BULLETIN OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE ARCHIVES





No. 9, OCTOBER 2001

Time Capsules

cross the years, archivists have searched for meaningful analogies to succinctly express what archives are all about. This need to explain has intensified as the terms 'archive' and 'archiving' took on new meanings in the

worlds of information technology and European literary theory. Among the most frequently used concepts have been social memory and the survival and transmission of traces from the past. For instance, archives have been regarded as a 'bridge' between the past and the future, but also as a culturally significant legacy bequeathed from the past to future generations.

Similarly, the symbolism of Janus the two faced Roman god of gates and beginnings whose head looked forwards and backwards is popular, the International Council on Archives for example using Janus as the name of its main professional journal.

In addition to archivists'need for the apt analogy, the often arcane terminology of recordkeeping itself has been recycled. Thus in Barry Jones' Knowledge Nation report, he calls for a 'cadastre' (or national inventory) of our natural and human resources. Originally a list of land titles included in William the

Conqueror's Doomsday book, cadastre's contemporary use has returned it to prominence and prompted Jones to be accused of 'jargon snobbery'—itself a wonderful new phrase! But undoubtedly the best recent adaptation has been 'time capsule'. With the

latest five yearly population count held in early August, Australians were given the choice of having their answers kept in the National Archives for eventual release in 99 years. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the project name 'Time Capsule' was used because its research showed 'the general public understood the concept of a time capsule to be information placed in an inaccessible place, and subse-

THILE IN POULE

Example of time capsule seal and contents: adapted from the Fort Worth historical project.

quently released at a predetermined time in the future'.

In some ways, it was a good choice; it suggested to the popular imagination something important which must be sealed for a long time but intended from the very start to be released eventually for all to see. The National Archives itself has fostered a similar idea with its annual release of cabinet papers once 30 years has expired, and there are also many collections at the University Archives which are currently restricted for a set limit of years or until after someone's death.

Continued page 2

from page 1 The second relevant aspect of time capsules is the selectivity of their contents. While historically a bizarre range of things have been put into time capsules, typically, they contain objects such as coins, documents, messages, publications and in fact anything which 'encapsulates'; anything judged to be representative of the times. The limitation on the size of the capsule is a constraint that forces choice, somewhat like having to grab a few treasured possessions if one's house is threatened by fire. Equally, archives are those relatively few collections we identify from the mass of documentary materials which governments, organisations, businesses and individuals create and accumulate which are earmarked for consultation both now and in the future. Even with the census form, we were limited strictly to the questions asked; there was definitely no invitation to write additional messages or enclose photos for the Australians of August 2100.

Thirdly, time capsules and archives alike are launched out into the future in the confident expectation that their design and location will ensure preservation. There are now on-line time capsules (essentially messages for the future), but again, typically they are stored in airtight canisters, stainless steel now replacing glass, which usually are then buried underneath a building, sometimes even replacing an earlier one when constructing extensions. Here, sadly, suggesting a parallel with archives has unfortunate connotations and expectations. A trove of treasure rests buried in a long forgotten dank musty basement or underground vault or crypt, until mined or unearthed.

Certainly the entombed capsule should be airtight, just as air quality and minimal light are crucial features of an archival repository. Water is another threat to both time capsules and archives. Thus last year a 40-year-old Museum of Victoria capsule was disinterred at the Royal Exhibition Building, only to reveal the failure of the 'guaranteed' waterproof plywood

container had turned its contents into sludge, save for portions of a phone book, a toy Dodge car and a bottle of wine. The census forms on the other hand will be microfilmed after being digitised for statistical processing, and stored in the National Archives' climate controlled vaults, above ground. Interesting too that we are more confident we will be able to read microfilm in 99 years time, but continue looking for enduring solutions to IT hardware and software obsolescence.

Occasionally burying time capsules has also been likened to casting a message in a bottle into the sea. Here the end point is indeterminate, and time capsules — and archives — can be lost for centuries and only surface accidentally. When the Athenaeum Theatre in Collins Street was refurbished in 1991, it took four days to locate the 1892 and 1924 capsules! There have certainly been instances of lost capsules accidentally discovered during demolition of buildings with the location map inside; embarrassingly, archivists have also been know to include the only list of a collection in the first box.

