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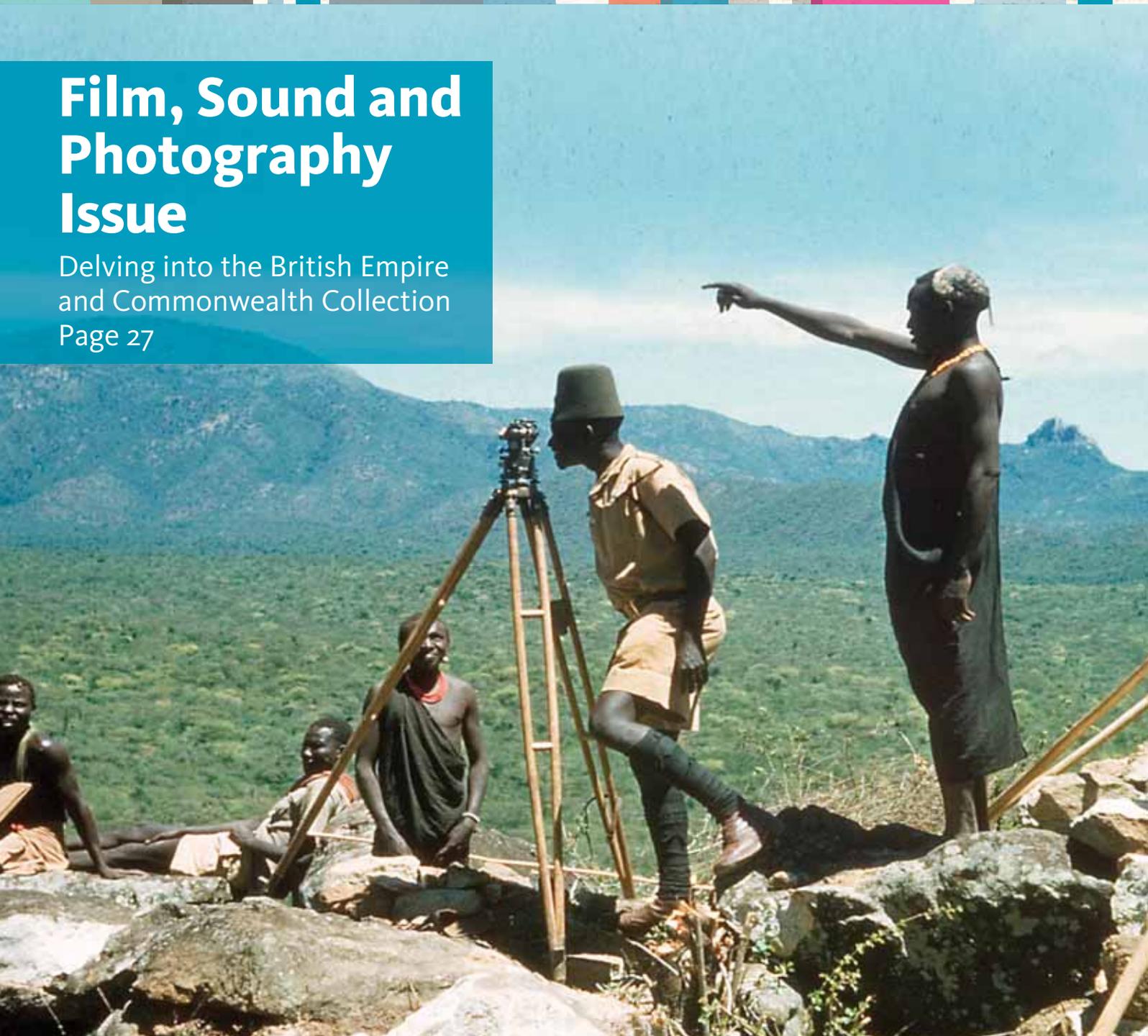
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Out of
the Ether



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**Archives & Records
Association**
UK & Ireland



International Council on Archives
Conseil International des Archives

International Conference **2019**



Edinburgh International Conference Centre
21 - 23 October 2019

Welcome to ARC Magazine April 2018

Welcome to the April issue of ARC, which focuses on film, sound and photographic collections, and is the first one I have worked on as one of the team of joint editors. I am very grateful to Richard Wragg for his generous and wise guidance during the editing process, to Rebekah Taylor for sourcing such an interesting array of articles, and to all the authors.

