NEW ROADS TO CREATION AND RELEVANCE OF ARCHIVES
IN A CHANGING WORLD

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ABSTRACT

A fundamental prerequisite for all facets of archival work is a clear mandate to authorize the programme. Mandates are traditionally issued by a governing board or chief executive, but in today's fiscal climate, new programmes are finding that innovative 'outside-in' methods are useful for obtaining their mandates, a method long-established archives should consider to maintain the viabilityof their own programmes in the face of constant budget threats.

Part I: ARCHIVAL MANDATES IN THE 21st CENTURY

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Ask a stranger on any street corner what an archivist is and they will probably describe some old fusty old academic in horn-rimmed glasses surrounded by mountains of untidy paper who is fixated on the past. In reality, they should be thinking of someone more like the late Ray Bradbury or the creators of Star Trek. Just as these science fiction works anticipated by decades some of today's most cutting-edge technological breakthroughs, archivists must anticipate by decades the best ways to make sure that what we do in the present is meaningful and beneficial to the future.

In fact, an archivist's view of the future is radically presumptuous because everything we do must be aimed at securing our archives in perpetuity. Perhaps with the exception of executioners and undertakers, there is hardly a profession in today's world with the same ambitious agenda of doing it right for all time. Although most archivists recognize the finite limits against achieving such a standard of finality, we still need to hold it as a fundamental goal. As the authors of the first edition of *Keeping Archives* noted a quarter century ago, "It is not sufficient to initiate any archival programme on the basis of short term funding allocation and staffing provisions. Similarly, personal enthusiasm, although commendable, obviously cannot sustain an archival programme in perpetuity."[1] In this regard, it is clear that the effective operation of any archives requires that there be a clear mandate and authorization covering the conduct of all major domains of archival work.

Unfortunately, in our increasingly complex and specialized profession and in a climate where so much attention is focused on public support and having broad audiences, the topic of

program mandates has been taken for granted in archival literature and professional conversations. The electronic records and social media fixations in today's literature may explain some of the inattention to such fundamentals as program mandates, but one can find significant blinders even in such seminal works as Schellenberg's *The Management of Archives* (1965) or in Kenneth Duckett's *Modern Manuscripts* (1975).[2]

Nevertheless, clear, broad, and solid mandates are absolutely essential for even the most basic success in completing archival functions, such as deciding what to keep, what to discard, or what to make available, when, and to whom. In 1994, Elizabeth Yakel recognized this fundamental importance in *Starting an Archives* when she wrote, "The establishment of an archival program implies a long-term commitment on the part of an organization. This entails both a financial commitment and a willingness to give the archives the authority it needs to carry out its mission."[3] Conventionally, an archives' authority is embodied in a mandate and archives policy statement that includes the following core elements:[4]

1. Statement of the program's mission.

2. Definition of organizational records, including the rule that all documents created or used in the course of institutional business are institutional records and are the property of the institution.

3. Designation of the archives as the unit responsible for the disposition of all institutional records with care for those of long-term administrative or research value.

4. Statement of the communities the archives is to serve, who may use it, and general access conditions.

5. Authorization of the archivist as the person to conduct all activities necessary to accomplish the program's mission according to professional archival standards.

6. Delineation of the core elements of the archives program, especially regarding the responsibility to collect, preserve, and provide access.

7. Identification of the archives' reporting line or administrative location.

In a government setting, authorization generally comes from either existing laws or new legislation written once there is enough public attention to generate a call for the creation of an archives. While having a sound legal basis for our public archives is important to both citizens and archivists, it is unfortunate the predominant focus by authors such as Schellenberg in *Modern Archives* and Michael Cook in *Archives Administration* is on how definitions in

particular public records laws in the US or UK undergird the mandates for archives.[5] Yet, in private institutions, such laws may be of little use in providing the authoritative building blocks for an archival program to be successful.

