

on those created in the twentieth century. In addition, there is very little information on dealing with computer generated design and the complications that preserving this type of material will represent. But its greatest flaw is that, as a manual, it lacks basic indexing and pagination that would allow users to find specific information quickly and easily. Although it is well written and well organized, some information would be better presented in tables, and while well illustrated, some of the illustrations could be clearer and more comprehensive. Obviously designed to be regularly updated, its packaging (which lacks a spine and binding) makes it difficult to use and it is therefore less likely to be used with any regularity. However, as a basic manual, it provides useful information for North American and European archivists with little experience in dealing with architectural records. For more experienced archivists it can provide a basis for further study. This book would also prove to be highly useful for institutions that are considering collecting architectural material, as it provides a clear description of the nature of architectural records, their similarities and differences from other archival records, and the problems and rewards that will result from caring for this type of material.

Linda Fraser
Canadian Architectural Archives
University of Calgary

An Ounce of Prevention: Integrated Disaster Planning for Archives, Libraries, and Record Centres, second edition. JOHANNA WELLHEISER and JUDE SCOTT with the assistance of JOHN BARTON. Lanham, MD and London: Scarecrow Press, Inc and the Canadian Archives Foundation, 2002. 304 p. ISBN 0-8108-4176-2.

Disaster planning for any business enables continuing service to clients by avoiding or minimizing losses. Many resources are available in the jargon-rich area of emergency response planning/business resumption planning/disaster contingency planning, but a resource directed specifically at archives and similar organizations provides a useful filter for this information.

This is the second edition of *An Ounce of Prevention: A Handbook on Disaster Contingency Planning for Archives, Libraries, and Record Centres*, edited by John Barton and Johanna Wellheiser and published by the Toronto Area Archivists Group Education Foundation in 1985. In spite of its modest design, the original *An Ounce of Prevention* proved a highly significant contribution to disaster planning literature. At a time when disaster planning for organizations with cultural property was focused on training in collections salvage and recovery procedures to be carried out by conservators, the authors incorporated disaster planning concepts and strategies developed for

business and government and emphasized disaster planning as a management function.

An emphasis on the salvage and recovery of holdings is well founded in disaster planning for archives and museums. The insurance and risk management industry generally assumes that what cannot be rehabilitated adequately by commercial salvage and restoration companies is replaceable. While these measures may serve reasonably well for office furnishings, cultural property is often unique. Archives and museums must expect to take a more active role in salvage and recovery decisions, as our mandates and holdings are often unfamiliar to risk management professionals. Archives and museums also have a lower tolerance for risk than other businesses; even relatively minor damage to a single record or artifact may decrease its value, and restoration may be costly or impossible. Additionally, archives and museums often come under public scrutiny regarding the protection of the significant aspects of their holdings for future generations. Unlike museums, however, archives often hold records which are valuable primarily for their information content. The nature of a business and the significance of its material assets will clearly affect choices in response and recovery strategies.

The change in the subtitle between the two editions indicates a shift from a mainly technical guide to response and recovery with some planning context, to a comprehensive planning process which includes extensive technical information. The second edition follows the clear and practical organization of its predecessor; the information is presented in logical sequence and concludes with appendices of resources and extensive and up-to-date references. Each chapter starts by discussing the purpose and providing an overview of the process for the planning phase, followed by more detailed discussion of each component within the phase, with supporting tables and checklists.

The sequence begins with a look at the international and Canadian context and resources for disaster planning before focussing on the organization level. The authors emphasize that the teams working on disaster planning and disaster response have different roles and require different skill sets. Planning team members need to excel in defining problems and formulating solutions; response team members need to assess and act quickly and effectively under pressure.

Hazard identification, prevention, and reduction are done in the “before” stage of a disaster. Where most disaster planning literature limits itself to fire and water damage scenarios, *An Ounce of Prevention* also includes disaster profiles relevant to current concerns regarding climate change patterns and terrorism. Suggested hazards survey questions consider the facility site, facility structure, construction and renovation activities, operations and services, and hazardous materials identification. Chapter three ends with a discussion of the main disaster prevention strategies, including housekeeping, staff practices, facility management, and security for both traditional format holdings

and electronic records and information technology. Chapter four looks at technical strategies for protection and detection of fire and water in detail and discusses how to integrate protection into storage practices, while Chapter five considers management strategies for preparing the organization. Planning for maintaining control over the assets to be protected includes reviews of: the material composition and related vulnerabilities of the holdings; the protection of vital records such as inventories, finding aids, and acquisition and accession records; strategies for electronic data recovery; and insurance coverage. To aid in establishing recovery priorities, suggestions are given for classification of holdings by relative importance, potential impact of loss, value, replaceability, and recoverability.

Disasters are often forewarned. Chapter six begins with actions which might be taken following warnings of fire, flood, earthquake, severe weather, explosion, power failure and civil disturbance, terrorism or military conflict. (While the World Trade Center towers were burning on 11 September 2001, building ventilation systems were shut down at nearby cultural organizations such as the Museum of Jewish Heritage, preventing tremendous potential damage from disfiguring and hazardous dust. Many organizations took such simple precautionary measures in the minutes prior to evacuation.) Consideration is given to planning for immediate response measures including communicating with staff, setting up alternative headquarters, and preparation for site re-entry. Planning strategies for holdings recovery begin with acquiring expert help to assist in assessing damage, establishing recovery priorities, and assessing recovery options for those priorities. Recovery options for water, fire, and mould damaged records are discussed in detail. Planning strategies for supporting recovery activities include establishing a co-ordination structure, command centre, computer systems support, internal and external communications, security, documentation procedures, and staffing the recovery operations. Preparation for mobilization of the recovery effort includes team instruction and training and procurement of the required equipment, supplies, and services.

