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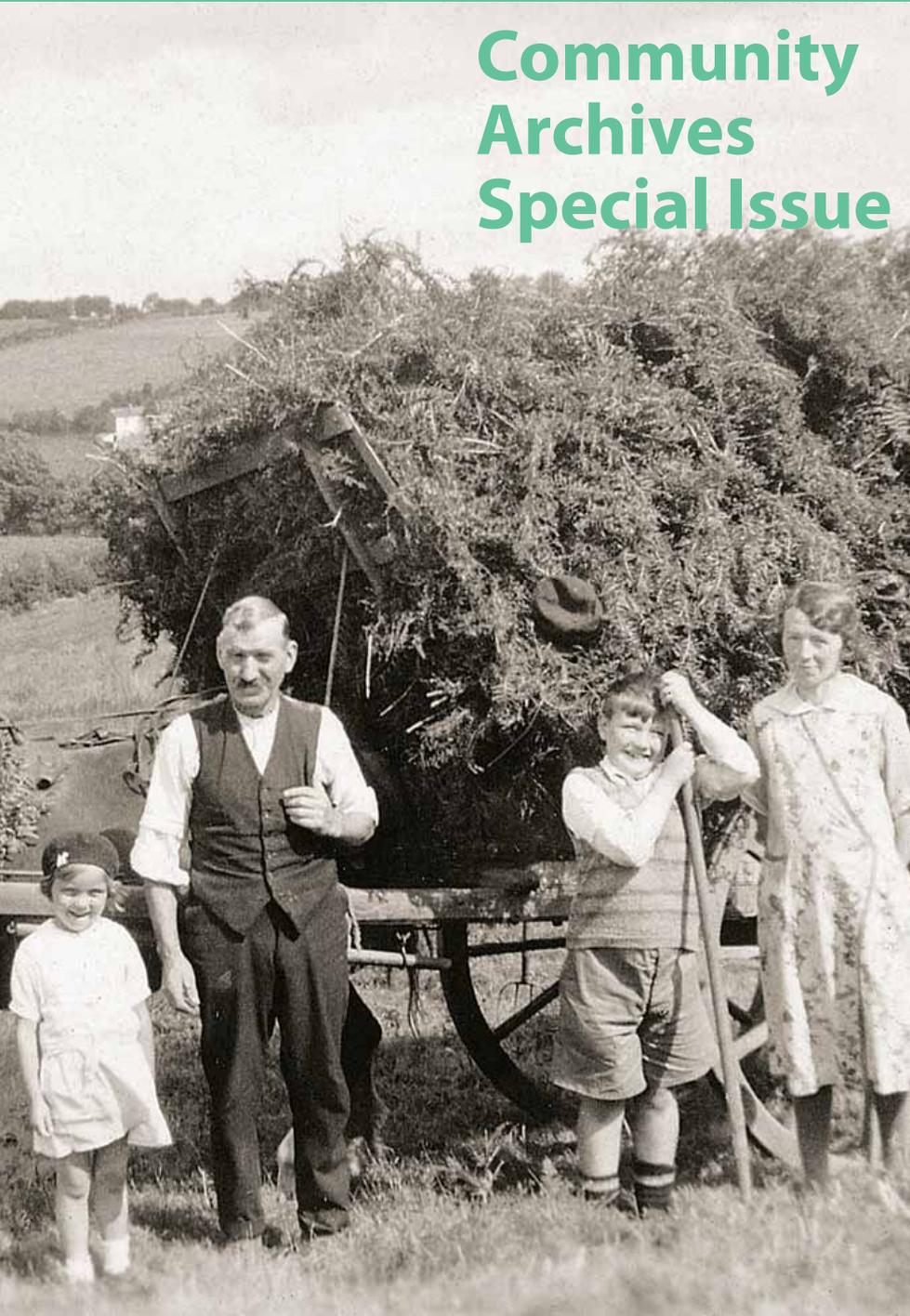
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ARC magazine

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Community Archives Special Issue



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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the October issue of *ARC*. This month's edition focuses on Community Archives and covers a range of topics, such as the launch of both a new website for the Community Archives and Heritage Group and the Community Archives Award Scheme. There are also articles from community archives in Northern Ireland, Bathgate in Scotland and Lustleigh in Dartmoor, as well as a suitably timed article reminding us all of the highs and lows that can be part and parcel of managing an archive.

There is also a thought-provoking article highlighting the work of the Miners Voices Project which provides an insight into the British coal-mining industry. With the recent tragedy involving the death of four Welsh Miners, it brings home just how history can repeat itself. The thoughts of the editorial board, and the *ARC* readership are with the relatives of those affected by the tragedy.

In this month's features we take a look at the re-launch of the Collections Link online community run by the Collections Trust, a new exhibition at PRONI, and the opening of the iMuseum research facility on the Isle of Man. Pete Wadley also highlights the impact of the Public Records Act for Scotland which was passed in May this year.

This is the first edition not to feature John Chambers' column. Hopefully the electronic updates will have landed in your inbox by the time this edition is published, meaning that you will receive up-to-date news on the work of the Association, particularly its advocacy work.

We hope you enjoy reading this edition and welcome any comments and articles for future publication.

Sarah Norman, Gary Collins, Ceri Forster, Rose Roberto and Richard Wragg

DISCLAIMER

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

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Harvesting bracken at Lings, Throwleigh (Courtesy of the Throwleigh Archive)
Former British Leyland worker Dorothy Aitken aboard a new Leyland tractor (c) Guthrie Aitken
Salmon netting at Portstewart. Courtesy of Coleraine Museum.
Janet Hancock, curator of the Launch Exhibition. Public Record Office of Northern Ireland.

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Opening lines



Caroline Williams is the new President of the Archives and Records Association (UK & Ireland). Here she considers what the role can and should do...

ARA is a new association so what better time to define an appropriate role for the President?

Inspired by the ARA annual conference (and gently encouraged by John Chambers and Marie Owens) to start a conversation around a possible role for the President, I am writing this in the train on my return from Edinburgh. I thought it was an excellent conference with a really positive feel and I am delighted that I am going to be closely associated with ARA as its new President.

It is clear that ARA has had a challenging and successful first year. The smoothness of the transition to the new body shows how professionally that potentially fraught process was accomplished. With that first year over there is of course plenty still to do to fulfil our original promises and intentions.

What should a President do? Our new Chairman, Martin Taylor's advice is sound – he suggested that the role might be “to encourage, to advise and to warn” – his quote is from Bagehot. Certainly the role is not meant to be either operational or decision making – and I suspect some detachment allows for objectivity for when judgement is needed.

As Alan Cameron, the previous President, said, one of the things a President brings to the role is experience – or the scars, as he put it. What experience can I bring? My early career was spent in (three) local authority record offices, gaining experience in both archives and records management at the level of practitioner and manager. My first shot at leadership took place at the University of Liverpool where I ran the new Master's programme and became accustomed to trying to fit into a single year's curriculum all that the new professional needed in order to be ready for a first post. I also discovered the real joys of research and writing for publication that I believe is so important for developing an independent discipline and profession. Finally a short stint at The National Archives establishing (and subsequently dismantling) the Research and Collections Development Department provided a fabulous insight into working in a government department with all the joys (e.g. sharing a lift with Peter Mandelson) and challenges that that entails. And finally – I am now freelance

which is best of all, even if it is not exactly the gentle coasting to retirement that I originally anticipated.

Elizabeth Oxborrow-Cowan said that one surprising result of archives services acquiring new buildings with HLF funding was a leap in confidence and aspiration. It seemed to me at conference that the new Association has brought with it a new optimism and engagement that was fully reflected in the excellent presentations we heard. I don't think I heard anything negative about how difficult life is for professionals these days, just an acknowledgement that we need to make the most of what we have: and there were many examples of what can actually be successfully achieved with very few resources. So an increase in confidence and new aspiration seem a great platform on which to build in the years to come (am I mixing my metaphors?).

In summary I know that this role is not about being an operational decision maker, that it may be about encouraging, advising and warning, that it is certainly about advocating, communicating, supporting and promoting all the excellent things that ARA does and helping in engaging the interest and support of decision makers and users alike.

But what do you think? if there are ways in which you think I could be useful why not let me know: caroline@cmwilliams.org.uk

John Chambers' Chief Executive column has moved to ARA TODAY, the new email newsletter published every fortnight. If you haven't received the newsletter in your email, please email membership@archives.org.uk or call 01823 327077.

.....
Caroline Williams



When did you last click on www.archives.org.uk?

We're working hard to improve the website and make it the one-stop-shop for everything you need to know about your Association and the archive and record-keeping world.

Read the latest news and views. And share some views of your own on the community pages. Forgotten your password? Send an email to membership@archives.org.uk – and you're ready to join in!



Collecting Matters

One of the lasting images from the Summer Unrest were the walls of multi-coloured post-it notes expressing local communities' opposition to the riots and revealing the strength of public solidarity. As the country reflects on the aftermath of the disturbances, what will the community memories be of those events?

Since 2009 Hertfordshire County Council's heritage services has successfully been recording stories in the local community through their 'Making Memories' project: www.hertsmemories.org.uk/ As with any community archives project, long term sustainability of digital records can raise some difficult challenges. One solution is for community archives to form relationships with bigger institutions.

A good example is the Accredited Community Archives Scheme developed by West Yorkshire Archive Service. The scheme gives community groups clear guidance on developing and sustaining a community archives project. Although the service can only accredit archives within the West Yorkshire region, it could be useful to find out more: www.wyjs.org.uk/archives-accreditation-scheme.asp

Then there is the British Library's UK Web Archive. You can request that your community website is harvested as part of their existing collections: www.webarchive.org.uk/ukwa/info/nominate

If you've already formed similar relationships or want more advice please get in touch.