Regardless, in either public or private institution, the preferred model is that the archival policy be undertaken as soon as possible after the decision to establish an archives is made. Ideally professional archival practice does not begin until the mandate is written and its adoption is secured, otherwise all of the work of the archivist will be on very shaky ground.[6] Formal approval, of course can often take years because it needs to come from highest officials of the institution, preferably the chief executive or operating officers as well as the governing board, and there may be many organizational hurdles to overcome, especially in today's world when many institutional leaders are so focused on the future that they may dismiss archives as mere antiquarianism.

This model of a priori mandates has served well for decades, but it is neither the only one, nor is it the one likely to be most effective in today's changing climate where hierarchy and order have less persuasive power. In fact, the current climate differs in at least three ways that necessitate consideration of other approaches: a) the nature of electronic records means that we cannot afford to wait years for approval of a mandate on the assumption that inactive files will safely accumulate in attics and basements in anticipation of the ultimate appearance of an archivist to manage them; b) the combination of freedom of information laws and office information technology has resulted in all sorts of people without archival training and standards attempting to do the tasks of archivists; and c) the authority structures themselves have become more permeable, malleable, and less rule-driven than they used to be, meaning that they are less dependable as bedrock for an archival foundation.

Given growth in the archival profession and the reduced rigidity of our conventional neighbors–librarians and historians–a key way forward while waiting for a formal authorization may be for professionally trained people to use an outside-in approach to "do" archives first, building credibility along the way. In other words, today's professionals may need to create repositories of heritage and accountability before seeking formal authorization. By providing effective service to institutional partners they can use this as tangible proof of service to secure the political support needed to create the archival mandate. This model can be seen in the work at Petra Christian University in Indonesia.

Part II AN OUTSIDE-IN APPROACH TO ESTABLISHMENT

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Petra Christian University (PCU) is a private Christian university located in Surabaya, the second-biggest city in Indonesia. It is a medium-sized single-campus university with approximately 8,000 students who are primarily undergraduates. PCU Library is a central library with approximately 150,000 physical library holdings and 180,000 digital resources. It has an annual circulation of approximately 68,000 volumes. Annual visits are approximately 150,000, while virtual visits are approximately 3.7 million unique visitors or 71.6 million hits to the Library's online catalog and institutional repository.

In general, Indonesian higher education institutions find it difficult to secure a mandate and authorization for the establishment of a formal archives for several reasons. It is a common assumption that archiving is part of the responsibility of each unit/department, so there is no need for a formal archives. Secondly, depositing records in an archives formally separate from the units leaves them with the impression that they are losing their control over their documents. Besides practical considerations such as speedy access to the documents, confidentiality is also a disincentive factor that prevents campus units/departments from willingly (or happily) surrendering their documents to a formal archives. The third factor is, of course, money. Those reasons explain why, since its establishment, PCU has been operating without any formal archives. Each campus unit/department manages and keeps its own records and archives without any campus-wide policy on archiving. This has caused some unfortunate consequences since each unit/department has various levels of awareness and commitment for record-keeping and archiving. Common occurrences would be the difficulty in locating certain documents or missing/misplaced documents. Certain types of archival materials do find their way to the Library, such as the semi-published materials, photographs of campus events, campus bulletins from the Public Relations Office, guidelines on course syllabi from academic departments, etc. However, this happens not by design and depends largely on the tenacity of the Library in 'hunting down' those materials.

Based on the conditions above, a top-down approach to secure mandate and authorization is considered to be virtually impossible. A bottom-up approach is preferable. The Library has needed to use innovative ways to generate interest among campus communities and stakeholders to archival-related issues. An approach taken is to utilize information and communication technology (ICT) in creating a digital 'archives' that is appealing and easily accessible to all

stakeholders.

