

ICTM Archive

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History

The ICTM Archive, currently housed at the National Library of Australia (Canberra, Australia) consists of Council records since its inception in 1947 as the International Folk Music Council (IFMC) in London. These records previously passed from one Secretariat to the next. At the time of writing, the records in the ICTM Archive end at 2005, the end of the Secretariat at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).¹

The records resided at the Department of Music, Columbia University (New York, USA), from 1981 to 2001, when Dieter Christensen was secretary general. Following the sudden resignation of Christensen as secretary general at the world conference in 2001, one of the urgent tasks of the new secretary general, Anthony Seeger, was to negotiate the release and effect the transportation of these unorganized records from Columbia University to UCLA.

The Council then began to cast around for a permanent location for the records as a permanent archive. It eschewed the United States as a country where the Archive could be established on the grounds that, as a world organization whose membership resided substantially outside the United States, and more of its activities occur outside the United States, it was more appropriate for the Archive to reside elsewhere.

In 2005, Stephen Wild approached the National Library of Australia (NLA) as a possible repository. The initial approach to the manuscript librarian was rejected, but a second approach in the same year to the curator of music of the NLA, Robyn Holmes, proved fruitful. Holmes convened a meeting between the director general of the NLA, Jan Fullerton; Seeger, who was visiting Australia; Wild; and the acting manuscript librarian. Fullerton accepted the proposal for the Archive to be established in the NLA. A contributing factor may have been that the ICTM Secretariat was due to move to Canberra in 2006.

After the Secretariat was transferred to the Australian National University (ANU) in 2006, the records were dispatched from UCLA to the NLA. At the expense of the ICTM, a cataloguer was employed by the NLA to organize the material for user access. A summary and the catalogue were placed on the NLA website under the catalogue title of “Records of the International Council for Traditional Music, 1948–2009 [manuscript].”²

The Archive was launched at the NLA by the president of the ICTM, Adrienne Kaeppler, in February 2008 on the occasion of a regional conference of the UNESCO programme “Memory of the World.” The launch was accompanied by an exhibition of the Archive highlights, including a letter from Ralph Vaughn Williams, explaining his non-attendance at a world conference due to his impending visit to Antarctica.

At the end of the Canberra Secretariat (2011), Wild made a second deposit of material to the Archive. This material consisted of the records of the UCLA Secretariat (2001–2005), and included records of the evaluations of recommendations for the Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity—a precursor to the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention—conducted by ICTM for UNESCO. These masterpieces were incorporated into the Representative List of the 2003 Convention 2003. Subsequent records of the ICTM may be added to the Archive.

Access and use

The Archive is composed of two parts: MS 10017 and MS Acc11.158. The first part consists of records up to 2001 (to the end of the period of the Columbia University Secretariat); and MS Acc11.158 consists of records from the period 2001–2005 (the period of the UCLA Secretariat).

In general, the contents of the Archive are open for research purposes, and permission is required from

1 Documentation from 2006 on is digitalized and for the most part accessible on demand from the Secretariat.

2 The collection’s catalogue record is located at <https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/3661782>.

ICTM for publication. The exception to this is the contents of box 1 under MS Acc11.158, which has been placed under embargo until 2033. These are the records of the evaluations of recommendations for the Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity referred to in the previous section.

All records are part of the Special Collections of the National Library. Access is provided by the library in a dedicated reading room. No digital access is available, as the cost of digitization of the physical records was determined to be prohibitive. As Special Collections are housed off-site, advance notice to the National Library is needed for access.

Content

The Archive collection is housed in a total of 104 boxes, of which the original deposit constitutes 98 boxes. The second deposit, covering the UCLA Secretariat (2001–2005), constitutes the remaining six boxes.

The collection includes office files; Executive Board, UNESCO, and International Music Council papers, committees, and liaison-officer supporting papers; legal papers relating to governance and administration; financial records; correspondence and other papers relating to the colloquia and conferences held in various countries over the life of the Council. The office files comprise the major part of the collection and include administration and financial records, and files relating to Council publications. Publications, sound recordings, and conference proceedings do not form part of this collection.