Rosie Logjudice

Resource Discovery Officer The National Archives

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives/collection-strategies.htm

Registration Scheme News

Registration Scheme Workshop at London School of Economics (LSE) Library, 10 Portugal Street, London, Tuesday 29 November, 1-4.30pm

This FREE half-day workshop is suitable for candidates, referees, mentors and anyone interested in enrolling on the scheme or becoming a mentor.

It will provide the opportunity to:

- Find out about the Registration Scheme: Why do it? What are the personal and professional benefits? What does it involve?
- Work through the four development areas: Formal training courses; Study and research; Work achievements; Contributions to the profession
- Work through Learning Outcome Forms: Motivation; Achievement; Evidence
- View successful portfolios
- Ask questions about the Registration Scheme

Programme Structure:

- 13:00-13:10 Arrival & registration
- 13:10-13:50 Overview of the ARA Registration Scheme; Role of the candidate and mentor; Personal Development Planning
- 13:50-15:15 Getting to grips with the four areas of development; Learning Outcome Forms
- 15:15-15:45 Tea/coffee; View portfolios of some of the successful candidates; Individual queries
- 15:45-16:30 Support; Frequently asked questions; Discussion and round-up

The maximum attendance for the workshop is 20. Book early to avoid disappointment (no later than one week prior to the date of the workshop)

To register for the workshop, please contact: regschemeevents@archives.org.uk

CONTACTS:

General Registration Scheme Enquiries:

registrar@archives.org.uk

Registration Scheme Events Enquiries:

regschemeevents@archives.org.uk

Registration Scheme Admin and Bursaries:

regschemeadmin@archives.org.uk

Registration Scheme Communications Officer:

regschemecomms@archives.org.uk

Registration Scheme Mentor Queries and Advice:

regschemementors@archives.org.uk

Collections Trust Re-launches Collections Link

The Collections Trust has announced the re-launch of Collections Link (www.collectionslink.org.uk), the popular online community for people who work with Collections in museums, archives, libraries and other cultural venues.

The new Collections Link has been comprehensively updated, and now features new content on the SPECTRUM and Museum Accreditation standards as well as new functionality designed to make it easier for professionals, students, teachers and volunteers to find and use expert guidance in Collections Management. The new platform is optimised for use with mobile devices and tablet PCs and integrates with existing social networks including Facebook, LinkedIn and twitter.

In a significant new development, as well as the existing content relating to professional practice, the new Collections Link is structured around Subjects – such as Archaeology and Art History – to help users connect to vital subject-specialist expertise. A new ‘Groups’ feature supports networking and collaboration for Subject Specialist and other sector networks. Group members can share documents, manage events and host online discussions relating to their areas of expertise.

Speaking about the new Collections Link, Collections Trust CEO Nick Poole commented, “Collections Link is already a hugely popular resource for museum, library and archive people. The new version represents the fulfilment of our vision of Collections Link as a dynamic online community, supporting new forms of collaboration. We have listened to our users, and ensured that it is as easy as possible to find, download and use the professional expertise, guidance and case studies we provide. I am delighted that Collections Link will be able to play a key role in supporting the rollout of the revised Museum Accreditation Scheme and the Arts Council’s vision for Museum Development.”

The new Collections Link is available online at www.collectionslink.org.uk. Users can register on the site under the ‘Collaborate’ menu. The Collections Trust will be providing a training event and guidance to help people get the most from the new Collections Link.

Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011

The Public Records (Scotland) Act received Royal assent on 20 April 2011. It is the first new public records legislation in Scotland since 1937.

The Act came out of the Historic Abuse Systemic Review: Residential Schools and Children’s Homes in Scotland 1950-1995 (The Shaw Report) published in 2007, which identified significant failures in public record keeping in the looked after children sector, and made several recommendations to Scottish Ministers for improvements. A further review in 2009 by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland (the Keeper) confirmed that problems with record keeping extended into other sectors as well.

The Shaw report can be consulted at: www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/11/20104729/0

The new Act applies only to named public authorities in Scotland, but it will reach into the private and voluntary sectors where a public authority decides to contract out a function to a private or voluntary body. The Act requires authorities to submit a records management plan (RMP) to be agreed by the Keeper. To assist authorities, the Keeper must develop and publish a model RMP and provide supporting guidance on the form and content of that plan.

Engagement with stakeholders is seen as crucial to developing these important documents and helping the Act to work correctly. Their development will be a collaborative effort between staff at the National Records of Scotland (NRS) and all those affected by the Act. To this end, the NRS has set up and convened the Public Records Stakeholder Forum, whose inaugural meeting took place in Edinburgh 30 June 2011. The Forum provides the main mechanism for reaching agreement over the form and content of the model RMP and guidance. It includes representatives from across

sectors and relevant professions with the intention of delivering cross sector agreement on issues.

Membership of the Forum was drawn from a number of authorities chosen by the Keeper to represent individual sectors. With over 200 public authorities in Scotland it was not possible to invite everyone and approximately 40 organisations attended the first meeting. This included representatives from the private and voluntary sectors.

The bulk of the Forum's work will take place remotely, through an online discussion board (we are using the Government's Communities of Practice tool) supported by periodic face-to-face working group meetings. The smaller group meeting will address particular issues, for example issues surrounding shared information platforms. The draft model RMP will be divided into separate elements which might be considered essential in a records management plan. It is expected that the number and scope of these elements will change as the discussion progresses. Many public authorities in Scotland already operate some form of records management system and will therefore be familiar with these elements. The job of the Forum is to have agreed by January 2012 the components of the draft model RMP and the draft guidance so that they can be subjected to wider scrutiny by all those affected by the Act.

Once agreed and developed, the model RMP and guidance will be published and submitted to all authorities affected by the Act for wider scrutiny by means of a formal consultation. The consultation period will last for 12 weeks.

The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 provides the records management and archive community with a unique opportunity to improve record keeping in Scotland and to develop a records management asset created by a wide range of expertise and knowledge. It is hoped that this will better secure the safety of Scottish public records of enduring value, and support the long term retention and security of the personal records of vulnerable people, thus fulfilling the recommendations of the Shaw Report.

.....
Pete Wadley

Public Records Officer, National Records of Scotland

A Century of Change, Conflict and Transformation - PRONI Launch Exhibition

On 25 May 2011, the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) was delighted to open its first major exhibition, entitled *A Century of Change, Conflict and Transformation*, at its new premises in the Titanic Quarter of Belfast.

The exhibition comprises storyboards, interactive audio visual content and three cabinets displaying original documents and artefacts. For the first time, PRONI has the opportunity to share Northern Ireland's archival heritage in an exciting and engaging format. There is something for everybody, from World War II ration books to photographs of the Delorean sports car.

A Century of Change, Conflict and Transformation covers the period 1911 up until the present day, using PRONI archives to depict the themes of politics, economy and society in Northern Ireland. It also covers major events of the last 100 years including the sinking of *Titanic*, the formation of Northern Ireland and two World Wars. The Blitz experience in Northern Ireland forms the centrepiece of the display and commemorates the 70th anniversary of the Blitz on Belfast. In our replica Anderson Shelter, visitors can experience the cramped conditions people endured when the air raid sirens sounded whilst listening to reminiscences from local people and viewing images of Blitz damage. The later half of the exhibition explores the drastic transition from the darkest days of The Troubles during the Seventies through to more recent advances towards a lasting peace in Northern Ireland.



Scouring: the signature image for the Launch Exhibition. Public Record Office of Northern Ireland.

An eclectic mix of documents and images from PRONI's private and official collections have been used to illustrate *A Century of Change, Conflict and Transformation*. Original documents from throughout the period aim to engage the visitor with primary source material. These include the diary of 19 year old Molly Duffin, depicting her life growing up in Belfast in 1911; applications to work in Northern Ireland (under the New Industries Act) received from Austrian Jews escaping persecution in Europe during the late 1930s; pilot's log book and medals of Wing Commander Ken McKenzie who served as a fighter pilot during World War II; and correspondence relating to the debate on Capital Punishment in Northern Ireland during the 1960s. Other documents and images have been reproduced to form an enticing and visually striking storyboard.

“ Original documents from throughout the period aim to engage the visitor with primary source material. ”

Two interactive touchscreens allow visitors to explore some of the exhibition topics in more depth. For example, diary entries and first hand accounts give a personalised picture of the Blitz experience. The following extract is from the diary of William Ward, a Church warden at St. Ninian's church in East Belfast where the boiler room was used as a shelter. It is a poignant recollection of how local communities were affected by the Blitz:



Janet Hancock, curator of the Launch Exhibition. Public Record Office of Northern Ireland.

"shortly after 1.20 am two Parachute Bombs landed, the first one in Barbour Street and the other one in front of nurse Storeys house at 74 Whitewell Road. Nurse Storey was the maternity nurse for the district. I had spoken to her about ten minutes earlier and requested her to come over to St. Ninian's shelter. 'No' she said 'I expect to be called out to a case and would rather remain where I am until called for'. She died as any nurse would – on duty."

The exhibition outlines access to information legislation, including the 30-year Rule, Freedom of Information (2000) and Data Protection (1998) Acts, and discusses how these affect what records archive users can see and when. It also explores the changing nature of archival media, considering how information will be produced and accessed in the future and posing the question 'are we the last generation who will experience paper records first hand?' It goes on to explore how traditional methods of recording information – diaries and letters – compare to modern methods – emails, blogs and other social media.

