

Going to Adelaide for my first conference was extremely exciting and being a joint conference was indeed a bonus with about 650 delegates from 75 countries – it was busy – so many people to meet and talk to. The National Schools SIG was where my conference began on Monday 21st October, we were hosted by Kate Pulford (whom I had tweeted earlier in the week so it was a delight to finally meet) at Prince Alfred College – the school is celebrating 150 years 1889 -2019 and can be found on Instagram @princealfredcollegearchives. The Headmaster Bradley Fenner has a keen interest in history and is a great supporter of the school archives and gave a lovely welcome speech and spoke warmly about Kate who only started at the school at the beginning of 2019. Morwenna Dixon was elected Convenor of the National School Archives SIG. With the day wrapped up; a leisurely group walk from Prince Alfred College to the Art Gallery of SA for the AGM was most enjoyable.

Just before the Conference Welcome Reception the Annual General Meeting was held; so wonderful to finally attend instead of sending an apology to Guy Tranter. The prima change proposed and agreed was the introduction of a New Professional membership rate, to bridge the financial gap between student and full individual membership.



Photo Credit: Jenny Scott

After an interesting and informative welcome to Kaurna Country by Mickey Kumatpi Marrutya O'Brien the Conference was opened by His Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le, Governor of South Australia on Tuesday October 22nd 2019.

The very first keynote on Tuesday morning, Michelle Caswell gave a thoughtful approach to rethinking appraisal theory from a feminist perspective : “In valuing the unique insights gleaned by people on the margins, feminist standpoint appraisal refuses the notion that archivists from oppressed communities must overcome their positionalities to meet institutional goals and professional demands for neutrality, but rather, values and leverages the insights gained from outsider status, viewing the attendant insights as assets, rather than as detriments, to the archival endeavour. Furthermore, feminist standpoint appraisal calls on archivists who inhabit dominant identities to acknowledge their oppressor standpoints and actively work to dismantle them.”

The morning and afternoon teas went for 45 minutes, and lunch for 1 hour, which gave enough time to catch up with people (10 of us from Qld) and make new friends, and also not eat quickly the terrific catering (the food was superb!).

The Loris Williams Memorial Lecture - Designing the Archive for Indigenous Language and Cultural Heritage Resources in South Australia was presented by National Centre for Aboriginal Language and Music Studies (NCALMS), The University of Adelaide. Professor Aaron Corn, Rod O'Brien, Karina Lester, Eleanor McCall, Grayson Rotumah, Lee Amoroso with Nathan May and Courtney Laughton gave an impressive presentation.

Wednesday 23rd October 2019 -

Reconciliation and Decolonization of National Archives was an interactive presentation which was a tad uncomfortable for some of the presenters; an extremely interesting discussion which continued during morning tea with Chief Archivist of the National Archives of New Zealand Richard Foy. Numerous National Archives are involved in processes leading to reconciliation and the decolonization of their processes. Normand Charbonneau, Richard Foy, David Fricker, Inga Marja Steinfjell had an open discussion on their institutional and personal values in that context as well as about their objectives and the challenges they face. Members of the ICA Expert Group on Indigenous Matters facilitated the conversation (Raymond Frogner, Karine R. Duhamel, Phyllis Williams).



Photo credit: Dorothy Carroll

Keynote Elizabeth Shepherd spoke about shifting practices towards human-centred recordkeeping. Care-experienced people (children, young people and adult care leavers of any age) should be able to participate in every stage of child social care recordkeeping, if they choose, including – the creation of records while they are in care; management of records during the period of retention, and the provision of access to records at any stage of life. Supporting practitioners and researchers in their recordkeeping responsibilities. Supporting care leavers' rights to information, memory and identity.

After lunch I listened to the following speakers: Inga Bolstad from Norway talked about going from a paper-based set of working, to a digital mind set, and it has set the Norwegian National Archive on a mind-blowing journey. Their ambitions were to solve the digital challenges in records management and provide digital self-services online. Ann Hardy spoke about survey responses from Work Integrated Learning (WIL) students and volunteers at the GLAM^x Living Living Histories Digitisation Lab at the University of Newcastle (UON), Australia. The GLAM Lab was established in 2017 as a pilot project to support students in WIL programs across a range of schools and disciplines. And Detlev Lueth spoke about the Triumphs & Challenges: Digitising NAA's Paper and Photographic Records and how the archives digitising program and projects has evolved. The digitising challenges and how it will look to innovate and design new cost effective and efficient approaches and practices that ensure it can meet current and future users expectations.

