The Administrative Framework
The Sydney Diocesan Archives is an administrative department which serves the offices and officers of the Anglican Church Diocese of Sydney.
For more information about the Anglican Church Diocese of Sydney, visit the Sydney Diocesan Network Portal website of the diocese: www.sydneyanglicans.net.
You may also be interested in the Anglican Media website for the Diocese of Sydney: www.your.sydneyanglicans.net.

The Sydney Diocesan Archives falls under the authority of the Registrar of the Diocese of Sydney, within the Archbishop’s Office division.
The Registrar’s Office is principally concerned with the issuing of licenses for persons, buildings and organisations within the Diocese of Sydney, on behalf of the Archbishop of Sydney. The Registry creates the principal administrative records of this diocese; the Archives cares for these records when they are no longer in current use, thus creating a cycle of records creation and management.
The staff of the Registry and Archives work in close cooperation.

The Sydney Diocesan Archives is funded by the Endowment of the See, which is an annual budget given by the Sydney Diocesan Synod to the Archbishop of Sydney to fund the work of the administrative units within the ‘Archbishop’s Office’ division.
The Sydney Diocesan Archives is not specifically connected with St Andrew’s Cathedral, unlike many other Anglican and religious Archives.

Staffing in the Sydney Diocesan Archives
Day-to-day organisation and control of the Sydney Diocesan Archives falls to the Sydney Diocesan Archivist. The Sydney Diocesan Archives is staffed full-time and is open for enquiries five days per week. Physical access to the Sydney Diocesan Archives is by appointment only.
The current Sydney Diocesan Archivist is Dr Louise Trott, who has worked for the Diocesan Archives since May 1990. She was appointed Diocesan Archivist (full-time) in November 1996.
Dr Trott studied Archives Administration at the University of NSW during 1986, and graduated in 1987.
with a Graduate Diploma in Information Management-Archives Administration. She has worked as a professional archivist since 1987. Dr Trott also holds the degrees of Bachelor of Arts (Honours) and Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Sydney.

She is currently National Convenor of two networks of religious archivists within Australia: a) the Australian Anglican Archivists Network (hosted by the General Synod); and b) the Religious Collections Special Interest Group of the Australian Society of Archivists (ASA).

Previous Diocesan Archivists have included Canon Boyce Horsley, Mrs Georgina Hart, and Mrs Ruth White (nee Ruth O’Hea). Canon Boyce Horsley was the first Sydney Diocesan Archivist (from 1977). Several other archivists (including Cathy Hobbs-Faulkner, Jane McGee, and Sarah O’Neill) have worked for periods of time as Assistant Archivist. The Sydney Diocesan Archives has always been staffed by professionally qualified archivists.

The in-coming volume of work of the Diocesan Archives requires up to three archivists and some administrative support, but limited funding allows for only one archivist, and no administrative support, with the occasional assistance of an experienced volunteer. Accordingly, the Sydney Diocesan Archives can only provide limited assistance for external enquiries.

Where is the office and repository of the Sydney Diocesan Archives?

For many years, the Sydney Diocesan Archives were located on Level 4 of the car park of St Andrew’s House.

In late January 2000, the Sydney Diocesan Archives moved to new and larger premises in the Phillip Street, St James area. This new facility provides physical conditions superior to those previously available in the St Andrew’s House site, with a first class air-conditioning and humidification system, and increased storage capacity.

When you have a confirmed research appointment, you will be given detailed information about how to find the Sydney Diocesan Archives & the working conditions in this office.

Is the Sydney Diocesan Archives a public or private archive?

The Sydney Diocesan Archives is a **private**, ‘in-house’, business, and research archive, and, in general, houses only records created by the Diocese of Sydney.

Accordingly, the Sydney Diocesan Archives is not open to the general public and casual visitors.

Does the Sydney Diocesan Archives have a website or web page?

In March 2007, new websites were launched for the Diocesan Registry and the Diocesan Archives. These two departments share a home page, from which one can navigate to the individual websites.

You can learn more about the work of the Registry and Archives at:


A downloadable copy of this document can be found in the DOCUMENTS page.

Prospective researchers are advised to read the pages under the ACCESS menu, especially those for:

- ‘For Diocesan Staff’ (to see what kinds of records are held in the collection)
- ‘For Academic Researchers & Historians’ (to find information about research access)

Some of this material in this document is reproduced on the website.

