



Archives & Records  
Association  
UK & Ireland

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# ARCmagazine

archives • records management • conservation

## International Affairs Special Issue



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WELCOME **ARC**



## EDITORIAL

This month's internationally focused issue of ARC with articles and images taking us to collections in China, India, the USA, and collaborative global efforts to use science and technology to document the worlds changing weather patterns over the past 200 years. HTML is a global standard that has changed information over the last two decades and it is examined in our regular column on data standards. Other articles focused on Manchester, Wigan, and London, talk about collections online and non-traditional activities which highlight work of archives.

Thanks to globalisation and technological innovation, people, money, and ideas travel more freely today than ever before, writes Chrystia Freeland of the *Atlantic Magazine*. But she also cautions that within nations, the fruits of this global transformation have been shared unevenly. And what of global information? What does the WikiLeaks phenomena mean to the archival world? A memo sent last month to US government security officials details how they should conduct security reviews of sensitive or classified information as the Obama administration attempts to safeguard against future leaks to the information-sharing website WikiLeaks and other news organisations. Wary diplomats may keep fewer records, says historian Kiron K. Skinner. Historians may rely more on their own interviews; archives will mean less, as documents document less, or are written in codes even archivists won't be able to decipher.

I disagree with this pessimism. Those who wishing to hide crimes will always seek a way to conceal their efforts, and those searching for the truth will find ways of uncovering it. Books have been written about ciphers and code breakers through the centuries. Our time is different for its technology, speed of communication, and global outlook. As with previous generations, we must adapt. We must just do it faster.

It is an exciting time to be an archivist. Welcome to the next decade of the 21st century.

**Rose Roberto, Gary Collins, Ceri Foster, Rachel Freeman, and Richard Wragg**

### DISCLAIMER

The Archives & Records Association (UK and Ireland) cannot accept responsibility for views expressed by individual contributors to ARC Magazine. It is a medium for informing members of news, information and ideas relevant to the profession, including archive conservation. It is not an official guide to procedures, concepts, materials or products.

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Left: Paper dress designed by Louise Goldin for London Fashion Week

Top Right: Detail from Met Office Science Brief Cover, Crown Copyright 2010

Bottom Left: Getty Research Institute, photo by Claire Sawyer

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# Association News



## A word from John Chambers, Chief Executive of the Association

Following on from the completion of the merger on 1st June 2010 the National Council on Archives has now been formally and legally wound up and its assets have transferred to the ARA. The former Society of Archivists Research Fund will be bolstered by new investment and will now become the ARA Research and Advocacy Fund. This will ensure there is a permanent legacy from both organisations. Research was a fundamental aim of the Society of Archivists and advocacy was a fundamental aim of the National Council on Archives.

Some of the money transferred from the NCA will be put into the fund together with some of the surplus made by the Society of Archivists in its last year. The total sum will be invested in the Charities Official Investment Fund and the surplus that this makes will be put into the Research and Advocacy Fund. The exact terms for the advocacy part of the fund will be agreed on by the ARA Council shortly, and these will be publicised.

Many professional bodies, ourselves included, have noticed a recent trend in that members are not volunteering to help the organisation in the

numbers that they have done in the past. As a small organisation, ARA is disproportionately affected. We have been able to punch above our weight for the last few years but how much longer we will be able to do so is a moot point. We have struggled to find members willing to become Registrar of the Registration Scheme and also to help with the running of the new website. Some regions and sections have also found recruiting officers noticeably harder. The ARA remains a member led organisation and we really need your support and involvement if we are to succeed.

However we are recruiting a new part time administrator, based at our office in Taunton, to take on responsibility for supporting the Registrar and regional and section training officers, as well as the administration of the CARN reader ticket system and other work. This is another benefit of the merger. Some members have expressed their disappointment that we have not been able to provide more details of our meetings with UK Government ministers and departmental officials. These meetings have been about the future of the whole sector and have been at a high strategic level. We are bound by confidentiality, and only the government can announce any decisions. It is precisely because we have proved our ability to keep our mouths shut that we have been

asked to higher level meetings and confidential papers have been shared with us. I hope members will be able to trust us to advocate for you and will be pleased that we are being listened to and consulted. I think this is a first for our sector.

At long last we have received the files for the latest version of Keeping Archives 3 from the Australian Society of Archivists and we are now the distributor for printed copies for Europe. Once again we represented the sector at the Online Show in London. Attendance was hit by the bad weather. We are also following up on the imminent demise of Lifelong Learning UK, the sector skills council for archives and libraries, to see if we can partner with other professional bodies to offer a better service.

Anyone interested in any of the above please contact me at [john.chambers@archives.org.uk](mailto:john.chambers@archives.org.uk)

.....  
**John Chambers**  
.....

# Registration Scheme News – February 2011

## Newly Registered Members of the Archives and Records

### Association:

Following the most recent assessments of portfolios submitted to the Assessors, the successful candidates are as follows:

**Elizabeth Ennion-Smith**, Records Management Officer, Girton College Cambridge; Assistant Archivist, St Catharine's College Cambridge.

**Helen McKellar**, Information Compliance & Records Management Specialist, University of Glasgow.

**Jennifer Shaw**, Collections Officer - Archivist, British Red Cross.

**Judith Stephenson**, Searchroom Services Manager, Suffolk Record Office.

**Laura Taylor**, Senior Archivist - CRMS and City Collections, LMA.

The Committee would like to congratulate the newly registered members on their success.

### New Enrolments:

We welcome the following new candidates to the Registration Scheme and wish them good luck with their progress:

**Kate Jarman**, Archivist, Brent Archives

**Ruth Loughrey**, Assistant Records Manager, Unilever Archives & Records Management

**Faye McLeod**, Archivist, Aston Martin Heritage Trust

**Ramona Riedzewski**, Victoria & Albert Museum Theatre & Performance

### Changes to the Registration Sub-Committee

Registration sub-committee sees a change of personnel this year, with Joanne Fitton standing down as Events Co-ordinator having taken on the role of Honorary Secretary to the Association. Kate Jarman will be joining Registration sub-committee in this role.

Liz Newman, who as Communications Officer has kept a steady stream of registration articles in ARC as well as looking after the website and the special e-zine for candidates, is being succeeded by Richard Wragg.

We also welcome Melinda Haunton as Secretary, following a longstanding vacancy.

My personal thanks, and the thanks of the Association, go to Joanne and Liz, to Kate, Melinda and Richard, and to the other members of the committee Libby Adams, Nicky Sugar and Judith Stephenson, for all their hard work, energy and commitment on behalf of Association members.

**Sarah Wickham**, Registrar, Archives & Records Association

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### Richard Wragg

Communications Officer, Registration Sub-committee

[regscheme Mentors@archives.org.uk](mailto:regscheme Mentors@archives.org.uk)

## Collecting Matters

The New Year is in full swing and you're probably thinking about fresh ways to promote and publicise your collections. But have you thought about last year? What did you achieve? How did you enhance your collections?

The National Archives (TNA) is currently engaged in its annual Accessions to Repositories Survey.

