

conclusions, especially those relating to the “new technologies,” nonetheless, such a systematic approach to dealing with preservation issues can only be applauded.

**Preservation Needs in State Archives.** HOWARD P. LOWELL. Albany: National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrations, 1986. 56 p.

This report is the result of a year-long study carried out under the auspices of the National Association of Government Archives and Administrators (NAGARA) with funding from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC). The NAGARA study, which built on information from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) collections survey and the first NHPRC-funded state historical records assessment and reporting projects, was to determine the extent of preservation problems among the state archives in the United States.

The overwhelming results of the study are that there is a preservation problem of massive proportions at the state archives level and that these archives cannot hope to find the resources internally to cope with the requirements of their archival records. State archival programmes with an annual total appropriation of \$18 million are underfunded to meet their statutory responsibilities — responsibilities which have frequently been delegated by the federal government without the necessary resources to carry them out. State archives are understaffed with no extra personnel to work on preservation programmes. State archives staff are usually not trained sufficiently to carry out preservation activities, particularly in the management area. State archives are faced with current holdings of some 50 million cubic feet of records and an annual accessioning rate of a further 45 thousand cubic feet. There is a general feeling of despair and lack of direction among state archivists dealing with the preservation question since “[the] total volume of records receiving preservation treatment during the past five years, however the state archives defines that treatment, is less than the estimated annual accession rate into the state archives.”

Faced with this problem, the NAGARA study recommends a strategy to address preservation in state archives. As might be expected, this programme puts considerable stress on the necessity for solid, long-term planning, NARA playing a leadership role, co-operative efforts among archives and other cultural agencies, training, and funding from federal and private sources as well as state appropriations since the protection of state archival records is really of national significance. The study proposes the creation of a ten-year preservation programme including collections surveying to gather the data necessary for long-range programme planning, improvements to state archival facilities, advanced training for archivists and conservators, expansion of the regional conservation centres, increased funding for reprography projects, holdings maintenance projects to ensure that collections are housed properly and receive the most basic conservation treatments, and an extension of laboratory-based research and development carried out either by NARA or co-ordinated through that agency with the Library of Congress, the National Institute of Conservation, and other preservation research and private sector groups. Finally, the study recommends the establishment of a Committee for Archives Preservation, attached perhaps to NAGARA or to the Society of American Archivists, to promote consultation among archives, to define archival preservation standards, and to

develop a national research agenda. The estimated cost of this ten-year preservation programme is \$134,150,000 in non-state funds (approximately equivalent to what the U.S. Government spends in one and one-quarter hours!) and \$337,650,000 from state appropriations or other sources.

Like the National Research Council report on the preservation of government records, this study is thought-provoking because of the systematic manner in which it attempts to come to grips with a massive problem. Even if the required funding does not quickly become available, state archives across the U.S. at least have a blue-print to follow in designing their preservation programmes and targetting their demands for resources. Canadian archivists faced with similar problems will be interested in the progress of any state archival preservation programme resulting from this study.

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