



Archives & Records  
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UK & Ireland

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## Education and Learning Issue

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Crowne Plaza, Chester  
2nd – 4th September

Conference  
2020

We ♥ Records



# Welcome...

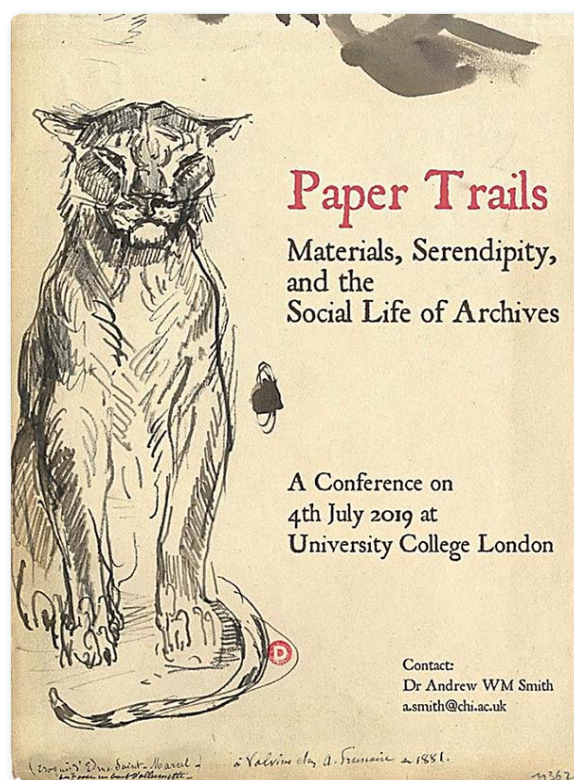


## Welcome to the Archives for Learning and Education issue of ARC

Reflecting on the range of contributions to this issue, my first as Joint Editor, I can't help but recognise how committed the ALES community is to developing innovative and exciting methods for providing access and engaging audiences. There are reports here from a variety of organisations, from university and specialist collections, to county record offices and school archives. What they share is a commitment to outreach and collaboration across sectors and professions; efforts which are enriching for both the audiences they find, and for the keepers' own understanding of their collections.

Many thanks go to the section coordinator Suzanne Shouesmith for her work gathering and selecting from the many submissions, and to the ALES contributors, without whom this issue would not have been possible.

**Adele Clarke**  
ARC Editor



### Archives and paper trails: establishing new communities of learning and collaboration

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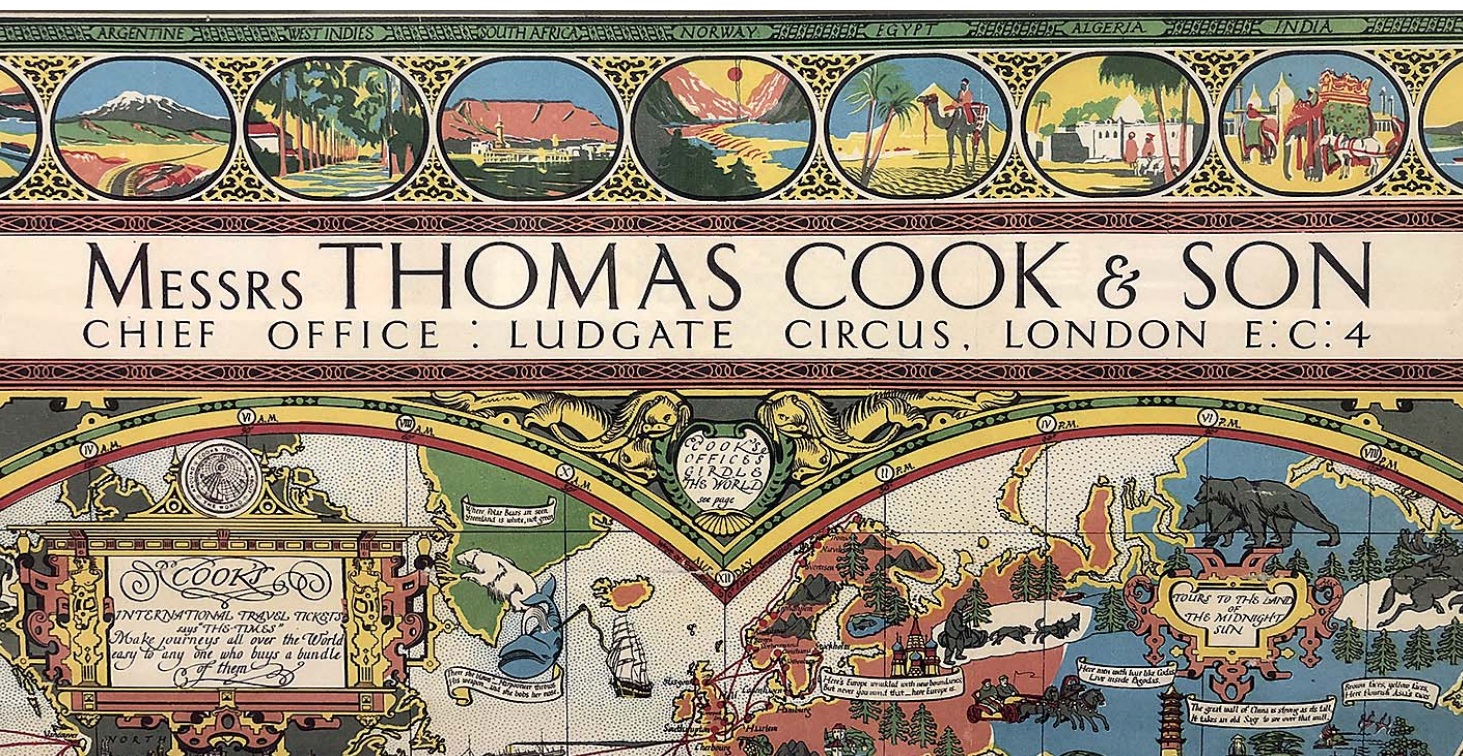
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# Openinglines



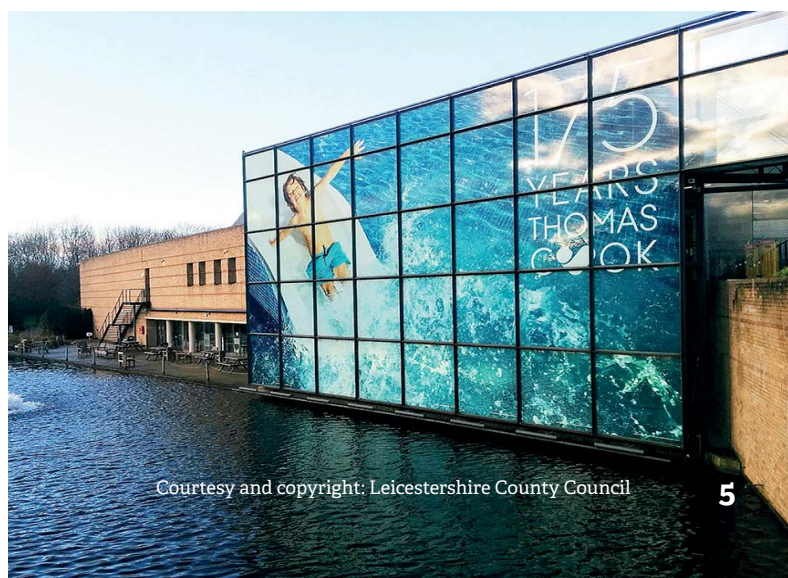
## Thomas Cook Archive saved for the nation

**Richard Wiltshire**, of the Business Archives Council, recounts how the Crisis Management Team for Business Archives spearheaded the effort to protect the future of the Thomas Cook collection.



In September 2019 the 178 year-old travel company Thomas Cook collapsed, leading to the loss of thousands of jobs and leaving customers stranded on holiday or with a lost booking. The firm's archive, an asset of international importance, was also put at immediate risk from potential disposal by division and sale.

The Crisis Management Team for Business Archives is formed of archivists and academics who act on cases where records may be at risk. As a team member representing the Business Archives Council (BAC) I contacted the Official Receiver, the appointed liquidator of the Thomas Cook Group, to convene a



Courtesy and copyright: Leicestershire County Council

meeting to discuss a strategy for the archive's future.

There were several key factors in reaching a successful conclusion for the collection:

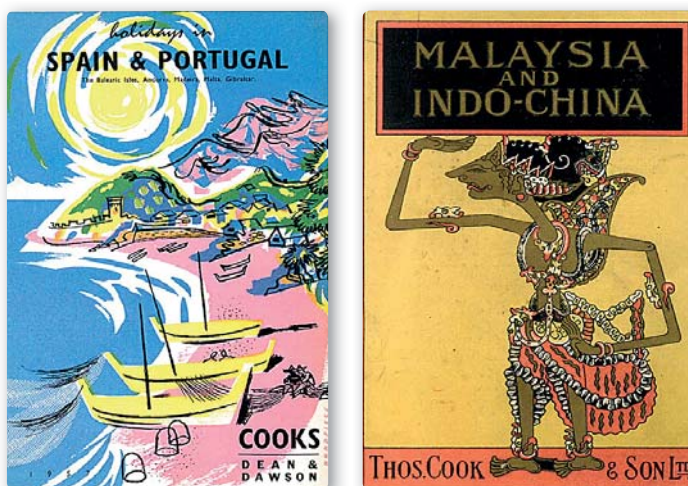
- The Crisis Management Team and the Business Archives Council proved to be invaluable as independent professional entities who lead the way forward.
- The use of social media to share researchers' testimonies and concerns about the archive. Over 130 messages were captured by the Association of Business Historians as evidence of the archive's research and broader societal value.
- A face-to-face meeting at Peterborough was of great importance as it enabled the voices of archive and museum professionals, researchers, the liquidator and Thomas Cook staff, to be heard and understood.
- The development of a strategy with specific tools (e.g. a proven gift agreement and decision framework) and channelling the archive community's investment in the outcome, gave assurance to the liquidator. This also helped archivists who were under pressure to pursue deposit and reassured researchers and stakeholders to know that action was being taken.
- To meet the liquidator's objective, six artefacts with high monetary value are being sold. Liaison with the Museums Association ensured their members were informed of the sale. I was shocked by the attitude of one heritage organisation which encouraged the break-up of the collection through their wish to buy only a specific section. However, all-in-all this has been a positive experience of organisations working together to save the material.
- The application process for repositories interested in acquiring the collection involved the completion of a framework of questions. I appreciated the willingness of key individuals in the sector to volunteer their time alongside the Official Receiver, to assess applications at short notice. It equalled a fair process and a well-considered decision was reached.

