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The Archives and Records Association (UK & Ireland) has developed its Core Training Programme to ensure high quality, in-demand courses are widely and frequently available

ARA Core Training courses are high quality, affordable and offered regularly across the regions and nations. They focus on the common skills essential to all of us who work with records - from Audience Engagement to E-Records Management. Each course is supported by ARA funds. The first eight courses have now been designed. More will follow.

Find out more about ARA Core Training and all other training and development opportunities by clicking on the Training link at www.archives.org.uk or keep in touch through Twitter @TrainingARA

Copyright

This course offers participants practical and relevant training in copyright for archives, and will instil confidence to manage copyright demands in the workplace. Practical workshop sessions, led by copyright experts and archivists with extensive experience in the field, ensure the opportunity for discussion and provision of advice.

Audience Engagement

This course offers various aspects of audience engagement, from producing an exhibition to running a successful community-based project. A great opportunity to learn from the experiences of colleagues and to start developing some ideas of your own.

Freedom of Information

This course covers the basic principles of the Freedom of Information Act as well as exploring some practical case studies. Develop your own knowledge about the Act and how to implement it in the workplace.

Archives and Volunteers

This course covers how best to utilise volunteers in the workplace, from the practicalities of running a volunteer project to the value they can bring to an organisation. This is a great opportunity for anyone interested in maximising the benefits of volunteering to both their organisation and for the individuals involved.

Digital Preservation

This course will be updated periodically to address the issues archivists face when dealing with born digital material, it will involve case studies and practical first steps. It's a great opportunity to share and receive advice and knowledge about the many aspects of digital preservation.

Data Protection

This course begins with refresher sessions on the basics of Data Protection. In the afternoon there are opportunities to discuss best practice and raise queries from your own workplace with an expert panel.

E-records management

This course provides a solid introduction to e-records management for record keepers who are not managing electronic records on a day-to-day basis. This course is a great opportunity to learn about and share best practice on all areas of the rapidly changing field of e-records management.

New and refurbished Archives Buildings

Whether you are planning a completely new building or hoping to refurbish a part of an existing site this course provides an introduction to the key issues and themes involved in the provision of new and refurbished archives buildings.

The ARA's Core Training programme is supported by Link 51.



**Archives & Records
Association**
UK & Ireland

Welcome to **ARC Magazine** July 2014

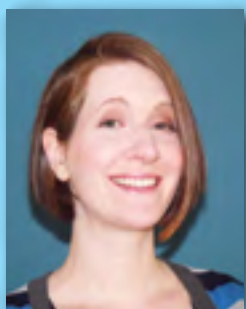
Editing ARC magazine is a rewarding job, but is not without its difficulties. Everyone concerned with each issue works very hard, but everyone is busy. So it usually involves a lot of chasing things up; emails bouncing here, there and everywhere; text, images and forms in various different attachments; and the odd last minute panic. We always get there in the end, but it isn't always straightforward.

This issue has been a breath of fresh air. Karyn Williamson (co-ordinator for the issue) sent only one email, containing a link to a folder on a cloud drive. There, all the articles, the associated pictures (with captions!) and copyright forms were neatly organised into sub-folders. I actually downloaded everything, but it later occurred to me that there was no reason I could not have edited it directly on the cloud, instead of having to email things to myself when I forgot my flash drive.

This clearly demonstrates the ethos of the Section for New Professionals. They are very organised, motivated, and are keen to embrace the latest ways of working. Judging by the articles they have produced for you this month, they are also enthusiastic about their work and eager to progress in the profession.

It also clearly demonstrates that the rest of us 'not-so-new' professionals can learn a lot from fresh minds, and that it is never too

late to start embracing new ways of working. It is easy to be complacent, but it is always worth stepping outside what we do on a daily basis to learn some new skills, meet some new people and to give a little something back.



Ceri Forster
Editor

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opening lines



David Jenkins is Chair of the ARA's Records Management and Information Governance Group and is Corporate Records Manager at Derbyshire County Council.



Photograph shows the Don't Risk It team at a planning meeting from left: Margherita Orlando, David Jenkins, Sarah Palmer, Byrony Leventhall and Laura Hynds. Edward Radcliffe is also on the Don't Risk it team.

This July sees the launch of the ARA's first ever records management awareness campaign. This builds on a long history of archive awareness campaigns (most recently the very successful Explore Your Archive campaign) and is a welcome development to meet the needs of the records managers that make up a large part of the ARA. I'm very proud to be involved in this campaign which I hope will provide some tangible benefits to records managers in a time where their role is becoming increasingly important in organisations (and which ironically isn't always recognised at the top of the organisation!).

'Don't Risk It! Know Your Records' is a campaign which stresses the positive contribution good recordkeeping can make to enable organisations to avoid the considerable risks associated with poor information management. We only need to quickly scan the newspapers and mailing lists for examples of these heavy risks – so far this year the Information Commissioner's Office has issued fines totalling over £530,000

for information security breaches. If there was ever a time to drum home the message that good recordkeeping can help organisations, it is now!

'Don't Risk It' has two main aims: firstly it will seek to raise awareness amongst senior decision makers of the role that records management can play in their organisation. Secondly it will help to skill up staff employed in recordkeeping roles to advocate within their organisations at various levels and to various audiences. The first aim will involve a letter writing campaign to senior decision makers across a variety of organisations including the FTSE 500, public sector and education sectors. The second strand will involve an advocacy toolkit which will provide some useful tools and best practice to recordkeeping professionals to better equip them in their advocacy activities. I hope that a combination of targeting key decision makers and helping to develop advocacy skills will help to empower recordkeeping staff who might often feel ill equipped to sell their skills and abilities.

So how can you get involved in the campaign? Well firstly make sure you come to our events we're running at various points from July to November. Also please make use of our advocacy toolkit when it is available in late July, and take those opportunities to speak with decision makers about the value of what you do. We will be regularly communicating throughout the campaign so follow us on twitter @knowyourrecords. Finally do please send us the contact details of any senior decision makers that you would like us to contact as part of the campaign. Email us at KnowYourRecords@archives.org.uk

As is often the case, this campaign will only be a success if you get involved and help drum home the Don't Risk It message. So I hope that all members involved in recordkeeping, whether you're a records manager, archivist, or conservator, will participate in this campaign to help make a difference to how organisations perceive the roles that we perform!

Collecting **matters**

For the past three years, The National Archives has managed a Skills for the Future trainee programme called *Opening Up Archives*. The project came to a close at the end of March 2014 and was supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The programme sought to diversify the archives profession by providing an entry into the sector for those who had not followed a traditional qualification route, and looked for people who could bring new talent and energy to the archival world. It also encouraged archives to recruit a broader range of skills, with staff that is more reflective of their community.

Opening Up Archives offered 13 one-year traineeships for each of the three years, and provided work placements for trainees in archive services across England. The trainees undertook a combination of on-the-job training and project work. They also attended Cohort Days at a number of cultural heritage venues where they gained an understanding of the heritage sector, the roles within it, and the sheer range of work that goes on.

The trainee specialisms included online engagement, community engagement and collections development, digitisation, digital preservation, and interpretation skills.

The body of work produced by the trainees has been as surprising and valuable as it has been varied. We have seen theatre productions inspired by oral histories; live gypsy music; exhibitions of oil paintings; apple flavoured chocolate; and highly trending photo albums of criminal mug shots. All in a day's work for the average *Opening Up Archives* trainee.

It is clear that The National Archives and the host organisations have learned as much as the trainees during the past three years. In fact, the experience has been so good that we've decided to do it all over again.

The HLF have kindly agreed to fund a new archives trainee programme that builds on the successes of *Opening Up Archives*, and it has been named *Transforming Archives*. The partners and host organisations are all primed and in place, and recruitment of the trainees is due to begin shortly.

All news and information about *Transforming Archives* will appear on The National Archives website as it becomes available. If you know of anyone who would be interested in becoming a trainee on this programme, let them know to keep their eyes peeled.

Rachel Davies

Programme Manager - Opening Up Archives
The National Archives

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www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/opening-up-archives.htm

www.archives.org.uk

Registration Scheme **news**

Registration Scheme Survey

Colleagues involved with the Registration Scheme should recently have received a link to a survey being undertaken by the Registration Scheme Sub-committee. If you have not already completed this survey, we would urge you to do so.

As you will be aware, the Registration Scheme is changing as part of the ARA's wider CPD developments. The Sub-committee is working hard to ensure that changes to the Registration Scheme are an improvement and that Registration forms a coherent part of a professional's career-long development.

The survey is an important part of our work and will help us to assess the short-term and long-term needs of those who are involved with the Scheme. If you have not received notification of the survey and would like to take part, please email regschemeomms@archives.org.uk

Irish Region Mentors

We are currently attempting to recruit registered ARA members to mentor Registration Scheme candidates in the Irish region. It doesn't matter whether you enrolled under the current or previous system. All we ask is that you maintain an interest in CPD and are willing to offer a little time to support somebody else's professional development. Please contact us for more information.

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General Registration Scheme Enquiries:

registrar@archives.org.uk

Registration Scheme Events Enquiries:

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Registration Scheme Admin and Bursaries:

regschemeadmin@archives.org.uk

Registration Scheme Communications Officer:

regschemeomms@archives.org.uk

Registration Scheme Mentor Queries and Advice:

regschemeomms@archives.org.uk

Richard Wragg

Registration Sub-committee

Reach out and touch - make this world a better place if you can!

One of the most rewarding things about working in this profession is that the colleagues you meet, mostly, enjoy what they do and believe that they are making a real difference. Records managers, archivists and conservators act with the conviction that they have a positive impact on the organisations or societies in which they operate. They believe that they can make the world a better place.

That world is currently grappling with issues with which we would seem to be uniquely placed to engage. Wikileaks, privacy concerns, the so called 'right to be forgotten', the security of information within the Cloud, and the impact of new technologies on ways of communicating and remembering, all regularly elicit discussion in the media. At the same time the commemorations surrounding the First World War, the Hillsborough enquiry and the continuing actions of Truth and Reconciliation commissions across the world serve to remind us of the emotional, judicial and political power of evidence of the past.

Yet the voices of our profession often remain unheard. Despite our expertise in preserving the past and managing the information of the present we continue to struggle to convey the importance of what we do. Embroiled in the battle to justify the limited resources that come our way, and insecure about the impact of the digital environment, are we in danger of doubting the contribution we can make? If it is so easy for communities and individuals to create and store their own information and archives, what is our role?

This year's ARA conference addresses these issues. The theme 'Survival of the Fittest: strengths, skills and priorities for 2014 and beyond' allows us to articulate the particular expertise of archivists, records managers and conservators while discussing what other skills we might need. Through a combination of presentations, workshops, and ask the expert sessions, as well as social events, we'll be able to celebrate our strengths but also to make sure we are fit to tackle the future. Keynote speakers are Rick Prelinger, archivist, writer, film maker and board president of the Internet Archive, and Martin Berendse, the President of the International Council on Archives whose paper title is the title of this article. We'll be looking at the information landscape, digital preservation tools, diversity, volunteers and creative partnerships and also at more traditional subjects such as hidden moulds and poetry and archives.

The conference takes place at the Hilton Gateshead from 27-29 August. Newcastle is a fantastic city, easily accessed by rail or plane. We're delighted to be able to offer a pre-conference visit to the Discovery Museum, courtesy of Tyne and Wear Archives, and are holding the first night reception at the Sage Gateshead, as well as a conference dinner at the hotel. It's possible to attend for just a day if you are not able to come to the full conference. For more information on the programme and how to register see www.archives.org.uk

Caroline Brown

Chair, ARA Conference Committee

Charity archives care begins at home

Carl Newton gives a personal response to Matthew McMurray's article *Charity Archives in the 21st Century* published in April's edition of ARC.

