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# Records Management Special Issue

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## The Archives and Records Association (UK & Ireland) has developed its Core Training Programme to ensure high quality, in-demand courses are widely and frequently available

ARA Core Training courses are high quality, affordable and offered regularly across the regions and nations. They focus on the common skills essential to all of us who work with records - from Audience Engagement to E-Records Management. Each course is supported by ARA funds. The first eight courses have now been designed. More will follow.

**Find out more about ARA Core Training and all other training and development opportunities by clicking on the Training link at [www.archives.org.uk](http://www.archives.org.uk) or keep in touch through Twitter @TrainingARA**

### Copyright

This course offers participants practical and relevant training in copyright for archives, and will instil confidence to manage copyright demands in the workplace. Practical workshop sessions, led by copyright experts and archivists with extensive experience in the field, ensure the opportunity for discussion and provision of advice.

### Audience Engagement

This course offers various aspects of audience engagement, from producing an exhibition to running a successful community-based project. A great opportunity to learn from the experiences of colleagues and to start developing some ideas of your own.

### Freedom of Information

This course covers the basic principles of the Freedom of Information Act as well as exploring some practical case studies. Develop your own knowledge about the Act and how to implement it in the workplace.

### Archives and Volunteers

This course covers how best to utilise volunteers in the workplace, from the practicalities of running a volunteer project to the value they can bring to an organisation. This is a great opportunity for anyone interested in maximising the benefits of volunteering to both their organisation and for the individuals involved.

### Digital Preservation

This course will be updated periodically to address the issues archivists face when dealing with born digital material, it will involve case studies and practical first steps. It's a great opportunity to share and receive advice and knowledge about the many aspects of digital preservation.

### Data Protection

This course begins with refresher sessions on the basics of Data Protection. In the afternoon there are opportunities to discuss best practice and raise queries from your own workplace with an expert panel.

### E-records management

This course provides a solid introduction to e-records management for record keepers who are not managing electronic records on a day-to-day basis. This course is a great opportunity to learn about and share best practice on all areas of the rapidly changing field of e-records management.

### New and refurbished Archives Buildings

Whether you are planning a completely new building or hoping to refurbish a part of an existing site this course provides an introduction to the key issues and themes involved in the provision of new and refurbished archives buildings.

The ARA's Core Training programme is supported by Link 51.



Archives & Records  
Association  
UK & Ireland

## Welcome to ARC Magazine March 2014

Welcome to the March issue of ARC. This Section for Records Management (SRM) edition contains a number of exciting articles which highlight just how events, appointments of sector professionals to prominent posts, and national campaigns are raising the profile of the records management profession within the ARA and beyond.

In this issue you will find highlights of the 2013 SRM online member survey results, from which the section aims to increase membership figures and benefits. For readers with an interest in the function of social media within the records management profession, Ruth Loughrey examines the development of enterprise social networking at Unilever.

Another theme is collaboration between records managers, conservators and archivists, who are joining forces to draw on each other's skills. David Jenkins provides a comprehensive account of Derbyshire Council's risk management training workshops, which bring records management to life through conservation team participation and hands-on workshops.

You will also find an overview of the Descriptive Standards Roundtable (DSR), which was officially launched at the UKAD Forum in March 2013. Rather than relying exclusively on specific standards, this informal group aims to deal with descriptive practice developments through collective reflection and discussion.

Rod Stone's article on ISO 15489 revisions, and Robert Fotheringham's summary of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 successes since implementation, serve to update readers on sector legislation.



Finally, I would like to thank Ruth Loughrey for her hard work in gathering articles and images over the Christmas and New Year period when most other archivists, records managers and conservators were holidaying.

**Ellie Pridgeon**  
Editor

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# opening lines

Sue Hampson is the new Chair of the Community Archives and Heritage Group, a national group supported by the Archives and Records Association.

It is a great privilege to be the new Chair of the Community Archives and Heritage Group, especially as I am an amateur in the world of archiving!

My personal focus this year is promoting the small community archives and local history groups by extending as much help, encouragement and access to information as I possibly can. As a 'non professional' my view on community archives and their place in the structured and sometimes rarefied world of archiving is possibly very different from that of an archivist.

I have worked with various community groups, firstly in my capacity as an Audience Development Officer for Essex Libraries and also as a volunteer and chair of a local community archive. The passion and commitment shown by the volunteers I have encountered amazes me, as does the knowledge, enthusiasm and innovation they bring to archives. From very small beginnings they have achieved national awards and national recognition. They have assisted with both BBC and Channel 4 television programmes, the latest being *Midsomer Murders* (although how this compares with *Canvey Island escapes me*) and a forthcoming programme on Radio 4. To me local community archives are all about the people contributing to them; they tend to bring their memories rather than ephemera or piles of paper. They breathe life into a factual account, bringing the subject alive and they give us an insight into the period concerned. An example of this is a letter written by a father to his daughter giving his account

as to how he and his wife survived the worst flooding in living memory. Through his descriptions you can almost hear the wind howling, feel the numbing cold, taste the fear they both felt and share the grief when his mother-in-law was swept away.

I am particularly enthused when local archives discover areas of local heritage that have been neglected or have remained undiscovered for years and organise campaigns to bring them to the attention of the community. Recently it was found that victims of the 1953 floods were buried in unmarked graves and although a memorial had been erected in the town centre nothing showed the place of burial. There followed a very active fundraising drive from the archive involving all areas of the community to rectify this and remember those who perished.

My examples are from my own experience but being on the awards group of CAHG I've seen the fabulous work that goes on around the country. Trying to pick a winner in 2013 was so difficult because of the high standards shown by all entries. Our overall winners – *Beyond the Point* - were very worthy of the award; the enthusiasm of Joe and Liam, just 16 years old and so full of enthusiasm, was inspiring.

The small archives are the grass roots of archiving and need the support and help from experts but we should never forget they do this because of their commitment to the community rather than because they are paid. Funding is always an issue



Photograph shows Sue, centre, with Liam Heatherson left and Joe Mander right, of *Beyond the Point*. Photograph by Dream Catcher Photography.

and I would love to see cooperation with the HLF for releasing money to enable them to continue their work without the constant worry of closure as Lottery funding does not allow for projects to be sustained.

The CAHG committee are always striving to improve the information offered to groups and have added more resources and guidelines within the past few months. Our Regional conferences have proved to be a success, especially the one on the subject of funding, and will continue in the foreseeable future. I'm looking forward to the year ahead and feel very proud to be part of such an amazing group of people.

(As Sue was writing this column, she learned of the death of an ex-colleague at Essex Record Office who had died tragically young. Sue dedicates this article to Deborah Peers.)

See more of award winners *Beyond the Point* at [beyondthepoint.co.uk](http://beyondthepoint.co.uk)

# Registration Scheme News

## Newly-registered members of the Archives and Records Association

Following the most recent assessments of portfolios submitted to the assessors, the successful candidates are as follows:

**Ruth MacLeod**

Heritage Officer, Wandsworth Borough Council

**Jaime McMurtrie**

Archivist (Collections) & Volunteer Co-ordinator, Nottinghamshire Archives

**Sarah Maspero**

Archivist, University of Southampton (Special Collections)

**Laura Yeoman**

Archivist, Royal Bank of Scotland

The committee would like to congratulate the newly-registered members on their success.