Removal, recovery and rehabilitation of holdings and facilities occur in the “after” stages of the disaster, beginning with documentation of damage, relocation of holdings, and the sorting of holdings according to the urgency and nature of the treatment plan. General guidelines are provided for work practices, treatment priorities, care and handling, cleaning, sorting, packing, transporting, and drying of holdings. Additional holdings rehabilitation may be required to render the records useable and accessible once more – a wet distorted document may still be too distorted after drying to be microfilmed or to fit back into a file folder without further damage. Expert help is recommended to assist in assessing the current state of the records, planning options for treatment, establishing short- to long-term rehabilitation priorities, and planning their implementation. Chapter nine is devoted to rehabilitation of facilities and systems following similar strategies.

A consistent emphasis on people – on personal safety, morale, training, and communication as essential plan components – is present throughout *An Ounce of Prevention*. In addition to post-disaster administration, such as reviewing the disaster-related events and activities and planning modifications to the plan, the recovery and rehabilitation of staff is considered. While recognition and appreciation is always important, the authors include in the final chapter a substantial discussion of staff counselling issues such as critical incident stress debriefing and post-traumatic stress disorder.

An Ounce of Prevention concludes with three appendices. The first is the text of the final declaration of the first national summit on Heritage and Risk Preparedness in Canada (1996). The second introduces the services of Emergency Preparedness Canada (now the Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness [OCIPEP]), and the third has twenty smaller font pages of sources for information, assistance, facilities and services, and supplies and equipment.

Weaknesses are relatively slight. The authors emphasize that the content should be adapted and supplemented as appropriate to an organization's circumstances. A commitment of resources from above is implied, but higher-level support for a disaster planning project might not be forthcoming for many reasons; a discussion of possible "Plan B" scenarios, such as a smaller scale or a partial planning process to address some key hazards, might offer encouragement where support from above is weak. Smaller scale organizations may find the scope and detail somewhat overwhelming, although the summaries and checklist boxes should help keep the main ideas in perspective. An emphasis on preservation of holdings is valuable, but archives often carry out additional business functions. In addition to public service, corporate records management, and revenue generating functions such as exhibitions and gift shops may be an equal or greater concern for some organizations, and must be considered in the planning process. While the general planning for these functions is fully supported by the process discussed in *An Ounce of Prevention*, additional business-oriented disaster literature may provide a useful supplement.

Archivists and other heritage professionals are passionate about protecting records. It is almost a tenet of faith that in a disaster we should go in and save the records as soon as possible – to put our responsibilities toward protecting records ahead of our responsibilities to our own health and to our families. It's easy to forget that the purpose of disaster planning is to enable continuing service to clients by avoiding or minimizing losses. Unplanned or poorly planned response may well increase losses and delay resumption of services. It is also easy to be inspired by heroic media images of firefighters and other emergency response professionals and to forget that effective response is a result of substantial planning and allocation of resources to the maintenance of an emergency response infrastructure. Perhaps the most important element of this

edition of *An Ounce of Prevention* is its focus on the planning process. While lacking glamour, the process of disaster planning is fundamental to effective preservation management, and the development of a disaster plan is just one of many preservation strategies which will be informed by this process.

Ala Rekrut
Provincial Archives of Manitoba

RAD Revealed: A Basic Primer on the Rules for Archival Description. WENDY M. DUFF and MARLENE VAN BALLEGOOIE. Ottawa: Canadian Council of Archives, 2001. 133 p. ISBN 0-929115-29-5.

I would like to think that environment does not play directly on literary results, particularly when it comes to book reviews, but reading this key archival resource in the hazy days of a hot prairie summer brought an immediate echo of “good eats, cool treats!” (to paraphrase a well known Canadian summertime advertisement). This succinctly describes a manual hitting the informational spot. *RAD Revealed* provides both sustenance in the form of good, boiled-down *RAD* and cool delights in the form of lead-in questions/chapter summaries that indicate that the *RAD*-smart archivists, who wrote this manual, were empathetically capable of placing themselves in the spot of the *RAD* trainee. Informative but not heavy, this slim tome can easily form the base curriculum of a *RAD* workshop, or several, with the examples turned into overheads, a “summaries contest” with the results revealed in the style of the “Jeopardy” game show, if desired, or a co-ordinated group flip to the *RAD* rules provided in the sidebars. Like a well-planned Dairy Queen Blizzard, the possibilities are relatively endless.

There are a number of glad things about the book. First, it is streamlined, professional, and unsentimental like a manual worth its salt ought to be. There are a number of refreshing “no’s”: no clip-art, no talk-down, and no sense of an automatic plug that leaves the user as a single, technical, unthinking component of the *RAD* process. There is no looking back to how far we have come in ten years – after all this is *RAD Revealed*, not *Brideshead Revisited* – no emotional exasperation at what might have held us back; no sense of watching history lurch toward some repetition of madness, as we try, try, try to grasp what this is about once and for all. Rather, this is animated *RAD*, with strong action verbs in its purpose statement – *to facilitate* understanding, *to discuss*, *to clarify*, and *to explain RAD*, its underlying principles, terms and uses – but it is not a *RAD* replacement. Mission accomplished in an Evelyn Waughian sort of way: no wasted words, no sugar coating.

A tacit thread of professionalism binds the reader of this manual, present in the assumption that there is an archival setting that has made *RAD* its own;