Matthew McMurray's article in the April issue and even more his interesting report, *Charity Archives in the 21st Century*, are graphic demonstrations of what is wrong with so-called 'charity' archives. There are four major issues:

- The name conjures up pictures of Victorian soup kitchens. It is totally inappropriate now as all kinds of organisations are 'charities' for legal and financial reasons. The big operators are businesses in all but name. We should talk about 'the voluntary sector' and its archives, which includes about 150,000 'charities' and probably an equal number of non-registered organisations;
- Some of those employed as archivists in the sector have received little or no training. They are thus reluctant to associate with the professional mainstream;

“A charity archivist who could demonstrate that they can generate income (or any other appropriate contribution) will be clasped to the bosom by a competent management.”

- In consequence they have an obsession with records as conservable objects, rather than archive management as a key professional function;
- There is limited recognition of the importance of the voluntary sector from the leading archive services – local record offices, universities, national museums and The National Archives .

The Charity Archivists and Records Managers Group (CHARM) were given the chance of getting involved in the profession some years ago and turned it down, allegedly because they thought they would be disadvantaged by the elitism of the Society of Archivists. Some of us thought that the SoA was very far from a professional body, elitist or otherwise, but there is no accounting for perceptions. The ARA is now open for all so that excuse can no longer be employed.

Most of the problems outlined in the report could have been made about any form of archives over the last 50 years and are still being made about business archives. Qualified and experienced archivists have been combating these problems for years. A low profile is not possible, nor is an obsession with the historical value of archives. A charity archivist who could demonstrate that they can generate income (or any other appropriate contribution) will be clasped to the bosom by a competent management. But senior managers everywhere do not regard archivists who sit away in a basement and complain about not being loved as worth their attention, however hard they may actually be working.

I have experience of the archive keeping of four voluntary organisations; Railfuture, (a national campaigning body), Friends of the Settle and Carlisle Line (a regional body), The Elgar Society (an international organisation), and the Eastbourne Recorded Music Society (a small local group).

Only one is a registered charity but all represent the voluntary sector. First I joined them and then offered my services as a whilom professional. In all cases I was taken seriously, being invited to make presentations on the importance of archive management and in two cases negotiating deposits in local Record Offices (suitably listed to ISAD-G standards). For most organisations below national level, without a central location, relying on individual officer enthusiasts, this is the best approach . All associations should have an archivist, because that is a key function of the parent body, but that does not mean that they have to be employees, work full-time, or sit on miles of shelving. Today a couple of disks may represent the whole of an archive. It is the management, not custody, which counts.

McMurray's claim that charity archives are private is not sustainable. Charities are supported by public and corporate donations and tax breaks and are subject to an increasingly onerous statutory regime. In consequence their archives are, in effect, in the public domain, whether they like it or not. That is why there must be adequate access, otherwise they are failing in their public duty. They have a responsibility to maintain their archives for reasons of accountability to their paymasters and regulators if for no other reason (and there are plenty of others). There are growing concerns about the management of charities and the effectiveness of their use of the large sums and privileges they now receive. The time may come when their backers may decide not to support them any longer. A casual attitude to their archives is a major indicator of a casual attitude to their public which they may come to regret.

Carl Newton



Thoughts from a new delegate at the SAA/COSA conference

In August 2013, Nancy Lyons was awarded an ARA international bursary and attended the Society of American Archivists (SAA) and Council of State Archivists (CoSA) annual conference in New Orleans, Louisiana.

New Orleans is a place well-known for its easy-going lifestyle, connections to jazz, eclectic foods, obsession with crocodiles, intense heat and humidity, and vulnerability to catastrophic storms. This was my first conference, so I really didn't know what to expect.

I attended for three days, although the full conference - consisting of plenary sessions, pre-conference workshops, roundtable/group meetings, and 70 education sessions - ran for a week. Overall, it was a well-planned, inspiring conference, where information was easily available online via the conference web pages and through links to blogs and Twitter.

The mardi gras themed conference covered a wide range of themes including digital challenges, strategy,

outreach, inclusivity/diversity, innovation and collaboration. There were also information tables about various organisations and projects, as well as an exhibition hall for suppliers. CV assistance was nearby at the networking cafe and 'career center', where consultations with an advisor could be scheduled.

It was difficult to choose from the many talks on offer. One of the timed sessions I attended was 'Strategic Planning in Archives', which included a strategic planning summary emphasizing the need for this kind of approach to avoid disasters, run an effective 'business', and review the goals and results of the last plan. In another session, 'Incentivising Volunteers for Crowd-Sourced Projects', a government representative discussed how by using

“The mardi gras themed conference covered a wide range of themes including digital challenges, strategy, outreach, inclusivity/diversity, innovation and collaboration.”

Flickr, Wikipedia, mobile phone apps and so on, the citizen archivist has been contributing collective knowledge. At the ‘Community Archives’ talk, on a much smaller scale one speaker shared his frustrations and achievements over the years when putting together an established community fair archive.

I also attended the *Performing Arts*, *Business Archives*, and *Visual Materials* roundtables. I discovered that the New York Public Library has one of the largest collections of dance materials in the US. The project manager for their digital collections pointed out in her presentation that the development process was much like a start-up business. Higher user collaboration was one positive outcome to the project.

“A helpful downloadable scheduling app was available alongside a paper programme”

The conference reflected a creative, multi-disciplinary approach to communicating from within the sector. A helpful downloadable scheduling app was available alongside a paper programme. Many took the opportunity to customise their badges with colourful descriptive ribbons to display they were a ‘student’, ‘self motivated’ or ‘SAA member’ or several other options. Near the registration area, a table had been set up to scribble feedback in crayon. Outside the rooms were a number of detailed professional, research forum, and graduate student posters. One evening I watched ‘Archives in the Movies II’ - a documentary made up of film clips from American movies containing various references, accurate and not, to records and archives. The audience often reacted with howls of laughter.

Charity work had been organised by the conference to interact with and give to the local community. Programmes involved learning about and rebuilding neighbourhoods such as the Ninth Ward badly affected by the storm Katrina in 2001.

There were lots of opportunities to network between sessions: delegates could meet up with other alumni at local university gatherings; there was a ‘toast to published authors’; a formal opening to the exhibition area; and a breakfast for those wanting to write for SAA publications. New professionals and students were supported with an orientation and forum session, written guidance, ‘lunch buddy’ program, and a ‘navigator’ programme matching veterans with first-time attendees. Catering was excellent, including much needed freshly squeezed lemonade. A memorable concluding reception at the World War II Museum was a walkable distance from the conference venue.

I would like to thank the ARA for supporting my attendance at this thought-provoking conference.

Nancy Lyons

Student, University of Dundee



Typical architecture in the French Quarter. Photograph Nancy Lyons

Welcome to the Section for New Professionals

Welcome to the Section for New Professionals special edition of ARC magazine. We have worked hard to provide something for everyone in this issue: from opinions on the value of pre-course work experience for those new to the profession, to detailed articles describing conservation theory and practice for ARA conservators; from cataloguing projects with a difference to an interview with the Chief Executive of the National Records of Scotland. The following articles showcase the ever changing landscape of the profession and the New Professionals is proud to be a part of this.

With the ARA Conference only a month away, our Co-Chair looks at the value of becoming part of the ARA through working for a region or special interest section and the benefits this produces for both the individual and their employers. A current list of committee vacancies is also included so why not have a look and see if you can become more involved with the community and improve your CV at the same time!

The fourth SfNP Summer Seminar was held on Friday 20 June 2014 at London Metropolitan Archives. The proceedings included talks and a Q&A session covering all three areas of our profession: Archives, Record Management and Information Governance and Conservation. The importance of bringing these sectors together under one professional platform and fostering collaboration between the professional bodies that unite and represent us all cannot be underestimated. Events like the ARA Conference and the Summer Seminar provide a platform for our community inspire and help each other throughout their careers. We hope the articles in this issue inform the reader of positive projects developed by our community, entertain and encourage you to become more involved in ARA activities and all it has to offer. For further information on our Summer Seminar please check here: www.archives.org.uk/si-new-professionals/news-and-events.html.

Happy Reading!

Karyn Williamson

SfNP Publicity Officer

Reflections on pre-course work experience

Students thinking about applying to study on an archives and record management course have a wide range of degrees and courses to choose from. After some investigation into available courses, it becomes clear that pre-course work experience, either paid or voluntary, is required as part of the application process and that there are many ways of achieving this experience.

Economic change has left many institutions unable to offer paid work placements and many students are turning to voluntary work to get the placements required to further their careers. The following three articles look at the value of pre-course work experience from the point of view of an archivist, a conservator and an institution, in an attempt to highlight both the long term and short term benefits for both the organisations and individuals involved.

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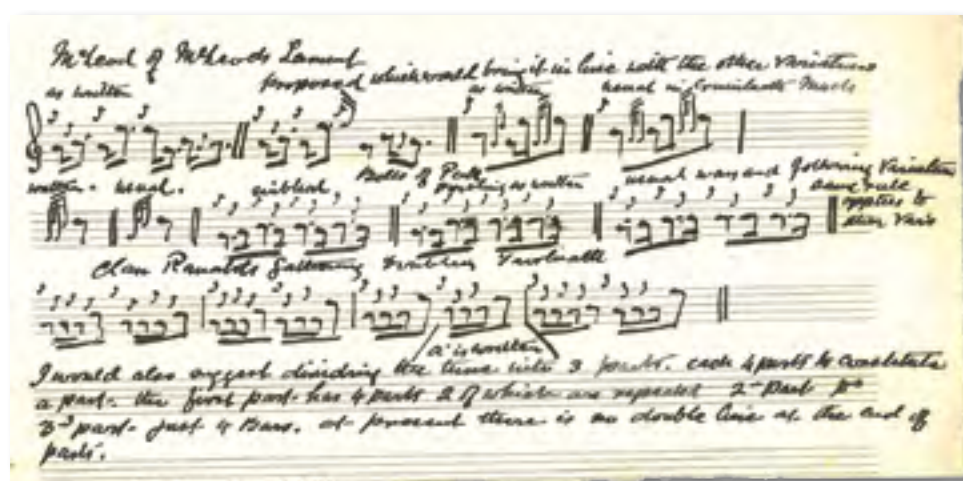
Pre-course experience matters: an individual's perspective

Gaining experience of work in the archive sector, before my MSc in Information Management and Preservation, was essential to my current career in archives. Firstly, undertaking a voluntary placement in The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons Glasgow stirred an interest in a sector I had previously been unaware of. For this placement I worked with another student to curate an exhibition about the history of travel medicine using the collections of the College. While looking through the fascinating papers of Ronald Ross, a pioneer in malaria studies, I came across a letter to Ross from Arthur Conan Doyle. As an avid reader of Sherlock Holmes this discovery was so exciting! It was then that I realised what amazing materials are held within archive collections, and that I wanted a career that would enable me to help preserve and promote these historical gems.

This experience led me to apply for the graduate traineeship at the University of Glasgow Archive Services (GUAS). I mainly worked in the searchroom and facilitated reader visits, and this year-long traineeship confirmed my love for the archives profession by giving me a good understanding of the role of archive services and how they function. Moreover, it was key to me securing AHRC funding for the MSc in Information Management and Preservation at the University of Glasgow, from which I graduated in December 2013.