We would also like to acknowledge the efforts of the successful candidate mentors:

**Anne Barrett**

College Archivist and Corporate Records Manager, Imperial College London

**Barbara Sharp**

Principal Archivist (Archive Services), Nottinghamshire Archives

**Karen Robson**

Senior Archivist, Hartley Library, University of Southampton

**Philip Winterbottom**

Archives Manager, Royal Bank of Scotland

The committee would like to thank them for the time and support they have given to the candidates.

## Contacts:

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## Richard Wragg

Communications Officer, Registration Sub-committee

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# Collecting Matters

So you know your collecting mandate, and have a clear idea of what you want to collect, and why and how it might be used. And you have everything documented in your collection development and acquisition policies - perhaps revisited and refreshed in preparation for achieving the Archive Service Accreditation standard?

[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/accreditation.htm](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/accreditation.htm)

Then you are almost ready to apply to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to deliver that mandate through its Collecting Cultures programme: [www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/programmes/Pages/CollectingCultures.aspx](http://www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/programmes/Pages/CollectingCultures.aspx)

Launched in November 2013, Collecting Cultures supports collection development through funding for acquisitions over a maximum of five years.

But you need to think *strategically*.

How does your approach fit with your wider objectives as a collecting institution? How will your newly-acquired collections help to address gaps in local, regional or national collecting activity?

Working in partnership with other archives, with museums and libraries - also eligible under the scheme - might best satisfy HLF's criteria and for end users, provide access to collections both diverse and comprehensive.

You have until 2 May 2014 to submit your application. All the information you need is on the HLF website, but you can come to The National Archives (TNA) for further support and guidance.

Don't miss this opportunity to realise your collecting ambitions, develop your in-house purchasing skills, reach more diverse audiences, and build professional networks.

When our challenge is sustainability, Collecting Cultures could help contribute to a healthier future. Can you afford not to apply?

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## Cathy Williams

Head of Collections Knowledge, The National Archives

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Email: [asd@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:asd@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk)

Website: [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/collections-strategies.htm](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/collections-strategies.htm)

# ISO 15489 is being revised: an update

This is an update to the ISO 15489 revision article which appeared in ARC in November 2013.

## Background

After a ballot of national standards bodies, the ISO records management committee decided to revise the international records management standard ISO 15489. The committee created a new working party responsible for the revision, chaired by Hans Hofman from the Netherlands. There is an editorial committee which has members from Australia, Canada, Estonia, France, Sweden, and the USA. British Standards Institution (BSI) is represented by Zoe Smyth and me. Here in the UK, a panel of the BSI records management committee was created to support feedback on the draft revisions.

The BSI panel includes representatives from ARA, Information and Records Management Society (IRMS), Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM), The National Archives (TNA), the University of Northumbria, and Dundee University. We have a good mix from the UK records management world, including representatives from national and local government, the private sector, and academia.

The ISO working party met for the first time in Paris in July 2013 to discuss a draft produced by the editorial committee. Following the meeting, the committee was asked to create a new draft for review in October and November. The working party agreed to meet to review comments in January 2014 in The Hague.

## The new draft

The working group received the new draft on 7 November 2013, and had two months to review and submit comments.

The UK panel felt that while the new draft addressed some of the issues, there were still fundamental areas which needed further discussion. These included the purpose and intended audience of the standard. With regards to structure and content, there was duplication

across sections, some low-level detail which appeared superfluous, and examples which were confusing.

As the foundation standard for records management, ISO 15489 needs to clearly cover the principles and techniques for physical, hybrid and digital environments. It was felt that the focus was too digital in certain areas, and not digital enough in others. It also took a largely paper-based approach to managing electronic records, and did not fully address some specific challenges for digital records, eg the inability to fix digital records, and managing social media.

There were a range of other issues - we submitted 20 pages of comments in all.

## The Hague Meeting

12 countries (Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Korea, New Zealand, Russia, Spain, Sweden, the USA, and the UK) submitted 169 pages of similar comments.

There were also challenges regarding the coverage of appraisal - for instance how it was defined, and how it should be included in more detail. There were a range of views on whether the new standard should cover archival records. Likewise, references to metadata were not consistent with other such standards, and there was a lack of consistent referencing to previously-published standards - such as the Management System for Records (ISO 30300 series) and ISO 16175.

As well the countries represented on the editorial committee, the meeting in The Hague was attended by members from Spain, Germany, and New Zealand.

Having reviewed the comments from the working party, the editorial committee suggested dividing the text into core principles on which the former could focus.

Part two - which addresses implementation - has been temporarily set aside as the editorial committee felt this action would tackle many of the criticisms of structure, and remove some of the contentious content. It is not yet clear how this will work with the existing ISO 15489 part two.

For one and a half days, the working party examined the issues still to be addressed. The use of the terms 'shall' and 'should' was discussed. In ISO standards, 'shall' signifies a requirement, and 'should' a recommendation. The current ISO 15489 has no requirements. This use of this terminology will be reviewed in the next draft.

### What next?

The working group will now develop successive drafts until the members are satisfied that it has created the best technical approach. It will then produce a committee draft, which will be circulated to all members of the ISO records management committee for comment and voting.

The UK panel considered that the number of changes required to the current text meant that without a new draft, it would be unclear whether we had arrived at the best solution. However, the working party decided to produce a committee draft. This should be circulated by late February 2014. Following the next working group meeting in May, we will have a clearer picture of progress on the revision and likely timeframes.

Once a consensus is reached, the text will be circulated as a draft international standard to all ISO members (not just those who are members of the records management committee). There is a three-month period for voting and comments. At this stage, BSI will put the draft on its website for public comment.

A draft international standard is approved if two-thirds of ISO member bodies are in favour, and not more than a quarter of the total votes are against it.

Member, ISO Records Management Committee  
Working Party WG13-ISO 15489 Revision

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### Rod Stone

ARA Representative  
BSI Records Management Committee

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# Section for Records Management: an overview

Records managers, archivists and conservators all work within the record-keeping profession, and we can learn much from each other by working together. I hope you enjoy this special edition of *ARC*, particularly non-records managers who might be interested to hear about some of the activities and developments in the records management world...it's not all about filing!

2013 has been a busy year for the Section for Records Management. We kicked the year off with a very successful AGM and training event on the topic of how records management adapts and evolves to changing circumstances. An interesting discussion took place over what members wanted from the Section for Records Management and from the ARA more generally. This has been a major theme which myself and colleagues on our committee have been pursuing throughout the year. We have done a lot of hard thinking about what our members want and what we can deliver to them, and now it is time to press on with this. 2014 is going to be a very busy year trying to achieve all our aims and we relish the challenge!

I am pleased to say that matters are progressing well within the section and there is a lot to show for it. For the first time in a number of years we have a records manager represented on the ARA Board (our former

“2014 is going to be a very busy year trying to achieve all of our aims and we relish the challenge!”

