# AERI Plenary: Grand Challenges in the Archival and Recordkeeping Field Redux

DeNeve Plaza Room A&B

Monday, July 9, 2012

9:00 am – 10:30 pm

Building on a plenary at AERI 2011 and workshops in AERI 2012, Sue McKemmish (Monash University) leads discussion on developing research and education agendas that address grand societal challenges.

AERI began an initiative in 2010 to develop an archival and recordkeeping research agenda associated with societal grand challenges. The first three columns of the Table below provide examples of societal grand challenges and associated archival challenges which were workshopped by AERI participants in the 2011 plenary.

In the 2012 plenary, we will map challenges in particular areas of archival research against the societal and archival challenges. The fourth column of the Table provides an example mapping of recordkeeping metadata and archival description research challenges. The mapping is an exemplar relating to one stream of recordkeeping and archival research.

In the plenary we will explore similar mappings for other streams of archival research, e.g. recordkeeping informatics, appraisal, digital curation and preservation, community archiving, theory building, modelling participatory archives, recordkeeping and archival law and policies.

Developing an agenda based on these kinds of mappings would both build upon and extend current research efforts while supporting various grand challenge areas.

The mapping underscores the fact that while research in the field has expanded, diversified and matured over the past 25 years, there is a vastly wider expanse of potential and valuable engagement that has not taken place to date. The goal of the AERI initiative is to use this identification and mapping of challenges to identify and promote research and research collaborations capable of making significant and meaningful contributions across this global and societal expanse.

**TABLE 1: Grand Societal Challenges and Archival Challenges**

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| **Area** | **Societal Challenge** | **Archival Challenge** | **Metadata Challenges** |
| Climate Change | Building a green economy | Building an integrated global archive of records relating to climate change | Interoperability of Metadata Schemas and Encoding Schemes |
| Peace and Security | Decolonisation | Decolonising the archive, archival functionality and recordkeeping practice | Developing **community-centered, value and culture-sensitive Metadata Schema and tools** |
| Development | Democratisation | Transforming archival access | Transforming current Archival Access Metadata Frameworks and approaches to enable citizens to participate in the constitution of the archives and to fully exercise their rights to access archival sources of information. |
| Corporate Governance | Accountability and transparency | Developing recordkeeping and archival structures, strategies and tactics that support accountability and transparency | Ensuring that Recordkeeping and Archival Metadata and Frameworks & Standards fully support accountability and transparency requirements |
| Human Rights | Enabling Indigenous peoples, oppressed and marginalised communities to exercise rights of self-determination | Building participatory archival models that support the exercise of cultural, information and memory rights as human rights | Building Metadata Frameworks that support participatory archival models |
| Social Justice and Inclusion | Bridging the digital and information divides | Bridging the archival divide | Redeveloping mainstream archival Metadata Frameworks, Standards and Tools to be more inclusive of the requirements and diverse needs of our local, national and global communities |
| Health & Well Being  | Addressing major health and well being issues, e.g. HIV/AIDS, malaria control, sexual violence | Developing recordkeeping and archival structures, strategies and tactics that support global health & well being initiatives | Ensuring that Recordkeeping and Archival Metadata and Frameworks & Standards fully support |
| Resilient Communities and Cultures | Recognising and valuing local community cultures and knowledge as critical components in building strong, healthy communities | Supporting independent, sustainable community-based archives | Developing **community-centered, value and culture-sensitive Metadata Schema and tools** |
| Information Society and Technological Change | Addressing the complexity and plurality of the worlds of recorded information in online cultures | Developing global and local archival structures, strategies and tactics to address the “infinitely expanding … continuum of recorded information that is engulfing us” | Investigating how Metadata Frameworks, Standards and Tools can be designed to address complexity and pluralisation.  |

**STREAMS IN ARCHIVAL RESEARCH**

1. Adapting/building frameworks for theorizing about the Archive
2. Archival access & use
3. Archival frameworks, structures, strategies, tactics (laws, policies, standards, practice)
4. Archival research and education (including infrastructure)
5. Archival theory, concepts and model building
6. Appraisal
7. Community archiving
8. Cultural heritage informatics
9. Digital curation and preservation
10. Participatory models of archiving
11. Recordkeeping informatics
12. Recordkeeping metadata and archival description