



Cataloguing Archives

Training material as used with
Historical Societies



First questions

- What is an archive collection?
 - The whole of the records, regardless of format, organically created and/or accumulated and used by a particular person, family or corporate body in the course of that creator's activities or functions
- Why catalogue archives?

Do I need a catalogue?

- Catalogue (detailed structured list of a collection)

OR

- Box lists
- Index databases
 - People names in registers
 - Rolls of Honour
 - Place names
- Index cards

Cataloguing: description

- *General International Standard Archival Description ISAD(G)* (Ottawa, 1999)
- Specifies the information to be captured in description
- Allows information to be easily shared
- Outlines a hierarchical approach to cataloguing

Structure: Principal of Provenance

- Provenance
 - Records from individual organisations or persons should be kept together as a discrete collection and should never be combined to create artificial collections
- Context
- Retains intellectual and evidential value

Task 1: What is the collection?

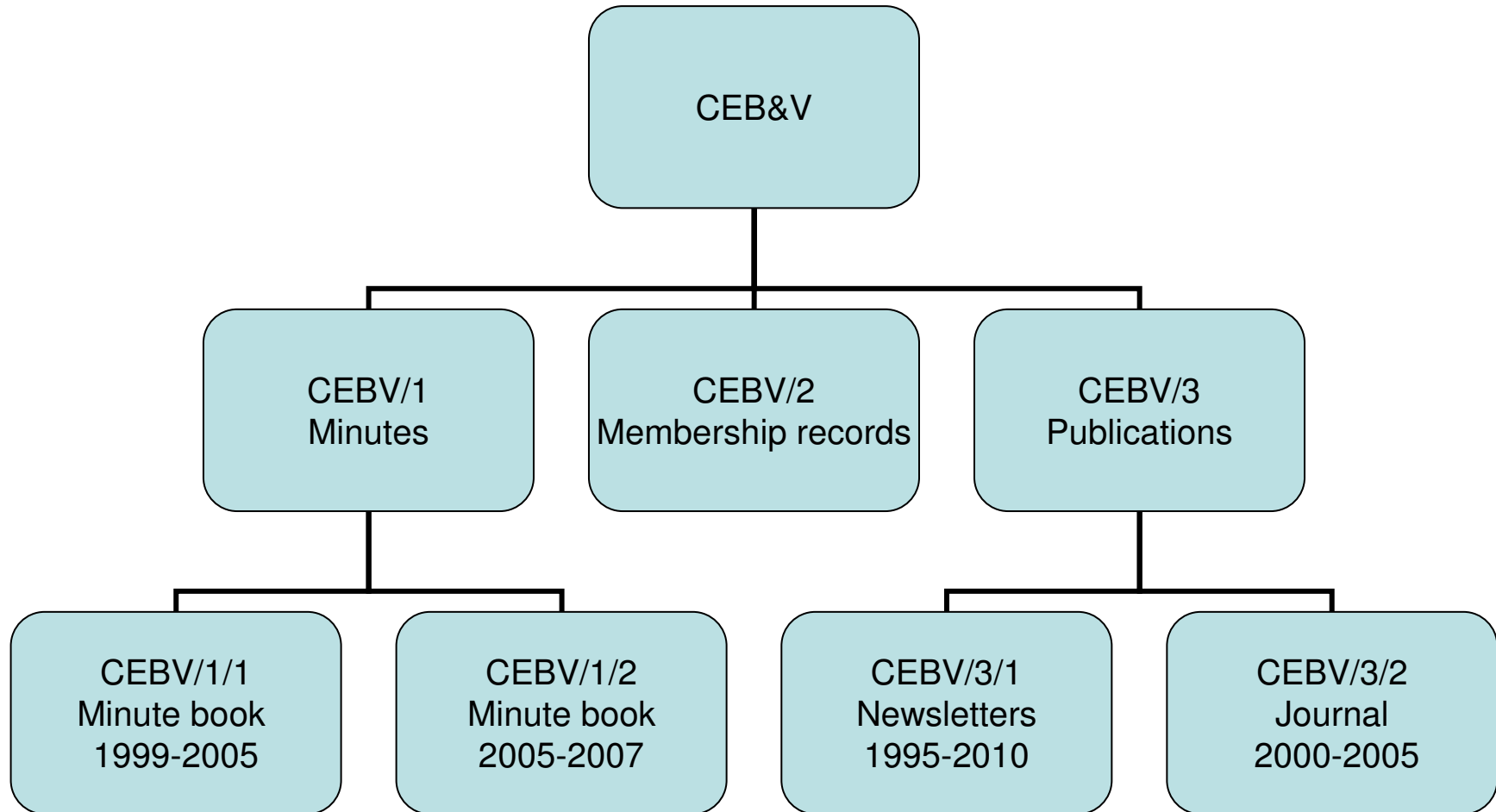
See separate file.

- Look at each entry and identify the provenance. What are the actually archive collections?
- Answers: see notes

Structure: Original order

- Original order
 - Records should be arranged in an order which reflects the relationship between them, and that reflects the way in which the records were created and used
- Context
- May need to reconstruct (original) order

Archive structure



Task2: Sample catalogues

- Looking at the archive catalogues
- Things to note:
 - What is the collection?
 - How has it been arranged?
 - What information has been recorded about each item?
 - How has the numbering system been applied

4 Rules of ISAD(G)

- Describe general to the specific (collection to individual item)
- Information is relevant to the level being described
- Each level should be linked to its next higher unit of description
- Information given at higher levels should not be repeated at lower levels
- **Task:** Look again at the sample catalogues to see how these rules have been applied

ISAD(G) description

- Bare minimum at each level should be:
 - Reference number
 - Title / description
 - Dates
 - Extent
 - *Creator*
 - *Level*
- **Task:** identify these elements in the sample catalogues provided