Catalogued under the title of “Records of the International Council for Traditional Music, 1948–2009 [manuscript],” the Archive records are organized by way of series and files. The list of contents is easily accessible through the finding aid, “Guide to the Records of International Council for Traditional Music” on the NLA webpage.³ The files are placed in boxes numbered according to the container list in the table of contents. Each file is given a descriptive title, e.g., “Status of International Council for Traditional Music, 1990–2001.”

The first deposit, MS 10017, has been classified into eight series by the NLA. Each series represents a subject, as follows (quoted directly from the NLA website):

Series 1. Papers relating to the Executive Board of the International Council for Traditional Music, 1951–2001

Series 2. National Committees and Liaison Officers papers and correspondence, 1951–2001

Series 3. Papers relating to UNESCO and International Music Council, 1960–1998

Series 4. International Council for Traditional Music files from the 1960s, 1948–1990

Series 5. Records and correspondence, 1969–2001

Series 6. Financial records, 1969–1999

Series 7. Memberships files and records, 1950–1996

Series 8. Papers relating to publications of the International Council for Traditional Music and publicity, 1949–1995

Each series refers to subject classifications, not to the actual files and boxes. File numbers in series 1, 2, and 3 are sequential within each series. Note that in the container list, the column heading of folders/pieces refers to file numbers mentioned under the series classifications. For example, “Secretary’s reports, 1972–1974 (File 4)” may be located from the container list as residing in box 51; while “Correspondence [group and separate files labelled] VA – VZ and Vaughan Williams, 1949–1967 (File 211)” is in box 50.

Some files are identified by sub-series numbers in addition to file numbers; therefore, the associated box numbers can only be found by including the sub-series numbers. For example, “Executive Board meetings minutes, 1986–1987 (Sub-series 1.5, File 15)” is found in box 2.

In summary, the material in the second deposit, MS Acc11.158, for the period 2001–2005, is similar to MS 10017 in content classification. However, the series are unnumbered:

Series. Records and ICH/Masterpieces Program

Series. UNESCO General; Participation Program

Series. Executive Board, General Assembly, Publishing

Series. Secretariat Papers

Series. Conference, Colloquia. Study Groups, National and Regional Committees

Series. Financial Records

As noted above, the Archive is physically stored offsite. Therefore, users need to request to examine individual boxes related to selected material before visiting the NLA, so that these files could be delivered to the Special Reading Room.

Highlights of contents

We do not intend to write a history of the Council, but, rather, just to describe some highlights of the contents which may interest readers.

DOCUMENTS RELATING TO MAUD KARPELES

Among the documents there is a typed script of a broadcast by Frank Howes in tribute to the IFMC

