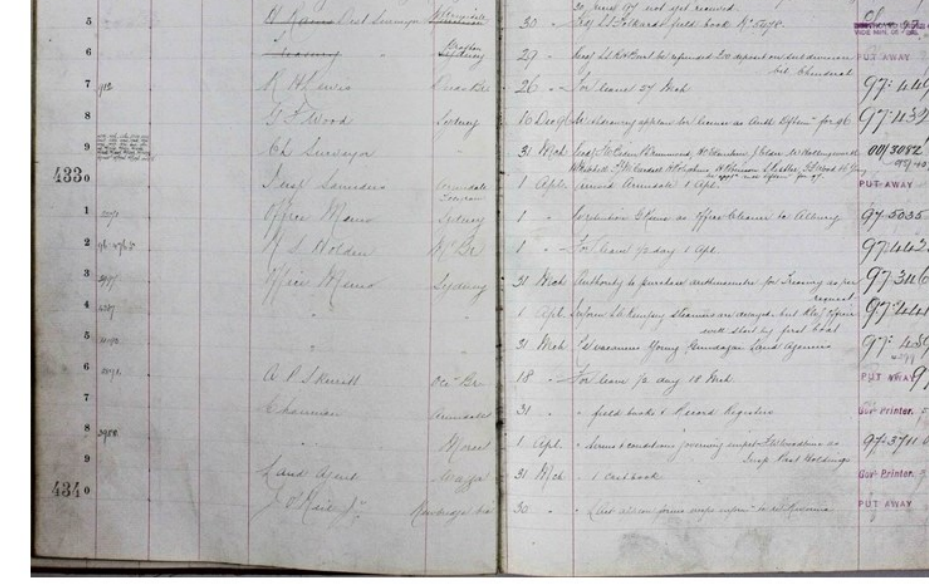
Every now and then rare examples of series items are found in our collection which may be described as 'treasures'.

The original insurance policy for a school building was found when searching through a school file for other information. These Mercantile Mutual Insurance Company insurance papers are for Paramatta High School, from **NRS 3829 School Files, 1878-1976**, 5/17263.1, September 1914:



Spotlight on: correspondence records

Government department correspondence records are an invaluable source of information for all types of historical research, from genealogy to local history, for biographical research, and the studying of particular events. The details recorded often shed light on the background of a government department's activities not easily located elsewhere. Indeed, such records may sometimes include the only documentation of a communication which was not shared with any other party.



Most agencies created correspondence-related records which have survived in one form or another, however many suffer gaps in years, and in many instances the actual letters themselves have not survived.

To assist in this type of research, we have addressed some common questions about correspondence records below:

What sorts of records are there?

Typically, correspondence records will include record series in the form of:

- Letters received** by the agency (often original letters)
- Letters sent** by the agency (usually carbon or letterpress copies of letters sent, often in volumes)
- Indexes** and registers of the above (usually in volumes, but sometimes in card systems). These will be explained in more detail below
- Special bundles** – more about these later
- Series relating to specific agency activities or events (not included in Special Bundles)

For which agencies have correspondence records survived?

Most government agencies created and maintained correspondence records. A good way to check if correspondence records have survived and are held as archives by State Records NSW is by checking Archives Investigator.

Use the **Advanced Search** option, and type the name of the agency in the 'filter' cell (if unsure of the actual full use less words rather than more to describe the agency). When the search results are listed, and once you have clicked on the relevant agency you will be led to the 'Agency Detail' screen. Scroll down to the bottom of the page to the section titled **Record series created by this agency**. If there are correspondence series created by this agency, they will usually be listed here (note that not all our records are listed in Archives Investigator).

What information is typically included in correspondence records?