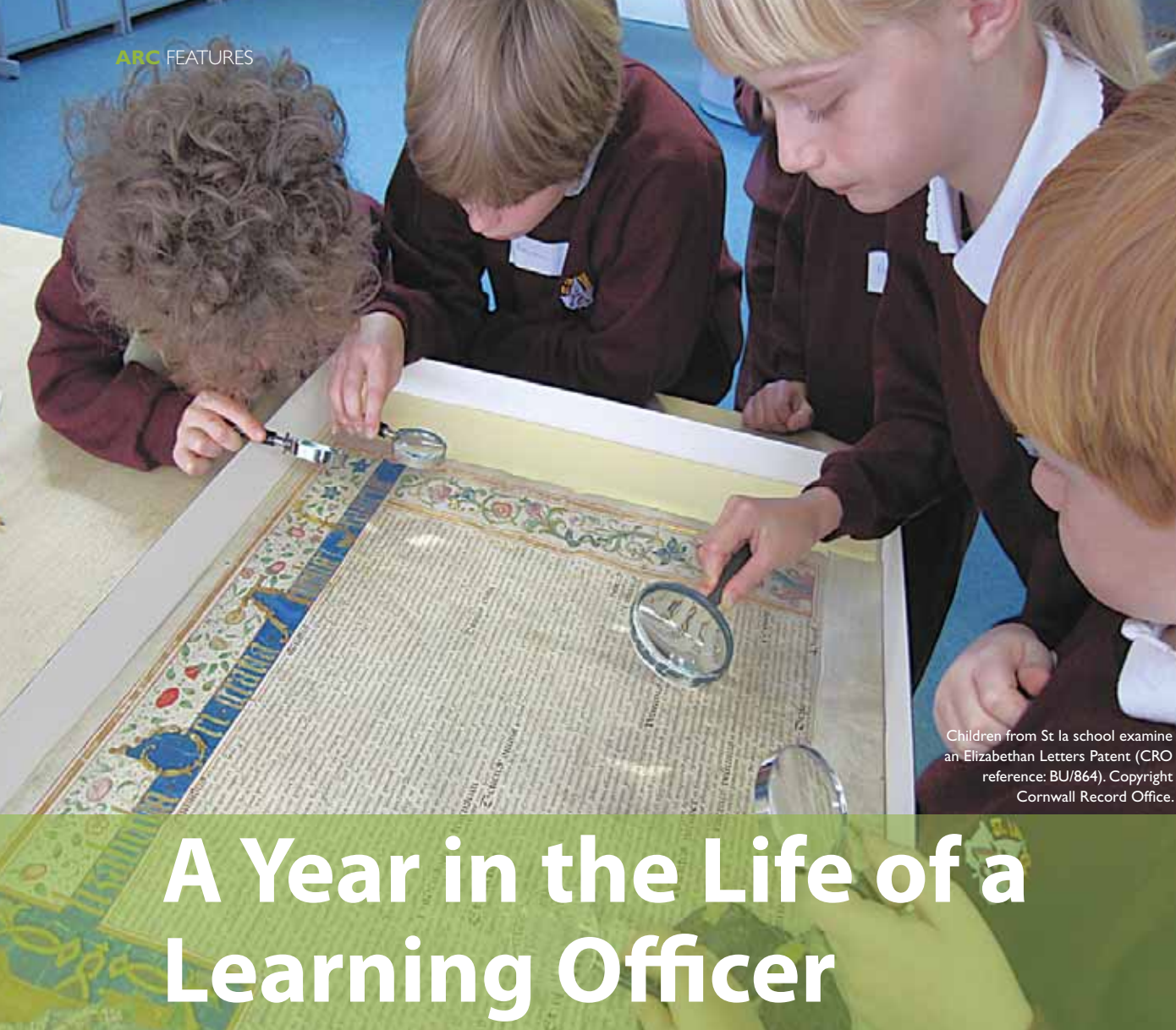
The survey provides an opportunity to share information about new collections and additions to existing collections via the National Register of Archives (NRA), and at the end of every year, the Archive Sector Development department contacts around 300 diverse archives inviting them to take part.

The information received is used to update the NRA but it's also compiled into themed digests for publication in academic or specialist journals and made available on TNA's website in a separate Accessions to Repositories database. So if you've taken in collections in 2010 but not received an invitation to complete the survey, let us know about it: [asd@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:asd@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk). And if you've already been contacted and not yet responded, then please do so as soon as possible!

Don't miss this chance to advertise your collections and contribute to TNA's information gathering: it's vital to our giving you the collecting support and guidance you might need.

### Cathy Williams

Strategic Collection Development, The National Archives



Children from St Ila school examine an Elizabethan Letters Patent (CRO reference: BU/864). Copyright Cornwall Record Office.

# A Year in the Life of a Learning Officer

I started work as a part-time Learning Officer at Cornwall Record Office in October 2009. The job is very varied, interesting, and certainly keeps me busy! Here are just a few of the highlights from my first year.

## November- December 2009

After a few weeks settling in, I got stuck into my first project, based around the life of Richard Lander, a Cornish explorer, who died exploring the Niger River in 1834. The project, working in partnership with the Royal Cornwall Museum and Truro Historical Project, was designed to support children's transition from primary to secondary school. We created a chest full of documents and objects to represent Richard Lander's life, and held workshops through the winter. The children involved really enjoyed it, and produced fantastic versions of their own 'life' boxes, which we displayed at an exhibition in Truro in July.

## January - February 2010

Three students from University of Exeter (based at Tremough campus, Penryn) came and worked with

me at the Office as part of their first year public history course. They were introduced to general work at the office, from productions to preservation, and worked together to produce a leaflet for us to use to promote the Office to students studying locally. Cornwall's university student population is rapidly growing, so building links with local higher education institutions has become a focus of mine.

## March - April 2010

In March I organised a family history morning for members of Cornwall's deaf community as part of Deaf Heritage Month. We had 12 people in attendance, and they enjoyed a BSL-interpreted tour of the strong-rooms as well as training in using our on line catalogues and the search room. The feedback was so good from the event that we have a follow-up course lined up for early 2011!

In April a request from an MA Professional Writing course group for human interest stories relating to the Port Eliot archive (held at Cornwall Record Office) led me to discover a bundle of very moving condolence letters relating to the suicide of Edward Eliot, who shot himself in the family's gun room in 1909, aged only 24.

### May - June 2010

In May I attended a Reminiscence Session in Falmouth's Age Concern, in association with Royal Cornwall Museum. Using boxes of original artefacts, Reminiscence practitioners encourage elderly people and those suffering from dementias to talk about their memories. It was fascinating to see how the objects sparked off so many discussions – and lively debates!

In June the Office decamped to the Royal Cornwall Show for four days, amidst the dancing diggers and prize pigs. Our stall focused on our associations with other Cornish archives, as well as enabling children to try their hand at quill pen writing. It was judged to be a successful event as we chatted to nearly 800 people, and the strawberries and cream were delicious too!

### July - August 2010

I was glued to my television screen in early July, waiting for my GMTV appearance! As part of a series of short films on their presenters' family histories, sports presenter Dan Lobb and a GMTV crew visited the Office to research his Cornish ancestry. Despite two hours of filming, my appearance was about ten seconds long and sadly no paparazzi were queuing up outside afterwards.

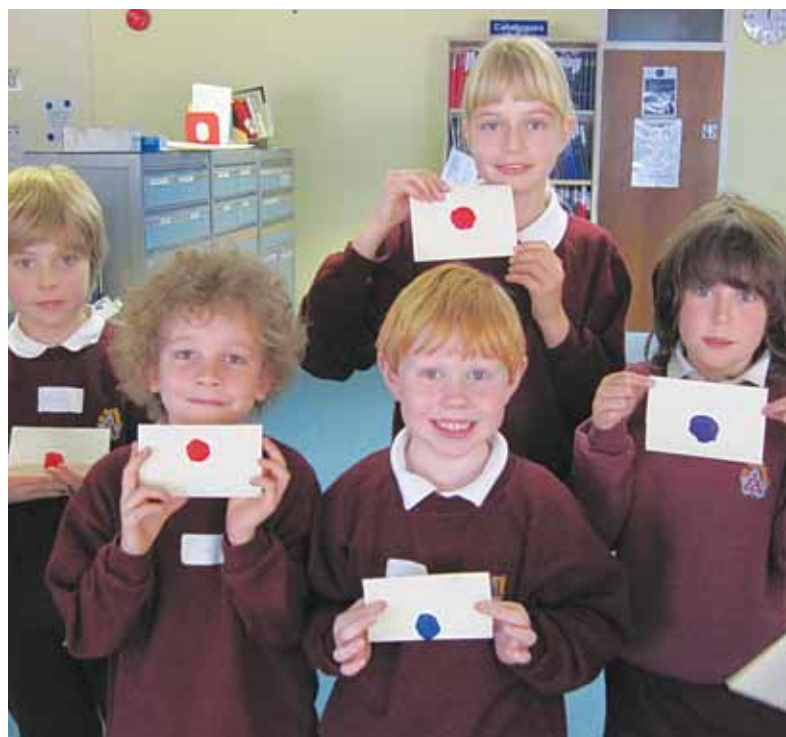
In August we held a workshop based around an exhibition of photos of Cornish railways. 'Cornish Wacky Races' was attended by about 20 boisterous youngsters, and led by artist Liz Le Grice. Children created boats and car models and then raced them in a grand finale.

### September - October 2010

In September I began work on a MLA Learning Links funded project focusing on the civil war in Cornwall. This, so far, has involved research into our extensive civil war collections, where I enjoyed teasing out local tales from this tumultuous period of history. Working with a local teacher, I am creating a school loans resource and an educational board game targeted at Key Stage 3 students.



Me at our stall in the Truro Uncovered exhibition, with work from the Richard Lander project. Copyright Cornwall Record Office.



Children from St Ia school show off their completed letters. Copyright Cornwall Record Office.

In October, St Ia primary school visited the Office. We had a fun morning touring the strong rooms, examining one of our most attractive and fascinating documents, and learning to write and seal documents, using parchment, quills, ink and sealing wax (well, Plasticine!).

### November 2010

As 2011 is already looking busy, I think it's time for some annual leave.

.....  
**Chloe Phillips**

Cornwall Council  
.....