This exhibition marks an opportunity for PRONI to reach out to new audiences such as school groups, who will be able to see actual archive material on display in a more interactive environment than previously possible. We also hope that our regular visitors will be surprised to find PRONI material they have not previously consulted or be inspired to research some new topics as a result of the exhibition. We would encourage anybody with an interest to come and visit.

.....
Janet Hancock

PRONI

iMuseum, 'Home of Manx Memories'

On 4 July 2011 Manx National Heritage on the Isle of Man officially opened the iMuseum as the 'Home of Manx Memories' (in Manx Gaelic, 'Cummal Cooinaghtyn Manninagh') in Douglas, the Island's capital.

Situated close to the Manx Museum, iMuseum is a new digital research facility designed to give the public unprecedented access to Manx National Heritage collections, in particular the nation's archives and historic newspaper collection. Already iMuseum is becoming the place on the Island to visit for those tracing their Manx roots.

iMuseum, Douglas

From the outset iMuseum was to open its doors as a community venue on the Isle of Man offering face-to-face expert advice on how to discover generations of Manx people using the newly digitised collections. In 2009, £1.4 million funding was awarded from the Isle of Man Government to re-develop a derelict two-storey structure into public spaces with lounge and conference style facilities for audiences up to 80. Wifi is available throughout the building enabling visitors to use their own laptops or mobile devices with initial direction made to the iMuseum homepage.

Explore Newspapers

For the first time anywhere, iMuseum makes digitally available over 150 years of Isle of Man newsprint. Explore Newspapers removes having to scroll through microfilm in the hope of spotting the relevant article and ushers in advanced OCR (Optical Character Recognition) technology in opening up the news archive.

Twenty-seven Manx newspaper titles, from the earliest extant copy in the collection of 25 December 1792 to 1960, totalling over 400,000 pages of ephemeral newsprint have been individually repaired, microfilmed, scanned and OCR'd to create



iMuseum in Douglas, the Island's capital.



iMuseum homepage inviting visitors to 'Explore'. Spring 2012 will see the launch of iMuseum on the internet.

an unrivalled resource for searching at the click of a button nearly two centuries worth of Isle of Man news. This remarkably ambitious project took nearly two years to deliver at a cost of £570,000, generously funded by the Trustees of Manx National Heritage.

Explore Newspapers relies on 4.3 terabytes of data and the specialist software created by Olive Software (www.olivesoftware.com) based in the US. Olive has devised software capable of dissecting a scanned newspaper into its individual articles, advertisements and pictures, accounting even for articles that run over several pages or are continuations. Once dissected, each 'virtual clipping' is subject to sophisticated OCR coping with faded text, historic fonts and applying 'fuzzy logic' search technology to compensate for text inaccuracies according to error probability in each word-pattern. In partnership with the UK-company MicroFormat who had the critical task of producing clean digital scans from the new microfilm, Olive achieved more than the contracted 80% OCR success rate on all the newspapers and provided a digital surrogate in helping secure its long term preservation.

Since opening the iMuseum the public response to Explore Newspapers has been explosive with people discovering stories about their ancestors, re-living memories and finding it a revelatory tool in research. How does searching work? A Google-style quick-search box on the homepage allows for simple keyword searches. The advanced search option provides wildcard and logical operator searching (i.e. <AND>, <OR>) across one or all titles whether looking at clippings, pictures or advertisements for all or just a chosen date range. Results appear as virtual clippings along with a citation of the source newspaper. Clicking on a clipping opens the full article with the search terms highlighted

and an option to reveal the full page the article comes from. Visitors can save their articles to a 'My Cuttings' area and select to print and save articles as pdfs. Browse Issues also allows visitors to select an individual newspaper and to click through it with the option of clicking to view any article. Based on our experience we would encourage anyone holding historic newspapers to reconsider the wealth of information and the power of using digital means for getting engrossed in yesterday's news.

Explore Family History

Explore Family History in iMuseum allows visitors a simple search on a surname or a complex enquiry on surname, first name(s), date, nationality, parish and category of record (e.g. census,



Tynwald Day ceremony, 5 July 1900 taken by Sir John Benjamin Stone, MP for East Birmingham & photographer (1838-1914)

baptism, marriage, burial, photograph, war memorial, etc.). How are we creating the resource? In January 2009, Manx National Heritage signed an Agreement with the Genealogical Society of Utah (GSU) allowing the Society to digitise onsite (using their own camera operative and equipment) all of the parish registers, wills and registered deeds (along with other archives of significant importance to family historians) for dissemination on their Family Search website: www.familysearch.org, with a licensed copy deposited with Manx National Heritage. This massive digitisation project came at no cost to Manx National Heritage other than preparing the material and hosting the operative. Two years in and it is estimated that the project worth is £2 million with high-quality digital images now deposited for all the parish registers (1598-1950), the wills (1800-1910) and deeds (1880-1910). Our future aim is to make these images available through the Explore Family History section of iMuseum linked to the indices prepared by the Isle of Man Family History Society and the GSU.

To further aid family historians, *Unlocking The Past: A guide to exploring family and local history in the Isle of Man* by Matthew Richardson has been published in conjunction with iMuseum. The book reveals the many different historical records and resources available on the Isle of Man, including photographic collections, maps and military records and how they can be used alongside sources in other parts of the world.

National Photographic Archive

The National Photographic Archive contains hundreds of thousands of images of the Isle of Man from the 1850s through to present day. In advance of iMuseum opening, UK-company Max Communications worked onsite digitising and re-packaging a Glass Plate Douglas Studio Portrait Collection of 4,000 glass plates of named individuals from the mid-19th through to the early 20th century. A further 9,500 photographs of people and 10,500 of places on the Isle of Man were digitised by Townsweb. The place photographs are a 'biography' of the Island, capturing its tourism, industry, events and landscape. 3,000 glass plate negatives of World War One internees on the Isle of Man were also digitised onsite by UK Archiving. Dedicated cataloguers are now working on releasing these remarkable images onto iMuseum through Explore Family History, Explore People, Explore Collections and Explore Places.

National Sound & Film Archive

National Sound Archive recordings from the 1950s of the last native Manx Gaelic speakers (digitised by Tobar an Dualchais, South Uist) are starting to be made available via the iMuseum media player. New content in the coming year will include digitised footage from the National Film Archive.



One of the 4,000 negative glass plates now digitised.

What's Next for iMuseum?

In November 2011, iMuseum will host events for Remembrance Week with the Royal British Legion, including our work to record the war memorials and names commemorated onto iMuseum.

Spring 2012 will see the launch of iMuseum on the internet and the virtual bringing together of the worldwide Manx community which in the US alone is estimated to be one million people with Manx roots. Online visitors will have the option of subscribing to Explore Newspapers and will be able to share their stories about things on iMuseum and request to be kept in touch by receiving a monthly iMuseum e-letter.

We might even once more take iMuseum on the road as follow-up to our successful stand at the 'Who Do You Think You Are?' exhibition at London Olympia in February 2011.

Visit Us

iMuseum is open Wednesday to Saturday 10am to 5pm, Thursdays until 7pm. iMuseum, Kingswood Grove, Douglas, Isle of Man, IM1 3LY

If you'd like to hear more about iMuseum or the work of Manx National Heritage then contact Jude Dicken at:

jude.dicken@mnh.gov.im; Tel. 01624 648000

Website: www.gov.im/mnh

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/manxheritage>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/manxnationalheritage

Podcast: <http://manxnationalheritage.posterous.com>

Jude Dicken

Documentation Officer, Manx National Heritage

Community Archives and Heritage Group

This is the second special Community Archives edition of ARC, and things have changed somewhat since the first edition in March 2010. Community Archives are now part of the Archives and Records Association (having merged from within the National Council on Archives), but continue to be supported by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council and The National Archives. Community Archives seem to have increased in prominence and importance over the last year or so, becoming a more talked about and more central string to the archive world in general. When Ed Vaizey, now Minister for Culture, addressed the 2009 Community Archives Conference, he spoke at length about how community archives can contribute to the policy that has since been termed 'the Big Society'. However, it has become apparent since the election last year that this is not necessarily the case, possibly because community archives have their own place in the archival landscape but do not replace the existing arrangement of record offices and independent archives. The realisation that the arrival of a new government was not going to be the answer to all of the community archive world's problems was a disappointment. So the same old issues remain – sustaining the work and development of community archives, both in terms of funding and in maintaining levels of volunteer support. Reports from the community archive groups working hard out in the field correlate with the experience being reported from local authority record offices across the country. The fact that everyone is struggling with similar issues is not reassuring but adds to the worries for community archives, based on responses to evaluation undertaken by CAHG.

This edition of ARC showcases several different facets of community archives: from three of the important aspects of CAHG's work – the conference, the new awards scheme and the website, to reflections on successful community archives networks with Cambridgeshire and Dartmoor. There are also examples of successful community projects working in two different areas of the country: Lancashire and West Lothian. This highlights the variety that there is in the community archive world – something CAHG embraces and tries to showcase at every opportunity.

Things are also on the move within the Community Archives and Heritage Group. We have continued to build on firm foundations, having just held our fifth annual one-day conference (the subject of one of the following articles) and developing our website. We have also held our first regional conference in Leeds in February 2011, and are aiming to have more of these in forthcoming years. One of the big priorities for us this year is writing more guidance and resources for community archives, including digital preservation and guidance for working with local authority archive services. All CAHG's work is available on the website, and announced through our own channels (newsletter and mailing list), so if you would like to know more about CAHG's ongoing work, please become a member by signing up on our website and you'll get priority booking information for our conference (which has not needed to be advertised beyond our own mailing list for the last two years) and information about all of our work.