Chair Vicki Wilkinson) who is fighting our corner at a high level. Our section helped to recruit a records management consultant to work with the ARA to improve its own internal records management, thereby raising the profile of records management in the process. We have re-launched our newsletter which now has a new format and new features, and have received some positive feedback on this. We are also building a dialogue - via the sterling work of ARA Chief Executive John Chambers - with the Information and Records Management Society (IRMS), and look forward to some joint training and networking in 2014. Perhaps our greatest achievement and our most exciting piece of news for 2014 is that funds have been made available for us to launch a records management campaign next year. We are working hard at the moment on the messages and audiences for this campaign, and we will be consulting our members regularly to get their views and input.

Please keep your eyes open for what we will be getting up to in 2014. There is lots going on and your involvement and participation is vital. I would like to close by saying a big thank you to everyone who volunteers on our committee (and beyond). You have been working very hard behind the scenes in your spare time in all sorts of ways - thank you!

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**David Jenkins**

Chair, Section for Records Management

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## Section for Records Management survey: we have listened to your views

During July 2013, the Section for Records Management (SRM) carried out an online member survey through SurveyMonkey. The SRM executive committee is trying to raise the section's profile within the ARA, increase its membership, and provide member benefits which better reflect its diverse range of specialist skill sets. To start achieving these aims, a 2013-2014 strategy was launched in January, and the survey hopes to form the basis of future strategy.

We wanted to use the survey to gauge whether the suggested improvements of the executive committee were in tune with the ideas of members. We also wanted to give the section membership a voice and an opportunity to influence the direction of the executive committee's work, so members could derive more benefits from their membership fee.

To understand what the views of our section members are, the survey covered topics about the ARA as a whole. These included a possible section name change, training and conferences, section webpages, regular communications, the forthcoming records management awareness campaign, and anything else that our members wished to feedback.

We received 71 responses, which is roughly translated as 16% of SRM membership. It did not quite hit the dizzy heights of the 20% response for the ARA online survey, but it is encouraging nevertheless. The SRM executive committee are extremely grateful those who took the time to respond, and especially to those who provided very detailed feedback. The responses have been examined and a survey report produced, now available on the SRM's webpages:

[www.archives.org.uk/si-rmg/news-and-events.html](http://www.archives.org.uk/si-rmg/news-and-events.html).

The report's key recommendations were:

- to investigate the feasibility of working closely with the Information and Records Management Society (IRMS)
- to improve membership satisfaction from 64.78% 'fair to good' to 'good to very good'
- that the ARA should place more emphasis on the professional interest of SRM members

- that the SRM submit to the ARA board a proposal for a section name change
- to develop and pilot online training resources
- for the SRM to submit to the ARA board a proposal for providing specialist course funding
- that the ARA Conference content should become more relevant to the professional interests of SRM members
- that the ARA Conference has a separate stream to help enhance the professional interests of SRM members
- to improve the SRM's webpages so they become a 'go to' site for professional resources
- that the SRM awareness campaign should target at least senior managers and executives
- for the campaign to focus on the importance and value of records management to both organisations and society, and to demonstrate the variety of specialist skills and knowledge held by practitioners

## Survey: key findings

### SRM members and the ARA

Over half the SRM members surveyed are members of at least one other professional body. The IRMS is the most popular alternative membership organisation.

64.78% rated their membership satisfaction at either 'fair or 'good'.

### Referendum: section name change

84.51% were in favour of a name change.

### Training

The top three areas for future training events were identified as:

- Records management / information management / information governance best-practice workshops
  - Records and information management standards
  - Information governance strategy and policy development
- 61.19% were in favour of seeing the ARA make funding available for expensive specialist training courses.

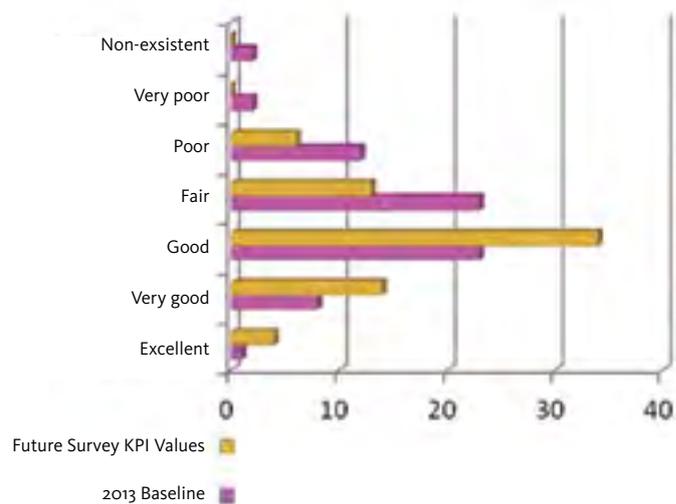
91.04% were in favour of holding joint meetings with other professional bodies, especially the IRMS.

### Conference

56.72% had previously attended the ARA Conference.

For those who had not previously attended the ARA Conference, the top three reasons for not attending were:

- Financial
- Content
- Location



The majority of SRM members who have attended other conferences found that the content was much more relevant to their professional posts. Most members have attended the IRMS Conference. 62.69% were in favour of having a separate records management stream at the ARA Conference. 23.88% were unsure.

### SRM webpages and communications

The majority of respondents wanted to see an improvement to the section webpages. 95% of those who had read *On the Record* newsletter found it either informative or very informative.

### ARA SRM awareness campaign

81.54% wanted the awareness campaign to target senior management and executives.

### The future

The SRM executive committee has taken member comments into consideration, and we will work hard to respond to the identified improvements. Most importantly, we will communicate to the section members when improvements are made. We will try our best to make such developments a reality. There is so much information gathered from this survey and it has resulted in a lot of work for the future. The SRM executive committee are all volunteers and changes will take time. If you want to help the committee make these improvements happen more quickly or have further thoughts on how you can get more out of the ARA, please get in touch with the Chair.

### Lee Pretlove

Training Officer, Section for Records Management

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# Enterprise social networking and records management

As a global, fast-moving consumable goods company, Unilever is constantly changing and adapting in order to react to market trends. With teams spread all over the globe, Unilever is adopting new technologies to make it easier for people to connect, speed up decision-making, improve collaboration, and reduce travel. Microsoft's SharePoint, Livemeeting, Skype and Chatter are just some of the collaboration tools available to employees.

With the emphasis on virtual collaboration, the technologies Unilever are adopting inevitably have the facility to store documents, which creates a new challenge for records managers. In the past, documents may have lurked in email accounts or been stored on shared drives. Now, the number of places where documents could be saved is growing, which makes the challenge of managing them effectively more difficult. One new technology that is making a splash within Unilever is (Salesforce) Chatter, an online enterprise social networking platform.

## What is Chatter?

Chatter is an online enterprise social networking platform provided by Salesforce, which can be used to connect with internal colleagues as well as with external clients. Similar to Facebook, Chatter users create a profile and follow colleagues. In just a few clicks users can create a public or private group to share information or to facilitate discussion on a particular topic or project. Users also receive post updates via a feed visible on their profile. Within the public and private groups, as well as when posting on individual profiles, users are able to upload and share documents. Virgin America, O2, Coca-Cola and L'Oreal are among some of the other companies that have adopted Chatter,



excited by the flexibility and accessibility of the product to their employees, which includes connecting via web, desktop or an app on smartphones and tablets. Even some governments in the USA, such the City of Boston and the State of Colorado, are adopting Chatter in order to communicate with citizens, businesses and local agencies.

