

remind them of the history of our field and the important work done before their own appearance on the scene. A work such as this also encourages us all to maintain a collegial and supportive professional community, one where “everybody knows everybody.”

Laura Millar
Roberts Creek, BC

Moving Archives: The Experiences of Eleven Archivists. JOHN NEWMAN and WALTER JONES, eds. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2002. 124 p. ISBN 0-8108-4500-8.

...the transfer of graves and the movement of archives
may seem unusual, but they have much in common.

Moving Archives: The Experiences of Eleven Archivists is a 2002 release from Scarecrow Press containing eleven essays dealing with the trials and tribulations of moving archives, most of which were initially presented at a joint meeting of the Northwest Archivists, the Conference of Intermountain Archivists, the Society of Rocky Mountain Archivists, and the Northwest Oral History Association in 2001. It is fairly short (124 pages) and easy to read, with a brief preface, and an “about the contributors” section. Unfortunately, it has no index.

Nine of the eleven essays recount the moves of university libraries with their archival collections, specifically the University of Utah’s Library and Special Collections Department; the Colorado State University Archives; the Northwestern University Archives; the Brigham Young University Library; and the University of Colorado at Boulder’s American Music Research Center. While these essays do dominate the publication, the remaining two essays vary slightly in topic, recounting the emergency move of the Rhode Island State Archives and Public Records Administration records, and the move of religious archives such as the Redemptorists’ archives move in Denver.

The primary focus of the book is, of course, moving archives or, as the editors put it, “to provide an initial piece of professional literature in what we hope will become a growing body of modern information about moving archives.” Moving archives – the task, is a challenging endeavor. By implication, it usually involves the move to a new space, and the need for some, if not considerable, facility planning; the management of a sometimes large budget, both for the new facility and for the move itself; and the move of staff and accompanying infrastructure such as desks, phones, computers etc., as well as the move of holdings – the records and books. In short, there is much to discuss and explore in a book on the subject of moving archives. Unfortunately,

Moving Archives – the book, doesn't always achieve what the editors suggest it sets out to do.

To be sure, some common themes, practices, and issues do emerge. The need for intellectual control of the materials, and the implications thereof, is something that most writers discuss. "We needed to maintain control in such a way that we could always access individual items on an as-called-for basis," writes Joanne Mattern in her account of the move of the Delaware Public Archives. The need to establish, or in some cases re-establish, intellectual control of the holdings is directly related to the first question often asked by movers, architects, facility planners, and the like: "what do you have to move and how much of it is there?" Knowing what you've got, how much you have of it, and where you're going to put it, are really at the crux of any archives move.

Another common theme identified in the essays is the importance of communication. As Walter Jones writes, regarding the University of Utah move of the J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections Department, it is an "...absolute necessity [to co-ordinate] with all people and departments involved in any part of the move...." Further to this, other essays identify the need for communication with staff about what is happening and when; with users about what is happening and, in particular, what the impact on their research will be; with planners regarding space requirements and the particular environmental needs of the archive or library; with the movers regarding the handling and placement of the materials; and even with others outside the particular move. In his account of the move of the Brigham Young University Library, Russell Taylor writes, "call people who have gone through the process and ask them questions – lots of questions...."

The notion of "planning" in every sense of the word is a recurring theme of the book, being invoked throughout the essays, such as in John Newman's observation that "Planning and preparation are essential...." Unfortunately, planning in either a broad or a specific sense is rarely spelled out or systematically explored for the reader.

What do you need to plan? You need to plan both the logistics of the move and the physical and intellectual control of the materials from point A to point B. The handling procedures and move include requirements such as moving truck specifications and an emergency plan – what happens if there is an accident on the freeway *en route* to the new location? In short, there are some fairly specific and detailed things that need to be planned when moving archives, and the case study/anecdotal nature of many of the essays in the book do not really lend themselves to this kind of analysis. This is unfortunate because moving archives is one of the few things that not many of us have done despite perhaps many years and a variety of professional experiences, and a text which systematically explores the issue, would be truly helpful and would indeed make a significant contribution to the professional literature.

In his preface to the book, John Newman writes, “it says something about the nature of the members of our profession, at least of those who are tasked to manage large moves, that everyone agreed we should emphasize practical matters and avoid much attempt to articulate theory.” Fair enough; I’m not sure what a theory of moving would look like, but I appreciate the emphasis on the practical nature of the task to be done. However, where the editors let the readers down is in not teasing out the commonalities of moving archives, bringing together in a more coherent fashion the similarities in the move process and experience. A move process is well enough articulated throughout the book by the contributors but editorially it lacks any contextual perspective, one that would have added significantly to both the reader’s understanding of the specific moves recounted in the book, and to the more practical objectives of the editors, especially for those of us who may one day be tasked with moving archives.

Finally, what are the similarities of the movement of archives and graves? “Both are jobs,” writes Monte Kniffen in his essay “The Redemptorists: Denver Province,” “that take months of planning and careful coordination of many people, and both are tasks that should not be undertaken by people who are afraid of physical activity and getting dirty.” To be sure, some of the same things could be said when it come to editing books.

Wayne Murdoch
Provincial Archives of Alberta

Managing Records: A Handbook of Principles and Practice. ELIZABETH SHEPHERD and GEOFFREY YEO. London: Facet Publishing, 2003. 318 p. ISBN 1-85604-370-3.

In *Managing Records: A Handbook of Principles and Practice*, Elizabeth Shepherd and Geoffrey Yeo set out to provide guidelines for “establishing, maintaining or restructuring a records management programme” (p. xiii). Their hope is that the book will “be of value to experienced practitioners as well as newcomers to the field” (p. ix), and although *Managing Records* will definitely prove more useful to novices than it will to veterans, the authors are largely successful in achieving their overall aims.

Managing Records may be most impressive for its broad scope: in addition to covering basic principles, Shepherd and Yeo introduce virtually all areas of practice that readers might expect to be covered in a guidebook of this type, including appraisal and retention of records, access and retrieval, storage and preservation, and a range of other topics. In many cases this broad coverage prevents in-depth discussion of important issues, as the authors are careful to disclaim at the outset. However, the extensive, topically-organized bibliogra-