The judges were unanimous in awarding the collection to the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland (ROLLR), the service for the region where Thomas Cook began in 1841. ROLLR did a fantastic job to organise the move of 300 linear shelf metres of archives and artefacts in December 2019, with only 3 weeks to complete it, including the transfer of a large, stained-glass, First World War memorial window.

This successful deposit is a landmark moment. With it, our sector has the opportunity to form



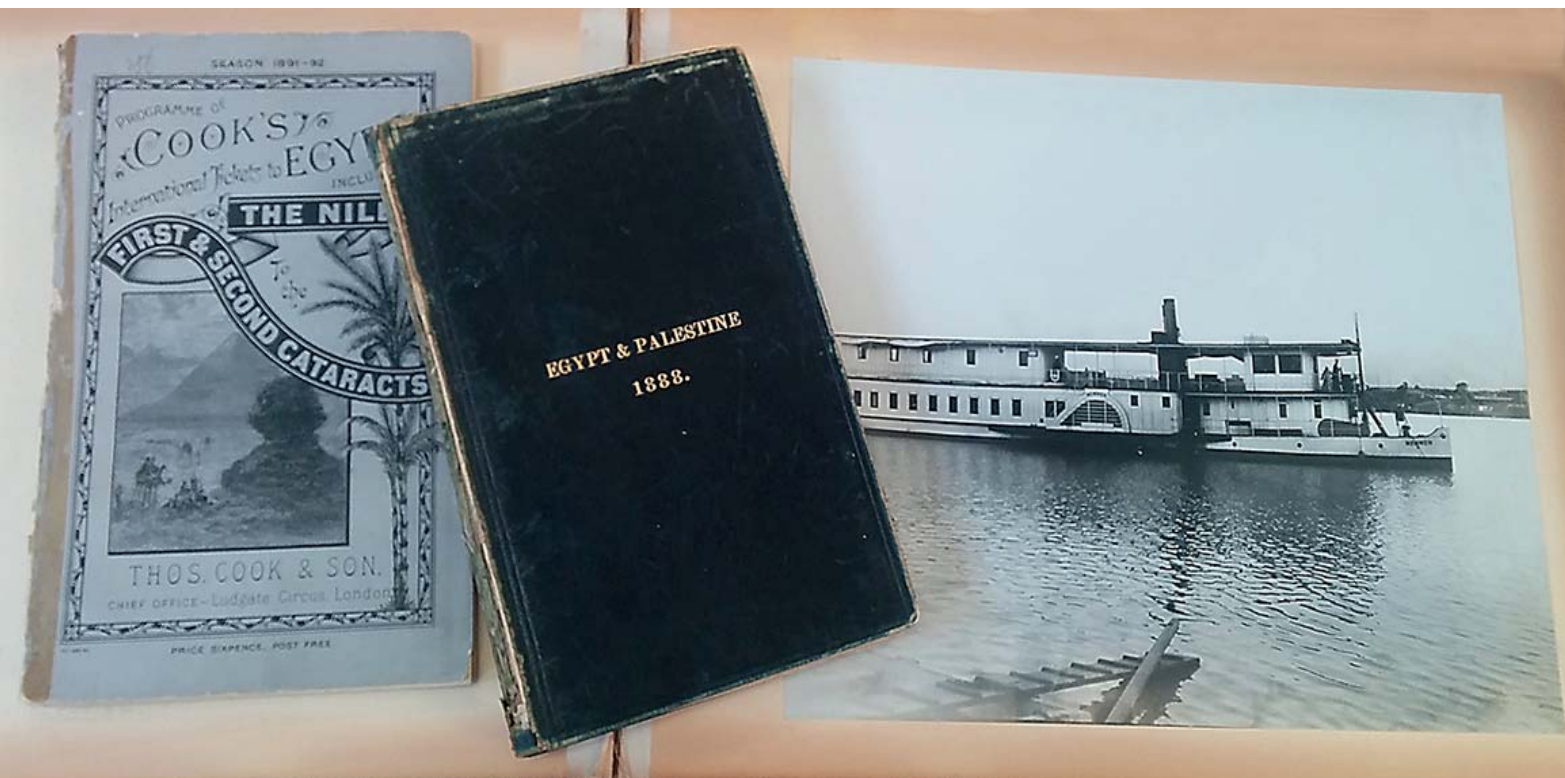
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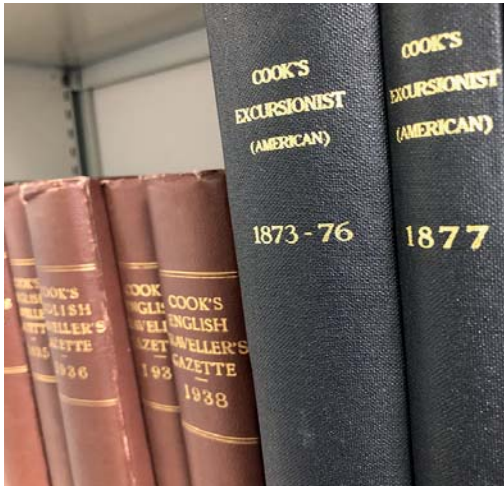
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ROLLR



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Courtesy and copyright: Leicestershire County Council

strong policy with insolvency practitioners and safeguard the archives of failed businesses and charities. The insolvency profession itself has a code of ethics which requires practitioners to understand the special context of each liquidation. Past attempts to meaningfully engage with insolvency professional associations have failed but now is the time to try again!

A big thank you to ROLLR, the Official Receiver and agents, Thomas Cook staff, judges, participating repositories and researchers for all your support in achieving this cracking result.

For guidance for archivists working with insolvency practitioners, and for contact details for the Crisis Management Team if you identify collections at risk, see our website: [www.managingbusinessarchives.co.uk](http://www.managingbusinessarchives.co.uk).

# Collecting matters

Making 'Mental Health on Record': a film by The National Archives.

**Emily Morris**, Family and Young People's Programme Officer, describes how government records informed a sensitive and personal filmmaking project.

The Education and Outreach team at The National Archives will soon release 'Mental Health on Record', a stop-motion animation film made by a group of young people which explores how contemporary views on mental health can be used to interpret historical records on the subject. Inspired by mental health records from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the project was co-led by filmmaker Nigel Kellaway, in partnership with Richmond Borough Mind and Jon Bartlett, a mental health first-aid consultant.

The film focuses on the 'hidden' stories of individuals in our collection and explores their personal experiences of mental health. The documents originate from a range of sources including the Prison Commission, Central Criminal Court and the War Office. These documents demonstrate how perceptions of mental health issues have changed over time and use language like 'lunatic', 'hysterical' and 'eccentric' to describe individuals experiencing mental health difficulties.

A key aspect of the project was the creative and emotional journey the young participants took during the film-making process last August. While the film is rooted in the historical documents, working with Mind and Jon gave the contributors an opportunity to speak candidly about their own mental wellbeing. One participant drew upon a session with Mind to animate the 'five ways to wellbeing', highlighting the parallels between contemporary experiences and the stories depicted in the records.

'Mental Health on Record' is the fourth instalment of a young people's project funded by the Friends of The National Archives. The film will become available on our website on 19 February, alongside a selection of learning resources.

You can learn more about the 'Archives for Everyone' strategy at: [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/our-role/plans-policies-performance-and-projects/our-plans/archives-for-everyone/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/our-role/plans-policies-performance-and-projects/our-plans/archives-for-everyone/).

# Professional development news

A Professional Development Programme update from **Chris Sheridan**, Head of Professional Standards and Development.



## Professional Development Programme - updated guidance and examples

We've recently published updated guidance and information for those working towards Foundation, Registered or Fellow status. This includes more examples of completed competency forms. An important development is the recommendation from our assessor team that candidates aim to demonstrate one or two of the examples presented under each competency level.

So, when benchmarking yourself against the competency framework, or thinking about how you will use your work experience to demonstrate how you meet your chosen competency levels, make sure you choose the examples carefully. Some competency levels offer one or two examples, but others offer four or five. Don't try and demonstrate all those listed, just choose one or two!

We've also published completed Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Review forms to help Registered Members get to grips with the requirements of the CPD Review. Please visit the programme website for more information [archivesandrecords.smapply.io/](http://archivesandrecords.smapply.io/).

## Trouble finding a mentor?

Are you interested in working towards Foundation or Registered status but are struggling to find a mentor? It is important that you try to identify your own mentor where possible. Developing and maintaining a professional network is a key benefit of being part of the record keeping profession. The more like-minded professionals you can connect with, the better. There are no restrictions on who can become a mentor.

We regularly receive enquiries from those interested in qualifying with us but who don't work with ARA members. Although we recommend mentors are members of the ARA, this is only a recommendation. We want Foundation and Registered Membership to be inclusive and achievable for all.

Your mentor should be someone with whom you feel comfortable discussing your development. They might be a colleague or person known to you at your workplace, or a previous colleague or line manager. If there is no one suitable within your current network of contacts, then attending ARA Nation/Region events and meetings is a good way to meet more ARA members and develop your network. To contact your local ARA Nation/Region please visit the ARA website [www.archives.org.uk/](http://www.archives.org.uk/).

It is important to note that mentors do not need to be located near you. Mentoring can be provided via Skype or phone, whatever suits your circumstances. This is particularly useful for mentors and candidates located in different regions, or different countries.

Any candidate without a mentor will receive a list of potential mentors upon their enrolment into the programme. The list contains contact details of ARA members willing to mentor candidates, but we are unable to guarantee their availability.

For anyone interested in becoming a mentor, our guide is a good starting point and a copy is available from the programme website [archivesandrecords.smapply.io/res/p/programme-guidance/](http://archivesandrecords.smapply.io/res/p/programme-guidance/).