The digital 'archives' project at PCU started in 2001 by digitizing students' theses, appropriately titled Digital Theses. It is common in Indonesia that every undergraduate student has to write an undergraduate thesis. The library is usually in charge for storing these documents. The common practice is to store two copies of each thesis document, since these documents are considered to be institutional/university documents with evidential value. They are also considered to be learning/library resources with informational value. The Indonesian Directorate General of Higher Education treats these theses documents as the official proof that a student has completed his/her undergraduate study. The practice of keeping two copies of each student's thesis document has created a considerable need for physical storage space. Digitizing them and storing them in the institutional repository is a great solution since it solves the physical space problem and improves access to the resources. This situation combined with developments in information and communication technology, have provided the backdrop of the Digital Theses project. An article titled "Desa Informasi: The Role of Digital Libraries in the Preservation and Dissemination of Indigenous Knowledge,"[7] and a book chapter titled "Institutional Repositories: Facilitating Structure, Collaborations, Scholarly Communications, and Institutional Visibility,"[8] provide more in-depth discussions on the technical and administrative aspects of the project.

The Digital Theses project consequently provided the experience and background for another, more archival-in-nature digital project called Petra Chronicle. This project aims at digitizing the semi-published types of archival materials to improve access by campus communities and stakeholders of the university. Samples of the types of archival materials digitized are: historical photographs of the university and campus events, academic department guidelines, course syllabi, student magazines, campus newsletters, graduation books, newspaper clippings about the university in the media, etc. Petra Chronicle has a sub-collection named Petra iPoster, which basically consists of promotional/publication materials of campus events or issues (posters, brochures/flyers, banners, promotional videos/clips, etc.). The decision to create them as a sub-collection was based on the fact that they comprise a considerable amount of materials in Petra Chronicle. However, a stronger reason was their visual nature, which is believed to have strong appeal to potential users. In a way, Petra iPoster was created to become the "Poster Child" for Petra Chronicle.

PCU Library uses Petra Chronicle and Petra iPoster projects to advocate for the establishment of a physical archives. Hence, advocacy is an ongoing effort, with the aim of

securing a mandate and authorization for a university archives. This is done by showcasing archival materials (physical and digital) to relevant stakeholders and events. The Library has been holding physical exhibitions and presenting Petra Chronicle and iPoster at university anniversaries, alumni gatherings, and other events where the relevant stakeholders (university administrators, members of the Board of Trustees, or alumni) are present. This is essential to instill the perception that archival functions can be embedded to the Library.

Effective advocacy efforts include making the digital resources personal to the stakeholders. This is done by appealing to the sentimental side of the stakeholders, especially if they are alumni of PCU. Historical photographs and other visual resources, such as posters are very effective for this purpose. Resources that depict the achievements of the university are also very effective in reaching out to the stakeholders, even for the ones who are not alumni of the university. In the effort to make the digital resources more personal, a website has been created (chronicle.petra.ac.id) where users can search for Petra Chronicle and Petra iPoster-only resources. This approach is a double-edged one since – as is usually the case – the website needs considerable efforts to maintain.

Good communication is also an essential component of the advocacy efforts. The Library needs to constantly 'remind' other campus units and various student organizations of its archival functions. This is important to make them become accustomed to sending their archival materials to the Library. Since the Library has not yet secured a formal archives mandate and authorization, it is limiting its acquisition of archival materials only to the semi-published archival materials from other campus units and student organizations. With the existence of Petra Chronicle and Petra iPoster, the Library also strives to acquire the digital version of these materials. It is useful in reducing the digitization tasks and to speed up the incorporation of the digital materials into Petra Chronicle and Petra iPoster digital collections.

Once the semi-published archival materials are incorporated into the institutional repository, access to them is greatly improved. Users can browse or search the resources from the Internet; copy and paste the permalink (URL) to share with friends and colleagues. In order to make the digital resources more friendly to the digital-natives generation, the Library has also utilized a free online tool to develop a feature that makes it very easy for users to share any resources to their social networking circle(s), such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. An on-going project to broaden the audience of these archival resources is the use of digital signage technology to advertise or showcase archival materials that are visual in nature to the campus

communities through the use of flat screen TVs. The project, called DIVo 3.0, aims at developing new media for campus/corporate communication utilizing digital signage technology, which can also be piggybacked for library/archives promotion. The flat screen TVs will be installed in various locations across the campus. It is a perfect medium for showcasing visual resources of Petra Chronicle and Petra iPoster to reach younger audiences (the undergraduates). It is as if the archival resources are being virtually exhibited all across campus.

