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the Community
Archives and
Heritage
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Talking
Syria



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Apna Heritage
Archive



Community Archives and Heritage Group Issue

EASTERN NATIONAL



Richard L. Green
2017



Archives & Records
Association
UK & Ireland

CONFERENCE 2018

Grand Central Hotel, Glasgow
29th – 31st August 2018

Welcome to ARC Magazine December 2017

This month's issue showcases some of the key activities of the Archives and Records Association (ARA) Community Archive and Heritage Group (CAHG) in the UK, Ireland and beyond. The broad range of articles have been sourced and collated by Sue Hampson – outgoing CAHG chair – whom I would like to thank for her tireless work over the past few months.

For many, the highlight of the ARA ritual year is the CAHG Awards, which feature prominently in this month's ARC. This year, the overall winners were Qisetna: Talking Syria – a community engagement venture which began as a blog for those inside Syria, living in the diaspora, or crossing borders. You can read about how this social media platform provides a unique opportunity for contributors to reflect, write and share stories about ordinary human life, away from politics and religion – a topical and poignant premise in 2017.

You can find out more about the activities of the CAHG by visiting: www.communityarchives.org.uk

Twitter: @CArchives

Facebook: Community Archives & Heritage Group



Ellie Pridgeon
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Front cover: Sea wall bus garage mural, Canvey Island, Essex. Photograph copyright Colin Letchford, Friends of Concord Beach.

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opening lines



The Dartmoor Trust was greatly honoured to receive the overall CAHG award in 2016 for its Dartmoor Life in the First World War project. It was a fitting tribute to the 20 local history groups and archives that contributed their knowledge, research and images. We both got the photo-ops and received the trophy on everyone's behalf but were delighted that award ultimately recognised the efforts of all the groups, their supporters and the wider community that contributed.

Four years ago, there was much talk of how to commemorate the centenary of the First World War, with the dominant focus seemingly (and understandably) being on the battles and those who died. The impact on those who remained at home, who grew the food and provided support for casualties seemed to be forgotten. Thus was born our desire – in our area – to examine and display the conflict's impact on our unique and predominantly rural community – Dartmoor.

Our resulting exhibition, which had over 50,000 visitors and which opened in the summer of 2015, was part of a wider outreach programme to residents and local schoolchildren explaining the socio-economic conditions prevalent at



that time and, critically, the changes and improvements in the community over the past century.

By drawing communities together at the research stage, getting people to contribute their own material to the archive, the goal was to archive local experiences before the war recedes from the memories of those whose relatives were alive at the time. The exhibition also highlighted the use of the Military Training Area in Dartmoor, the impact of the war on large estates, the requisition of horses to assist the war effort, conscientious objectors and the more unusual Dartmoor aspects, such as the collection of sphagnum moss to treat wounds and the harvesting of horse chestnuts to create explosives.

Initially, we struggled. Little seemed to be known or recorded from that time. But thanks to the efforts of the many local history groups in and around Dartmoor, the community uncovered and revealed information and images of genuine significance. The local history groups were crucial to this: they put together occasional displays alongside the main exhibition, providing detailed information from within their parishes. This working together for a united aim is was one of the lasting achievements

of the project, and was recognised by CAHG's judges in assessing the award. Another goal was awakening young people's interest in history. This was the real triumph of the whole exercise: we exceeded expectations so much that the future care of Dartmoor's archaeology and heritage seems assured.

We did not achieve all our objectives. It proved difficult getting busy secondary schools involved and we will need to maintain momentum at primary education level by renewing efforts to engage local schools in 2018. We had more needs than we had volunteers. For example, if we had had guides to help visitors to the exhibition and more to collect information, the project would have benefitted even more. And, of course, we wanted to know more about rural life and experiences in the early years of the 1900s, ie before the war, but it proved the trickiest information gap to fill.

But sustainability has not so far proven to be a problem. As the centenary of the end of the war draws near, we are gathering new information and will hold another exhibition at the National Park Visitor Centre, Princetown (Devon) between 13 September and 21 November 2018. Make a note in your diaries.

The support we have received ever since we started this project – and the wonderful comments made by visitors to our website and earlier exhibitions – continue to spur us on to honour everyone who was impacted by the war, both during it and for many years afterwards. Our mission remains the same: to inform today's generation and archive the memories so that they never fade for generations of the future. Thank you also to CAHG for your important part in supporting that mission.

Tony Clark and Peter Mason

The Dartmoor Trust

www.archives.org.uk

Professional Development News

Welcome to this new regular ARC column replacing the previous Registration News!

I will use this column to keep you updated with progress on the ARA's new competency-based routes to Foundation, Registered and Fellow membership. I'll also use this space to promote professional development, respond to enquiries, share experiences, and help you maximise the training and learning that you will undertake throughout your career.

At the moment we are busy finalising guidance to support members and their mentors when using the competency framework, and when collating or building the evidence required to support applications for Foundation or Registered membership. The assessment process for Fellow membership requires some additional work, although members should note that to be eligible for Fellow membership you must be a Registered member, and have undertaken the revalidation process.

I would like to encourage all members to read the competency framework summary, and the three separate framework and levels documents, which are published on the ARA website. Members can then self-assess their own professional experience against the five assessment levels which are based on experience. For those members interested in Foundation, Registered and Fellow membership it will help you understand what you need to do in order to submit a successful application. Although we will not accept applications until next year, it would be a great way for enthusiastic members to begin planning the evidence they will use in their submissions. For others, it will prove a useful exercise in evaluating your career experience to date, and hopefully provoke thoughts around how you might like your career to develop.

Turning to updates, the first I have to report on is Mahara. Previous editions of ARC have reported on the testing of this online product. The intention was to introduce Mahara as a service to members, allowing you to plan and record your professional development online. This recorded development could then be used as evidence to support applications for Foundation, Registered and Fellow membership. It would also support members revalidating their level of membership.