### **We're recruiting more Assessors**

The ARA's Assessor team perform a key voluntary role by ensuring that applications for Foundation, Registered and Fellow status meet the required standards. Assessors also evaluate the evidence submitted by members for their CPD Review.

We're looking to recruit more Registered members to this voluntary role. Training is provided, and Assessors are invited to an annual meeting hosted by the ARA. This provides a fantastic opportunity to share experience and information, advise the ARA of matters of concern, and review published guidance and advice.

Anyone looking to develop their own governance, line management and critical thinking competencies, for example, would find the role beneficial. It's also a great way to gain perspective and expertise whilst contributing to the development of the profession and supporting the next generation of ARA members. Please contact me [chris.sheridan@archives.org.uk](mailto:chris.sheridan@archives.org.uk) if you would like to know more.

# Chair's welcome

**Alexandra Healey,**  
Chair of ARA's  
Archives for Learning  
and Education  
Section (ALES),  
welcomes you to our  
issue.



This has been the ALES' first full year as a refreshed committee and we've had a fantastic and busy time. Firstly, I want to thank everyone who contributed articles for this special edition of ARC. We were overwhelmed with contributions and wished we could have included all of them.

The range and high quality of submissions was echoed in the array of applications to speak at our January 2020 event on using archives to support teaching in Higher Education. It's been fantastic to hear about the exciting projects taking place across the sector in the UK and Ireland, and we're happy to be able to share some of these via our ARA Learning blog.

The blog was launched in April 2019 and has been a great way to share reflections on CPD events and case studies from the sector, among other things. The blog is updated at least once a month, and you can subscribe for free from any email address to get the latest stories delivered to your inbox. If you'd like to contribute an article for the blog, about an event you've attended, project you've participated in, or reviewing a tool or publication you've used, then please get in touch with us.

In addition to our January event, in June we will be providing a training event offering basic building blocks for education outreach. The training will be led by Douglas Roberts, Education Officer for the Scottish Council on Archives, and promises some valuable grounding in this area from an experienced training provider. If you would like to see similar training in your nation/region, please let us know.

To be first to know about our activities, be sure to sign up as an ALES member. You can also keep updated by following us on Twitter (@ARALearning) and subscribing to our blog ([www.aralearning.wordpress.com](http://www.aralearning.wordpress.com)). We welcome suggestions and comments, and you can get in touch with us at [ales@archives.org.uk](mailto:ales@archives.org.uk).



Pupils 'meeting' Galileo and learning his principles for the telescope. Once the children had built a replica telescope they tested it by trying to read Latin text placed across the School's courtyard. Image courtesy of Ernie Saverese.

# Jacobean Day to mark the 400th anniversary of Alleyn's College of God's Gift and Alleyn's School

**Nicola Waddington**, Alleyn's School, recounts the ambitious and immersive celebrations held for this historic anniversary.

The 13 September 2019 marked the 400th anniversary of the founding of Alleyn's College of God's Gift in Dulwich, London. The College was re-constituted into two schools in the 19th century and one of those, Alleyn's School, held a Jacobean themed cross-curricular day to mark that 400th anniversary. Timetabled classes that day were suspended and replaced with four one-hour sessions, all with a Jacobean theme. The children were immersed in Jacobean period school life, food, music, drama, economics, religion, maths, dance, sport, London, and science as they were understood in the early seventeenth century.

No one person could plan or deliver this day single handed, and the idea for the day emerged via the school's 400th

anniversary committee. This comprised the school's senior management team, board members, a local historian, the school archivist, marketing, alumni and events departments, and teaching staff. It was a collaborative effort and one which could only occur with genuine buy-in to the idea from senior management. As human beings we learn by doing, and the committee felt that the best way to help the pupils reflect on how their school came about and what it now means for them, was to immerse them in period-specific activities.

The development of the idea actually required us to go beyond the school archives, and for the archivist to draw on her knowledge of the wider heritage landscape.



Lower School pupils handling original objects from the Jacobean Period in their School Life lesson. Image courtesy of Ernie Saverese.

We were aiming to re-create a period of history with events that were happening nationally and even internationally. We had hoped to do this via partnerships with the educational departments of local museums, and our vision was that they would use their specialist knowledge to deliver themed learning in our classrooms. The lesson for us here was that they could not. We found that the museums we approached, either with or without learning departments, only offered curriculum based sessions, and did not have the resources to deliver something bespoke and beyond the curriculum, even if offered payment.

We had more luck engaging with individual, freelance, heritage interpreters. They were able to develop bespoke sessions. One of the interpreters, teaching Jacobean School Life, used the school archives to identify the first masters of the school, the first pupils, the events of the foundation day in 1619, and the routine of school life thereafter. The current pupils took on the roles of their former counterparts and reflected on the differences between their lives now and in 1619. Another session used Claes Visscher's panorama of London, with the pupils researching the various sites on the map, their uses and significance. They then conducted their own research into what

“The committee felt that the best way to help the pupils reflect on how their school came about and what it now means for them, was to immerse them in period-specific activities”

buildings currently stand on these sites and produced their own modern panoramas of London.

Where sessions had to run without specialist interpreters we arranged, instead, for consultation sessions with our teachers so they could develop their own lesson plans. The staff were just as much learners as the pupils on this day.

Our Head of Lower School commented: “It was so interesting to gain an understanding of the personal

“*The current pupils took on the roles of their former counterparts and reflected on the differences between their lives now and in 1619*”

profiles of the scholars that were part of the College's intake in 1619. The scholars' backgrounds are so different from those of the pupils today, and I had no idea that such archives existed for our school. ...I also learned some fun things from the School Statutes of 1626, for example that the children drank beer with every meal in school! ...It was a great day and it allowed me to feel more connected with the roots of the School. The sense of feeling part of something much greater is oddly overwhelming but also exciting. It got me wondering about what my 21st century school master life would have looked like in 1619. I wonder what the next 400 years will bring?”

One of the students commented: “We saw a copy of our Founder's Diary from 1619 which talks about him going five miles into London on horseback. It sounds silly to say but you just assume that cars and trains have always been there. He had to pay for 'horse standing', which made me think of a car park for horses. I can't imagine what Southwark would have looked like four hundred years ago, but it's been fun to try.”

Another student reflected: “I think that the lessons were so creative and different. It really gave everyone a brilliant understanding of what it was like back then (sic) and we felt surrounded by their day to day lives. My perfect moment was cooking the Banbury cakes and seeing the difference between foods for the higher and lower classes. Honey, for example, was only used by poor people as sugar was expensive. Now everyone uses honey. It's very interesting to see the difference.”

# Making better citizens: exhibition to commemorate the 1944 'Butler' Education Act and the Leicestershire Plan

**Jeanette Ovenden**, Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland, describes the bold response to the 1944 Education Act in Leicestershire by its directors of education.

The 4th August 2019 marked an important anniversary in the history of education in this country, it being 75 years since the passing of the 1944 Education Act (or, the 'Butler Act'). The exhibition 'Making Better Citizens' at the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland marks this special occasion. It looks at the system prior to the act, who R. A. Butler was, the Act's main points, opposition to the selection system and the introduction of a unique plan in Leicestershire which resulted in the Act's abolition. The Act was conceived as a recognition and reward for the hardship and sacrifices of the nation's citizens during the Second World War. It introduced free secondary education for all children and raised the leaving age to 15. Three types of school were created: grammar, secondary modern and



Above: Practical Science lesson in progress boys' Grammar school, c.1945. Image courtesy of The British Council.

Below: Letter from S.C.Mason, to Frank Oldham, Headmaster of Hinckley Grammar School, with suggestions for implementing the 'Experiment', 2 Mar 1957. Image courtesy of the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland.



Stewart Carlton Mason in his later years at home. Image courtesy of the School of Education, University of Leicester.



## COUNTY OF LEICESTER

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
STEWART C. MASON, M.A.  
TELEPHONE : 20451

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
GREY FRIARS  
LEICESTER

Ref.  
S/141

2nd March 1957.

Dear Oldham,

Thank you for your letter of February 27th. I don't think we shall be able to include Market Bosworth Grammar School in the scheme, since if we do that the repercussions spread even wider and the result would be that the experiment would cover the whole County. I do not think it would be fair to ask the Committee to undergo all at once the vast upheaval of carrying out the experiment on such a big scale. Obviously the right thing is to do it in one or two selected areas to discover whether it really is in practice as good a solution as it appears. One reason for thinking of Hinckley was that it is relatively easier to isolate than most other areas in the County.

I have been thinking a bit further about the details of implementing the scheme, and it did appear to us that it might be better to let the clutch in gently at the start. I was thinking that until the High Schools had over a three year period built up their 14+ entry into the Grammar School, we might let through into the Grammar School the high fliers. This would ease the transition from the point of view of the Grammar School since you would still have an entry, though a considerably reduced one, and equally the High Schools would have more time to attract suitable staff before they themselves had to deal with the high fliers. I think to a large extent this would remove the anxiety you feel about Market Bosworth, but in any event your main defence will be the fact that we should not continue to offer parents at Earl Shilton and Barwell the option of Market Bosworth. With the bulge coming along we should in any event wish to restrict the area contributing to Market Bosworth, and we would, I am sure, only need to consider the cases of parents who put forward a special plea, for example, of long-standing family associations with Dixie Grammar School.



Official opening of Abington High School showing a view of the school from the front, the library, domestic science and woodwork classes, May 1957. Images courtesy of K and S Commercial

technical, based on pupils' skills, abilities and aptitudes. Entry to these schools was based on an examination known as the 11-plus.

By the late 1950s there was growing opposition to the 11-plus examination and it was against this background that Stewart Carlton Mason, Leicestershire Director of Education, hatched a bold, dynamic and innovative plan. Initially known as the 'Leicestershire Experiment', he created 'middle' or 'high' schools for 11 to 14 year olds which eliminated the 11-plus examination in the county and so abolished selection at 11. Leicestershire became the first English county to do this and to replace it with a unique style of comprehensive education. In S.C. Mason, *The Leicestershire Experiment and Plan*





The entrance to Wigston Academy which incorporates the former Abington and Bushloe High schools. Image courtesy of Wigston Academy.