Another digital archives project with a wider scope and audience is Surabaya Memory (surabaya-memory.petra.ac.id), which aims to digitally document the historical and cultural heritage of the city of Surabaya. The digital resources in Surabaya Memory are mainly old photographs/maps, documentation of settlements in Surabaya, and other resources related to various aspects of the city. Besides being used as learning resources by students from several academic departments (Architecture, Tourism Management, and Communication Science), the resources in Surabaya Memory have a certain personal appeal to the people of Surabaya. The Library has held annual exhibitions of Surabaya Memory in various malls in Surabaya in conjunction with the anniversary celebration of the city. The idea is to reach out to the general public who might not have a good awareness of heritage-related issues. The exhibition usually draws thousands of visitors since people who go to the malls to shop can just stop by and enjoy the exhibited resources, or even join the activities created around the exhibitions (heritage walk, cultural performances, heritage-based competitions, etc.). The concept of the exhibition has also evolved from merely an old photo exhibition to a more contemporary all-about-Surabaya exhibition (visual designs, architectural designs, cultural expressions, etc.). The Library has managed to partner with various academic departments at PCU to showcase works of students and lecturers related to Surabaya, or outside partners such the city or state library and archives. In a way, Surabaya Memory has served as a corporate platform for the university to reach out to society.

All the efforts above have benefited the Library in strengthening its role in the campus communities as well as in society. The goal is for the Library to become so embedded in the campus communities that it will help in its efforts in securing a formal mandate and authorization in establishing a (physical) archives in the near future. There have been some positive signs towards that direction. For instance, campus units/departments are now relatively much more cooperative in fulfilling the Library's requests for sending their semi-published archival materials to the Library. A formal mandate and authorization will transform the process

to become systematic, instead of ad hoc (based on requests). Another positive sign is the fact that nowadays almost all campus units/departments turn to the Library when they need to do historical work on their respective unit/department. Since the Library only receives semi-published archival materials, there are some limitations on what the Library can provide, but again, this has served the Library's interest in advocating for a formal mandate and authorization, which will enable the Library to provide much more in terms of archival materials.

NURTURING YOUR MANDATE IN TODAY'S WORLD

Whether a program has received its mandate in the conventional authorization model or through outside-in approaches, the authoritative position of the archives needs to be monitored and nurtured so that persons from all levels understand the primacy of the archives in matters of history and records. If used carefully, the kinds of service projects pursued by Petra Christian University can be of tremendous help in solidifying an existing archives' claim to an authoritative position, as illustrated by three recent projects at the University of Illinois.

Our institution's most important college, Engineering, historically has paid very little attention to records transfers, resulting in paltry holdings in the University Archives, so when the dean contacted us to resolve a records storage issue, we saw an opportunity. After a preliminary survey of records, we outlined a strong archival project to appraise, arrange, and describe their records, to selectively digitize hard-copy files, and to provide ongoing management for born-digital records. It was approved along with $150,000 in funds from the College. The project will be launched this fall, and its successful completion will go a long way to solidify our mandate and relations with senior administration staff, especially since this dean has just been appointed to be the campus's chief academic officer.

