

The International Scene: News and Abstracts

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International Council on Archives. The ICA Bulletin for December 1974 contained reports on the intergovernmental conference on the planning of national documentation, library, and archives infrastructures, held in Paris in September 1974; the 18th session of the UNESCO General Conference, Paris, October-November 1974; and the meeting of the ICA Executive Committee at Hyde Park, N.Y., October 1974. The bulletin also included reports from the different ICA committees, a list of meetings held in 1974, and a list of conferences and meetings planned for 1975.

International Council on Archives—membership application. Over the past several years the International Council on Archives (ICA) has significantly revised its dues structure and is currently accepting membership applications. The ICA has several categories of membership. Category "A" is reserved for national archival agencies, central archival directorates, and similar institutions, with dues based upon a formula utilizing gross national product and gross national product per capita for the countries involved. Minimum dues in this category are \$75, and maximum dues \$2,000, per year. Category "B" membership comprises national associations of archivists, and dues in this category are \$50 annually. Archival agencies other than national archives may apply for membership in category "C," with dues of \$15 annually. Individual members comprise category "D," with membership dues of \$10 annually. In addition to the journal *Archivum*, individual members receive the ICA Bulletin, notices of other ICA publications, and may participate in the quadrennial ICA congresses. Approval of applications of membership must be made by the ICA Executive Committee, but such approval is largely pro forma. Applications should be addressed to Dr. Oscar Gauye, Treasurer, ICA, Directeur des Archives Fédérales, 24 Archivstrasse, CH-3003 BERNE, Switzerland. Payment should be made by bank check or bank transfer

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to the Swiss Bank Corporation, CH-3000 BERNE, in favor of the International Council on Archives, Account No. 336385, for payment in U.S. dollars, and to Account No. 336385.1, for payment in other currencies.

ABSTRACTS

Belgium. [SIMONE V. and PAUL V. GUITÉ, Washington, D.C.] *Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique*, vol. 45, nos. 3/4 (1974). H. Coppejans-Desmedt discusses the formal establishment, on September 18, 1974, of the intermediary archives in Beveren-Waas. For budgetary reasons, the archival complex will be completed in four phases. The first phase is a rectangular building. Two adjacent buildings intended as reception halls will temporarily house the services. When the next phases are completed, the useful archives space will cover 150 kilometers. The intermediary archives is intended to serve Flanders. Similar structures are planned for Wallonia and in Brussels. Foreign intermediary depots show different patterns in matters of organization, functioning, and administration. G. Asaert, of the State Archives in Beveren-Waas, toured Germany, England, and the United States during 1971, with particular attention to the US because its system resembles the situation prevailing in the Belgian archival administration.

René Gandilhon, inspector general of the Archives of France, discusses the place of the departmental archives in the French archival structure and reflects upon certain problems and values that these archives possess. Until about 1925 these archives were, practically, archives of the prefecture, accounting for the paucity of documents that entered these archives each year. The author summarizes the conceptual aspects of the departmental archives and their accomplishments since their establishment a century and a half ago. He then proceeds to give his personal opinions on the growth of archives. He states that their astonishing growth is due in great part to the intervention of administrators and to the multiplication of bureaucratic formalities. Administrators have shown themselves to be intransigent regarding the disposition and conservation of records. Archivists have taken refuge in the solution of constructing new buildings. Gandilhon holds that microfilming is onerous while the creation of pre-archival records centers is a false solution justified by the proximity of government bureaus. He does not believe that the growth of archives can continue at the actual present rate. He holds that archivists should obtain from administrators a modification of the laws concerning the types of records to be preserved.

Brazil. [LAURA MONTI, University of Florida] *Arquivo & Administração*, vol. 2, no. 2 (August 1974). A brief article on the Bolsa de Valores do Rio de Janeiro provides a history of the formation of the Stock Exchange, an indication of its impact on the Brazilian economy, and an overview and summary of the organization of its archives.

Arquivo & Administração, vol. 2, no. 3 (December 1974). This issue includes a reprint, in Portuguese, of Frank B. Evans, "Modern Concepts of Archives Administration and Records Management" from the *Unesco Bulletin for Libraries*, vol. 24, no. 5 (October 1961).

