

arc magazine

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Welcome

arc magazine

September & October 2022 edition



Welcome to the September/October edition of *ARC Magazine*. I hope everyone who attended the ARA Conference in Chester has, firstly, recovered, and also returned home energised and full of ideas to take into your professional practice. This edition includes some highlights and reflections from the event, which will be of interest to attendees and non-attendees alike.

Elsewhere in the magazine we have a special double feature to celebrate 75 years of archive education in the UK. Elizabeth Shepherd looks at the origins and development of archival training, whilst a panel of experts from across the profession give their views on the current and future state of education in the record-keeping field.

We also hear from Peter Goodwin of Ancestry, on the unexpected conservation benefits that can result from a digitisation project, celebrate success in the Community Archive and Heritage Group Awards and, as always, bring you the latest news and developments from across the sector.

Diversity is a key strand that runs through this edition. Jenny Moran reflects on what this means in a record-keeping context and provides an update

on ARA's ongoing mission to embed diversity and inclusion into its work, whilst included among the news items are examples of projects, toolkits and guidance that touch on various aspects of equality.

My thanks go to all the contributors who have given their time and expertise. If you have an idea for a feature or would like to share some news, please get in touch: arceditors@archives.org.uk.

Finally, it's the time of year for membership renewals. Recent events have emphasised the importance of togetherness, particularly when times are tough, and we hope that you will continue being part of the ARA community. Renewals are due by 1st October 2022 and you can renew online [here](#).

Michael

Michael Gallagher
ARC Joint Editor





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Front Cover image Paul Robeson on the stage during the "gymanfa ganu" at the 1958 National Eisteddfod of Wales at Ebbw Vale
© The National Library of Wales



Opening lines

Audrey Wilson, Partnerships and Engagement Manager for the Scottish Council on Archives, discusses collaboration and innovation in the dynamic field of community archives.



Recently, community archive heritage groups have embraced the digital world, through much collaboration and hard work. This was most evident at July's Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG) Annual Conference and Awards in Galway with the theme *Meitheal*. This Irish Gaelic word describes how neighbours collaborate and support one another to get the harvest and other jobs done. The three days of the conference included listening to and visiting a diverse selection of community archive projects involving heritage professionals, academics, digital specialists and myriad volunteers. Beyond the UK and Ireland, we welcomed speaker contributions from Chile and Poland.

Meitheal has certainly influenced my work with community archive heritage groups, to produce innovations that enable us to use archives to reflect, learn and future-plan. Since 2018, I have been part of the Community Archives and Heritage Group (a special interest group of the ARA) contributing towards the creation of a Community Archives and Heritage Group Scotland Network. A goal of CAHG has been to set up regional groups and networks to meet the needs of members with the support of the ARA UK and Ireland group.

The network embraces knowledge-sharing and provision, training and best practice, whilst supporting and advocating on behalf of community archives. Although Scotland-based, we welcome contributions from everyone and everywhere! The

steering group of CAHG Scotland reflects the ethos of the main CAHG group, and our constituents work and volunteer in archives and heritage throughout Scotland.

Forming a new group and network as we entered lockdown was a challenge, but we adapted quickly to meeting and creating events online. A two-year pilot provided a degree of safety-netting whilst enabling creative opportunities for innovation and listening, as some perhaps struggled with new technology, or missed the camaraderie of volunteering in their own community archive heritage group.

“
I believe we
need to open up
our archives to
include everyone's
story
”

CAHG conference delegates at Oughterard Courthouse, Galway. © Deborah Mason

Through feedback from in-person events in 2019 and a survey in 2020, the CAHG Scotland steering group responded with a user-friendly "Developing Your Digital Skills" webinar series. Eight lunchtime Zoom webinars included an introduction to 3D digitisation. Accorded CPD credentials by the ARA and presented by a mix of volunteers and professionals, our webinar series was recognised by The UK National Archives as part of their celebration, A Year in Archives 2021.

I am delighted that all our projects in the two-year pilot phase were successful, including a presentation at Glasgow's COP26 meeting, *Sustainable Stories: Capturing an Age of Change in Community Archives*. With continued support and funding from the ARA, the network grows.

On the [Scottish Council on Archives \(SCA\) website](#), you will see a plethora of wonderful projects, all connected and reliant on Meitheal. Perhaps the most ambitious project to date is [Voices: The Community Story \(VCS\)](#).

This will resonate with many readers. I believe we need to open up our archives to include everyone's story and the project brings together the stories of New Scots, as well as second and third generation migrants. This is delivered through oral history recordings of those people now living in both urban and rural Scotland. For perhaps the first time, it allows voices from a variety of backgrounds and previously difficult-

to-access communities to be heard and preserved.

By introducing archivists, heritage professionals, community and volunteers, we create opportunities to learn, collaborate and develop future partnerships.

This project realised early on that we cannot capture everyone's story. The greatest contribution will be an evaluation report, including a legacy document to inform future projects and funding applications. We would also like to engage with worldwide CAHGs and their undoubted expertise, new ideas and skills, to join our network.

To start this conversation, I am presenting at the International Council on Archives conference in Rome this month on, *Opening-Up Scotland's Archives: Capacity Building and Providing Digital Skills to Create an Accessible Network of Community Archives*. There's something very satisfying about developing an idea from a solid foundation and witnessing it flourish.

Please email me at a.wilson@scottisharchives.org.uk to discuss anything mentioned in the article or to join our mailing list.



From the Board

Jenny Moran reflects on the concepts of pride and prejudice, and what they mean for record keepers.



Pride. It can be the best feeling of confidence and euphoria: in yourself, in your team, in your country. This summer we've been proud of our athletes in the Commonwealth Games and England's Lionesses in the Euros. They, in turn, talk about being proud to represent us: the people who look to them as pioneers and icons. For the first time in two years there have been Pride parades and October's Black History Month will feature, for many of us, Black people in our archives and records. These events aim to celebrate achievement and to engender pride in how far we have come, to stress that we are part of something bigger than ourselves.

But what have we got to be proud of? Surely the footballers' success is theirs, not ours and we have no right to claim a part of it. Why should we celebrate someone being English, or Black or gay? It's complicated to answer, of course. We feel the triumph of our national teams reflects well on our country and, therefore, on us. They are our lionesses and their success is our success. Pride parades, Black History Month, International Women's Day all remind us that there is much to admire in being yourself and standing up for what is right against the odds and, often, against the law.

As record keepers, we have a unique perspective on this: we hold the source material and know how much - and how little - the world has changed. We have the anti-suffrage leaflets explaining that women thought only about fashion and family and could not be trusted with the weighty matters of state. We are aware of courts and hospitals punishing and medicalising gay people, through the records we hold, as well as many documented examples of prejudice against people from ethnic minority backgrounds over many centuries. We know of the recent, shameful history lurking just beneath the surface of our suffragette-inspired tea towels, glittery rainbow flags, carnivals and melas. We also know there is nothing to be proud of there.

If we can feel pride when things go well, we equally feel shame when they have gone badly and this is a difficult and painful emotion. We want to rationalise and justify, take refuge in denial and just not thinking about it. There are myriad examples in the mainstream media: fears about women's safety are exaggerated, the British Empire was benign and beneficial, the woke agenda is erasing our heritage and the classic: "Not all men!"

Feeling pride and shame indicates taking ownership, otherwise we would be equally unmoved by footballing success or failure. These emotions can be very positive if they lead to action: turning our pride into support and inclusion and our shame into accepting the truth and a commitment to doing better in the future. The Archives and Records Association, and, of course, our members have experienced a difficult and challenging period over the last three years. Not only has Covid altered the world, but events like the Black Lives Matter protests and decolonising discussions can make us feel uncertain and confused as the things that used to make us feel proud may now make us feel ashamed.

What can we do? We would like every member to feel proud of ARA and celebrate how far we have come. At the same time, we want everyone to drive the organisation forward, to be challenging but supportive - we have come a long way, but still have far to go. If there are things that we do badly or do not do at all, we want to know about it so we can listen, respond and do better in the future. Ultimately, we all want to feel that sense of belonging and euphoria: that we represent and are represented and that we are all proud to be who we are.



Your new board

At the ARA Board Meeting on 18th July Ruth Macleod was co-opted as Vice Chair and Ross Higgins and Killian Downing were co-opted as Board Members. The ARA Board now comprises:

Chair: Andrew Nicoll
Vice Chair: Ruth Macleod
Secretary: David Powell
Treasurer: Stephen Scarth
Board Members: Julie Bon, Killian Downing, Ross Higgins, Jenny Moran, Elizabeth Thomson-McCrae.

All board members can be contacted by email using the email format: firstname.lastname@archives.org.uk

Podcast call out - Explore Your Archive

As part of ARA's public engagement and advocacy strategy a new podcast series – aimed at the general public – is being planned for delivery through the Explore Your Archive initiative. ARA Communications Manager, Deborah Mason, and podcast producer and Explore Your Archive volunteer, Lily Colgan are in the process of creating the first podcasts. If you have a story to tell about your archive (and the things it contains) that will engage the general public, please get in touch. Send an email to deborah.mason@archives.org.uk



Inclusive Cataloguing blog series

In August 2022, the Diversity Allies Inclusive Cataloguing group launched a blog series looking at the practical steps to decolonise archives. The blogs explore questions such as:

- What is decolonisation?
- How can cataloguing be more inclusive?
- Are there different ways to decolonise a collection?
- Can you decolonise a relatively modern set of records?