## How are Unilever records managers facing new technologies such as Chatter?

### Keep up to date

The records management team keeps up-to-date with the new technologies made available to the business, in order to ensure that the advice and services we are providing are current and relevant. We monitor company news and events on the company intranet, as well as engaging our business partners in order to understand how colleagues are utilising the new technologies.



Ruth Loughrey's Chatter profile

*“ Be open to learning by having a go with the new technologies, and then share your experience with colleagues. ”*

### **Connect with key teams and create opportunities**

The records management team works to find the right contacts (no mean feat in a company the size of Unilever) in order to better advise our clients on which technologies best suit their needs within the business.

### **Share experiences and get involved**

Be open to learning by having a go with the new technologies, and then share your experience with colleagues. The Unilever records management team actively use Chatter, and attended training provided on using the tool when it was first launched.

### **Make information available**

In the records management department we are proactive in aligning the services we provide to key initiatives within the company. This includes making our best-practice advice and guidelines available in familiar formats. There is a large drive within Unilever for employees to ‘self help’ and locate information themselves on the intranet, so we have all our advice and guidelines available at our fingertips.

### **Don't be the trainer**

While IT provide the tools and training to employees, it is the records management team who provide best-practice advice. By accepting that it is not the job of the records managers to train people how to use technologies such as Chatter (instead we provide

best-practice principles), we do not get stuck in the mechanics of how staff are saving documents. Records managers can free themselves from involvement, and make a difference by promoting good record-keeping across technologies.

### **Manage the risk**

The new technologies are focussed on allowing people to work smarter, which often means working outside a defined environment with focus on fluid communication and flexibility. As a result, technology is making it easier for users to store and share documents in many different places, choosing a system on personal preference. In a company like Unilever where adapting to market trends is big business, you cannot prevent people searching out and using these new technologies. In 2013, Unilever published a standard to manage all its structured and unstructured data regardless of where it is stored. This will ensure that any new internal systems or external technologies that are adopted within the business will be compliant in terms of document management and storage.

Enterprise social networking is on the rise, and any shrewd information professional needs to keep up-to-date and be part of the debate.

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#### **Ruth Loughrey**

Records Manager, Unilever Records Management

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# Risky records! Records management and conservation: an unlikely alliance?

When we think about the professions that make up the ARA, we often see an obvious link between archivists and records managers. This is because we share a lot of common skills and training, and because of how the professions have developed historically. But do records managers have similar connections to their colleagues working in the world of conservation? Are there areas of overlap where these two professions can work together and draw on each other's skills?

At Derbyshire County Council we run a series of training workshops for council staff throughout the year on a variety of topics, ranging from key principles of records management to the complexities of managing your email records. This training aims to support our objective of improving life for local people by delivering high-quality services. Most people will think that our training topics are the bread and butter of records management. However, we do also try to include some topics which are not so run-of-the-mill. One such course looks at applying risk management approaches to records management (entitled Risky Records!), and is delivered jointly by records management and conservation staff. We have been running this course for three years in its current format, and find it a useful way for records management and conservation professionals to work together.

The course is divided between records and risk management theory, and practical conservation skills. The session begins with a brief introduction to records management, an explanation of our internal policies and procedures, and then covers some key principles of risk management. Following on from this, our trainees are taken to the conservation studio where they are left in the capable hands of our conservation team.

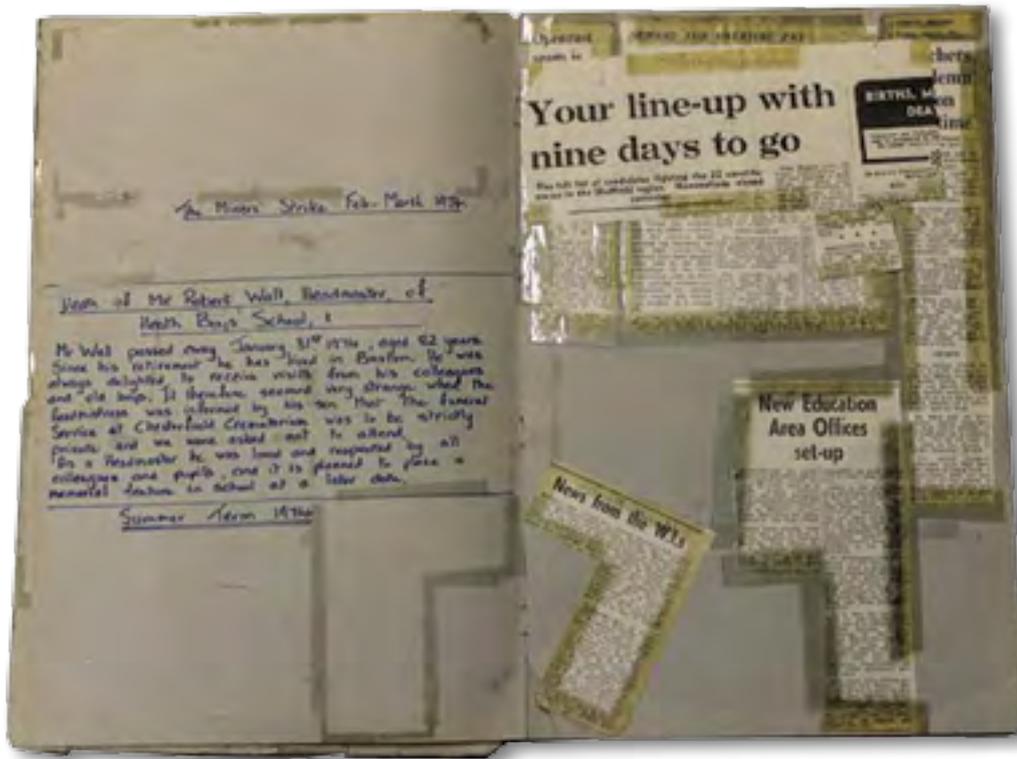


Derbyshire Record Office collection: minute book

This section of the course involves delivering training which focuses on some practical examples of damage to records, and considering how this type of damage can be avoided. Trainees are encouraged to literally get their hands dirty (and wet!) by handling water-damaged documents, and to understand how they might react if they encountered a small-scale disaster in their office. Part of this discussion revolves around some of the key risks that might befall records, including water, fire, and poor environmental conditions.

The session concludes with the trainees returning to the teaching room to discuss risk assessment methodologies and actually working through what risk management and risk response plans should involve. This includes looking at a staged scenario of office scenes with maps, assessing the potential and actual risks they observe, and the ways that they would resolve these.

The feedback received from the trainees has always been very positive, with comments stressing that the mix of content and practical skills is a good way of delivering a course.



Derbyshire Record Office collection: scrapbook newspapers

Comments have included:

- “Brilliant course and tutors!”
- “I found the session looking at damaged documents very interesting. The practical scenario commenting on potential risks was very informative”
- “I found the practical sessions useful and interesting!”

So what are the main benefits of this collaborative approach between records management and conservation? First, it introduces staff to new and interesting content that most members of a large organisation will never have seen before. Even the most innovative records management trainer might struggle to stretch beyond concepts such as compliance, retention, and information security. However, when you add document handling and repair, as well as real examples of damage, it can really bring a topic such as record risk management to life. We have found that the mix of presenters, practical scenarios, and activities helps to keep trainees engaged and to structure the course in a logical way. The joined-up approach also promotes the services offered by our conservation team, such as their practical skills at repairing documents, their expertise in disaster planning, and the resources they can call upon when responding to a disaster.

