

arc magazine

November &
December '22

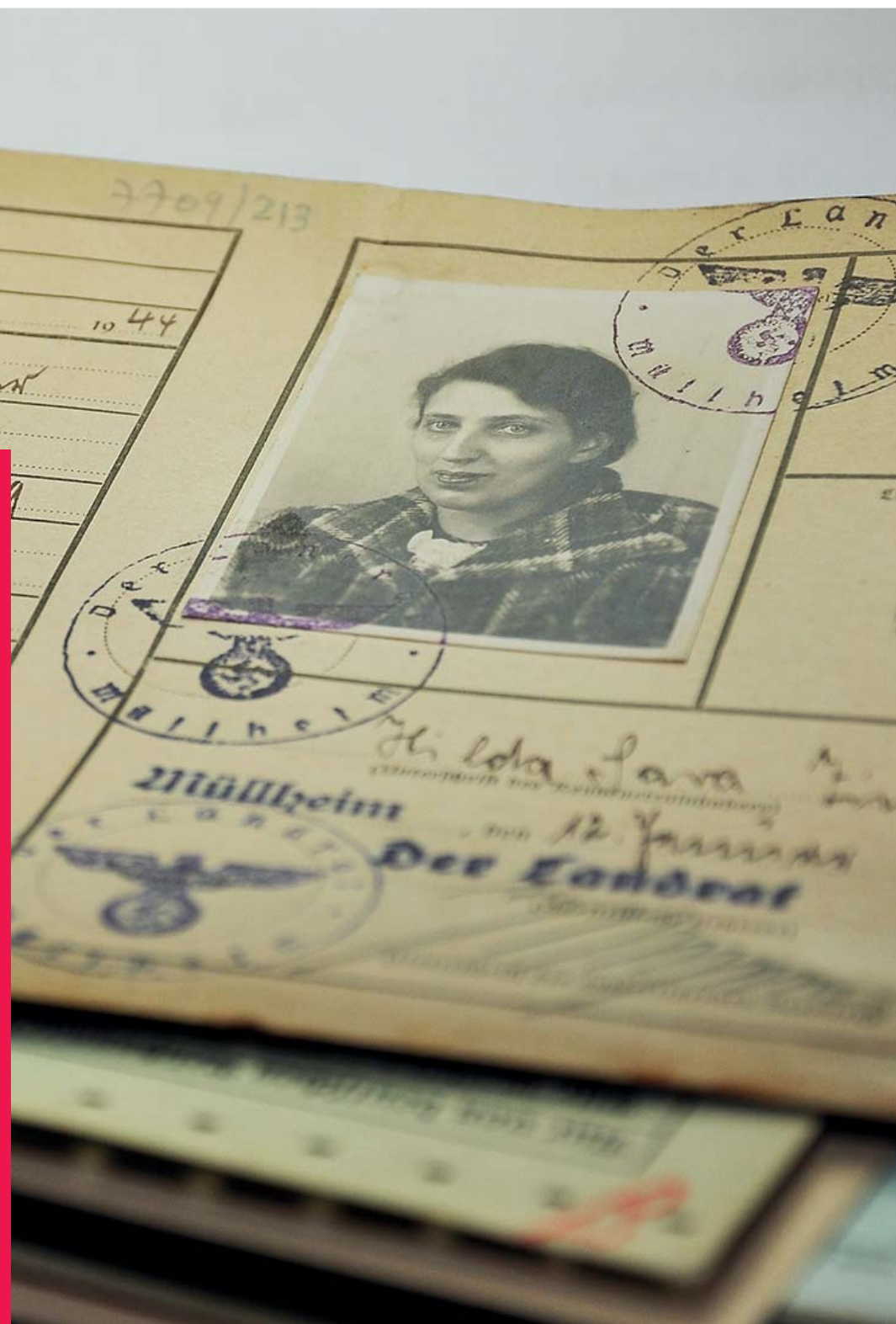
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Welcome

arc magazine

November & December 2022 edition



elcome to the November/
December edition of ARC
Magazine.

This edition spans a range of themes, all equally important in these times of uncertainty and change. Opening Lines for this edition has been contributed by the Section for Archives and Museums (SAM) who talk about the excellent work they have been doing since the section was established.

Our features include Katharina Bock in conversation with Lynsey Gillespie and Dr Laura Aguiar looking at the advantages of digital engagement and creative reuse of archival material.

We return to the Holocaust and the importance of archives in the provision of truth to future generations with Dr Kathrin Meyer and Dr Karel Berkhoff. The last edition I worked on was the first to be printed following Russia's invasion of the Ukraine and what this feature has to say about the necessity of truth and collective memory is as important six months on as back in spring 2022.

We hear from Richard Wragg, chair of the Diversity Allies, in a feature discussing

the important work
the Allies are doing
and how others can
get involved more in
the future.

Inclusion and accessibility are also discussed in Alexandra Healey, Philip Milnes-Smith and Laura Yeoman's article on the Accessible Learning Toolkit. There is always more to be done to improve archival practices in relation to inclusion and diversity.

Thank you to all contributors who have helped make this edition so varied and interesting. If you have an idea for a feature or would like to share some news, please get in touch:
arceditors@archives.org.uk.

Ally McConnell
ARC Joint Editor





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Cover image: Identification card of Hilda Ziri issued by the Landrat authorities in Müllheim, 12 January 1939. © Courtesy of Yad Vashem.



Opening lines

For this issue's Opening Lines we have departed from our normal format and the Section for Archives and Museums here provides an overview of the achievements of the section since it was set up three years ago.

At the ARA Conference 2022, the Section for Archives & Museums (SAM) took part in the fringe poster session with our talk named: ARA SAM Moving Forward. This session aimed to highlight how our Section has moved forward since our formation, developing our activities and training services to best support our wide-ranging membership.

SAM was set up in 2019 by Charlotte Berry in response to a growing need among record-keeping professionals for knowledge and training in the care of non-archival object collections. We reflect the interests of museum colleagues and growth in interdisciplinary services, and provide a focal point for record keepers, conservators and volunteers interested in archives, museums and galleries and working in all types of institutions across the UK and Ireland.

In practice, SAM supports our growing membership through:

- **Providing regular training sessions and learning opportunities**

Training has been a strong focus for SAM and we have undertaken face to face training (in 2019) as well as adapting through Lockdown to offer several popular half day sessions online. This offer has included topics on: caring for and documenting mixed collections, planning exhibitions and displays with mixed collections, and how to safely handle and pack object collections.

- **Hosting "In Conversation with..." AGM panels and creating a SAM podcast with invited guest speakers**

We have attracted some excellent speakers across the sector to join us for discussions on documenting mixed collections, careers and diversifying skills, freelancing in heritage, and recruitment. Our podcast was launched in 2019 and is available on Spotify, Apple, Anchor.FM etc.

- **Contributions to articles in sector publications promoting best practice and advocating for SAM**

We have contributed regularly to ARC Magazine / ARA Today – reflecting on our social media presence and planning training events – and have guest hosted an ARA Together Call. We have also made various presentations to external groups including Historic House Archivists' Group and Museum Librarians and Archivists' Group.

- **Building an online presence through our Twitter account and creation of our blog "Don't Box Me In"**

We have participated in multiple social media campaigns and regularly engage with online discussions. As a result, we now have over 2,300 followers on Twitter, which is proving a vital means of



Don't Box Me In

Allied Practice in Archives and Museums

HOME • BLOG • EVENTS • RESOURCES • ABOUT • CONTACT

Featured

Hello from 'Don't Box Me In'



bringing together archive and museum professionals. We encourage interested folk to join the ARA and SAM as an Affiliate member, as a way of attracting professionals from other sectors. In July 2022 we launched our new online blog to share content, practical case studies, resources and events with our membership and wider community who care about and for mixed collections.

- **Collaboration with ARA Sections / Groups on shared training sessions and webinars**

ARA SAM members have joined the Archives for Learning and Education Section (ALES) for their lunchtime webinar and ARA Scotland for their Explore Your Archives campaign and "Arch'Ive Connected" webinar, including giving sessions on working with schools and the challenges of mounting exhibitions using archive sources.

- **Contributing to focus groups to represent membership**

We have represented our membership by being part of working groups for the Museums Association on the impact of COVID-19 on the heritage workforce, and more recently by invitation to join a focus group for The UK National Archives' Mixed Collection guidance which is already establishing itself as a key resource. Our volunteer SAM

Committee consists of archive, museum and conservation professionals and paraprofessionals, all with wide-ranging practical experience. In addition to the normal Committee roles, we have two posts of Museum Liaison Officers who are our resident experts working in the Museum sector: bringing along invaluable knowledge to support and develop SAM and affiliate ARA membership which helps to generate a more inclusive and diverse nature of our Section.

What do we have planned next?

Following on from our appearance at Conference, we have lots planned for the 22/23 period:

- Rerunning our popular training workshops and planning new sessions – keep an eye on our Twitter and Blog
- Creating content for the “Don’t Box Me In” blog – get in touch with your suggestions!
- Progressing our Glossary Project Working Group, which focuses on the shared terminology between Archives & Museums, and the many grey areas in-between! If you’d like to join us, please get in touch.

We are very grateful to our members and current/previous Committee members who have helped us get to this stage and allowed us to move forward and grow from strength to strength! We will have vacancies coming up on the Committee at the spring AGM in 2023 – do let us know right away if you are thinking about joining us.