Cartoon appealing for funds for the Ross Institute. From the papers of Ronald Ross, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow (RCPSCG 9/RI/1/1/14)



Handwritten piobaireachd tune from the papers of the Piobaireachd Society, University of Glasgow Archive Services (DC80/359) University of Glasgow Archive Services

While studying for a professional qualification in information management, practical experience of the profession was invaluable. I was able to link theoretical concepts about information and records management with aspects of my job as a graduate trainee. Experiencing the challenges of operating an archive service first hand by working as part of the

service delivery team enabled me to think more deeply about concepts such as cataloguing, complying with information legislation, the informational value of different types of records, and outreach activities. I was able to engage in academic discourse about these challenges with a solid background in how they operate in practice. It was particularly useful



Thurso Street searchroom, University of Glasgow Archive Services

for the cataloguing element of the course to have had experience of the GUAS catalogues: through helping readers find resources, and through box-listing materials. Having experience of using catalogues in the searchroom fostered a great understanding of how to make a useful and descriptive catalogue, and greatly improved my cataloguing skills. Moreover my practical experiences as a trainee inspired me to undertake a practical project as my dissertation. My project: to catalogue and make accessible a selection of Scottish Opera's Press and Marketing materials, was a great experience that furthered my professional development. It also provides a great example of my archival skills for job applications and interviews.

As well as allowing me a greater understanding of issues studied during my Masters, my pre-course experience has been essential in gaining archival positions after the course. Having one full year of experience working in an archive, as well as maintaining my archival experience during the course, has greatly strengthened my applications. My traineeship has provided me with strong examples of the archival skills I have developed including: handling heritage materials correctly and carefully; aiding readers with their research and access to collections; complying with information legislation such as Data Protection and Freedom of Information when dealing with enquiries; and promoting archival collections via blogs, displays, and social media. I am greatly interested in outreach and a particularly interesting project I undertook as a trainee was to write a series of blog-posts to promote the correspondence of the Piobaireachd (or 'piping') Society: a prestigious society established in 1903, that still operates today. The use of social media to promote archival collections is a very active topic in the archives sector and my experiences in this area have proved very useful in finding employment. The varied nature of my pre-course experience



Thurso Street reception, University of Glasgow Archive Services

has enabled me to be successful in finding employment after the course and since November 2013 I have been employed in two part-time archivist roles: Archival intern at HarperCollins Archive, and Business Archive Cataloguer at GUAS. I greatly enjoy both of these roles and they continue to develop my professional experience.

My pre-course experience is responsible for getting me where I am today. It opened the world of archives to me, gave me great practical experience to apply to my studies and successfully pass the course, and allowed me to speedily gain employment as a professional archivist.

Rachael Egan

Business Archives Cataloguer, University of Glasgow Archive Services and Archives Intern, HarperCollins Archive

Practice makes perfect!

A conservator's view of pre-course work experience

There is a theoretical and a practical side to knowledge and both are important. To truly master a craft or discipline, you need to understand both ends of the spectrum. Putting time into acquiring practical techniques needs to be accompanied by understanding of how the techniques fit into the larger context and why they work.

I studied for four years for a BSc in Bio-archaeology before moving on to train as an archive conservator with the Archives and Records Association Conservation Training Scheme. The scheme involves both practical and theoretical ways of learning conservation. The course includes 24 weeks of practical placements covering the conservation of books, maps and plans, paper, parchment and seals, and the teaching focuses on the development of practical skills. Each practical session is followed up with a report and notes related to the training. The theoretical aspects of conservation

are covered through a series of lecture weeks focusing on both interventive and preventative conservation and chemistry for conservators. An extensive reading list is also provided for students, who are encouraged to read a wide range of conservation literature.

Now working as a qualified conservator at West Yorkshire Archive Service, I feel that the benefit of the practical placements I did during my training cannot be overestimated. Conservation is a very practical profession; however, having a good theoretical knowledge of the subject is also essential. Learning how to solve a problem only teaches you how to solve that problem again, whereas theory can help you apply what you've learned in solving one problem to different problems.

During my examination for the Certificate in Archive Conservation, one of the questions asked related to



Learning how heat affects parchment. Reproduced with kind permission of Antoinette Curtis, Norfolk Record Office.

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Lining a tracing on a suction table. Reproduced with kind permission of Antoinette Curtis, Norfolk Record Office.



Installing an Exhibition at Norfolk Record Office. Reproduced with kind permission of Antoinette Curtis, Norfolk Record Office.



Consolidation of flaking inks at Norfolk Record Office. Reproduced with kind permission of Antoinette Curtis, Norfolk Record Office.



dealing with a mouldy collection brought into a repository from an external depositor. This question was rather timely as we had just received a large and very mouldy, insect infested collection from an external client at work. Having recently undergone a salvage operation from start to finish I felt very confident in answering the exam question drawing on my most recent practical work. I was able to discuss effects of mould on paper and inks due to background reading I had picked up during my training. This was a perfect example of how both the theoretical and practical parts of my training came together to enable me to answer an important question.

A well known learning styles model suggests that people are generally divided into three styles of learning; Visual, Auditory and Kinaesthetic (VAK). The visual style of learning means that somebody has a preference for seen or observed things such as pictures, diagrams or demonstration. The Auditory learning style shows a preference for the transfer of information through listening and the spoken word of self or others. The Kinaesthetic style of learning is a preference for the physical experience, touching, feeling, holding and doing. The VAK learning style model suggests that people commonly have one

Seal repair training at Hertfordshire Record Office. Reproduced with kind permission of Sarah Mason photography.

“ I often find myself turning to my training notes to jog my memory when presented with a similar conservation problem I encountered in my training ”

preferred style of learning with perhaps a blend of the other styles as well. Having carried out the VAK learning styles self assessment questionnaire I found that I have a preference for a mixture of the Visual and Kinaesthetic style of learning, which is probably why I find the practical side of learning so much more beneficial, supported by the theoretical side.

My placements were not only valuable in helping me gain a qualification as a conservator but have served me well throughout my employment. I often find myself turning to my training notes to jog my memory when presented with a similar conservation problem I encountered in my training. I also keep my extensive notes and collected articles and often find myself turning to these for support. My colleagues have also found they have benefited from my training and often ask me to recount practices I have learned along the way.

Perhaps it does depend on the way a person learns and retains information as to what style of learning suits them, but for myself I certainly found that the balance of practical and theoretical learning provided by my traineeship was the perfect balance.

Katie Proctor

Conservator, West Yorkshire Archive Service



Bookbinding at the National Library of Wales, training with Julian Thomas. Reproduced with kind permission of Sarah Mason photography.



Bookbinding at the National Library of Wales, training with Julian Thomas. Reproduced with kind permission of Sarah Mason photography.



Learning how to make paste at Norfolk Record Office. Reproduced with kind permission of Antoinette Curtis, Norfolk Record Office.



Kew Gardens Herbarium, Library, Art and Archives Building

Graduate traineeships: an institutional view

When I was first asked to contribute an article providing an institutional view of the value of graduate trainees in archives, I wondered if I would be the best person to ask. It was only four years ago that I was a graduate trainee myself! However, perhaps sooner than I had anticipated, I now find myself managing one. I think it is because my year as a trainee is still so fresh in my mind that I hope I can provide the trainee I now manage with as valuable an experience as possible. Just as importantly, I can also well appreciate what a trainee is capable of offering to an archive service.

At a time when funding for archives is becoming increasingly difficult, and many institutions are fighting to keep a qualified archivist in post, ending the graduate traineeship can seem like the simple, victimless solution. However, without a role such as the trainee post here at RBG Kew, we would not be much of a service at all. The current trainee, Miriam Hopkinson, is truly responsible for providing the public with access to the collections on a daily basis. Without her, the material would languish in a vault, and hundreds of enquiries would go unanswered. In short - we would stand still, at a time when it is vital that archives move forward.

That said, it is important that a trainee is given an introduction to all the various aspects of archive work, and that they are not just used to fetch and carry, or re-package and label. We make sure the trainees are given the opportunity to delve into the collections, and write and talk about what they find. Miriam was intrigued by the story of a suffragette attack at Kew in 1913, and so went on a hunt for further details. The records she found have subsequently become a highlight of our Library and Archive blog and talks to colleagues and the public. Each new trainee brings their individual interests and strengths to the service, and can dedicate attention to material that Archive managers struggle to find the time for.

“Each new trainee brings their individual interests and strengths to the service”

“it is important that a trainee is... not just used to fetch and carry, or re-package and label.”

When employing someone for a short term post, there is always the risk that they will move on to something more permanent as soon as possible, or realise that they are not suited to archives work after all. More than once, I have seen this happen to colleagues in the library sector. Perhaps due to the high level of competition for paid pre-course experience in archives, the most successful applicants for the traineeship have already proven their interest, and have some previous experience. Here at Kew, 12 of the 13 previous Graduate Trainees have continued to a career in archives or records management.

Within a busy archive service, it is easy to lose sight of what we do, and why we do it. But I have found that explaining processes such as archival description to someone who does not take any of the concepts for granted, forces me to re-evaluate them myself. I feel that this fresh look at the work I do every day only makes me better at it, and this follows through into my interaction with the public and other people with non-archival perspectives.

I imagine that it can sometimes feel like each new trainee intake is starting back at square one, and it is sad to say goodbye to someone you have invested so much time in, and who has grown to become an integral part of your team. However, I have to say, my strongest feeling is excitement. I am excited to see what Miriam does next, and the opportunity to forge a new link between Kew and other institutions. And I am excited to meet our next Graduate Trainee and, over the course of a year, find out what they can teach me about our collections, and what it means to be an archivist.

Lorna Cahill

Acting Archivist, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew

All Images Courtesy Library, Art and Archives, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew



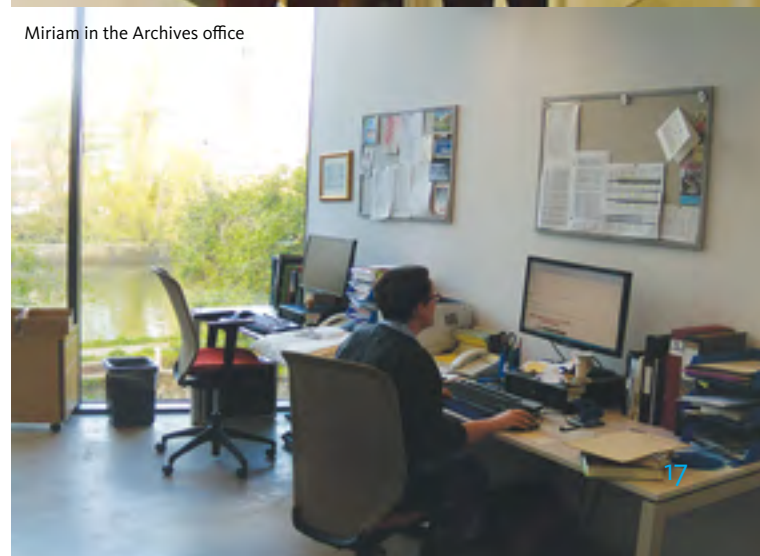
Kew Gardens Archive Store



Kew Gardens Reading Room



Miriam and Lorna in the Archive store



Miriam in the Archives office

Accreditation of archives and records management education programmes: what is it, who does it and why is it important?

The process of accrediting archives and records management education programmes in the United Kingdom and Ireland has now been in existence for over 20 years. In 1984 the then Society of Archivists introduced this procedure with the aim of ensuring that all programmes provide professional education of appropriate content and standard in which students can have confidence and the assurance that, once achieved, their qualification will be recognised by employers and professional colleagues. The process also ensures that a dialogue is maintained between the Archives and Records Association and each programme (individually and through the Forum for Archives and Records Management Education and Research - FARMER), thereby promoting mutual co-operation and development of the profession. This work is carried out by the Qualifications Accreditation Team.

The process and procedures for each visit are available on the ARA website and the criteria for accreditation are set out as a series of core outcomes. These are, in effect, core competencies for the profession.