Departmental correspondence records typically include letters between officers within a department, or between other departments, as well as letters from outside bodies and individuals, including members of the public. In the case of letters received record series, often both the original correspondence received by a department, as well as copies of replies sent, are included. Subject bundles of related correspondence are usually found pinned or tied together. Other items related to a letter may often be found included in a bundle, such as newspaper clippings, official government communication such as circulars or memoranda, pamphlets, and even photographs and other objects.

What are correspondence records useful for?

Information found in correspondence records varies greatly, from personal pleas or complaints written by members of the public, to official instructions and reports within a department, information about arranging major state events or projects, down to that of a local fair. While newspapers and government communications may at the time have stated the official version of events, correspondence records might demonstrate differing views and otherwise confidential discussions behind the scenes.

Letters written to a government department may provide a genealogist with their only example of a relative's handwriting and signature, or reveal an incident that family stories have not otherwise recorded.

Ultimately, if a NSW Government department was involved, there is a chance that some form of correspondence has survived which may be useful for research purposes.

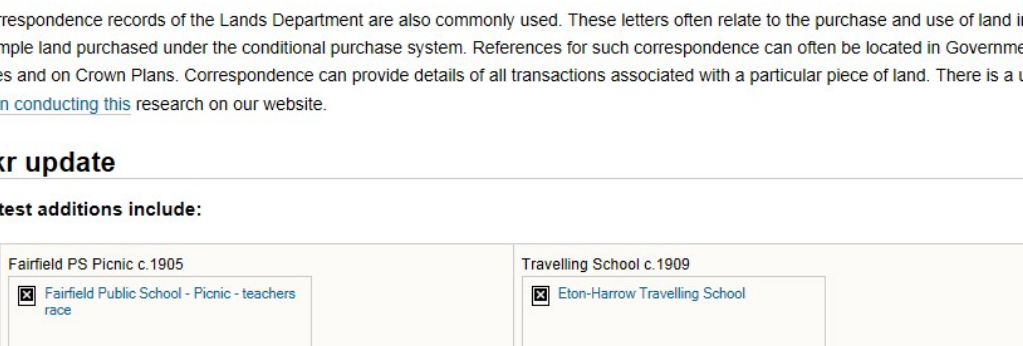
How do I search these records series?

Typically (not always), there are finding aids available in the form of indexes and registers to search correspondence records. These were normally created at the time the correspondence were sent or received, by the departments' clerks.

Some correspondence series such as the Colonial Secretary's papers have also been partially indexed after the records were created. An example is the index to the Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1780-1825, available online here. Other examples include: Joan Reese Index to Colonial Secretary's In-Letters, Convicts (and others), 1826-1894, by Joan Reese, and Index to NSW Colonial Secretary's Office: Letters sent to the Sheriff 1828-1850, which are available for searching in the reading room on microfilm.

Indexes

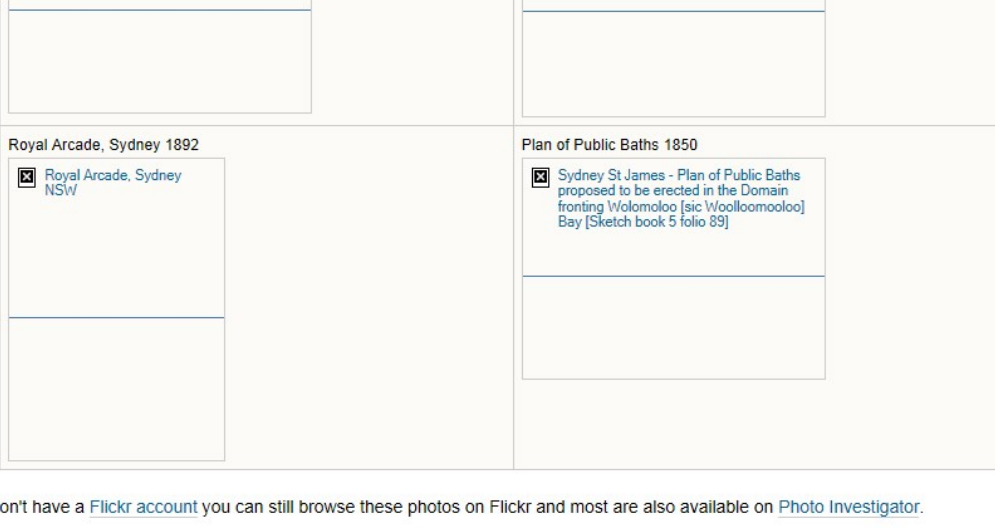
Indexes are usually the best place to start your research, as they provide an easy way to find letter numbers for use in the registers. Indexes are arranged by year and then alphabetically by name of individual/department or subject. If you find a name or subject that looks to be related to your research area, there will be correspondence or letter numbers marked next to the index entry.



