

**Shauna Hicks**, *Your family history archives: a brief introduction*, Unlock the Past, Modbury North, South Australia, 2010. 40 pp. ISBN 9780980776003. \$10.00 (paperback); and **Shauna Hicks**, *What was the voyage really like: a brief guide to researching convict and immigrant voyages to Australia and New Zealand*, Unlock the Past, Modbury North, South Australia, 2010. 40 pp. ISBN 9780980776010. \$10 (paperback).

These two short guides are the first instalment of a projected series from Unlock the Past primarily targeting family history audiences, but also of potential interest to people seeking brief introductions to archival research and the preservation of collections.

*Your family history archives* is very easy to read, strikes a friendly tone and is completely suited to its intended purpose and audience as an introduction to caring for family archives. The book covers a wide range of topics relating to the care and preservation of family archives, with a level of detail that is appropriate to a brief introduction. There are also references for the reader who wishes to delve further on a particular matter. I particularly liked the author's own personal reflections woven into the text which humanise many of tasks at hand and show how even a professional archivist will sometimes struggle to keep their collection in good order and provide adequate care.

Part one of the book defines 'family history archives' and advice for how records in this kind of archive should be organised. Part two covers a range of topics dealing with care of archives, from storage to preservation and conservation, and even planning to survive disasters. Part three provides advice on how to ensure that all the work and effort that has gone into creating and preserving a family archives can be shared and survive once the family archivist passes away. The book has three appendices that offer further handy advice to family archivists: a list of archival suppliers; a list of conservators; and the Records Management Association of Australasia's Personal Continuity Plan.

*What was the voyage really like* takes a very similar approach to exploring the various sources for discovering information about the journeys made to Australia and New Zealand since the eighteenth century. The book focuses on the transportation of convicts as well as immigrants making their own passage. While no specific collection is the focus of the research advice offered in this book, it provides a good basic orientation particularly for people interested in doing family history research in state, territory and federal archives. As someone who works in a reading room, I can see a potential for this guide (and a number of others like it on related topics) as a way of assisting first-time researchers to come to grips with the range of records that they may be able to access on convict and immigrant voyages to Australia and New Zealand.

The book begins with an historical introduction that explains the reasons why people came to Australia, the kinds of motivations and circumstances behind their undertaking such a perilous voyage. The next section provides advice on finding out which ship someone arrived on, followed by a section that focuses on sources for finding images of ships and, failing that, information about their physical dimensions and characteristics. The largest section focuses on sources that can provide information about the voyages themselves, what the voyage being investigated was like, both through secondary and primary sources. The final two sections look at ways of finding out about shipwrecks and the fate of other ships.

Both books include a list of abbreviations, as well as select bibliographies, and short indexes to the topics discussed. They are good value for money and make excellent introductory texts.

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