Engaging with records in relatively modern media provides notable opportunities both to encounter the familiar once more, and to discover the unexpected. So within these pages you will find activities ranging from researching a cast member of one of cinema's longest running and most popular film series, to audio ecology (no, me neither, just one of the many good reasons for reading on...).

Film, sound and photographic records can present distinct preservation challenges, but the impact of access to them can be great. Both characteristics are demonstrated vividly by the collections and projects which this issue showcases. There is an emphasis on digital initiatives, be that improved metadata or digitising content, but also strong awareness of how to manage the original material. With threats such as vinegar syndrome for photographs, and format obsolescence for sound and video, the time available for action may well be short. Perhaps some of the work described here might act as inspiration to do something about such material which you hold?



To find out more about the work of the ARA Section for Film, Sound and Photography, visit their page on the ARA website: www.archives.org.uk/about/sections-interest-groups/film-sound-and-photography-group-fspg.html

Matti Watton
ARC Editor

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Front cover:
Delving into the British Empire and Commonwealth Collection

DISCLAIMER

The Archives & Records Association (UK and Ireland) cannot accept responsibility for views expressed by individual contributors to ARC Magazine. It is a medium for informing members of news, information and ideas relevant to the profession, including archive conservation. It is not an official guide to procedures, concepts, materials or products.

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opening lines



Specialist collections like film or sound can often be marginalised within the workflow of a local, regional or national archive because their format demands specialist knowledge, time and resources, to unlock the content. Specifically, even experienced professionals may feel unsure about how to safely handle, store or digitise audio-visual records. So, how can we support each other and what resources are available to offer practical guidance?

From the enquiries ARA's Film, Sound and Photography Section (FSPS) receives, and the training it delivers, it is evident many recordkeepers would like to engage more actively with their film and sound collections, especially how to tackle conservation issues and develop sustainable digitisation projects. Through our networks, the FSPS committee has delivered workshops that introduce practical ideas to safeguard audio-visual records, case studies that highlight different ways to support digitisation, and presentations that detail the legal frameworks in which you can responsibly provide access to film and sound collections.

Our latest training event was held at the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) on Tuesday 20th March, where a range of speakers presented on subject areas relating to both film and sound; for instance, on how moving images can be used creatively, and an introduction to film preservation and digitisation workflows. With support from institutions like

Northern Ireland Screen, the Irish Film Institute and National Museums Northern Ireland the event provided a good platform to identify gaps in knowledge and work out potential solutions as a regional collective. Of particular interest were the ways in which institutions were using a mix of both best practice and common sense to progress locally, understanding that action was better than procrastination! Equally, that by collaborating and developing partnerships, projects had been easier to kick-start.

Overall, the feedback FSPS receives from workshops is positive and continues to instruct the type of training we aim to deliver, but what is most encouraging is the strong level of communication that takes place - an important reason why exchanging information is so vital. This is uniformly the case within the records space, but particularly so in relation to film, sound and photographic material; we know that there is a high volume of records at risk, either from degradation or obsolescence of playback equipment.

Moving forward into 2018, we plan a number of exciting projects to support access to film and sound collections through partnership and collaboration, one of the most significant being 'Unlocking our Sound Heritage'. Led by the British Library, this UK-wide project aims to save almost half a million rare and at-risk sound recordings via a network of audio preservation centres located at National Museums Northern Ireland, Archives + (Manchester), Norfolk Record Office, the National Library of Scotland, the University of Leicester, The Keep (Brighton), Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums, the National Library of Wales, London Metropolitan Archives and Bristol Culture.

