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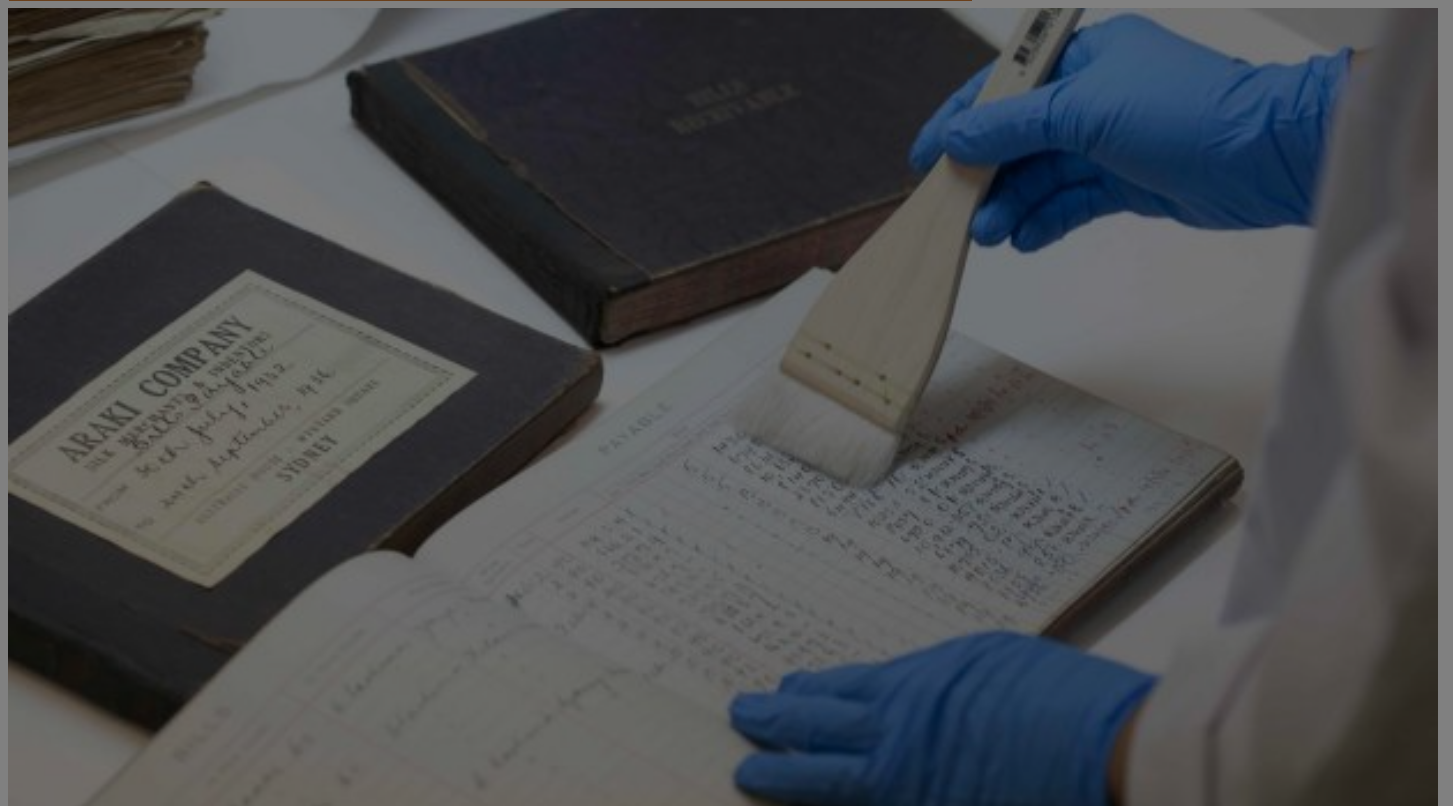
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hands back priceless Japanese records



Thousands of historic Japanese commercial records seized during World War II have been returned to Tokyo as part of a significant cultural milestone from the National Archives of Australia.

The largest move of its kind from Australia, the gift will see more than 3300 archival boxes of business documents, journals, posters, catalogues, meeting minutes, shipping records and even some personal photographs returned to Japan.

The items were seized by authorities under laws preventing trade with Australia's enemies and have been held by federal government authorities since the 1950s.

National Archives of Australia director-general David Fricker said the gift of more than 800 metres length of items had been considered for some years, as the records provide a unique insight into the personal and business lives of Japanese people living in Australia.

A memorandum of understand has been signed to facilitate the gift, which Mr Fricker said included items not central to the mission of the National Archives of Australia.

"As is the case with many archival collections, a single document by itself may not be that outstanding but the value of this is in the aggregate.


"These items present quite a rich picture of the Japanese men and women, the transactions, commercial decisions, the posters, the catalogues and the journals. They present a rich view of the commercial activity up to the early 1940s.

Read full story on [The Canberra Times](#)

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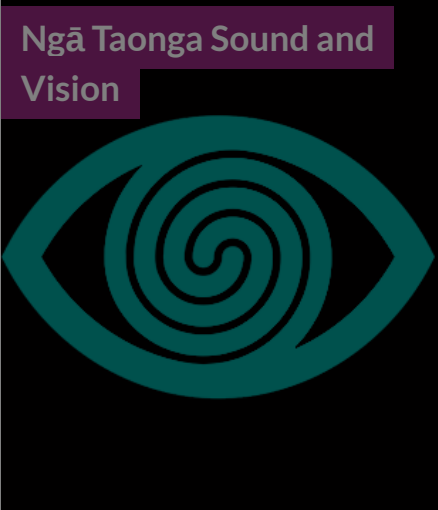
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