3 Presently found at: <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-415329506/findingaid>.

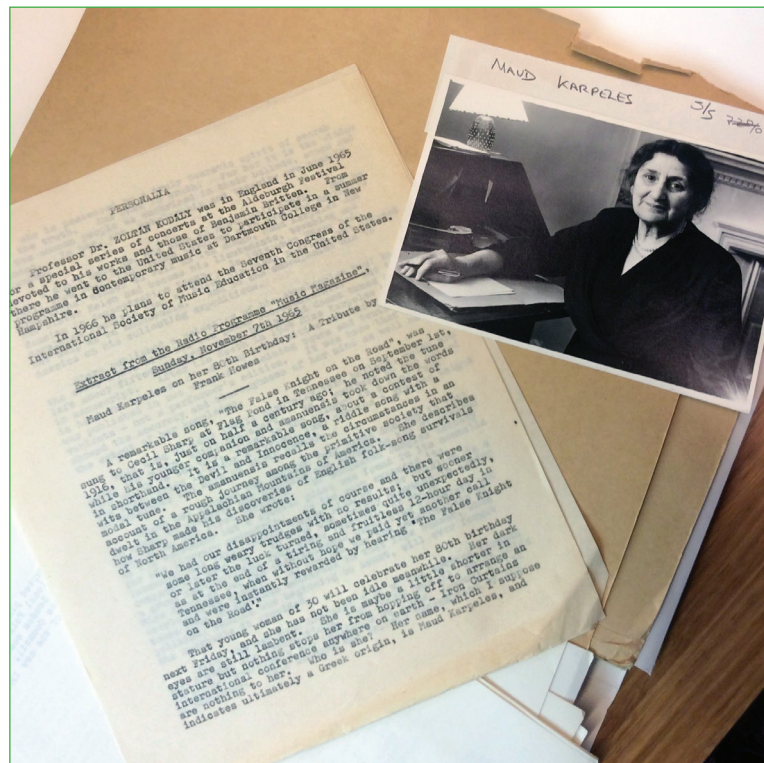


Figure 1. Extract from the Radio Programme “Music Magazine,” Sunday, 7 November 1965, “Karpeles on her 80th Birthday: A Tribute by Frank Howes,” with photograph of Maud Karpeles.

founder and honorary president, Maud Karpeles, on her eightieth birthday (see figure 1). This was part of the the radio programme “Music Magazine,” broadcast on 7 November 1965 on BBC Network 3. Frank Howes sings praises of Karpeles’s qualities as a scholar/researcher, saying “in her, art, scholarship and tenacity are equally blended.” Also included in that tribute is an account of Karpeles’s tireless involvement in Cecil Sharp’s research on English folk dance and survivals of English folk songs in the Appalachian Mountains, USA. The tribute highlights her involvement in the International Festival of Folk Dance (London, 1935), as well as her role in the beginnings of IFMC.

DOCUMENTS RELATING TO ZOLTÁN KODÁLY

There is a letter dated 20 January 1960 from Karpeles to Zoltán Kodály thanking him for accepting the position of president of IFMC. The letter mentions increasing subscription costs, not for individual members, but for national committees, and also notes a grant from the Ralph Vaughn Williams Trust. The finances of the IFMC are said to be in fine condition.

LETTER FROM ALEXANDER RINGER

This letter of 14 March 1968 raises concerns about the commitment of the IFMC Board to the proposed new journal publication, referred to by Alexander Ringer as

a yearbook. Ringer was the editor of the first two issues of the *Yearbook of the International Folk Music Council*, which began publication in 1969.

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN T. G. H. STREHLOW AND MAUD KARPELES

A number of letters exchanged between T. G. H. Strehlow and Karpeles also exist in the Archive. They concern the publication of an article on Australian Aboriginal music by Strehlow following the invitation of Karpeles. Strehlow was an early specialist on Central Australian Aboriginal music. He grew up in a Central Australian Aboriginal mission and was fluent in the Aboriginal language Arrernte (also called Aranda). Two of his books were *Aranda Traditions* (1947) and *Songs of Central Australia* (1971). His first research assistant was Catherine Ellis, another well-known Australian ethnomusicologist.

Conclusion

The ICTM Archive in its current form contains records collected, often unsystematically, by each Secretariat and passed on to the next. There was never an archive policy, and undoubtedly, there are many gaps in the record. Eventually this collection grew so large that it became imperative to preserve it properly. Despite the

undoubtedly incomplete record, the Archive is a vast repository for the history of the Council. Enterprising historians will find it a rich source of documentation for the history of IFMC/ICTM, as has been the case for writing a number of the chapters in this volume.

There needs to be an archive policy to ensure a systematic and comprehensive collection and safekeeping of material documenting the history of the Council from its very beginnings onwards. Such a policy might include the digitization of subsequent contributions to the Archive, a call for significant historical documents to be held by the current Secretariat for inclusion in its final deposit, and the establishment of a fund dedicated to the digitization of the current records.

Such a policy should require that at the conclusion of each Secretariat, the records passed on to it by the previous Secretariat be deposited in the Archive in a timely manner. It must be noted here that the National Library of Australia will not accept individual or only a handful of documents, but instead requires a substantial deposit at any one time. Hence the need for each Secretariat to maintain carefully all documents regarding the organization's activities during its period of responsibility, and to organize the records in an accessible manner.

References cited

- Strehlow, T. G. H. 1947. *Aranda Traditions*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.
- , 1971. *Songs of Central Australia*. Sydney: Angus and Robertson.