It seems to us that it is a win-win situation for all concerned, and we hope that records management and conservation will continue working together in similar ways in the future.

### David Jenkins

Corporate Records Manager  
Derbyshire County Council

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Descriptive Standards Roundtable at the 2013 ARA Conference in Cardiff. Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA.

## The Descriptive Standards Roundtable

The Descriptive Standards Roundtable (DSR) was born just over a year ago, when a number of individuals, loosely connected through membership of the ARA Section for Archives and Technology (ARA SAT) came together around a shared niggle that had something to do with standards for archival description and with descriptive practice more widely.

For some, niggles arose from daily experience of attempting to fit the round-shaped description of digital material into the square holes of ISAD(G) data elements. For others it came from the sense of *deja vu* they felt as yet another discussion of name authorities appeared on the Archives-NRA listserv. Either way, it arose and the fact that it did so (and seemingly kept doing so) convinced them that this was something worthy of their attention.

To that end, they decided to start a DSR, which was officially launched at the UKAD Forum, held at The National Archives (TNA) in March 2013. Initially, interested individuals were invited to sign up to a Google Form, and thanks are owed to the small number (22) who did so. Following this, the next manifestation of the DSR took place at the ARA Conference in Cardiff. Here was presented an issues log, which was DSR's attempt to summarise all the difficulties that had been brought to their attention as being of concern (either through the comments of those signing up to the Google Form or in

myriad other ways). About 45 attendees discussed the issues log and also considered changes to descriptive practice more generally.

DSR is a deliberately informal body, for it seeks less to direct developments in standards and descriptive practice, and more to reflect them in such a way that they become visible and force us to deal with them (not just on an individual basis, but also an international one, feeding into wider standards development at that level). For example, one firm finding from the session at the ARA Conference was that the rule against the repetition of information in multi-level description had seemingly been abandoned by most of those in the room when working in a digital environment. What does this mean for our descriptive practice? And what does it mean that it is still enshrined in the standards many of us purport to follow?

A report on the discussion which took place at the ARA Conference can now be viewed, along with the original issues



*“Consensus is not built by everyone following a specific set of standards, but by everyone reflecting on and discussing what they are doing and thinking about how it might be changing. Many of us do this already, but we are perhaps not so good at doing it collectively.”*

log, on the DSR group pages on the ARA website:  
[www.archives.org.uk/sections/interest-groups/general/descriptive-standards-roundtable.html](http://www.archives.org.uk/sections/interest-groups/general/descriptive-standards-roundtable.html).

DSR will also be running a session at this year's UKAD Forum, and hope to have a presence at the ARA Conference later in the year.

The best standards should formalise a consensus on good practice and a common way of doing things. However, that consensus is not built by everyone following a specific set of standards, but by everyone reflecting on and discussing what they are doing and thinking about how it might be changing. Many of us do this already, but we are perhaps not so good at doing it collectively. DSR is a collective designed to help this happen. Anyone can be a knight of the roundtable - so take a look at the issues log, re-read those standards, have a think, and join the conversation. DSR do not wish to dictate any one place for this conversation to happen and we will be monitoring the existing channels, including Archives-NRA

listserv, Twitter, and professional literature. However, if you want to be sure that your contribution or comment is brought to our attention, please contact one of the following:

---

**Jenny Bunn**

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**Alexandra Eveleigh**

Email: [alexandra.eveleigh.og@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:alexandra.eveleigh.og@ucl.ac.uk)

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**Simon Wilson**

Email: [s.wilson@hull.ac.uk](mailto:s.wilson@hull.ac.uk)

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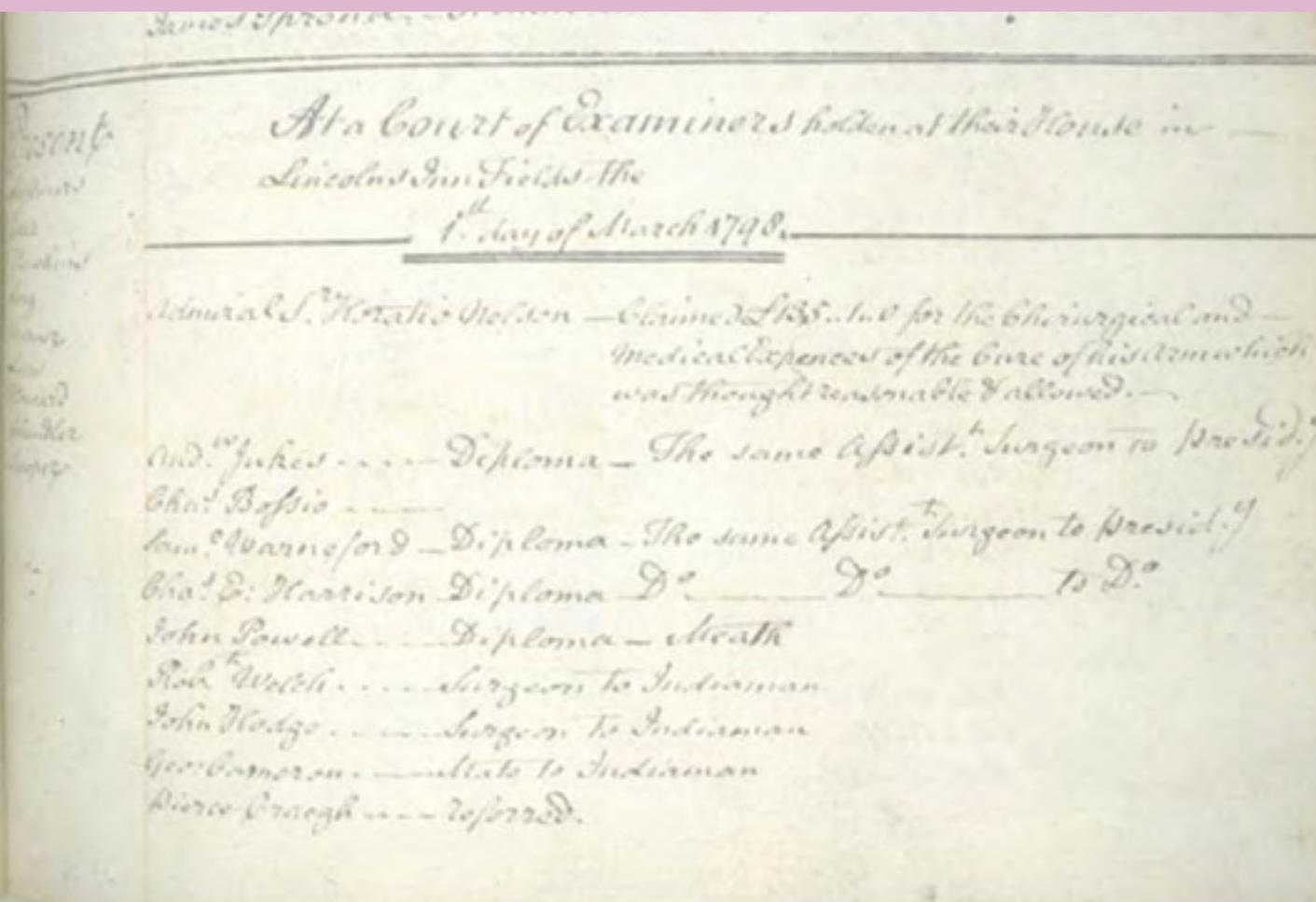
# Hunterian Museum bicentenary: the Royal College of Surgeons archives

In May 2013, the Royal College of Surgeons of England celebrated the bicentenary of the opening of its museum. The College had been in existence since 1800, in Lincoln's Inn Fields in London, and the museum was built within it to house the vast collection belonging to surgeon John Hunter. In 2003, an archivist began cataloguing the College's deposited archives. These include the papers of eminent figures in the history of medicine such as John Hunter, naturalist Richard Owen, and founder of antiseptic surgery Joseph Lister. Meanwhile, the College itself had generated a wealth of records that had been neglected in favour of the deposited collections - until I was appointed to catalogue them in 2010 as part of a five-year project.