The importance of a project like this is not simply the transfer of audio formats at risk, but the conversations it will start among professionals and the communities they support. Specifically, through a series of planned outreach initiatives, including workshops, learning events for families, public tours and exhibitions, and a new website to host the digitised recordings, the project aims to raise the profile of sound archives, encourage members of the public to understand more about their value and hopefully inspire research into more collections.

For more information about the work of the Film, Sound and Photography Section, please visit our page at www.archives.org.uk where you will find information on upcoming events, articles and useful resources to develop your knowledge of this specialist area. Alternatively, if you have any questions email fspg@archives.org.uk or find us on Twitter @ARAFSPG

David Baldwin

Chair, ARA Film, Sound and Photography Section

Professional development news

April is a month when many employers begin their staff appraisal or performance review process. So in this edition we will discuss how to incorporate the ARA competency framework into your professional development, and help you get the professional recognition you deserve.

For some members however, April is not significant as they may have already had such a review. For others, either their employer is unable to provide such support or they are self-employed. The good news is that whatever your situation, this article will help you think about your learning and development, and maximise the opportunities that will come your way over the next 12 months.

Competency framework

Launched in 2017, the competency framework was developed by Caroline Williams, Visiting Professor at Liverpool John Moores University in partnership with ARA members. *'We engaged with a wide range of employers to ensure the framework met their current and future needs'* explained Caroline. *'We also consulted with the ARA membership structures to ensure the framework also met the needs of the profession. Practitioners will find that the skills and competencies they learn in the workplace can now be used as evidence to demonstrate that they meet the required standard for Foundation, Registered and Fellow Membership.'*

The framework sets out 39 competencies that are grouped into three areas; organisational, process, and stakeholder/customer. Each competency is supported by five levels of experience (from novice through to expert) which describe the typical activities undertaken. This means that the framework can be used by junior staff through to the most experienced professionals in senior managerial positions. So, whether you are thinking of your own development or that of your staff, the framework is your guide.

The framework is also your pathway to professional recognition by the ARA, as the experience you gain throughout your career can be used to qualify as a Foundation, Registered or Fellow member.

Getting started

The first step is to familiarise yourself with the ARA's competency framework, if you have not done so already. The competency level descriptions will help you think about what

career or development goal(s) you want to achieve over the next 1-3 years. You can then discuss your ideas with your line manager so that they can be agreed or amended to suit the needs of your employer. If you are organising your own goals, then perhaps the best advice is to make sure your goals are achievable.

The next step is to organise how you will achieve your goal. You can do this with a professional development plan, and the ARA competency framework webpage includes free advice to members on how to create your own plan. Whether your goals are short or medium term, for you or your staff, the framework sets out all the key competencies required by the sector, and should always be your main point of reference.

For those members looking to progress their membership towards Foundation and Registered then further guidance is available from the ARA website. More announcements on the route to become a Fellow will appear over the coming months.

If you would like the ARA to come and talk to your team about the ARA's approach to professional development please contact chris.sheridan@archives.org.uk.

Programme enrolment

The following members have recently enrolled onto the ARA programme:

Foundation: Alice Maltby-Kemp, Amanda Brooks, Shona MacLellan & Teresa Davies.

Registered: Alexandra Mitchell, Anna Bowman, Anthony Hughes, Anthony Pitaluga, Bryony Hooper, Carly Randall, Carol Ince, David Clifford, Edward Ratcliffe, Elisabeth Thurlow, Fabiana Barticioti, Jennifer Hunt, Karen Davies, Lynsey Darby, Matt Naylor, Matt Tantony, Nathanael Hodge, Rachel Jones and Zoe Watson.

Best wishes to all enrolled members with their progress towards ARA professional recognition.