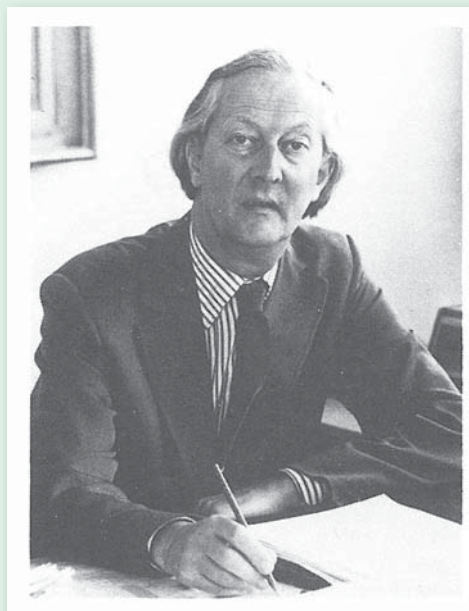
“With missionary zeal he [Fairbairn] recruited the best headteachers from around the country which placed Leicestershire at the forefront of educational delivery”

(England, 1957) he explained the rationale behind the idea, “there were now three links in a continuous chain of education - Primary School, High School, Grammar School... boys and girls move naturally on from one to the next. At no point is the next step forward dependant on an examination”.

In September 1957 the Plan was introduced in two pilot areas of the county: Hinckley and Oadby/Wigston. In Wigston Magna a very unique situation occurred whereby Abington High School took pupils with surnames in the first half of the alphabet and the newly opened Bushloe High School took pupils with surnames in the second half of the alphabet. The adjoining Grammar School named Guthlaxton became the Upper School and was renamed the Guthlaxton Community College.

In just over ten years the Plan was extended to the whole county and completed the reorganisation of secondary education on comprehensive lines.

For the next two decades the Plan thrived under Andrew Napier Fairbairn, Mason's successor from 1971. With missionary zeal he recruited the best headteachers from around the country which placed Leicestershire at the forefront of educational delivery.



Andrew Fairbairn Napier, Director of Education, 1971-1984. Image courtesy of the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland.

The period since the 1980s has witnessed increasing diversity in education provision with increasing state involvement. The last ten years has seen a steady rise in the number of schools converting to Academies in Leicestershire. A major consequence of this has been the demise of the Leicestershire Plan as many middle or high schools have extended their age range from 11-14 to 11-16 or 11-18 or have combined to remain viable.



Pupils from Garboldisham Church Primary School discuss what to pack in their suitcase. Image courtesy of Norfolk Record Office

## Canaries, beer and oxtail soup: discovering the impact of refugees in Norfolk over the last 500 years

**Victoria Draper**, Norfolk Record Office, describes the development of workshops engaging Norfolk's primary school students with the personal narratives of refugees

In 2017 staff of the Norwich Record Office worked with Norwich Schools of Sanctuary to create a workshop using archives to teach pupils about the positive impact refugees have made to Norfolk over the past 500 years. Since its creation the workshop has become one of our most popular classroom sessions for primary schools.

Staff were approached by the Schools of Sanctuary coordinator after he saw the activities we had created as part of Norwich's annual refugee week events. To adapt these activities for a workshop, we decided on several clear learning objectives. These objectives were linked to the Key Stage 2 history curriculum, as a study of an aspect of history significant in the locality, and the citizenship curriculum, by encouraging pupils to use their imaginations to understand other people's experiences. The initial workshop was trialled by 120 year 6 pupils from a Norwich primary school. Following feedback some minor adjustments were made before the workshop was launched.

The workshop incorporates a timeline looking at the effect of various conflicts on refugees coming to

Norfolk. Each conflict is depicted by a different colour. Pupils are given cards containing copies of documents showing evidence of refugees in Norfolk before being asked to place them on the correct date on the timeline. For example, one card gives the names of 2 French nuns living in Norfolk in 1800. By placing it on the timeline pupils can see that they probably came to the county following the French Revolution.

**“When summarising the suitcase activity we encourage the pupils to also consider and empathise with recent and current refugees.”**



Pupils from Worstead Church of England Primary School place documents on the timeline. Image courtesy of Norfolk Record Office.

Next, pupils find out about Jewish refugee Lewis Ecker who left Russia in the 1880s. Using census returns, trade directories, and personal papers they discover how Lewis was unable to read and write when he arrived in Norfolk but later became a successful tailor owning 4 shops.

For the final activity pupils are given a suitcase and crate of objects. They are asked to put themselves in Lewis's shoes and choose 7 of the objects they would take if they had to flee the country. Working in small groups, this activity has prompted some great discussions; pupils consider if Lewis should take his religious book with him, arguing that his religion must mean a lot to him if he was prepared to face persecution for it, but that it could also make him a target during his journey.

**“To date, the session has been run 51 times for over 1,500 pupils.”**

In creating the workshop we had to address several challenges. Firstly, we wanted to ensure that we developed activities which were relevant to today's refugees as well as previous generations. The last archival material on the timeline dates from 1957 so we decided to bring it completely up to date by using a modern newspaper article about Norfolk County Council helping to house Syrian refugees. When summarising the suitcase activity we encourage the pupils to also consider and empathise with recent and current refugees.

Secondly, we had to consider how to explain changes to borders and country names. The timeline includes the Norwich Strangers; many of whom were from the Spanish Netherlands. When we were developing the workshop we discovered the papers of Nancy Ives. Nancy spent many years researching the history of the Strangers. Her notes included a map of the Spanish Netherlands overlaid upon a modern map of Europe. We display this map on the screen during the activity.

“*They are asked to put themselves in Lewis’s shoes and choose 7 of the objects they would take if they had to flee the country.*”

Our final obstacle was the amount of material we needed to run the workshop. The final activity alone requires 6 suitcases and 6 crates. After trying to fit all the items into a car and carrying it into each school, we decided to hire a van and use 2 trolleys to transport the materials. This enables us to put the preloaded trolleys on the van and wheel them straight into the classroom upon arrival at each school.

To promote the workshop to schools we attended the launch of Norwich Schools of Sanctuary where we handed out flyers and demonstrated the suitcase activity. In addition, the workshop is advertised on their website and in our own schools’ programme which goes out to Norfolk schools at the start of each academic year. We keep the period over Refugee Week and Norfolk Welcomes Day free from other events, as this is the most popular time for schools to book the workshop.

To date, the session has been run 51 times for over 1,500 pupils. It has been popular with teachers, some of whom book it to help encourage their pupils to understand the importance of welcoming others into their community. It has also been well received by pupils with comments such as, “I didn’t know being a refugee was as hard as this” and “So many refugees have come to Norwich and created a new life”.

# An archivist joins the SEND network

**Philip Milnes-Smith**, ALES Training Officer, discusses initiatives of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) network to improve outreach programs between archives and students with special needs.

The SEND network, a joint initiative by The National Gallery and the Museum of London, aims to connect SEND teachers and arts and heritage professionals to share best practice in special needs education. With a background as a special needs teacher, I was keen to join the network, and so far have attended two events: the Annual Conference, and one of the quarterly meetings. The 2019 conference theme was space – but not in the Star Trek ‘final frontier’ sense. Rather, delegates were encouraged to reflect on the physical and sensory spaces within our heritage settings, and how users with additional needs experience them. This included consciously thinking about aromas in the environment that may pass almost unnoticed by visitors without special needs, but which for some could amount to a rollercoaster of sensory overload. Additionally, many conference attendees participated in an exercise which allowed us to experience a gallery space without the sense of sight. Most inspiring, however, was the session about a museum initiative building on relationships with local special schools, to offer meaningful entry level work experience in a museum setting for young people with additional needs.

A range of delegates were in attendance that day, including teachers and museum professionals, and a small number of archive professionals. By chance, the next SEND network meeting had an archive focus and was held at The National Archives (TNA) in Kew. The main event of the meeting was a joint presentation from Emily Morris, of the education team at TNA, and Noel Hayden, a freelance practitioner who has developed their SEND provision and who, in their former role at TNA, was a founder of the SEND network.

Prior to the creation of the SEND Network, TNA had existing relationships with two local special schools. In 2018, however, TNA aimed to be in a better position to engage more students

through outreach, to grow their network of schools, and to build their team's confidence in delivering programs and activities.

There was a review of the existing provision, including a premises access audit, and a teacher consultation to establish what they wanted in terms of content, themes, approaches, structures and activities. Particularly with older students, the aim was less about fitting to the National Curriculum and more about developing life skills including communication and social skills.

Subsequently two adaptable, one-hour sessions for up to eight learners have been developed, piloted, evaluated and will be made available for booking in spring 2020. The first, conceived for a younger audience, focuses on Victorian convict child William Towers and his life story as revealed through certificates and census documents. The second, envisioned for an older audience, focuses on choosing for the archives, and is based on the life of a Windrush migrant who contributed to the development of the Notting Hill Carnival and became a mayor of Southwark.

The delivery team acknowledged that archives of written paper documents present a particular challenge for learners with impairments, as they may often be less visually interesting and robust than, for example, museum objects. Also, by moving away from the original document to a laminated or digital surrogate, as these outreach sessions require, we may feel there is a loss compared to the actual, authentic and ancient. However, these sessions are focused on the stories of the people in the documents, rather than the documents as objects. The sensory experience needed for the learners is created by call and response rhymes supported by signing, and a range of replica, toy and purpose-made objects (e.g. a door knocker mounted on plywood) that assist the narration of the person's life. The sessions do feature real archive boxes and convey the idea that archives are kept, and need to be looked after, to be able to tell these life stories.

Building on these first sessions, the TNA team plan to offer on-site follow-up sessions in which the learners could view original documents. The delivery team already have in place the social stories and sensory maps to facilitate such visits, and the expectation that they will foster confidence by meeting and greeting the visitors in person. Furthermore, TNA are interested in running variants of these sessions as part of their family learning provision.

Where the keepers of public records at TNA have easy access to certificates and censuses, other archives may be at least as well placed to tell individual stories from other types of documents and collections (e.g. diaries, personal correspondence). What we perhaps lack is the time and budget to develop these outreach activities, the professional guidelines to help us understand the diversity of needs and abilities, and the best practice strategies for developing engagement. To address these concerns, look out for a toolkit for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities produced by ARA ALES later in 2020.



Replica handcuffs and strands from rope. Image courtesy of Philip Milnes-Smith.