Please get in touch any time if you are interested in any aspects of SAM’s activities, such as joining the Committee, suggesting ideas for training sessions or writing posts for our new blog!

To contact us directly, email: sam@archives.org.uk

To access our resources, visit the ARA website:

www.archives.org.uk/resources

Listen to the SAM podcast on: anchor.fm/carly-randall

Follow us on Twitter: [@ARAArchMus](https://twitter.com/ARAArchMus)

Subscribe to our blog “Don’t Box Me In – Allied Practice in Archives & Museums”: aramuseums.wordpress.com/



Who are ARA SAM and what do we do?

We provide a focal point for record keepers, conservators & volunteers interested in archives, museums and galleries across the UK and Ireland. As a forum for interdisciplinary professionals, we share best practice in areas of museum/object management and its intersection with archives, as well as discussing shared concerns.

We also aim to:

- ⇒ Develop and provide training and learning opportunities
- ⇒ Collaborate with ARA and other groups
- ⇒ Provide a UK and Ireland based discussion forum for professionals
- ⇒ Communicate with the membership with Section and wider ARA activities

ARA SAM have moved forward so much since our formation in 2019, in response to a growing need among record-keeping professionals for knowledge and training in the care of non-archival object collections

Membership is at 860
(as of July 2022)



First two SAM Podcast were
accessed at least 266 times!



Twitter Followers Increased
From approx. 30 to 2,300
(May 2020– July 2022)



Over 400 people have
attended our training
sessions



Highlights of our Achievements since Formation in 2019:

- ✓ Provided regular training sessions (over 8) on: Caring for and Documenting mixed collections; Planning exhibitions and displays with mixed collections; How to safely handle and pack object collections; Marking and labelling object collections - with more planned for 2022/23!
- ✓ Hosted discussion forums through ‘In Conversation with ...’ panels & release of SAM podcasts with invited speakers
- ✓ Launched our new ARA SAM blog ‘Don’t Box Me in’ in May 2022 to support and engage with more members
- ✓ Supported our online presence with our growing Twitter account - we’ve have taken part in major initiatives and campaigns and hosted Archive Hour to join in interdisciplinary discussions and advocate for collaboration between archives and museums
- ✓ Advocated through contributions to articles in sector publications— 6 articles for ARC Magazine/ARA Today, guest host for ARA Together Call, various presentations to groups
- ✓ Contributed to focus groups (Museums Association, impact of the pandemic on heritage workforce, The UK National Archives’ Mixed Collection guidance) to represent membership
- ✓ Collaborated with ARA Section/Groups on shared training sessions and webinars
- ✓ Formed a working group to develop a glossary of terms for shared museum and archive professional terminology



Images copyright of the Mountain Heritage Trust, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and Victoria Stevens ACR

We’re always eager to hear from members who are interested in getting involved or who require support, training or advice. [Please get in touch any time!](#)

To contact us directly, email: sam@archives.org.uk

To access our resources visit the ARA website: <https://www.archives.org.uk/resources>

Follow us on Twitter: [@ARAArchMus](https://twitter.com/ARAArchMus)

Subscribe to our blog ‘Don’t Box Me In – Allied Practice in Archives & Museums’: <https://aramuseums.wordpress.com/>



From the Board

Vice-chair, **Ruth Macleod** reflects on the challenges of the winter to come and the support that ARA can offer, and that members can offer each other.



It's hard to avoid hearing about the Cost of Living Crisis at the moment; even if you ignore the news headlines then the rising prices of everything force themselves to your attention. Following hard on the heels of COVID-19, and after years of austerity policies, it's been a difficult few years for many in the record-keeping sector. Even if your own job is not affected, events around us are still having an impact and it's hardly a secret that salaries in the sector are not as high as we would like.

You might be wondering what the point of me writing this is, as resolving the country's finances is slightly beyond the scope of archivists, conservators and records managers. We wanted to highlight that the ARA Board are aware of the challenges we're all facing – the Board are all ordinary members of ARA – and that we are taking steps to try and make things a little easier for our members where we can.

We've launched the ARA Cost of Living support fund, which will grant a level of assistance in paying membership fees and costs of training. The Board recognise that in straitened financial times, paying for ARA membership won't be top of the list, but we also believe that being a member is beneficial and we want to support people to stay.

The Pay Review Group have done sterling work over the last few years to examine salaries across the sector and to develop guidelines for what people in the sector should be paid. It's a hugely important area – working in archives, conservation and records management needs to be a career path where everyone is able to support themselves, not one which is only open to people with other means of support. Pay is a huge part of well-being overall, and whilst as a charity ARA has restrictions over what we can and can't campaign on, we are concerned for the conditions our members work under and will do what we can to help. Ongoing advocacy work may be mostly behind the scenes,

but if you think ARA can help with issues around service provision and conditions, please do get in touch – we do care, and we will respond.

Financial support and campaigning around salary is a very small part of what ARA does for our members. Much of it is provided by members, for members, such as the regions and sections. As in-person meetings start to pick back up again, it's a great opportunity to get to talk to other people who may be facing the same kind of issues as you are. Others may have faced those issues previously and come through the other side with helpful advice, or just a sympathetic ear, and we all benefit from shared experiences, best practice discussions and a chance to discuss those work problems that friends and family respond to with a blank stare. I've personally got a lot out of those kind of conversations, both from a cathartic whinge to people who understand, but also constructively coming up with potential projects with archivists in other services!

If you think that your region or section isn't doing enough to support the people who are part of it, can I recommend volunteering, or at the very least telling us what you think we should be doing? The Board are ordinary members of ARA with the same occasionally frustrating jobs that take up much of our time, and we don't know everything that's going on! We want the organisation to work as well as possible and to do our best for our members, but everyone contributing is hugely important for us to be able to do that. In return, you get an organisation that does what you need it to do.

Campaign for Records Democracy and Rights in the Digital Age

The Archives and Records Association (ARA) and Information and Records Management Society (IRMS) have been working on this new campaign aimed at addressing the shortcomings of our current system of keeping and giving access to public sector and government records in the UK for some months. It was launched to the record-keeping sector on 13th October and will be launched to the general public in January 2023 at an event at the Houses of Parliament.

The Campaign for Records will highlight the need for better records management in public life and calls for more resources, better regulation and improved freedom of information and access to public sector and government records.

Further information is available on the campaign website:
www.campaignforrecords.org/

The website features guest blogs from:

Dame Meg Hillier MP – Chair of the Public Accounts Committee on ‘Good Record Keeping in Government’ where she particularly focuses on the frustrations the committee faced due to poor record-keeping in the awarding of contracts during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Journalist and author Tim Tate – who details the difficulties he has faced with getting access to government records – and particularly the loopholes used by the Cabinet Office to prevent the release of papers which should be in the public domain.

CAMPAIGN FOR RECORDS

**Democracy and Rights in the
Digital Age**

A campaign by the Archives & Records
Association UK & Ireland and the
Information and Records Management
Society

Angie Sutton-Vane from the Open University looks at why police records are not public records and what can be done to ensure that these vital records can be better archived for greater accountability and transparency.

In the initial phase of the Campaign the team will continue to elicit different viewpoints and invite guest writers to contribute thoughts on a range of issues. Through this outreach activity they will build a comprehensive picture of what needs to be improved, what needs to be changed and where the increased resource they are asking for needs to be focused.

If you'd like to be involved get in touch with Deborah Mason at
deborah.mason@archives.org.uk



Explore Your Archive week is coming soon!

Explore Your Archive focus week is back - starting on Monday 28th November and running to Tuesday 6th December.

Daily themes for the focus week are:

Monday 28th November - Maps and Plans
Tuesday 29th November - Time
Wednesday 30th November - Beards (referencing Movember)
Thursday 1st December - Throwback (referencing Throwback Thursday)
Friday 2nd December - Party
Saturday 3rd December - News
Sunday 4th December - Language
Monday 5th December - Humour
Tuesday 6th December - Your Archive - inviting the public to share their own treasures.

This year's campaign will have a strong public facing focus and we have recruited a celebrity champion, Gyles Brandreth, to help us spread the message to a wider audience.

We are also organising public facing events in Scotland, Wales and (online) England. Details can be found on the Explore Your Archive website at www.exploreyourarchive.org/celebrating/. You can also load your own events there.

ARA Ireland will be continuing with their already successful formula for the Explore Your Archive campaign. A success we hope to emulate in the UK!



Join the Archives Card scheme now – reap the benefits for years to come

We launched the Archives Card scheme just before the first lockdowns of the COVID-19 pandemic, despite this over 15,000 users are now signed up to use a single card to access many different archives. They could see the benefits. As we head into a difficult winter where many services will be opening their doors wide to provide a place for people to come and get warm, a quick, simple, efficient way to manage security and access will soon demonstrate benefits to organisations as well.

In the long term there are many other benefits to services offering the Archives Card, full information can be found [here](#) but Gary Tuson, County Archivist at Norfolk Record Office gives some compelling reasons from his own experience:

"From the perspective of running and managing an archive, planning is very data driven these days and the Archives Card scheme gives us the data we need. We used to have a visitor book where we collected postcodes and then typed up the data the following day, every day. That approach is now outmoded and unnecessary and while there was a bit of upfront investment when joining the scheme, the cost savings over time are evident – not to mention the modernisation that has to take place to keep archives relevant and valuable to

society today.