To find this website manually, go to the Sydney Diocesan Network Portal: [www.sydneyanglicans.net](http://www.sydneyanglicans.net), and then click on the ‘Organisations’ drop-down menu. You will find ‘Registry & Archives’ there. Alternatively, if you are on any diocesan website, you can look for the ‘Directory’ drop-down menu at the top left hand corner of the page. You can find ‘Archives’ in that menu.

Alternatively, you can go to: [www.sydneyanglicans.net](http://www.sydneyanglicans.net), and then click on the green bar on the bottom right: ‘Anglican Community’. You will find ‘Registry & Archives’ listed under ‘Organisations’.
Does the Sydney Diocesan Archives collect all records to do with the Anglican Church in Australia?
No, the Sydney Diocesan Archives collects only those records created by and within the Anglican Church Diocese of Sydney. Each of the 23 Anglican dioceses within Australia creates and cares for its own records and archives. There is no central Anglican Archives or Records Centre in Australia. For contact details of other Anglican dioceses in Australia (and further information about the Anglican Church in Australia) visit the General Synod web site: www.anglican.org.au. For contact details of other Anglican diocesan archives in Australia, visit the General Synod web page via the menu commands: Community; Networks; Anglican Archives. Other Anglican organisations which are not purely diocesan, such as the General Synod, Church Missionary Society, and Bush Church Aid Society, employ their own archivists to care for and administer their archival records, as do the Anglican schools and theological colleges.

What kinds of archival records does the Sydney Diocesan Archives collect?
In essence, the Sydney Diocesan Archives collects those records created as a result of the administrative work of the offices and officers of the Diocese of Sydney, since the creation of the Diocese of Australia in 1836. These records fall into three broad groups:

- Records created by the **Archbishop’s Office Division** (Archbishop, Registry, Assisting Bishops, Archdeacons, Regional Offices, Professional Standards Unit, Area Deans, & Dean of St Andrew’s Cathedral). This includes the Regional Offices of the Diocese.
- Records created by **Diocesan organisations, departments and units**, such as: Sydney Diocesan Synod, Standing Committee of Synod, Sydney Diocesan Secretariat, Church Property Trust, the former Glebe Administration Board, Anglicare (formerly Home Mission Society), Mothers Union, GFS, and many other diocesan administrative bodies. The names and composition of these administrative bodies have changed frequently in the history of the diocese.
- Records created by **parishes and churches** within the Diocese of Sydney. Parishes and churches are not compelled to deposit their records into the Sydney Diocesan Archives, but the majority of parishes choose to do so. The Diocesan Archives holds the parish records of some 300 churches so far.

The Sydney Diocesan Archivist liaises with the officers of these abovementioned departments to provide education about identification and preparation of records for retention and disposal, or deposit to Archives.

Who uses the Sydney Diocesan Archives? Diocesan Staff
The Sydney Diocesan Archives provides, as its primary task, archival storage and retrieval services to the staff of the Archbishop’s Office division. Similarly, the staff of the Sydney Diocesan Secretariat make frequent use of the services of the Sydney Diocesan Archives, with an increasing emphasis upon legal, property, and heritage enquiries. In the months leading up to the annual meeting of Synod, Synod Representatives sometimes refer to the Sydney Diocesan Archives for research for forthcoming questions. An increasing interest in the Church of England children’s homes has led to increased liaison with Anglicare.
Who uses the Sydney Diocesan Archives? Parish staff
Parishes frequently refer to the Sydney Diocesan Archives for information about faculties, plans, and specifications to assist with new building projects. For those parishes undertaking a parish history project, the Parish Historian will make frequent visits to the Sydney Diocesan Archives to undertake research. Parishes frequently refer to the Diocesan Archivist for on-going advice and assistance with records management issues, which often leads to the deposit of parish records into the Diocesan Archives.

Who uses the Sydney Diocesan Archives? Historians and other research professionals
Other than Diocesan staff, professional historians and other research professionals account for the largest number of research visitors to the Sydney Diocesan Archives. Visiting researchers undertake research into the history of the life and work of Anglican Church, its clergy and lay participants, its land and buildings, its institutions and activities, and indeed almost any aspect of the life of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney.
Approximately 40 researchers per annum use the collection. These researchers include: academic, consultant & private historians; research assistants; PhD, Masters, and undergraduate Honours students of history and architecture; conservation architects and heritage consultants, and their research staff; archaeologists; stained glass artists; film and documentary makers; writers of academic books and journal articles; writers of fiction; and filmmakers, of both feature films and television documentaries.

