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International Association of Sound Archives
AUSTRALIAN BRANCH

31st December , 1980

P.O. Box 1787

CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601

Dr. J.K. Ling
Director , South Australian Museum
North Terrace
Adelaide South Australia 5000

Dear Dr. Ling ,

I have been interested to learn of the recent transfer to tape in the South Australian Museum of your collections of early cylindrical recordings . This is indeed an important step towards the long-term preservation of these fragile audio materials and one of which members of this Association thoroughly approve.

Last month , when in Adelaide for a IASA meeting , I visited the Museum and discussed these recordings with your Senior Curator, Mr. Graham Pretty . For many years, and more especially during the four years spent as Research Officer in Ethnomusicology on the staff of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies , I have been acutely aware of the problems and difficulties involved in making material of this kind accessible to interested listeners.

Though now officially retired , I am still quite heavily committed in a number of areas of activity. Despite this , I have indicated to Mr.Pretty that I would be willing to lend a hand at some future time in preparing your audio collections for access. This would entail the preparation of auditory catalogues based on the timing (with a tape clock) of individual song items. Mr. Pretty agrees that the material must be evaluated ,or categorised, as well catalogued. At the outset , I have suggested two general categories: 'open' and 'closed' , the latter reserved for bona fide researchers.

Eleven LP discs/cassettes of my own recordings of Aboriginal music have been issued to date and at present I am engaged in the preparation of three more. I am well aware of the need for adequate cataloguing prior to such work. I have outlined to Mr. Pretty some of the necessary steps in the cataloguing of field-recorded Aboriginal music. Should you wish me to take this matter any further with him , I should be glad to do so.

Yours sincerely,

Alice Moyle