# London Fashion Week meets Coutts Archives

## A new challenge

Coutts took on a new challenge in 2010 by deciding to sponsor London Fashion Week. The bank was the only sponsor from the financial sector. London Fashion Week (LFW) is a heady celebration of everything from emerging talent to established designers, and includes catwalk shows, exhibitions and presentations. It is billed as one of the most exciting events in the global fashion calendar, where designers showcase their latest collections and industry buyers can view the newest trends.

As an institution, Coutts Bank is working to emphasise its modern outlook and increase its appeal to women as clients. By participating in LFW, both these aspirations were met. And, fortunately for the Archives team, LFW linked in with some elements of the bank's history, meaning they could actively contribute to the event.

## The Archives' role

The 'W' for 'week' in LFW, is a little misleading, as LFW actually ran for two weeks. One between 19-24 February, and the other from 17-22 September. At the start of the year, an up-and-coming designer, Louise Goldin, was asked to create a bespoke dress as part of our sponsorship. In February, clients were invited to see catwalk shows by designers Caroline Charles, Paul Costelloe, Jaeger and Jasper Conran. During this period we mounted an exhibition in the reception area at Coutts' head office on the Strand. This focused partly on the Coutts family and their interests in fashion. These ranged from Thomas Coutts himself (1735-1822), although he wasn't exactly a follower of fashion, to his wife Harriot, who liked to dress well, and his two teenaged daughters, who in the 1789 wrote Thomas a passionately detailed letter from Paris declaring that 'Orange is no longer the tip-top fashion. Pink and black is the great rage. They wear here bonnets very much dishabille. Pink linking black at top and the crown. Pink and black ribbons tipped with a little pink fringe is the most newest fashion,

then black pink or white feathers. Cock feathers black and pink is very much the mode.' As well as personal interests in fashion and clothing, our archives reflect the variety of the clothing industry. A large number of haberdashers, corset makers, hatters and tailors appear in our C18 and C19 ledgers, including one Mr John Lewis, a silk mercer, who opened his account in 1887. Of course today his business is still 'never knowingly undersold'.

The archives' contribution to the September LFW was higher profile. Louise Goldin had by now designed her dress – and her chosen material? Paper! Publicity stepped up in advance of the week, building interest in Louise's innovative creation, which was to be unveiled on September 13th. In advance, we gave the Press team details of how paper had featured in Coutts history. These snippets ranged from the obvious role of paper as the medium for recording banking transactions, making payments by cheque, and ensuring customer security by keeping signatures on file, to some less well known associations. For example, the boardroom at 440 Strand is decorated with 200-year-old Chinese wallpaper made from mulberry leaves. And many of Coutts' famous customers relied on paper as a way of earning their living; such as the artists Sir Thomas Lawrence and George Frederic Watts, and authors like Charles Dickens.

## Bloggers' delight

On 10 September a group of fashion bloggers came to the Strand for a private lunch and to see a film of how the dress was made. The visit included a viewing

“Orange is no longer the tip-top fashion. Pink and black is the great rage.”



“

Louise Goldin had by now designed her dress – and her chosen material? Paper!

”

of some archives and artefacts relating to the press factsheet. We were excited to find that the resulting ‘tweets’ focused as much on the history and archives of Coutts as they did on the making of Louise Goldin’s striking dress.

On two days of September’s Fashion Week we were also mounted a display for clients attending catwalk events as guests of Coutts. Some of these were extremely dedicated fashion fans, as the earliest show began at 8.30am. Clients arrived at the Strand at 8 sharp for a glass of champagne (!) and a light breakfast before being ferried to the show at Somerset House. We were stationed in an adjoining room with documents and artefacts laid out, including an example of a signature book and a beautiful handwriting exercise written by an eighteenth-century clerk. Two further waves of guests came at mid-morning and at lunch, but the long shift was well worth it as we added a unique dash of Coutts history to the excitement of their day.

“

It was great to see our ideas taken up with enthusiasm.

”

Although at the end of September we were back to business as usual, London Fashion Week had been a new and enjoyable experience for us, and was rated a success by the sponsorship and events team. We had raised our team’s profile by contributing to a new initiative, and had perhaps surprised ourselves with the number of connections that existed between the glittering world of fashion and a sensible private bank.

.....  
**Isobel Long**

Coutts & Co  
 .....

# As Good as Old? The Reinvention of Forgotten Technologies

How many inventions lie forgotten or dormant in archives? What is the most efficient way to identify the good ideas lurking amongst them? Could some of these inventions be of value in today's world, contributing solutions in areas such as sustainability?

High profile examples of technologies which have been brought back from the past and adapted for today's world are relatively easy to come by; wind turbines (derived from the windmill) or electric vehicles are good examples. Revisiting these ideas is relatively simple as they were commercialised at the time of their invention, and consequently information is readily available and not out of sight in old archives. Reviving these types of technology is perhaps best described as re-innovation.

However, many good ideas and useful inventions never reached the commercial market at the time of their conception due to unfavourable conditions. For example, the historically cheap price of oil reduced the economic viability of many alternative, oil free technologies. Changing circumstances could now allow some of these previously abandoned technologies to be feasible. Revisiting inventions of this type can be described as reinvention, and this process is less familiar than re-innovation. Examples of reinventions can still be identified though, for example the production of paper from textiles as a useful way

of recycling low grade waste clothing, or the use of efficient Atkinson cycle engines in vehicles. Both of these technologies are historic, but were never previously used on a large commercial scale. However, they may now provide solutions to some of today's sustainability challenges by finding alternative sources of materials, or providing lower impact transport.

Oakdene Hollins is carrying out an exploratory project, funded by the Technology Strategy Board and the Economics and Social Research Council, scoping how abandoned inventions can successfully be revisited due to changing factors such as the economic landscape or increased environmental awareness. Evidence we have gathered suggests that there is wealth of useful ideas contained in archives which could find contemporary applications. To-date, the concept of reinvention has received little recognition, and little is known about this field. This project is investigating the possibilities of reinventing technologies, and determining if there is worth in purposely searching for forgotten technologies to reinvent. Part of this project has been to identify evidence of reinventions which have already occurred, and many examples have been found across many different technology areas. However, this work has also discovered that purposely seeking reinventions is not common, and reinvention typically occurs through chance. Therefore, the appearance of reinvented technologies is typically attributable to serendipity

rather than through the methodical or systematic searching of records. To determine if the discovery of reinventions can be conducted in a purposeful manner, an analysis of 80 years worth of digitised archives from a research organisation has been performed. A methodology to systematically identify and pursue possible reinventions has been developed, and this process will allow the incidence of potential reinventions to be determined. The most promising ideas have been investigated further and an estimation of their impact made. Once fully complete this work will allow us to estimate the potential value of inventions hidden in archives. So far this analysis has proved successful, and several ideas are now being pursued further to discover if contemporary application can be realised. Once complete this work will provide us with the data to answer the central questions posed at the beginning of this piece.

The project team is also seeking opinions and contributions for experts in various areas. We would be interested in finding out about analogous work investigating similar concepts, methods of archive analysis or even examples of potential technologies which could be reinvented. For further information or comment please contact [adrian.chapman@oakdenehollins.co.uk](mailto:adrian.chapman@oakdenehollins.co.uk)

.....  
**Adrian Chapman**

Oakdene Hollins Ltd  
.....

# “We are what we keep ...”

The conference this year marked the official inauguration of ARA (Archives and Records Association) and provided an opportunity to reflect on past accomplishments. In particular, Alan Cameron, (Association President) followed the keynote speech with a brief overview of some of the major developments in archival theory and practice over the last few decades.

The main focus of the conference, however, was on appraisal, and to a certain extent, digitisation. Yet, while delegates enjoyed a widely, theoretical dialogue from speakers, they also found presentations were punctuated by individual experience and a series of practical case-studies. Of particular interest, was Sharon McMeekin, (Royal Commission on the Ancient & Historical Monuments of Scotland) who outlined the steps taken to promote and enable digital curation. Issues such as compliancy (with reference to architectural plans), gap analysis and proactive acquisition were all debated and then put into context by using examples of project work undertaken at RCAHMS.

Core ideas such as democratisation, transparency and the living archive were all discussed throughout the 3-day conference. Initially, the former of these was reflected in the keynote speech by Terry Cook, (University of Manitoba) who addressed delegates with the opinion “*we are what we **don’t** keep*” and continued by challenging archivists to invest more time in the development of local or community archives. In terms of the latter, Louise Ray, (Consultant Archivist) spoke of a record’s birth, its growth and consequent place within a life-cycle and that by using this notion of a record’s organic development, it might be, that a well-nurtured archive would continue to live and therefore continue to provide use for both creator and researcher alike.

“Core ideas such as democratisation, transparency and the living archive were all discussed throughout the 3-day conference.”