The ARA has undertaken further discussions and testing, I am now of the view that Mahara is not the best option for ARA members. However, all the testing and discussion by members is still of real value, as the knowledge gained helps us explore other options that are better suited to our needs. We have

already been alerted to a similar platform, with a remarkably similar name – Totara. Further testing is planned.

The second update relates to fees involved in submitting applications for Foundation, Registered and Fellow membership. Given that further work is needed to identify which IT platform is best, the ARA is not able to confirm costs. However, members should have confidence in the ARA's commitment to keep costs as low as possible.

The ARA's CPD steering group has completed its work, and my thanks to all those members involved in the move from the Registration scheme to the new competency-based approach. A new ARA committee, known as the Professional Membership Committee, will oversee the implementation of the framework and assessment process. This will ensure members continue to influence and improve the processes that both recognise and celebrate their professional standing.

In the meantime, please email your questions and enquiries to: chris.sheridan@archives.org.uk

Chris Sheridan

CPD Programme Manager

Sector News



The Archives Revealed Cataloguing Grants programme is now open for applications. Archives Revealed is a partnership programme between The National Archives and The Pilgrim Trust, and includes two strands: cataloguing grants and scoping grants. The deadline for applications to phase 1 of the cataloguing grants strand is Friday 12 January 2018.

For more information please visit the Archives Revealed website:

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/archives-revealed.

Collecting Matters

I have recently taken on attendance at the Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG) steering group as part of my role at The National Archives (TNA) as Head of the Regional and Networks Team. I have been really impressed by the range of activity, along with the commitment and enthusiasm that group members put into the planning and facilitation of community activity.

The latest survey of the membership will give the group an amazing evidence base for future funding bids, and really demonstrates the need for this kind of network activity. The recent second edition of their Cataloguing Guidelines for Community Archives is impressively detailed, and the group are looking to increase the amount of regional activity that they do.

In addition to the funding we provide CAHG via the Archives and Records Association (ARA), my team is currently reviewing its own role in supporting this type of archive activity. We are looking at how we can best work with all sorts of archives, including community archives, school archives, and emerging archives in all kinds of organisations.

Part of this, and quite crucially, is how we align this with the delivery of the new national vision for archives – Archives Unlocked – with its themes of trust, enrichment and openness, underpinned by digital capacity, resilience and impact. You can find out more at:

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/projects-and-programmes/strategic-vision-for-archives

The group's work on creating an evidence base aligns well with our commitment to demonstrating impact in the vision and action plan, whilst community archives are really important in the trust and openness space.

At the last CAHG meeting, we identified some small things we can easily do to support each other's work in the short term, such as a greater join-up on social media now that Archive Sector Development (ASD) has its own Twitter account:

@UKNatArcSector

A lot more is possible – watch this space!

Further information is available on the CAHG website or Twitter:

www.communityarchives.org.uk

@CArchives

Tina Morton

The National Archives (UK)

Email: asd@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

ARA Conference in Manchester 2017.
Photography by Mills Media Creative.



**Archives & Records
Association**
UK & Ireland

Annual Conference: 29 to 31 August 2018, Glasgow, UK

The Archives and Records Association, UK and Ireland will hold its 2018 Conference in Glasgow between 29 and 31 August 2018. Appropriately, our theme is 'People Make Records'. Well we couldn't possibly go to Glasgow and ignore its famous '**People make Glasgow**' strapline: people-driven industry, innovation, culture and heritage; a meeting place of people from all cultures yet distinctively Scottish.

Our venue for 2018 – the Grand Central Hotel - encapsulates all of these virtues. A refurbished nineteenth-century railway hotel in the heart of the city, it positively oozes history. In 1927 it was the Glasgow destination for John Logie Baird's first-ever broadcast of television pictures in the UK – sent over 400 miles on telephone lines from London. The list of famous guests includes Laurel & Hardy, Frank Sinatra, John F Kennedy, the Beatles and the Rolling Stones.

We invite proposals for the Conference. As usual there will be streams encompassing archives and records, conservation, and digital preservation. Contributions are welcomed from across the UK and Ireland, and from colleagues in the global recordkeeping community.

PEOPLE MAKE RECORDS

Within the overall 'People Make Records' theme, we have developed a specific topic for each day, with each of these allowing the opportunity to discuss plenty of questions.



Call for Papers: 'People Make Records'

People in the records

Do records reflect their communities? Do records represent the people who create them? Do people trust the authenticity of their records? Who decides on the selection and appraisal or the preservation and conservation of records in their community? Where should records be located?

People looking after records

Who are the record-keepers and conservators? Do we have the skills we need? Is the current training model fit for purpose? Is the profession diverse enough? What code of ethics should record keepers adopt? What is the role of volunteers?

People using records

How do we increase awareness of records and encourage engagement from more users? Are we approachable enough to users and people in the records? What models might we adopt to increase diversity of users? Does archival and conservation practice limit rather than promote access? What do current users require from archives and records in the twenty-first century?

PROPOSALS

You can participate in the following ways:

- Individual contributions – presentations of 20 minutes
- Panel session – up to three speakers presenting related papers on a specific theme or topic
- '30 minute makeover' – practical workshops, demonstrations or tutorials
- Lightning talks – pitch your big idea or burning issue in quick-fire five minute presentations

- Posters – an opportunity to highlight your research in our poster session.

In forming your proposal:

- Try to connect your proposal to the theme and remember that it's about people!
- We are keen to stimulate debate so try to be creative and think about how your paper might achieve this
- If you are considering a panel sessions, try to mix speakers from other professional disciplines, or different geographical and institutional backgrounds.

HOW DO I SUBMIT A PROPOSAL?

