

## Archives Synod Report 2021

I ended last years report indicating that I was writing it at the beginning of Level 4 Lockdown, four weeks and possibly more with no access to the archives building, it's enough to create sleepless nights.

Determined that there would indeed be no sleepless nights, I cleared out the boot of the car, turned down the back seats and set out for Grove Road. What would keep me busy for four weeks? Indexing was obviously the answer and thanks to the hard work of the volunteers there were pages and pages of indexing to be inputted. So I collected the exercise books, and some of the old clippings books and a large Register or four and set off home. So, the next working day I pulled up a chair, put the laptop on the card table, lined up the books and got on with it. The result has once again been the saving of hours of searching. Indexes hasten access for all.

The most unfortunate side of COVID has been the need to suspend the volunteers for the year. Moving in and out of Lockdown levels was not conducive to continuity of work, or of their health. They are kept up to date via email, and the situation will be re- assessed in 2022.

Zoom meetings became an import way of keeping in contact with the Anglican Centre, the Anglican Archives and History Committee and the national Anglican Archivist, Judith Bright. The emails of course kept on coming from researchers overseas, and with remote access it was possible to provide answers to some of their requests.

Once let out of lockdown, the researchers returned to Grove Road. They must have all been working on family trees and planning their tricky questions. When a comparison is made between the 2019 and 2020 calendar years, there is very little difference: In 2019 the archives were open for 41 public days for 46 researchers and in 2020 there were 37 public days for 48 researchers. After lockdown the archives were available via appointment on Friday as well as Wednesday for a limited time.

Requests concerning cemeteries, land sales, trust monies, architectural plans have all arrived from staff this year. I am always wary of a request which begins " I know you are snowed under but...." However chasing clues through minutes and correspondence are the stock in trade of an Anglican Archivist, with the occasional foray into Vestry Minutes when Parishes have "forgotten" to clarify the reason for a decision.

Cardale House necessitates the planning for another move. That will make 5 moves in the last 10 years: Hereford Street to the containers, to the warehouse at Opawa, with part of the collection then moving to the Cultural Recovery Centre at Wigram and then combining these latter two locations via many trips in a van to Grove Road. Each time there is more material to move, shelves to relocate and boxes to pack. The appointment of Amy Ryan towards the end of 2020 two Mondays a month has eased the practical side of the move. Folder and box making, de framing are an essential part of the process and increasingly she is working on packing the collections.

It will be a pleasure to be back with the rest of the Anglican Centre, even though I suspect it will be a little tight!!