From the variety of archival backgrounds present, one of the most interesting probably being Dr. Meena Gautam (National Archives of India), delegates were fortunate to learn how repositories outside their own counties, and indeed countries, were working towards improving best practice and introducing new projects to open up archives to wider demographics and different interest groups.

However, as the conference drew to a close, with most delegates sheepishly attending the final round of talks (following a night of the Adams Jovi Experience), I found myself oddly intrigued by a series of esoteric sounds and, in particular, the lyrics of DLT (Dave Lee Travis) by The Rejects. This was part of a presentation

David Baldwin and Dr Gutram



by Martin Astell (Essex County Archives) on the creation and management of sound archives, and competently supported earlier thoughts on democratising archival content.

With good weather and a strong list of speakers the conference was hugely enjoyable and offered

a unique insight into national and international thought on current archival theory and practice. My only concern was that following the conference I had a sudden desire to purchase *Bon Jovi's Greatest Hits!*

.....  
**David Baldwin**

London Metropolitan Archives  
.....

# Culture, Heritage & Why sitting under that umbrella isn't necessarily a bad thing

## A response to 'Who are we?' in last month's edition of ARC

**L**ook around your searchroom. Open your email. Check the enquiries you've received today, yesterday, last week, last year. I can guarantee that the majority of your users whether in person or remotely will be family historians or leisure users in some other guise. And that's not necessarily a bad thing.

There appears to be no end to those wanting to investigate their family history, the way of life in their neighbourhood or where their ancestors worked and lived, what they ate, read, and did. Which means we continue to be able to prove use of our services and to develop new ways of delivering them.

Interest in local and family history is growing fast. The success of the BBC's *Who Do You Think You Are*, and the prominence of Heritage and local history content in regional and national media underlines this. Being part of the 'Culture sector' means we can open the way to new and different funding streams, new audiences who access our information in non-traditional ways.

The work we, as a sector, do with Community Archives can offer local groups a platform to document their lives and histories. Not for the evidential value of their records but because it builds a sense of belonging, and of value to society. We play

our part in preserving the corporate memory and through what are traditionally seen as less important or valuable sources this documents life for future generations.

Through our connection with Heritage and Culture this picture is added to and built up, collaborative working with museums, galleries and other heritage organisations results in our documentary sources being used in conjunction with artefacts, buildings, locations, oral histories, memories to create a sense of place and fleshing out history.

Not necessarily our ancestor's history but it brings to life the time in which they lived. The success of the BBC's *Turn back Time* programme illustrates this as does the sheer volume of websites, mash-ups, stories and images that are available on the web. Digital access and the social media boom is just adding to and exacerbating this. Surely we should jump on board and not dismiss it because it's tenuous, uncertain and doesn't fit with Jenkinsonian principles of appraisal and cataloguing?

A link to culture bring us new contacts, new stories, new and innovative ways of doing things. The interest is there, archives are in demand. Does it matter if it's from leisure users and pulls us into the culture or heritage sector? I'm not sure it does.

# “Unlock the potential of your collections”



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# Sowing seeds of collaboration:

## Digitising an 18th century botanist's archive

The Superintendent of the East India Company Botanical Garden in Kolkata, Nathaniel Wallich, is a significant figure in the history and development of botany in India.

His work, including botanical collections, watercolour drawings and letters, represents an invaluable scientific and historical resource for researchers and botanists in India and world wide. Like many natural history collections of 18th century, much of his work is now widely distributed amongst a number of European and Asian institutions.

The British Library (BL), Natural History Museum (NHM) and Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew all have important Wallich collections. A pilot project, funded by the World Collections Programme, is currently underway to digitise the drawings, plant specimens and correspondence of Wallich. Three hundred drawings from the NHM and Kew will be digitised. Where the drawings can be matched to specimens, these will also be digitised, and related information captured. A botanical expert from the Natural History Museum has assessed the Wallich correspondence at the British Library for scientific and historical content and 3000 letters have been identified.

This material will be made available next year to a global audience through a new website, hosted by Kew, aimed at scientists and social historians alike. The site also intends to and will act as an introduction to the breadth and depth of material

“

This project is a marvellous opportunity to work with colleagues in the UK and India to benefit researchers from a range of disciplines.

”

Penny Brook, British Library

relating to the history of India and its economic development.

The project researchers, in addition to creating the website, will explore whether the drawings collections at Kew and the NHM are associated with Wallich's famous work *Plantae Asiaticae Rariories* (1830-32). If this is confirmed-- it will be of significant scientific and bibliographical interest.

Professor David Mabberley, Keeper of the Herbarium at Kew, visited the Calcutta Botanical Garden last November. The Gardens hold a substantial amount of manuscript material relating to Wallich. Other UK specialists from the Kew and NHM will be visiting the Calcutta Botanical Garden later this year to assess the 33 volumes of correspondence to identify unique and complimentary material and discuss if the project can support any conservation the collection requires. It is hoped some of this material will also be digitised and made available through the website.

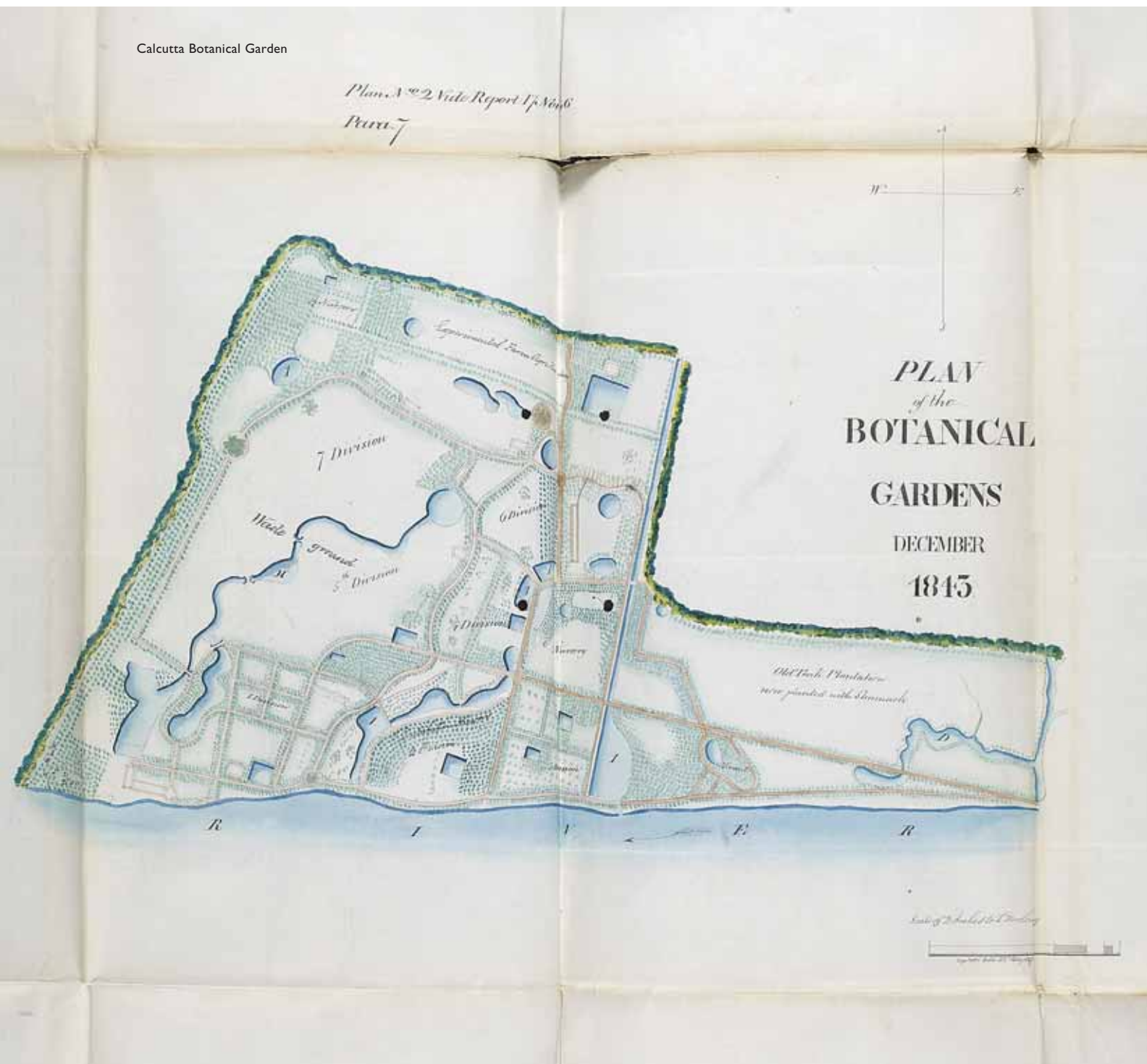
A survey of the key south Asian natural history drawing collections (1690-1900), held at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, the Natural History Museum and the British Library has been completed and a further detailed study will be undertaken next July by the distinguished Indian academic, Kapil Raj, Associate Professor at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris and Assistant Director at the Centre Alexandre Koyré, Centre de Recherche en Histoire des Sciences et des Techniques.