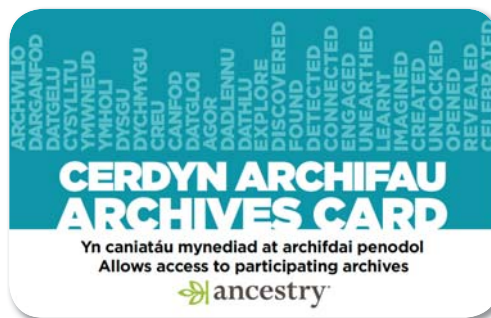
"It's not just the staff time saved as a result of not having to manually record visitor data – there is also a time saving associated with the Archives Card registration process. Whereas the old

CARN system was entirely paper based and had to be administered onsite, Archives Card is entirely digital, and the bulk of the process can be done remotely by the user – at

their leisure, without queues, in the comfort of their own home or from wherever they choose.

"I would really encourage other archive services to sign up, not only for all the direct benefits for their users and their own collections, but also for the sector as a whole. The earlier we start benchmarking using the data from the system the sooner we can start tracking what become long-term trends. This is essential for continued success and further enhancing the impact we have on society with the work we do and the services we offer."

You can see the user facing website at archivescard.com and if you are already convinced and want to sign up then get in touch at archivescard@archives.org.uk



Exclusive Web Archiving Training Resources for Members

Thanks to a grant from the UK National Archives we were recently able to commission a ten video training series on web-archiving, split into two parts: Getting Started and Scaling-Up.

You can find the two part training course here on the [ARA Website](#). You will need your member's website password to access this.

This is also where you will find videos of online training sessions and events organised by our sections, groups, nations

and regions - most recent additions include:

- Archive Accreditation Process with Melinda Haunton of The UK National Archives
- The SAM AGM and in conversation panel on Career Progression and Diversifying your Skill Set
- ALES Lunchtime talk on practical steps to becoming a more accessible service.

These join more than two dozen helpful videos on a wide variety of topics.

Professional Registration News

Chris Ash FCLIP RMARA shares his commitment to professional development.

Chris Ash FCLIP RMARA is Senior Library & Archives Manager at Sandwell MBC Libraries & Archives. He is also the vice chair of CILIP's Professional Registration Panel. Chris shares with us his career journey and thoughts on CPD and ARA professional registration.

After leaving school I set my sights on becoming a solicitor. While studying A-Levels, law degree and post-graduate diploma in legal practice, I took a Saturday assistant role at my local community library. This is where I discovered my passion for libraries, archives and museums, and eventually turned my career on its head and joined Birmingham Central Library as a reference librarian.

From 1993-2009 I worked for Birmingham Library Services in a wide variety of roles and developed subject specialisms. But it was my time in the local studies section of Central Library where I developed a deep passion for the history and heritage of Birmingham. I worked with the local studies and genealogical collections, maps,

newspapers and the photography collection. I also contributed to the publication of several local history books on the area.

In 2009 I joined Sandwell MBC Libraries and Archives as their Community Library Manager, leading to a promotion to the role of Senior Library Manager in 2016. I also joined the Senior Leadership Team for the service with responsibilities for the management of Sandwell Central Library and as strategic lead for arts and culture. In 2018 I became service lead for Sandwell Archives and continue to work in a hybrid public libraries and archives capacity.

How important a role has continuing professional development (CPD) played throughout your career?

Volunteering has formed a vital part of my CPD throughout my career. For over 10 years I volunteered as a company director and charitable trustee of Aston Manor Road Transport Museum in Birmingham. I managed historic vehicles and transport archives, and



I took a Saturday assistant role at my local community library. This is where I discovered my passion for libraries, archives and museums





My membership of ARA and CILIP has introduced me to the value of competency frameworks as a means for continued professional development.

produced the museum's first collections development policy. As a Board member, I contributed to decisions affecting all aspects of the museum's service. These experiences developed a diverse range of new skills, without which I would not have been able to progress from reference librarian to community library manager so early in my career.

Professional networks play an important part in my CPD. The career knowledge and experience that you develop can make a real difference to the wider sector, bringing a reciprocal benefit professionally. For example, I am a Peer Reviewer for Archive Service Accreditation and I sit on the Chief Archivists in Local Government Group's (CALGG) Executive Committee. This provides the opportunity to share my knowledge of performance frameworks and libraries, while deepening my understanding of the wider archive sector.

My membership of ARA and CILIP has introduced me to the value of competency frameworks as a means for continued professional development. I now use both the CILIP Professional Knowledge and Skills Base and the ARA competency framework to actively manage the direction of my career.

Why did you apply for Registered Membership and how does it feel to have qualified?

It's an absolutely amazing experience to have qualified. I was inspired by the ARA competency framework and could immediately see the value of it. Recognition by your peers as having reached a key professional benchmark feels fantastic.

I am passionate about professional registration. I'd moved sideways into archives management and I needed to assess my current knowledge and skills base. It has supported my personal growth and strengthened my self-confidence.

What aspects of the application process did you find challenging?

Demonstrating competencies in all three areas of the framework proved to be the biggest challenge. Having moved directly across into archives management, I found demonstrating process-based competencies to be difficult.

My first application was unsuccessful, but that provided the opportunity to learn from the assessor feedback letter. The letter also stressed the importance of reflective writing. I then re-submitted a successful application. My resubmitted application passed the assessment and, after comparing the content with my CILIP revalidation application (2021), the difference was dramatic- a real step change in the quality of my reflective writing.

This shows why professional registration is such an important tool for continued professional development.

What advice would you offer to others thinking of applying for professional registration?

Start by undertaking the self-assessment. This will help you understand where you are now and how you might want to develop. Then familiarise yourself with the application process and start to map out a realistic schedule for writing your competency forms.

There are two submission deadlines a year, so use them as a milestone to build your short, medium and long-term goals for your application. The process of building your application is dynamic, so momentum is key to submitting an application. You set your own schedule which makes everything flexible enough to suit all circumstances.

I would also encourage all ARA members to consider the CPD Review, ARA's peer-review service that offers constructive feedback on your professional development. It is a tremendous opportunity to gain an external perspective on your CPD, which will really give you a fresh perspective to your work.

For more information on ARA professional registration and CPD Review please contact chris.sheridan@archives.org.uk and visit archivesandrecords.smapply.io



TRAINING IN INDEXING

The Society of Indexers is a professional organization promoting high standards and quality in all forms of indexing. It provides internationally recognized training in indexing and supports professional indexers in developing their skills. With the development of new digital publishing technologies, indexers can now provide embedded indexing services in response to publishers' requirements, facilitating active ebook indexes or the revision and repurposing of texts, alongside creating traditional indexes for the print market.

The Society of Indexers Training Course is a modular distance learning course on the theory and practice of indexing. Students work at their own pace within a four-year time limit. The course has been recently updated, with one-to-one support and a greater focus on tutoring.

Find out more:

- www.indexers.org.uk/training-development/si-training-course
- admin@indexers.org.uk

YOUR **aratoday**

ARA Today, is our electronic members' bulletin which contains all the latest ARA and industry news, is circulated on the first Wednesday of each month. Please send any content suggestions for future editions of ARA Today to deborah.mason@archives.org.uk.



ARA 2023 CONFERENCE

BELFAST

30th August to
1st September 2023



The Accessible Learning Toolkit – where do we go from here?

In this article Alexandra Healey, Philip Milnes-Smith and Laura Yeoman give an overview of the genesis and approach of the Accessible Learning Toolkit and detail possible next steps to improving inclusivity and accessibility in archive services.



The archives sector and its members are on a journey to explore how to improve archival practices in relation to inclusion and diversity. Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) initiatives have become common in services, as organisations seek to become more inclusive. Becoming a more inclusive service means exploring how your activities and practices, including outreach, can better support all communities, but particularly minority groups who may have been excluded in the past.

People with disabilities have been identified as the world's largest minority group. In the CIPFA survey of visitors to UK Archives in 2018 only 16 per cent of respondents identified themselves as having a disability. Only one per cent had a learning-related disability. The Equality Act UK (2010) seeks to ensure that disabled people are offered the same life chances and opportunities as everyone else. The Archives and Records Association (ARA)'s Code of Ethics (2020) also states that Members 'should ensure open and equitable access to records and archives as far as they can'. This includes in our engagement and outreach work.

Yet in 2018-19 when the Archives for Learning and Education Section (ALES) reformed, there was a lack of sector-specific literature available to support effective engagement and outreach work with people with disabilities. Feedback from events and user surveys, and discussion within the committee of workplace experiences revealed an appetite for support and guidance in this area. This led to a successful bid to the ARA Research Fund for the development of an 'Accessible Learning Toolkit'. Recognising the variety of lived experiences that are represented by this minority group meant that an attempt to create a single document aiming to address every individual's needs would likely

lead to a lack of focus. It was therefore decided to aim the toolkit towards activities for learner groups of children and young people up to the age of 25 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Cue disruption and delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but in January 2022, the Accessible Learning Toolkit launched on the ARA website. It is designed to inspire and support archives services to become more 'SEND-friendly'. It pulls together information from a range of specialist sources to introduce and define key terms and concepts including special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), EDI, ethical and legislative contexts and safeguarding. It describes the lived experience of individuals with SEND in their own words, and shares feedback from participants in archive projects.

The main body of the toolkit is divided into four sections: assess, plan, do and review. This graduated approach is taken from the SEND Code of Practice and has been adapted here specifically for use by Archive services. The idea is that becoming SEND-friendly is a continual process – with constant reassessment, planning, delivery of activities or services, and subsequent reviews. There is no intended end point, but instead a constant movement towards improvement.