.....
Laura Cotton

Chair, Community Archives and Heritage Group



CAHG Online

One of the most important achievements of the Community Archives and Heritage Group since it was created is the online resource for community archive groups at www.communityarchives.org.uk.

The main feature of the site is the area where community archive groups can create their own pages to showcase their work on a national - if not international - stage. Each month, one of the groups who have created their own page is featured as the 'Archive of the Month'. One such group, featured recently, was the Trull Parish Archive Group from Taunton in Somerset. Trull Parish Archive group have recently joined the community archive website. It is a relatively new group having formed in autumn 2010 and acts under the joint auspices of the recently formed Trull, Staplehay & Angersleigh Local History Society and All Saints Parish Church, in whose Parish Rooms their collection is physically based. The 'Parish' in their title embraces both the ecclesiastical and the civil parishes. The group is currently busy cataloguing all the documents and other historic material that have accumulated over many years and is at last being sorted, using the CAHG Cataloguing Guidelines which they say "have been a godsend" to them.

The site also allows CAHG to make available the different resources that have been developed for and by the group. This includes the cataloguing guidelines, based on the principles of ISAD(G) but pared down to the basics for community archive groups to make use of in their own collections. There is also collections care and funding advice, amongst other things. This is an area that will be undergoing more development over the forthcoming year.

One of the functions of the website is to bring community archives closer together for mutual support. This is achieved through the regular e-newsletter, the e-mail list and the website message boards. So if you would like more information about the work of CAHG, community archive groups around the country and forthcoming events, then sign up to the email newsletter through the website. Those who receive the newsletter will get to hear about CAHG events before they are advertised elsewhere (although after members who get priority booking for all CAHG events, including the annual conference).

Telling Our Stories

The Northern Ireland Community Archive

Under the banner 'Telling Our Stories', the Northern Ireland Community Archive brings together a huge range of local heritage resources for the benefit of community groups, schools, genealogists and tourists, or simply anyone interested in local history and culture.

The site, launched in 2008, provides a one-stop shop for local heritage resources. It includes museum collections, records of museum projects and exhibitions, educational resources and community archives. The site is under constant development and a recent innovation has been the addition of a series of heritage trails. This was a Tourism Innovation Fund Project, part-financed by the European Regional Development Fund under the European Sustainable Competitiveness Programme for Northern Ireland, administered by Northern Ireland Tourist Board.

The first trails have featured the Ulster plantation, the Causeway salmon industry and Belfast's maritime heritage. These provide stories and images to reveal the subject, linked to maps and information which allow locals and visitors to create their own tour on the ground.

At the core of the site are the community archives. Gemma Reid from the Causeway Museum Service, one of the lead partners in the project, explains, "The Causeway Museum Service had been developing community archives with local groups for some time. This project represents a fantastic opportunity for those groups to share their



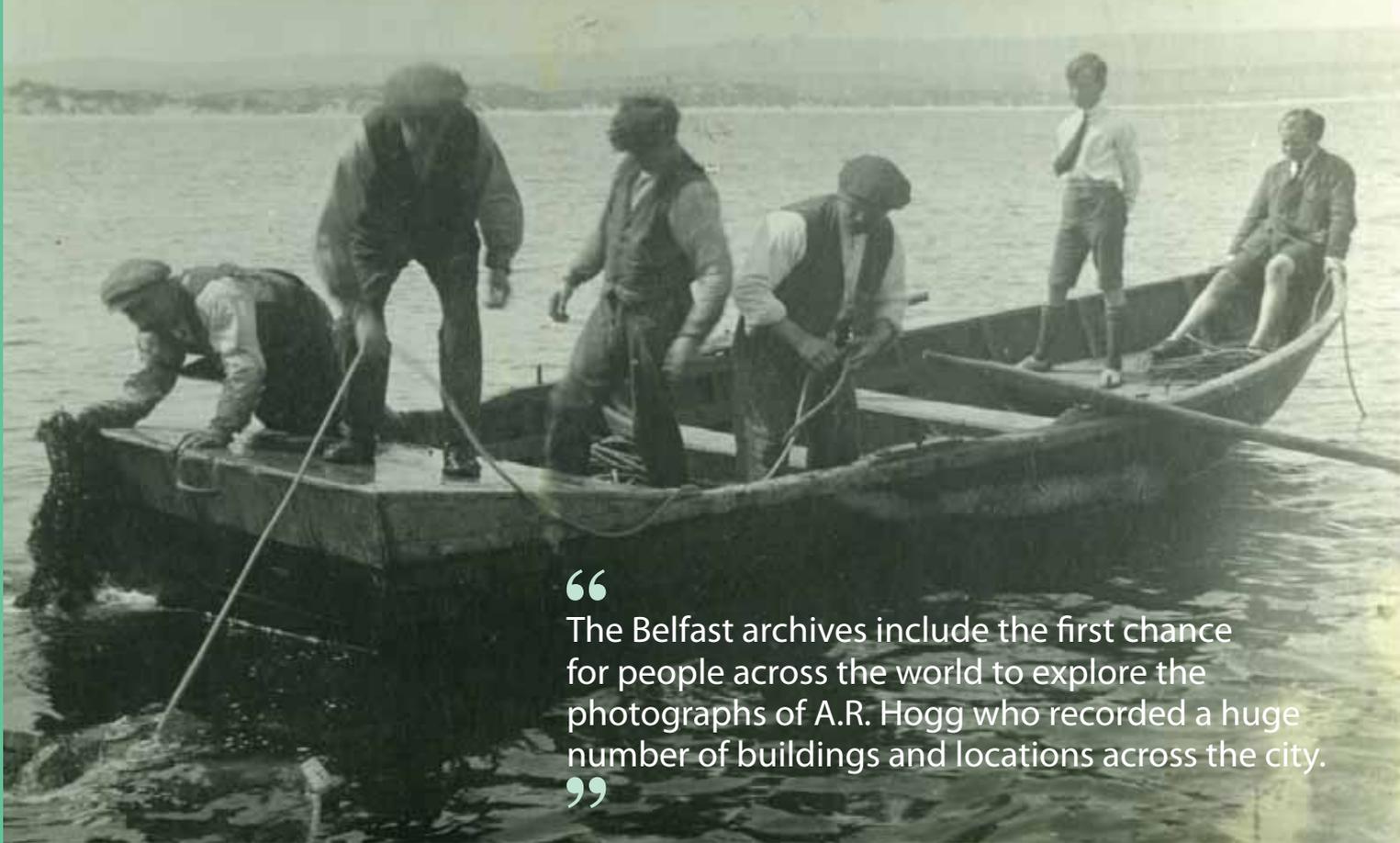
Landing Salmon at Portballantrae. Image courtesy of Bushmills Community Association.

experiences with a much wider audience and access resources and information from other areas.” The Northern Ireland Community Archive aims to capture the passion and energy of our local communities for exploring their heritage and provide the tools to share their discoveries with others. Community archives are collections of stories, photographs, documents, audio recordings and film that have been captured by a community as a record of their cultural heritage and identity. Archive projects may be based in clubs, community centres, historical societies, schools, libraries, museums or public archives and may focus on a common geography or a specific subject or a project which the group have carried out. The material is generated and managed by the community, who has full ownership of the archive, though it may be developed in partnership with a public body.

Some community groups have uploaded collections of local images, while others have put together series of recordings taken at oral history sessions, presenting their local history in their own voices. Some have displayed projects which they have

“ Some community groups have uploaded collections of local images, while others have put together series of recordings taken at oral history sessions ”

undertaken. For example, within the Moyle Community Archive, is the result of a project by Fairhead Photography Club with the support of Causeway Museum Service with Awards for All funding. Faces of Ballycastle set out to provide training in photography and in recording oral history to community members. The participants sought out local characters took their portraits and recorded their stories. A full gallery of pictures, each accompanied by an audio file of a selected story is now available to the world on the archive. A project undertaken by the Gelvin Community Association, in the Limavady area, has involved researching the detailed history of houses and abandoned dwellings in their local townlands. The



“ The Belfast archives include the first chance for people across the world to explore the photographs of A.R. Hogg who recorded a huge number of buildings and locations across the city. ”

Salmon netting at Portstewart. Courtesy of Coleraine Museum.

files, containing a great wealth of information about the people who lived there over the last century and a half, along with a large selection of accompanying images, are soon to be uploaded. This archive is sure to be of great interest to genealogists and to anyone with an interest in rural life.

Within the museum archives, Coleraine Museum has a range of information related to Coleraine Market Yard, the possible site for a new museum. These include audio files of memories of those who remember the yard when it was working facility and a social hub for the town, a history of the yard, details of schools project, 'When the Cows Come Home' and artworks created recently by youth groups exploring the yard.

The Belfast archives include the first chance for people across the world to explore the photographs of A.R. Hogg who recorded a huge number of buildings and locations across the city.

The main partners are currently Causeway Museum Service, which works across Coleraine, Limavady and Moyle council areas, and the Culture, Arts and Tourism Unit of Belfast City Council. The archive is stepping into a new phase of development with

several other organisations coming on board. The original site layout, supported then with funding from the Department of Finance and Personnel Digital Inclusion Unit, has been out-paced by the growing content and we are currently talking to MMC Consulting about further site improvements as more groups come on board.