All currently available programmes, at Aberystwyth, University College Dublin, Dundee, Glasgow, Northumbria, Liverpool and University College London are fully accredited. All programme leaders continue to be supportive of the accreditation process and apply for formal re-accreditation every five years. Granting of accreditation status is by no means a given, and the team must be convinced that the programme under review will deliver the required outcomes before accreditation is granted.

Accreditation is an incredibly important part of what we do in the Association, and something for which we are highly regarded on the international stage. For individual members, it is particularly vital, as those wishing to enrol on the registration scheme must be graduates from one of the accredited programmes.

The Team for each visit is chosen from a wider pool of accreditors to ensure that it contains the appropriate level of experience in archives and/or records management for the programme under review. As Head of the Team, I visit all programmes, and I am fortunate to work with excellent colleagues - Margaret Crockett, Jeannette Strickland, Chris Webb, Kevin Bolton, Mary Mackay and Alice Stewart - who have given their time, experience and knowledge to ensure that the review process works efficiently and effectively to the benefit of all concerned. Until her retirement in late 2013 Sue Garland was also a member of the team for a considerable number of years as well as Secretary of the wider Qualifications Accreditation Team.

Reflecting on the last 20 years, the most obvious change is in the number of programmes on offer. Students can now choose from ten programmes on offer at seven universities and delivered either on campus or by distance learning. The increase in choice available is clearly meeting a need as programmes continue to attract high quality applicants. As part of the process, the team meets current and former students and is always very impressed with the high quality of the students and feels optimistic for the future of the profession.

The profession has changed enormously in this period and is still changing rapidly. External events increasingly impact on and affect all sectors of the profession. It is always gratifying to note how those responsible for delivering the programmes are able to react to events and incorporate them into their teaching. Through the accreditation process, the profession can be confident that programmes are changing and adapting to events, continually reflecting on what is taught and on the best way to deliver this. One example of these changes can be seen in the increasing number of modules on topics such as Knowledge Management being made available to students. Given their limited staffing and the fact that they are, like many public and private bodies, also facing financial

“... the accreditation process allows both sides to continue to be confident that what is being taught is appropriate and relevant for the development of the archives and records management profession...”

pressures, programme leaders and their teams deserve congratulations for ensuring that their programmes remain current and relevant.

The dialogue established with the programme leaders through the accreditation process allows both sides to continue to be confident that what is being taught is appropriate and relevant for the development of the archives and records management profession and that the students recruited onto the programmes are those required to manage this development.

Accreditation is one of the hallmarks of a mature profession, and as the profession changes, the process of accreditation must also develop. Before the next round of visits begins in 2016, the Team will be reviewing and developing the procedures and criteria (in consultation with the programme leaders) to ensure that they continue to be sufficiently robust to accredit the programmes, and thus allow us, as a professional association, to continue to influence the quality of the education and training entry-level professionals receive.

Margaret Turner

Head of Qualifications Accreditation Team

turnermargaret@hotmail.com

The challenge of internal advocacy: showcasing the value of the Harper Collins Archive

HarperCollins archivist Dawn Sinclair and intern Rachael Egan discuss the challenges in gaining support for the archive from all areas of the company.

Dawn Sinclair, HarperCollins archivist

As a recently qualified archivist, I have had many challenges in building a functional archive within HarperCollins Publishers.

The records management aspect of the HarperCollins Publishers Archive has always been present. However one of my first tasks was to improve how the service ran. This meant ensuring procedures were agreed and put in place. Moreover these procedures had to be communicated to all staff. I ran a series of small presentations in both our Glasgow and London offices to build staff's confidence in using the archive service, as well as gaining trust that material would be properly maintained. Apart from keeping 2 copies of every book we publish, we also must ensure that the records which support our business are kept safely and securely. Furthermore it is essential that the

A selection of the historical records sent to HarperCollins Glasgow from HarperCollins New Zealand





Archive holds material which is relevant and useful to the business. Therefore putting a strong retention and destruction policy in place was necessary.

Having engaged people with the records management side of the archive, I also wanted staff to understand the wealth of our heritage. Presenting the archive to the Board of Executives gave me the chance to speak directly to the decision makers and highlight the benefits of a well maintained archive. HarperCollins Publishers is steeped in history and our archive is based on material collected and created by William Collins & Sons as a company and as a family. Our London office will be moving in 2015 and will soon have a special area dedicated to displaying archive material and showcasing our history. This area is one of the first steps on the road to celebrating our bi-centenary in 2017.

Bringing on board 2 interns has also been essential to improving the Archive Service. Lynsey Green and Rachael Egan joined me in October 2013 and have helped kick start projects that were not possible as a lone archivist.

Rachael Egan, Archive Intern

As Dawn's intern, I help with many aspects of the records management and archive functions, including cataloguing departmental papers, re-packaging damaged items and retrieving files requested by staff members. This provides me with a great overall experience of working in a corporate archive.

I have also been able to dive into the historical documents, brought together from various locations in the company, and

“Bringing on board 2 interns has also been essential to improving the Archive Service”

to help Dawn begin to make these documents accessible and promote them to the whole company, and beyond. One historical feature that I run, begun by Dawn, is the ‘Archive Item of the Month’: a blog posted to the company intranet site that tells the story of an historical document from the archive. The feature has become very popular within the company: so popular, in fact, that certain areas of the business are interested in sharing our blog with a wider audience.

Another great way to increase the audience for our historical materials is through collaboration with the Scottish Council on Archives and their campaign ‘The Working Archive’. We found some fantastic photographs of Collins employees at work (and play) to add to the gallery and submitted a blog about the welfare of Collins workers. It is great to be involved with larger, national, archival initiatives and to see the photographs and records of other business archives.

The work involved in selecting these photographs was a great starting point for getting to grips with the historical records here at the Westerhill site of HarperCollins. I am beginning to catalogue the fascinating collection, including papers sent to Glasgow from the New Zealand branch of the company.

Right: HarperCollins Westerhill Distribution site, Glasgow, under construction, c. 1976



Left: Christmas in the William Collins & Sons factory in Cathedral St, Glasgow, December 1948.



Collins printing press, 1948



Typesetting in the caseroom, 1948

Cataloguing the historical collections, as well as promoting the material, is not only great for raising the profile of HarperCollins and its heritage, but has given me fantastic professional experience for furthering my career in the archives sector. Moreover, helping the day-to-day records management functions of the business has given me a valuable, holistic experience of the running of a company archive.

While developing the records management functions of the archive can be challenge, it is one worth undertaking and is necessary in order to underpin the legacy of our long established company. Making the historical records accessible and findable will prove invaluable when bringing together the story of William Collins & Sons for the up-coming bicentenary celebrations.

Dawn Sinclair and Rachael Egan

HarperCollins Publishers

All images courtesy HarperCollins Publishers

Iraq War Voices at the Guardian News & Media Archive

In my role as Trainee Archivist at the Guardian News & Media Archive, I recently catalogued and digitised our Iraq War Voices oral history collection. Oral histories are an important part of the archive's aim to record and preserve the history of the Guardian and Observer newspapers. This unique collection is made up of interviews with Guardian staff reporters who covered the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

In March 2003, a US-led coalition of forces invaded Iraq, signalling the start of the Iraq War. The Guardian placed reporters and photographers in the area to cover the run up to the conflict. A small number of Guardian staff were embedded, meaning they were attached to military units, whilst others travelled independently. Reporter Jamie Wilson was embedded with the British Navy, while photographer Sean Smith, best known for his coverage of conflicts, stayed in Baghdad throughout the allied campaign. Some war correspondents were not based in the Middle East at all: Washington correspondent Julian Borger reported from the

Helmet and boot of an Iraqi soldier. Part of a collection of items brought back by journalist Luke Harding. Robin Christian for The Guardian newspaper.





Elisabeth retrieving oral history material in the archive stores.
Robin Christian for The Guardian newspaper.

Front page of the Guardian newspaper the day after the invasion of Iraq, 21 March 2003.
Robin Christian for The Guardian newspaper.

Pentagon, where he attended regular briefings from the United States military.

After the invasion, a series of interviews was undertaken with Guardian staff who covered the Iraq conflict. The interviews were conducted by journalist Leslie Plommer between May and June 2003 following the invasion and were later that year transferred to the archive. When cataloguing the collection I produced detailed track listings, which are available on our online CalmView catalogue. I promoted the collection through social media and produced an online educational resource, which can be freely downloaded for use in the classroom.

During cataloguing a number of key themes emerged across the interviews, such as the dangers of war reporting, training they undertook before departure, equipment used in the field and their interaction with the armed forces and local people. One issue common to a number of interviewees was the problem of filing reports from war zones. For those operating from Iraq and surrounding areas, bulky, battery-operated satellite phones provided





Smoke rising from the buildings of central Baghdad, Iraq, following bombing by coalition forces, 22 March 2003. Sean Smith for The Guardian newspaper.

the only means of communication with the newspaper in London. In one interview, reporter Jamie Wilson describes his struggle to file copy from the war ship HMS Marlborough. Finding that the ship's email system was down he next attempted to use a fax machine, which he discovered no one on board knew how to operate. Eventually Wilson dictated his copy over the ship's phone, all 2000 words, taking over an hour. He estimates it took eight hours from finishing writing to successfully getting the report to the Guardian.

The physical act of reporting from conflict zones has changed dramatically for reporters as technology has advanced over the past century. During the Second Boer War (1899-1902) the Guardian sent their first special war correspondents to South Africa to report back. They sent short news telegrams and later mailed larger articles, which took three to four weeks to arrive, meaning that readers had to wait to read a full account of the battles. Today news services offer 24-hour rolling news and newspaper websites such as theguardian.com can be updated instantly.

The Iraq War interviews were originally held on minidisc and CD. In 2013, I transferred them to our digital repository as AIFF audio files where they are now made available to researchers by appointment in our reading room via a dedicated researcher PC terminal.

This project forms part of a larger project to digitally preserve the audio-visual collections of the Guardian and Observer newspapers. Records previously held on magnetic tape and optical disc have been digitised and uploaded into our secure server based digital repository. Once catalogued, this material is made available to researchers under the same conditions as physical archive material but it is accessed via a dedicated PC terminal which is essentially 'locked down' so that researchers only have access to files made available by the Archivist.

Elisabeth Thurlow

Trainee Archivist, Guardian News & Media Archive

How does volunteering benefit employers?

When asked what makes them unique and successful, organisations invariably say their staff are their most significant asset. It therefore stands to reason that, as an essential resource, staff are valued and invested in. The best organisations - from volunteer-run to major corporations - are always looking for creative ways of developing their staff.

Professional development, including volunteering for professional bodies, has a range of benefits to employers and is a cost effective way of developing staff. Recognised benefits to organisations, as cited by volunteering support organisations include:

- **Development of personal and professional skills**

These include self-confidence, team work, communication and public speaking skills, event planning and budget management. These skills and experiences can then be applied in the workplace.

- **Cost effectiveness**

Learning by doing is an effective way of increasing skills and, compared to other forms of staff development such as in house or external training courses, requires fewer resources.

- **Increased employee motivation**

Increased enthusiasm and engagement is demonstrated to result in higher productivity, reduced sick leave and greater staff retention.

- **Enhanced reputation**

Awareness of the organisation is raised overall and stakeholders are more likely to perceive the organisation as effective and outward-looking. This also has benefits for attracting the best staff.

• Development of future leaders

This is something which is often expensive and difficult to provide in the workplace but can be achieved successfully and cost effectively through volunteering.

Archivists have added to these with the sector specific benefits of volunteering for ARA:

• Networking

It's a brilliant way to make professional contacts who can in turn offer support and advice to your work place. This can be especially important if you are a sole archivist or conservator.

• Bringing back ideas

Participating in the wider sector increases awareness of opportunities that could benefit the organisation as a whole.

• Learning new solutions

Learning how others have approached issues similar to those faced by your organisation saves reinventing the wheel and investing disproportionate resources in resolving challenges.