Chris Sheridan

CPD Programme Manager

ARA Conference 2018 – Glasgow

First keynote speaker announced - Michelle Caswell, UCLA

Early-bird discounts open: book by 30 April and pay by 31 May

Apply now for bursaries

We are pleased to announce the programme for Conference 2018 at Grand Central Hotel, Glasgow, from Wednesday 29th August - Friday 31st August 2018. For full details of speakers, themes and more, see the Conference website: conference.archives.org.uk/

We've worked hard this year - in response to delegate feedback - to make each individual day's programme at Conference as 'self-contained' as possible. Our goal is to encourage more people to come for at least one day if they cannot make all three and organise the programme to maximise the value and learning outcomes for all delegates.

The special 'early-bird' discounted rate for Conference is now open until 30 April. If you register by 30 April, you have until 31 May to pay.

To register for Conference, please select one of the registration options from the right hand menu. If you require any assistance then please contact the Conference Desk on +44 (0) 151 649 3688 or by email: araconference@millsmediagroup.com

First keynote speaker announced

We are also pleased to announce the first confirmed keynote speaker at Conference: Michelle Caswell, Assistant Professor of Archival Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles.



Ms Caswell's book *Archiving the Unspeakable: Silence, Memory, and the Photographic Record in Cambodia* won the 2015 Waldo Gifford Leland Award for Best Publication from the Society of American Archivists. The book explores the role of archives and records in the construction of memory about the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia. Caswell's research traces a collection of photos taken at Tuol Sleng prison from their creation as bureaucratic documents that streamlined mass murder, to their inclusion in archives, digitisation and use by survivors and the family members of victims to spark narratives about the regime and memorialize the dead.

Ms Caswell has a wide and diverse range of interests in records and archives. She is the co-founder of the South Asian American

Digital Archive (SAADA), an online repository which documents and provides access to the diverse stories of South Asian Americans. In 2016, she was awarded a three-year grant by the Institute of Museum and Library Services to study the users of community-based archives in Southern California. She was also a member of the United States Delegation to the Mandela Dialogues on Memory Work 2, a programme organised by the Nelson Mandela Foundation in South Africa and the German Global Leadership Academy that convenes an international dialogue series for thought leaders and change agents in the field of memory work. We will announce the theme of her keynote in the next edition of ARC.

Bursaries

We are taking applications for bursaries for this year's Conference. For more details on the range of options and to apply, see the Conference website.

Best-value Conference

The ARA Board and Conference Committee work hard to maintain Conference as the most innovative, relevant and stimulating experience for all records professionals – as well as being the best value in the sector. Other conferences may be cheaper in their individual components but few offer meals and accommodation at all, never mind on site, and no other offers the depth, quality and range of speakers as the ARA Conference. The cost of attending Conference this year is little changed on previous years. For ease of reference, please find below a breakdown of this year's fees.

CHARGES FOR ARA MEMBERS

- Full Conference Attendance with Two Nights' Accommodation (Early Bird) - £552.00 (£570 after 1 May). NB: full attendance includes breakfast, lunch and dinner for the days of Conference.
- Full Conference Attendance ONLY (Early Bird) - £466.00 (£480 after 1 May)
- Daily Attendance Rate (Wednesday, Thursday or Friday) - £190.00 per day
- Accommodation Rates for Single Occupancy only - Monday to Friday (per Night) - £175.00
- Accommodation Rates for Twin/Double Occupancy (per room) - Monday to Friday - £195.00

ARA announces revised terms for Supporters Groups membership category

Our goal is to engage with and help organisations that play a key role in supporting the recordkeeping profession and services

The Archives and Records Association (UK & Ireland) announces today revisions to its membership criteria for Supporters Groups.

Key Stakeholders

The ARA Board has been looking for a number of months at how it might attract into the ARA community more stakeholder groups - run by enthusiasts and volunteers - that do so much to support the records community in the UK and Ireland, as users, advisers, fund-raisers and/or campaigners. The Board sees great benefits in working more closely with such enthusiastic, supportive and creative voices within the ARA community.