A conference will also be held in London next December focussed on Wallich and the work of the project. The partners see the project as a 'seed-bed' and aim to encourage other institutions to contribute material to the website so that it eventually grows to include all surviving Wallich material and becomes a valuable research tool for botanists and historians.

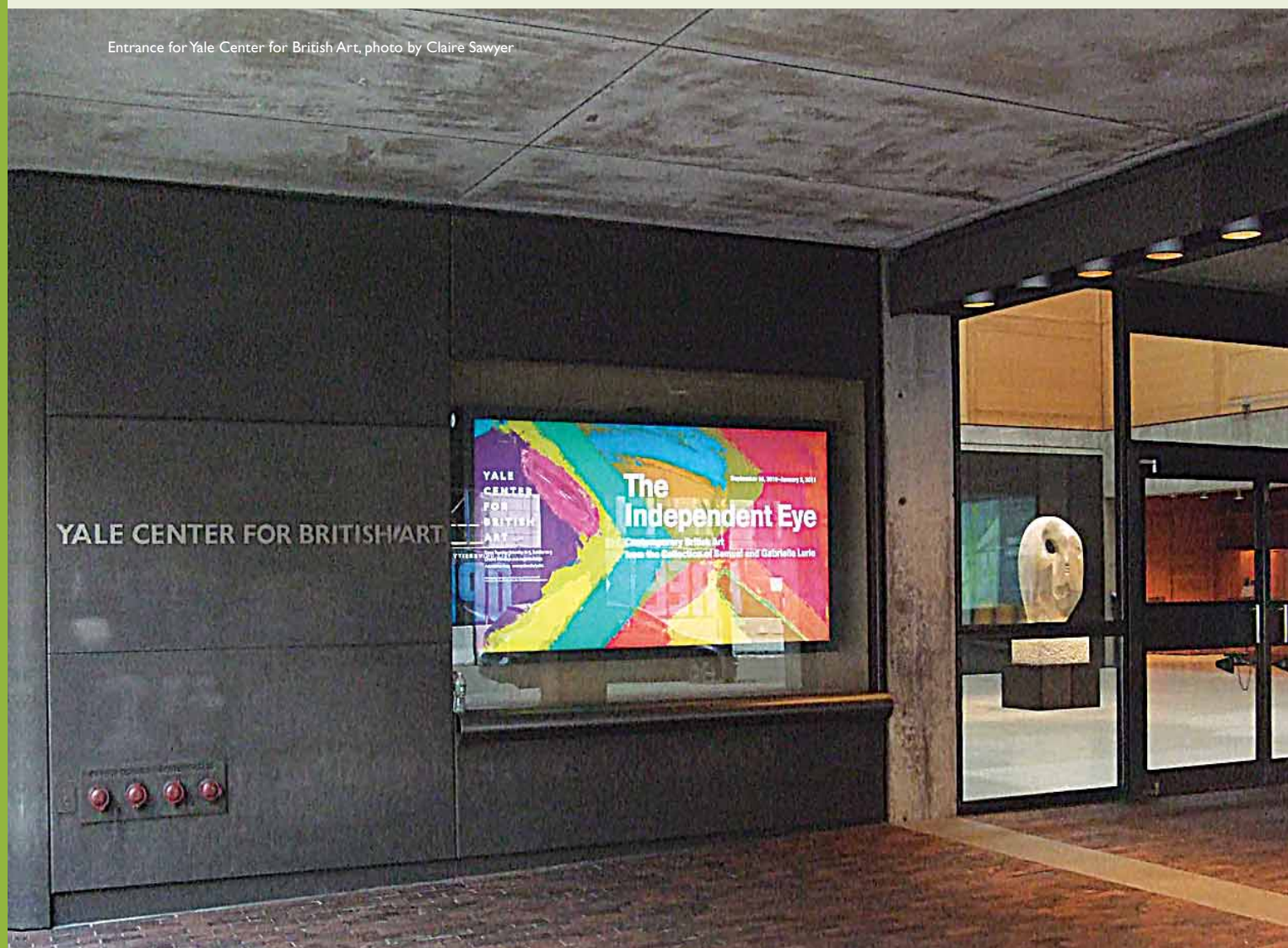
**Cat Finlayson**

British Library

Calcutta Botanical Garden



Entrance for Yale Center for British Art, photo by Claire Sawyer



# USA Study Trip Report

Specialist archives can be found in arts organisations across the UK, providing unique resources for a wide range of research interests, including art historical studies. I currently manage one such collection, the archive of sculptors' papers at the Henry Moore Institute (HMI) in Leeds ([www.henry-moore.org/hmi](http://www.henry-moore.org/hmi)). The HMI undertakes a wide variety of activities relating to the study of sculpture, including exhibitions, research programme, and has an extensive research library, archive and sculpture collection. The Archive is part of the Leeds sculpture collections, owned by Leeds Museums & Galleries (LM&G) and managed through a partnership agreement with the HMI.

I began working with the collection in 2008, and after twelve months in post considered visiting similar institutions to the HMI, to familiarise myself with related collections, compare practices and network.

My former manager Dr Penelope Curtis (now Director of Tate Britain) was very supportive of my idea, and suggested that I make an overseas study, visiting USA arts archives. This would enable me to also compare UK and USA archival practices. Through her contacts, I arranged to visit the Getty Research Institute, (GRI), Los Angeles and the Yale Center for British Art, (YCBA), New Haven, both of which hold archives and specialist collections closely related to the Henry



Inside the Getty Research Institute stack area, photo by Claire Sawyer

“visiting similar institutions to the HMI, to familiarise myself with related collections, compare practices and network.”

Moore Institute (HMI) Archive, and operate similar exhibition and research programmes. Supported by a generous bursary from the International Affairs Working Group of the ARA, a contribution from the Henry Moore Foundation and agreed leave from my employers at LM&G, I was able to undertake the trip in October 2010.

Whilst visiting the GRI and YCBA, and several galleries and museums in New York which hold archives, I was

interested to note the commonalties with archival theory and practice in the UK. However the most significant discovery was when discussing archival ‘processing’ with Andra Darlington the Head of Special Collections Cataloguing & Metadata, at the GRI. In 2009 the GRI had a major restructure and had to consider new ways for working, with fewer staff and less resources. One effect was to examine ways in which the backlog could be addressed but, faced with lengthy cataloguing times, this was to be



Getty Research Institute, photo by Claire Sawyer

“  
I was interested to note the commonalities with archival theory and practice in the UK.  
”

a challenge. However they found solutions within a ground-breaking article: 'More Product, Less Process: Pragmatically Revamping Traditional Processing Approaches to Deal with Late 20th-Century Collections' by Mark A. Greene of the University of Wyoming and Dennis Meissner of the Minnesota

Historical Society, (2004), which advocated for a new approach to creating access to archives.

It argued that the archival community was operating outmoded, laborious cataloguing and preservation practices in the face of a growing backlog and the public's need for access. Green and Meissner surveyed current USA archival guidance and procedures and found them wanting. They also undertook new research evidencing the huge variance in cataloguing times for like twentieth century collections. Their paper called for a drastic change in approaches to cataloguing, making the

needs of the user, not archival practice, the main concern. The article stated 'we have been applying traditional approaches to a new problem, and we have not been motivated to change the ways we do things, despite the clearly growing handicaps imposed by the status quo'.

The article recommended changes in areas including arrangement, conservation and description. For example, to reduce cataloguing times, a key tenet of the article is to establish a minimum level of work, particularly to not arrange below series level and to keep description brief and simple. Also, to dispense with refolding and removing staples and paper clips, as these should not deteriorate in the appropriate strongroom environment. The report caused some controversy, and a mixed reception in the USA. However the GRI took the 'MPLP' (as the article is known) recommendations and found these new ways of working to be beneficial in drastically reducing cataloguing times, and the backlog. The response from their users has been positive.