The approaching 150th anniversary of the University will doubtless encourage attempts to identify the key mementos providing a representative 'slice' of the institution as at 2003. They will not be the first however. In 1981 a 30cm x 1 metre cylinder capsule was placed in one of the hollow piers of the vaulting under the Council Chamber. It contained documents relating to the expansion that followed the 1970 Master Plan Report, a University Calendar, a staff list, photos and coins. But whatever one would select, we know that a larger representation of over a kilometre of official documents has slowly been compiled and is now gently time travelling, above ground, in our repository in Brunswick. ❖

Michael Piggott University Archivist

UMA Bulletin

Editor: Liz Agostino Layout: Jacqui Barnett Produced by: the Communications and Marketing Section, Information Division ISSN 1320 5838

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Opening Hours: Mon, Tue, Thu, 9.00 am–5.00 pm; Wed 9.00 am–9.45 pm Summer Opening Hours: Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri 9.00 am–5.00 pm; Wed 9.00 am–8.45 pm

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Architectural Drawings at the Archives

A Listing and Storage Survey

by Mark Richmond Archivist

hen the Archives was established and enunciated a collecting policy that included business records, 'business' was interpreted to include the professions, such as the law, medicine and, of course, architecture. Various collections of drawings and other records of architects and builders have thus been acquired by the UMA under the rubric of business; others have been received as a component of general business collections (eg. Foy & Gibson) while some have come under other collecting categories, e.g trade union records (Victorian Trades Hall Council), and others still have come from non-business and non-union organisations. The 'bottom line' is that, as an institutional as well as a collecting archive, it is inevitable that the UMA would acquire a certain quantity of drawings, especially as part of an ever-growing and ever-renewing built environment, both on and off-campus.

The collections include those in the printed *Guide to Collections* pages one to six, especially — Harold Desbrowe Annear, Bates, Smart and McCutcheon (which, since the time of Joseph Reed's appointment as University Architect in 1858, has designed many University buildings), Robin Boyd, J. J. and E. J. Clark, Clements Langford, Leith and Bartlett (which includes some drawings of Robert Haddon), E. E. Milston (including some material from his partnership with Don Hendry Fulton), William Pitt, and A. W. Purnell (from his own practice and from the numerous partnerships he entered into in Melbourne and Sydney).

Of the firms listed above, Clements Langford Pty Ltd was a prominent building firm which began in a small way in the 1880s, and really flourished from the end of World War I until the 'credit squeeze' of the early 1960s; it alone contains drawings from some 140 different architectural firms or individuals, including Nahum Barnet, Buchan, Laird and Buchan, Charles D'Ebro, A. S. Eggleston, Gawler and Drummond, A. and K. Henderson, H. A. Norris, Oakden and Ballantyne, Best Overend, A. and H. Peck, Smith, Ogg and Serpell, Stephenson and Meldrum, H. W. and F. B. Tompkins and Albion Walkley. The drawings include a number of designs for buildings at the University of Melbourne.

Other collections of architectural drawings held at UMA include those of Albert Bode (Kerang, Swan Hill), Peter Burrowes and Associates, the Exhibition Building Trustees'

copies of drawings of the various additions and annexes to the main building, Moore and Hammond; Michael Ryan (Ararat and Horsham), Stephenson partnerships (with Meldrum, Turner *et al.*, though the core collection of those drawings is held by the State Library of Victoria), the University of Melbourne Staff Architect's copies of drawings for various jobs, and Yuncken Freeman Associates.

Listing Project

The level of listing varies considerably across these collections, from:

- the individual sheet listing of Clements Langford (also indexed), Leith and Bartlett, Robin Boyd, Harold Desbrowe Annear, Michael Ryan, and Albert Bode;
- the sheet-numbering by job name (and incomplete sheet-listing) of Bates, Smart and McCutcheon pre-2001 accessions (also indexed but in need of revision);
- 3. the listing to job level of J J and E J Clark, William Pitt, Ernest Milston, and the University Staff Architect's drawings (being copies of drawings from a variety of hands);
- 4. the part-listing to job level of A W Purnell and partnerships and James Earle partnerships;
- 5. the creator-listing of Yuncken Freeman by job number (with a checklist of job names and numbers); and

6.unlisted collections of drawings.