The Board defines Supporters Groups flexibly. They would typically include 'Friends' of local government record offices, local history societies, family history associations, etc. But they could potentially be any association of people that provides meaningful support to records managers, archivists and archives and conservation/conservators in a volunteer capacity.

There are some conditions for this revised membership category. Any such group must have a membership of at least ten people, an established oversight committee of at least two people that records its activities, and credible articles of association. And it must be based in either the UK or Ireland.

The ARA will continue to view community-based archives as a separate category and encourage all such

- Evening Meal and Welcome Drinks Reception (Wednesday 29 August) - £35.86
NB: this evening meal will take place at the Grand Central Hotel with a Drinks Reception to follow. The cost of this is included in the tariff of those booking to attend the full conference.
- Gala Dinner with Entertainment, Table Wine and Drinks Reception (Thursday) - £46.90
NB: the cost of this is included in the tariff of those booking to attend the full conference.

SCALES OF CHARGES for NON-MEMBERS & GUESTS

- Full Conference Attendance with Two Nights' Accommodation (Early Bird) - £723.00 (£741 from 1 May)
- Full Conference Attendance ONLY (Early Bird) - £606.00 (£625 from 1 May)
- Daily attendance rate (Wednesday, Thursday or Friday) - £220.00
- Accommodation Rates for Single Occupancy only - Monday to Friday (per Night) - £175.00
- Accommodation Rates for Twin/Double Occupancy (per room) - Monday to Friday (per Night) - £195.00
- Guest rate for lunches - £25.00
- Evening Meal and Welcome Drinks Reception (Wednesday) - £35.86 NB: The evening meal will take place at the Grand Central Hotel with a Drinks Reception to follow. The cost of this is included in the tariff of those booking to attend the whole conference.
- Gala Dinner with Entertainment, Table Wine and Drinks Reception (Thursday) - £46.90 NB: the cost of this is included in the tariff of those booking to attend the whole conference.

John Chambers

CEO, ARA



ARA Conference

People Make Records

29 - 31 August 2018 Glasgow UK

★★ **Early Bird Reminder** ★★
Register by 30 April and pay by 31 May 2018
for your early bird discounted rate

Conference Bursaries
Please apply now, further details can be found on the conference website

First Keynote Speaker Announced
Professor Michelle Caswell, University of California

<http://conference.archives.org.uk>

groups to become active in the excellent and well-established **Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG)**, which is closely affiliated to, and receives specific support, from the ARA and The National Archives (UK).

What's in it for Supporters Groups?

Many groups in the Supporter space currently operate in isolation, such as those campaigning against cuts to individual local authority record offices, their services and hours of operation. But the Board is also aware of groups that want to gain a wider understanding of specific aspects of the records, conservation and archiving community, such as filing, cataloguing, retention policies, data protection, book-repair techniques and so on. There are also those actively seeking new ideas for activities, or expert speakers for their events, or want to improve their advocacy or understanding and use of social media. Affiliating to the ARA opens doors to all the expertise you are likely to need.

To help Supporters Groups better network with each other, the ARA will establish a virtual Supporters Groups section as a platform for like-minded groups to interact and build an online networking community for asking questions and sharing ideas, experiences and best practice. A range of Supporters Groups have told us they would not want a formal ARA section committee or an obligation to organise or travel to formal meetings. The Board understands and respects this. Recognising that such groups aim to devote as many of their limited resources as possible to their 'core' or 'support' activities that benefit the entire sector, the Board has decided not to charge membership fees for Supporters Groups for a provisional trial period of eighteen months (in effect to the end of 2019).