You can make your conference submissions online using this link: <https://app.oxfordabstracts.com/stages/315/submission>. Please email conference@archives.org.uk if you require any assistance.

Informal discussion of your proposal with members of the Conference Committee is encouraged. Please contact conference@archives.org.uk

KEY DATES

The deadline for submission is Wednesday 13 December 2017
Notification invitations to speak will be confirmed by Friday 9 February 2018.

Final presentations must be emailed to conference organisers by Monday 20 August 2018.

All speakers will be reimbursed travel expenses (up to £100) and will receive free conference registration for the day on which they are speaking.



Sea wall mural, Canvey Island, Essex.
Photograph copyright Colin Letchford,
Friends of Concord Beach.

Welcome from the Community Archives and Heritage Group

I can't believe it's been a year since the Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG) contributed to ARC. The group has worked on various projects and initiatives, not forgetting organising our annual conference and judging the entries to this year's awards. As always, I have been so impressed with the diversity and imagination of the award entries, and with the passion and ingenuity shown by both heritage and archive groups.

This year's conference theme was 'Creativity: Making Meaning with Community Archives', and our keynote speaker Mohammed Ali gave an inspirational talk, which included his award-winning work using street art to bridge cultures and communities. This led me to thinking about new ways of bringing community archives and heritage to a wider audience.

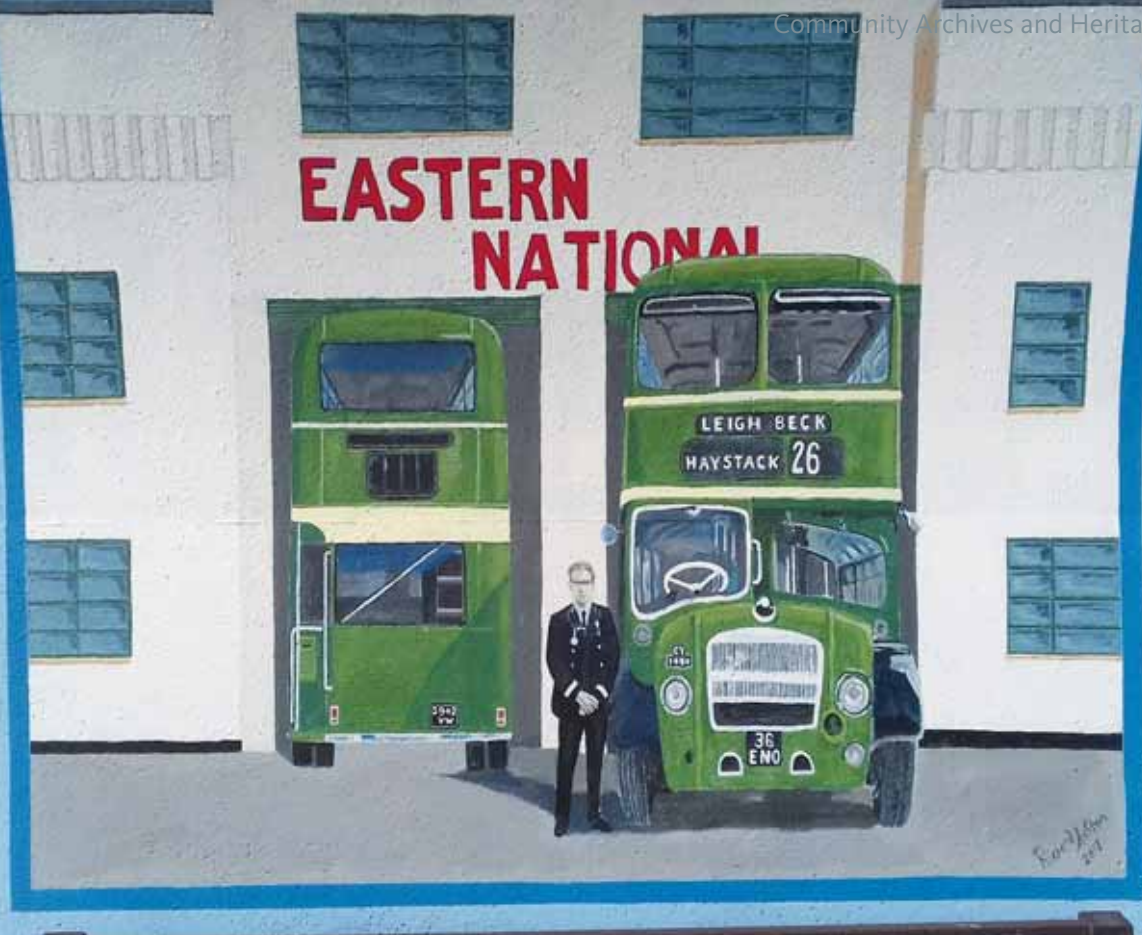
I am amazed at the innovation shown by groups who bring local history to the community in an unusual and exciting way. Milford Street Bridge Project, our overall winner in 2015, transformed a boring, dull underpass into a magnificent mural depicting various aspects of the community, from historical buildings, shops long disappeared, to local characters. The result was an exciting and very different method of showcasing the heritage of the area:

www.milfordstreetbridgeproject.org.uk

Similarly, Canvey Island is transforming a necessary but dull sea wall into a work of art attracting visitors from all over the country. Friends of Concord Beach – a small voluntary community group – worked in partnership with the Canvey Community Archive to obtain funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to paint 10 panels depicting the devastating floods of 1953. The completed murals really bring home the terrifying events of that night in January 1953, when 58 people lost their lives, and many were made homeless. The stories taken from the archive are real and heartrending, making a dramatic series of



Sea wall flood mural, Canvey Island, Essex.
Photograph copyright Colin Letchford,
Friends of Concord Beach.



paintings. Since then, many more panels have been added depicting old landmarks, well-known characters, and local community organisations.