An incidental but important imperative driving the architectural drawings project is the impending sesquicentenary celebration next year of the arrival in Melbourne of Joseph Reed (a disputed date, but 2002 it is), and the need to supply Bates Smart, and through them the authors of a planned book on the history of the firm, with a checklist of the firm's drawings held at the UMA. To this end, Mark Richmond suspended his detailed description of each drawing in favour of a fast-tracked operation which involved assigning a unique UMA number to each job and each sheet in order to establish some inventory control, and to provide Bates Smart with a list of every job for which drawings are held (the result was a list of 152 jobs and 1587 sheets, not including the substantial quantity of drawings for the new Wilson Hall).

In the meantime, the BSM Collection was substantially augmented by two transfers of mainly older drawings (already listed inhouse) as part of the firm's relocation to new premises — fittingly, in one of its landmark modern designs, the ICI [now Orica] building, overlooking one of its landmark older designs, The Melbourne International Exhibition [now The Royal Exhibition Building, described by its new parent Museum Victoria as its largest collection object!]

Storage Problems

A certain proportion of the architectural drawings are housed in steel plan cabinets, nearly all of them the familiar ten drawer style stacked three high; there are two steel vertical cabinets which have been deemed less satisfactory, though still in use. The Exhibition Building-related drawings came to the UMA with the wooden plinth and plan cabinet in which the trustees had stored them. Many others are held in a rolled form, generally wrapped and labelled by the UMA and stored in cartons, or across a double width of steel shelving primarily designed to hold boxed or unboxed MS or printed archival material. The Yuncken Freeman drawings continue to be held in the numbered cardboard cylinders in which the firm had placed them for their own secondary storage, and a further large quantity of their drawings in the same format are soon to be transferred. And most recently, in August 2001, a quantity of tracings arrived from the Property and Buildings department of the University in another storage mode, being Planex (Vertiplan) vertical cabinets using suspension strips on hanging rods.

A constant problem has arisen with many of the drawings stored in plan cabinets, in that many of them, especially those of Clements Langford (which are all in drawers) and A. W. Purnell (some of which are in drawers) came to the UMA in a rolled state, and were converted to flat drawer storage without the benefit of professional relaxing and flattening, or of individual sheet sleeving. It has been beyond the means of the UMA to provide this level of professional conservation or encasement.

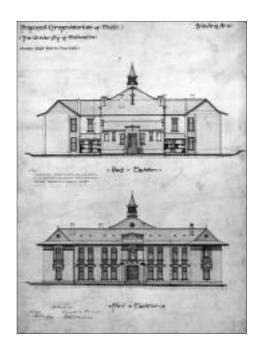
The present trend of thinking is that the drawings which are still rolled and either encased in cylinders or wrapped in paper, should stay that way for the time being and not be converted to drawer storage unless the required flattening and sleeving can be provided. The question is more one of devising a means within the shelving whereby rolled drawings can be stored in an accessible manner, perhaps through some kind of pigeon-holing in existing shelf modules by intershelving, plus some system of vertical dividers. Some of the storage shelving at the office of Bates Smart is of this type.

For the future, some of the problems of storing and retrieving drawings will of course be reduced as the collections, or the most heavily-used of them, are digitised into electronically accessible form. •

Right: Conservatorium of Music, elevations, Smart, Tappin and Peebles, 1909. (BSM Collection, UMA)



Above: Site and ground plan, 1888 Melbourne Exhibition, showing Joseph Reed's Exhibition Building, 1879-1880. (BSM Collection, UMA)



John Morrison - Towards The Last Years

by Jennifer Rumsey

hen John Gordon Morrison left his parents and siblings in England and came to Australia, he was in his late teens and looking for excitement. Like the rest of his family, he had always been an avid reader. Dreams of a writing career soon led him to establish a lifelong habit of writing in his spare time.

At first such spare time was snatched from farm work and odd jobs he managed to find in the eastern states of Australia. Then, in his twenties, he married and settled in Melbourne where he and his wife Frances raised two children. He supported his family with gardening, (he had an English training of which he was proud), and with work on the waterfront. A regular job and a regular house in which to live made it possible for him to develop a disciplined program of weekend writing. Morrison

always remained committed in principle to what writers now call "the Day Job". For him such work provided not only a steady income but also a source of inspiration.