Full membership will continue to have added benefits

The ARA can only continue to thrive through the annual membership fees paid by individuals and institutions and the generous time that many individual members devote to ARA work. Therefore, Supporters Groups and their members will not be eligible for all the advantages of full ARA membership, such as access to professional development programmes, the ARA's research journal (Archives and Records), formal ARA core training and ARA bursaries. Of course, members of Supporters Groups that want to be a formal part of our community would be most welcome to apply to become individual members (we are great value: ARA membership fees have only increased once in the past decade!).

And, unlike other ARA sections comprising full individual and institutional ARA members, the virtual Supporters Group network would not receive an annual budget for running its activities. The consultation with Supporters Groups to date suggests that this might be a reasonable arrangement in

return for a very much reduced membership fee after 2019. To summarise, the revised Supporters Groups membership offer includes:

- **No membership fee** for a provisional period of 18 months (to the end of 2019).
- One digital copy of the ARA's themed monthly magazine 'ARC' and monthly newsletter 'ARA Today' (which includes useful information, eg on grants, events and sector news) to (a maximum of) **two designated committee members** of each Supporters Group.
- Support from the ARA in networking with other groups in their community – through the establishment of an online **virtual Supporters Groups section** – and access to the ARA's **network of professional expertise**.
- Freedom to **attend ARA nation/region/section meetings of interest**, subject to the agreement of section Chairs (eg, where there might be restrictions on numbers at specific venues).
- Access to the **ARA website** and its many 'back-end' resources, including practical advice, information on the work of our nations, sections and regions and background documents on a range of records management, archiving and conservation issues.
- Access to the **discounted member rate** to attend the ARA's annual conference.
- Opportunity to **submit articles** for inclusion in the ARA's monthly magazine, 'ARC'.

The Board remains open to receiving further suggestions from Supporters Groups in terms of member benefits; it will also review the revised policy set out above before the end of 2019.

How to join

1. If you are a committee member of your group, believe that your group meets the above criteria and have the group's authority to apply for membership as a Supporters Group, please email Lorraine Logan at the ARA office in Taunton: membership@archives.org.uk or call 01827 327077. Lorraine will take care of your 'onboarding'.
2. Contact the same email address or phone number if you are not sure if your group qualifies as a Supporters Group but want to check.

John Chambers

CEO, ARA

Business Archives Council cataloguing grant for business archives

Excellent news for archives as the Business Archives Council increases its annual cataloguing grant.

The Business Archives Council (BAC) has announced that it has increased its annual cataloguing grant for business collections to £4,000 this year. The aim of the grant is to fund the cataloguing of a business collection in either the private or public sector, and to:

- Provide financial support for institutions/businesses that manage business archives;
- Reach collections that have not yet been prioritised but have potential academic or socio-historical value;
- Create opportunities for archivists or para-professionals/volunteers to gain experience in listing business collections;
- Increase access to business collections.

The grant opens on 3 April 2018 and the deadline for applications is 25 June 2018.

Previous applicants are welcome to re-apply. Please note that the BAC will not award a grant to the same institution within three years.

Find out more about the grant criteria and how to apply on the BAC website: www.businessarchivescouncil.org.uk