Toy rabbits representing those stolen by William Towers. Image courtesy of Philip Milnes-Smith.



Archive boxes used in the sessions, with facsimiles of photograph of William Towers. Image courtesy of Philip Milnes-Smith.

FORM X.

*Wandsworth* Gaol,County of *Surrey**4 Jan<sup>y</sup>* 1872

PARTICULARS of a Person convicted of a Crime specified in the 20th Section of  
the Prevention of Crimes Act, 1871.

Name ..... *William Towers 4099*

and

Aliases .....

Description when liberated.

Age (on discharge) ..... *12*  
 Height..... *4 ft 5½*  
 Hair..... *Brown*  
 Eyes ..... *Brown*  
 Complexion..... *Fresh*  
 Where born..... *Richmond*  
 Married or single ..... *Single*  
 Trade or occupation ..... *None*  
 Any other distinguishing mark ..... *None*

Photograph of Prisoner.



# Archives and paper trails: establishing new communities of learning and collaboration

**Andrew W M Smith**, University of Chichester, writes about the genesis of a series of conferences and publications encouraging cross-discipline engagement with the social histories and contexts of archival documents.

This story started with a second-hand book I had ordered from a bookseller in Toulouse. When it arrived, the 1954 book seemed a good copy, though I soon discovered that its pages were uncut. A brief rifle through (and some impromptu book surgery) revealed some original marketing material tucked between its pages, which asked - 4 years before the question would be definitively answered - "will France's African empire be lost?" The tide of history which swept France from its colonial possessions was lent a whole new force by the expired question in that material, which in turn better contextualized the book itself, Charles Mus' *The Future of the French Union* (1954).

This sort of encounter sparked creative ideas about the 'Paper Trails' we follow in research, our affective relationship with archives and collections, and the ways in which those relationships can often fall by the wayside in published histories. The lives of our research material often go unmarked, lost between the gaps in disciplinary boundaries and narrow definitions.

This sort of striking moment recurred when I was teaching in partnership with University College London (UCL) Special Collections. When we introduced students to the collection of Francis Galton, the Victorian polymath and prominent eugenicist, we were struck by their wonder and disgust which arose when contextualising and analysing the material before them. In particular, a copy of his eugenicist novel *Kantsaywhere* fascinated students, telling a story about his problematic conflation of science and politics, but also a material story of editing by his daughter, who had physically cut whole sections from the book. These moments suggested the potential for something beyond a material book history, and perhaps more like a social history of ideas.

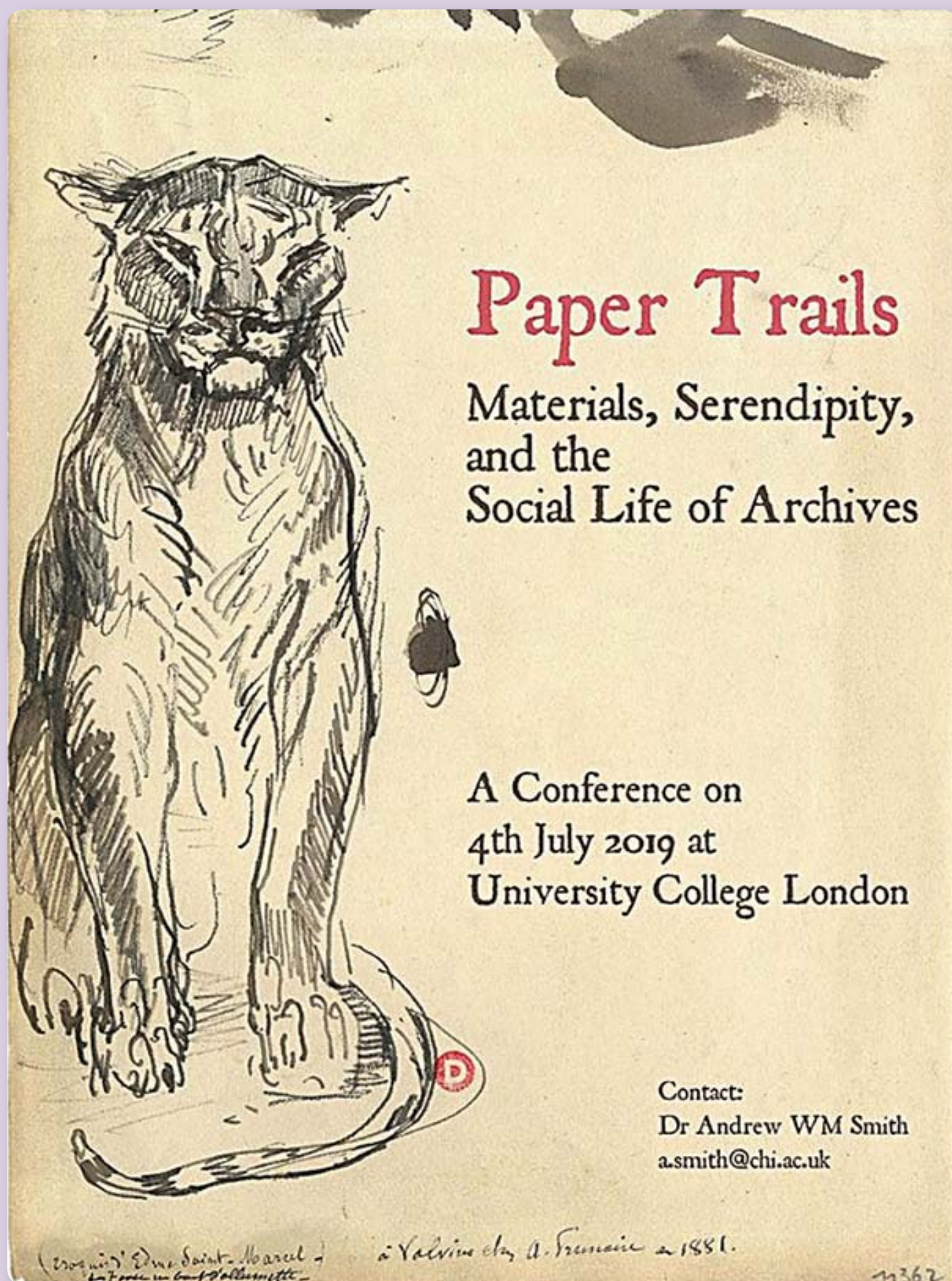
From here, the conference 'Paper Trails' was organised at UCL Special Collections which sought to enable collaboration between unlikely partners to help break down barriers that currently exist in academia and to

“*The lives of our research material often go unmarked, lost between the gaps in disciplinary boundaries and narrow definitions*”

open up the world of historical research. Two academic historians worked alongside library and archive professionals to draw up plans for an event that would reveal how our work and methodologies inter-relate, providing opportunities for collaborations beyond the usual parameters our fields present. Researchers, academics, education practitioners and students came together in 2017 for a conference and school workshops based at UCL which turned the focus onto our affective relationship with archives and collections, and put research stories to the fore.

The conference was a success, and subsequently plans developed to try to publish its outcomes. The papers themselves had been inter-disciplinary and presented in novel formats and so it seemed that any output from the conference should reflect this fact. This was when we discovered the 'Book as Open Online Content' (BOOC) format, published by UCL Press. They describe it as a 'living book', which is entirely open access and evolves over time, allowing for different formats of pieces to speak in conversation. This seemed an exciting opportunity to establish a new publication focused on broadening engagement with archives and collections in new ways.

Exploring the opportunities of the format with the Press, we decided that our BOOC could be best organised around four streams of content, reflecting the



Poster for Paper Trails conference 2019. Image courtesy of UCL.

types of material which we had seen at the conference and which offered opportunities for innovation. Those four streams are:

1. **Research Stories:** which encourages a focus on research stories to invite a more reflective methodology, offering a more inclusive and engaged commentary on the work involved in researching, ordering, and preserving the past.
2. **Co-Production:** Outputs from projects in which non-academic, undergraduate and taught postgraduate audiences collaborate with others (collection professions, academics, members of the public etc.) to create new work that is based on research collections.
3. **Collection Profiles:** Shorter, descriptive or even narrative pieces that highlight items or collections of interest.
4. **Engagement:** Reflective pieces that focus on a broad range of engagement activities, from the professional's perspective. These can be case studies, or 'think pieces' on particular skills or techniques.

We took these ideas into another series of conference and school workshops in 2019, again hosted by UCL Special Collections. This repeated the success of the 2017 event and generated a wave of enthusiasm for the proposed publication. We've now built an editorial board of archivists, librarians, and inter-disciplinary researchers and have started considering exciting submissions for the launch of the publication in 2021. The BOOC will appear three times a year from its launch, featuring material in all of these streams and helping to drive new conversations and forge new communities of learning and collaboration.

From a second-hand book to a living book, the project has generated its own Paper Trails, and the whole team is excited to see where they lead next.