During his lifetime, a dozen books of his work were published in Australia. Of these, ten are collections of short stories and other short pieces. Two are novels. Five of the twelve appeared in what archives refer to as his "twilight years". It was a long

and rather eventful twilight. Morrison's first wife, Frances, had died in 1967 after a long illness and he had remarried in 1969. With Rachel he was to enjoy a second marriage that was almost as long as the first. Most of the period covered in his second marriage is represented in the artefacts of The John Morrison Collection, and although the decade 1970-1980 is excluded from Archives' description of the Collection, there is some coverage of it.

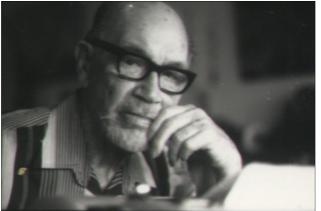
Archives' concentration on the period from 1980 may suggest some shortage in the generation of artefacts in the preceding decade. It was certainly a period of enormous adjustment for Morrison. Although the second marriage appeared happy, and

undoubtedly was, it must have had its difficulties, as he was dealing with a number of substantial stressors: the loss of his first wife, forced retirement through illness, and a move from the flat he had taken when Frances died to the flat he shared with Rachel after their marriage. There was also a serious lack of keen publishers to share his enthusiasm for a new collection of short pieces.

By this time the books of Morrison and others of his circle had become used to making room in Australian bookshops for those of Patrick White and a new school of Australian writing. Nevertheless, and, it would seem, greatly to his relief, between 1982 and 1988 most of Morrison's short works were collected again and republished. Some new works were blended with previously published work. Important honours were to follow,

bestowed on him in the form of the Patrick White Award in 1986, and in 1989 the Order of Australia for his contribution to literature. Melbourne University Archives hold photographs of John and Rachel at Morrison's investiture at Government House.

In the difficult decade mentioned above, Morrison might have been prepared to keep writing despite not having a job from which to seek inspiration. However, he now had a heart condition to monitor. He also had



John Morrison. (John Morrison Collection, UMA)

problems with his hands, possibly caused by overuse. Writing and typing became increasingly difficult and, for a time, virtually ceased. Often he speaks, in letters, of a friend who used to type for him. For a while he had managed to maintain a position in the public eye, notably in the provision of reviews for the Melbourne *Age*. He was also interviewed and the transcripts of several such interviews are held in Archives.

Some of Morrison's earlier reviews are held in the Archives in the form of typed drafts. They reflect his connections with the Melbourne Realist Writers and the Victorian Fellowship of Australian Writers, and his involvement in the trade union movement. Their destinations were mixed.

The reviews that were published mainly in the later years in the Melbourne Age are well represented in Archives where they are held as press cuttings. This group demonstrates a fascinating range of subjects in which Morrison shows himself to be a capable critic. Like Alan Marshall, he had always been deeply interested in all things associated with what was once referred to as "natural history". In the long twilight of his retirement, Morrison was able to review books dealing with such environmental issues as the protection of the habitats of animals and fish, the use of nuclear energy and the effect of the atomic bomb. He was able to exercise his equally deep concern with social issues in reading for critical purposes works that addressed social justice in European, Asian and African cultures, that examined poverty and wealth and that told of the atrocities of World War II. Two countries addressed in books for review were of special interest to Morrison: Scotland, with which he had an ancestral connection, and Russia, with which he had a philosophical connection.

A victim of fashion, the work of John Morrison has all but disappeared from libraries and has certainly disappeared from bookshops. This seems unpardonable when one considers the high esteem with which his work was formerly regarded by readers of all backgrounds. There has also been a consensus among critics that his work represents the sensitive observation of one of Australia's finest ever short story writers. Such consensus is today virtually undiminished. Is his work "dated"? Find some of his short stories, if you can, and decide for yourself.

The staff of The University of Melbourne Archives is to be congratulated for the way in which they have organised The John Morrison Collection. Access is currently restricted, however, in the future, information about many important ideas and practices of the twentieth-century will be found to be residing in the treasures contained in this fine and substantial collection. ❖

Jennifer Rumsey is completing a PhD at the University of Sydney. Her thesis is a biography of John Morrison, who made a significant contribution to the Australian short story genre. Jennifer's early career was in music, in which she maintains a strong interest. Her Master's degree in English is in poetry, and she is a published children's poet. She is the vice-president of the Society of Women Writers NSW.