France. [PAUL V. GUITÉ, National Archives and Records Service] *La Gazette des Archives*, n.s., no. 85 (1974). This issue contains two articles about private archives in the French archival system. Suzanne d'Huart, a curator in the Archives nationales, reports on private archives in that institution (pp. 79-88); Jean Sablou, director of services of the Archives of Gard, discusses private archives in the departmental archives (pp. 89-103).

Curator d'Huart notes that the Archives of France institutionalized the problem of private archives by creating in 1949 a subsection on economic archives. Since that date about sixty acquisitions in the form of gifts, deposits, purchases, and complements to gifts and deposits have been accessioned annually. No separate statistics are kept on gifts, deposits, and purchases. Also, the accessions range widely in quantity, from several tons of paper to a dossier of one single piece.

The balance of d'Huart's report is devoted to an examination of the processes involved in the search for private archives, beginning with the seeking out of important collections of contemporary personalities, the drawing up of a contract of deposit, the arrangement and description of the accessioned papers, microfilming of collections often undertaken as a substitute for deposit, the preparation of inventories and other finding aids, the publication of important texts, and, finally, the communication of the results to researchers. It is the author's view that the transformations taking place in society favor the action of the French Archives in augmenting its official holdings with private archives.

Jean Sablou notes that the problems involved in the preservation of family archives are not new to French archivists. In the "Manuel d'archivistique," pp. 401-430, an entire section is devoted to an examination of private archives, with a clear distinction being made between family and personal archives, archives of associations, and archives designated as economic. Despite the diversity of their contents, these archives offer a documentary source parallel to the public archives.

The establishment of departmental archives originated in large measure from the impetus of the Revolutionary decrees sequestering the titles and papers of emigrés, and the subsequent laws providing that seized family papers be assembled in the chief town of the department. Outside of sequestration, the chief means of acquiring family archives have been by gift or by legacy. The contract of deposit is less used in the provincial archives than in the Archives nationales. Part of the difficulty stems from a lack of direct approach on the part of the archivists and misunderstanding of the intentions of the archivists on the part of proprietors. Very often the proprietors of private archives are reluctant to turn over their papers, despite the guarantees of a

contract. To facilitate the greater use of the contract of deposit and to make private archives more accessible, the author suggests an improvement in procedures. Archivists need to inform the holders of private archives and the public of the great historical value of these materials and of the need for their preservation. Affiliation with preservation committees and greater use of the media are also highly effective and need to be pursued more actively.

Michel Duchein, in "Notes techniques," offers a critique of the recent work by Y. P. Kathpalia on the conservation and restoration of archival documents. Specialists from the binding and workshop laboratories of the Archives nationales also offer their assessments. Kathpalia is chief of technical services in the Indian National Archives and well known as the inventor of the process of "hand lamination." Duchein cautions against the hazards that can result if nonspecialists attempt to apply the techniques described by Kathpalia. In his principal chapter, on "Principles of Restoration," Kathpalia writes that a profound knowledge of the documents involved and of the various processes of restoration is necessary before any restoration can be undertaken.

This issue also contains the news section and several book reviews, among which is George Weill's review of P. A. Alsberg's *Guide to the Archives in Israel*.

La Gazette des Archives, n.s., no. 86 (1974). Guy Thuillier, chief councillor of the Audit Department of the French treasury, in discussing administrative history, the teaching of history, and the history of teaching, maintains that there cannot be an archival policy without considering the ends of history or without having a clear view of the objectives pursued by historians. Administrative history, in his view, permits an explanation of the present and can direct action, serve the planner, and give wise guidance to the administrator.

Thuillier further maintains that we have a poor knowledge of the methods and limits of the history of educational administration, a discipline still too new to have fixed rules. In his view, the archivist should concern himself with what is outside official teaching, with such as institutions and associations, religious education, and teaching institutions. He should also seek out and collect as much as possible, in a systematic manner, of such things as personal papers of high officials, the records of labor unions, and student syllabi. The archivist must collect statistical documents, audiovisual material, materials relating to new methods of management, documents produced in scientific research, and oral histories.