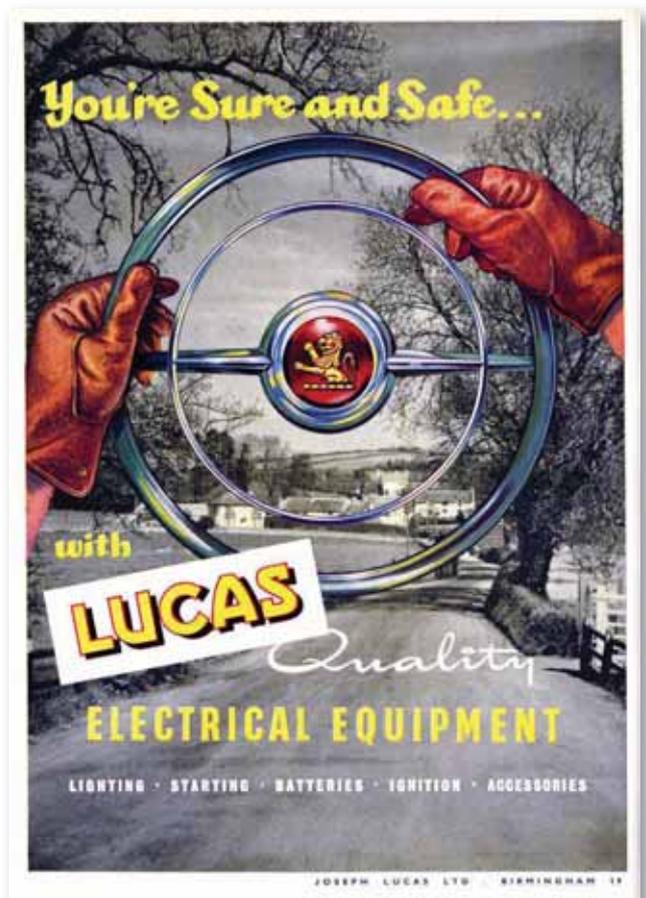
Any questions about the grant should be addressed to Jenny Willis, Administrator, Business Archives Council Cataloguing Grant 2018, tel: 0300 0300 700 (ext.953), email: Jenny.Willis@postalmuseum.org

The cataloguing grant for business archives related to the arts - also £4,000 - opens on 26 April; the deadline for applications is 26 July. If you have any questions, contact the Grant Administrator, at: anne.archer@bt.com

Jenny Willis

The Postal Museum

“The aim of the grant is to fund the cataloguing of a business collection in either the private or public sector”



An advertisement from the archives of Lucas Industries, the winner of the 2017 BAC cataloguing grant; image courtesy of the British Motor Industry Heritage Trust

“Previous applicants are welcome to re-apply”

Collecting matters

It's interesting what moving jobs does to change your perspective on what you thought was a familiar landscape.

As part of my new role at The National Archives - Development Manager: National and Networks - I'm getting to know new networks and encountering archives in ever more diverse settings and formats.

Film and sound archives are amongst the specialisms I'm less familiar with so I'm enjoying the learning curve; meeting experts who are passionate about what they do and who are adopting innovative and/or pragmatic approaches to the challenges they face.

The power of our visual archive collections in engaging people, whether through popular events and screenings or ground-breaking academic research is compelling and the contribution they make to the "distributed national collection" is enormous.

Already, what I have seen of the work of Film Archives UK, the regional film archives, even more specialist networks such as Sporting Heritage and their Photography and TV conference late last year, and the newly formed Photographic Collections Network to name but a few, is thought-provoking and genuinely exciting.

I see my job as linking people, services and collections with opportunities, whether that be funding, guidance, support networks, creative projects, or something altogether new and different.

Film and sound archives are very much part of that mix, so if you'd like to continue my induction to the world of audio-visual archives, please get in touch via our share your expertise page below.
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/keeping-in-touch/share-your-expertise/

Caroline Sampson

The National Archives (UK)

Archiving abroad: the Kewpie photographic collection

Jenny Marsden explains how ARA's international engagement bursary enabled her to promote a South African photographic collection.

I have been living in South Africa for over a year now, and wanted to share one of the projects I'm working on with the archival community in the UK. The Kewpie photographic collection is held at Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action, known as GALA, an archive and NGO in Johannesburg. GALA was set up as an archive in 1997 to address the erasure of the stories



Portrait of Kewpie, June/July 1967; copyright GALA

“The majority of the photographs have captions which Kewpie provided during the accessioning process, and most have been digitised”

and experiences of LGBTIQ people from official archives, histories and other spaces in Africa. The Kewpie collection is the personal photographic collection of Kewpie, a hairdresser and drag queen who lived in District Six, a multi-racial working-class area of Cape Town. There are around 700 photographs in the collection, spanning the period 1950 to the early 1980s. The majority of the photographs have captions which Kewpie provided during the accessioning process, and most have been digitised. The project has involved arranging and cataloguing the collection to make it more accessible, and I'm currently conducting research and preparing material for an exhibition about Kewpie to be held at the District Six Museum in Cape Town.