Each Ally shares how they

underwent decolonising practice in their work and explains how they view the decolonisation topic. In late September, at the end of the series, there will be an event to discuss the themes raised in the blogs more broadly with the wider ARA community.

You can read the blogs [here](#).



An update from the Security and Access Group

The Security and Access Group has been reconvened after several years in abeyance. We would like to encourage new members to join the group from across ARA and further afield. The group provides a forum to discuss security and access issues in confidence. For example, in the past the group has shared information about recent thefts or security breaches, discussed new legislation, standards and guidelines and provided access to information about current threats e.g. related to war or terrorism.

Given the uncertain state of the world, resourcing challenges and rapid changes in technology, we feel the group has an important role to play within ARA and the wider cultural/information community. The group considers both physical and digital/cyber

security issues and indeed anything which might impact on our mission to make collections available while maintaining security and preservation.

It also provides a forum to discuss emergency and business continuity planning and will seek to support relevant training needs identified by the members.

The group meets approximately three times a year, generally online, but with some in-person meetings which normally present the opportunity to visit a repository/collection. If you are interested in joining the group please contact the current chair, Joe Marshall (National Library of Scotland) at J.Marshall@nls.uk

The revised Terms of Reference are available [here](#).

An update on ARA's Diversity Work

"Long periods of boredom punctuated by moments of terror: this seems an apposite summary of the past two or three years. Are we now post-COVID, mid-COVID or at the mid-point of an inglorious COVID Five-Year Plan? Not even Jonathan Van-Tam (whom God preserve), knows" says **Jenny Moran**



In terms of ARA's work on diversity, there has been progress and we continue to develop. ARA's Vision for Inclusion from the Strategic Plan 2021-2025 contains the following statement:

"Our organisation is changing. Our sector is changing. Our commitment to inclusion and equality is a thread that runs throughout our entire organisation and our activities."

This means that we want to embed equality, diversity and inclusion into everything we do and not have this work sit outside of our activities and planning. In some ways, it feels that national progress has hit reverse gear with continuing concerns about the safety of women, and misogynistic attitudes in society as a whole and law enforcement in particular. Black people continue to be disproportionately targeted by the police and the 'Hostile Environment' continues to be our government's response to refugees and asylum seekers.

Trans people have also felt unsafe, marginalised and disregarded: attacked by public figures and politicians who have stated their intentions to weaken equalities legislation and withdraw from the European Convention on Human Rights.

ARA, of course, exists in the real world and the issues facing society also face our members and stakeholders.

- As ARA's Diversity Portfolio holder, I contributed to an article 'Against Whitewashing: The Recent History of Anti-Racist Action in the British Archives Sector' published in the International Journal of Information, Diversity and Inclusion (IJIDI). This discussed recent concerns and initiatives in the sector.
- Norma Gregory, Director of Nottingham News Centre CIC, edited

a special anti-racism edition of Archives and Records, our journal. Norma was a panel member of the ARA Together call in June 2020 which focussed on race and ethnicity following the death of George Floyd and Black Lives Matter protests.

- A diversity edition of ARC Magazine was produced in 2021, with contributions from the Diversity Allies.
- Throughout 2021, the Diversity Allies worked on training resources. The group was formally constituted within ARA, formed a leadership committee and has an allocated budget.
- The Diversity Allies are currently developing resources on the following topics, with more in the pipeline:
 - Approaching marginalised communities
 - Decolonising catalogues
 - Recruitment best practice
- A blog series on approaches to inclusive cataloguing was launched in August and will culminate in an online event in September.
- There has been significant diversity input into the Conference both in 2021, when it was held virtually, and 2022 in Chester. In 2021, Arike Oke, Managing Director of the Black Cultural Archives was very well received as one of our keynote speakers and this year there was a 'talking diversity' fringe session, amongst other content. Diversity and inclusion have been given greater consideration in the planning of social events in order to make



There has been progress and we continue to develop. ©Vonecia Carswell via Unsplash

people feel more comfortable and able to attend.

- As the Diversity Portfolio holder, I spoke at the University College London summer school for people hoping to enter the record-keeping profession.
- As the Diversity Portfolio holder, I have responded to individuals and regions about specific concerns and development of training sessions.
- ARA obtained funding from The UK National Archives to develop training resources and this tender will be developed in 2022-23.

There is much more to do and ARA board and staff are working with the Diversity Allies on a more detailed activity plan covering our current and future work to ensure that we really are embedding diversity and inclusion into everything we do.

Please get in touch if you have any comments on this work or would like to be more involved.

Jenny is the ARA Board Diversity Portfolio holder you can contact her at: jenny.moran@archives.org.uk

Find out more about the Diversity Allies [here](#).

ARA Excellence Awards 2022

The winners of the ARA Excellence Awards were announced at the Gala Dinner of the Archives and Records Association Conference in Chester on the evening of Thursday 1st September. Andrew Nicoll, ARA Chair, announced each winner and Aileen Ireland, ARA President, presented the awards to those who were able to attend.

ARA instituted the awards to recognise excellence and contributions by individuals and teams in the record keeping sector. The work of the sector is vital in supporting democracy and human rights and in preserving and sharing the heritage of the UK and Ireland.

To celebrate the achievements of record keeping professionals and their contribution to society, ARA has four special awards: Distinguished Service Award (DSA), Record Keeper of the Year, Record Keeping Service of the Year and New Professional of the Year Award.

"The ARA Excellence Awards are a wonderful opportunity to celebrate what is best about the record keeping sector and to encourage us all to strive for excellence. It is great to be able to make awards to people at the start of their careers and to those who have been working in the sector for five decades, demonstrating that what

we are doing today, now, is where the good practice and excellence begin. In the case of those receiving the Distinguished Service Award for some of them the award is made because they have repeated that good practice, that excellence, that going-beyond throughout a long career within a single place, for others it is about a defining moment of bringing an important piece of work to fruition or making a specific contribution to a particular area. Both paths bring benefit to our sector and to the people who access our services and to the public in general whose history we keep safe and whose future we protect."

Three awards were voted on by the public and over 750 votes were cast in all.

The nominees for Record Keeping Service of the Year were:

- Barnsley Archives and Local Studies
- University of Nottingham, Manuscripts & Special Collections
- The Manuscripts for Medieval Studies Team, the Library of Trinity College Dublin
- Transport for London Corporate Archives
- Doncaster Archives & Heritage Doncaster



ARA Excellence Award Winners 2022 – left to right, Paul Stebbings (Barnsley), Maggie Tohill, Katie Proctor, Michael Cook, Gemma Evans, Declan Kelly. Photo credit: Simon O'Connor

The winner with 54 per cent of the vote was Barnsley Archives and Local Studies.

The nominees for Record Keeper of the Year were:

- Stacey Anderson
- Sally Mcinnes
- Katie Proctor

The winner, with 51 per cent of the vote was Katie Proctor, with Stacey and Sally dividing the remainder of the votes equally between them.

The nominees for New Professional of the Year were:

- Gemma Evans
- Iida Saarinen

In a closely fought contest the winner with 58 per cent of the vote was Gemma Evans.

In addition to the awards voted on by the public, the Board were pleased to make four **Distinguished Service Awards (DSA)**.

The DSA recognises individual conservators, archivists or records managers for career-long achievement and/or outstanding work, e.g. successful management/implementation of a project; external fundraising that has transformed a resource or service; significant improvements to service delivery.

Distinguished Service Awards were given to:

Michael Cook for record keeping for his work, particularly with the IT Group of the Society of Archivists and the Archival Description Project as well as at the University of Liverpool, where having retired as University Archivist, he was a co-founder of the Liverpool University Centre for Archive Studies.



The ARA Excellence Awards were presented at the gala dinner of the ARA Conference in Chester. Photo credit: Simon O'Connor



ARA Excellence Awards were presented by Andrew Nicoll, ARA Chair and Aideen Ireland, ARA President. Photo credit: Simon O'Connor

Declan Kelly for Archives and Records Management and specifically for the delivery of the new Lambeth Palace Library, the National Library and Archives for the Church of England.

Maggie Tohill for Distinguished Service in Archives for her work at Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service (WAAS) and particularly for her dedication to innovation, modernisation of the profession and commitment to accessibility.

Brian Smith for Distinguished Service in Archives and Recordkeeping for his work as archivist of the Shetland Amenity Trust and his ongoing development of the service there.

You can read a fuller report on the awards on our website [here](#).



ARA Conference 2022

'Facing Forward: Post-pandemic recordkeeping – change, challenge, choice'

ARA's first face-to-face conference since 2019 took place over three days at the end of August. Our speakers and delegates certainly took the 'facing forward' part of the conference theme to heart and throughout the three days the conference abounded with positive energy, connections were made, information, knowledge and experience shared and two great social events cemented the positive atmosphere. No one doubted that the next few years would be tough but conference had reinforced the message that working together both across our professional boundaries as archivists, records managers, conservators and across our sector, was the way to make progress.