As a result of Telling Our Stories, local museum and community collections, stories and memories are being shared across the internet, encouraging people in far flung places to explore our rich heritage and plan a visit here. Already, visits to the archive have been recorded from New Zealand, Australia, Canada, US and United Arab Emirates although the most loyal and frequent visitors are from UK and Ireland.

There are many, many more stories out there to be told and the Northern Ireland Community Archive is stepping up to provide an on-going platform for community groups to share their passions with the rest of the world.

The archive can be found at www.niarchive.org.

John Hamilton

Community Outreach, Causeway Archive Service

Community Archives Conference 2011

The Community Archives and Heritage Group met at University College London on Wednesday 22 June 2011 for their fifth annual conference entitled 'Telling Your Story: Challenges and Opportunities in 2011'. It attracted over 120 delegates from a huge variety of organisations ranging from national institutions and corporate archives, to smaller independent local history and special interest archive groups.

The morning session highlighted the 'Big Picture' for community archives within the UK. Katy Goodrum, Chair of the Archives and Records Association, opened the conference with the keynote speech. This focused on the achievements of last year including ARA's increased membership, the role of volunteers in a post-custodial world, and emphasising the fact that community archives are an important part of the national archive landscape. John Chambers, Chief Executive of ARA, raised concerns that there is little central government interest in community archives despite the contribution that they can make to the 'Big Society'. On a more positive note, Jack Latimer from CommunitySites pointed to 'Issues and Trends', such as the coming of age of community archives through better networks with professional archivists and shared interest groups, as well as a growing use and awareness of the importance of emerging technology. Jane Golding of English Heritage ended the morning presentations with her positive outlook on the importance of community archives and how they can make use of and add to Historic Environment Records.

The 'Telling Your Story 2011 News Round' section of the morning allowed community groups and independent

archivists to showcase their current work and projects, which were delivered against the clock in five minute 'Show and Tell' presentations. First to speak was the African Heritages Initiative who focused on achievements and contributions of Africans in Birmingham from 1950. This was followed by Our Oxhey Community Archive, a web-based photograph and memory archive which emerged last year following a library tea party; and Feminist Webs, who have recently developed projects to promote inter-generational storytelling and recording which has resulted in invaluable physical and online archive collections. Clive Egginton followed this presentation with his research project looking at documenting the untold Sheffield stories of today through a photographic medium. Geoff Cordingley from Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies rounded off the Show and Tell with a demonstration of their online archive of diaries and letters which have been brought to life through audio recordings by local volunteers.

The afternoon session began with Gilliam Edom of West Sussex Record Office who summarised the 'Joining up our Heritage Project', which focuses on using tithe map resources to link old and new data and document local communities. Using technology effectively was a strong theme throughout the day and Elaine Davis, the Community Archives website administrator, highlighted the continuing importance of website contributors maintaining up-to-date information.

Jess Thomas provided an overview of the Accrediting Community Archives scheme developed by West Yorkshire

“
The use and application of technology and a focus on cooperation and communication were strong themes throughout the conference
”

Archive Service. The guidance provides advice that allows community archives to develop within a structured approach. It embraces community cohesion and aims to bring groups together to exchange views and information.

The afternoon session was completed with a presentation by Janet Nixon from Surrey History Centre who reported on a project where drama students used archival records from a former mental hospital to raise awareness of mental health issues. The students performed the project to Surrey's secondary school pupils and a filmed version of this performance will be made widely available in autumn 2011. Highlights of the film were screened at the conference, illustrating how anonymisation can make closed material and difficult subjects accessible.

The use and application of technology and a focus on cooperation and communication were strong themes throughout the conference. The existing developments in these areas mean that the Community Archives and Heritage Group is in a strong position for the future.

.....
**Alison Heaps, Shawna Satz and
Kelda Roe**
University College London
.....



Sawtry Abbey sketch from 1147 – 1535



Molly Dancing at Ramsey Straw Bear Festival, 2009



Upwood Panto, 2003



Phone box decorated for the Royal Wedding, Chatteris



Lifting a new footbridge across Great Ouse, 2011

The Highs and Lows of a Community Archive

Times are tough! Whatever you are, be it professional or amateur, be it a long standing archive or a new one, there are pressures which didn't exist a few years ago. Despite financial concerns and an element of 'ride out the storm' there is still lots of activity and plenty of enthusiasm.

A year ago, I wrote about Cambridgeshire Community Archive Network (CCAN), a digital archive created to build snapshots of social history across the county. The network still exists, slightly depleted, but going strong. Enthusiasm is still high and the archive has spawned lots of fringe activities which cover 'community' and 'archive'. Some groups have published books, others have started local history groups, some have set up their own village websites, some hold regular 'memories coffee mornings' and there is still lots of site activity.

The guest speaker for the CCAN AGM this year was the Local Studies Librarian for the Cambridgeshire Collection. Despite mutterings that 'archivists (are) handing over their birth right to community archives' CCAN is working on nurturing links between them. Cambridgeshire is a portmanteau county so things come in triplicate in the form of Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire and Fenland collections and CCAN is beginning to pass on original documents and information as appropriate. The county archives don't want everything from the website and CCAN doesn't want all their detail but, as in many other counties, they are working together.

Older material is drying up despite novel attempts to sniff it out. In one village the local computer geek happily problem solves but in return expects a picture for the village archive. Over this past year CCAN has changed direction slightly shifting the focus towards creating a 'living archive'; this has been group's own choice not network direction. The site now

has almost 27,000 items, everything from a sketch of Sawtry Abbey created sometime between 1147 and 1535 (foundation to dissolution), to village pantomimes to molly dancing on Plough Monday to 2011 happenings, including mowing the cricket pitch at Pymoor, a new footbridge at Eaton Socon and a phone box celebrating the Royal Wedding in Chatteris. Cambridgeshire life is rural, concentrated in small towns and villages and these are what communities feel relevant to future generations.

Everything is positive but in the background there are troubles. In small communities it is hard to raise the money to pay annual website fees, the population is aging with more interest in armchairs than computer chairs, legislation means that recent children's pictures can no longer be included, people's interests change and move on, memories become less reliable and site technology needs to keep up but changes cost. The website was envisaged as a way of teaching computer technology but in reality the computer shy remain computer shy. They love to see the pictures but not to participate. Memory failure is an on-going problem. My own village is trying to produce a village timeline, in particular documenting recent changes. Can anyone remember what happened and when – no chance!

The future is rosy (ish) but it just needs a lot of work, a bit of tweaking and updating and a nice sponsor. In the absence of the latter we will thrive on enthusiasm and bite our nails with worry. It will be OK, too much effort has been invested to let it fail now!

www.ccan.co.uk

Judith Harvey

CCAN

Community Archive Award Scheme

The Community Archive and Heritage Group (CAHG) were excited to announce the launch of the 'Community Archive Award Scheme' at their recent conference. The Awards Scheme has been designed to celebrate and reward the work of community archives across the UK and Ireland. The award will celebrate the contribution of community archives within the archive sector and will work to promote and share good practice in community archives.

The award is open to all community archives in the UK and Ireland although applications must be submitted by a member of CAHG. If you are not currently a member, individuals can join free of charge by visiting www.communityarchives.org.uk.

There are several different categories that people can enter their community archive in. There will be one overall 'Community Archive of the Year' award, awarded to the archive which has most impressed the judges across all the categories. It will be possible to win this award by making an outstanding entry just in one category, although you may improve your chances of winning the overall award if you make entries in more than one category.

There will also be awards for the different categories which are:

Inspiration

Tell us about a project or activity that your group have done that you think others usefully could learn from or copy. Do you have top tips or ideas to share?

The aim of this category is to share good ideas and practice between community archives. The activity or project entered could be part of the day to day work of your group or be a one off. We are looking

for examples of best practice, or a project that was particularly successful.

Innovation

Tell us about an innovative or unique project that you think is new in some way.

This category is looking for projects that are trail blazing, that have tried something new and succeeded. It might be, for example, a new way of presenting your collection online, a new way of collecting, or a new way of engaging others. Tell us about what you did, why it was innovative and how it was a success.

Impact

Have you carried out work that benefited the local community? What is the wider impact of your work on others?

Perhaps you have worked with a school, or engaged in a project that increased the number of people affected by your archive? Perhaps you had an exhibition that inspired people or an event that drew in the crowds? Tell us about the impact your community archive is having. (This category may overlap with 'Inspiration'!)

Interest

Tell us about something in your collection that you think is interesting and why?

Perhaps you have a prize object or document? Tell us why you think it is so special, what it means to the community archive and perhaps what work you have done with it. Have you used some of your collections in an interesting way?

Online Activity

Tell us about your online activity.

Have you launched something new? Is your web presence special? Perhaps you have an interactive element that is successful? We are looking for good examples of use of the internet.

Best New Archive

Have you just started up?

We are looking for examples of new archives that have set up within the last year.

There should only be one application per community archive per category. If you are part of a network of community archives, then the network can submit one application, and each individual archive in the network can also submit one application. You can nominate your own community archive or another community archive.

You DO NOT have to enter all the categories. You can enter in just one category, or you can enter in several or all of the categories.

To nominate your organisation you should either complete the online form or submit a paper application. More details are available at www.communityarchives.org.uk

The closing date for entries is 31 December 2011.

A panel, including representatives from the supporter organisations, will assess the nominations. The winners will be announced at the CAHG 2012 Conference and the 'Community Archive of the Year' will be invited to the Archive and Record Association conference to receive their award.