I began by cataloguing the records of the Company of Surgeons, the predecessor of the College. The company formed in 1745, after the Company of Barber-Surgeons (one of London's historic trade guilds) split into two separate bodies following years of dispute.

Royal College of Surgeons, London. Photograph copyright Royal College of Surgeons.





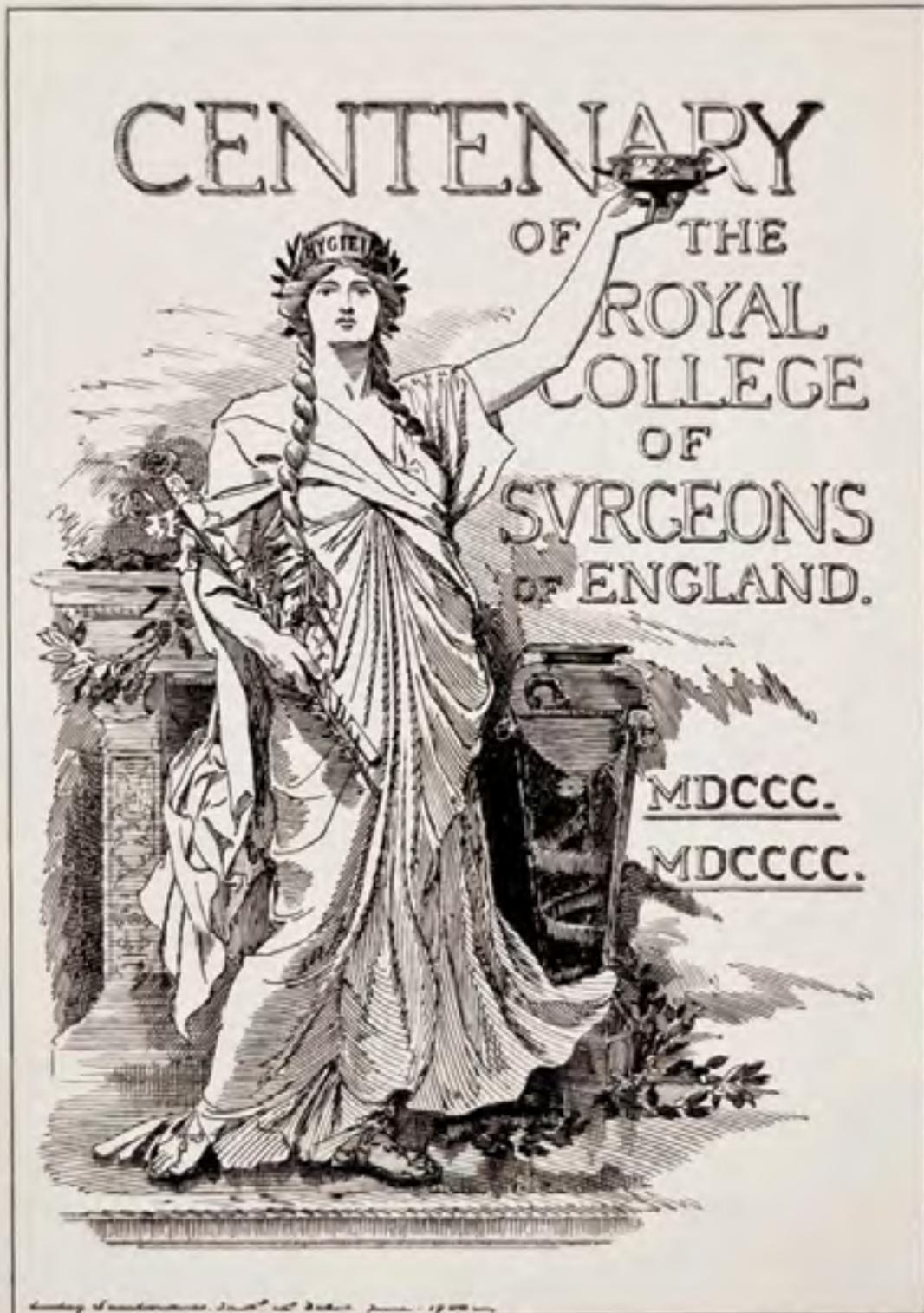
Company of Surgeons minutes mentioning the loss of Admiral Nelson's arm. 1798. Photograph copyright Royal College of Surgeons.

The Company of Surgeons controlled the practice of surgery within London until 1800, by apprenticing young men to surgeons and conducting membership examinations. They also examined naval and military surgeons and acted on behalf of the Royal Navy to examine wounded sailors - either agreeing they should be pensioned off or signing off expenses for medical treatment. Amongst the company's minutes are some brief notes about Admiral Nelson. He came before the company on two occasions: when he lost his eye and later when he lost his arm. The company confirmed the extent of his injuries and the cost of treatment.

The Company severed its ties with London's trade guilds in 1800, and became the Royal College of Surgeons in London, under a charter signed by George III. The body was determined to change the image of surgery as a barbaric and low-class craft. Becoming a royal college was a big step towards this, and surgeons were now recognised as highly-skilled, educated professionals. As the College became more professional, it naturally produced more and more records.

One particularly interesting series of records is the minutes of the discipline committee. This body examined alleged misconduct by members of the College and could reprimand them, or even revoke their membership in extreme cases. Some of the offences investigated would be taken just as seriously today - for example drunkenness, fraud and indecent assault. Others seem rather unusual by today's standards, such as the placing of advertisements. The College wanted surgeons to be perceived as middle-class gentlemen, and advertising was bound to lower the tone and status of the profession.

The records of the Hunterian Museum are by far the largest series, as befits the museum around which the College was built. These encompass the usual committee minutes, acquisition registers, annual reports, and over 500 different catalogues. The catalogues are very important because in 1941, the museum suffered bomb damage, which destroyed about two thirds of the collection. After the war, many surviving specimens were, as frequently happened, transferred to other organisations, such as the Natural



The Royal College of Surgeons centenary publicity. Photograph copyright Royal College of Surgeons.

History Museum. The older museum catalogues are now often the only record of these destroyed or dispersed specimens. They are regularly consulted by Hunterian Museum and external museum staff, and academics.