Also included are case studies from the UK Archives Sector of outreach and engagement projects aimed at audiences with SEND. Explore York Libraries and Archives Mutual Ltd facilitated learner-led history sessions for students at the Blueberry Academy, an organisation providing specialist support for adults with a range of SEND. The M&S Company Archive adapted a workshop intended for use in mainstream schools for delivery to students of Oastlers School, a co-

educational school of 94 learners of secondary school age who have social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) disturbance. The National Museum of Scotland has worked to adapt their schools offering to better accommodate groups with higher numbers of students with Additional Support Needs (ASN), in response to teacher feedback. Britten Pears Arts collaborated with the non-profit organisation Autism and Nature, to deliver sessions to local special schools. All of the examples involved consultation and collaboration with partner organisations and participants.

The toolkit advocates for this user-centred approach, where the target audience is consulted with, and involved in, the planning and design of activities, both beforehand and during delivery. Just as you are the expert on the service you work in, the people you are hoping to work with are experts on their own needs and expectations. By actively engaging with the right people you can work together to build quality experiences for visitors with SEND.

5 Top Takeaways



- A more SEND-friendly service benefits everyone
- SEND, deaf, disabled and neurodivergent audiences know their own needs best, so ask them
- No one expects you to know everything
- You can achieve a lot with only a little
- Accept you will make mistakes, and learn from them

Learners at the National Museum of Scotland. ©Ruth Armstrong Photography





Participants in the Autism and Nature/Britten Pears Arts learning sessions © Autism and Nature

Testimonials...

"Local history can be a great way of exploring themes of everyday life. And its a really interesting way of looking at the history of our community."

Participant in Blueberry Academy/York Explore Project

"Heritage. Young people. Photos. Making film. Director."

Participant in Whodunnits! Project answering the question 'what do you value about the project?'

"...it was the banter between all of us that came with this great journey."

Participant in Whodunnits! Project answering the question 'what have you enjoyed?'

"The experience has exceeded my expectations as it has been more exciting than I thought it would be. I did not know the scale of the project when I applied so to be involved with historic landmarks and professional equipment was very interesting."

Participant in Whodunnits! Project answering the question 'what have you enjoyed?'

The World Health Organisation suggests that everyone will experience disability of some kind at some point during their lifetime. And so, taking steps towards being a more SEND-friendly service really will benefit everyone. Whether you are considering specific activities targeted towards groups or individuals with SEND or not, there is value in using the toolkit to assess how 'SEND-friendly' your service offering is, and whether there are any quick wins which might have positive impacts for users more generally.

An online launch event on 'practical steps to becoming a more accessible service' was hosted in February 2022, and the video is available in the members area of the [ARA website](#). The UK National Archives is currently planning workshops around designing and delivering activities for SEND, deaf, disabled and neurodivergent audiences which will also be linked to the toolkit. More broadly, ARA's Diversity and Inclusion Allies have an Accessibility working group with an interest both in workplace issues for staff and volunteers, and in making communication accessible (including finding aids and outreach presentations). Events are being planned to take place over the next few months. The Allies' Inclusive Cataloguing group has an interest in addressing outdated terminology that covers disability, as part of its broader remit. We are also aware of others working in this area (across archives, libraries and museums), building on the glossary work of [Carissa Chew](#) thinking about developing good practice guidance for description and engagement. Anyone wishing to be put in touch can contact ARA.



Front page of the Accessible Learning Toolkit. Archives and Records Association

We hope that you'll take the time to look at the toolkit, be inspired by the experiences of the case study participants and institutions, and find ways to become more SEND-friendly. It's a journey, not a destination, and it means engaging with learners with SEND during the planning process, not designing experiences in isolation for dissemination-style delivery. It involves building relationships and networks to become co-creators of archive experiences that may challenge your expectations of what engagement and learning in archives might look like.

Thanks to Rachel Bates, Sarah Wickham, Noel Hayden, and all of the case study contributors and workshop participants.

Author info

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Philip Milnes-Smith

After a career as a Special Education teacher, Philip Milnes-Smith retrained in archives. He is digital archivist at Shakespeare's Globe, undertakes freelance archival and oral history work, and volunteers for ARA both as a Diversity and Inclusion Ally and an officer of the Archives for Learning and Education Section.

Laura Yeoman

Laura is Access and Digital Engagement Archivist at the Borthwick Institute for Archives, University of York. As part of her role, she teaches on undergraduate and postgraduate courses, as well as for the University's Centre for Lifelong Learning. Laura is the Treasurer of ARA's Archives for Learning and Education Section.

Connecting Holocaust researchers to their answers: What archivists can do to strengthen the field

Dr Kathrin Meyer, Secretary General of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, and Dr Karel Berkhoff, Co-Director at the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure argue that as custodians of the truth, archivists have a vital role to play in helping societies deal openly and accurately with the past.



The same week Russia began a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Russia's Supreme Court upheld the decision to shut down not only Memorial, the longest running human rights organization in Russia, but also its archive, with the argument that the organization "distorts memory about the War," "rehabilitates Nazis," and "creates a false image of the USSR" and of Russia as terrorist states. This familiar argumentation – which Russia has also used to justify its invasion of Ukraine – also reminds us of the quiet power of archives.

Archivists are custodians of the truth. Their role in making archival material accessible helps ensure societies stand a chance at dealing openly and accurately with the past. This is especially true of the history of the Holocaust.

How archivists define which material is related to the Holocaust can have a major impact on our understanding of this history. The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) and the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI) are therefore raising awareness of the need for a broad approach to identifying Holocaust-related material – and are offering practical tools that empower archivists and researchers to apply such an approach.

Together, the IHRA's new Guidelines for Identifying Relevant Documentation for Holocaust Research, [Education and Remembrance](#) and the [EHRI Portal](#)

provide archivists, from all disciplines, with an unprecedented opportunity to strengthen the field worldwide, at a time when protecting the facts is more critical than ever.

New IHRA Guidelines help archivists shine light on the shadows of the Holocaust

Time and place rarely hold much sway over the relevance of archival material bearing on the destruction of the European Jews. Raul Hilberg, the father of Holocaust studies, knew this well. Writing in the late 1990s, he reflected on this central feature of Holocaust research in his memoirs:

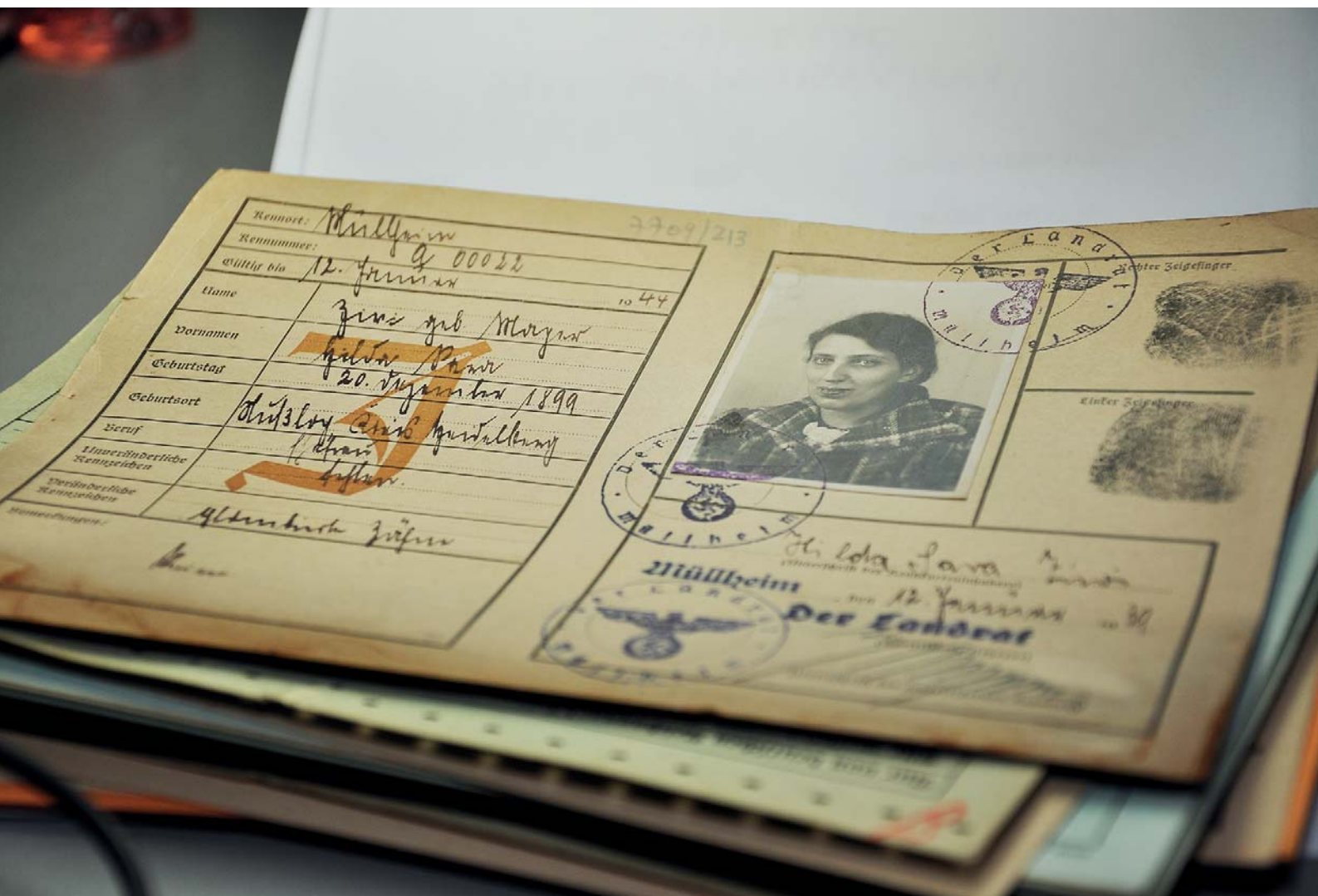
I would sit in an archive in Lvov [Lviv], reading the correspondence of local German officials dealing with gardens and ornamental horticulture to discover that the greens were used as camouflage in the camps. I would learn that church records of births and marriages dating to the middle of the nineteenth century were essential in proving who was of Aryan descent and hence not a Jew.