The three, exceptional, keynotes had a number of common threads. Jack Kirby of the Science Museum Group talked about risk and that there was a danger that fear of risk could lead to lack of progress, particularly around issues of open access and diversity. He also touched on the need for uncomfortable choices around preserving digital records and the urgency of managing this in terms of climate and environmental implications.

David Smith, from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities also looked at the need to rationalise what is kept and what is stored and archived. He reinforced the need to be risk aware not risk averse

and looked particularly at the challenges facing those keeping public records, helpfully offering up some potential strategies for managing the 'electronic heap'. In an engaging and humorous talk he also provided helpful tips on preparing for public inquiries using examples from both the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and the ongoing COVID-19 inquiry. In putting forward a number of areas where he felt that the recordkeeping sector could do better he also touched on the need for an ethical approach and that it was important to be 'tough on issues' but 'kind to people'.

Our final keynote, Zöe Reid, Keeper at the National Archives, Ireland, presented an overview of the Virtual Treasury Ireland (see page 28). The project brought together over 70 participant institutions and a wide range of professional sectors

and Zöe looked at the challenges, choices and change that it engendered. A key factor was the importance of collaborating with other professionals in the project in new and flexible ways. Adapting a conservation approach for example to an historical one that would help to tell the story of the Virtual Treasury and also guide the choices of what to conserve next in a way that would enable the very tight (and inflexible) timescale to be achieved. The Virtual Treasury was destined to launch 100 years to the day that the Four Courts and Public Record Office were destroyed by fire in the opening actions of the Irish Civil War on 30th June 1922. However, two years of COVID lockdowns had made this work harder but the process, requiring new ways of thinking, new approaches and new

Thursday's keynote speaker, David Smith of the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. Credit: Simon O'Connor



connections had increased confidence and capacity in the conservation project team.

It would be impossible in the space available here to cover all the other highlights of a packed programme, but it is worth mentioning the innovative fringe session organised by Jenny Moran (ARA Board portfolio holder for diversity). Modelled on the Last Leg TV show the session asked 'Is It OK?' and with panel members drawn from our diversity bursary holders (Villy Magero and Saman Quaraishi) a lively and entertaining discussion of serious subjects ensued. A number of other presentations experimented with interactive formats including The Section for Archives and Technology's 'lean coffee discussion' and the Section for Records Management & Information Governance's launch of Think BIG (our new information governance campaign) – a highly entertaining session with a bingo card, quizzes and, unexpectedly, dinosaurs!

It was also great to welcome back our sponsors and exhibitors. Ancestry were again our main sponsor and also provided four bursaries, Bruynzeel once again sponsored the very popular Ice Cream break and Preservica sponsored our lanyards. We also enjoyed the social events in Chester Cathedral (for our Wednesday evening drinks event) and the Gala Dinner on Thursday night where local band, The Pictures, got everyone up on the dance floor.

We will be publishing some follow up blogs, videos and bursary holder reports on the website over the coming weeks.



Is It OK fringe session panel: Villy Magero, Jenny Moran, Saman Quaraishi. Credit: Simon O'Connor



Friday's keynote speaker, Zöe Reid, Keeper at the National Archives, Ireland. Credit: Simon O'Connor




Ancestry Bursary Holders with Ancestry staff. Credit: Simon O'Connor



Dancing at the Gala Dinner. Credit: Simon O'Connor



The Bruynzeel ice cream break returns. Credit: Simon O'Connor



Professional Development News

The ARA has launched a new series of web archiving webinars designed for record-keepers.

Web archiving is an evolving professional activity. The tools and technologies used are changing and will continue to do so as they respond to the fluid nature of web content. It is therefore vital that the record keeping profession develops its digital capacity.

Thanks to funding from The UK National Archives, ARA commissioned Kirsty Fife, Lecturer in Digital Information and Curatorial Practice at Manchester Metropolitan University, to design and deliver a series of pre-recorded web archiving webinars. So, whether you are new to web archiving, or an experienced web archiver looking to progress your work to the next level, this training is for you.

In this article we discuss with Kirsty how this series of training webinars will equip record keepers with the skills and knowledge required to meet the challenges of web archiving. The first series of four webinars is all about getting started in web archiving. We explore what web archiving is, what it is not, and introduce key web archiving terms and workflows. You will also have the opportunity to test and evaluate some of the open source tools available, including [Conifer](#), [Archiveweb.page](#) and [Replayweb.page](#). The second series of four webinars takes this knowledge and experience to the next level, exploring options in scaling up your web archiving work. This includes developing a web archiving policy, managing your programme and additional sources of web archiving CPD.

So what makes this training different to other web archiving training? "These free webinars are aimed at all archive workers", explained Kirsty. "They are recorded in digestible and pre-recorded sessions, so you can work through the training at your own pace. We've built in knowledge checks and exercises at the end of each presentation which encourage you to either test your knowledge, try out a tool or reflect on your experience".

Kirsty also recognised the barriers that prevent some archivists from web archiving: "It is a new skillset that feels very different to those who went through training focused on paper-based materials. This can feel intimidating, especially when lots of jargon is used and not explained. So the webinars are jargon-free and don't assume knowledge of terms that might not be familiar."

Many archivists also face resource barriers in workplaces, which affect their ability to fund web archiving activity. Kirsty's response to this challenge is to focus the training on open source tools, which are initially low cost and can be scaled for larger organisations: "The first module gives you practical knowledge of the daily work of web archiving, helping you to take those first steps! The second is more focused on planning, policy and project management, so helps you to scale up. The modules also advise where you can continue your professional development by participating in peer networks, events and accessing free resources."

The webinars are now available to members on the [ARA website](#) and can be accessed from any device as often as required. We also provide a downloadable copy of all presentation slides, with active web links, to support your learning.



Kirsty Fife,
Lecturer
in Digital
Information
and Curatorial
Practice at
Manchester
Metropolitan
University.

ARA2023 CONFERENCE

BELFAST
30th August to
1st September 2023



Celebrating **75 years**
of Archives Education

PART
1

75 years of archive education in the UK and Ireland

In this article **Elizabeth Shepherd**, Professor of Archives and Records Management at UCL, draws on her research into the history of the archives profession in the 20th Century to explore the development of archive education in the UK and Ireland.



Archival education started formally in England in 1947 when the first students were admitted to study at University College London (UCL) and at the University of Liverpool. The need for archival education had been identified in government reports by 1902, following the model of the national training schools established during the 19th century on the European continent, in France, Austria and elsewhere. In the UK, recruitment to the staff of the national archives (then the Public Record Office, established in 1838) was via the Civil Service Commission clerkship examinations, followed by in-house training in scholarly and historical skills. Universities in England began to teach archive-related disciplines such as librarianship (which began in 1902 at the London School of Economics, and was later re-instated at UCL in 1919, as the first British School of Librarianship), local history (notably at the University of Liverpool's School of Local History and Palaeography from 1902) and palaeography and diplomatic, which were taught by Hubert Hall of the PRO in the University of London from 1896 and later by Hilary Jenkinson, and at Oxford University which appointed R L Poole to a lectureship in 1897. It was not until the demand for archivists rose as local government record offices were established and businesses set up archives in the 1920s and 1930s, that universities started archival education programmes.

Three separate initiatives began in 1947 which each resulted in an archival education programme at UCL, the University of Liverpool and the Bodleian Library, Oxford. In Oxford, discussions between the Department of Western Manuscripts in the Library and the modern history faculty about the nature and use of archives for postgraduate students evolved into a scheme to establish a diploma in archives, to satisfy the demand for trained scholars who could work as archivists. A traineeship was established, with one or two Oxford graduates admitted as students each year, who attended lectures in history and worked in the Bodleian Library, mainly cataloguing

and calendaring. They did not receive a formal university qualification but were provided with a detailed reference from the Keeper of Western Manuscripts instead. The scheme continued until 1980 and trained 50 archivists, many of whom rose to senior roles in the profession and academia.

At the University of Liverpool in 1944, Geoffrey Barraclough was newly appointed to the Department of Medieval History and, with the continental schools in mind, he felt that it was time to introduce a Diploma in Archives and Archive Administration. Dorothea Oschinsky was appointed to a lectureship in palaeography, succeeded in 1977 by Elizabeth Danbury. The Diploma aimed to train students in a practical way to work in English local archives and, to that end, students undertook practical instruction at Lancashire Record Office and were taught by county archivists such as Peter Walne, who introduced records management in 1954. The university archivist, Michael Cook, taught on the programme for many years from 1969. In 1982 the Diploma was replaced by the new Master of Archive Administration programme.