One of the strangest enquiries was whether we know what happened to 'one of the testicles of Chevalier d'Eon'. The chevalier was a spy, soldier and diplomat who lived the first 49 years of his life as a male and the remaining 33 as a female. There was much speculation as to the biological sex, which a post-mortem examination revealed to be male. The College appears to have purchased the testicle in 1829, but by 1931 it was no longer in the museum. That means it disappeared before the bombing, though exactly what did happen to it remains a mystery.

The most rewarding aspect of the project is that the records have been catalogued and can be searched online: [surgicat.rcseng.ac.uk](http://surgicat.rcseng.ac.uk)

More and more researchers have been using the College archives, investigating topics as diverse as property rights, medical misdemeanours, and tracing Aboriginal human remains for repatriation. In the nine years before the project began, an average of 12 College records per year were used by researchers. In the three years since the project started, an average of 138 records have been consulted - an increase of over 1000%. This, as much as anything else, demonstrates the value of such a project at a time when we are having to justify keeping archives and the staff to manage them.

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**Kate Tyte**

Project Archivist  
Royal College of Surgeons

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Head of Public Affairs Marie Owens and Membership and Office Administrator Lorraine Logan with the 2013 ARA Conference bursary winners. Shanine Salmon is middle row, second from left. Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA.

# Diversity in record keeping: ARA Conference 2013

The ARA Conference in Cardiff was a chance for me, a recipient of the ARA Conference bursary, to see a snapshot of the profession today. Whilst the sector is fortunate to have resources such as JISC mailing lists, it does not show how wide-ranging and international the sector is like the conference does.

This was reflected in a busy and interesting programme, which meant I did not get to attend as much as I would have liked. What I did see provoked many questions and internal debate.

The presidential address from Caroline Williams addressed the role of boundaries within archives, citing the recent Richard III car park project that saw very different stakeholders (archaeologists, historical societies etc) who showed that collaboration between the professional and non-professional could be successful. As the sector continues to look at the roles of professionals and non-professionals, it does not examine how the two can use their skills collaboratively to come up with new ideas. I believe we need to work closely amongst ourselves, but also with groups like rare book librarians who face the same conservation and storage issues, and with the records management sector.

Sarah Tyacke spoke about the role of archivists in the Hillsborough Independent Panel. For any professional this was an unusual endeavour, but the circumstances of Hillsborough were unique. It remains a disaster that is not only a tragedy because of what occurred in April 1989, but for what happened subsequently. After 21 years, blame has shifted from the fans to the police. The assignment involved working with 85 separate bodies (the archivist usually deals with one organisation), as well as digitising, redacting, cataloguing, sorting, and working with social workers who were assisting grieving families during this difficult and time-consuming process. It was a role that saw the archivist as the mediator, and to many (particularly in the profession) the saviour, whose actions have led to the decision that another inquest will be held whilst still upholding the results of the panel.

Whilst it is a lovely image, it does not look at the long-term roles of such a panel. Will archivists be there not as keepers but to come together when organisations hide evidence? I do worry that the archivist will become the fixer. Does the archivist have the ability to deal with that pressure?

“I believe we need to work closely amongst ourselves, but also with groups like rare book librarians who face the same conservation and storage issues, and with the records management sector.”



Caroline Williams, ARA President, presenting to the Conference. Photograph Tim Fok for the ARA

The session on race, civil rights and ethical accountability showed how archives are not just documents of a time and place, but also personal stories. Nathan Sowry, Archivist at the Smithsonian Institute, argued that perhaps the subject should be seen as the creator. That photograph, that FBI report containing information about someone who if they had not made those decisions to perform that action, there would not be record. Whilst I do understand Sowry’s point, I would much prefer people to get credit as a subject, as well as an awareness that archives are not neutral documents. Many documents may reflect the point of view of FBI agents, but we should not feel the need to make a community a creator of something they may not want their name put to because it reflects negatively on their actions.

I should also use this opportunity to mention the wonderful events that allowed me to appreciate the Welsh cultural sector. Professor Aled Jones reminded us of the fire at the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth. A fire in these circumstances is always devastating and shocking, but the ‘ifs and buts’ of what could have happened do not bear thinking about. Like any nation, Wales





Sarah Tyacke giving a keynote address about the work of the Hillsborough Independent Panel. Photograph Tim Fok for the ARA

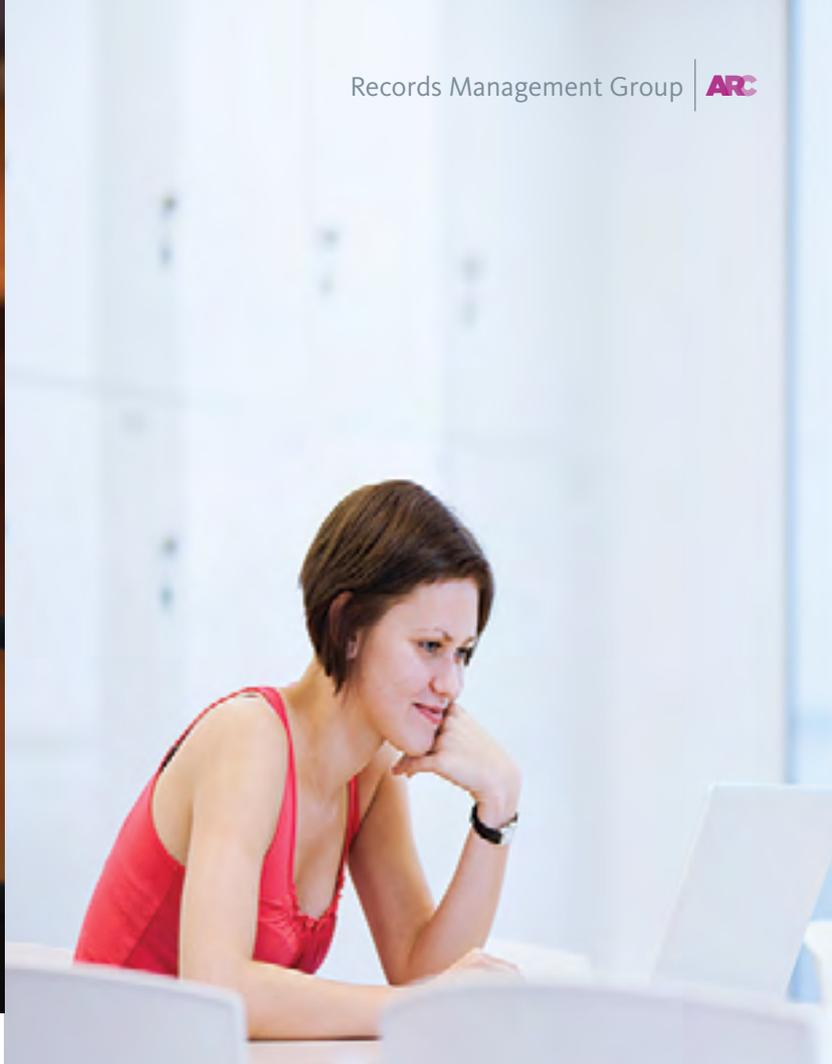
has such a personal history, but what is forgotten is that though Welsh is a joint official language, there is not much demand for it elsewhere. Those rare records in the Welsh language are based at the Library for a reason - if they disappear there is not another copy elsewhere.