Archivists are experts at facilitating research on the Holocaust. Every archive offers a unique perspective into this history and determining whether material is relevant for Holocaust research must take place on a case-by-case basis.

Feature **arc** magazine

Archivists showing Holocaust-related documents. © Courtesy of Yad Vashem.

19



Identification card of Hilda Ziri issued by the Landrat authorities in Müllheim, 12 January 1939. © Courtesy of Yad Vashem.

The IHRA's experts, together with heads of individual archives – those who know their collections better than anyone else – and leaders of national and international archival system networks, set out to develop a practical tool that would help archivists in that process.

The resulting Guidelines offer flexible, open-ended guidance on how to account for the geographical, temporal, and thematic diversity of relevant material. Archivists can apply the Guidelines to various areas of their work, including when assessing their collections, updating collection descriptions, responding to research requests, and ensuring adherence to Recital 158 of the GDPR.

Taking some of the guesswork out of Holocaust research

Many questions related to the Holocaust cannot be answered. Despite its notoriety as the most well-documented genocide in history, what remains is only a fraction of what existed, due to the efforts of the Nazis and their collaborators to destroy the evidence of their crimes, as well as the culture of those they murdered. This field is

one full of lacunas, and every piece we can glean from the full picture is precious. Applying a broad approach to identifying Holocaust-related material is one of the most important ways archivists can ensure that researchers have what they need to fill these gaps.

For Dr Anna Ullrich of the Leibniz Institute for Contemporary History in Munich, this would have helped take much of the guesswork out of her dissertation research. Her project dealt with antisemitic incidents in Germany that took place between World War I and the first years of Nazi rule, and with the advice German-Jewish Associations gave their members who experienced antisemitism. This project sat outside the usual 1933–1945 timeframe generally assigned to Holocaust research. This meant that, often, finding the required sources was the result of trial and error.

Sometimes, Ullrich would get lucky and find, for instance, that a collection described simply as “member correspondence” included extensive exchanges on antisemitic harassment during

a vacation in 1920s Germany. But she also had moments when she had travelled to an archive only to discover that the archival descriptions available online had over-promised.

"I sometimes wonder how much highly relevant material has remained uncovered," she told us, "simply because no specific emphasis was placed on questions of antisemitism and how Jewish men and women were excluded from German society well before 1933."

The EHRI Portal takes a proactive approach to facilitating Holocaust research

Ullrich's experience is far from unique. While a certain amount of trial and error is part of any research project, her story reminds us that helping researchers uncover the multifaceted nature of the Holocaust requires a proactive, concerted effort.

The EHRI Portal fills exactly that gap. Since 2010, EHRI has helped researchers navigate the scattered and fragmented landscape of Holocaust-related material. The EHRI Portal provides them with information on which institutions have relevant holdings, no matter where they are located, with detailed archival descriptions and overviews of archival situations in specific countries. In this way, the EHRI Portal facilitates transnational Holocaust research, connecting material and sharing it across borders.

While EHRI has always taken a broad, open-ended approach to identifying material for the Portal, it has thus far relied primarily on an internal working definition to do so. With the launch of the IHRA's Guidelines, this has all changed. EHRI now makes use of the internationally agreed-upon IHRA Guidelines to guide it in its work, making the decision-making process behind its Portal much more transparent.

IHRA Guidelines allow archivists to contribute to EHRI Portal

EHRI's use of the IHRA Guidelines has another effect: making it possible for archivists to play a very active role. Individual archivists can make use of the Guidelines' instructions and examples to assess (and/or reassess) their collections and alert EHRI to relevant holdings.

Until now, EHRI has been the one to reach out to individual institutions, working with them to fine-tune archival and collection descriptions to be provided on the Portal. The IHRA Guidelines allow for the relationship to become even more collaborative, by making it a two-way process.

Archivists critical to addressing today's challenges

Much has changed since Raul Hilberg first embarked on his lifelong quest to study and analyze the destruction of the European Jews. While Holocaust-related material remains scattered and fragmented, the infrastructure to connect it has never been more robust.

Today, archivists and their institutions are in an unprecedented position to effect real change in Holocaust research by:

- Taking a broad approach to identifying Holocaust-related material
- (Re-)assessing collections based on the *IHRA Guidelines for Identifying Relevant Documentation for Holocaust Research, Education and Remembrance*
- Informing EHRI of any holdings that are not yet included in the EHRI Portal (by emailing feedback@ehri-project.eu)

Doing so is important, especially now.

Antisemitism and Holocaust distortion – warping the facts Hilberg and many others have taken pains to establish – are inching towards the mainstream, making appearances in protests against coronavirus measures, in Parliaments the world over, and in the stated pretexts for war.

Holocaust research is never a purely academic concern, but a prerequisite for open and non-discriminatory societies across Europe and beyond. And archivists are key to strengthening it – both in times of war and peace.

Have you used the *IHRA Guidelines for Identifying Relevant Documentation for Holocaust Research, Education and Remembrance*? Tell us about your experience! Send an email to info@holocaustremembrance.com



How can creative reuse of archival material become a means to advocate for public engagement?

Katharina Bock explores the topic in conversation with **Lynsey Gillespie** at the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) and **Dr. Laura Aguiar** at Nerve Centre (NC) writing about their experiences of reusing archival material in creative workshops with the public.



For Lynsey Gillespie at the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) and Dr. Laura Aguiar at Nerve Centre (NC), a creative media arts centre based in Derry/Londonderry, collaboration has been the key to a flourishing relationship between the two institutions and the public. A cooperation that started in 2018 with the [“Making the Future”](#) project. Funded by the Northern Ireland PEACE program from the European Commission it brought together PRONI and NC but also National Museum NI and the Linen Hall Library in an effort to boost engagement with archive and museum collections in creative ways while improving cross-community relations in the process. With a successful wrap in 2021 a follow-up project supported financially by the National Lottery Heritage Fund [“CollabArchive”](#) enabled the partnership between PRONI and NC to continue. Within this digital volunteering project, as it is self-described, different audience groups are encouraged to creatively work with five different collection topics:

- The Roberta Hewitt Collection
- Emigrant letters from the 1800-1900s

- The Ulster Television Archive
- Asylum Records
- LGBTQ+ related material

What stands out is how versatile the digital engagement opportunities are when paired with a corresponding theme: from animation, podcasting, recording oral history interviews as a response to the collection or assembling an online exhibition using augmented reality and poetry. Furthermore, the project aims to pilot a novel and more sustainable model of volunteer engagement that can be done remotely using digital technologies. Looking at the project from a researcher's perspective there is much to learn about audience engagement, creative reuse of archival material and collaboration.

To understand this better I talked to Lynsey Gillespie and Dr. Laura Aguiar about their experiences. My first questions were about the collaboration between PRONI and NC and what makes it so successful. Laura Aguiar put forward the view that the connection between both institutions' respective strengths is essential, on the one hand an archivist view, with insights and knowledge about the collections

and how to navigate them and on the other hand a set of new eyes from someone with experience in the creative sector and digital technologies to see the material from a different perspective. By joining forces, Gillespie and Aguiar, representing PRONI and NC, were especially successful in getting young people and first-time visitors “through the door”. Their strategy involves offering skill building workshops, like movie editing, animation and podcasting as incentives to take part. Thus encouraged, the participants experienced history through a lens of creative engagement and making, rather than a school-like lesson or academic lecture. “For some participants taking part in our project inspired them to do their own research or creative project and even look into a career within the archive”, says Gillespie as she outlines how these projects brought a “small but steady” flock of new visitors and volunteers to PRONI. This illustrates how important these third party funded projects are and the impact they can have within an institution in particular in terms of audience engagement and outreach aspirations.



Filming workshop with Dr. Laura Aguiar and participants. © L.Aguiar

Both Laura and Lyndsey agree that it can be challenging to introduce and establish novel ways of public engagement with cultural heritage and in this case with and within archives. It might take some convincing within an institution to get everyone on board and the necessary funding lined up, to bravely try something new, different and sometimes experimental. The diverse opportunities created for the public to interact with historic records within projects like CollabArchive show what good and innovative participation with archival collections can look like in the 21st century. Something that is echoed by the overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants. Although the outputs from the projects are being included into PRONI's catalogue, Aguiar would wish for "more time to reflect, reassess and learn from previous experiences to improve for future possibilities and follow on projects". So there remains a lot of potential for future projects as the collaboration comes to an end this year - at least for the time being.