The third programme was established at UCL in the School of Librarianship, following an intervention by Hilary Jenkinson and the British Records Association (BRA). In 1944, the BRA drafted two schemes, one for a repair workshop and another for training archivists, which were proposed to UCL. UCL did not feel it had space for the repair centre, but the Diploma progressed through the College and University committees, receiving approval and admitting the first students in 1947. The syllabus included courses in palaeography and diplomatic, administrative history, listing and indexing, archival storage, organisation of an archive, and aspects of librarianship, together with practical work. By 1960, about 100 archive students had graduated with UCL's Diploma. From 1966, the programme offered a Masters degree to students who completed a thesis or long



Bodleian Library. Photo credit Tim Wildsmith via Unsplash

BRITISH RECORDS ASSOCIATION

Patron: Her Majesty Queen Mary

President: The Right Honourable the Master of the Rolls

Honorary Treasurer: Edward H. Hoare, Esq.

Honorary Secretaries:

Hilary Jenkinson, Esq., F.S.A.

Irene J. Churchill, D.Phil., F.S.A.

~~44-46 Institute of Historical Research~~

~~University of London,~~

~~W.C.2.~~

Public Record Office,
Chancery Lane, W.C.2.

21 August, 1945.

I see that the School of Librarianship is being revived at University College. May I therefore invite the attention of yourself and your School Committee to a document of which I have already spoken to you — the scheme for a School of and Diploma in Archive Science, drawn up by a Committee of this Association: of which I enclose a copy.

My Council is well aware that some time must elapse before we can hope to see any such scheme realised in its entirety. It is also aware of the great difficulty of the situation — the fact that posts as Archivists cannot be filled without the requisite number of trained Archivists being available; while on the other hand, students can hardly be asked to take up the career of Archivist unless and until there is a reasonable guarantee that posts will be provided for them: a vicious circle.

It is thought, however, that the beginning of a solution might be found if, within an organisation such as that of the School of Librarianship, provision could be made for the inclusion of Archive Science not only in an elementary form (as was in fact done by my own Lectures when the School was first started after the last War) but as a subject to be expanded if and when the demand for such specialisation warranted it. The syllabus which we have compiled has been deliberately constructed with that aim: and (not to make this letter too long) I should be extremely glad of an opportunity to discuss the proposal in more detail either with yourself or with the Director of the School.

The

The Provost,
University College,
Gower Street,
W.C.1.

The scheme for an experimental Repairing Centre is a separate one: but it might well be, if the idea of including Archive Science in your Syllabus upon the basis I have indicated were approved, that we might seek a grant of the necessary capital for the purpose of starting such a centre with direct consideration of the requirements of a short practical course for your Students.

Yours sincerely
Hilary Jenkinson

Register copy
typing of the Report

Letter from
Sir Hilary
Jenkinson to
Provost of
UCL proposing
the institution
of a 'School of
and Diploma
in Archive
Science'.
Date: 21 August
1945.
Courtesy of
University
of London,
Senate House
Library,
University
of London
Archives



University of Liverpool.
By courtesy of The University of Liverpool Library

project. UCL also offered doctoral level study in librarianship and in archives from 1966. Historical bibliographer A G Watson acted as tutor from 1954, succeeded in 1977 by diplomatist Jane Sayers.

In the University of Wales, two colleges began to teach a diploma in archives in the 1950s. North Wales College, Bangor established a Diploma course in Palaeography and Archive Administration in the Department of History in 1954, led by N Denholm-Young, who had previously been an archivist at Caernarvon Record Office. The Diploma was given University status in 1955, after which the college at Aberystwyth also began an archives and palaeography course, taught initially as inter-departmental between Welsh History, History and Classics, later forming part of the Department of Information Studies.

Within a decade, five programmes in archival education were established across England and Wales. The only addition in the 1970s was the programme at University College Dublin led by the university archivist, which initially provided for archivists in Ireland. All the programmes remained fairly small, each taking between about five and 15 students each year. The provision of archival education in the UK and Ireland remained stable until around 1980, after which there were significant changes to the existing curricula,

reflecting changes in the archives and records profession and workplaces. In due course, new subjects were taught, new programmes started (notably in Scotland at the Universities of Glasgow and Dundee, at Northumbria University, as well as a distance learning programme offered by the Society of Archivists), and some programmes closed. Significant changes in higher education, the emergence of international research networks in archival science and records management, and the emergence of a global market in post-graduate students transformed the archival education landscape everywhere in the world by 2022.

Links:

[FARMER](#) represents all the archives and records programmes in the UK and Ireland.

Biography:

[Dr Elizabeth Shepherd](#) is Professor of Archives and Records Management at the Department of Information Studies, UCL. Qualified as an archivist, she has been an academic since 1992, including Director of the [MA in Archives and Records Management](#) at UCL for a decade. Her recent research is into the information needs of children in care, the [MIRRA project](#) and the history of the archives profession in 20th century England (*Archives and Archivists in 20th Century England*, 2009) [here](#) on which this short article draws.

Celebrating **75 years**
of Archives Education

PART
2

Education and training in the record-keeping sector now and in the future

In this second article celebrating 75 years of formal archive education in the UK we asked **Andrew Nicoll**, Chair of ARA, **Chris Sheridan**, ARA's Head of Professional Development and Standards, **Katie Proctor**, Registrar of the Archive Conservation Training Scheme and **Chris Jones** from The UK National Archives' Bridging the Digital Gap initiative to give their views on the current and future state of education and training in the record-keeping sector.

Conservation Training

Katie Proctor, Registrar of the Archive Conservation Training Scheme

The ARA's Archive Conservation Training Scheme has been running since the 1970s and was predominantly formed with a view to training students from local government record offices. The training scheme has trained 180 archive conservators in the 50 or so years since it began, many of whom have been employed not only in local government record offices but also national institutions such as the National Library of Wales and the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland.

Over the years the training scheme has developed to train students from a wide variety of backgrounds and working situations. Many students have funded themselves through the training or have received grants for training from various bodies. Due to the significant funding cuts local authorities have been facing over the past years, the requirement of external funding for training has increased significantly.

Trainees have often been working in a large team or may be working completely on their own, setting up a conservation studio and practice for their employer, so the training scheme has worked on acting as a mentor and support for the development of

conservation studios and practices nationwide. We are very proud to support the development of the conservation profession.

The way training is delivered has significantly changed over the past two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the conservation training scheme has had to work very closely with its trainees and instructors to ensure the safe and effective running of the course during these challenging times. The training scheme was very proud to deliver its first completely virtual week of lectures in November 2021. The virtual lecture week attracted over 52 attendees, not only from the UK but also Canada and Europe.

The delivery of the training had to be somewhat rethought and developed as situations changed across the country. The training scheme is now working very hard to help the 10 current trainees reach a successful end to their journeys to become professional conservators.

The training scheme is also working closely with the ARA to ensure the offer of training remains up-to-date and relevant to the needs of the sector.



ACTS training week
© Katie Proctor

Establishing and developing a sector wide competency framework

Chris Sheridan, ARA Head of Professional Development and Standards

In 2017 ARA launched a competency framework for the record-keeping sector. At that time, this important document met two distinct needs; it provided an essential career development tool for all those working and volunteering within the sector. Relating professional knowledge and experience to the framework helps record keepers understand their current level of experience, identify strengths and areas to improve, and helps them plan the steps they need to take to progress in their careers. The framework also set standards of competence that ARA members must demonstrate to qualify for ARA professional registration.

Over time the competency framework has proven to be a highly effective tool for both individuals and employers. For some, the framework established standards in competence that unites professional practice across the UK and Republic of Ireland. For others, it supports diverse career routes into the sector via traineeships, apprenticeships and for those changing career.

However, just as professions and sectors must evolve to meet the challenges of digital, access and value for money, ARA's competency framework must also keep pace and reflect the sector's educational and professional development needs. The 2022 workforce mapping survey will provide an effective evidence base to support a review of the framework and we will consult widely with ARA members, employers and stakeholders to ensure it remains relevant.

There is more work to do to ensure the framework speaks to



archival, records management and archival conservation work. ARA's Board also see a role for the framework in the accreditation of current and future university programmes. As traditional career routes shift and change, and a more diverse range of talent finds opportunities to work in record-

keeping, it is good to know that the framework will remain a critical part of the sector's professional development.



The UK National Archives' Bridging the Digital Gap Traineeships.....

Chris Jones, UK National Archives Project Manager, Bridging the Digital Gap



Bridging the Digital Gap was an ambitious traineeship programme in which 24 people with technological skills, but little to no archive experience, were trained to become digital archive assistants. Supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and managed by The UK National Archives, the programme aimed to boost the digital capacity of 24 archive services across England and diversify the workforce by recruiting trainees from under-represented groups. Between 2018 and 2022, three cohorts of trainees undertook 15-month placements.

The hosts' on-the-job training and the off-the-job training provided by The UK National Archives covered four broad digital areas – acquisition, preservation, access, and engagement – as well as archival

principles. Hosts developed individual work plans for their own trainee, but also offered workshops and tours (pre-COVID) for the cohort so that trainees learned about different archives and specialisms.

Off-the-job training included workshops, an e-learning course and subscriptions to e-books. Trainees each had a budget to spend on courses and events of their choice. They could also use The UK National Archives' membership in the Digital Preservation Coalition and the Open Preservation Foundation to access a wealth of relevant resources and events. The ARA also gave trainees free student membership, enabling access to its events and publications.