These numbers (which normally include a year number and a register number) can then be used to trace the correspondence through registers. The year will normally be represented first, using the last two digits in the year (1867 will be 67) followed by a forward slash (/), point (.) or colon (:) and then the register number. In this instance there will be no other letter number in the register entry, instead there will be the words 'filed' or 'away', or the terms 'put away' or 'put by' or similar (see below example).

Registers

In the case of letters received, **registers tell a researcher where a correspondence is filed** (or at least where it should be). The receipt of a letter was typically entered into a register as it arrived at an agency, i.e. in chronological order. As a letter was bundled with new letters on the same or a similar subject, this movement of the letter was then recorded in the registers. This system is also known as 'top-numbering'.



Example of register of letters received (in volume format)

Once a letter number has been found by a researcher in the indexes, the aim is to try to trace this letter number through the registers to find a final filed location of the **original letter**. This is achieved by finding the letter number entry in the register for the relevant year, then checking the action/note/remarks column at the far right for the entry, and noting any letter numbers which appear on the same line that haven't been crossed out or erased (see below example).



Example of notation indicating next location for letter number, from register entry

This new number should then be checked in the register as it represents the letter number that the letter was stored. Essentially, as another letter was received relating to the same subject, the earlier letter's would be bundled with the most recent letter, and so on and so forth. Eventually the topic was deemed to be 'closed', and the letter or bundle 'filed'. In this instance there will be no other letter number in the register entry, instead there will be the words 'filed' or 'away', or the terms 'put away' or 'put by' or similar (see below example).



Example of notation indicating letter has been filed, but then re-opened and next location entered, from register entry

Sometimes a letter was sent on to another department, or organisation. In this case the organisation is usually noted in abbreviated form, and the date sent to that department included (see below example).



Example of notation indicating letter has been sent to outside department, from register entry

Some indexes and registers have been copied onto microform, but the majority are only searchable in their original form, which can make progress slow as the researcher moves from volume to volume in their pursuit of a letter being filed. So always be prepared for the fact that this process can be lengthy, and that it does not always return success for the effort. Due to the passage of time, and sometimes poor recordkeeping practices, some letters simply are not where they should be, or have been destroyed. These registers are sometimes the sole surviving record of correspondence, in which case the letter description will be the only indication of the subject of communication available to a researcher.

Commonly used correspondence records

It is important to note that most correspondence records can only be searched in our Reading Room, where there is always an archivist on duty if you need assistance in this type of research.

Some of the most commonly used correspondence records in the State Records NSW collection include:

Colonial Secretary's papers

The best known correspondence series in the State Records NSW collection, are those of the Colonial (later Chief) Secretary, particularly the main series of letters received 1788-1825 which is indexed online, and 1826-1893 (NRS 903). Other notable correspondence series is the Colonial Secretary include **letter books of letters sent**, and the searchable online **NRS 907 Letters from individuals re Land, 1826-56**. There is a very useful [guide](#) on using these series available on our website.

