

Entry type: Resource
Entry ID: AWH002789

Correspondence files, National Headquarters

Repository The University of Melbourne Archives

Reference [2015.0033](#)

Date Range 1914 - 1995

Quantity 803 units 136.5 m

Access Part restricted

Details

[Red Cross Archives Series reference: NO33]??Note that three separate content lists for this series are available to researchers: 1 – in box (unit) number order, largely reflecting the order in which the series was received from the Red Cross; 2 in approximate chronological order; 3 in alphabetical order of file titles.??This series documents the very wide range of activities of the National Office (formerly known as Headquarters , Australian Headquarters or National Headquarters) of the Australian Red Cross from its formation in 1914 as the Australian Branch of the British Red Cross Society. These activities include: administration, personnel, buildings and equipment, finance, the Blood Transfusion Service (see below), the Tracing Bureau, Red Cross Youth, shipping and stores, public relations, community services, handcrafts, field force/personnel, medical, voluntary services, development/international programmes, fundraising, awards, international humanitarian law, health and safety education, disaster services and correspondence with the Australian divisions (states) and with the International Committee of the Red Cross/Red Crescent.??Note that the series contains only a few records of the Blood Transfusion Service ('Blood Bank') Blood Services were operated by each state/division until 1996 at which time the semi-autonomous national Blood Service was established. Some correspondence of the Victorian Blood Service may be found in series 2015.0026 (Executive Correspondence of the Victorian Division), however it is possible that some records have been removed from these series and transferred to the Blood Service following its nationalisation in 1996.??From about 1940 the Red Cross National Office used a three-part hierarchical file classification system. A new file was created for each activity or topic each year. For instance, there are several files with the classification Correspondence Miscellaneous Braille Watches , each of these containing one year s worth of correspondence on this topic. Although elements of the system evolved over the years and terminology changed, it was still in use in the mid 1990 s by which time it had been incorporated into a computer-supported file control system. Some, but not all, pre-1940 correspondence files appear to have subsequently been arranged according to the post-1940 hierarchical system. Index cards and computer printouts which supported the system have been transferred to the University of Melbourne Archives as series 2015.0032. These provide a list of the file headings and clues as to the workings of the system. However a full listing of file titles was generated by the Red Cross Archives prior to transfer to the University of Melbourne in 2015 and this data, rather than the control records, is recommended as a first point of access to the correspondence in series 2015.0033.??This series was transferred from the Red Cross Archives to the University of Melbourne Archives in 2015. It is arranged in two distinct parts which are not strictly in chronological sequence:??Boxes (Units) 0001-0447: The bulk of correspondence dates from 1914 to 1970 but includes some later files. Some correspondence files have been bound into volumes or lever-arch folders and the classification system coding and file titles have been annotated on the spine of each volume or folder. There are often many different topics covered within one volume. For the purposes of archival description the titles of these volumes have been reconstructed by University of Melbourne Archives staff using the original classification system codes and headings where possible. The full range of file titles/topics covered by a volume is listed in the description column on the Records Description List.??Boxes (Units) 0448- 0791: The bulk of correspondence dates from 1951-1959 and 1970-1995. Correspondence is unbound and in files (in some instances original files have been replaced and file titles have been copied onto these replacement folders). Original file titles have been retained, however for clarity, elements of the classification system hierarchy have been added as prefixes to the file title.??Researchers should note that under the Geneva Conventions Act 1957 protections govern the use of the Red Cross emblem. For further information see Archives staff.

Author Details
Helen Morgan

Created 17 August 2015
Last modified 30 December 2017