• Keeping up-to-date with professional issues

Officers get to hear about issues and opportunities as they emerge and to shape new initiatives and solutions. Individuals who are interested in engaging with and shaping the wider world are vital for ensuring services remain relevant and user-focused.

Working in a sector so connected to life-long learning, it is hoped that these benefits are self-evident to the majority of employers. If they are employing professional staff they should expect them to want to engage with their profession. However, given pressures on capacity, it's useful to have all the arguments to hand, so that you can clearly and concisely explain the benefits to your organisation (and not just to yourself or ARA).

A final comment - recognise that it is up to you to find a way of making it happen, whether that is persuading your employer, choosing to invest your own time, or proposing new ways of delivering activity (virtual networks? micro volunteering?). Professional development is important on so many levels, don't let anyone stop you taking responsibility for your career.

Anna Siddall

ARA Board member

Why should I volunteer for professional associations?

The Section for New Professionals heard that some people find it difficult to convince their employers that volunteering for professional bodies is beneficial. We thought that experienced volunteers for professional bodies could offer some help with this matter and share their thoughts. We initiated a discussion by tweeting the question: (@fbarticioti) How do you justify to your line manager that sparing working time to a professional association is an investment for the organisation? The responses were very fruitful and we hope that they help the wider community to overcome the barrier.

@KeriNicholson10: It is a brilliant way to make professional contacts who can in turn offer support and advice to your work place.

@Ksarchivist: I had this in my first job. I was able to convince employer that as they had valued the need for a qualified professional (I was 1st) they should also value professional development which they would need to get from profession/sector (including involvement) as they couldn't provide internally.

@Munkeyinblack: Being a member of an organisation could lead to funded training opportunities that would make staff better informed.

@emilygresh: It provides a good opportunity to see how others have approached issues similar to those we face.

@melindahaunton: There's nothing worse for an individual archivist's practice than working solo and not getting to engage with profession.

@melindahaunton: It's, uh, not that difficult for me... Your development from being in contact with professional issues in real time is big draw.

@melindahaunton: Not just reading an article months after something happens but being able to influence, participate, plan for your workplace.

@melindahauton: It's a different experience; your employer gets more too. e.g. engaging with CPD/core training you've input your needs and situation.

@melindahauton: (I know it won't work on all employers/line managers) but sometimes external expectation is a helpful extra nudge. ARA expects professionals to do CPD, and Archives Accreditation (#archivesaccreditn) asks what your employer does to keep professionals skilled.

@VeronicaHowe: Raises employer's profile when you represent them at external events, particularly when it is included to reports to trustees and governors.

@LouiseARay: Could be about developing and sustaining personal contacts that you can draw on for professional advice or as informal mentors. It could be about being up to date with & having opportunity to shape new initiatives like ARA competencies and Accreditation standard. It could be opportunity to develop transferable skills: project or event planning, budget management, editing newsletters or website.

@LouiseARay: Though having said that my experience has mainly been that you have to do this in your own time.

@LouiseARay: If they want to employ professional staff they should expect them to want to engage with their profession.

@cartivist: Active, engaged staff (individually & collectively) = reputational benefits for employer; sign of a good organisation.

@MariaSienk: Reflects well on your organisation that they are supporting you and your profession; learning & developing new skills; meeting other professionals which leads to shared expertise, experiences, tips & ideas.

@rjc_archives: I suppose it's how you sell the alternative use of your time to mutual use. You can develop new skills, have different experiences to ones which would otherwise arise in your job, and utilise that learning.

@stephrolt: It's a chance to develop new skills which can be applied in the workplace - in my case communication and public speaking.

A personal experience volunteering for ARA

I wanted to feel that I belonged to a peer group... that was my initial motivation for joining the ARA Section for New Professionals (SfNP) back in November 2011. At that time I was still adapting to a new country and culture, changing profession and starting an MA. So, I just wanted to get to know more peers, and find out more about the leading professional association (ARA) for the career I was about to embark upon. A few weeks later when I took over the chairmanship of SfNP I realised that working for ARA would provide me and the rest of the team with great opportunities to develop useful professional skills and gain valuable experience.

The skills, experience and knowledge required in working for an ARA committee, as with any professional body, will very much depend on what role officers take up and the portfolio of activities of that committee. The SfNP currently has nine officers who deliver a varied range of activities, including a blog, two annual events, an enquiry service, and a peer mentoring programme. Skills needed across the board include:

Fabiana speaking at a previous Section for New Professionals Summer Seminar.





The current Section for New Professionals Committee at the Section for New Professionals AGM.

- Remote and face-to-face communication skills
- Budget planning and budget control
- Events management
- Team management and leadership and giving moral support to the team
- Public speaking
- Planning and producing a busy blog and other publicity material
- Office management, minute taking and answering enquiries
- Using social media for audience engagement
- Writing reports, proof-reading and cross-referencing
- Chairing meetings and events, encouraging constructive debate
- Designing group activities and thematic day conferences

These are transferable skills and relevant professional experience. It struck me while writing this that they feature at all levels of the ARA framework of competencies. To find out what each of the SfNP roles entail you can click on the job title for any role profile at www.archives.org.uk/si-new-professionals/contact-us.html.

When I started volunteering I was working part-time as Cataloguer/Curatorial Team Assistant at a large institution as part of a team with a strong focus on public facing services. The role was very wide-ranging, but functional, as might be

expected in an assistant and cataloguing position, without much room to develop some of the above skills. I was very much inspired by colleagues that were involved with other professional bodies or network communities at the time. They offered support in the form of permission for allocating reasonable work time to carry out tasks associated with SfNP and provision of advice when needed. Despite this kind offer, I ended up working out-of-office hours to deliver my tasks, and having a smart phone helped in managing time and planning for SfNP while on the move. But I believe that all the time and effort invested in the last 30 months has been worth it on many levels. I am confident in my first job post MA, am well-informed about current professional practices, connected to my peers and also feel a sense of belonging. I think volunteering for a professional body is good for those wanting to raise their professional profile; who are looking for a professional challenge; who want to broaden their networks; who want to keep abreast of professional matters; and who are looking to have a say in the profession at large. From time to time I see some committees advertising that they need volunteers help. I actually think that they are offering new opportunities for professional growth.

Fabiana Barticioti

Chair of SfNP (2011-2013), Co-Chair (Nov 2013 – June 2014)

Images: Photographs by Anna Crutchley. Courtesy Section for New Professionals

Current vacancies at ARA

There are a number of positions up for grabs across the ARA at present. There is information about what the roles in Regions entail on the ARA website: www.archives.org.uk/about/play-your-part-with-the-ara.html. If you are interested in taking part or would like to have an informal discussion about the roles, please contact respective committee representatives through the contact details provided.

Scotland Committee

Title of roles: ARA Scotland Publicity Officer
Committee for the National and Regions Representative (Scotland)

Contact name: Karl Magee, Chair, ARA Scotland

Contact details: karl.magee@stir.ac.uk, 01786 466619

South East Committee

Title of role: South East Committee for the Nations and Regions Representative

Contact name: Hannah Jones, current CfNR rep

Contact details: hannah.jones@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Wales Region

Title of roles: Secretary
Treasurer
Training Officer

Contact names: Steven Davies (Secretary), Sally McInnes (Chair)

Contact details: steven.davies@flintshire.gov.uk;
sally.mcinnnes@llgc.org.uk

PSQG Sub-committee on Volunteering committee

Title of roles: Training Officer
Representative of Community Archives & Heritage Group
Volunteer Representative (i.e. a person who is closely involved in volunteer management, but who does so in an unpaid capacity)

Contact name: Louise Ray, Convenor PSQG sub-committee on Volunteering

Contact detail: volunteering@archives.org.uk

Qualifications Accreditation Team

Title of role: Team Secretary (expected to become a full member for their second accreditation round - see Accreditation article for further details)

Contact name: Margaret Turner

Contact detail: turnermargaret@hotmail.com

Conserving a Second World War bomb map of Norwich

At the end of 2012, the decision was taken to conserve a Second World War bomb map of Norwich. The map was created by the Norwich Air Raid Precautions Department during the war, featuring 679 paper labels marking the bombs which fell on the city from 1940 -1944. The location of each label represents the site, date and size of each bomb.

Repetitive handling of the original was caused by the lack of a usable digital image. The condition of the map was such that no adequate facsimile could be made, despite several attempts to capture a quality, detailed image. Hence, one of the main objectives in bringing the item to conservation was to produce a digital surrogate. This strong demand for digitisation prioritised conservation of the map, though the very poor condition alone easily justified conservation treatment with some archival information being at serious risk of permanent loss.



Whole recto of the map



One of the paper tags. The original pin hole was very close to the edge

“the very poor condition alone easily justified conservation treatment with some archival information being at serious risk of permanent loss.”

At 188cm high, 182cm wide and 8cm deep, the map comprised three separate ordnance survey maps. The conjoint sheets were directly mounted to two wooden fibre boards with a wooden strainer. The 679 paper labels were certainly a factor in obstructing previous endeavours to produce a clear digital image. Many were heavily distorted, and the information written on them was not easily captured by the camera.

A further concern was discolouration, with the map appearing extremely darkened throughout. The entire verso of the map was in contact with the poor quality wooden fibre board, suggesting the paper had been oxidised by organic compounds and acids generated in the board.

After establishing a means of safe handling of the labels throughout the project, all labels and pins were removed. Surface cleaning was then carried out on both sides of the map with a chemical sponge and soft eraser. This was followed by extensive tear repairs and lining of the whole map.

Each label was immersed in an individual container in order to identify it at any stage during washing. After washing, alkalisation with calcium hydroxide was undertaken. The labels were then flattened and lined with two layers of Japanese paper. The original locations of the pin holes were also a serious issue as these were located extremely close to text or at the very edge of labels. In some cases, the mislocation of holes, pinheads or rust stains rendered the labels illegible. For those worst affected, the labels needed to be extended in order to accommodate new pin locations, allowing them to be reattached safely. The extension was



Detail of the map



Detail of the map



Attaching the map to the new back board



The item after reassembling the outer strainer

“In some cases, the mislocation of holes, pinheads or rust stains rendered the labels illegible.”

made with two layers of Japanese paper. The entire reverse of each label was then covered with a Japanese paper dyed with direct dye in order to blend the new extended segment with the original brown-coloured label. In selecting a new back board, a Tycore™ Support Board was chosen for quality, long-term preservation and the assured low weight of the complete assembly without compromising rigidity.

On completing treatment, a bespoke packing was made for the map. An oversized four-flap enclosure was produced using Tyvek® sheet. In addition to the external cover, the recto was covered by two corrugated plastic panels. Previously, the item was simply wrapped in a single, large sheet of Tyvek®. Due to the size and nature of the map, the Tyvek® easily snagged on the distorted paper labels when uncovered and so the problem was resolved by the new protective panels.

Finally, digitisation was carried out, and whole and detailed images are now available to the public. Conservation of the paper labels contributed significantly to the production of a clear image of each label. The original map is now stored in a controlled environment with handling kept to an absolute minimum.

Yuki Russell

Conservator, The Conservation Section, Norfolk Record Office, The Archive Centre

All Images courtesy Norfolk Record Office



Whole verso of the item



Detail of the map after treatment

The progress of the 'Peer Pals' programme

In September 2013 the Section for New Professionals re-launched its virtual mentoring programme, 'Peer Pals', previously known as the 'E-mentoring scheme'. This programme aims to provide support and advice for those starting out or considering training options in the Archives and Record Keeping profession, and those completing postgraduate courses and entering the workplace.