Each category winner will be presented with a certificate at the 2012 conference and given the opportunity to promote their work. The CAHG Awards Coordinator will arrange local and national press releases and support the group in sharing the news. Each winner will also be featured on the CAHG website.

So log on to the website and nominate your community archive now!

Sarah Shooter

CAHG Awards Coordinator

In a small room that used to be the Parcel Office at the former railway station in Bovey Tracey, neat stacks of boxes hide a wealth of information on local people, businesses, buildings in the town, celebrations and events. Turning page after page of photographs and postcards, the life of Bovey Tracey over the last century or so comes to life. Photographs of floods record disasters, those of past carnivals show the town in happier mood, and shopkeepers stand proudly outside shops displaying sides of meat.

This archive is part of the Bovey Tracey Heritage Centre which was started in 1998. Entirely run by volunteers the archive is one of more than a dozen similar projects around Dartmoor that provide crucial evidence of the people of the area and the towns, villages and countryside in which they lived and worked. These collections are not only of interest to local people but they are an important source of social detail for historians and writers of historical fiction.

A community archive is the collective memory of the social history of a village or town. History is not just about kings and queens, wars or great national events – every family or community has a story worth telling and without the collections of photographs, oral history tapes and transcripts; documents, maps, minute books of societies, copies of parish magazines, council minutes etc., in local archives this history would be lost forever. With TV programmes such as "Who Do You Think You Are?" building interest in family history and "Time Team" generating interest in history and archaeology, the need to allow greater public access to important local collections is becoming ever more important.

“History is not just about kings and queens, wars or great national events – every family or community has a story worth telling”





Harvesting bracken at Langs, Throwleigh (Courtesy of the Throwleigh Archive)

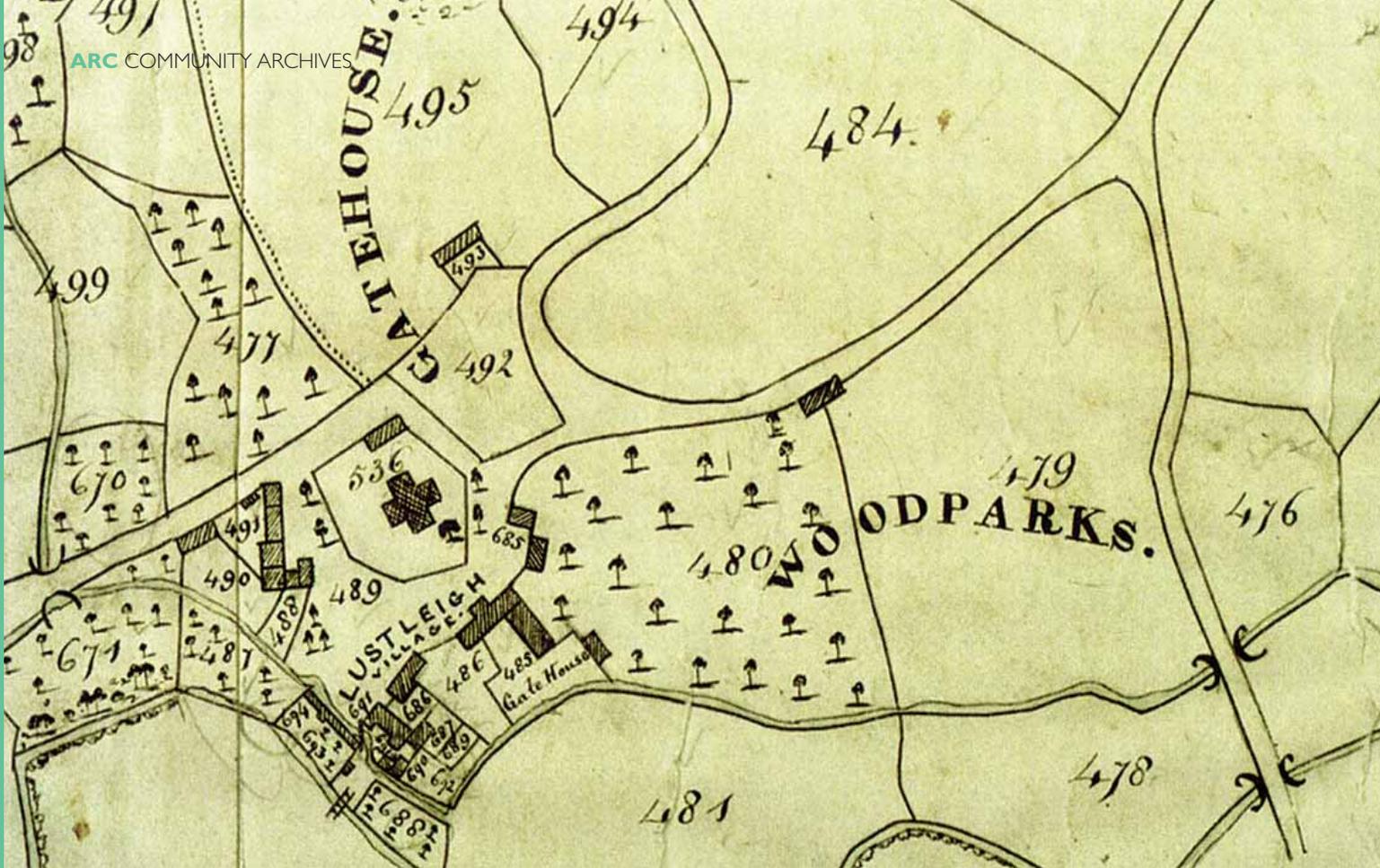
Who do we think we are?

The Lustleigh Society began collecting photographs, postcards and other material about the parish in the 1970s. The Society also took on the care of a collection of parish magazines dating from 1888 and parish council minutes. From the start the collection has been housed in one room of the historic Old Vestry situated in a corner of the churchyard. With the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund, Dartmoor National Park Authority and others, the collection was moved into a larger, newly refurbished room and re-opened to the public in April 2009. Open two and a half days a week the Lustleigh Community Archive, as well as being consulted by people researching family history, is used by those wanting to know more about the village.

Not all community archives require a room – or even a cupboard – to store their collections. In this digital age all that is required is a computer. In the case of Throwleigh, the Archive is stored on a laptop. This makes for flexibility and easy access at village events. It can even be taken to people's houses when oral history recordings are being made in order to help stimulate memories.

“With the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund, Dartmoor National Park Authority and others, the collection was moved into a larger, newly refurbished room and re-opened to the public in April 2009.”

Initially conceived as a Millennium Project, the Throwleigh Archive holds some 1800 photographs of people, places and events taken over the last hundred years. Volunteers scanned photographs and documents lent by current and former residents of Throwleigh. A grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund enabled public exhibitions to be mounted in the village hall in 2002 and 2006 and a highly professional book was published with a collection of the best photographs from the Archive together with text which explains, amplifies or comments on the pictures, sometimes using extracts from oral history tapes. As Michael Paget, editor of the book, explained: “Without an explanation, the pictures would increasingly become meaningless.”



Lustleigh Tithe Map. Lustleigh Community Archive.

Moretonhampstead History Society holds archival material relating to the history of the town, mainly covering the period 1810 to 2000. Family historians can access census records as well as parish baptismal, marriage and burial records via their website. Chagford's Local History Society holds copies of census material and a copy of its Tithe Map. They also mount exhibitions every other year looking at particular streets in the town and the people who lived and worked there.

In the 1980s the Devon based Wren Trust collected old photographs taken in and around South Tawton and South Zeal. These photographs are now in the Dartmoor Archive but copies of them form the basis of the community archive held by the South Tawton and District Local History Group in the Victory Hall at South Zeal. Transcripts of the Churchwardens' Accounts were given to the archive at the same time.

Meg Walton, who looks after the collection, says that the importance of the collection is to help keep local history alive. In 2007, for example, an exhibition traced the history of all the buildings in the old village of South Zeal. In 2009 research led to an exhibition about other aspects of the village including the school and the extensive network of leats in the Parish and in September 2010 an

exhibition looked at the locality in 1910 – the year in which both the local mine and quarry closed. As well as generating interest in the history of the area new material generated by these exhibitions goes into the archive.

In stressing the importance of a community archive, Michael Paget at Throwleigh commented that "in terms of national history, nothing much ever happened here! The Archive, and the book we published, provides a voice for the people of Throwleigh." Community archives record the history of ordinary people, their homes, places of work and their leisure time. They record how the landscape has changed and how villages have developed. They present an invaluable portrait of the people who live and work around Dartmoor.

Most of the community archives around Dartmoor are still collecting material and making recordings of people's reminiscences but it is also important to record what is happening today. Lustleigh Community Archive has a slogan which stresses the importance of continuing to collect – TODAY'S EVENTS ARE TOMORROW'S HISTORY!

This is an edited version of an article that first appeared in the DARTMOOR MAGAZINE (Winter 2009 issue 97) and appears by kind permission of the editor.

Peter Mason

Chairman of the Lustleigh Society



Bathgate Once More

Former British Leyland worker Dorothy Aitken aboard a new Leyland tractor (c) Guthrie Aitken

2011 marks the 50th anniversary of the coming of the British Motor Corporation (the BMC) Truck and Tractor Plant to Bathgate, West Lothian and the 25th anniversary of its closure. To coincide with this, a range of organisations are working together with the local community to collect oral testimonies, documents and photographs about the plant and its impact on the community and to create a community archive – *Bathgate Once More* - which will be housed at West Lothian Local History Library in Linlithgow.