Recent Research Requests

ocial life, student activism and sporting achievements — these categories comprise the primary areas of interest university-related material, according to a survey of researcher requests over the last few months. Requests for access to photographs, ephemera, records and publications relating to individuals, student groups, sporting clubs and residential colleges have been particularly notable.



Typical student 'digs'at Ormond College, 1915-1916. (Strathfieldsaye Estate collection, UMA)

Whether inspired by

preparations for the University's forthcoming sesquicentenary, curricula demands, family history or the rekindling of personal memories, the usual interest in the physical and administrative structure of the University has, of late, been surpassed by curiosity about the scholars who have passed through its halls.

Several Archives' holdings can be utilised to recreate an image of who these people were, what they did, what they thought, and how they lived. As one example out of many, a single photograph held in the Strathfieldsaye Estate collection readily evokes the lifestyle of residential college student in the early 1900s. Harold Clive Disher was a medical student during World War I. He resided at Ormond College and later bequeathed his estate, Strathfieldsaye,

to the University. Disher was also involved with the Medical Students' Society and the Melbourne University Boat Club and his papers reveal as much about college life, the sporting clubs and the academic environment of the time, as they do about the man himself. ❖

Victorian Women's Liberation and Lesbian Feminist Archive

by Fay Anderson Project Archivist

major collection of women's liberation and lesbian feminist literature was transferred to the University of Melbourne Archives at the end of 2000. The collection, the Victorian Women's Liberation and Lesbian Feminist Archive (VWL&LFA), contains the papers of 127 individuals and organisations associated with women's liberation, political activism and the lesbian movement. It is one of our more impor-

tant and exciting additions that complements the Archives' existing and evolving women's collections, notably the records of the Working Women's Centre, the Women's Electoral Lobby, the Victorian Women Graduates' Association, the Young Women's Christian Association and, most recently, the Women's Christian Temperence Union.

In May 2001, the Archives celebrated the handover of the VWL&LFA. The presentation was opened by the Vice-Principal Information and University Librarian, Ms Helen Haves, and featured Ms Jean Taylor, VWL&LFA collective member, Mr Michael Piggott, University Archivist Professor Patricia Grimshaw (History) who as guest speaker gave an animated and enthralling address. The University of Melbourne Archives has been extremely

fortunate to receive the VWL&LFA, which is a unique and significant collection of women's liberation and lesbian feminist literature, memorabilia and private papers. The collection dates from 1950 to 1996 and consists of 441 standard archive and larger boxes.

The VWL&LFA began in 1982, bringing together the papers

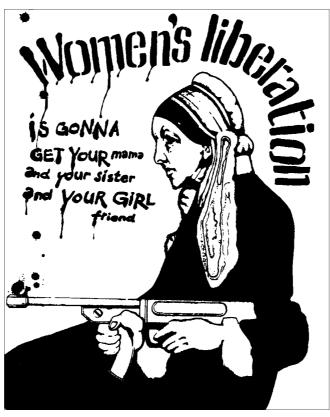
of 127 individuals and women's organisations. It includes correspondence, membership records, posters, articles, publications, banners, photographs, petitions, newspaper clippings, postcards, leaflets, constitutions, press releases, programs, conference papers, handbooks, minutes, contact lists, diaries, poetry, badges, discussion papers, maps, newsletters, budgets, invitations, submissions, songbooks and sheets, a brothel kit, legisla-

tion, poetry, drawings, costumes, stickers, speeches, audio cassettes, interviews, scripts, calendars, questionnaires and an extensive collection of periodicals.

The VWL&LFA is also significant in offering an extensive collection of periodicals and documenting the women's movement, gender, sexuality, and social issues both in Australia and internationally. The collection boasts partial or entire runs of mainstream, alternative, fringe or more obscure publications (see the list that follows).