Canvey Island has now become home to Haredi Jewish families who have relocated into the community from Stamford Hill, bringing another dimension to the island. I understand talk is in progress for them to include their story in a panel, bringing the sea wall bang up to date. The murals tell a story in a novel way, bringing archives and heritage to large numbers of people who may not purposely seek them out.

This will be my last year as chair of the CAHG, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support and enthusiasm, not to mention adding to the content of our website and continually striving to improve our offer to members. I have met some amazing groups and speakers over the past four years, all with a story to tell and expertise to share. I hope the group continues to grow and prosper, and look forward to the conference in Birmingham next year.

Sue Hampson

Community Archives and Heritage Group

Sea wall bus garage mural, Canvey Island, Essex. Photograph copyright Colin Letchford, Friends of Concord Beach.

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Community Archives and Heritage Group Awards 2017

The entries for the 6th year of Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG) Awards in 2017 were of a really high standard. Judging was difficult. Assessment was against fixed criteria, with a few extra marks for overall impression. It was up to groups to tell the judges the details of their project, and to direct them to salient items on their website – as always crystal balls were unavailable. Marking was both category-specific and took into account evidence of good practice and plans for sustainability. However, of far more interest is who won.

Best new group

The new group category is always hard to judge. Groups must have existed for no more than two years, and some start up very slowly with few plans. Best prepared are groups with professional input from record offices or individual archivists.

The winners in the new group category were the Apna Heritage Archive project at the Black Country Visual Arts (BCVA) in Wolverhampton: <http://bcva.info>

Based within the South-Asian community, they aim to gather information about the Punjabi migration to Wolverhampton between the 1960s and the 1980s, and express it through past pictures and current portraits. They have created local links with schools, the university, a Gurdwara, and the city council.

Website

The winners in this category were Lodsworth Heritage Society, West Sussex: <http://lodsworthheritage.org.uk>

The project was triggered by a gift to the Society of significant documents and memorabilia from the 18th

century. This particular group had put a lot of thought into doing it well, doing it right, and aiming for quality. Their website is a basic WordPress site, with excellent use being made of available templates, and involving the local community. A huge plus was that both contents and information



Qisetna: Talking Syria at the Community Archives and Heritage Group Awards. Photograph copyright Community Archives and Heritage Group.

on the site were up-to-date. Amazingly, entries often have calendars from three or four years ago, which makes for grumpy judges.

Inspiration

The winners of this category were Morecambe Bay (Oral History Volunteers):

www.morecambebay.org.uk/BaysPast/Projects/FishingOralHistories

The group is part of a small charity working in direct partnership with local organisations to record interviews with local people. Commercial fishing in Morecambe Bay is rapidly declining. A whole community and associated way of life will soon be lost. The group is working to good practice standards and is planning for the future. The interviews will eventually be deposited with Cumbria and Lancashire Archives.

All three of the above winners are putting 'COMMUNITY' into their community archive. Their planning and working practices make them showcases for others to follow.

Innovation and overall winners for 2017

The three groups above are impressive category winners, but the stand out group – winners of the 'innovation' category and overall winners for 2017 – were Qisetna: Talking Syria: <https://talkingsyria.com>

There was a unanimous decision in the marks making Talking Syria the best entry. Their use of a simple storytelling format for a very difficult subject was really well handled. There is obvious community involvement and support from displaced Syrians, the project is a potential research tool, workshops are run for young people, and much more. The site has a mix of memories of everyday life in better times, and stories of raw emotion driven by trauma induced by conflict.



Apna Heritage Archive winners with Nick Barratt at the Community Archives and Heritage Group Awards. Photograph copyright Community Archives and Heritage Group.



Morecambe Bay Partnership (Oral History Volunteers) at the Community Archives and Heritage Group Awards with Nick Barratt. Photograph copyright Community Archives and Heritage Group.

Awards 2018

Please, please encourage community archives in your area both to join CAHG, and to add information about their archive to the website. They should also enter the CAHG Awards 2018. The closing date is 31 January 2018:

www.communityarchives.org.uk

The categories are changing slightly for 2018. They have been broadened to cover not only innovative and inspiring ideas, but also to encourage thought into the process of gathering, preserving and disseminating heritage. The website category has been renamed 'digital' to cover all aspects of technology.

The new categories are: 'community engagement', 'gathering and preserving heritage', 'digital', and 'best new group'.

Judith Harvey

Community Archives and Heritage Group

Qisetna: Talking Syria

I was born in the Southern Spanish town of Cartagena – a seaside town protected by a ring of mountains that makes it one of the most beautiful harbours in the Mediterranean.

For centuries, this place was the gateway into Spain for most people who arrived from other lands: Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Romans, Arabs...who settled down, traded, farmed, and made this region one of the most prosperous not only economically, but also in terms of culture and the arts.

My family still lives in this beautiful place. I am one of the few family members that moved out looking for

Qisetna: Talking Syria award at the Community Archives and Heritage Group conference. Photograph copyright Community Archives and Heritage Group.





Qisetna: Talking Syria award at the Community Archives and Heritage Group conference with Nick Barrett. Photograph copyright Community Archives and Heritage Group.

opportunities to develop professionally. I travelled to meet people with different customs, who speak other languages, and taste reality with a different flavour.

I became a migrant by my own decision to explore the world. I arrived in London, one of the most exciting, cosmopolitan and complex urban enclaves in the world. In my daily life, I encountered people from any imaginable culture, and enjoyed listening to stories – real stories – from as far afield as Nepal, Zimbabwe, Oman, Nigeria, Chile, and Iran. Their eyes would sparkle when people told intimate episodes from the small towns they were from, while lying down in a park or having coffee in one of the terraces in the bustling streets of Soho.

In the interest of learning, I travelled to many countries – to Colombia, Palestine, Turkey, Italy, Morocco. I found out that there was something that was common to all people I met – the profound need to tell a story to someone.