Signed up mentors are ARA members who have received a recognised postgraduate qualification within the last five years, and hold any kind of archives, conservation, or records management role. They are matched with interested mentees, based on similar motivations and relevant expertise as identified by individuals when they sign up to the programme. To qualify as a mentee you must be an ARA member that's exploring the possibility of becoming an archivist, records manager, or conservator; a volunteer aspiring to progress; a trainee considering a professional qualification; or a current student on a professional course. The scheme aims to create a mutually beneficial, virtual relationship, that encourages the sharing of experiences and development of networking opportunities, to help demystify the process of getting into the profession.

The scheme enables the mentee and mentor to:

- develop essential professional and networking links, to build relationships within the profession
- exchange personal experiences of working practices, continued professional development, and job hunting
- ask specific questions about the processes of training and qualification, and provide a platform of discussion for new professional's and sector issues

- develop coaching skills as a precursor to managing staff or volunteers in the future, and possibly count towards those all important Registration Scheme credits.

Since its launch, the Peer Pals Programme has successfully matched a number of mentees and mentors, and has helped develop relationships that have contributed to a progression within the profession: be that pre, during, or post course.

Mentee Elisabeth Thurlow, Graduate Trainee Archivist at Guardian News & Media says "I'm really pleased with my involvement with the Peer Pals scheme so far and would absolutely encourage others at my trainee career stage to sign up. I've been able to ask questions freely and gained very honest answers."

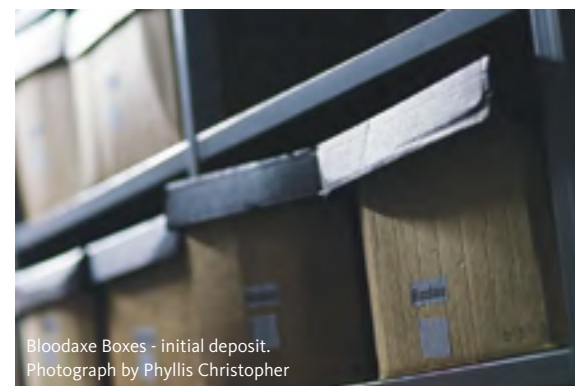
Mentor Sian Wilks, Cunard Archivist at the University of Liverpool thinks "the most important thing I've gained from being a mentor, is realising how beneficial a network of people in the profession can be, in helping to support someone on their way, especially in the beginning."

If you are interested in participating in the programme as a mentee or mentor, or have any further questions relating to the programme, please send an e-mail to newprofessionals@archives.org.uk, indicating 'Peer Pals programme' in the subject line. Please note that to be part of the programme you must be a current member of ARA.

Sally Cholewa
SfNP Careers Officer

The evolution of finding aids: creative cataloguing with the Bloodaxe Books project

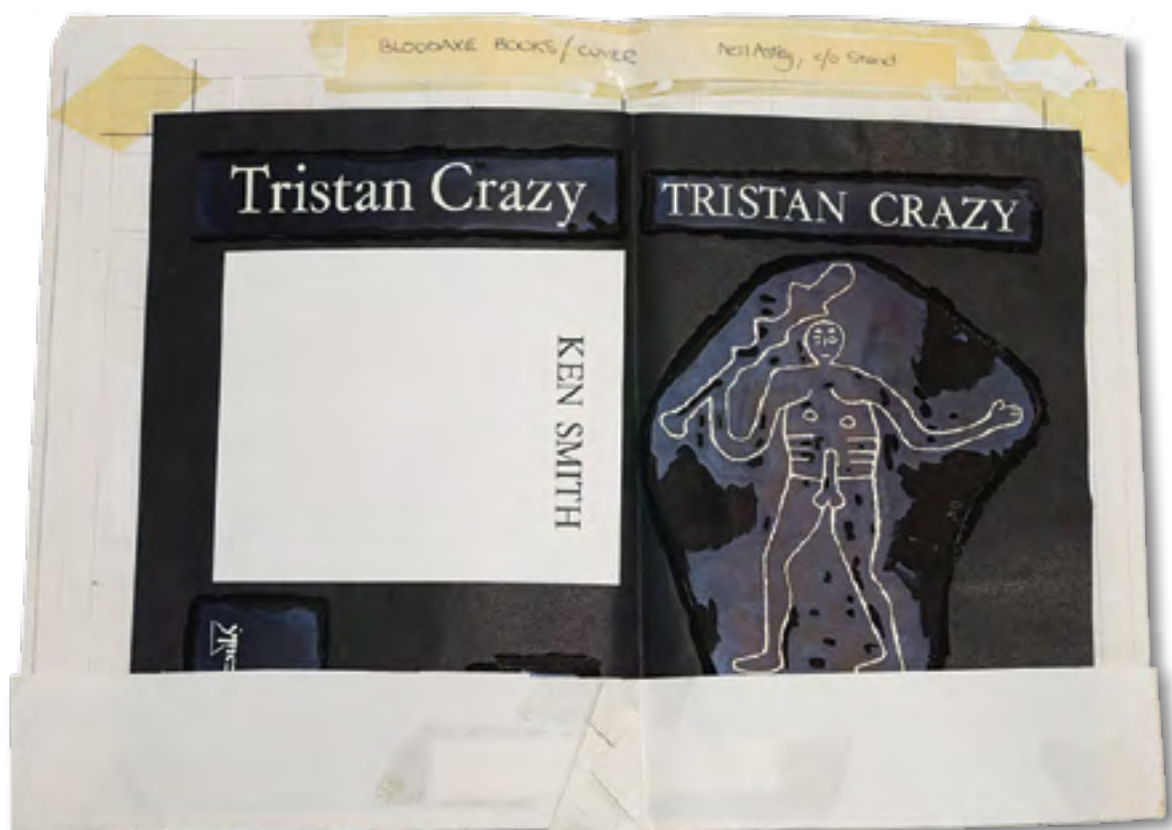
In December 2013, I started my role as the Bloodaxe Books Project Archivist at Newcastle University, in collaboration with the Newcastle Centre for Literary Arts. Bloodaxe Books, founded by Neil Astley in 1978 in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, is a publishing house specialising in poetry. The archive is considered one of the most exciting archives for contemporary poetry that exists; having published many prize-winners (including four Nobel Prizes) and publishing more women writers than any other British publisher. The material in the collection includes original typescripts, editorial



Bloodaxe Boxes - initial deposit.
Photograph by Phyllis Christopher



Poetry - Bloodaxe Office. Photograph by Phyllis Christopher



Ken Smith, *Tristan Crazy* - Bloodaxe first publication. Photograph by Phyllis Christopher

material, marketing material, correspondence, visual and audio recordings and business and financial records.

This project has been funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and brings together a variety of individuals to build upon archival practices, as well as developing creative responses to archive material, and generating new ways of viewing the collection using a digital platform. From an archival perspective, we are aiming to produce a catalogue using the Archives Hub EAD editor, and provide digitised materials to enhance the project's outputs. Beyond this, there are 29 participants engaging with the uncatalogued archival material who are responding creatively to what they discover. There is an Interaction Designer and Developer working with participants to build a generous interface as an alternative to the catalogue. A generous interface aims to present a detailed browsable view of digitised archive material, while maintaining links and context in a visually intuitive manner. The researchers also employed on this project are producing material, including interviews with poets, using the archival material to steer their questions.

The main aims of the project do not necessarily focus solely on the creation of an archive catalogue with digitised material. There are research outputs that need to be achieved and because of this, we have had to take a liberal approach to allowing access to material. Copyright and Data Protection laws have been clearly communicated to the participants and they have signed agreements assenting not to breach these. Our digitisation process has had to take a similarly pragmatic approach. We have sought permission from authors to digitise unpublished material and decided not to digitise the editorial correspondence. Collectively it was decided that with time restrictions and the specific aims of the project, it is more pertinent to focus on draft material which the authors are more likely to give permission to digitise and display to wider audiences. The project's digitisation decisions are led by the researchers, who have specified the author's work they see the most potential in digitising. These author's works are then digitised once a catalogue entry has been created for the selected material.

For me as the Project Archivist, a benefit of the interaction with the wider project team is the expertise

“collaborations allow us to build a catalogue and a generous interface that are user-centred”

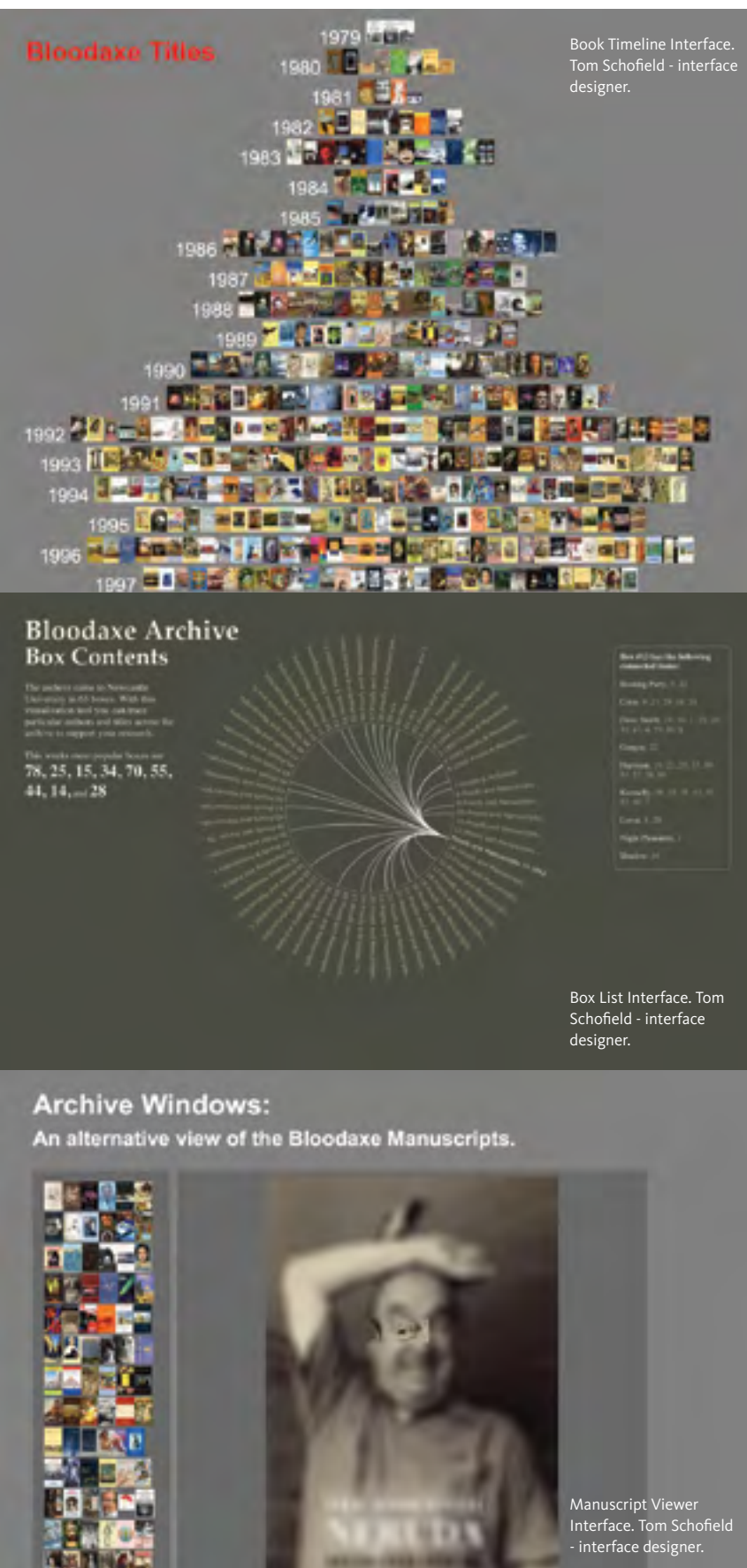
that can be gathered. I do not have the specialist knowledge required to create literary specific subject terms so when participants access the archive they are given a feedback sheet. They use this sheet to add index terms relating to the material, such as ‘romanticism’ or ‘surrealist’ which I can then transfer to the catalogue. Our depositor relationship is also altered by the project. Neil Astley is involved at an advisory level and we are gaining interesting anecdotal evidence about Bloodaxe while he discusses material with the participants. This has led us to explore ideas of Oral History, and Neil has also pointed to information that I might not have known about, such as a YouTube video of his printing process in the 1980s and an interview he undertook which is held at the British Library. This can all be built upon at collection level to give a more detailed background to the company. These collaborations allow us to build a catalogue and a generous interface that are user-centred because the project Interaction Developer and I have access to a specific audience that is more likely to use this archive. For other researchers, the catalogue will be an objective portrayal of the material, but for literary users there will be added interactional qualities from the generous interface, that will enable them to use the archive as a creative tool without having to go through a formal research process.