Special Bundles

Other often-used correspondence-based series are those included in the various **Special Bundles** series, for which item lists are usually available online. These contain larger bundles of communications and material on particular matters or subjects, and have been separated from the main correspondence series because of their significance or the quantity of correspondence collected. They may contain both registered and unregistered papers and, depending on the nature of the bundle, may cover many years or just a short period of time. **Listings of Special Bundles** are available on our website. Colonial Secretary Special Bundles are listed in the [Guide to the Colonial Secretary's Papers](#).

School Files, 1878-1979

NRS 3829 School administrative files are almost entirely made up of correspondence between a school and the Department of Public Instruction/Education. They relate primarily to the running of a school, including appointments of teachers, maintenance of school buildings and grounds, and the status of a school associated with number and level of education of its students.

Students are mentioned occasionally in the school files, however only school admission registers record all pupils enrolled at a particular school in a particular year.

The School Files were re-sorted by the Department of Education into alphabetical order by the name of the school. [An index and guide to School Files](#) is available to search on our website.

Land Purchase Records

The correspondence records of the Lands Department are also commonly used. These letters often relate to the purchase and use of land in NSW, for example land purchased under the conditional purchase system. References for such correspondence can often be located in Government Gazettes and on Crown Plans. Correspondence can provide details of all transactions associated with a particular piece of land. There is a useful [guide on conducting](#) this research on our website.

Flickr update

The latest additions include:

If you don't have a [Flickr account](#) you can still browse these photos on Flickr and most are also available on [Photo Investigator](#).

Upcoming Talks and Tours

See more upcoming events on our [State Records Events page](#).

Immigration and shipping records

John Cann will be presenting this seminar at the Society of Australian Genealogists (SAG). He will examine shipping and immigration records held by State Records NSW.

28 February 2015

1:30pm to 3:30pm

Sutherland District Trade Union Club (Trades), The Kingsway, Gymea

Contact: info@sag.org.au

(02) 9247 3553

Death Death Death

Gail Davis will be presenting this talk which highlights death records held as NSW State archives including Coroners inquest, probate and deceased estate files. The talk will be presented as part of the Central Coast Family History Society Seniors Week event.

7 March 2015

10:30am - 3:00pm

Lions Hall, Rear 8 Davidson Street, East Gosford

Contact: Marlene Davidson kay1@centralcoasths.org.au

(02) 4324 9164

Land Records

John Cann will be presenting this talk on land records held in the NSW State archives collection at Muswellbrook Library.

17 March 2015

10:30am to 1:00pm

Muswellbrook Library, 126 Bridge Street MUSWELLBROOK 2333

(02) 6543 1913

The A-Z of occupation records

Emily Hanna will be presenting this session on occupation records held as NSW State archives at Tuggerah Library.

25 March 2015

10:30am to 12:30pm

Tuggerah Library, Westfield Tuggerah, 50 Wyong Road, Tuggerah

Contact: Michelle Goldsmith

02 4350 1560

The 14th Australasian Congress on Genealogy and Heraldry

State Records will be attending the Congress as an exhibitor at the Family History Exhibition. The Exhibition will be open to Congress attendees and the public, and will be located in the Exhibition Hall of the Canberra National Convention Centre.

Friday 27 to Monday, 30 March 2015

National Convention Centre Canberra

For more information, see the Congress website: <http://www.congress2015.org.au/congress-2015/>

Botany Bay Family History Society 2015 Heritage Fair

Gail Davis will be presenting a talk and hosting a stall at the Heritage Fair.

11 April 2015

10:00am to 4:00pm

Sutherland District Trade Union Club (Trades), The Kingsway, Gymea

[View the full program about this event](#)

Researching your NSW public servant ancestors who served during WWI and how to trace their story at State Records NSW

Gail Davis will be presenting this session at the Society of Australian Genealogists.

19 April 2015

Society of Australian Genealogists, Richmond Villa, 120 Kent Street Sydney NSW 2000

10:30am to 12:30pm

Contact: info@sag.org.au

(02) 9247 3553

Stay up-to-date with State Records