In 2012, I came into contact with people from a place I knew almost nothing about – Syria. I had heard of

the ancient beauty of Damascus, and that one of my favourite poets – Rumi – once studied in a place called Aleppo. Yet my knowledge of these people was scarce until I met Khaled Alesmael, a young radio journalist living in Cairo. He introduced me to the flavours of the Old Damascus – the smell of Jasmine on the warm summer days. We listened to the charming songs of the Aleppian singer Sabah Fakhri, and tasted the delicious kibbeh, fattoush, maktouds...

At that moment, Syria was entering the dark tunnel of a war they themselves could not understand fully, and neither did we. In the months that followed, I encountered other Syrians in Turkey, the UK, and Spain. They were all sharing their profound love for their country, and the indescribable pain that filled their hearts. We cried for the loss of friends, siblings, neighbours...the teacher, the pharmacist, the street seller, the children whose giggles mixed with the loud sound of traffic, the fountains, the songs of Qudoud Halabeye. We looked around to find ourselves in a new place, people smiling, gently talking...different smells and flavours – Europe.



Photograph taken in Jordan by the young Syrian photographer Saria Samakie. Photograph copyright Saria Samakie.

I decided to create a place in which all the memories – the moments and words – could be preserved. A place online, where we could return and read those stories that told us who we were and where we came from. Qisetna was born to challenge the mainstream media narrative, as a response to reconnect a truly diverse community who once lived door-to-door, sharing each other's ancient cultures and faiths, music, calligraphy, flavours, and humour. Also, to rescue the stories scattered across borders, and value the extraordinary richness of these resilient people.

In 2013, I met with a young British journalist and a young Syrian microbiologist, and we talked about the possibility of creating a blog in which those who were living in the diaspora, crossing borders, or still living inside Syria, could write and share their stories away from politics and religion – rescuing the human side that the war had taken away. From that day, we started to collect stories about ordinary human life – their favourite food, music, places, memories, everyday life, hobbies etc. In those days, the blog was entirely powered by the efforts of unpaid volunteers. In keeping with our aim to promote Arab culture and the

arts, the platform was from the beginning bilingual.

Over time, the stories have reflected the changing nature of the Syrian crisis. Although many of our first stories were written by Syrians who were living in the country, we have gathered a collection with a common theme of crossing borders. These were stories told by the Syrians themselves, either during their journeys crossing borders, or after arriving in the European countries. You can read these stories and many others on the website:

<https://talkingsyria.com>

Since 2013, our blog has evolved into a wider project, and today it acts as an umbrella for many activities. In 2014, Qisetna used social media to deliver a storytelling workshop that linked internally-displaced children in Yarmouk and Jaramana with a Syrian storyteller and actor to share their stories.

In 2015, we brought the stories on the blog to life at the Scottish International Storytelling Festival in Edinburgh. Six performances were held on stage by Bassam Dawood and Dima Mekdad. In them, we



Rothsay Library, Isle of Bute in Scotland, where Qisetna: Talking Syria delivered a Hakawati storytelling session to 80 children. Pictured are Bassam Dawood, Dima Mekdad and Julia Rampen. Photograph copyright Qisetna: Talking Syria.

“Qisetna was born to challenge the mainstream media narrative, as a response to reconnect a truly diverse community who once lived door-to-door, sharing each other’s ancient cultures and faiths, music, calligraphy, flavours, and humour.”

introduced an international audience to the traditional Syrian ‘Hakawati’ (storyteller), and we also shared more immediate and contemporary Syrian stories from the blog.

At times, these stories can feel incredibly urgent. As part of the festival, the Qisetna team visited the Isle of Bute in Scotland, which was about to resettle several Syrian families. By holding a storytelling evening at the library, and visiting the island’s primary schools, we were able to help prepare a remote community for the new arrivals.

In London meanwhile, we have interviewed Syrians about their memories of home and their experience in the city. We have then shared these stories with a wider audience at the Park Theatre, the Arab British Centre, and Tate Modern.

For some Syrian writers, the blog has provided a springboard to other projects. One of our contributors – Rana Abdul Fattah – who is currently based in Istanbul, has now published the book *Tiger & Clay* (Palewell Press) with our support. Stories from the blog have also been featured by UNESCO and the Swedish magazine *Artikel 14*. The British actress Kate Pendry also read a story from Qisetna at the 2017 Human Rights Wrong documentary film festival in Oslo.

The project continues to rely on its volunteers, with the small grant money used to cover website expenses, social media and one-off projects. This year, we were delighted to receive a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Awards for All scheme, which we are using to fund a series of workshops in Nottingham.

Finally, in 2017, the Archives and Records Association (ARA) awarded this project the Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG) Award. This honour has not only helped recognise the efforts of the Qisetna team of volunteers, but has also highlighted the need to bring out the stories from this online archive to the local communities, with the aim of preserving the cultural identity of the Syrian diaspora.

Juan delGado

Qisetna: Talking Syria

Website: www.talkingsyria.com

Twitter: @qisetna

Photo workshop at
Wolverhampton City
Archive. Photograph
copyright Black Country
Visual Archives.



Apna Heritage Archive

They came here in search of a better life and were prepared to take menial and monotonous jobs, working in grimy factories and foundries. Their arrival was at a time when the whole country was suffering severe labour shortages in the aftermath of the Second World War, and there can be no doubt that migrants from the Punjab made a vital contribution to the Black Country economy in the face of discrimination.

Many Punjabi immigrants who came over in the 1960s settled in Wolverhampton, but on a visit to the City Archives, photographer Anand Chhabra – incumbent Chair at Black Country Visual Arts (BCVA), an organisation which seeks to open up new avenues of art for under-represented groups – discovered there was virtually nothing recording their arrival and impact on the rich tapestry of life in the area. This is despite the fact the city is home to the country’s second largest Sikh population.