Bridging the Digital Gap piloted a training model for a new entry route into the

sector. A key lesson was that technically minded people from other disciplines may have different learning styles from the sector's traditional entrants and may not respond well to text-heavy e-learning courses and assessments. Future programmes could think innovatively about designing training resources appropriate to their learners.

By July 2022, 67 per cent of trainees had successfully applied for Foundation Membership of ARA, and 57 per cent were working in the archive, library, and museum sectors, more than half in digital archiving or digitisation roles.

© Archives Council Wales

The future is ... Learning, Education and Development

Andrew Nicoll – ARA Chair

It seems right whilst considering and exploring the past, that we turn our attention to the present and the future. The last two years has seen ARA consider how it could be delivering all of the opportunities and responsibilities that it has for learning, education and development. Bringing everything together coherently into one programme, providing a framework for all that allows any member to learn and develop for their entire career, is important to us as an organisation and for us as a profession.

We have been very clear that our competency framework is key to this - the 'spine' that all of our learning, education and development can relate to and build from. To this end, we began an internal look at how we would start to build an environment that helps us do this. This coming year, we will begin a review of the competency framework. Experience has shown that it is good, but in some places it could be better. We also need to tackle the differences (and similarities!) within the professions in our record keeping sector. It needs to be as relevant to a conservator as it is to an archivist, as to a records or information manager. The second national Workforce Skills Survey will underpin this, and using our previous baseline data we will start to have a valuable evidence base to support this.

Professional registration and your ongoing professional development continue to be supported centrally by ARA. We view registration as a key career investment and we will support all members in this. To this end, we are now bringing together our central training resource and working closely with all training officers across the organisation. You will see exciting new training opportunities made available over the next year, formed after analysis of the member survey data. We are also expanding our reach into finding third party partners who



ACTS training week.
© Katie Proctor

can provide training for our members and negotiating favourable rates for that. Finally, we have partnered with The UK National Archives to support record-keeping professionals in their careers by funding CPD modules available from the higher education sector.

New and sustainable routes into the profession have been to the fore of discussions lately and ARA has invested a lot of time in supporting the development of the level 7 apprenticeship. The establishing process was not without teething troubles, and we are pleased to partner with a number of organisations to get this off the ground shortly. In anticipation, and to support those who might be thinking of an apprenticeship, ARA and The UK National Archives are supporting a number of pre-apprenticeship funded placements to give individuals the chance to try out what working in archives might be like and how an apprenticeship will work.

All of this development and consolidation is supported by the careers guidance and mentoring that goes on in the association. You might not realise it, but every day you likely mentor or support a colleague or staff member in their work. We need to find a way of highlighting and celebrating that.

To support the member led initiatives, we continue to provide

bursaries for members to attend the annual ARA conference and also provide international bursaries for members to engage with colleagues overseas. Alongside these strengths and opportunities, we continue to research and publish best practice guidance and find case studies to promote the valuable work we all do.

Accreditation of university postgraduate courses and other education and training schemes is also changing. In line with other professional bodies, we have moved to a new model of accreditation which is supported by the sector through FARMER. A more agile based accreditation means that we will respond to the needs of students and the workforce, working with educators to provide the most current needs for the profession. We are also supporting the review of the Archive Conservation Training Scheme in the coming year and will ensure that this is supported fully in the future.

All in all, there is a great deal going on, and we anticipate that this work will provide a clear, interesting and more structured CPD landscape, so that from entry to the profession (whichever route that might be), and throughout your working life, you will be able to manage your own learning, education and development, enhancing your career, your professional standing and employability.

Conservation as a driver for digitisation

Our online conference in 2021 was a great experience for delegates who could dip in and out of sessions and get on with other tasks in the gaps in between. In a conference venue that time is usually spent networking and visiting exhibitor stands. To replace some of that chat they might have had with delegates we have asked our premier conference sponsor Ancestry to write a series of articles looking at how they work with archive service providers.

In this third article **Peter Goodwin** shares more of his experience of working with archive services during his tenure at Ancestry and some of the lesser-known benefits that a digitisation project may bring around preservation and access.



In my last article for ARC Magazine I looked at some of the unexpected benefits for the people and services we work for. In this article I am looking at some of the advantages digitisation can bring to a collection, particularly around preservation and access and how we work closely with the collection care departments and conservators at the organisations we work with.

At Ancestry we have a flexible approach to document capture, by which I mean we will use the right tool for the job and where occasion necessitates we may use digitisation vendors. However, imaging at Ancestry is predominantly done by Ancestry, which is important on a number of levels, not least because of our relationship with archives whose duty of care to their collections is paramount. It's also a great opportunity for us to learn from archive professionals; the archivists, conservators and reprographic operatives as although record type may be similar from collection to collection, document format and condition can be very different which makes our job both challenging and fascinating. A consequence of this close working relationship is the opportunity for mutually beneficial collaboration.

A large-scale digitisation project is often the first time that a collection will have been handled and processed in a systematic fashion within a relatively short space of time and is therefore a good opportunity for collection level appraisal, stabilisation and perhaps even re-housing. More often than not stabilisation work boils down to the removal of rusty fastenings and replacing them with brass paper clips or changing pink cotton legal tape with white tape.

Re-housing is rarer because the likely outcome of digitisation means the originals will be handled less. However, we have undertaken a number of re-housing projects, notably with the National Maritime Museum (NMM) and West Yorkshire Archive Service.

Ancestry partnered with NMM from 2011 to digitise many thousands of records from their collection of master and mate certificates, examination applications and other documents relating to qualifying

Pink cotton legal tape removed from Bishops Transcripts digitisation projects and one of two 'staple monsters' each comprising a million staples, created from the Deutsche Dienststelle (WASt) project in Berlin.



Yorkshire BTs Digitisation. Project – legal tape removal. © Ancestry (for all)



WASt Digitisation Project – staple removal © Ancestry (for all)

merchant seamen. This required the Ancestry team, led by Ancestry's experienced conservator, to undertake considerable document preparation (cleaning, unfolding, flattening, removing fasteners, rehousing) as well as high volume digitisation. The workflow was worked out in detail with NMM, and we worked closely with their repository, archive and conservation staff keeping them abreast of progress as well as adhering strictly to their requirements and handling guidelines. The project was completed to schedule creating some 1.1 million images.

Collections or parts of collections that are essentially inaccessible or 'unfit for production' due to the necessity for costly and time-consuming conservation can have their conservation funded by digitisation. For example, the Gretna Green project, where Ancestry partnered with the Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies to digitise a number of collections including the Gretna Green registers. The collection was a 'mixed bag' in terms of format and document size. The condition of the documents was poor, and they all required extremely careful handling and full conservation ahead of imaging. When a partner does not provide project specific handling guidelines, as in this case, Ancestry conforms to its own handling guidelines which are based on those from The UK National Archives and the National Archives and Records Administration in the US. For the Gretna Green project Ancestry employed an experienced conservator, who had done considerable work at The UK National Archives, to carefully conserve and re-house the collection.



Before and after of the Probate prep, digitisation and rehousing



Our goal is always to capture the content in the safest and most efficient way and undertaking additional tasks that are not driven by capture lengthens project duration. However, it also makes clear, logical sense that we take advantage of the process and use this resource to benefit the collection and its ongoing preservation. These additional tasks are undertaken in collaboration with and at the direction of the host archive, and more specifically with their collection care department.

“We will always leave a collection in a better state than when we find it, both physically and organisationally.”

Memorandum. This Leaf was accidentally torn out
by my son Henry, a little Boy of a year and quarter
old, who had got into my study, & was very much
old, who had got into my study, & was very much
I was making some entries. I replaced the entries
I was upon the parchment. T. Ibbotson Curate.

BAPTISMS solemnized in the Parish of Nafferton
in the County of York in the Year 1844.

When Baptized.	Child's Christian Name.	Parents Name.		Abode.	Quality, Trade, or Profession.	By whom the Ceremony was performed.
		Christian.	Surname.			
1844. July 28 th No. 65.	Richard Son of	John Mary	Sharpe	Nafferton	Labourer	Thomas Ibbotson Curate
July 28 th No. 66.	William Son of	Arthur Sarah	Myers	Nafferton	Labourer	Thomas Ibbotson Curate
B August 24 th No. 67.	George Son of	Charles Elizabeth	Longbottoms	Nafferton	Bricklayer	Thomas Ibbotson Curate
omitted in its proper place August 11 th No. 68.	Jane Daughter of	Thomas Lucy	Sherwood	Nafferton	Worrier	Thomas Ibbotson Curate
B September 1 st No. 69.	Henry Son of	John Ann	Leech	Wansford	Labourer	Thomas Ibbotson Curate
R September 1 st No. 70.	George Son of	William Mary	Storr	Wansford	Labourer	Thomas Ibbotson Curate
B Septe 1 st No. 71.	Hannah Daughter of	Henry Mary	Koggard	Wansford	Labourer	Thomas Ibbotson Curate
B Septe 1 st No. 72.	Sarah Ann Daughter of	John Ann	Swaine	Wansford	Labourer	Thomas Ibbotson Curate

In some projects we have had the team of remote operatives start by working with the collection care department for some time before they even capture a single page. Carrying out these tasks also adds to the role of operatives and gives them the benefit of increased experience.