Paper Trails is accepting proposals for content at: [blogs.ucl.ac.uk/special-collections/2019/08/23/call-for-papers-for-paper-trails-a-new-open-access-publication-with-ucl-press/](https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/special-collections/2019/08/23/call-for-papers-for-paper-trails-a-new-open-access-publication-with-ucl-press/)

For an example of the first BOOC published by UCL Press, see: [ucldigitalpress.co.uk/BOOC](https://ucldigitalpress.co.uk/BOOC)

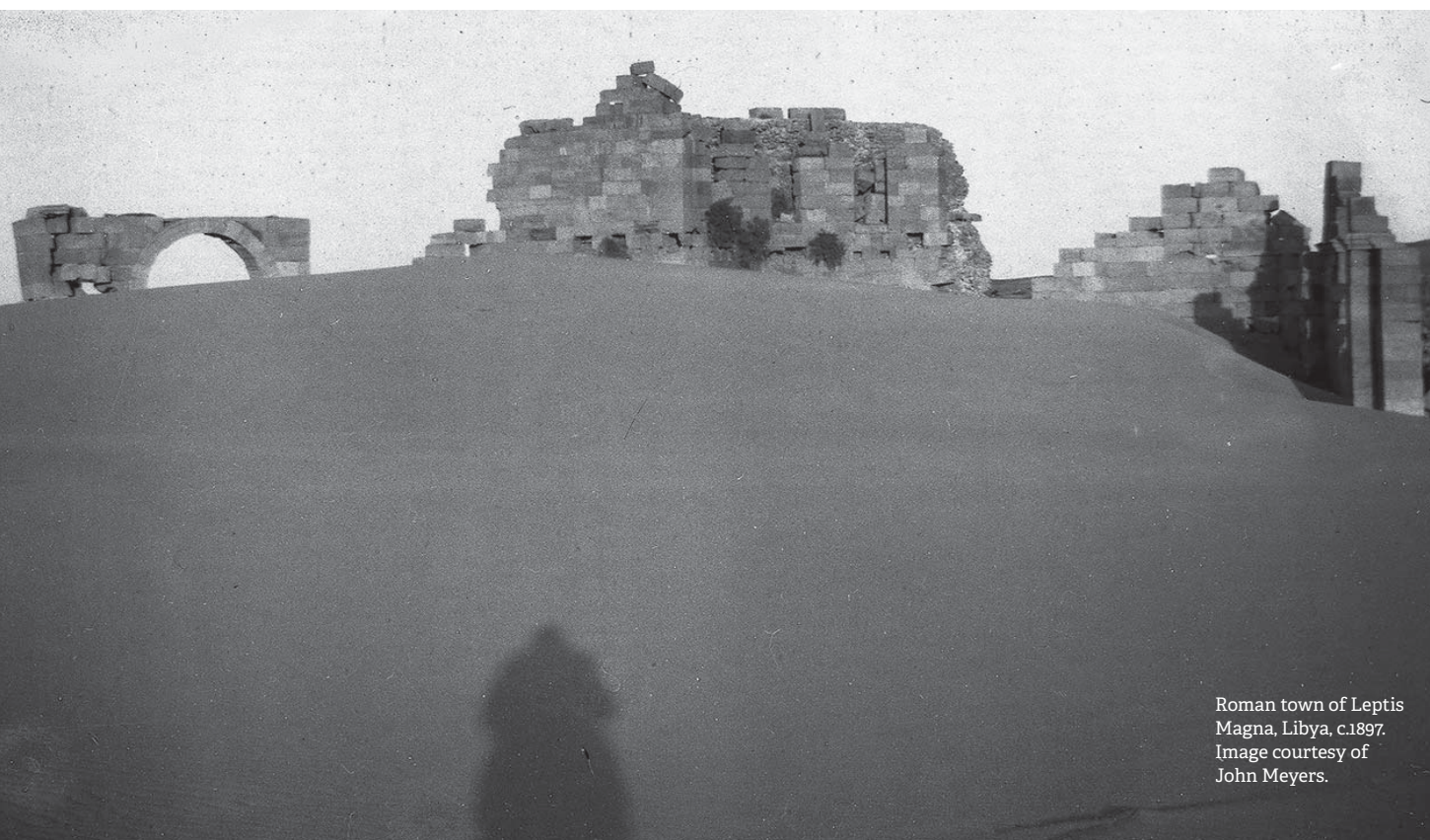
Leptis Magna c.1990.  
Image courtesy of  
Andrew Wilson.



## ‘Then’ and ‘Now’: tracking a changing world with help from the public

**Katharina Ulmschneider**, University of Oxford, describes an initiative to give obsolescent teaching materials new life as a resource documenting social and geographical change.

In 2012, when Dr. Sally Crawford and I were charged with exploring the ‘hidden’ collections of the humanities and social science departments at the University of Oxford, we had little idea about the treasures we were about to unearth. ‘Hidden’ in this case refers to paper, photographic, and material culture archives which had been haphazardly amassed by departments over time, had never been catalogued, and could not be found on any official website. Among the myriad of materials, one



Roman town of Leptis Magna, Libya, c.1897.  
Image courtesy of John Meyers.



Victorian lantern slide performance.  
Image courtesy of Tony Randall.

type in particular kept recurring in virtually every department: old photographic collections. Formerly used for student teaching, research, or to illustrate talks, these image collections had long since become disused with the move to a digital age.

Why then bother with these redundant collections, and what possible value could they have in the modern day? Delving into boxes of glass plates, lantern slides, and 35mm slides, dating from anytime between the later Victorian period to the 1980s, we realised that we

*“Whether images from plant science, history of art, archaeology, or geography, each discipline had helped record a moment in time, and had a story to tell”*

were looking at a photographic record of a world that no longer existed. Whether images from plant science, history of art, archaeology, or geography, each discipline had helped record a moment in time, and had a story to tell. As archaeologists we were not only struck by the potential of finding out about the ‘then’, we also wanted to know about the ‘now’. What had happened to the sites, landscapes, monuments, societies recorded in these images? What did they look like now, how much had they changed, did they still exist? The idea of the Historic Environment Image Resource (HEIR) was born.

HEIR is a freely accessible online image database currently containing over 27,000 digitized photographs from all over the world dating from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. Its core images are the early technology lantern slides and glass plate negatives

“*Delving into boxes of glass plates, lantern slides, and 35mm slides... we realised that we were looking at a photographic record of a world that no longer existed*”

held in college, library, museum and departmental collections within the University of Oxford. New resources, including related collections from outside the university, are regularly being scanned and added to the HEIR image database, including Mick Aston's personal aerial photographs, some of which show 'Time Team' in action!

HEIR, however, is about much more than scanning old images. From the outset, its mission has been to involve the public in keywording and commenting on the images. Drawing on the 'crowd', whether professional, local societies, or interested individuals, has allowed us to tap into a pool of specialist information, which far surpasses our own archaeological expertise, and in return has sparked interest, debate, and new approaches to old images as an important resource. Engaging with people, whether through blogs, social media, talks, exhibitions, or even writing and putting on a Victorian lantern slide performance in costumes, has been one of the core elements of presenting the images to the wider public. At the same time we are gaining a better understanding about what people are interested in and care about in terms of their environments and heritage.

Another strand of HEIR is re-photographing the images in their modern settings. This has proved to be very popular with the wider public, with some individuals even planning their holiday destinations to track down a particular view or site. The photographs obtained in this way are providing a wealth of information for a wide range of disciplines. They are helping build the foundation for researchers now and in the future to track and study in detail changes to sites, monuments, landscapes and societies over time.

HEIR is run from the Archives at the Institute of Archaeology, University of Oxford by Dr. Katharina Ulmschneider and Dr. Sally Crawford (Co-Directors) and Dr. Janice Kinory (Researcher). Explore HEIR at [heir.arch.ox.ac.uk/pages/home.php](http://heir.arch.ox.ac.uk/pages/home.php).

# Archives: The historian's perspective

**Jamie Wood** and **Lucie Matthews-Jones**, of History UK, write about initiatives to create stronger collaborative relationships between the higher education and archive sectors.

For historians, archives are treasured spaces. They are fundamental to our work. They are filled with the stuff that makes our research and drives our writing. They are increasingly driving our students' experience of studying history, too. That's why History UK, the national body that represents history departments in higher education, has been working with The National Archives (TNA) over the past two years on a series of events to cultivate partnerships between historians working in higher education and archive professionals.

We began by working with TNA and consultants to develop a guidance document on co-working between the higher education and archive sectors. This culminated in a launch event in July 2018 that fed into a series of six regional events that we held in the first half of 2019. We were interested in opening new avenues for collaboration between historians and archivists in teaching, research and public engagement, and in providing resources that would facilitate future partnership. You can see examples of some of the collaborative work that historians have done with archivists in the guide.

*“We were interested in opening new avenues for collaboration between historians and archivists in teaching, research and public engagement”*

History UK wants to continue to provide a platform for collaborative relationship building between the higher education and the archive sectors. Over the next couple of years, we plan to develop further initiatives to explore how we can work together in new ways. We're looking forward to speaking at the training event for the Archives for Learning and Education Section (ALES) in January. We'd love to hear from you if you have any ideas for projects, would like to host an event, or would like to contribute to our blog ([www.history-uk.ac.uk/](http://www.history-uk.ac.uk/)). The important thing is to keep the conversation going!

In the meantime, we would like to encourage you as archive professionals to think about engaging with university historians in your day-to-day work: maybe invite someone to talk about their research at your archive? Maybe ask an academic to contribute to your blog? Most historians would be really pleased to share their work and to offer insights into their research methods and approaches even if their research is not related directly to your collections. There will always be opportunities for us to work together.

Nevertheless, we recognise that it is not always straightforward to identify potential collaborators on university websites. They are often not easy to navigate or to locate people and their contact details. Many university history departments and historians are on social media so we would encourage you to try Twitter in the first instance. We have a vibrant #twitterstorians community out there so use that as a means of making first contact. More importantly, we would urge you to shop around and see what universities in your area can do for you. Ask if they can offer you any resources or assistance. Who do you want to collaborate with? What are the chances for building a long-term working relationship? You hold more power in these interactions than you might realise!

This is because archives offer opportunities to enhance our students' overall learning experience. In 2014 the Quality Assurance Agency published a subject benchmark statement for History, which noted that degree programmes in the discipline should offer students the opportunity to engage in "work placements or work-related projects". Some universities have started offering internship schemes, where external organisations can ask for a student placement to help them with a project. So, if you have any projects that

need assistance, a temporary intern student might be able to help you. There are lots of other ways of engaging with historians and the students that we teach.

There has also been growing recognition that archives can improve students' classroom experience. Lecturers are increasingly keen to think about how we can use them in our teaching to train our students in historical methods and research. This has led to a rise in thinking about archives as venues for one-off teaching sessions or, in some instances, archives have informed the structure of whole modules. Our conclusion is that students and lecturers love archive-based sessions and modules. They offer students the chance to engage with primary material. Taking students, especially those in the first and second year, to an archive can offer lecturers the chance to dispel some of their students' fears and anxieties about using archive collections. It can really encourage students to write better dissertations and to help us to make the next generation of historians! But we can't do this without collaborating as partners with archive professionals and archival institutions.

*“History UK wants to continue to provide a platform for collaborative relationship building between the higher education and the archive sectors”*

# Material remains: collection led learning and performing arts history

**Sabrina Offord**, Victoria and Albert Museum, describes how the museum's Theatre and Performance collection is enriching the learning of Royal College of Arts students, and the reciprocal benefits to the collection and its custodians.