The Sydney Diocesan Archives collection is a rich and, in many cases, unique source of information about the early history of the Anglican Church in Australia, the history of the Colony of NSW, and the history of the city of Sydney, both in terms of institutions and people. This collection is also a valuable resource for research into the role of the Anglican Church within the life and culture of the people of Sydney. The provision of access to researchers and historians, who undertake research leading to publication, is deemed to be an important means of making a contribution to the academic, social, cultural and historical development of Sydney and Australia.

Who uses the Sydney Diocesan Archives? Public enquiries
The Sydney Diocesan Archives also receives a steady stream of enquiries from members of the public by telephone, email, post, and facsimile. Public enquiries most usually concern topics such as procurement of baptism and confirmation records for marriage and ordination; clergy biographical information; family history & genealogy, with an increasing emphasis upon burials; and C of E children’s homes.
Beyond these topics, members of the public seek assistance with a wide range of enquiries broadly connected with the Anglican Church in Sydney, elsewhere in Australia, and in the UK. Due to limited staffing, it is not always possible to answer all of these enquiries.

Does the Sydney Diocesan Archives deal with family history enquiries?
The Sydney Diocesan Archives is principally funded to provide in-house services, and access to external bona fide researchers. Thus, the Sydney Diocesan Archives cannot provide a family history research service.
However, most of the pre-1930 parish baptism, marriage, confirmation and burial registers held in the Sydney Diocesan Archives have been microfilmed by the Society of Australian Genealogists as part of the joint copying project with the SLNSW & the National Library. Most family history enquiries can be passed to that organisation, or to the Family History Unit at the State Library of NSW. However, the Sydney Diocesan Archives will, as time permits, handle any family history enquiries of a more complex nature, which cannot be dealt with via the abovementioned organisations.
How to contact the Diocesan Archivist / How to book an appointment for research

Unfortunately, the Sydney Diocesan Archives is limited by financial constraints to one staff member only, even though there is enough work to keep three full-time archivists very busy, and this office does not have a receptionist. For reasons of funding and security, a ‘shop-front’ service is not possible. Accordingly, the Sydney Diocesan Archives is not open to the general public, or for casual visits.

Access for research is strictly by application and appointment. You are most welcome to email, telephone or fax the Diocesan Archivist to discuss your research enquiry, and the possibility or suitability of access for research. Research appointments can usually be made for Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday, depending upon the commitments of the Diocesan Archivist. There is a high demand for external research access, and that demand has to be balanced against the in-house work.

If your telephone call is not answered in person, please leave a recorded message on the Voice Mail service, and your call will be returned when possible. Please allow for the fact that, due to the high volume of work, the Diocesan Archivist will not always be able to attend to your enquiry immediately.

Dr Louise Trott
B. A. (Hons), Syd; Grad. Dip. Information Management-Archives Administration, UNSW; PhD, Syd
Sydney Diocesan Archivist

Telephone: 02 / 9265-1620
Facsimile: 02 / 9232-7841
Email: archives@sydney.anglican.asn.au

USEFUL LINKS in alphabetical order

Australian Society of Archivists: www.archivists.org.au
Archives Act 1983 (C’wth) (as amended): www.austlii.edu.au
City of Sydney Archives:
  www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/AboutSydney/HistoryAndArchives/Archives
Directory of Archives in Australia:
Government Records Repository (GRR):
Moore Theological College Library:
  www.moore.edu.au/library
National Archives of Australia:
  www.naa.gov.au
NSW Registry of Births Deaths & Marriages:
  www.bdm.nsw.gov.au
Society of Australian Genealogists:
  www.sag.org.au
State Library of NSW:
  www.sl.nsw.gov.au
State Records Act 1998 (NSW):
  www.austlii.edu.au
State Records NSW:
  www.records.nsw.gov.au
The Archivist’s Toolkit (British Columbia):
  www.aabc.bc.ca/aabc/toolkit.html
Understanding Society Through its Records:
  www.john.curtin.edu.au/society
Understanding and Using Archives:
APPENDIX: DEFINITIONS & EXPLANATIONS OF ARCHIVAL TERMINOLOGY

These definitions and explanations have been adapted from those provided by the National Archives of Australia (NAA), and edited to reflect the Sydney Diocesan Archives.
For the NAA FAQ webpage see: http://www.archivenet.gov.au/FAQs/faqs_001.htm
Although the NAA deals with government records, this information is applicable for the records of any large corporate organisation such as the Anglican Church Diocese of Sydney.