We will always leave a collection in a better state than when we find it, both physically and organisationally. This is particularly noticeable in loose sheet or tagged file collections, where successive trips to reading rooms may have caused creasing and dog-ears as well as the documents being out of order. As our goal is to create high quality digital surrogates, we will always make the items presentable for capture and return them to their box or folder as a neat pile. The digitisation process itself can also be seen as an opportunity for 'stocktake' as it can uncover uncatalogued material, or items that have been placed out of order or in the wrong box in the reading room. Similarly, digitisation is a good opportunity to conduct 'fragments' projects, which we have done, notably with probate collections, where we try and reunite items catalogued as 'orphans' with parents. It may never be 100 per cent successful but we will leave the collection more complete both physically and online than it has, perhaps, ever been. Working onsite is a collaborative process and interaction with, and direction from, archivists and conservators is invaluable.

As well as adding to the knowledge of the physical state of a collection during capture and bringing it to the attention of the archive, the operatives also note down information about the content itself. They are encouraged to note down stories and interesting images, which can be especially valuable for marketing purposes and save time at launch, helping build awareness of the collection and archive which is one of the principal motivators of digitisation.

Our aim is to preserve records pertinent to family history and make them searchable online and it is a privilege that my team and I are able to be part of this preservation process. In addition, if, as part of the digitisation process, we are able to make a positive difference to benefit the collection or archive then so much the better. Ultimately, the imaging team are a flexible resource that can be directed by the host archive to greatest benefit.

If you'd like to learn more about working with Ancestry, or discuss a potential project, please do feel free to contact my colleagues Kristian Lafferty (klafferty@ancestry.com) or Rhona Murray (rmurray@ancestry.com).

“ Collections or parts of collections that are essentially inaccessible or 'unfit for production' due to the necessity for costly and time-consuming conservation can have their conservation funded by digitisation ”



Various Digitisation projects. Ancestry (for all)



1851 Census Conservation and Forensic Imaging Project.
© Ancestry (for all)

Virtual Record Treasury recreates Ireland's lost history

When the Public Record Office of Ireland was destroyed by fire in 1922, seven centuries of Ireland's historical documents were lost — apparently forever. The [Virtual Record Treasury of Ireland](#) is a vast and growing treasury of replacement documents identified in partner archives around the world, freely and permanently available online to everyone with an interest in Ireland's past.

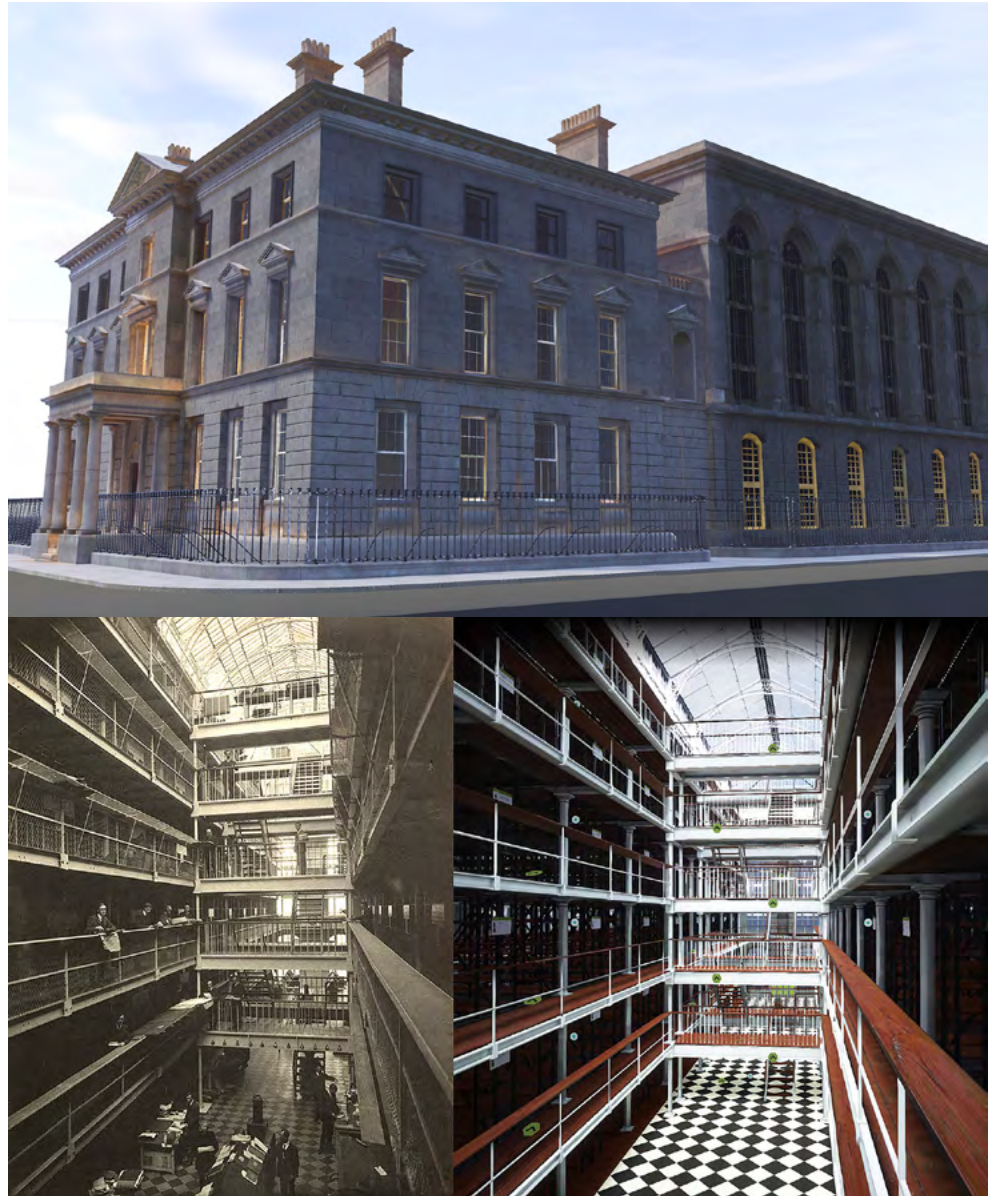
The Virtual Treasury is the outcome of a five-year research programme led by Trinity College Dublin and funded by the Irish state. The research combined historical investigation, archival conservation and technical innovation to re-imagine and recreate, through digital technologies, the archive lost on 30th June 1922.

Archival partnerships are a key element. In addition to the five core partners (National Archives of Ireland, The UK National Archives, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, Irish Manuscripts Commission and the Library of Trinity College Dublin) the Virtual Treasury has built collaborations with over seventy archives, libraries and memory institutions in Ireland, Britain and further afield.

An innovative feature is the immersive 3D model of the destroyed repository. This model, which can be operated on any desktop or tablet, engages a younger audience, and others who may be new to archives.

Through extensive use of the Transkribus API for machine-generated transcription of handwriting, the Virtual Treasury gives access to 50 million words of searchable text. Users can investigate 150,000 records, and more than 6,000 maps, spanning Irish history since 1174.

Three 'Gold Seams' - particularly rich collections where up to 80 per cent of the lost material has been retrieved -



offer deeper research access to Medieval Exchequer records, Cromwellian land surveys (including maps and lists of seizures and redistribution), and the 1766 Religious Census of Ireland with over 50,000 names.

The data architecture underpinning the Virtual Treasury includes the Knowledge Graph for Irish History – a powerful new research tool identifying connections between people and places across time. Its Linked Open Data (LOD) structure echoes the open access ethos of the entire enterprise.

Top: 3D model of the Public Record Office of Ireland, destroyed on 30 June 1922
© Virtual Record Treasury

Below: The interior of the Record Treasury before its destruction in 1922, open for (virtual) visitors for the first time in a century.
© National Archives of Ireland and Virtual Record Treasury



Paul Robeson on the stage during the "gymanfa ganu" at the 1958 National Eisteddfod of Wales at Ebbw Vale.
© The National Library of Wales

Revealing the lived experience of Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic People in Wales

The Archives and Records Council Wales was recently awarded funding to complete the first phase of a project to improve awareness of, and access to, cultural collections for people within Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities in Wales. The objective was to create a strong foundation for developing collections with those communities, ensuring that their lived experience is an integral part of the national record.

Funded by the Welsh Government, consultants Melian Dialogue prepared a toolkit to support the sector in its work with its collections and communities. This includes case studies of relevant activity, a terminology list and survey methodology to identify material from archival

repositories, library special collections and museums which reflect the lived experiences of BAME people across Wales, and a roadmap which sets out a programme of future activity. The resources are downloadable from the [Archives Wales](#) site.

It is hoped that these outputs will bring together best practice in working with collections and communities and provide a starting point for a wider programme of work that will enable people to learn about Wales' unique, diverse and valued cultural heritage and uncover new voices and untold stories.

Marx Memorial Library awarded major grant for engagement and accessibility

The Marx Memorial Library (MML) in London is celebrating after receiving a £93,710 grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund for an exciting heritage project, 'Marx Memorial Library at 90: Enduring and Engaging'. Made possible by money raised by National Lottery players, the project will engage with local schools, voluntary organisations and community groups to improve accessibility and interest in its archives.