“Nothing really exists in Wolverhampton in terms of a record of the history of Punjabi migration to the area,” says Anand. “I went to the City Archives and stood in front of 30,000 images of Wolverhampton. I asked how

www.archives.org.uk

many were from the South Asian community, and there were none. There was a book about the turban dispute, but that was it.”

Hence the Apna Heritage Archive seeks to redress this issue, and is creating a new resource that will be of interest and use to local schools, colleges, universities,

St Luke’s School archive. Photograph copyright Black Country Visual Archives.





St Chad's Asian ladies' group's dedicated archive space at the Gurdwara. Photograph copyright Black Country Visual Archives.



St Luke's students examining school photographs. Photograph copyright Black Country Visual Archives.

researchers and broadcasters. A digital record is to be kept at Wolverhampton City Archives.

Galvanised to create a lasting legacy for future generations, Anand and fellow BCVA founder Sarvjit Sra set about collecting 2,000 images from 40 families in the city from the period 1960 to 1989. The contribution of Punjabi migrants to Wolverhampton over three decades has been documented in a new archive. We were delighted to be announced as the 'best new group' 2017 for our two-year Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) arts project. The award has been bestowed by the Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG).

The project took considerable patience, as initially Anand and Sarvjit were met with suspicion. People within the community are very private, and they were reluctant to share their photographs at first. Anand commented: "At first we struggled to get people within the community to understand what we were trying to achieve. It was about how we approached people. It was no good telling them about the City Archives, as they don't even know it exists. However, if we asked them if they wanted their grandchildren to forget how they arrived with only a few pounds in their pockets, they understood." "We had to make it personal to them," adds Anand, whose father

“ Nothing really exists in Wolverhampton in terms of a record of the history of Punjabi migration to the area ”
Says Anand.

came here and worked as a toolmaker at Jenks & Cattell in Wednesfield. Their first port of call was the day centres frequented by the older Asian generation.

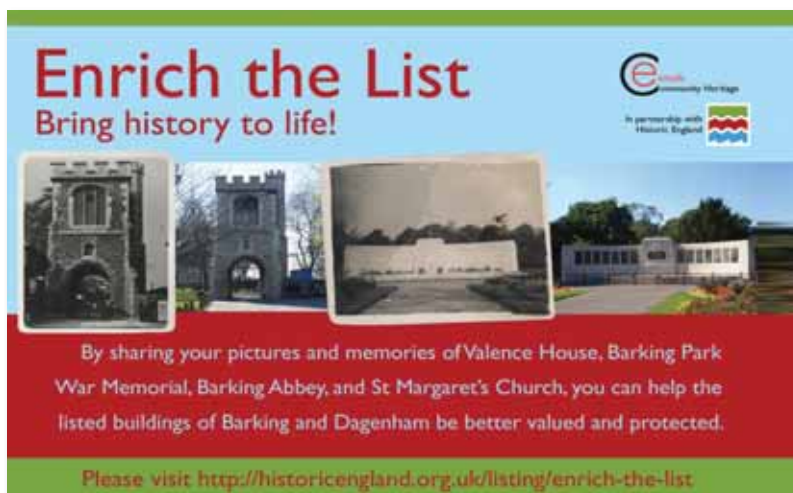
The HLF project culminates with an exhibition at Wolverhampton Art Gallery in January 2018. Anand and Sra can be contacted through their website: www.bcva.info

Anand Chhabra
Black Country Visual Arts

Enriching the List with Eastside Community Heritage

Listed buildings make up the majority of the protected sites on the National Heritage List for England (List). This year celebrates the 70th anniversary of the List. Many of the earlier entries are quite brief, providing little more than a short description, and all entries are in need of photographs to bring them to life. To address this challenge, Historic England has launched a major crowdsourcing project: Enriching the List. So far, as part of the project, over 57,000 contributions have been published, including 85,000 images. Over 33,000 List entries have been enriched by over 700 registered contributors.

Community partners are helping Historic England promote Enriching the List, and develop engagement initiatives at a local level. Earlier this year, Eastside Community Heritage (ECH) generated rich detail to List entries within the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, through archival research and by running reminiscence sessions. Activities were led by two members of ECH's Heritage Leadership trainee scheme, assisted by other trainees at ECH, and a sociology student on a work



Enriching the List event in partnership with Eastside Community Heritage. Photograph copyright Historic England.

placement from Sheffield University. In addition to enriched contributions, work by ECH has provided much useful evaluation that is informing the process of developing wider engagement to Enriching the List.

In listing historic buildings or sites, we celebrate their significance, and make sure that our history can be enjoyed by present and future generations. By taking part in Enriching the List, community groups are able to link their archive collections to List entries, and in doing so, bring them to a wider public, and also affirm their own sense of history and identity. Historic England

is running a series of free Enriching the List workshops in association with the Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG). Further details can be found on the CAHG website: www.communityarchives.org.uk

For more information on Enriching the List visit: www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/enrich-the-list