The author's third conclusion is that archivists should also foresee the present. Thuillier maintains that the problem of archives is really that of having a conscience acutely aware of our dependence on time, and of the fall of the present into a past future.

Robert-Henri Bautier, in the *varia* section, discusses archival legislation published in *Archivum*. One of the difficulties faced by the editors was the translation of the various texts into one of the working

languages of the ICA. A peculiarity of French legislation cited by Bauthier is the complexity of the legal structure governing archives. Many of the earlier fundamental laws are no longer applicable, while many contemporary decrees are contradictory or tenuous. There is nothing comparable in France to a "Public Records Act."

Great Britain. [ROBERT B. MATCHETTE, National Archives and Records Service] *Archives*, vol. 11, no. 50 (Autumn 1973). In "The Contemporary Scientific Archives Centre" (pp. 73-75), Margaret Gowing, the center's director, describes the history and operation of the CSAC, presently housed at Oxford University. The CSAC developed out of concern generated in the 1960s for the papers and other records of eminent British scientists, which, because of their specialized nature, were not receiving archival consideration commensurate with their historical value in an increasingly scientific and technological society. In 1967, a Joint Standing Committee of the Royal Society and the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts was established, with one of its goals the salvage of the papers of contemporary or recently deceased scientists. The work of the joint committee led in late 1972 to the establishment of the CSAC which began operations on April 2, 1973, in the Indian Institute, Oxford. The CSAC performs its role in three phases: first, using as broad a definition of "scientific papers" as possible, it identifies those collections suitable for processing; second, by the culling of ephemera and unrelated materials and by organizing the remainder into categories and files, it processes the collections for accessioning; and, third, based upon the compatibility of each collection with the interests of a particular depository, it negotiates the transfer of the processed collections to existing archival repositories.

Journal of the Society of Archivists, vol. 5, no. 1 (April 1974). In "The New Public Records Office at Kew" (pp. 1-8), Lionel Bell of the PRO discusses the new repository under construction since May 1973 and scheduled for occupancy in 1976. The decision was made in November 1969 to build a new PRO after it had become obvious that the older archives on Chancery Lane and elsewhere (Ashbridge, Portugal Street, Porchester Road) were hopelessly inadequate to the future needs of the British government. After much discussion and debate, it was decided to divide the holdings between the existing and the new facilities on the basis of administrative organization. Those records included in volume 1 of the *Guide to the Contents of the Public Records Office*, plus records of selected other government agencies, will be retained in the older repository, while the records of modern departments will be transferred to Kew. The new structure was designed to facilitate researcher use and records retrieval based upon an extensive survey conducted in 1970 by the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works. The core of the building will be the 111,500 meters (69 miles) of shelving, segregated from areas dealing with other operations and accessible through an extensive conveyor system. The storage areas

are designed for additional expansion as needed and are deemed adequate for anticipated accessions until the end of this century. Problems involved in the wholesale transfer of a functioning archival operation have been extensively reviewed by the PRO in anticipation of the move, including such details as the need to box or rebox large quantities of records, the need to provide largely uninterrupted reference service during the transition period, and the need to maintain proper records control during the actual transfer process.

Yugoslavia. [CARL CHARLICK, Washington, D.C.] *Archivist*, vol. 24, no. 1 (1974). This magazine is the organ of the Yugoslav Federation of Archivists, the leading professional organization in Yugoslavia in the field of archives. The issue is designated as number 1 for 1974 and represents an effort to overcome the wide time-lag which has usually delayed the appearance of this publication. There are other signs of streamlining in its production; also, its retail price has increased 67 percent. The present issue contains primarily news of domestic interest, such as archival meetings and colloquia within the country. Among foreign news, of interest is an extensive report on the Military Affairs Archives at Pau, France, cited from a 1971 issue of *La Gazette des Archives*. Other foreign notes mention chiefly archival literature received from Czechoslovakia. A large section of this issue is taken up by recent Yugoslav legislative texts on archives.

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