We hope to have the majority of the cataloguing completed by the end of the project. Already a number of creative works are being developed, and these will be featured in a poetry festival in March 2015. To view the project so far, please see: <http://bloodaxe.ncl.ac.uk/wordpress/>

Rebecca Bradley

Bloodaxe Books Project Archivist, Newcastle University

All images courtesy Bloodaxe Books Archive, Newcastle University Special Collection.



National change and evolution- an interview with Tim Ellis, Chief Executive of the National Records of Scotland

It's been a hectic year in a new role for Tim Ellis, Chief Executive of the National Records of Scotland. Taking up a post which contains two sub posts; Keeper of the Records of Scotland and the Registrar General for Scotland is no easy task. Combined with the ongoing Scottish independence debate, financial recession and digital technology challenges, Tim's first year in post has certainly been eventful! We caught up with the Keeper in General Register House to find out more about his role and the various challenges of leading a National Organisation.

What attracted you to the role of Chief Executive?

My experiences of the General Register Office for Scotland and the National Archives of Scotland before taking on the role were really positive, and the merging of the two organisations in 2011 created a massive opportunity for collaboration and partnership on a whole new level. The prospect of working with other local and national institutions, while raising the profile of the NRS, was also appealing to me and I feel incredibly privileged to be at the helm of such a forward facing organisation.

What is the most challenging aspect of your role?

The role comes with a large range of challenges and this is partly what

makes it so appealing. The NRS employs over 420 staff in different departments, and maintaining a cohesive public image across the organisation is challenging, as are the budget cuts this has to be achieved under. One aspect which has been particularly challenging for me personally has been the move from a background role to being at the forefront of a National Organisation. The transparency involved in a public facing position compared to the relative anonymity of most civil service roles has been both challenging and a very welcome change.

The National Archives has a sector leader role for archives in England and Wales. Does the NRS have a similar role?

We have a similar role but it's not exactly the same. We work in close collaboration with organisations such as the Scottish Council on Archives to ensure the most innovative ideas are included in our business plans. Partnership is a really important part of maintaining this position and the collaboration involved between the NRS and these institutions is instrumental in achieving success now and in the future. The Public Records (Scotland) Act also provides opportunities for cross sector working which contributes to this lead sector role while setting us apart from The National Archives which does not have this element.



Tim Ellis, Chief Executive of The National Records of Scotland.

What prompted the move to hire five new archivists?

Every archive institution has a responsibility to move forward, and employing these new archivists goes some way towards developing the talent the archive sector is currently producing. As a National Institution, the NRS has a responsibility to lead the way on replenishing lost talent and bringing fresh ideas to the table. Investing in dedicated, enthusiastic staff is instrumental to the success of any organisation and adding more knowledge and experience to an already motivated team can only bring positive change.

NRS seems to be focused heavily on digitisation as a key strategy (based on the recent job adverts) - why is this and do you think that other archive services should be following their example?

Only one of the advertised posts focused heavily on digitisation,



The National Records of Scotland, Princes Street, Edinburgh at Dusk.

“As a National Institution, the NRS has a responsibility to lead the way on replenishing lost talent and bringing fresh ideas to the table.”

although it cannot be denied that the sector is quickly evolving and digital is quickly cementing itself as the way forward. The NRS holds over 80km of records and digitising all of these is not a viable option. However, making more records available digitally, and making provision for the digital records currently being created, should be an integral part of all archive strategies. Digital in its many forms is here to stay and it is important to embrace this and make provision for the born digital records of the future.

How supportive is the NRS of professional qualifications and professional development among its staff?

Professional development is an important part of overall staff development and certainly has its place within the NRS. The work of the Archive and Records Association surrounding Continued Professional Development and the recently completed competency framework for self-measurement is a great way for individuals to improve while establishing a career. However, I do think that there is more to the profession than professional qualifications; the knowledge and experience gained over time, and the ability to absorb information during our day to day jobs, are irreplaceable as is the ability to impart knowledge and training to colleagues. My goal is to ultimately make the

NRS a learning organisation and although CPD plays a critical part in achieving this, it is not the only factor.

How has the National Records of Scotland coped in the aftermath of the recession in terms of providing a quality service for users?

The recession has been and still continues to be a massive drain on resources for the NRS and the merger added to the pressure with the implementation of more cost cutting measures. However, staff across the organisation have consistently worked hard to ensure our high service levels are maintained and innovative ideas are moved forward where possible.



The Historical Search Room,
National Records of Scotland.

The hiring of new staff has been a positive step and there are many more to come.

What impact, if any, do you think that national independence would have on the National Records of Scotland?

The issue of independence raises many questions which may not be immediately obvious on first thought. For example: this would mean a far wider range of records being deposited from a larger range of sources and worked on in ways not previously dealt with by the organisation. Financial, data security and confidentiality issues would need to be considered as a consequence. In addition, there could be significant change from the section of the white paper that proposes that the NRS be used to run a designated National Statistics Institute should the vote be a yes. This is certainly an exciting time for the National Records of Scotland and the result of the vote in September is only one part of this.

Karyn Williamson
SfNP Publicity Officer

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ARA Registration: the value of achievement

Jaime McMurtrie shares his experiences of the ARA Registration Scheme.

I was encouraged to sign up for the Registration Scheme soon after starting in my first role as an archivist at Nottinghamshire Archives, approximately 9 years ago. I vaguely remember attending one of the Registration Scheme workshops, however at the time, the end seemed so far away and I don't think I really realised how much work I would need to put in along the way.

With regard to 'work achievements', I tried to include a broad range, to demonstrate the different aspects of my role; particularly as I have remained in the same post since qualifying. If two credits are similar however, it can be quite difficult to maintain their individuality, so that the assessor recognises them as two separate achievements.

I would definitely recommend keeping evidence of activities as you go along, even if you decide not to use it later. I would also recommend writing short reports after finishing major work projects, describing in brief what your input was, the methodology used, and the outcome etc. Even bullet points are better than nothing. I didn't write my credits until many months after the event, so I was thankful for the notes I had made to jog my memory of what I actually did and achieved. I did find writing the credits quite repetitive, having to link what I was writing to the question all the time, and it was sometimes difficult highlighting what I had learnt, rather than providing a narrative of the activity.

Work and training credits I found were fairly easy to accumulate, but credits for the other categories were more difficult to achieve and I think it is worth considering other angles such as speaking at a conference or training day for professionals, as well as taking on a role on a professional committee.

I was initially worried about including two 'double' credits, knowing that the work required for them has to be of a high enough standard and duration. However, I was encouraged by my mentor to submit them, as she felt they were worthy enough for the scheme.

It was definitely an advantage for me to have my line manager as my mentor, especially since I have remained in the same post for the duration of the scheme. Having regular contact with her was useful not only in spurring me on, but as she had a good overview of my work

“I also found it really useful talking to colleagues who had already completed the scheme as they had the best understanding of it.”

she was able to make suggestions regarding my credits which I had perhaps forgotten about. I also found it really useful talking to colleagues who had already completed the scheme as they had the best understanding of it. It was helpful to ask their advice on the type of credits to include, and I felt encouraged and reassured that I was on the right track.

I found the last few months the most difficult as I tried to pull my portfolio together. I thought all the hard work was done after completing my credits, however, I soon discovered that all the additional paperwork, such as the cover sheets for each credit, and evidence, took a long time to complete. Therefore I would definitely recommend allowing plenty of time at the end to ensure your presentation is of a high standard.

Taking part in the scheme has been really worthwhile. I feel a sense of professional pride when I look back over all the work I have completed over the last few years, and to have this recognised by the profession is very rewarding. Although it is hard work, I would recommend others to undertake Registration, and in the current economic climate, having an extra advantage could always be helpful!

Jaime McMurtrie

Archivist & Volunteer Co-ordinator,
Nottinghamshire Archives

Hidden treasures: excitement at the Geological Society of London

One ordinary Wednesday afternoon earlier this year, in a central London basement, I came across an item that turned out to be a lot more significant than I initially thought.

I had been working at the Geological Society - the UK's national society for geosciences - since completing the UCL course in September 2013. On that particular Wednesday, I was repackaging addresses that had been sent to the Society to celebrate its centenary in 1907. As we didn't have an archive box in which it would fit, I left the item in question until last, presuming it was another centenary address. When the archivist, Caroline, and I unwrapped the 1980s conservation tissue around it however, we discovered that it was a map.

It wasn't just any map - its title plate declared that it was a copy of William Smith's 1815 map of England and Wales, arguably the first geological map of a nation ever produced. Although the Society already owned three copies of the map, this version, TS5, was particularly fine - little damaged and retaining its original bright colouring. After the

The (re)discovered map (TS5) in the leather case in which it was found.
Photograph by Victoria Woodcock





Detail of plate XI, showing the earliest form of the geology of the Isle of Wight. Photograph by Victoria Woodcock

initial excitement, the main question we wanted to answer was whether this was an early copy, created and sold in 1815, or a later version.

The map comes in 15 plates, in this instance bound together and folded in half, and kept inside a red morocco leather case. The simplest indication of the age of a William Smith map is the state of the geology on the Isle of Wight. While copies of the map were being created, more was learnt about the geology of the island, and thus the colouring of this part of the map changed - specifically the green line of the cretaceous strata. Looking at the Isle of Wight on TS5, we could see that it appeared in its earliest form. This, along with other indicators such as the lack of reference number and the absence of granite around Eskdale, led us to think that this was a very early copy indeed.

It is not certain how many copies of the 1815 William Smith map were produced in total, but the number is thought to be around 400. They can be broadly divided into four

different types - early unnumbered copies, the 'a' series, the 'b' series, and later versions. All the signs were pointing to this map being one of the earliest copies, but there were still mysteries to solve. The title plate had a Geological Society Library stamp and a date, along with a handwritten note suggesting that this particular plate had been exchanged with one from the copy of the map hanging on the wall in our entrance hall (TS5c). The copy of the William Smith map hanging in our entrance hall

in Burlington House is one of the Society's most well-known possessions, drawing many visitors, but no one had ever noticed what was now obvious - the title plate was from a different copy. Looking carefully, it is possible to make out the marks made by folds, identical to those in TS5. Examining committee minutes, Caroline and I discovered that the purchase of "a fine copy of William Smith's map of England" was decided

Plate XI, showing southern England. Photograph by Victoria Woodcock



“ *It seems that its existence had been forgotten for at least the past few decades, falling victim to the lack of a full time archivist.* ”

upon at the Library Committee meeting of 18 November 1931 - the very same date stamped on TS5's title plate. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Arthur Greig, on 22 February 1932, provided certainty that the plate exchange had taken place - he writes that the Society intends to use the copy bought in 1931 (TS5c) to replace the one hanging on the wall in Burlington House at the time (TS5a), but that the title plate was discoloured, and would consequently be exchanged with one from a copy already held in the Library - TS5.

