

On the Record

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Introduction to Ross Latham

Manager - Tasmanian Archive & Heritage Office & State Archivist.

The December edition of *On the Record* is my first opportunity to use this communication as a means of introducing myself and addressing the key issues confronting TAHO now and into the future.

Originally from Hobart I spent the period from January 2003 to September 2010 in Melbourne in the role of State Director of the Melbourne office of the National Archives of Australia (NAA). Prior to 2003 I spent many a year with the NAA office in Hobart, my final three as State Director. I hold a professional qualification in information management having completed a Graduate Diploma via Edith Cowan University over the period 2000 – 2002.

NAA Melbourne is large and dynamic; I really enjoyed my time there and learned a lot along the way. My position enabled me to watch, learn and participate in the information management industry in Victoria and get to know the key players and organisations. I was actively involved with the Victorian branches of the ASA and RMAA and a member of the Course Advisory Committee for the study of IM at Monash University.

By virtue of the co-location of the NAA and Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) at the Victorian Archives Centre, North Melbourne I developed a good understanding of the recordkeeping environment in State and local government and the means by which PROV endeavoured to promote good recordkeeping and enable the long term preservation and accessibility of digital content.

Well into my eighth year in the role and having chalked up a total of twenty four with NAA I was very much in need of a change of environment, the advertisement of the position of Manager Tasmanian Archives & Heritage Office and State Archivist could not have come at a better time. From my vantage point in Melbourne I watched the evolution of the Community Knowledge Network with great interest as I believe the bringing together of the archives, libraries, adult education and literacy functions into a single administration was a bold and forward thinking move. It was with great enthusiasm that I applied for the role and was delighted to be appointed.

As you are most likely aware the Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office (TAHO) brought together the State Library's Heritage Collections, the Launceston Local Studies Collection and the Archives Office of Tasmania to provide access to the published and non-published resources of the Tasmanian community and its government. TAHO regulates the preservation and eventual destruction or retention of State and local government records in Tasmania to ensure that records of continuing value to the public and the government are accessible for appropriate lengths of time. We also provide services to government organisations to assist them in complying with their recordkeeping responsibilities and obligations in accordance with the *Archives Act 1983*.

Two months into my new role I am very pleased to have made the move and excited about what we can achieve to progress the quality of recordkeeping across government and make the TAHO collections more visible, known and accessible. To achieve these goals there are some immediate responsibilities and challenges:

- Further development and implementation of strategies to enable creation, acquisition, and long term preservation of, and access to digital information of enduring value.
- Effectively promoting the value and improving the quality of recordkeeping in State and local government.
- Making the TAHO collections more accessible, visible and known via digitisation, outreach initiatives and greater use of the CKN state-wide network.
- Providing storage solutions to enable the long term preservation and accessibility of the TAHO collections and capacity for future acquisition of records and collections of significance.
- Making effective use of partnerships to achieve shared goals.
- Making best use of emerging technology to achieve our major objectives.
- Maintaining balance in servicing the needs of all our client groups

A robust list to say the least!

That said these are the very same issues confronting government archives worldwide and if I do my job well it is reasonable to expect us to make significant inroads in both the immediate and long term future. I'm very much aware of the complexities of each of these issues but confident that via effort, initiative and perseverance we will succeed. In a number of instances we will require your support and collaboration and I look forward to working with you to achieve these goals.

That's all for now, I wish you all the very best for a happy and safe festive season.



Recordkeeping Training for Council staff on King Island

In September I flew to King Island to run training for Council staff.

First of all I gave a presentation, open to all Council Staff, outlining the business and legal risks the Council takes if it doesn't have good recordkeeping. Then I ran Disposal and Thesaurus training for the three staff at Council who look after the records.



King Island Council is in the process of reviewing their recordkeeping systems, writing a Recordkeeping Policy and investigating the possibility of moving to an electronic RM system. I was able to help with advice on all of these issues. It was great to meet up with Annette Brooks, who I have contacted by phone & email over the past three years. Annette nervously showed me the Council records storage area, and I am pleased to report it was clean, dry, and quite tidy.



For a very small, very isolated council, they are doing a good job with their records, and the situation will only improve with the changes they have planned.

Spotlight



Doris Mamerow-Pelham DPIPWE

What is your role at DPIPWE?

I manage the records of the EPA Division including the district offices. Though specifically focussed on Environment issues It has oversight of quite diverse areas. This makes it rather challenging at times. I can't say I have time to get bored.

How did you become involved in Information Management?

When I first came to Tasmania in 1991 I was on the Temp Employment Register. What was a 6 weeks temp job has turned into a 19 year career. I wasn't too bright to start with but with time I discovered I had a good aptitude for Information Management.

What's the thing you like best about your job?