Jointly offered by the Royal College of Art (RCA) and the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), the History of Design Master of Arts programme encourages a critical approach to the study of material culture. The course is interdisciplinary, combining cutting edge research with first hand understanding of artefacts, and aims to prepare students for the increasingly diverse professions in academia and the heritage sector.

Since September 2017, students on the V&A/RCA History of Design programme can choose to follow a pathway focussing on the history and material cultures of performance. The programme is aimed at prospective students from a range of backgrounds including academia, the creative industries and the heritage sector. It appeals to those with a passion for the arts who are seeking to combine research, practice and the study of cultural and social history. The teaching of this pathway is embedded in the V&A's Department of Theatre and Performance, giving students' unparalleled access to the National Collection of Performing Arts and providing an opportunity for students to draw directly on curatorial expertise and experience.

As well as completing set readings and seminar discussions, each week the students take part in a themed session using the museum's collections to explore a different aspect of the performing arts. Facilitated by specialist curatorial staff, students use these sessions to interrogate the collections. Performance, by its very nature,

is a fleeting and intangible art form so students are encouraged to examine the 'material remains' left behind from a performance, discovering what can be uncovered from seemingly ephemeral items. The students also engage with archival and curatorial practice, asking challenging questions about

the appraisal process, the limitations of our cataloguing priorities and how access to the collections can be provided.

One of the benefits of this collection led teaching is that it has demystified the archive. By bringing students who are in the early stages of their



Front cover of music sheet for Babil and Bijou, Ca.19th Century (S. 149-2012). Image courtesy of the V&A Museum, London.

2

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J. M. BARRIE

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Mrs. Purdie	CHARMIAN EYRE
Joanna Trout	PAMELA PAGE
Lady Caroline Lancy	LEONORA LEVIN
Mrs. Dearth	ANN FARRER
Matey	JOHN DEVERELL
Lob	SEBASTIAN SMITH
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Mr. Dearth	DAVID HORNE
Margaret	JUNE WHITFIELD

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And looked just as cute as  
The cutest cute cutie of Kew'.

*much love of food wishes from little*

31.10.44. *Pencil*

ALL THE "GOO" WISHES  
AND ALL THE "GOO" LUCK  
IN THE "GOO" OLD WORLD  
TO OUR "GOO" LITTLE WITTY.  
FROM "GOO" OLD ZOG.  
MOG.  
and MIRROR.

*Hope to night is the key  
opening the door of  
the passage leading  
to the Hall of Fame!*

*D.A.*

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*To Margaret (alias Olivia)*

*Appropriate I think!*

*Good luck. Wish it a  
huge success.*

*alias Dan.*

3

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A Comedy by J. M. BARRIE.

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Mrs. Purdie	Flora Britton
Joanna Trout	Pamela Page
Lady Caroline Lancy	Pamela Durr
Mrs. Dearth	ANN FARRER
Matey	John Clifford
Lob	Kenneth Morgan
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Mr. Dearth	DAVID HORNE
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Scenery designed by Victor Membe (by permission of Nettelford Productions Ltd.) and executed by Ambassadors Studios. Dresses designed by Anna Dine (by permission of Associated British Pictures Ltd.)

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A Comedy by J. M. BARRIE

The Cast includes:

DAVID HORNE

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Page from scrapbook kept by Dame June Whitfield including messages of good luck (THM/495/1/1). Image courtesy of the V&A Museum, London.

“students are encouraged to examine the ‘material remains’ left behind from a performance, discovering what can be uncovered from seemingly ephemeral items”

academic careers into the stores and explaining how we collect and catalogue, we have removed the perceived barriers to using archives. Later, when these students come to visit the research room to carry out their own research, they are more confident in using the facility and navigating the collection.

As part of the assessment of this course, students are required to complete coursework including an essay focussing on a particular object or archive, a historiographic analysis of design change and a dissertation. A wide range of material has been chosen as a focus for these assignments ranging from costume designs to theatre posters to good luck telegrams! One student selected the scrapbooks of the actress Kate Terry, a collection whose origins we previously knew little about, and considered the scrapbooking tradition alongside the archival value of this type of material. Another student created a piece of theatre inspired by a song sheet cover for *Babil and Bijou* which they encountered during their research. In some cases, the original research carried out by the students

has been used to enhance catalogue records, inform others' research and contribute to exhibition content planning.

Working with the students while they explore the collection has led us as archivists and curators to see the collections in a new light. Their creative uses of the collections as source material has led us to consider the ongoing creative value of the archive. Their research on specific items has deepened our understanding of areas of the collection. Their challenging questioning of our collecting practices has also forced us as heritage professionals to look and reflect on our own procedures and methodologies. By placing collections at the heart of learning, this course is inspiring the academics, theatre practitioners and heritage professionals of the future.

For more information on the V&A/RCA History of Design postgraduate programme please visit: [www.vam.ac.uk/info/history-of-design-postgraduate-programme](http://www.vam.ac.uk/info/history-of-design-postgraduate-programme)

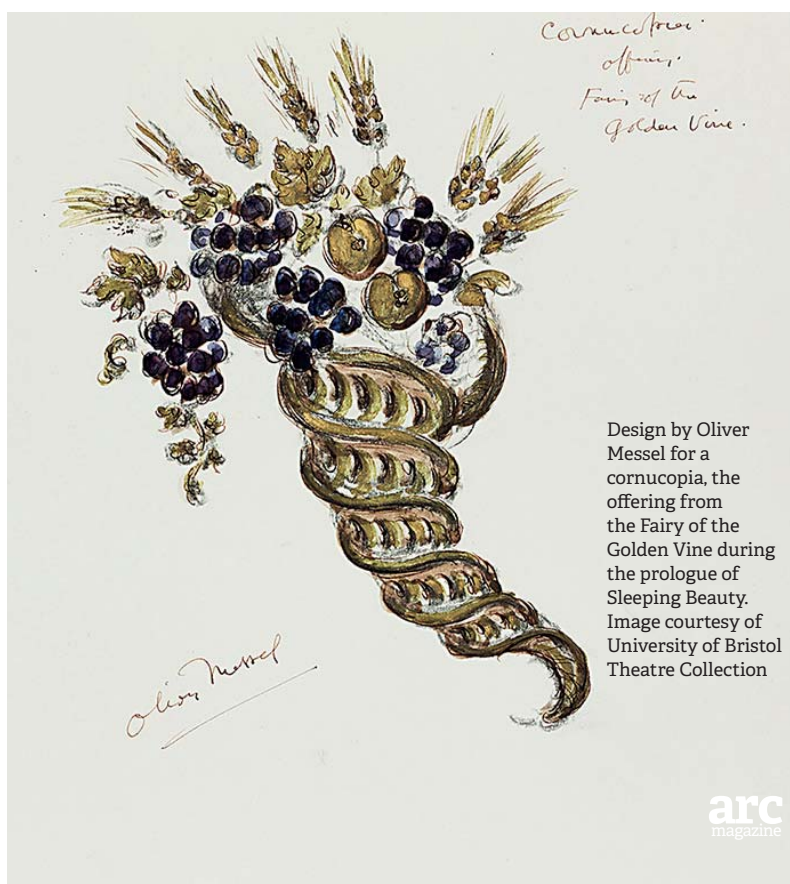


Items on display in *Wake Up and Dream*.  
Image courtesy of University of Bristol  
Theatre Collection

# Sharing the Messel magic

**Laura Gardner** and **Gemma Brace**, University of Bristol Theatre Collection, describe how the Oliver Messel archive has presented interesting opportunities for engagement and exhibition.

In 2014 the University of Bristol Theatre Collection had the exciting opportunity to acquire the Oliver Messel Personal Archive. The archive, which complements the Oliver Messel Collection held by the Victoria & Albert Museum, is an incredibly rich collection containing correspondence, photographs, scrapbooks, objects and architectural drawings. As well as documenting Messel's work as the foremost theatre designer of his time, it sheds light on his social conscience, his sexuality and his wide-ranging and all-encompassing creativity.



Design by Oliver Messel for a cornucopia, the offering from the Fairy of the Golden Vine during the prologue of *Sleeping Beauty*.  
Image courtesy of University of Bristol Theatre Collection



Items on display in *Wake up and Dream*. Image courtesy of University of Bristol Theatre Collection

From the moment the archive arrived at the Theatre Collection it has changed the way we work. For the first time we embarked on a public-facing fundraising campaign, *Saving the Messel Magic*, securing funding from a range of individuals, trusts and foundations, including the National Heritage Memorial Fund, raising enough to purchase the archive in 2015.

We then secured HLF funding for a follow-on project, *Sharing the Messel Magic*, commencing in 2016. This was focussed on elements which were necessary to make the archive accessible: cataloguing, digitisation, conservation and outreach. The archive is now fully catalogued thanks to Emma Howgill, our Project Archivist who created 10,441 catalogue entries which are now available via our online catalogue, opening the archive up to researchers from all over the world.

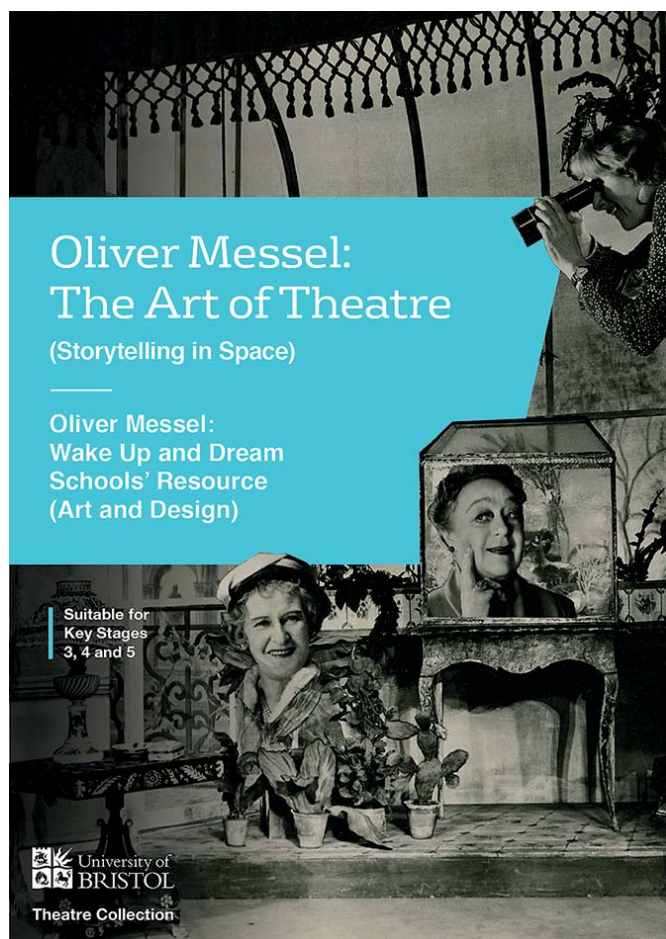
Sharing the archive with the public has been a central element of the project and has taken several forms. We have made loans to external exhibitions, including providing over 100 items to the exhibition *Portraits by Oliver Messel* at Nymans, the National Trust property that was Messel's family home.