Although we haven't been able to establish exactly when the Society acquired TS5, it is mentioned in a catalogue from 1829-1836. It is also recorded in a list of maps compiled between 1917 and 1931, from which the 'TS' references originate. Since it was found wrapped in conservation tissue from the 1980s, someone must have seen it then, but perhaps they did not realise its significance. It seems that its existence had been forgotten for at least the past few decades, falling victim to the lack of a full time archivist.

I'm not entirely sure what the moral of this story should be, but it does go to show that even amongst material that you thought was catalogued, there could be a well-disguised, and valuable, gem. This chance (re)discovery is certainly something that I shall carry with me throughout my career!

It is hoped that TS5 will be conserved, and possibly even digitised, in time for the bicentenary of the map's production in 2015. You can find out more about William Smith and his most famous map on the websites of the Geological Society and the British Geological Survey, as well as in Simon Winchester's book, *The Map that Changed the World*.

Victoria Woodcock

Geological Society London

All images Courtesy of the Geological Society of London



The Upper Library of the Geological Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly

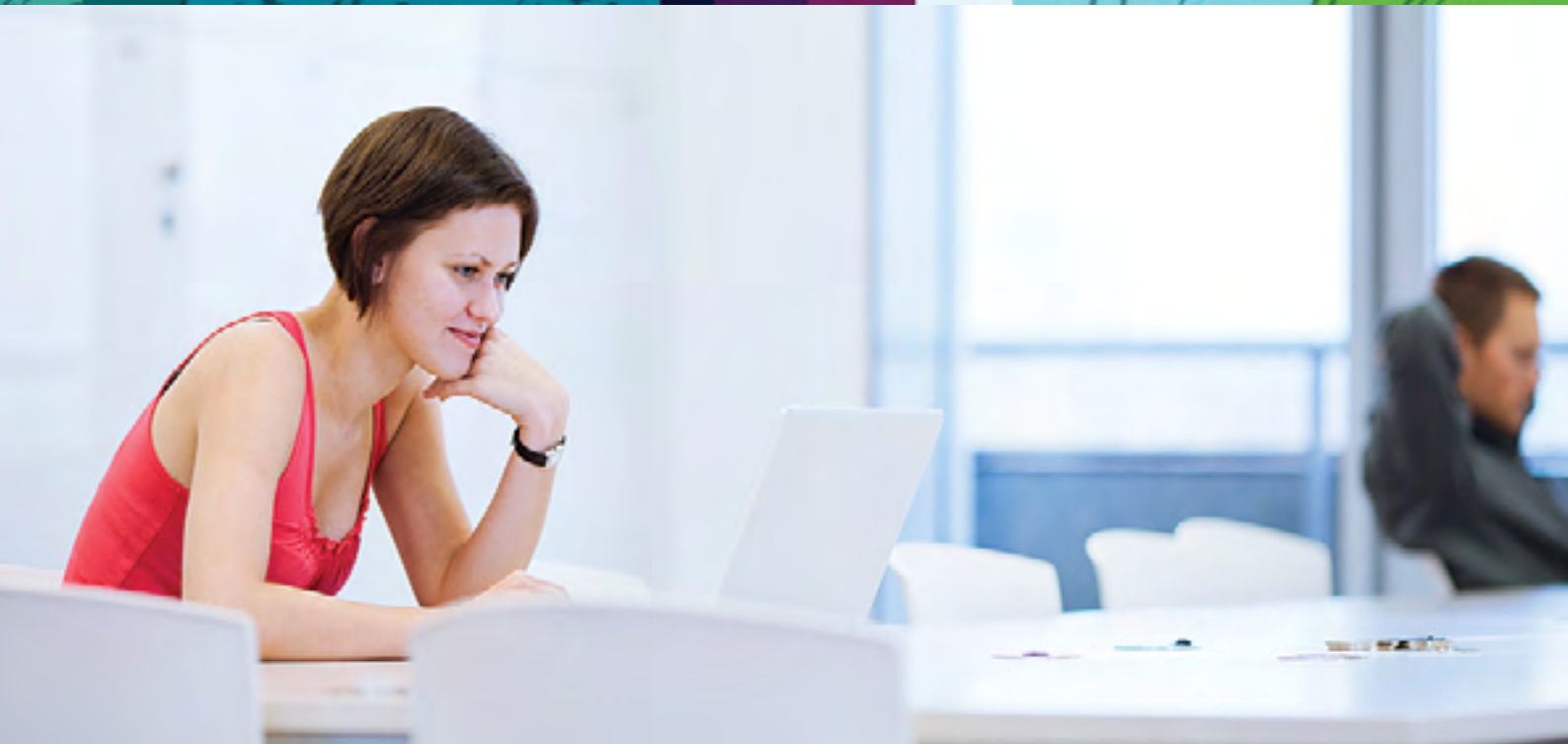


The two maps hanging in the entrance hall of the Geological Society, Burlington House - William Smith's 1815 map (TS5c) is on the right, while on the left is George Bellas Greenough's 1819 map. Photograph by Deryck Laming

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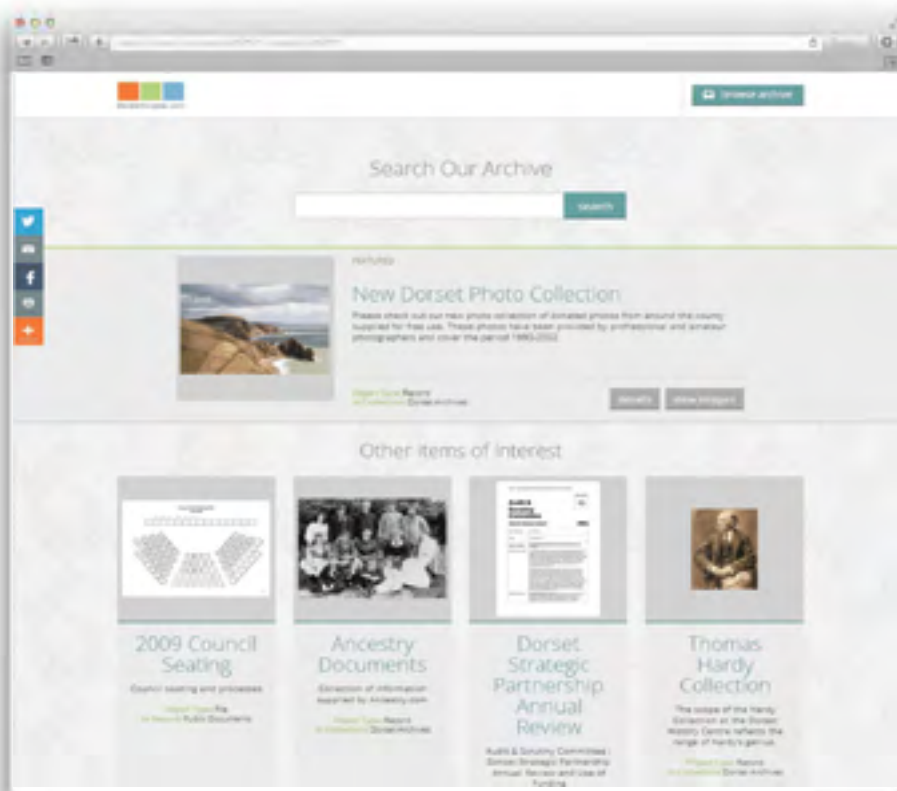
Furthering our work to improve the website our latest addition is our new online application, booking and payment system. Covering conference registration, training event bookings, membership applications, membership renewals and the ARA Shop this new facility is available 24/7 and is ready for you to use.



Doing things digitally in Dorset

Digital information has transformed the way Dorset County Council (DCC) works, but to date there has been no overt strategy as to how this exponential information growth should be managed. Two projects focusing on the strategy and practicalities of managing electronic records and archives are taking an innovative, joined-up approach to these challenges. Whilst managed separately, the projects are mutually dependent and envisage a holistic approach to managing electronic information - from creation through to destruction or permanent preservation. In common with other local authorities, DCC has a huge variety and volume of current and semi-current information. Much of our electronic information sits on unmanaged shared drives with complex folder structures, duplication, and without formal retention and disposal practices.

Example of how public access to content might look using Preservica. Preservica Ltd



www.archives.org.uk



IMPACT project logo. Dorset County Council

The IMPACT project (Information Management Project and Corporate Transformation) was initiated in August 2013 to develop policies and procedures to manage this digital deluge. We will also implement SharePoint 2013 for document and records management, collaborative working and staff intranet. Making information accessible, findable

and understandable is central to the IMPACT project - we are often reminding our stakeholders that records and information management enables usability and is not just about compliance!

An example of our progressive approach is an Information Asset Register template, based on The National Archives' digital continuity guidance, which will replace our outdated retention schedules. The register will document the purpose and business needs of the information currently on shared drives, where the file format alone is not sufficient to understand its management requirements.

Simultaneously, the archives service (funded by Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole councils) has acquired funding from DCC for a year-long pilot project using Preservica, a cloud-based solution, to explore and demonstrate the benefits of digital preservation. Previously there was no clear responsibility for the management of digital archives, no programme to regularly check for corruption and obsolescence; digital media was boxed up in the repositories like everything else.

The project aims to prove the need for and benefits of digital preservation, through case studies of key corporate records within DCC. The first target area is the council's committee meeting papers which are created electronically but printed to send to the archive. Work involves replacing the current process of sending 20,000 pages a year by courier with a much more efficient electronic transfer.

We are keen to maximise the value of existing cultural capital within the archive service. For example, we recently digitised a set of negatives taken by Weymouth photographer Graham Herbert in the 1950s and 1960s. Unfortunately, the negatives are suffering from 'vinegar syndrome', with no treatment yet available to reverse or stop the decay. Preserving the digital images is our best hope of ensuring the accessibility of the collection into the future.

The project has also allowed us to participate in discussions with Preservica around the development of the product, particularly the universal access module. This will allow users to view and download content online, a priority for us and a key selling point for stakeholders. Preservica's tool synchronises metadata with CALM to provide a single point of access to all of our catalogue information. Ways of ensuring digital preservation is sustainable need to be thoroughly investigated, including potentially charging users to access material online. Discussions around interoperability between SharePoint and Preservica have also been initiated.

In both projects, advocating for support at different levels of the authority is a major challenge. Whilst there is agreement for the required project outcomes in principle, there is not yet full understanding of the change management needed to encourage such a large and diverse organisation to succeed in the 'digital age'. Getting the right systems is important, but engaging with all stakeholders is equally vital to achieve the goals of both projects.

Another challenge is ensuring that the language we use is understood in the same way by all, especially terms like 'records', 'information management', 'information governance', 'digital continuity', and 'archives'. Working together, the two projects are able to communicate a consistent message to others about the value of managing information throughout its lifecycle.

In the absence of agreed theory we are encouraged by others' examples of practical success shared through social media, blogs, webinars, and at sector events. Connecting with other institutions has enabled us to share our experiences with the wider community and raise our organisations' profiles. On a



Herbert collection negative showing signs of vinegar syndrome (ref: D-HBT/2486a). Dorset History Centre

personal level, confronting these wider issues has allowed us to develop our skills through learning from and contributing to the professional community.

Both projects are currently funded on a temporary basis, although we are planning for the long-term. It is our hope that good information management and sustainable digital preservation are recognised as being vital to the council and are eventually embedded as 'business as usual'.

Cassandra Johnson

Archives Service Officer (Digital Preservation),
Dorset History Centre

Kate Watson

Records Manager (EDRMS), Dorset County Council

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From beetles to The Beatles



Entomology Products (Pages 71-75)



Phonograph Record Storage Sleeves (Page 27)

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