

# Dream INTO ACTION

Working in a library was something I dreamed of as a child. I had a passion for reading, knowledge and organisation, so I knew this would be the career for me.

My first job, as a graduate librarian, involved rotating around different sections of a university library. This was a great introduction to the workings of an academic library and gave me a chance to identify the areas best suited to my skills and interest.

I volunteered to work on a project producing a box list for a small archival collection based on an historical education program in South Australia. I loved looking through the old documents and describing the contents of the folders. Working on this project introduced me to the archival collections held by the university and piqued my interest in an area of information management I knew little about. In the hope that someday I'd be able to work

in this area, I endeavoured to find out as much about preservation and archiving practices as I could.

I now find myself three years into my career as the archivist in the Bob Hawke Prime Ministerial Library (BHPML) at the University of South Australia. Our library includes several archival collections with a political and South Australian focus, supported by a small monograph and journal collection.

I have found I enjoy archival work perhaps more than library work. This is probably due to the nature of the role – I get to deal with a lot of old material and spend my days organising, describing and digitising it. I love the opportunities for discovery and insight into our collective past.

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I work mainly with documents and photographs as well as with some items of realia. I rarely deal with books and although I do spend a great deal of time at the computer I am also involved in a lot of physical work. I have found that the skills I developed in my library career, particularly in classification, research and metadata management are readily applicable to my work in the archives, despite the obvious differences in theory.

Working in archives and joining a professional association (the Australian Society of Archivists) has expanded my knowledge of the opportunities available for information workers but remaining connected to ALIA is also important to me. I volunteer on the ALIA New Generation Advisory Committee which allows me to contribute an 'outside the library' perspective to our experiences of the information industry as new professionals. I now feel the whole galleries, libraries, archives and museums (GLAM) sector has opened up to me and I am more positive about future opportunities as I feel there are multiple career pathways available.

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