Having been with DPIPWE in all its many guises I'd have to say the variety. Nothing remains static for too long. And as departments lose resources the multi skilling aspect means I can turn my hand to many different areas. I really enjoyed the years as one of the DPIPWE's Archive and Disposal officers.

What's the thing you like least about your job?

Sitting in front of the computer too long. Now that Records are becoming more and more computer focussed, I think I have become somewhat too sedentary these last few years. (My expanding girth tells no lies.)

Along with that, I still have a vivid memory of finding a mummified mouse at the bottom of a box of files that had been sent down from a district office for disposal. That definitely took the edge off any enthusiasm I had for offsite projects.

What do you see for the future of Information Management?

Information Management is evolving so rapidly it's so hard to imagine what it will be like in

the years ahead. New methods of communication are always evolving and trying to keep up and capture them is quite challenging. My journey in Information Management has taken me from the years of manual entry (in multiple books) to the capture of electronic data where no paper copy has been involved.

Will we end up with electronic documents that 'read' the information out loud to us?

What do you do for Professional Development?

Being involved with the RMAA Tasmanian Branch Council has helped me improve my knowledge and skills. Learning how different organisations are dealing with the evolution of their records is always enlightening. Especially here in Hobart. We sometimes feel a little far away from progress but having met fellow IM colleagues at conferences on the mainland it has been something of a revelation to find that Hobart is not lagging behind.

I would also like to achieve a Diploma in Information Management but that's currently on the back burner.

Share with us something about your life away from IM?

Away from IM my life is split between my home in Tranmere and my family on the mainland. Having progressed from an Old Aged Auntie to an Old Aged Great Auntie means there are regular trips back to Adelaide to view the latest offspring. Coming from a family of 7 children that means a fair few visits. Home in Tranmere is in the 'upgrading' stage so the renovations, painting and landscaping tend to keep me busy most weekends. And when it all gets too much you'll find me somewhere up the East Coast of Tasmania. My favourite getaway.



A new Local Government Disposal Schedule

The new Local Government Disposal Schedule (DA2200) is finally finished and approved and available on our website:

<http://www.archives.tas.gov.au/disposals/DA2200-for-upload.pdf>

The Schedule was written by archivists Robert Dooley and David Benjamin, with valuable assistance from the Local Government Reference Group.

Ross Latham, our new State Archivist, formally issued the Schedule on 1 November and publicly launched it at Glenorchy City Council on the 3rd. The launch was followed by an information session at which David Benjamin, Acting Manager, Government Recordkeeping, described the structure and content of the new Schedule and described some of the major differences from the old DSI I. David repeated the information session in Devonport on the 4th and Launceston on the 5th.

RMAA visit to the Tasmanian Archive & Heritage Office

On 23 September a group of RMAA members attended a tour of the TAHO facilities at 91 Murray Street Hobart. Tony Marshall and Marian Jameson gave them a behind the scenes glimpse as well as touring the History Room, izeone and Allport Library & Museum of Fine Arts.



Guideline on Cloud Computing

On 30 November we released our 17th Guideline – Managing the recordkeeping risks associated with cloud computing.

Cloud computing providers may be located in physical locations which may be beyond state or national boundaries. This raises a number of risks for government organisations, and the guideline provides information about, and stipulates the process for the transfer to, or creation of, content in data stores which are maintained by a service provider.

DoE Traineeship Completed

(Contributed by Felicity Vass, DoE)

I recently completed a Certificate IV in Business traineeship as part of my current employment as a RIMS Quality Assurance Officer with the Department of Education.

The flexibility of the course and the ability to choose electives in addition to studying the required core units meant that I was able to choose six records based electives for inclusion in the course. This allowed me to include units from a Certificate in Recordkeeping into my studies and I was able to combine two areas of study into one, which was relevant to my position.

I completed the units over the required period of 3 years, via the completion of various assignments, relevant training courses and also utilising RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) for those units I had current employment experience in (e.g. Record keeping units).

The traineeship was fully funded through the Australian Government Australian Apprenticeships Incentive scheme, and training courses, assessments and visits were provided by the training provider (RTO).

I thoroughly recommend undertaking this qualification (or any of those similar) to anyone working in the area of Information Management as it provides you with excellent recognition for the work and knowledge you currently undertake and have, as well as providing further learning and new ideas for your work in the industry. It has definitely enhanced my knowledge in the areas of both business and recordkeeping, and has provided me with opportunities to experience and train in areas which I perhaps may not have before completing the qualification

Deborah Drinkell

Consultant – Government Recordkeeping | Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office

Community Knowledge Network

91 Murray Street | Hobart Tasmania 7000

Ph (03) 6233 7557 Fax (03) 6233 7471 Email address deborah.drinkell@education.tas.gov.au



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Explore the possibilities