1. What are archives?
The term archives can mean:
- records that are preserved permanently because of their enduring value.
- the building, room or storage area where archival material is kept.
- an organisation responsible for the care and control of archival material.

2. Are all records archives?
No. All archives are records, but not all records become archives. Government agencies, individuals, and private organisations create and accumulate records; these include registers, minute books, financial records, correspondence files and reports, maps, plans, photographs, films, videotapes, sound recordings, optical disks and computer databases. Some of these records may be destroyed once their usefulness for current purposes ceases. Those that are preserved because of their enduring value are called archives.

3. How are archives selected?
Only if records meet certain criteria are they considered to be of enduring value. For example, the National Archives of Australia identifies and selects records as archives if they possess one or more of the following values: administrative, research, evidential, legal, financial or display. It is one of the responsibilities of State and federal government archives to ensure that valuable government records are identified and preserved, and not damaged, lost or destroyed through carelessness, error or improper handling. Almost every record created by a parish office is deemed worthy of permanent retention, as most parish records are created in response to a diocesan procedure, as set down by ordinances and regulations.

4. How do archives differ from library material?
Archives have unique characteristics which make them very different from books or journals in a library. Library material is usually published and is often held by other libraries or individuals; if it is lost or stolen it can usually be replaced. By contrast, archives are original records, often unique and usually irreplaceable. When you use an archival record you are often using the only copy that exists.

5. Why can't archives be browsed on the shelves?
Because of their age archives are fragile and the information they contain is vulnerable to damage or loss through constant or improper handling; thus strict rules govern their handling and use. For example, they are kept in environmentally controlled conditions to minimise their deterioration; they may not be browsed on the shelves as in a library; and they may not be borrowed. When requested by researchers, records are delivered to the reading area where they must be used under the supervision of the Archivist. In these ways archives seek to maintain and preserve the collections in their care for future generations.
6. Why are archives not arranged by subject?
Whereas books in a library are catalogued and shelved according to subject and other classification systems, archives are arranged to preserve their value as evidence. The two rules governing the arrangement of archives are:
   a) that the archives of an agency or an individual not be mixed or intermingled with those of other agencies or individuals, and,
   b) that archives should be maintained in the same sequence and filing system in which they were created and maintained.
This enables present-day researchers not only to use the information they contain, but also to understand something about the way the department which created them was organised and administered. To reorganise the records into a subject arrangement would destroy these contextual links and would diminish their value as a source of evidence and information.

The respect for provenance and original order in the arrangement of archives has implications for the way they are used for research. It is useful to remember that in most cases they were created to meet the immediate needs of agencies or individuals, not the diverse research needs of a wider community some years later. Because archives are not arranged by subject, finding the information you want will often be time consuming, but it can also be challenging and exciting.

7. Can I research archival records online?
The process of digitising archival records is still too expensive and time-consuming for most archives to be in a position to adapt so quickly. For larger institutions it is unlikely that a collection numbering many millions of existing records would ever be fully accessible online.

8. What does the Internet offer the archival researcher at present?
A lot. Some Australian archives already provide online research aids which mean that research can be planned ahead. Some profile their collections and promote events and publications; some use their websites as a means of linking visitors with archives worldwide. Even if a web site is currently only giving addresses, phone numbers and opening hours this is a useful service.

9. How can I find the archives I need?
To locate archives related to your research, you usually need to identify who might have created relevant records and when (i.e. the provenance of the record). You can then use any original indexes to identify individual files, volumes, etc. These indexes and other item listings may have idiosyncrasies and shortcomings which make them (and the filing systems they describe) time consuming and frustrating to use. Archives develop findings aids of various kinds to assist researchers in accessing their records.

10. What access rights do I have?
Check with the archives you wish to consult – there will be specific rules about access. For instance, the National Archives of Australia is covered under the Archives Act 1983, which gives a legal right of access to Commonwealth government records over 30 years old.
The records created by private organisations are not subject to the access provisions of the state and federal archives legislation.

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