The 17-month project begins this month and will look at subjects such as peace, anti-fascism, anti-racism, and the role of colonialism. The new funding stream coincides with the library's 90th anniversary next year. It will also provide resources for fundraising feasibility and commercial viability studies to explore new income streams, and a conservation management plan to examine possible avenues for the redevelopment of Marx House. Meirian Jump, Library Manager and Archivist at the MML said: "The library is a treasure trove of rich history, and we are delighted to have the opportunity to expand our work into the local community".

"We want The Marx Memorial Library to emerge from this initial project more resilient, with a clear business and fundraising plan, a comprehensive knowledge of our building and its possible uses, and a dynamic engagement plan".

She adds: "This is an exciting and important step for the MML. We can't wait to get started".



Marx Memorial Library © Marx Memorial Library



Meirian Jump, Library Manager, speaking at May Day this year. © Karl Weiss



Sketch of
the Manor of
Ashburton,
Devon, 1605
The UK
National
Archives

Celebrating the completion of the online Manorial Documents Register

The UK National Archives has completed its 30-year project to make the Manorial Documents Register for England and Wales available online. The UK National Archives worked with a large number of local partners in their county-by-county approach, including archive services, universities, funders and private owners.

The Manorial Documents Register (MDR) is the official index of English and Welsh manorial records. You can use the register to identify manors and their surviving records and find out where they are held. The new online register is far more detailed and accurate than the paper-based original and you can now search for manorial records by manor, parish, county, document type and date from wherever you are in the world.

The online register was completed on 29th June 2022, which marked the centenary of the Royal

Assent of the Law of Property Act 1922. This act abolished copyhold tenure, which was common on manorial lands. Later legislation in 1924 gave the Master of the Rolls jurisdiction over manorial records and The UK National Archives maintains the Manorial Documents Register on their behalf.

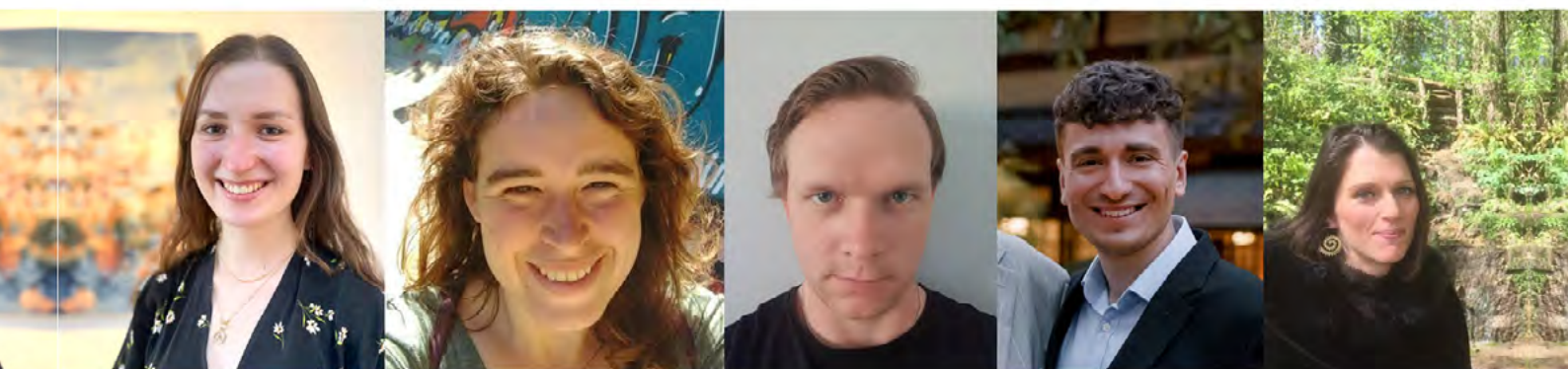
Manorial documents provide a snapshot of daily life for ordinary people from the 14th to the 20th century, making these records a valuable source for researching a plethora of subjects from land ownership, archaeology and agriculture to diet, crime and welfare. You can find out more about what manorial documents are and why they're so important in [@UKNatArcSector's](#) Twitter thread. If you have any manorial documents or related stories, please share them using [#ManorialDocuments](#).

PRONOM: A starting point in digital preservation

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From finances, murky and complicated language, to deciding what software to use, digital preservation can still seem all smoke and mirrors for many archival institutions. One of the first digital preservation steps is to work out what you have, or how else can you preserve it? [PRONOM](#) is one of the solutions.

PRONOM is the UK National Archives' database containing information about file formats. It stores information that allows other software such as DROID or FIDO to recognise what type of files you have on your computer. This can be either based on the file format extensions or internal repeated patterns that can be found by analysing the file, specifically in a notation called hex. If you were a conservator you

would need to understand the materials you were working with to do an effective job. PRONOM enables archivists to understand what file formats they have, allowing for successful digital preservation planning.

Engagement with other archivists and the digital preservation community is key to this work. Recently, the PRONOM team held online [drop-in sessions](#), launched a new [GitHub](#) page and created a [starter pack](#) with simple steps for anyone who wishes to give file format research a go and delve into their collections.

A number of PRONOM landmarks took place this year: a [software centenary](#) with the release of PRONOM version 100; winning the [DPC Digital Preservation](#)

[World Cup](#) on Twitter and being announced as a finalist for the [Digital Preservation Coalition 20th Anniversary Awards](#).

Since its inception, 20 years ago, PRONOM has been driven by the digital preservation community. The team is always keen to welcome new submissions to PRONOM's database, and share further information with colleagues. If you would like to get involved please get in touch at pronom@nationalarchives.gov.uk

Members of the PRONOM team at The National Archives



Community Archives and Heritage Group Awards

At their very successful 2022 conference in Galway, Ireland, the Community Archives and Heritage Group presented their annual awards.

The winners are:

Overall winner and Wellbeing Category:

[Workie Ticket Theatre CIC](#)

Gathering and Preserving Heritage:

[Scattery Island Heritage Group](#)

Community Engagement:

[The Liberties Weavers](#)

Alan Butler, Chair of the Community Archives and Heritage Group, said:

"We were thrilled to receive three times the amount of entries this year from last year and we believe this came about by altering the process into a two-stage one. In the first stage, we invited entrants to tell us why their group was special and, from those entries, we shortlisted and asked for more details. Lots of community archivists told us why they do what they do and it was inspirational".

This year's two stage process meant a far greater number of groups entered and 48 entries were eventually whittled down to a shortlist of 14 from which the three winners were chosen.

You can read more about the awards and the award winners [here](#).

Further prizes were awarded at the conference for digital posters, with Moycullen Heritage Group winning best poster. Delegates were also asked to choose which poster entrant they would like to hear more from and the top five were:

- Moycullen Heritage Group
- Milltown Heritage Group
- Mayo Genealogy Group
- Glendalough Heritage Forum
- Luining History Group

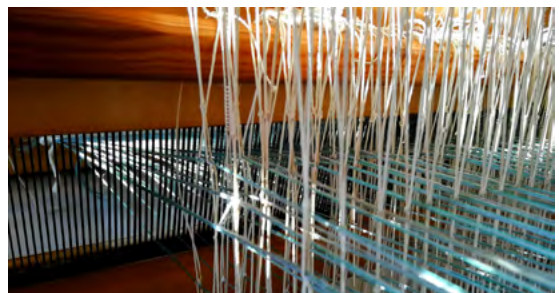
Along with the main award winners these groups will be invited to take part in an Autumn webinar series.



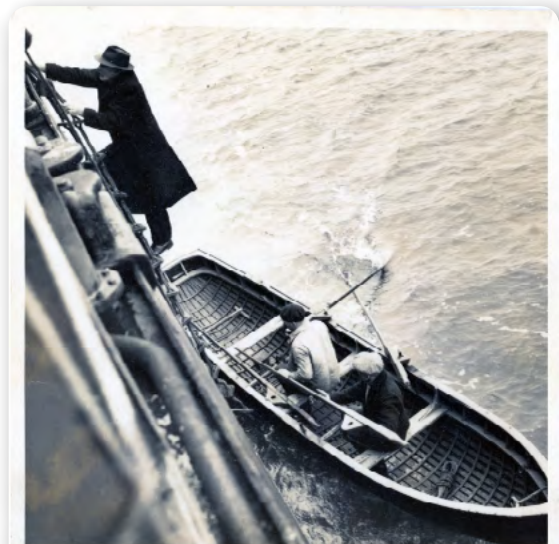
Workie Ticket Theatre. © Workie Ticket Theatre



Liberties Weavers' workshop © Liberties Weavers



Liberties Weavers - a Loom © Liberties Weavers



Right: Scattery Pilot coming aboard a vessel, 1953
© Brennan Family



Liverpool placement widens routes into heritage profession



Dateus Tagoe, project assistant, cataloguing items from the L8 Law Centre archive
© Vicki Caren, project archivist

At the start of 2022, arts charity Writing on the Wall and Liverpool Record Office successfully applied to the UK National Archives' Archive Testbed Fund. The grant enables a young person from the Liverpool 8 Black community, traditionally underrepresented in the wider heritage sector, to work with the archivist on the L8 Archive Project. The Project Assistant is a positive action placement aimed at Black, Asian and other racial minority applicants and has been specifically designed to be flexible and adaptable to the needs and interests of the person in post, giving them the opportunity to learn more about routes into arts and heritage while gaining valuable skills.