Once an industrial boom town, by the mid-20th century, Bathgate's thriving coal, lime, brick, steel, shale and whisky industries had all declined and the area had been designated a Special Development Area. Financial incentives offered by the government of the day brought the BMC to the area in 1961, as they chose to site their new plant in Scotland rather than expand their existing base in the Midlands.

“ The gathering of oral histories has provided a range of opportunities for education and community engagement which have driven this project forward. ”

The impact of the plant on the Bathgate area was immense, creating thousands of new jobs and a new economic prosperity which brought with it new housing and amenities. By the mid-1960s, BMC Bathgate housed the largest tool-shop in Europe. A decade later and BMC Bathgate had become British Leyland and was producing over 450 vehicles a day with 70 % of these being exported to 97 countries around the world.

But by 1986 the plant was closed. This had followed a trade union-led campaign for jobs and came alongside other local factory and mine closures. It was a devastating blow to the area, which still resonates today.

The voices of those whose lives had a connection in some way with the truck and tractor plant at Bathgate are vital to this project. An archive of oral histories is being built up consisting of interviews with: former workers: from shop floor apprentices to managers; trades unionists involved in the disputes of the '80s; people with family connections to the plant; local people who still live in the area and others who have moved away since the plant closed, including a number who have emigrated to Canada.

The gathering of oral histories has provided a range of opportunities for education and community engagement which have driven this project forward. The Workers' Educational Association Scotland

BATHGATE ONCE MORE



Recording and preserving the story of the Bathgate Truck and Tractor Plant, 1961-86

“ Digital outcomes have the potential to keep a project fluid; they are not held fast on paper and can be added to and used in innovative ways.

”

(WEA Scotland) has been instrumental in delivering training in oral history recording techniques for volunteer interviewers, some of whom are former workers from the plant. Other volunteers include unemployed people looking to gain new skills and students wishing to gain an insight into the history of industrial relations for the purposes of academic research.

The material gathered - full digital recordings of interviews, transcriptions and indexes, along with hard copies of photographs, documents and artefacts - will be lodged with the West Lothian Local History Library and form the basis of the permanent archive. A representative selection of oral history clips along with other digitised materials will be interpreted to form educational resources for schools which will be delivered by Scran, a digital service of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS). These resources will support Curriculum for Excellence and offer opportunities for young people to explore their own heritage.

Oral histories can be incredibly engaging in the classroom: whole classes can interrogate audio clips using interactive whiteboards; oral history gathering is an activity pupils can take part in themselves and provides great opportunities for intergenerational work.

The stories from the truck and tractor plant at Bathgate provide an opportunity for pupils to engage with relevant local stories, through familiar voices. Oral material gathered to date suggests that a wide range of narrative viewpoints are represented and these have the potential to encourage pupils to exercise their own critical judgement. To many of the interviewees, the events surrounding the plant's decline and closure in a climate of ill-will in the 1980s, are still quite fresh. Some say that they are pleased that the project has given them a voice at last; some claim to have been misrepresented by the press during the eighties' unrest. Others 'admit' that there were 'silly strikes' during this period, but maintain that there were many legitimate disputes concerning breaches of health and safety and discrepancies in pay between Scottish British Leyland workers and their English counterparts.

Digital outcomes have the potential to keep a project fluid; they are not held fast on paper and can be added to and used in innovative ways. The cycle of involving people in remembering, telling and recording their stories, the feeding of these outcomes into schools and colleges providing opportunities for learners at whatever age and stage to feed back as contributors to a community archive will help to keep this archive fresh and ensure that *Bathgate Once More* has an enduring legacy.



A t-shirt commemorating Leyland's Silver Jubilee Open Day in 1977 is added to the archive (c) Helen Foster

Project details

The project is being led by the Workers' Educational Association Scotland (WEA Scotland) in partnership with Bennie Museum, West Lothian Local History Library, the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS), the Scottish Trades Unions Council (STUC) and Simpson Primary School, Bathgate and has received HLF funding.

Outcomes from December 2011: a permanent archive, publication, exhibition, online education resources

Helen Foster

The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland



Community Archive Accreditation Scheme

Morley Community Archive are presented with their certificate as the first group to achieve accreditation as part of the WYAS Community Accreditation Scheme. Courtesy of WYAS

Last year, West Yorkshire Archive Service (WYAS) received a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to undertake the 'West Yorkshire: Our Stories' project, aimed at increasing community participation with both the archive service and local heritage and history. One element of this project is an Accreditation Scheme which has been developed to create standards of best practice that groups will be able to work towards at their own pace. It is being run in collaboration with a training programme, also provided by the service, which will offer support to groups involved in the accreditation process as well as a network group to bring people together to share and learn, a mentoring scheme where accredited groups support others and online advice and support.

The scheme was launched at a joint regional event between WYAS and the Community Archives and Heritage Group in February 2011, where Morley

Community Archives - the first group to achieve accreditation - were presented with their certificate.

Who is the scheme aimed at?

This Accreditation Scheme has been designed with community groups who are working in the area of heritage in mind. This could be an established group that has its own archive that has been developed over a number of years or a set of people just starting out and setting up a new group. The information pack provides guidance on the basic standards that will need to be met but also has provision for other considerations if groups would like to continue with their development.

At the moment only groups in West Yorkshire can be accredited by WYAS but we are working to expand this. However, any group is welcome to download and use the scheme and access any of the online resources that have been created.



Delegates listening to the main speaker at the Community Archive Conference in Leeds. Courtesy of WYAS

“ we hope that gaining accreditation will raise both the profile of the group involved and the standards to which they will be working. ”

What can community groups gain from taking part in the scheme?

The success of the scheme will be partially dependant on participation – the more groups that take part the more recognition the scheme will gain. However, we hope that gaining accreditation will raise both the profile of the group involved and the standards to which they will be working, which will in turn increase the possibility of securing funding, working in partnership and the likelihood of achieving their aims and goals.

The information pack provides a wealth of detail about both the basic principles of running groups,

such as how to recruit and support volunteers and generate new audiences, and in-depth advice from archive professionals about the practical issues that matter to groups. By taking part in the Accreditation Scheme, groups will be giving themselves the chance to learn new skills, gain new information and hopefully ensure the successful growth of their activities.

What do community groups get when they are accredited?

Groups will receive the WYAS Accreditation Scheme logo to use on all of their promotional material, discounts on training provided by the service, one to one support, regular briefing notes about important and relevant topics and a chance to network with other groups in the region.

How long will accreditation take?

The scheme has been designed so that groups can work through it at their own pace. Each topic has been divided up into sections that can either be worked through in isolation or together as a whole. WYAS have set no time frame on the accreditation process, and it is entirely up to individual groups how they make use of the material available in the information pack.

SPORTING HEROES



The West Yorkshire: Our Stories project celebrated the wide and varied sporting landscape and culture of the region, creating a wide variety of community archives on the theme of sport.



Sporting Heroes was awarded the Inspire mark by the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG).



If you would have a sporting memory you would like to share, please visit the www.nowthen.org site.

www.nowthen.org

Accreditation Scheme



The accreditation scheme is an excellent opportunity for groups to gain support and guidance that can help all aspects of their work. The scheme has been developed to create a benchmark of best practice for groups to be able to work towards at their own pace.

Achieving accreditation through this scheme helps community archive groups to raise both the profile of the group and their working standards, which will in turn increase the possibility of securing funding, working in partnership and the likelihood of achieving aims and goals.

To sign up, visit www.nowthen.org, e-mail educationandoutreach@wyjs.org.uk or call (0113) 2888 223.

www.nowthen.org

Training Programme and Network Group



The West Yorkshire: Our Stories Project has devised and delivered a programme of training sessions. Offered to individuals and groups involved in community archives, the courses offer groups the opportunity to gain new skills and develop their group and project work.

Details of courses (past and present) and downloadable support material can be found on the www.nowthen.org website.



The project has also set up a Network Group for members of community heritage groups to come together and share information and ideas, whilst receiving free talks and trainings. The Network Group meets every two months and new members are always welcome.

To find out about the latest courses or offers or to attend the next network group, visit www.nowthen.org or contact educationandoutreach@wyjs.org.uk.

www.nowthen.org

What if groups become stuck?

The Accreditation Scheme is a component of a larger area of support provision that WYAS has been able to develop through the project. Within this there is a network group that holds regular meetings for community groups working in the region and also a programme of training sessions. These sessions have been designed to support key areas of the Accreditation Scheme that groups may find difficult – such as copyright and legislation. WYAS will also be providing guidance and advice to groups on a one to one basis at Accreditation workshops for all groups involved with the process.

How do community groups become accredited?

The WYAS scheme is a self accreditation scheme – meaning the service will provide groups with all the resources required and the groups must then take it upon themselves to complete the accreditation process.

Each section of the information pack contains an Accreditation Checklist at the end which outlines key tasks that groups will have to undertake to complete that section. These checklist points can range from creating a policy document to making sure that an issue is discussed openly with group members. Groups should endeavour to collect

The different elements of the Our Stories Project promoted. Courtesy of WYAS

“The Accreditation Scheme is a component of a larger area of support provision that WYAS has been able to develop through the project.”

evidence of these activities to be kept safe with their accreditation packs. Each section also contains a range of Action Points designed to help groups to put the information provided into practice within a group context – these are there to help them and are not a requirement of the completion of the scheme.

For more information on the scheme and a copy of the information pack, visit www.nowthen.org

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Sarah Shooter

West Yorkshire Archive Service
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Miners Voices

On the 5 August 2010 a massive roof fall trapped 33 Chilean miners at the San Jose copper mine near Copiapó in the Atacama Desert in Chile. Over the next 66 days a huge rescue operation was undertaken that drew media attention from all over the world. As the rescue attempt unfolded in South America, a small Scottish mining community commemorated the 60th anniversary of another heroic and remarkable mines rescue.