Nearly ten years ago a very talented, tech-savvy undergraduate created a website using innovative information technology to capture and index the content of 135 years of university publications and historical snippets, thereby creating a chronology of university history. Despite the fact that the student had no formal historical training, the site quickly became the "go-to" tool for alumni and campus administrators alike. Unfortunately, in 2009 it ran afoul of a high-level communications office, which demanded the site be taken down. The site was useful to the Archives, so we collaborated with the higher, university-level Vice-President for Academic Affairs to take responsibility for the site, thus preserving the content and claiming ownership of this quite accomplished tool. Our action has served to solidify our value to a senior-level administrator as well as associate the Archives with a technological initiative that would

otherwise have been out of our reach.[7]

Our state has a long, unfortunate history of political scandals, causing ever-increasing oversight of even minor details of record-keeping. In this climate, the University's Board of Trustees had been informed by internal auditors of deficiencies in the way they indexed the minutes to their meetings. Because the Archives has had a long and successful relationship with the Board's secretariat, we were approached to provide technical assistance in designing a new indexing system. We are now collaborating with a university technology office to develop a system that will satisfy the auditors as well as the Archives. As it so happens, the project coincides with the hiring of both a new Secretary of the Board and a new indexing staff person. Thus, the project not only will provide a tool to assist in our own reference use, but it will also serve to tighten our connections with this all-important office at the university's highest levels.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Whether a mandate comes via the back door or from up front authorization, an archives still must constantly justify its existence or face possible extinction. This may require periodic reinvention of the archives, or at least regular repackaging, in order to emphasize a return on investment that is articulated in the linguistic currency of the day. What will never change, however, will be the fact that the archivist needs a sound grounding not so much in the techniques and tools used to create the sale, but more in archival principles and traditional archival values, such as those that can be found in venerable texts of Schellenberg and Jenkinson. Techniques, after all, come and go as technology moves along; core archival principles do not change. These principles may not often be "sexy," but we still must understand them while also mastering the latest tools and technologies of communication. Most importantly, we must find the right balance of theory and technologies. We should not let technology drive archival theory and principles, but we should never let our need to be faithful to principles become an excuse to not embrace the techniques valued by society in any given era.

NOTES

1. Ann Pederson, ed., *Keeping Archives,* (Sydney: Australian Society of Archives, 1987), 21. The third, 2008 edition of *Keeping Archives* has a more detailed description of the steps necessary to develop an archives policy even if it allows the possibility that collecting activity might actually get underway before a formal archives policy is drafted and approved. Jackie Bettington, ed., *Keeping Archives,* 3rd edition (Sydney: Australian Society of Archivists, 2008), 39-45.

2. T. R. Schellenberg, *The Management of Archives*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965). Kenneth W. Duckett, *Modern Manuscripts: A Practical Manual for Their Management, Care, and Use,* (Nashville, Tennessee: American Association for State and Local History, 1975).

3. Elizabeth Yakel, *Starting an Archives*, (Metuchen, N.J. and London: Society of American Archivists and the Scarecrow Press, 1994), 8.

4. William J. Maher, *Management of College and University Archives,* (Metuchen, N.J. and London: Society of American Archivists and the Scarecrow Press, 1992), 20-21.

5. T. R. Schellenberg, *Modern Archives Principles and Techniques*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), 122-25. Michael Cook, *Archives Administration: A Manual for Intermediate and Smaller Organizations and for Local Government*, (Folkstone, England: Dawson, 1977) 10-17.

6. Pederson, 22. Bettington. 41.

7.   Liauw Toong Tjiek, *Desa Informasi: The Role of Digital Libraries in the Preservation and Dissemination of Indigenous Knowledge* (International Information and Library Review, 38(3), pp. 123-131).

8. Liauw Toong Tjiek, *Institutional Repositories: Facilitating Structure, Collaborations, Scholarly Communications, and Institutional Visibility* (book chapter for "Digital Libraries - Methods and Applications", Editor: Kuo Hung Huang (Ed.), ISBN: 978-953-307-203-6, InTech, Available from: http://www.intechopen.com/articles/show/title/institutional-repositories-facilitating-structure-collaborations-scholarly-communications-and-instit)

[7] http://uihistoriesproject.chass.illinois.edu/