Personally, I would argue that projects like this make archival collections more accessible for the wider public and can create a first point of contact for non-visitors based on modern engagement preferences and considering up to date user perspectives. Opening collections and facilitating creative reuse of archival material with support from archivists and experienced creative producers can thus become a means to advocate for a new way of public engagement.

This article was written by Katharina Bock. She is a PhD candidate and MSCA fellow at Queen's University Belfast where she is researching how creative reuse of digital archival material impacts people's relationship with cultural heritage online.



Lynsey Gillespie working with a participant. © L.Aguiar



Dr. Laura Aguiar and Lynsey Gillespie working together.

The work continues – an update on the Diversity Allies

Richard Wragg, chair of the Diversity Allies, gives an overview of the work they have undertaken and encourages others to step forward.



At the ARA conference in Chester, I joined Jenny Moran and Ruth MacLeod in taking stock of recent and forthcoming equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) activities. A part of the discussion considered the establishment and remit of the Diversity Allies. We were first set up, in August 2020, to undertake training and improve our own understanding about EDI work, and then advocate for both within the sector. However, it quickly became apparent that we needed (and wanted) to do more. Over the past two-and-a-bit years we've been an active group but, on reflection, it has taken us some time to rethink our role and place within the ARA.

During the conference session, Jenny articulated the EDI work that the ARA will be undertaking over the coming year and how the Diversity Allies will be involved in a structured way. The ARA's activities will include work to embed good practice in the workplace and a careful assessment of the sector workforce. The Allies will support these activities by commenting on the design of training programmes and through the development of specific responses to the results of survey analysis. It's right that the Diversity Allies should play a part in the work of the ARA, particularly as concepts of EDI need to run through everything the Association does. Crucially, though, the Allies will retain some autonomy – we welcome contact by non-ARA members – and this enables us to engage openly and honestly. The Allies have already provided feedback within the sector, for example in connection to the development of the Accreditation standard.

Underpinning the ARA's activities and, indeed, those of the Diversity Allies, will be a simple but effective approach: undertake research; produce something that responds to the outcomes of that research; develop a strategy for use; test, analyse the results and then communicate widely. The Diversity Allies, specifically, have been taking this approach in the area of decolonising catalogues. In September 2021 the Allies held a workshop with practitioners in the sector (the 'research'). This workshop identified the need for some sector-specific guidance and curated case-studies (the 'something').

on reflection, it has taken us some time to rethink our role and place within the ARA.

The Diversity Allies Inclusive Cataloguing working group is now in a position to produce guidance and will complete this work over the next twelve months. In the meantime, please have a look at the series of blogs highlighted in the last issue of ARC Magazine. In the posts, individual Diversity Allies reflect on the approach to cataloguing that they have taken in their own workplaces. What comes through in the series of texts is that activities will vary from place to place, depending particularly on the type of collection held by an institution. Despite this, many common threads can be found that will be more generally relevant. The posts can be read at www.archives.org.uk/news/tag/Decolonising+Blogs.

A second major piece of work that is being led by the Allies is in relation to engaging with marginalised communities. Here, we will be working in solidarity and partnership to explore and improve areas of activity. Plans to run a series of conversations with marginalised communities are progressing well and a guidance document has been written. We are now consulting within and outside of the record-keeping sector to ensure the document is useful.

From the outset, it has been the intention that the Diversity Allies should support the ARA regions. This can mean a number of things, depending on

what is most useful at a local level. In some cases, Allies have attended committee meetings, either to give presentations or to engage in discussions about regional activities. Through a network of contacts, the Allies can also offer support to individuals or services.

Being a Diversity Ally is not to step forward as an expert with all the answers. The Allies are engaged in a variety of activities with the intention of supporting a more diverse record-keeping sector and with that comes the development of valuable experience. However, we recognise that we're all learning, and exploring challenging concepts together is a part of what we do. Nevertheless, the Allies seek to be an active group, we want to contribute to change and not act as bystanders. That might mean being a confidant in one-to-one conversations. This is a major reason why we wish to work closely with the ARA but retain a position of critical friendship whenever it's needed.

The Diversity Allies can also support record-keeping services whether by sharing guidance and ideas or by facilitating introductions. This works particularly well at a regional level and we are starting to see networks develop – around cataloguing and also working with particular content – that the Allies can support (though we do not seek to take ownership of initiatives).

For our work to continue, to grow, and to be effective we need your help. If you would like to contribute to the activities of the Diversity Allies, or would like more information about what will be involved, then please get in touch by emailing diversityandinclusion@archives.org.uk.

Students at Cardiff University. © Archives and Records Council Wales



13/09/2022

Decolonising in practice: the strangers' case



06/09/2022

Decolonising the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine Archives Service



30/08/2022

Inclusive Cataloguing at the Historic England Archive



23/08/2022

Decolonisation, equity and inclusivity at Hull University Archives



16/08/2022

Decolonising: to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up



09/08/2022

Decolonising: What country, friends, is this?

Your involvement could be for a specific project or period of time or on an ongoing basis. We would welcome members regardless of location but are particularly interested in hearing from colleagues who would like to join our network in the Northern Region. Whether to offer support, or just to find out more about the Diversity Allies, please do get in touch.

Richard Wragg is the Collections Manager at the University of Sussex.

Decolonising the Catalogue blogs on the ARA Website



Icam at the ARA Conference 2022

Icam Archive Systems Ltd were one of many exhibitors that attended the ARA Conference 2022 in Chester. Richard Anteney, Director of Icam wanted to share his positive experience:

“The location was the Crowne Plaza Hotel which was spacious and clean with excellent amenities. When we arrived on Tuesday afternoon, for set up purposes, the hotel staff were friendly and very helpful. As you can see from the photo of our stand, we utilised the available space in the assigned Chester Suite to meet our showcasing needs and to share information (and chocolates!) with the delegates on the Wednesday and Thursday of the Conference.

It was lovely to meet up with old and new friends from the record-keeping profession, at what is arguably the largest gathering of our marketplace in the UK and Ireland. For us at Icam,



Icam exhibiting stand at ARA Conference in Chester 2022. © Richard Anteney

the ARA Conference is one of our highlights of the year so “onwards and upwards” towards Belfast in 2023. We would like to take this opportunity to say

thank you to John, Lorraine and the Board and members of the Archives and Records Association UK and Ireland for organising another wonderful event.”

The UK National Archives' new advocacy toolkit

The UK National Archives has launched its new advocacy toolkit through its Higher Education Archives Programme (HEAP). Developed by consultant Kevin Bolton, the toolkit offers a simple four-step approach to advocacy, supported by new case studies, checklists and suggestions for further reading. With stakeholders less likely to be on site, it's now more important than ever to be able to communicate clearly and effectively about the value of your archive service. This toolkit can help any archive (within higher education or not) and is divided into small digestible sections to fit around your other commitments.

Support for Ukraine's archives

The State Archival Service of Ukraine has announced a charity account to support Ukrainian archival institutions endangered by Russia's invasion. The charity account will help preserve the documentary heritage of Ukraine and support the recovery of these archives' coordinated work and activities.

They are reaching out to concerned citizens, organisations and colleagues from Ukraine and all over the world to donate funds to the charity account. Even small donations will make a significant difference. Received funds will be used to rebuild archives and ensure their proper functioning during wartime. They will regularly report on the charity account via their website.

You can find out more and donate [here](#).



Researching ARC Magazine on the new PastView online publishing platform

In the past we have always tried to respond to questions about back issues as swiftly as possible but relying on the good will of others and their ability to interpret your search request is inevitably less satisfactory than being able to direct the process yourself. Now that ARC Magazine's back issues are available on [PastView](#), everyone has the freedom to search not just one magazine, but all of them simultaneously, using a single search term.

Following the launch of the new magazine portal on 6th July 2022, we made available all digital issues of ARC Magazine, dating back to 2011, enabling all the records to be accessed through PastView's online publishing platform. The three most recent issues will continue to be available to members only, through a secure login, while the remainder

will be available to all. Each magazine is fully searchable, within and across the issues, with rich metadata providing visitors with sophisticated search facilities.

Intrigued by the new microsite, and with the privilege of being the first to trial it, TownsWeb Archiving (TWA) decided to track their very own ARC Magazine presence, focusing on the lifetime of TWA Digitisation Grant.

Marshall Parr of TownsWeb says:

"With 130 issues, there was a lot to explore, but comprehensive search filters meant we could quickly drill down to 17 relevant results. Starting with the very first grant announcement back in 2017, the issues document the development of the grant as it sought to better support the needs of the industry,

bringing news about COVID-19, the decision to take a break in 2021, and the additional grant award for 2022, as well as the unprecedented revisions to our match funding offer.

Uncovering the history of the TWA grant was an absolute pleasure, and seeing its own history recorded throughout the ARC Magazine was a wonderful opportunity. In fact, it didn't feel like work at all!"

With their collection now online, the ARA is fully prepared to provide the industry with all the stories, news and information it could possibly need.

You can read more about TownsWeb Archiving's own journey of discovery through the ARC Magazine collection in an online article [here](#).

Instantly search 130 ARC Magazine issues...

arc magazine

PastView

Developed by: TownsWeb Archiving

“Model New Town” Archive Project Success at Essex Record Office

The Essex Record Office has held for over thirty years more than 400 boxes of records of Harlow Development Corporation, the body which managed creation of the New Town of Harlow from 1947 to 1980. The Essex borough is a model example of post-war “New Towns” created under powers granted by the Attlee government in 1946, which aimed to relocate populations from substandard housing following the Second World War.