On Thursday 7 September 1950, an inrush of 60,000 tons of peat and moss engulfed the workings of Knockshinnoch Castle Colliery, New Cumnock, Ayrshire trapping 129 miners on the backshift. As word of the disaster spread round the local mining communities, hundreds of men, women and children gathered at the pithead anxiously waiting for news. Over the next 36 hours, a huge rescue operation was mounted involving hundreds of local miners and the Mines Rescue Brigade service. In the most difficult and dangerous circumstances and with time running out, 116 miners were led to safety through the old workings of the adjoining Bank No6 Pit. Despite a heroic effort by the volunteers in the mines rescue brigade, 13 men who were nearest to the site of the inrush couldn't be reached and their lives were lost.

To commemorate the 60th anniversary of the disaster on 7 September 2010, with funding provided by the Scottish Mining Institute of Scotland Trust, I interviewed some of the miners and their families who witnessed and survived the disaster for the Miners Voices website. The Knockshinnoch disaster is one of the most significant events in British coal mining history and made headline news all over the world; it was on the front page of the New York Times and replaced the Korean War in the headlines. Much has been written and produced about the disaster including the book "Black Avalanche" (Arthur and Mary Selwood - Frederick Muller 1960) and the film "The Brave Don't Cry" (1952 Philip Leacock). But I wanted to tell the story from different perspectives, so there are interviews from some of the miners trapped underground, from a 14 year old's view as he waits for the rescue of his brother; a volunteer miner from a neighbouring pit; from one of the Mines Rescue brigades men and from a young mother waiting at home. As an ex miner who worked at Barony Colliery, Auchinleck, I personally knew some of the men who were involved in the disaster and they were happy to share their experiences with me. The interviews are on-line at www.minersvoices.co.uk.

“Despite a heroic effort by the volunteers in the mines rescue brigade, 13 men who were nearest to the site of the inrush couldn't be reached and their lives were lost.”

The Miners Voices project was started in 2007. My family have been miners in Ayrshire for many generations and as I got older I became more interested in Scottish mining history and wondered if I could somehow contribute to its preservation. I've been writing and recording the spoken word for many years, have my own digital recording studio and have experience in restoring old audio tape recordings. I also speak the pit patter fluently as I studied Coal mining at Ayr College for 5 years and trained as an NCB mining craft apprentice in the late 1970s working underground at the coal face.

In October 1997 I met an old friend and union official, Alex Mills, who helped me and many other miners with our compensation claims. I have never met anyone with such a passion for social justice and the rights of the disadvantaged. Over the next three months I spent some time with Alex and recorded his life story and mining memories. The Union Man is an audio documentary about Alex Mills' life as a miner and trade union delegate. It's a fascinating story told with conviction and passion about the miners and our mining communities since the World War II, the Miners Strikes and the aftermath of the closures. From this recording came the idea to develop Miners Voices: a project to record, edit and archive the memories and experiences of the miners in Scotland.

I then applied to the O2! It's Your Community Awards and Scotland Unltd and was awarded funding for equipment and expenses to record the experiences of the miners who survived the 1957 Kames Colliery disaster, when an underground explosion occurred in the 6ft section of the West Mine, resulting in the deaths of 17 men. It was one of the last major explosions in the British coal mining industry. On the 50th Anniversary of the event, the survivors paint a vivid picture of the events of that fateful night and the effect it had on the village. It was a privilege to hear and record their memories. It's a remarkable story, told by remarkable men. The completed recordings were made available to the Muirkirk community website and put online. Such was the response to the web pages I then decided

that the internet offered the best opportunity for complete accessibility to my other recordings.

For the past three years I have been building the Miners Voices website and have created an online audio archive of miners sharing their living memories. With over a 100 tracks on the website, there are over 6 hours of high quality recordings of Ayrshire miners talking about their working lives, offering a unique insight into coal miners and their families' experiences. The website also has over a 100 mining photographs including images from the Ayrshire Archives, Scottish Mining Museum, SCRAN, Glasgow Herald and many that have never been published before. The images, transcriptions and audio recordings combine together to create an informative and educational experience for visitors to the website. Over the coming months, I'm hoping to add audio slide shows and a database of mining words and terms to help with the interpretation of the material.

At the moment I am also involved with the Scottish Coalfields collections, a group made up of members from Strathclyde University Oral History Dept, The Scottish Mining Museum, Fife Council and the Royal and Historic ancient monuments of Scotland. We are currently carrying out an assessment of what oral history material about the miners is held throughout the libraries, museums and archives in Scotland.

In the Ayrshire Archives there are around 48 audio cassette tapes directly linked to coal mining, some of which were made back in the 1970s. These tapes offer a unique insight into local coal mining history, taking us back through time to when Coal was King and there were 1000's of miners employed in an industry that changed the world for good and put the Great into Britain. I believe that oral history recordings, both new and old, are the key to unlock the vast wealth of mining photographs and memorabilia in the UK's archives, libraries and museums. Given the disappearance of the coal mining industry in many areas of the UK, and the historic importance of mining to the UK economy and society, it's vitally important to digitise, catalogue, index and make more accessible the existing material regarding coal mining in the UK. It will give us the opportunity to identify the gaps and develop an oral history collecting policy. The resulting material should form the basis of a substantial and definitive national collection, which could be consulted by public and researchers and be the foundation for a new history of the rise and fall of the British Coal Mining Industry.

Johnny Templeton

www.minersvoices.co.uk

A Guide to Archival and Related Standards

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

Title

Text Encoding Initiative (TEI): Guidelines for Electronic Text Encoding and Interchange

Name of Standards Developing Organisation

The TEI Consortium

Current version

TEI P5 (2010) Guidelines for Electronic Text Encoding and Interchange (version 1.9.1, updated 5 March 2011)

Replaces

TEI P4 (2001) Guidelines for Electronic Text Encoding and Interchange

Abstract

TEI P5 *Guidelines for Electronic Text Encoding and Interchange* describe an open source general purpose Extensible Mark-up Language (XML) conformant schema that provides a standard format for characterising the structure and content of electronic representations of textual information, for machine searching and data exchange. *The Guidelines* focus on the characterisation of text in digitised material although they are also applicable to born-digital materials. Originating in the humanities research domain the schema is modular to enable it to be comprehensively applicable to a range of materials. It is both flexible and extensible to accommodate the different scholarly purposes of humanities text studies.

Description

TEI is a well-established methodology, with the first Schema and Guidelines released in 1990. Since then a large body of expertise has

developed across the humanities; and library and archives domains. Notable implementers are the Oxford Text Archive developed by the University of Oxford and the Electronic Text Center at the University of Virginia.

TEI provides a powerful XML schema and a set of supporting guidelines for marking-up textual documents for machine searching and data exchange. It defines several hundred XML elements and attributes to enable the mark-up of text documents of any kind. It is not expected that all the available tags will be used by an implementation, and tags are included for:

- a range of textual genres such as verse, drama, hand-written manuscripts and transcribed speech;
- syntactical devices such as figures, tables, characters and glyphs;
- description of hierarchical and non-hierarchical structures;
- linguistic and narrative characterisations;
- identification of names, dates and places.

In *The Guidelines* these elements and attributes are organised into modules for specific applications. However, in practice the most applicable elements and attributes for the intended implementation may be used from any module. Therefore implementation requires an analysis of both a project's aims and objectives and the actual materials to be marked-up, before a profile of the TEI tag-set to be used can be defined, or required customisations identified.

Help with defining an applicable profile of TEI is included in *The Guidelines* through an introduction to XML and advice on technical implementation and customisation. A core set of header tags, a set of generic tags which can appear at any point in the structure, and a default document structure are defined. A full data dictionary to all model classes, elements, attributes, data types and macros that can be used is included.

The use of the XML Schema Language means that TEI is flexible enough for other XML schemas, such as MathML (for mathematical notation) or MusicXML (for music notation) to be referenced from inside a TEI document. This enables the standard XML schema for specific genre, not included in TEI, to be used. Meanwhile a TEI document can be embedded within other XML documents such as EAD (Encoded Archival Description) or METS (Metadata Encoding Transmission Standard). This makes it possible for collections of digital representations of textual documents, which are both structured and text searchable, to be embedded in a digital catalogue of an archive or a digital repositories.

The TEI Consortium provides practical help with implementation through the provision of both on-line and face-to-face tutorials. There are also a number of online tools available to help with different aspects of implementation. *Roma* is a Web-based tool which helps with the development of a profile or customisation. A list of authoring and editing tools is maintained and style-sheets are provided to allow transformations for Web delivery of the data.

There is an active user base which maintains an archived discussion list and a wiki of help, advice, activities, meetings and examples. This is supported through 10 Special Interest Groups (SIGs) for different user bases or specialist applications. There is an annual conference and a newly launched online journal to facilitate sharing. Membership of the TEI Consortium brings a number of benefits including discounts on digitisation costs, software, and training.

The TEI P5 schema, *Roma* tool, additional tools and style-sheets are freely available from SourceForge at <http://tei.sourceforge.net>. All other information regarding TEI and the TEI Consortium can be found at www.tei-c.org/index.xml.

Next month

Next month we will look at the metadata structure standard Dublin Core (ISO 15836:2009) and the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative's (DCMI) content authority files, DCMI Vocabularies, for use with Dublin Core.

Sarah Higgins

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