The Project Assistant will help to research and write the histories of the Liverpool 8 Law Centre and

Liverpool Anti-Racist Arts Association (LARCAA), two campaigning anti-racist organisations, and contribute to cataloguing, digitisation of archive material and raising awareness of these nationally important collections.

Writing on the Wall and Liverpool Record Office have worked together on community archive projects uncovering hidden histories since 2013, developing a creative heritage model featuring short taught courses and training in basic archive skills for volunteers. Each project has its own engagement activities, from research and writing for a book to artistic creative responses, and even a walking tour. You can learn more about the project on the [Writing on the Wall website](#).

Finding the Words: new guidance on derogatory language in archive collections

The Bath & Colonialism Archive [Project](#) a partnership between Bath Abbey, Bath Record Office and Bath Preservation Trust, has published a website that shares new information about Bath's links to the transatlantic slave trade and guidance on derogatory language in archive collections. The project was funded by the UK National Archives' Archive Testbed Fund.

Volunteers from the three organisations looked for keywords, such as rum, sugar and Jamaica, in digitised copies of the Bath Chronicle from 1760 to 1780, discovering approximately 5,000 articles.

As the research progressed, it became clear that project staff and volunteers needed guidance to help describe the racist language and distressing content in the articles, which included descriptions of violence and exploitation of Black people. The Project Team secured funding from the Archive Testbed Fund to recruit a team of consultants to develop the website and write the guidance: Cultural Diversity Adviser,

Renée Jacobs [here](#); Historian and Website Content Writer, Lisa Kennedy; Web Designer, Marva Jackson Lord [here](#) and Evaluation Consultant Melita Armitage [here](#).

The website includes an introduction to the Bath Chronicle and colonialism, samples of newspaper articles and links to other organisations' work in Bath. The guidance written by Lisa Kennedy, called '[Finding the Words](#)' is also available to view and download.

The next steps will be to seek funding for a second phase of the project which will see volunteers apply the guidance to the article descriptions to allow for the content to be uploaded to an online database.

Images opposite
Top: Detail of 'South Prospect of the City of Bath', Buck © Bath Record Office

Bottom: Bath Chronicle masthead, 31 May 1764 © Bath Abbey Archives



POPE'S Bath Chronicle

Printed and publish'd by CORNELIUS POPE, at his Office in STALL-STREET, BATH.

Every Branch of the PRINTING BUSINESS is executed with the greatest Correctness and Dispatch, on the most reasonable Terms, and in the neatest Manner.—BOOK-WORK at the *London* Prices.—Small HAND-BILLS at an Hour's Notice.

the FOURTH
VOLUME.

THURSDAY, MAY 31, 1764.

No. 190 { Weeks since this Paper
was first publish'd. }

of the FAIR SEX.

own, that I am a faith-
Ladies; and, like a Cham-

Moderns, who take every Thing for granted which they find delivered down to them, have brought the same Accusations, that they are weak in Council, deficient in Courage, inordinate in their Pas-

this Matter coolly, Mr. Printer, and speak impartially, whether we have not as just a Claim to Vails, as Members have to Places and Persons; and whether you can perceive any better Rhyme to Reason for all this Clamour against us, than

London, May 24.

This being the Birth-Day of his Royal Highness Prince Frederick William, (youngest Son of her Royal Highness the Princess Dowager of Wales) who enter'd into the 12th Year of his

Backchat



Michael Gallagher talks to **Bernadette Walsh**, archivist at the Tower Museum in Derry, about contested histories, the role of record keepers in reconciliation and a certain TV show...



Can you tell me a bit about your career so far and how you got into archives?

I studied European Studies at Durham University, and a focus on history and politics led me to an Erasmus programme and my first trip to Ireland. My dissertation focused on the 1916 Rising and the programme brought me to what was Tralee Regional Technical College. I was hooked! Following graduation, I made the decision to move to Tralee and worked on various heritage and publishing projects, eventually settling on a postgraduate course to study Archives at University College Dublin.

I was fortunate to be part of the first National Library of Ireland Archival Studentship and worked with the fabulous Dr Noel Kissane; this probably became the year that defined why I wanted to work in Archives. Many of the techniques and knowledge I developed that year I still use today.

How would you describe a typical day in your current role?

Every day can be different. I work within a Museum Service, working closely with the Curator. I manage a Contract Genealogist, Collection Assistants and volunteers, whilst also advising front of house on programming needs, security and environmental requirements. We are a small professional Museum team working across four sites and with a large team of front of house staff.

Throughout the pandemic I worked from home in Donegal, traveling to Derry once a week to check galleries and stores. We continue to have a very successful hybrid working system which has enabled us to focus attention on areas of the collections that were certainly neglected like digitisation, web access and online programming.

Bernadette Walsh
archivist at the Tower
Museum in Derry.
© Bernadette Walsh





Launch of the Ulster Plantation exhibition 2013, with Edward Montgomery of the Irish Society. © DCSDC

A day usually involves dealing with research queries and bookings for access to the collection. Copyright has also become an area that takes a little time, with queries from internal Council staff and external requests for broadcasting and publications.

I work on two or three temporary exhibitions each year. This usually involves researching and preparing archives for display, digitisation and a programme of events. Unfortunately, I don't seem to get a lot of time to catalogue archive collections; every archive has a backlog but it can sometimes feel a little frustrating.

Derry has a rich yet contested history. What challenges has this created for you as an archivist?

As an archivist for a local authority - which incidentally is the only such role in Northern Ireland - I work to develop projects across and with all communities. The Tower Museum is an award-winning museum; I'd like to think we have told stories (often difficult and contested ones) and showcased collections that have helped inform and engage visitors as to the rich history and heritage of the city.

The stories we tell through the archive collections have played a role in the development of other heritage sites. With the curator I work as a mentor to sites such as the Museum of Free Derry and the Siege Museum in developing their community stories. These stories are contested and challenged, but personal and rich to their communities, and integral to the understanding of the development of Derry, from a city of conflict to one of peace.

As a professional archivist, and someone who has been in the city for 20 years, creating access to collections - whether linked to Bloody Sunday, the Second World War or emigration - allows people to understand the society that they live in. They may not always agree but enabling access allows transparency.



Archivist with Jack Scoltock at the Maritime Festival Derry 2022. © DCSDC

In your experience, what part can archives play in engagement, both within and across communities?

Archives have been integral in many community projects. We often use collections to generate discussions and provoke memories, whether it's with a community group working with dementia patients or a group of artists developing visual projects.

I've worked with a textile collection, 'Conflict Textiles', for over ten years, which originally focused on arpilleras (three-dimensional textiles from Latin America, which originated from Chile) documenting experiences of daily life in the era of Pinochet. I worked with the collector and curator of the pieces, bringing together local women from across communities in Ireland's north west to talk, drink tea, and make their own arpilleras telling their stories. The collection is powerful and moving. And whilst it's not a traditional archive, it tells a story of people during times of conflict, often hidden and contested but always challenging.

Have you worked on a project that you've been particularly proud of?

Many! In particular, a project called The Great Parchment with London Metropolitan Archives, University College London and Ulster University. The project focused on a manuscript known as The Great Parchment of The Honourable The Irish Society. This was a major survey, compiled in 1639 by a Commission instituted under the Great Seal by Charles I, of all the estates in Derry

managed by the City of London through the Irish Society and the City of London livery companies.

It represents a hugely important source for the City of London's role in the colonisation and administration of Ulster. Damaged as the result of a fire at the Guildhall in 1786, it has been unavailable to researchers for over 200 years. As part of the 2013 commemorations in Derry of the 400th anniversary of the building of the city walls, it was decided to attempt to make the Great Parchment Book available as a central point of an exhibition in Derry's Guildhall. The project focused on conserving, digitally reconstructing, transcribing and publishing the manuscript.

And finally, no piece about Derry is complete without mentioning the TV show *Derry Girls*. What do you think of the show and its impact on the city, and have you felt this in your work?

Derry Girls is a great show! I was lucky enough to be around the city when filming was taking place and the Guildhall in particular was hugely significant in the final episode, which focused on the Good Friday Agreement. We have a fantastic mural dedicated to the show in the city and it has certainly impacted on tourism. I also think it has opened up discussions about the city during the Troubles and the peace process, and how it has moved on over the years. Speaking to those who are from the city and lived through the Troubles, it depicted a time few could understand using humour which is ever-present in the city. Maybe we will do a 'Derry Girls' exhibition next!

Launch of the Ulster Plantation exhibition 2013, with Edward Montgomery of the Irish Society. © DCSDC



And finally **arc**magazine

Our next edition of the **ARC Magazine** is due out in November/December 2022 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.



ARA 2023 CONFERENCE

BELFAST
30th August to
1st September 2023