Essex Record Office had long been aware of the need to provide wider access to these significant research materials through the creation of an accurate and detailed catalogue. In 2020 we were delighted, therefore, to receive an Archives Revealed cataloguing grant for a project titled “The Model New Town”. This had at its core the creation of a new online catalogue which is now completed and available for all at Essex Archives Online, the Essex Record Office’s online catalogue and image [portal](#), under the reference A/TH.

Records include key functions of the Corporation, such as minutes and agenda of the Board and core papers from departments managing Administration, Social Development, Legal, Finance and Technical services. Challenges during the project included the partial shutdown of facilities for much of the pandemic, although Essex Record Office was fortunate in being able to allow staff into the Record Office to work in socially distanced conditions throughout 2021. Outreach successes have included a centre-page spread in the Winter 2022 Essex Explorer magazine and even the deposit of an historic 17th century map of Harlow.

Harlow is also well known for its firm commitment to arts and culture, especially sculpture, and a new guide to resources for sculpture was able to be created as part of the project which can be viewed [here](#).

The “Model New Town” project additionally fed into planning and knowledge sharing for the Wellcome-



Harlow Development Corporation Records: New Town Master Plan © Image reproduced courtesy of Essex Record Office



Harlow Development Corporation Records: The Hides, Harlow.
© Image reproduced courtesy of Essex Record Office



Harlow Development Corporation
Records: Clock House and
Hugh's Tower, Harlow. © Image
reproduced courtesy of Essex
Record Office

funded 'New Jerusalem's' project to catalogue New Town archives across the UK, about which more can be found out [here](#).

Essex Record Office would again like to thank The UK

National Archives who made the cataloguing of the Harlow Development Corporation records possible through an Archives Revealed Cataloguing Grant supported by The Pilgrim Trust and The Wolfson Foundation.

Royal Botanic Gardens Kew and the Museum of English Rural Life, University of Reading have announced a new subject specialist network: Plants, Places and People.

Supported by The UK National Archive's Networks for Change scheme, the network will bring together a diverse group of archives with holdings covering collections of botanical, agricultural and horticultural archives, records of landscape preservation, landscape architecture and land management.

The network will provide a supportive, inclusive and diverse platform that champions holdings on living landscapes, plants, their place in communities, and the people who work with them. Five key areas of focus are:

- Promote visibility, wider understanding and greater use of archives in this subject area

- Work to increase accessibility and relevance of resources, including the creation of a network website and online exhibitions
- Improve coordination of acquisitions and rescues, including developing strategies to meet challenges of born-digital records, and – by taking an inclusive approach – capturing records that would otherwise be lost
- Act as a forum for development of funded research collaborations, enabling archives to be proactive in research and delivery of research impact relating to their collections

- Develop a partnership vision and governance structure

Plants, Places and People currently has the support of archives including the National Trust, Black Environment Network, Bedgebury National Pinetum and Forest, Cambridge University Herbarium and Library for the Department of Plant Sciences, Garden Museum, Linnean Society, Harper Adams University, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and The Mills Archive Trust.

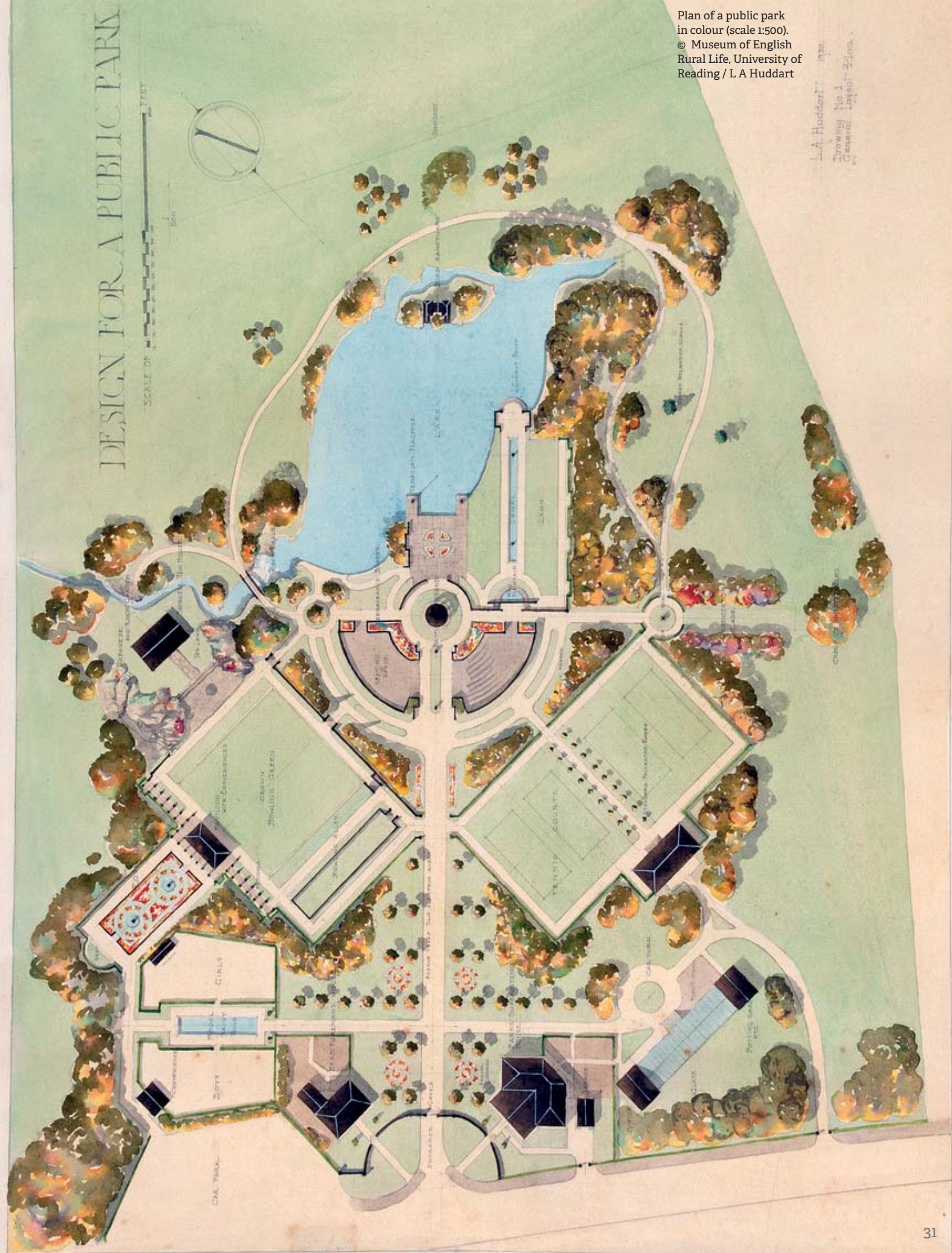
If you are interested in the network please contact the network coordinator, Lily Colgan, at l.colgan@kew.org.



Photograph of two women working the land in the gardens during World War II
© Image reproduced courtesy Kew Gardens

Plan of a public park
in colour (scale 1:500).
© Museum of English
Rural Life, University of
Reading / L A Huddart

L.A. Huddart 1920
Drawing No 1
General Layout 21/2/20



London Metropolitan Archives makes filmed interviews of HIV/AIDS epidemic publicly available

London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) has announced that the first 40 interviews of the National HIV Story Trust (NHST) are now open to the public.

The interviews could be made accessible thanks to a substantial grant by the Wellcome Trust, through its Research Resources in Medical History scheme, that funded the extensive cataloguing and digital editing required to make each film available.

The filmed interviews were compiled by the NHST to record the personal stories of people impacted by HIV/AIDS in the United Kingdom. The project set out to document the