Email: EnrichingTheList@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Jane Golding
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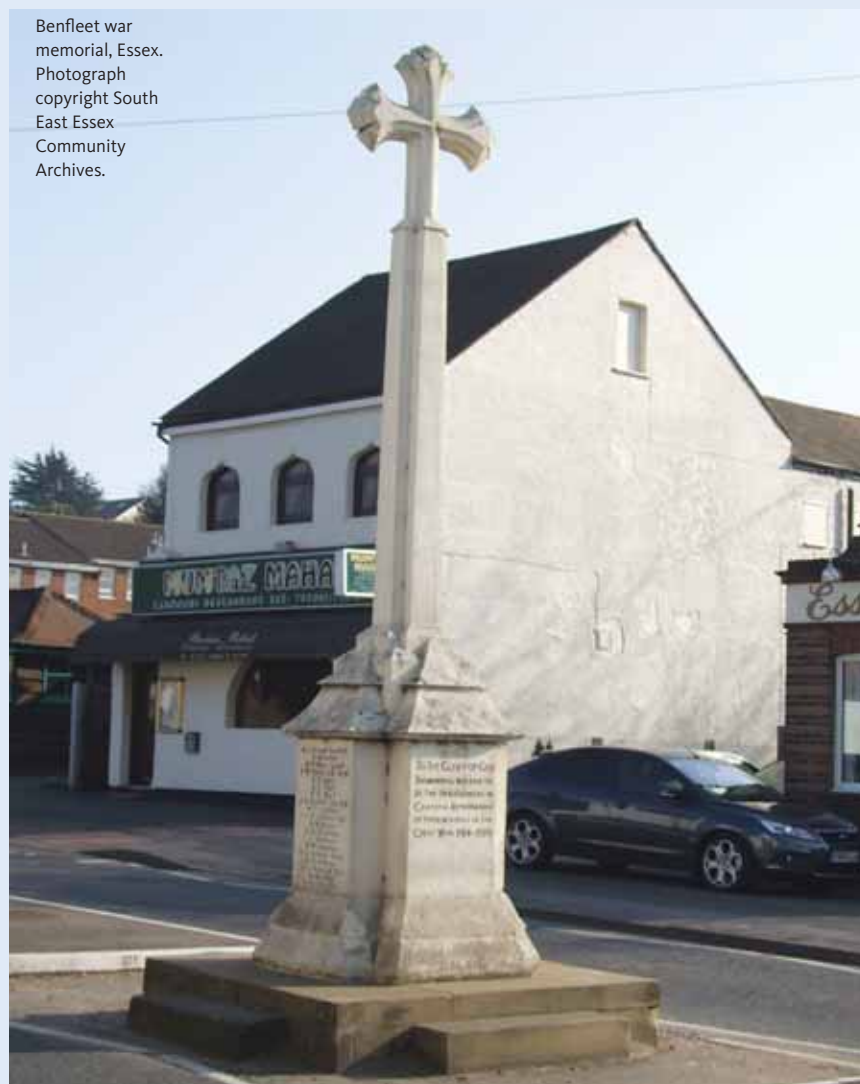
What is the purpose of community archives?

Community archives (CAs) are a growing area within the archive field, but what is their purpose, and how do they affect the work of official archives?

All archives collect, preserve and make available source documents that provide historic information about a defined area, such as an organisation, location or a group of people. Where official and community archives differ is in the approach they take. Official archives are tasked with preserving primary sources of information, which are deemed to have cultural or historical significance – such as the Magna Carta. This focus on significance means that many other forms of data may not be collected.

This is where CAs are useful. They collect opinions, recollections or just photographs of not particularly important people or buildings. This complements the work of official archives by providing a background against which major decisions and events occurred, so improving understanding of why they occurred.

Most CAs will collect anything if it is within the scope of the community they are serving. They also do not make a decision about the cultural or historic significance of any records they receive. They are more concerned that it offers insights into their



Benfleet war memorial, Essex.
Photograph
copyright South
East Essex
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Archives.

community, even accepting the fact that some is contradictory and the source may not be sound.

The rise of the Internet and smartphones in all aspects of our life have made it considerably cheaper and easier to collect and publish information, thus making it available to the whole world. People who used to live in an area or work for an organisation can keep in touch, even if they live on the other side of the world.

The CA I belong to is the Benfleet Community Archive (BCA). This village had only one major event in its history – the Battle of Benfleet in AD 893. Therefore there is little about Benfleet in the official archives, though they do have copies of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which describes the battle.

There is information in official archives about Benfleet, but is spread widely. Without a CA, anyone with an interest in Benfleet has to work very

Not always what you think: the latest cataloguing guidelines for community archives



Benfleet war memorial, Essex. Photograph copyright South East Essex Community Archives.

hard to find anything. A specific case is the Benfleet war memorial, which was unveiled on the 30 May 1920. On it are 39 names of those who fell during the First World War, and very little else. In 2014, members of the BCA compiled what information they could find to provide a story behind these people. This information was published both on the Internet and at a month-long exhibition at the local library. As a result, a great deal of interest was generated, and people started to offer more morsels of information – including copies of photographs of their ancestors.

Sometimes CAs come across information that should belong in an official archive, but this is rare. Most times they encourage a community to think about its past, preserve what it can in the way of information, and provide a background to what has occurred in major events.

Phil Coley

South East Essex Community Archives /
Community Archive and Heritage Group

Hot off the press! The new version of the Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG) cataloguing guidelines has been released. Archivists will find a lot of reassuring and familiar content in the guidelines, as well as a few surprises.

The new guidelines were launched at the CAHG conference this summer. They have already been downloaded well over 100 times from: www.communityarchives.org.uk

Professional cataloguing standards are somewhat intimidating for non-archivists, so the aim is to offer guidance on a minimal standard for cataloguing that is realistic and user-friendly. We have tried to keep the guidance simple, concise and free of jargon.



Members of the Yorkshire Dales Community Archives project who have worked with the Community Archives cataloguing guidelines. Photograph copyright Jack Latimer.

“ We have tried to keep the guidance simple, concise and free of jargon. ”

Even professional archivists may find that some pointers in these guidelines are surprising or thought-provoking. That is because the situation and working practices of community archives differ from those of record offices, in a few interesting ways.

Bear in mind that most community archives cannot own copyright. The majority are ‘unincorporated associations’, which do not have the legal status to collectively own any property, including copyright. So, while record offices often ask for copyright to be reassigned, community groups do not have that option – even if it is desirable or fair, which is another debate! Instead, they can ask contributors to release their material under a Creative Commons licence, as recommended by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

Furthermore – and this might go against the grain – not all community archives are best served by following ISAD(G). For example, many community groups have close links to a local museum and might one day pass over their collection to that organisation. So it makes sense for the group to follow a similar cataloguing approach to the museum, which is derived from the Dublin Core standard.