*“Sharing the archive with the public has been a central element of the project”*

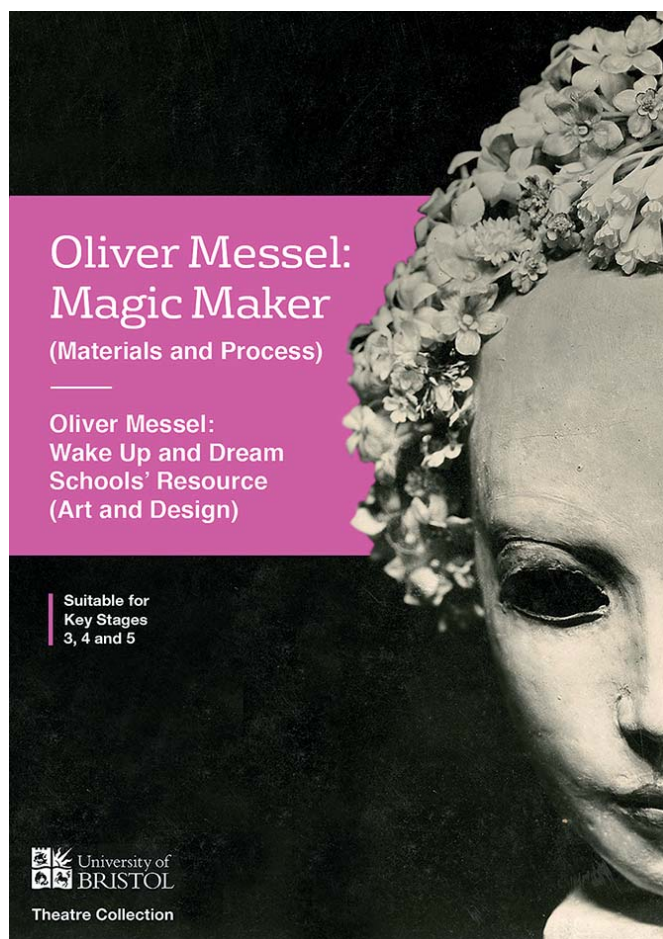
*“we have seen how the story of one man has intrigued and inspired both existing and new audiences and allowed the Theatre Collection to move towards a more outward focus”*

We also held an on-site exhibition titled *Wake up and dream: Oliver Messel, theatre, art and society* alongside a linked exhibition at the Royal West of England Academy, *Oliver Messel: Beyond Theatre*, featuring Messel's masks and portraits. These exhibitions have been pivotal in sharing Messel's fascinating story with local audiences, providing the springboard for a series of object-based workshops, and collaborating with organisations such as Outstories, an LGBTQ history group; the Creative Youth Network; IntoUniversity; and Bristol University's own Widening Access, LGBTQ Network and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion teams.

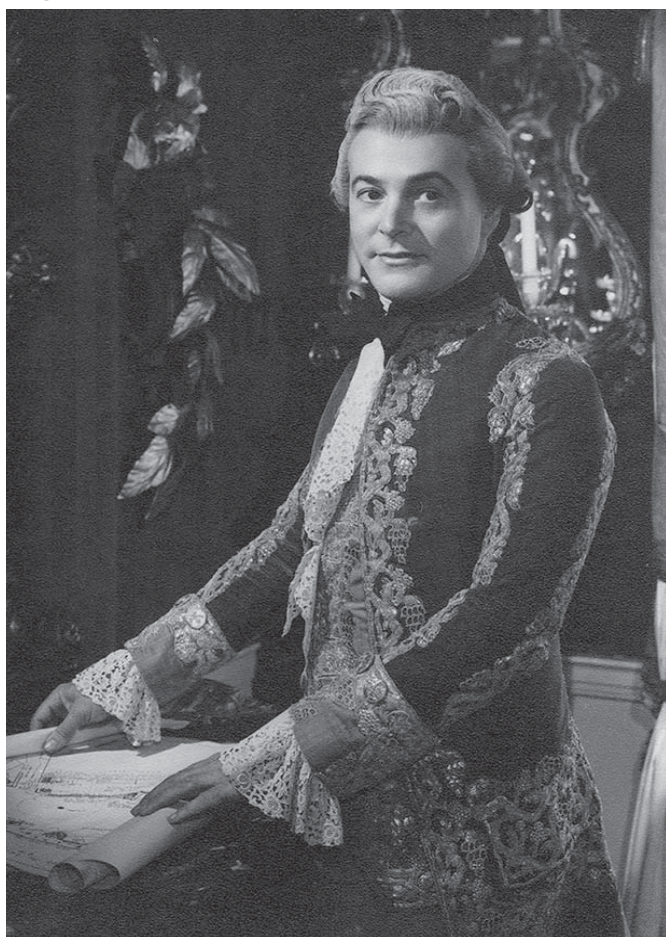
We were keen for this project to help us develop the way we work with schools and it therefore included development of a series of downloadable education packs and web resources. These have been designed to introduce teachers of Art and Design across Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 to the archive and the Theatre



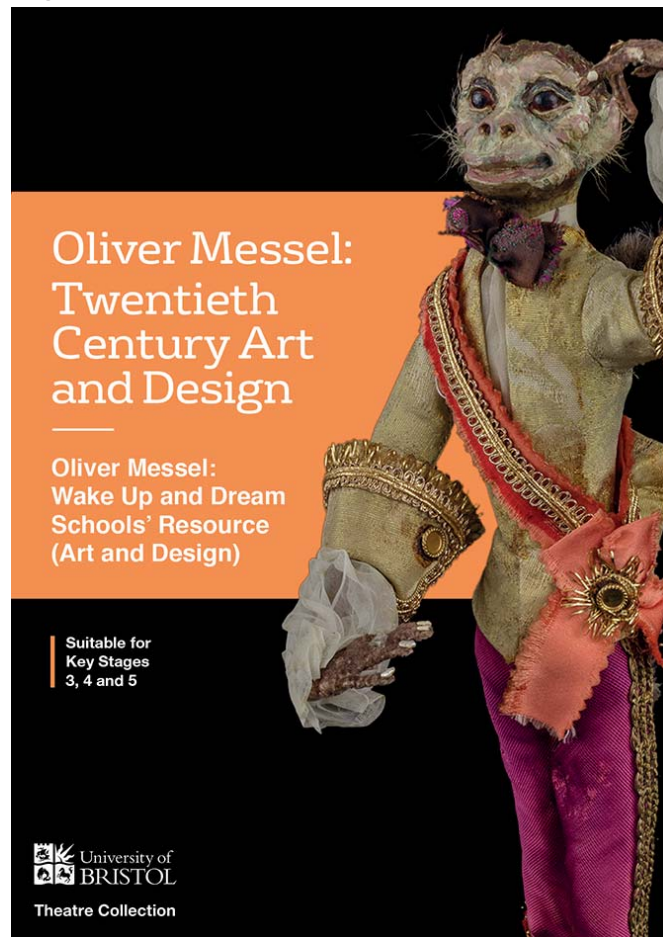
School resource packs produced as part of the project.  
Image courtesy of University of Bristol Theatre Collection



School resource packs produced as part of the project.  
Image courtesy of University of Bristol Theatre Collection



Portrait of Oliver Messel by Angus McBean.  
Image courtesy of University of Bristol Theatre Collection



School resource packs produced as part of the project.  
Image courtesy of University of Bristol Theatre Collection

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*[the collection] has provided a foundation for new and innovative ways of working, pushing us to look at our approach to both sharing and interpreting archives*

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Portrait of Oliver Messel by Angus McBean. Image courtesy of University of Bristol Theatre Collection

Collection more widely as a creative resource. They contain contextual material relating each sub-theme to the curriculum as a whole, as well as reference images and creative activities including suggestions for discussion topics, focussed tasks, and ideas for independent research which can be adapted as needed for different stages of the curriculum. The education packs explore three different aspects of the archive: *Oliver Messel: magic maker (materials and processes)*,

*Oliver Messel: twentieth century art and design* and *Oliver Messel: The art of theatre design (storytelling in space)*. Additional resources are available to accompany each pack including a glossary designed to introduce students to specific terms and vocabulary used and downloadable image packs.

An unanticipated outcome of *Sharing the Messel Magic* was a collaboration with Bristol-based

artist Tom Marshman who has built a reputation uncovering and interpreting untold stories within archives and museum collections. What started with embedding a small interactive audio work, *The caviar outlook*, within our exhibition, grew into a successful Arts Council funded project developing the work into an extended performance and installation piece, *I went to a marvellous party*. This work was performed in venues across Bristol, taking facsimiles from the Theatre Collection and enabling us to reach new audiences in a completely new and dynamic way.

From its acquisition back in 2015 to the project's completion, we have seen how the story of one man has intrigued and inspired both existing and new audiences and allowed the Theatre Collection to move towards a more outward focus, engaging with communities in and around Bristol. It has also provided a foundation for new and innovative ways of working, pushing us to look at our approach to both sharing and interpreting archives. Now established as a key resource within our wider collections, we are looking forward to engaging more audiences in Messel's unique story for many years to come.

To find out more about the Oliver Messel Archive, including how to access our schools' resources, for information about the exhibition *Wake up and dream*, to search our online catalogue or watch *I went to a marvellous party* please visit [www.bristol.ac.uk/theatre-collection/explore/theatre/oliver-messel-archive/](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/theatre-collection/explore/theatre/oliver-messel-archive/).

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