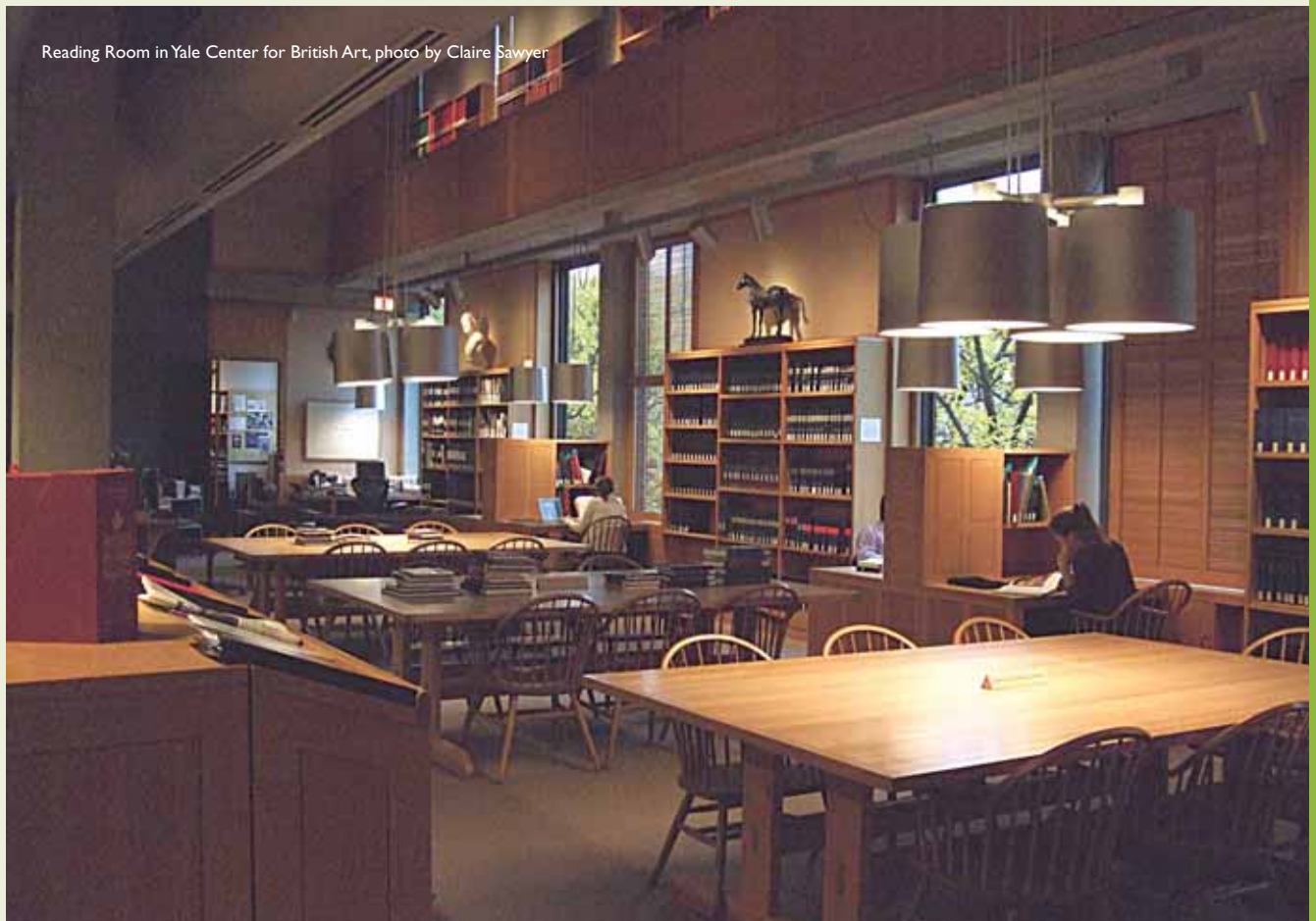
I am now relating how MPLP could be incorporated into my work at the HMI Archive. As a solo archivist,

managing all aspects of a rapidly growing collection, I need to consider how I am to meet the demand for access. I would welcome a discussion with UK archive professionals who would like to investigate the MPLP recommendations. Dennis Meissner recently spoke on MPLP at a Research Libraries Group event and I would be keen to hear responses from delegates. I will talk more with colleagues at the GRI about the specifics of introducing MPLP, and read a recent article by Mark A. Green on this subject, ("MPLP: It's Not Just for Processing Anymore," *The American Archivist*, Vol. 73, Spring/Summer 2010, 175-203).

To conclude, the study trip has been hugely beneficial to me and my place of work. I will make changes to the way the HMI Archive is managed in light of what I've seen and learnt, improving access to the collection. I will continue to reflect on the conversations and new discoveries I made, and keep in touch with my new contacts overseas with a view to working together in the future.

.....  
**Claire Sawyer**

Henry Moore Institute  
.....



Reading Room in Yale Center for British Art, photo by Claire Sawyer

# The international Atmospheric Circulation Reconstructions over the Earth initiative

The international Atmospheric Circulation Reconstructions over the Earth (ACRE initiative) aims to undertake and facilitate the recovery of instrumental terrestrial and marine global surface weather observations. (<http://www.met-acre.org/>) These observations will make it possible to create computer reconstructions of past global weather conditions spanning the last 200-250 years (<http://reanalyses.org>). The vast amounts of global historical weather data being recovered, imaged, digitised and added to international terrestrial and marine databases by this initiative, come from a wide variety of sources, for example ships logs held in various archival repositories of all types. In order to make these recovery efforts as thorough and exhaustive as possible, the initiative is keen to work closely with libraries, archives and museums around the world.

The initiative provides an umbrella that links together some 35+ projects, institutions, organisations, data rescue and climate applications activities around the globe (<http://www.met-acre.org/international-acre-partners--collaborations---linkages-1>) and has wide international support from various groups such as the World Meteorological Organisation, the Group on Earth Observations, the Global Climate Observing System, the World Climate Research Program. In 2010, the ACRE initiative and its activities were ratified by the World Meteorological Organisation's Commission for Climatology and extolled in the Implementation Plan for the Global Observing System for Climate in Support of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (<http://www.wmo.int/pages/prog/gcos/Publications/gcos-138.pdf>).

Led by the Centre for e-Research at King's College, London, the initiative is also part of a consortium that has recently been awarded a UK Arts and Humanities Research Council Researching Environmental Change Networks grant. The grant will support a series of expert seminars to explore research questions and sources, and methods for the effective shared use of historical weather data and to promote real inter/cross disciplinary engagements between the physical, social, economic sciences and the humanities (<http://historicweather.cerch.kcl.ac.uk/>).

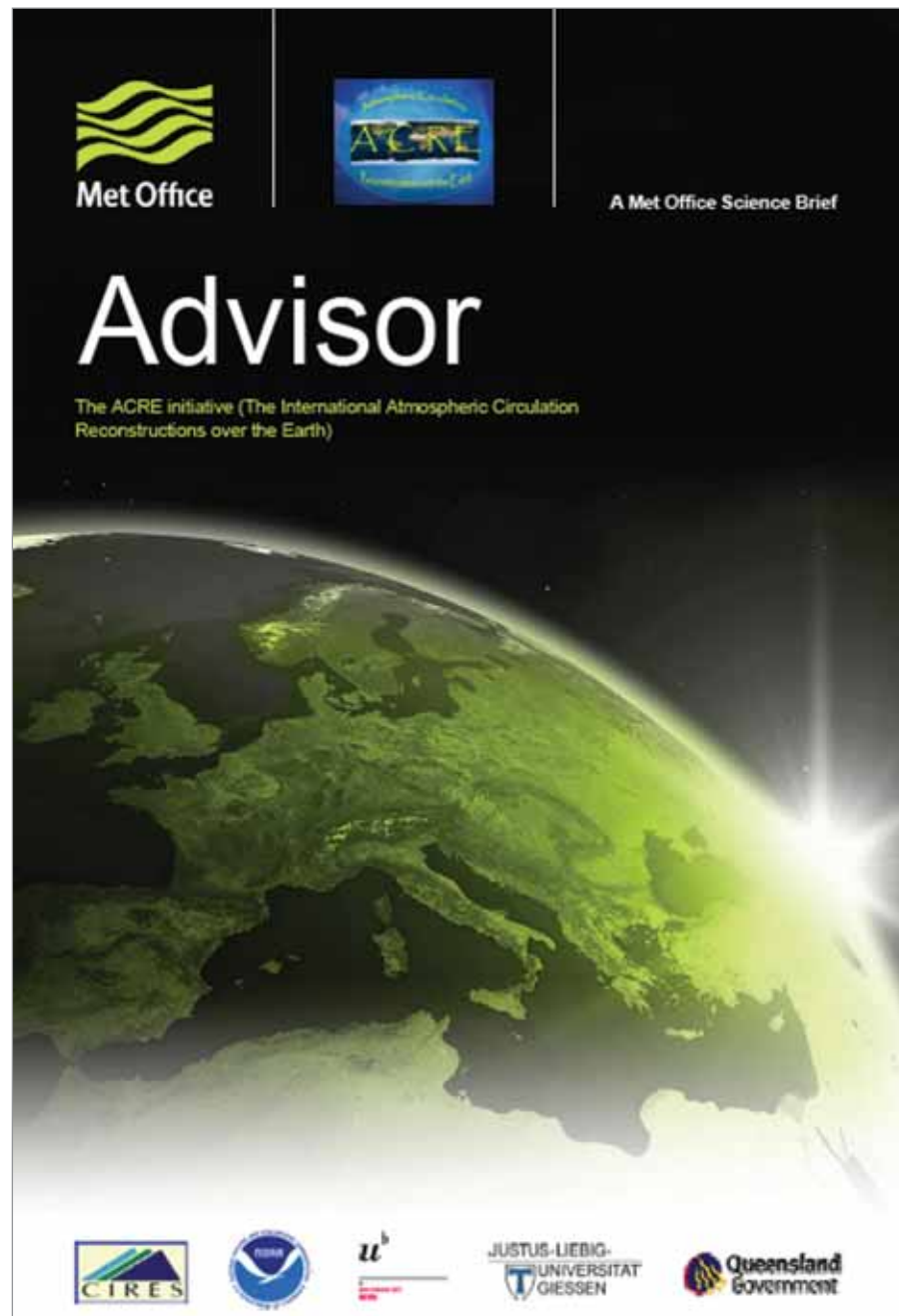
An integral component essential to ACRE is the ongoing effort to build a web-based interface that will store and allow free access to visualisations of all of the variables generated by the global weather reconstructions in time and space such as the raw weather data, data images, and metadata. For examples of other related inter/cross-disciplinary engagements between climate, social, economic, environmental and political sciences and the