A comprehensive and diverse series of subject files collated by individuals and various organisations also dominates the VWL&LFA. Issues including: Aboriginal rights; abortion; alcoholism; apartheid; arts; domestic violence; cancer; drugs; child-care; contraception; crime;

defence; disability; education; environment; equal opportunity; feminism; film; health; housing; incest and child abuse; intellectual and physically disability; IVF; law; lesbian and gay issues; matriarchy; menopause; menstruation; mental health; multiculturalism; natural health; politics; pregnancy and child birth; prison; prostitution; rape; right wing continued page 8



Right: Cover of the Perth Free Press, Vol. 2, April 1976. (VWL&LFA Collection, UMA)

women's groups; sex; sexism; sexual harassment in the workplace; sexuality; social welfare; suffrage; theatre; venereal disease.

The VWL&LFA has already inspired avid interest among postgraduates, historians and journalists. Most of the papers are open to researchers although some of the more confidential material and case files are closed for a designated period. A guide to the papers will be available online by next year. In the meantime most of the collection is listed in paper form to ensure that researchers will be able to access this unique collection. ❖

Periodicals and Publications Available in the Victorian Women's Liberation and Lesbian Feminist Archive

Abortion Law Reform Association

Newsletter

Abortion law Repeal

Action

Ain't IA Woman

Alive and WEL

Animal Rights

Anti Prison News Journal

Australian Feminist Newspaper

Banshee

Bay Area Reporter

Behind Closed Doors

Berkeley Barb

Between the Eyes

Big Mama Bitches

Black Women's Forum

Bluestocking Body Politic

Bread and Wine Broadsheet

Camp

Campaign Catalyst

Cauldron

Chain Reaction

Circle

Connection

Courage Current Sweden

Deneuve

Dykespeak Emma

Empire News

Equal Opportunity News

Everywoman

Fallopian Tube

Farrago

FARTS

Feminist and Gay News

Feminist Therapists Newsletter

Fibreforum

Film News Fin

Freedom to Choose

Furv

Gay Community News Gay Liberation Newsletter Gay Rays

Gay Teachers and Students Group

Newsletter

Gayzette

Girls'Own

Grapevine Greg Weir Defence

Health Sharing Women Newsletter

of the Victorian Women's Health

Information Service

High Spirited Women Unite

Interface Review

International Women's Development

Agency News

Iris ISIS

Join Hands

Judy's Punch

Koorier

Learning Exchange

Lesbian Connection

Lesbian Feminist Magazine

Lesbian Network

Lesbian News

Lesbiana Liberation

Lilith

Lip

Lot's Wife

Mabel Mama

Manipulation

Manushi

MeJane

Melbourne Observer Magazine

Melbourne University Women's

Liberation Newsletter

Message Stick

Monthly Cycle Mothers for Peace Newsletter

Ms

Ms Muffet

National Council of Women of

Victoria Newsletter National Review

National Student

National U

New Dawn

Newssheet: Off Our Backs

Office of Women's Affairs

Other Side

Other Woman

Our Women

Out From Under

Out Now

Outrage

Pacific Peacemaker

Panacea

Perth Free Press

Praxis

Pursuit

Rahelais

Radical America

Rag

Red Rag

Refractory Girl

Response

Right to Choose

Rouge

Rough Times

Sage the Separatists Age

San Francisco Bay Times

Scarlet Woman

Second Wave SHE

Shrew

Sibyl Sister

Socialist Feminist Magazine

Socialist Worker

Spare Rib

Speaking Volumes

Star

Survival News Sydney Feminist Newspaper

Women's Sydney Liberation

Newsletter

Teachers Newsletter

Textile

The Bulletin

The Digger

The Feminist Renaissance

The Journalists' Clarion

The Kite

The Little Red School Book

The Suffragette

Time

Tribune

Trouble and Strife

Unemployment News

Union of Australian Women

Newsletter

Unity

Vashti

Vashti's Voice Victorian Action on Intellectual

Disability

WAC Women's Newsletter

Witches & Dykes

WLM Newsheet

Womanspeak Women and Revolution

Women at Work

Women: A Journal of Liberation

Women's Abortion Action Campaign Melbourne Newsletter

Women's Action for Nuclear

Disarmament Newsletter

Women's Department News Women's Ecology Action Group

Newsletter

Women's International Bulletin

Women's Liberation Election News

Women's Liberation Newsletter

Women's National Us Women's News Service

Women's Newsletter

Women's Refuges Magazine

Women's Rights Newsletter Women's Support Groups

Women's Tribune

Women's Weekly Wrist