Visiting the National Museum Cardiff ‘after hours’ was a fantastic opportunity, not just because of the free wine, but due to the amazing collection of Impressionist works held there. Britain has some wonderful art and it should be remembered that the art world does not begin and end in London.

To conclude, the ARA Conference offered variety. This is the message record keepers need to get out across their own archives. Whilst the collections may be specialist, it does not mean that they are dull or contain the same thing over and over. It also made me think about ethics, particularly the relationship between the record keeper and other professionals / non-professionals, and what role we can play in the accountability of others.

**Shanine Salmon**

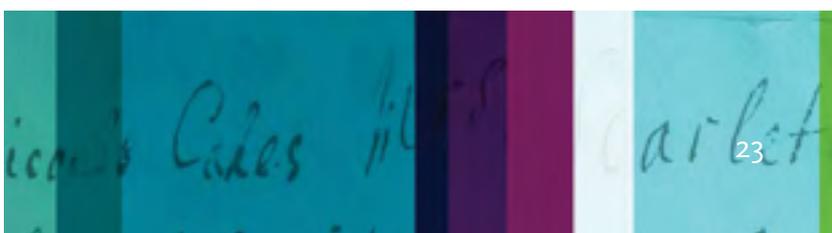
Records Assistant, King’s College London



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# The season for change?

## Records management in present contexts: A summary of the ARA Section for Records Management AGM and training event

In January 2013, the Section for Records Management gathered for its AGM and training event in the plush surroundings of the Royal Bank of Scotland in central London. It was attended by a cross section of membership from all over the country, and began with a summary of the year's activities from section Chair Vicki Wilkinson. It also saw us saying a fond farewell to both Vicki and Ann Jones who had served as joint chairs for a number of years. New officers were elected (or re-elected), and the section's committee expanded to include five new members.

### **ARA to run an independent records management campaign in 2014**

As part of the AGM component of the day, ARA Head of Public Affairs Marie Owens gave a presentation on the (then) plans to revamp the Archives Awareness Campaign. This provided an excellent opportunity for the membership to convey their views on the potential value of having an awareness campaign for records managers. The discussions led on to an agreement from the ARA to run an independent records management campaign in 2014. The committee are currently hard at work on this venture, so look out for updates in the coming months.

### **Training event**

The AGM and networking lunch gave members the opportunity to discuss current professional issues and to catch up with old colleagues and friends. The training event then began with a presentation from Michael Gallagher from Glasgow City Archives, on consumerising recordkeeping and the new and evolving challenges which face record-keeping professionals in the 21st century. We heard some fascinating statistics on the exponential growth of technology, including the fact that more iPhones are sold each day than babies born worldwide. Mobile devices also outnumbered humans in 2012. The presentation addressed the developing issue of 'bring your own device', and we were interested to learn that 75% of organisations currently support this approach, with 53% of employees already using their own devices for work. The presentation ended with a number of key conclusions, including the notion that whilst we cannot hope to stop the consumerisation of recordkeeping, we can attempt to manage it - yet another new challenge and opportunity for records managers to enjoy in the coming years.

After an engaging question-and-answer session, the attendees heard a presentation from Section for Records Management committee members Craig

Moore and Lee Pretlove. They described forthcoming plans for 2013, and the new approach the ARA has adopted (Core Training), which includes a host of opportunities for developing records management skills.

The theme of the event was very much the evolution of records management, and the day closed with a presentation on the state of records management today, and whether that term itself accurately reflects the role of records managers in the 21st century. The presentation described the evolution of the profession from its early conception, to the dynamic environment in which many of us now operate. The ensuing discussion recognised the variety of new skills and expertise contemporary record-keeping professionals are required to possess, which range from managing compliance to ensuring information security. The discussion also considered the name of our profession - what we actually call ourselves, eg records managers, information managers, compliance officers (the list goes on). We came to the conclusion that as the role changes, the title of records manager may no longer accurately reflect the current working environment.

As the 2013 AGM and training event drew to a close, the attendees left refreshed, with a greater awareness of current developments in the profession, and with new ideas to take away and perhaps to put into practice.

The slides from 'A season for change?' are available on the ARA Section for Records Management webpage: [www.archives.org.uk/si-rmg/news-and-events.html](http://www.archives.org.uk/si-rmg/news-and-events.html)

With members spread across the UK and Ireland, the Section for Records Management AGM and training events are a great opportunity to meet up with fellow professionals. Look out for forthcoming events in the section newsletter.

Not a member yet and want to get involved? Contact the Chair.

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**David Jenkins**

Chair, Section for Records Management

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# The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011: one year on

Records are crucial for a democracy. They inform us about our past and our present and act as the ultimate guarantee of our rights, but we tend to take them for granted until some crisis highlights their importance. To address this issue, Parliament passed the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 (PRSA), which came into effect on 1 January 2013.

New legislation was a recommendation of the *Historical Abuse Systemic Review (Shaw Report)*, which in 2007 highlighted the destruction of thousands of records in the looked-after children sector. This left many people who had gone through the care system with no way of accessing records which document their formative years. The aim of the act is to improve the quality of record keeping within 250 named Scottish public authorities.

The PRSA obliges authorities scheduled under the act to prepare, implement and keep under review a records management plan, setting out arrangements for the management of records either created or held by the authority. They must submit their plan to the Keeper of the Records of Scotland (the Keeper) for his agreement. Implementing agreed plans will help improve governance and efficiencies within authorities, and increase accountability at a local level.

One year on, the signs are that matters are improving. A PRSA assessment team based in the National Records of Scotland (NRS) in Edinburgh, has assessed 19 plans, and these have been agreed by the Keeper. A list of agreed plans can be viewed on the NRS website:

[www.nas.gov.uk/recordKeeping/publicRecordsActAssessmentReport.asp](http://www.nas.gov.uk/recordKeeping/publicRecordsActAssessmentReport.asp)

Over the next four years, all scheduled authorities will be invited to submit plans for assessment. The Keeper's model plan and guidance, issued to support public bodies develop their plans, has proven to be very useful. Likewise, in May 2013, the assessment team were awarded the Information and Records Management Society's prestigious Records Management Team of the Year Award in recognition of the success of these documents.

During 2013, the assessment team actively engaged with public authorities by holding a series of eight surgery events at venues across Scotland, including Ayr, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and Kirkwall. Surgeries provided practical advice on how to create a plan, and

gave representatives of public authorities the opportunity to engage directly with the assessment team. Feedback from these events was extremely positive and they will continue in 2014.

The year ended with an inaugural PRSA conference on 3 December, held in the City Halls, Glasgow. A wide range of speakers from across the UK delivered talks on the relationship of the act to other information regulation regimes, and the influence of the act on record-keeping practices within Scottish public authorities.

There is evidence that the PRSA is influencing practice elsewhere in Europe and in North America. This is extremely encouraging as the assessment team aims to continue working with authorities in Scotland to encourage best-practice records management. As well as providing efficiencies in the public sector, this will continue to safeguard the rights of Scottish citizens, particularly the most vulnerable in our society.

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**Robert Fotheringham**

Public Records Officer, National Records of Scotland

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# From beetles to The Beatles



Entomology Products (Pages 71-75)



Phonograph Record Storage Sleeves (Page 27)

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