“

The initiative provides an umbrella that links together some 35+ projects, institutions, organisations, data rescue and climate applications activities around the globe

”

Met Office Science Brief Cover,  
Crown Copyright 2010



humanities worldwide please see the following:

- GLOBE Program and its Student Climate Research Campaign (<http://www.globe.gov/content/scrc>)
- Galaxy Zoo (<http://www.galaxyzoo.org/>)
- Citizen Science Alliance (<http://www.citizensciencealliance.org/>)
- Oldweather (<http://www.oldweather.org/>).

At a time when climate and climate change research findings are being questioned, the ACRE initiative seeks to engage, interact, and partner with libraries, archives and museums around the world—to bring them into the effort to construct a truly coherent and integrated web-based historical reconstruction of

global instrumental weather for the full international user community. If this can be achieved, then any accumulated data or material from any discipline that has spatiotemporal characteristics can be layered into such a web-based entity to produce a sustainable and evolving 21st century platform, serving different international researchers everywhere.

For more information, please see ACRE website or contact the project manager: <http://www.met-acre.org/Home/manager>

**Dr Rob Allan**  
Met Office Hadley Centre

# The Endangered Archives Programme – An Update

The Endangered Archives Programme (EAP), set up in 2004, is funded by a charity called Arcadia and administered by The British Library. The aims of the Programme focus on preserving documentary heritage, raising awareness, fostering archival best practice and facilitating scholarship and research. We achieve these aims through an annual grants programme which has to date funded 137 projects in 58 countries, with a grant commitment of £3.6 million.

By October 2009, the Programme had been running for five years. It was time to examine the impact of the Programme and to consider areas for change or improvement. From October 2009 to November 2010, the Programme underwent a review, carried out by Sarah Tyacke.

The review considered questions of surrogate capture, accessibility of the materials, the provision of training and geographical coverage. The results of the review were positive, although the recommendations necessarily included suggestions for change. A significant recommendation was a switch in preference from microfilm to digital as the preferred surrogate medium. Another recommendation aimed at improving access to the accumulated digital collections. This resulted in new web pages for the EAP and the post of EAP Cataloguer being extended for another two years.

With the review behind us, we are in a position to confidently move forward. The timing could not be better, as The British Library launches its new on-line



Example of an endangered archive

cataloguing interface: Search our Catalogue Archives and Manuscripts. The new EAP web pages compliment this by hosting the digital images, video and audio files on-line. The site is also designed to hold information about un-catalogued collections, thus increasing access to all our existing descriptive metadata.

More information

EAP Webpages: <http://eap.bl.uk/>

British Library SOCAM page: <http://searcharchives.bl.uk>

EAP Blog: <http://britishlibrary.typepad.co.uk/endangeredarchives/>

.....  
**Lynda Barraclough**

British Library  
.....



Gopal Bhar.  
Photo courtesy of the  
British Library

# Hypertext Markup Language

## A Guide to Archival and Related Standards

Standards applicable to archives; for the digital delivery of repository guides, finding-aids, and images of material from collections.

### Name of Standards Developing Organisation:

W3C (World Wide Web Consortium)

the use of the opening `<p>` tag and the closing `</p>` tag.

### Current version

HTML5 Draft Standard (W3C Working Draft 16 November 2010)

HTML provides `<body>` start and end tags to indicate that all the content within these 'wrapper' tags is to be displayed. It also provides `<header>` tags for the content that comprises the header of the page, that is, the metadata about the page, such as its title, the date it was created, who created it and any modifications made.

### Replaces

HTML4 (1999) and XHTML (2000, revised 2002)

### Abstract

HTML is the predominant markup language for Web pages created by Tim Berners-Lee as a means to provide basic hypertext navigation, menus and simple documentation. It has become incredibly popular and increasingly sophisticated.

One of the most powerful features of HTML is the ability to create hyperlinks between pages. This is done by using the `<a>` tag to define a link. The link is put within what is called an attribute, in this case one called 'href'. So, a link to the Archives and Records Association would be:

### Description

HTML stands for *HyperText Markup Language*. It is a set of markup tags used to describe Web pages. Markup tags are simply pairs of tags, using angled brackets, with a forward slash to indicate the closing tag. A Web browser, such as Internet Explorer or Firefox, can read the HTML markup and display the page. The browser uses the tags to interpret the page.

```
<a href=http://www.archives.org.uk/>Link to the ARA</a>.
```

You can see that this markup provides the URL, or location, of the Web page, and it provides some text for the link that is displayed in the page.

A set of tags might indicate that content should be a heading, or that it is a list, or that it forms a paragraph. For example, `<h1>An Introduction to HTML</h1>` shows content within a heading tag. The browser will interpret this as a heading. Paragraphs are indicated by

An HTML element is defined as everything within a tag, from the opening tag to the closing tag. An element may or may not include an attribute, such as the 'href' attribute shown above. Most HTML elements can be nested, for example, the content is nested within the `<body>` tag.

#### Here is an example of very simple HTML:

```
<html>
  <head>
    <title>An Introduction to HTML</title>
  </head>
  <body>
    <h1>An Introduction to HTML</h1>
    <p>HTML stands for HyperText Markup Language. You can
    find out more about HTML at <a
    href=http://www.w3.org/html/>http://www.w3.org/html/</a>.
    </p>
  </body>
</html>
```

You can see that there are `<html>` opening and closing tags wrapping all of the content, and then tags to indicate the header information and the main body of text.

HTML has gone through a number of revisions since it was first created. HTML5 is now available as a draft standard. It is designed to help create powerful interactive Web based applications. The ability to support Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) is becoming increasingly important, as APIs enable software applications to interact with each other. This helps promote the sharing of content, moving us further towards the principle of open data. It is also designed to be effective on different devices – not just desktop PCs but mobiles and other hand-held devices. HTML5 is much more prescriptive than previous version in terms of telling browsers what to do with the markup. One of the problems with HTML has been that browsers will interpret the tags differently, so that designers can never be sure how their pages will render. The idea is to make browsers more interoperable.

Web pages are often created using editing software such as Adobe Dreamweaver, allowing authors to use a WYSIWYG editor (What You See Is What You Get), without needing to understand the tags and attributes. However, it is important to have an understanding of how to create accessible Web pages that conform to the Disability Discrimination Act, section III, 1999 (DDA). The Act states that websites must be accessible, but gives little information on how to achieve this. The W3C provides useful Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) as part of their Web Accessibility Initiative.

HTML provides tags to identify content and it can provide tags for display. However, it is good practice to use CSS (Cascading Stylesheets) for specifying how to display HTML elements. Stylesheets enable the content (the HTML) to be separated from the presentation to a large extent. In fact, HTML was never really intended to contain tags for formatting; it was intended to define content – ‘this is a heading’, ‘this is a paragraph’, etc. Stylesheets can specify the size, weight and colour of text, whether text is indented, how lists are rendered, and all sorts of other layout issues.

In his book, *Weaving the Web*, Tim Berners-Lee describes the basis of the World Wide Web:

“HTML is the ‘lingua franca’, the basic warp and weft of the Web.”