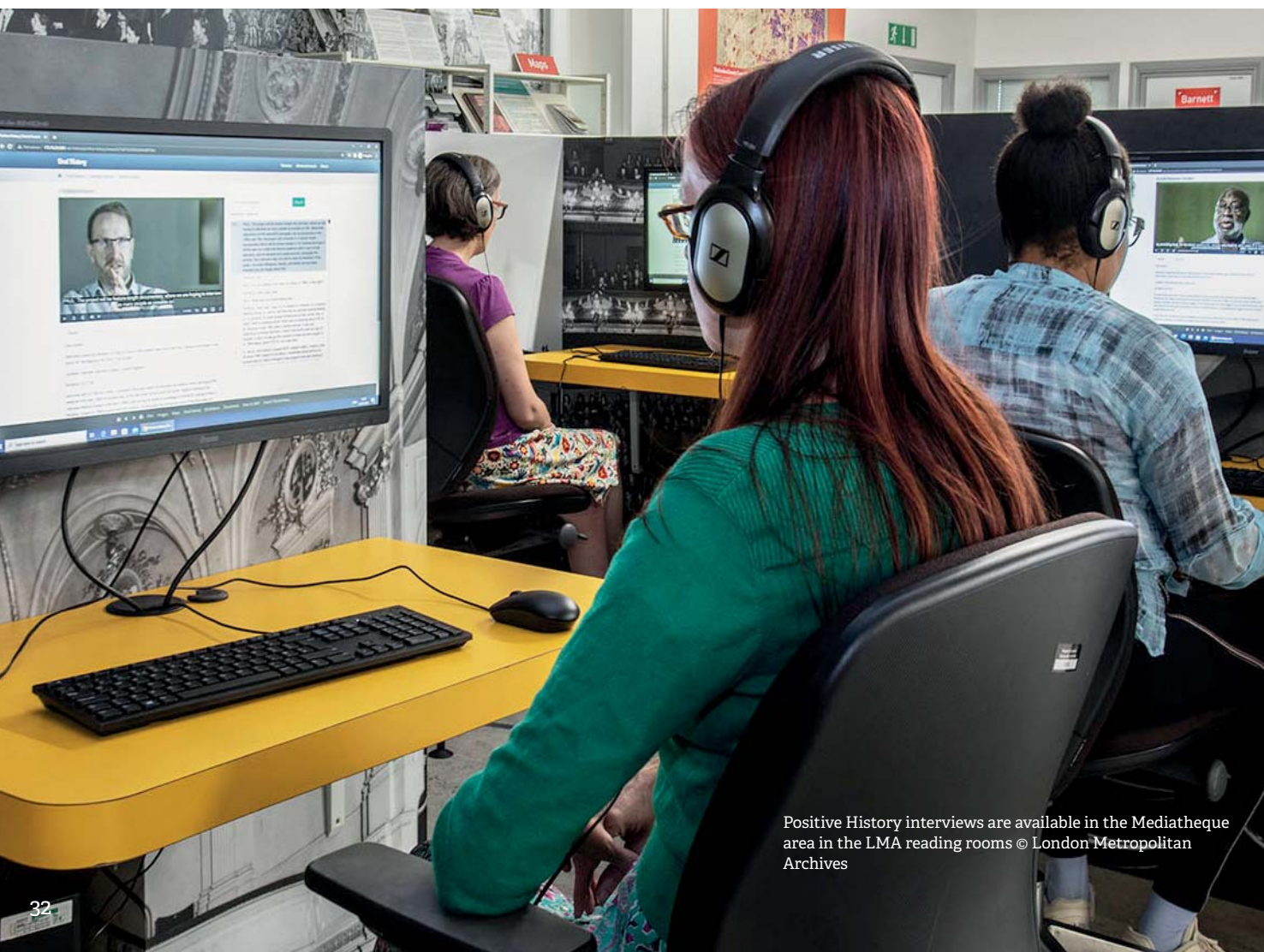
first-hand accounts of 100 individuals whose lives were shaped by the HIV epidemic, including those diagnosed with the virus in the 1980s-1990s, the carers and friends who supported and sadly lost loved ones during the epidemic, and the healthcare workers and activists who cared and advocated for them.

The films are available to view in the Mediatheque space in the public rooms at LMA. The Mediatheque is LMA's digital access point and has multiple terminals and headsets for visitors to access the interviews, and explore other oral histories, films, or digital documents in the wider LMA digital collection which are not available online. Each film

available has been fully transcribed and subtitled allowing searching, both within the transcript of an individual interview, and across all the interviews in the collection, with over 40 hours of material in this first release.

All interviews have undergone an extensive data protection and sensitivity review. Due to the sensitive subject matter of the interviews, they will only be able to view on-site. However, summaries of the available interviews can be found on LMA's online catalogue.

For more information on the project please visit LMA's website [here](#).



Positive History interviews are available in the Mediatheque area in the LMA reading rooms © London Metropolitan Archives

Kentish publisher's archive saved for local history

When a business becomes insolvent and is wound up, it is rare that its records are kept for posterity, as a lasting legacy of its contribution, in a publicly accessible archive. Many business archives can be vital to understanding changing landscapes, product lines and trends in society. One of the biggest challenges for archivists and academics on the Crisis Management Team (CMT) for Business Archives is ensuring that records at risk are identified and retrieved quickly once a business is liquidated. Often premises need to be sold or given up quickly and material can be in immediate danger of disposal.

In order to raise awareness to administrators and liquidators of businesses, the CMT contacted the Insolvency Practitioners Association (IPA) to promote CMT guidance. As a result, the IPA put a link on their website to the CMT's best practice guidelines (which are hosted on the Managing Business Archives website) and published an article in their newsletter.

As a result of reading the guidance, Maxwell Davies, liquidators, contacted Richard Wiltshire, Business Archives Council representative on the CMT on 21st June to let him know that Mail Publications Limited, a local publisher near Maidstone, Kent, would be going into liquidation the following week. Richard contacted Mark Bateson at Kent Archives and Local History (KALHS), who went to survey the records on 24th June. Six days later, Mark returned to Mail Publications Ltd with KALHS Service Manager, Sarah Stanley. Helped by the company's co-founder and co-owner Claire Proctor, the two of them transferred relevant material to the Kent History and Library Centre.

Founded in 1997, Mail Publications was a major local news publisher and supporter of campaigns in the Maidstone and Malling area. The company's main title was Downs Mail (the reference being to The North Downs, the range of hills overlooking the paper's distribution area). Mark and Sarah were able to rescue Downs Mail almost in its entirety, along

with some minutes and financial records. Sadly, the firm's photographic collection had been disposed of some years previously.

As in so many liquidation cases, speed really was of the essence – thanks to that proactive call from Maxwell Davies, the CMT was able to alert Kent Archives and Local History, who sprang into action with real momentum, ensuring that this unique local resource will be preserved for future research.

For further information and advice contact:

www.kentarchives.org.uk

insolvency-practitioners.org.uk

businessarchivescouncil.org.uk

businessarchivescouncil.org.uk/activities/objectives/risk

© Courtesy of Kent Archives and Local History Service





Backchat



Ally McConnell talks to **Sean Rippington**, who works currently at the University of St Andrews, about his route into the archives profession and the challenges faced in the profession today.

Tell us about your pathway into the archive profession: what made you decide to pursue this career?

I studied for a science degree and spent a couple of summers at university working in labs, and realised it wasn't going to be the career for me! When I graduated I had no idea what to do. I was looking around for graduate schemes or post-graduate trainee roles and saw that you could spend a year at Oxford or Cambridge learning to be a librarian or archivist, which seemed like it would be an interesting change of pace and relatively low commitment. I loved libraries as a kid but didn't really know what archives were.

I was able to live with my Mum for a year while I volunteered and got part-time work at various libraries, archives, and the International Records Management Trust, before getting on the Oxford University Libraries trainee scheme at Magdalen College. That was in 2010, so I guess the commitment turned out to be greater than anticipated.

You work now at the University of St Andrews. Tell us about your role.

I think I'm the only person in the world with the job title Digital Archives and Copyright Manager. The role was originally created as Digital Archives Officer, with responsibility for managing and preserving digital records. Over the years it has expanded to include some preservation responsibility for other kinds of digital content across the university (including things like corporate web content, research data, theses, open access publications, audiovisual, and digital heritage content).

The copyright bit was added when our previous copyright manager retired in 2018, and her responsibilities were added to my job description. That covers all copyright aspects at the university, so not all of it is archives-related – though it has been really useful for understanding licensing and reuse issues relating to our archives.

I've been here since March 2015 – so quite a long time, albeit less than quite a few of my colleagues! As you can see above, the job has changed quite a bit in that time so the job often feels new, even if I'm not.



Sean Rippington at the University of St Andrews

What opportunities do you have to work in partnership with other parts of the university? Do you do much collaborative work?

We're a merged library, archive, and museum unit, and the digital preservation remit isn't just archive focused, so I do get to spend a lot of time working with people in other directorates and business units. It's a fun challenge and you can learn a lot from the different experiences and approaches you come across. It can be a bit mind-bending trying to juggle all the different vocabulary, processes and priorities though!

I'm less likely to work directly with students or academics, though I do a bit of instruction for incoming postgraduates and occasionally speak to students on our Museum and Heritage Studies (MLitt) course.

I'm also fairly involved with the Scottish Council on Archives, Community Archives and Heritage Group (Scotland), the Digital Preservation Coalition, and Research Libraries UK, and have been involved in things like booksprints (a method of creating a book collaboratively in a short period of time), knowledge sharing presentations and delivering training events via those groups.

Martyrs Kirk Research Library at The University of St Andrews.
© The University of St Andrews.

What challenges do you face in your work with digital records?

Over the pandemic there was an explosion in the number of options for staff to create and manage digital records – databases within business units, MS Teams, Sharepoint, OneDrive, shared drives, website content management systems etc, and the related training and governance is lagging behind. So there's a lot of work to rationalise all that (which is a moving target) while also trying to deal with these systems and their content from a preservation standpoint – how to export data satisfactorily and potentially preserve system functionality. Meanwhile I'm conscious that people are still talking about how to preserve email, which has been around since the 1970s and still doesn't feel solved!

Is there any one person in your professional life that you feel has been a particular influence for you?

It's probably unfair to pick out one person, but I could suggest people like Dr James Lowry, Dr Robin-Darwall Smith, and Rachel Hart, who all gave me guidance (and jobs!) at crucial stages. I would be doing something else if not for them. But really a lot of people have been very kind and supportive to me along the way – that's a great strength of our profession, and I hope other people feel that too.



And finally **arc**magazine

Our next edition of the **ARC Magazine** is due out in January/February 2023 so look out for it in your inboxes. If you have any content suggestions for future editions, please email ARC Magazine arceditors@archives.org.uk



All our back issues are now on our new TownsWeb hosting platform [here](#)

aratoday

Meanwhile, ARA Today, our electronic members' bulletin which contains all the latest ARA and industry news, is circulated on the first Wednesday of each month. Please send any content suggestions for future editions of ARA Today to deborah.mason@archives.org.uk.



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