The cataloguing guidelines go into some detail about the best way to structure the catalogue, and debate the practical pros and cons of the ISAD(G) hierarchical approach. For most groups, it should be said, ISAD(G) wins out, but it is worth remembering there is a choice.

The initial feedback has been encouraging: “The guidelines are great, really easy to follow and very comprehensive,” wrote one group during the pilot phase of updating the guidelines.

I have been helping community archive groups think through their approach to cataloguing for over 10 years now, and I certainly find the cataloguing guidelines a useful framework. I hope you will too.

Jack Latimer

Community Archives and Heritage Group / CommunitySites



ARC magazine

New editor required

We have a vacancy on the ARC Editorial Board. If you would be interested in joining our team to help edit, develop and commission copy for ARC then **please contact John Chambers on: john.chambers@archives.org.uk**



Apna Heritage Archive winners with Nick Barratt at the Community Archives and Heritage Group Awards. Photograph copyright Community Archives and Heritage Group.



Creativity: Making Meaning with Community Archives – the Community Archives and Heritage Group 2017 annual conference

The Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG) conference opened with a keynote speech from Mohammed Ali of Soul City Arts. His words were engaging, amusing and passionate as he delved into his familial past to draw a portrait of The Knights of the Raj: Stories of the Indian Restaurant Trade, UK. This project developed out of Mohammed's quest to know the stories of his now deceased father. From the starting point of the iconic British curry and a beer, he was to discover a multi-cultural Britain full of confrontation, disconnect and assumptions – a living history with the need for trust to engage with its people right on his doorstep.

In capturing his father's story of immigration to Birmingham and seeking of a better life for his family, Mohammed told how his own struggle with identity growing up had found him a meaning within his newly-created archive – quite by accident. Pride, loss, culture, identity and traditions had all been uncovered, and from this he has found

duty, responsibility, sincerity and authenticity as a graffiti artist, activist, and archivist. These are portrayed through the medium of mural and story. His project for Birmingham's Quran, with a live performance, he hopes has established a buzz, and will pull new audiences to immerse themselves in the local community, creating new connections and ambassadors for archives.

Ian Rowe of the Archives and Cornish Studies Service told us how separate establishments of the Record Office – the Cornish Studies Library and Historic Environment Records – become one. The Centre Cornwall came about with the help of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). The upshot had been to develop the creative environment that everybody wanted. In association with the Cornish Archive Network (CAN), they have achieved many varied creative projects, such as ArTchive, which includes artist-in-residence workshops with Sue Lewington. Other key projects are a drama showcase of 10-minute plays of stories from

the archives, an archive film project highlighting Newlyn Post Office and life guard, Golant boat building, Cornish Audio Visual Archive (CAVA), West Cornwall farmers, and Falmouth schools. Work has also involved Falmouth University textile and print students, a cider project, and A Place to Write at Trelissick House. Quite a cornucopia of creativity has helped connect an area of contrasting huge wealth and severe poverty.

After lunch, Jack Latimer introduced the revised cataloguing guidelines recently launched by the CAHG. The guidelines take a simple approach to both the top down and bottom up approaches to organising a catalogue, focusing on a limited set of mandatory fields to ensure that the guidelines are accessible and easy to use. The guidelines can be found under the 'resources' section of the CAHG website, and are available to be downloaded for free. Jack thanked all those who have contributed to the revision of the guidelines, and asked for any feedback to be sent to: Email: catalogue@communityarchives.org

“In capturing his father’s story of immigration to Birmingham and seeking of a better life for his family, Mohammed told how his own struggle with identity growing up had found him a meaning within his newly-created archive – quite by accident.”

Tola Dabiri and Charlotte Dickerson opened their presentation on the brave new world of carnival as archive with the quotation: “Until the lion roars, the hunter will always tell the story of the hunt.” This image of the distortion of power has grown from their research, mainly from private archives in this area. Carnival is full of rich culture and deep in tradition. The National Archives (TNA) has 32 miles of archives, and yet only 2894 carnival records exist, mostly due to its oral tradition.

On their quest for preserving and recording carnival archives, Tola and Charlotte presented an insightful checklist for us and anyone gathering information from groups and communities from the outside:

- Know your community – much suspicion prevails without good communication
- Be available when your community are available – go to them, don’t expect them to come to you



Community Archives and Heritage Group Awards. Photograph copyright Community Archives and Heritage Group.

- Ensure your partners are committed – respect the community with which you are engaging
- Have realistic targets
- Create a legacy.

Jefny Ashcroft gave a spirited talk demonstrating the impact that engaging with performing arts practitioners can have on increasing and diversifying visitors to archives. A recently completed Arts Council-funded project – Arts Friendly Archives – created three plays from materials available at Wolverhampton, Dudley and Stratford archives. Half of the audiences for these performances were first time visitors to archives.

The final talk of the day came from Sarah Feinstein and Joe Watson, who spoke about Manchester Digital Music Archive (MDMArchive), a crowd-sourced digital archive

created as a response to discussions within Manchester about ways to celebrate Manchester’s musical heritage. They spoke of a desire to highlight hidden music histories that are often overlooked in favour of a dominant white male narrative in the city’s history. They conceded that as a crowd-sourced initiative, an overwhelming number of user uploads has fed into these narratives. The talk focused on the various ways that MDMArchive has sought to redress this imbalance and engage the public in creating new histories. The talk concluded by offering us an insight into a new programme of events for a forthcoming exhibition ‘Rebel Music: The Sound of Politics and Protest in Manchester’.

Charlotte Robinson, Natalie White, Amy Finn

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