“The art was to define the few basic, common rules of ‘protocol’ that would allow one computer to talk to another, in such a way that when all computers everywhere did it, the system would thrive, not break down. For the Web, those elements were...universal resource identifiers (URIs), the Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) and the Hypertext Markup Language (HTML).” (*Weaving the Web*, Tim Berners-Lee, Texere 1999)

It is URIs that are used to identify resources, including web pages, and HTTP is the protocol enabling the transfer of information across the Web. HTML is the ‘lingua franca’, the basic warp and weft of the Web.

#### Next month

We will look at a number of international reference code systems defined by ISO (The International Organization for Standardization).

.....  
**Jane Stevenson**

The Archives Hub

Mimas, The University of Manchester  
.....

## ZOMBIES, BALLERINAS AND WILD ROCK GIGS...

**The IMAGINE Children’s Festival**

**Saturday 12 – Sunday 27 February 2011**

**Southbank Centre, London**

**[www.southbankcentre.co.uk](http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk)**

Imagine, Southbank Centre’s inspirational children’s festival returns for the 10th year with an unbeatable mix of readings and storytelling by favourite children’s authors and poets and a full programme of music, dance, comedy, film and performance.

# MANCHESTER CHINESE ARCHIVE EXHIBITION

3 February to 31 July 31, 2011

Manchester Chinese Centre, 67 Ardwick Green, Manchester M12 6FX

Throughout 2010 the Manchester Chinese Centre in partnership with Manchester City Archives and the Museum of Science and Industry (MOSI), recorded the memories of the Chinese community since their early settlement in Greater Manchester in the 1900's, creating an archive, for the community itself and the general public. The exhibition and the learning events accompanying it, showcase this work. Project kindly funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

**Jane Speller**

Manchester Chinese Archive



Left: Archive volunteer Andre Li with Kung Fu fan.  
Below: Mr. and Mrs. Lee (centre), in a Manchester restaurant, around 1960.



## 2011: The Year of the Bible

Annual Conference of the Librarians' Christian Fellowship

Bertha Wright Room, Carrs Lane Church Centre, Carrs Lane  
Birmingham, B4 7SX. Saturday 2 April 2011 10.30 a.m.

The speakers will be Dr. Rob Cotton, who works for the Bible Society as their Campaigns Manager and also co-ordinates the "Biblefresh" project for the Evangelical Alliance, and the Rev. Dr. Pete Wilcox, Canon Chancellor of Lichfield Cathedral. The Conference has been arranged to coincide with 2011's 400th anniversary of the King James or

Authorised Version of the Bible. The Conference fee is £25.00, including lunch and refreshments, with a reduced rate of £20.00 for unwaged delegates.

Non-members are welcome. For more information and to register email Graham Hedges at: [secretary@librarianscf.org.uk](mailto:secretary@librarianscf.org.uk)

**Web Site:** [www.librarianscf.org.uk](http://www.librarianscf.org.uk)



Stanley gymnasium for women 1920

# Life as a Victorian student in South East London

On Thursday 30 September, 2010, London South Bank University (LSBU) launched its online archives catalogue to facilitate the first ever global access to historical records which depict life as a higher education student in South East (SE) London over a century ago. The catalogue is part of LSBU's Archive Centre launch and includes 1,500 items dating back to the University's inception in 1892. Until now, LSBU's archive collection, which holds the key to the history of higher education in SE London, has remained locked away in a secure repository. The online catalogue makes this history accessible to the public for the first time.

The collection consists of photographs, student magazines, press cuttings, trophies, annual reports and building models, which trace the history of the University and the education and training needs of the community it serves. For instance, it tracks the University pioneering specialist courses such as petrol motor mechanics in the 1900s, heating and ventilating engineering in the 1920s and nuclear power in the 1950s. It also includes artefacts recording the UK's first engineering course for women in the 1920s and one of the UK's first nursing degrees in 1974, along with a photo of the Duke of York (who later

became King George VI) visiting a baking class in 1930. Back in the late 1890s, the popular baking class attracted students from Canada, New Zealand and South Africa.

As South East London's largest and oldest provider of higher education, LSBU's historical records also provide a snapshot of the cultural and economic environment at the time. For example, the collection's pre-1917 photographs include images of Victorian students baking bread which reflect the era's focus on providing theoretical and practical instruction in trades which were common in the local area. Another depicts students starching collars, mirroring the demand for well-trained domestic staff in London's middle-class homes at the time. While another image captures female students vaulting in the gymnasium wearing long heavy skirts

“It's really exciting to enable everyone to have access to the striking documents and photographs that in the archive.”



Duke of York visiting the National Bakery School at LSBU, 20th February 1930.

“ We encourage anyone who has an interest in history or an affiliation with LSBU to visit the online catalogue – you may even find a long lost photo of someone you know. ”



Baking class c1910.

showing that despite the weighed down and restricting attire, well-being of the body and mind through exercise was highly valued at the time.

These images also reflect the original aim of the University, which was ‘to promote the industrial skill, general knowledge, health and well-being of young men and women’. This theme continues throughout the periods covered in the collection and continues to ring true today. LSBU’s current mission is to “create professional opportunity for all who can benefit” and its close industry links continue to ensure its professional

courses mirror real-world developments. The preserved documentation shows how LSBU has always provided professional skills and qualifications which reflect the economic needs of its local area. The archives collection demonstrates the institution’s credibility and relevance throughout its history, including significant past achievements and present developments.

The online catalogue can be found at:  
[www.lsbu.ac.uk/archivescatalogue](http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/archivescatalogue).

**Elizabeth Harper**

London South Bank University

# Wigan's History and Heritage goes Online

The vision for online public access to Wigan's photographic archive has been a long held ambition of the Collections Development Manager of the Museum of Wigan Life, run by the Wigan Leisure & Culture Trust (WLCT).

The initial selection of 5,000 items identified for digitisation consisted of photographic prints, glass plates, lantern slides, original negatives, 6x7 slides and 35mm negatives.

Through a competitive tender process WLCT appointed TownsWeb Archiving to provide the scanning and digitisation services, and to work with WLCT to set up and host a searchable online website with a payment gateway for customers to buy prints.

## Digitising the collection

Staff and volunteers working for WLCT catalogued, labelled and packed the collection of 5,000 photos. TownsWeb staff ensured

their safe transportation by arranging a personal collection.

“ TownsWeb Archiving have proved extremely helpful supporting us to bring a local heritage alive. We would certainly recommend them to other libraries, museums and archives. ”

Lisa Keys, Wigan Leisure & Culture Trust.





The images were scanned to a high resolution and each file named according to the identifier written on the envelope of each photograph. Catalogue data was exported from WLCT's Adlib Museums database and attached to the record of each image. Negatives were converted to positives, and each image checked for quality and contrast adjusted where necessary, and then output in both master TIFF and surrogate JPEG formats for the web. Images were loaded to an external hard drive and redelivered to WLCT over a two month period.

#### **Collection management**

TownsWeb has developed its own archive collections management system, ArcView ([www.arc-view.com](http://www.arc-view.com)), to enable clients to continue to upload scanned images and metadata,

and to associate features such as copyright protection watermarks with each image. The system, following some bespoke software development and staff training, now allows Wigan to manage the updating and display of images and control the print costs to users. TownsWeb hosts and maintains the archive, and provides the print request service to customers on behalf of WLCT.

#### **Public access to the collection**

The TownsWeb Archiving team worked with WLCT staff to design and then develop a website to provide keyword search and retrieval of thumbnail images that could be enlarged to view, with an 'add to cart' option to order prints in two alternative sizes, 10"x8" or 6"x4".

The website design follows the brand and colour principles of

the client's main web portal, and is compliant with W3C standards.

#### **Print supply**

Customer order enquiries and customer orders via the website are all handled by the TownsWeb team. They process the order, print the photograph, pack and post it, with the profit margin on the sale remitted to WLCT. Income generated in this way can be used to fund the ongoing digitisation of Wigan's vast photographic archive.

For more information, please see: [www.wiganimages.wlct.org](http://www.wiganimages.wlct.org)

#### **Paul Sugden**

TownsWeb Archiving Ltd

## ARC's last photo competition

Win a £10 book token!

Please send your entries to [arceditors@archives.org.uk](mailto:arceditors@archives.org.uk)

This competition is open to anyone, not just Association members.

The winner will be announced in next month's ARC.



This month we have an image from the Berkshire Record Office. It is a publicity photograph taken in 1897 of Miss Maud Lancaster allegedly demonstrating telepathy.

## Calling All Colleagues!

ARC is always seeking articles reflecting the issues that matter to you most. We would love to make ARC more provocative and publish pieces that reveal the sector's opinion.

If you would like to send something for inclusion in the magazine, or write and let us know what you'd like to read about, please send articles to [arceditors@archives.org.uk](mailto:arceditors@archives.org.uk).

Guidelines for articles for ARC can be found on the Association's website: [www.archives.org.uk](http://www.archives.org.uk).



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