The final session that I attended was about transitioning archive users from paper to digital (and back to paper) - Linlin Du from China presented his paper on Collaborative Design of the Electronic Records Management System under Big Data Circumstances -From 2015 China has

unveiled national information-based development strategies as “Promoting Big Data-Based Development” and “Internet + Government Services”, etc. Many regions have started the construction of online integrated government service platforms, with government examinations and approvals all being handled on the said platforms. He introduced the collaborative construction of the electronic records management system and the national government service platforms in China.

I booked the dinner as it was my first conference so I was very much looking forward to the night, the Qld contingent that attended the dinner didn't all sit together but I gathered everyone under the gold balloons that celebrated 100 years of the first govt archive and Jenny Scott kindly took our photograph. It was a great night with a jazz band playing. It had been quite a long day as I had caught the first tram of the day to go out to Glenelg Beach, had a paddle, took some photos and was back in time for the first keynote of the day.

Thursday 24 October 2019

Keynote Camille Callison opened the proceeding for the final day of the conference and was not afraid to speak her mind and to be honest about what we need to do to genuinely honour and include Indigenous voices in archival thinking and practice. While she was introduced as a librarian, she said that she calls herself a cultural memory activist. She noted that Western systems and approaches to recordkeeping do not work for a lot of Indigenous knowledge. Also that it took a long time in Canada for Indigenous oral histories to be recognised as evidence/records, compared to written documents. She emphasised that relationship building is essential to reconciliation.

ICA runs a New Professionals program to support and encourage those with five or less years in the profession. It was great to see the program participants presenting on the last day of the conference, this session was really interesting chaired by Laura Miller. One can't attend all sessions as they run at the same time but this one was fascinating and actually not one that I was intent on being at the session on but I am glad I did.

New ways of thinking about archival space and the design of archive buildings was the session I attended before lunch; Peter Lester used Henri Lefebvre's theory of space to consider the socio-political processes around the making of archival space and how a turn towards user-centred design can fundamentally shift the nature of what an archive can be. Odile Welfele talked about Archive buildings can make you dream - New title: Archives Buildings - witnesses of the past and bridges to modernity. France has a tradition of construction and rehabilitation for the Archives. Since the Second World War, the preservation of documents has involved the creation of many buildings for both cities and counties. This policy, supported by the Archives de France, has made possible to design beautiful buildings for documents and humans.

After lunch I went to Experimentation: emerging technologies and archives where Kuldar Aas and Karin Bredenberg described the ongoing work of the E-ARK initiative which has been accepted in 2018 to become a core component of the EU Digital Single Market. Being now known as the "eArchiving Building Block" it proceeds to develop and provide a set of training and support services for digital archiving experts around the implementation of interoperable and long-term sustainable digital repositories. Jenny Kidd and Josephine Marsh gave a presentation on the Queensland State Archives' transformative journey as QSA asked how does an archive make itself relevant in the age of Netflix? This was the question they set themselves back in 2016 and one that transformed how they strategically approached their collection and recordkeeping responsibilities. And Mette van Essen spoke on using technology to gain insight – archival space is not neutral which was a bit of a theme throughout the conference.

Mickey Kumatpi Marrutya O'Brien performed a closing ceremony and ICA President David Fricker gave the closing remarks. It truly was an amazing awesome conference. Some of us went to the Dumplings Market for dinner.

On Friday after breakfast with Cara Downes, Peter Collin, Bruce Ibsen, Nicola Laurent, Michelle Lillico, Annabel Lloyd, Colleen Sippo, Julia Mant and Anke Brandt to discuss next year's conference in Brisbane I enjoyed two tours – one to Artlab where qualified conservators provide specialised preservation and conservation services for works of art and historic items and the other was the State Library of South Australia where an Archives projects talk and tour of the archives and the preservation facilities, focusing on audio, film, video and paper-based materials was undertaken. Then the icing on my conference cake – a personal tour of the Bob Hawke Library which was a total delight; my thanks to Jenny Jacobs who came to the Library especially for me.

I hope to welcome as many of you to Brisbane for Archives Amplified in August 2020

Dorothy Carroll 2019