Kewpie, whose given name was Eugene Fritz, was born in District Six in 1942. Kewpie trained as a ballet dancer but was unable to pursue a professional dance career following her father's objections. Instead, she became a hairdresser. In the 1950s Kewpie started going to gay parties and became part of a queer community in District Six that was highly visible through public performances and attendance at balls in elaborate drag. Members of this



community sometimes identified as gay men and sometimes identified as female, although their relationships with men were generally referred to as gay relationships. Kewpie's gender identity appears to have been fluid, as she did not strictly identify as either male or female. However, both Kewpie and her friends tended to use feminine pronouns for each other.

Top: Olivia, Kewpie, Patti (all at back, L-R), Sue Thompson, Brigitte, Gaya, Mitzy (all in front, L-R) in Sir Lowry Road; copyright GALA

Bottom: Sodja and Kewpie at the Marie Antoinette Ball at the Ambassador Club (1967); copyright GALA

District Six came into being following the division of Cape Town into six districts in 1867, and developed as a racially mixed working-class community of freed slaves, merchants, artists, labourers and new migrants. There were significant problems in the district including overcrowding, poverty and gangsterism, but people were also proud to live there, with one former resident saying in an oral history interview that if ‘you can’t sing or you can’t dance, you can’t make a plan, you can’t make ends meet then you’re not from District Six.’ In 1966, District Six was declared a white ‘group area’ by the apartheid government, and was systematically demolished. Residents were gradually moved to racially defined residential developments across the Cape Flats. The trauma resulting from forced removals and the destruction of communities like District Six continues to reverberate in South Africa, and is one of the great tragedies of the apartheid system.

The Kewpie collection is an important resource helping to document a place that has since been lost and a community that was scattered. Most of the photographs in the collection were taken by Kewpie and friends, and show Kewpie’s extensive social life and social circle. The collection depicts the carefully crafted public personas of the drag queens, and also their private ‘off-duty’ lives. There are pictures from excursions to beaches and parks, photographs of hairdressing salons, images of elaborate fancy dress balls and parties, portraits of friends, snapshots of everyday life in the local area, and photoshoots of Kewpie’s friends on the streets of District Six. The collection also includes studio portraits and images taken by street photographers. As well as giving an insight into the queer community, the collection helps to illuminate the specific urban locality of District Six.



The photographs suggest Kewpie and her friends were both visible and well-integrated within the broader District Six community, challenging contemporaneous media representations of queer people as social outcasts, and reinforcing historical understandings of District Six as a close-knit community where diversity was valued.

Top: Brian and Kewpie (in their 20s) in Rutgers Street; copyright GALA

Bottom: Kewpie's party in Rutgers Street; copyright GALA

“*The trauma resulting from forced removals and the destruction of communities like District Six continues to reverberate in South Africa*”

As part of the work to promote this collection, and to learn more about LGBT history work being carried out elsewhere, I presented a paper at the Queer Localities international conference in London, which focused on the local and particularly on queer historical work around the world. My attendance at the conference was funded by ARA's international engagement bursary. The conference papers emphasised the need to tell the stories of LGBT people outside major urban centres, and the importance of documenting the history of particular localities for the people for whom those places were vitally important. I also attended the Talking Back! oral history LGBT conference at London Metropolitan Archives, with presenters demonstrating how effective oral history is as a methodology when it comes to LGBT history. Speakers at the conferences also explored why LGBT archives are sometimes more difficult to locate and more fractured than others. In response to this there were several call-outs from researchers and heritage professionals encouraging people to set up community archives or donate existing material to institutions, so that LGBT history can be accessed in the future.

Jenny Marsden

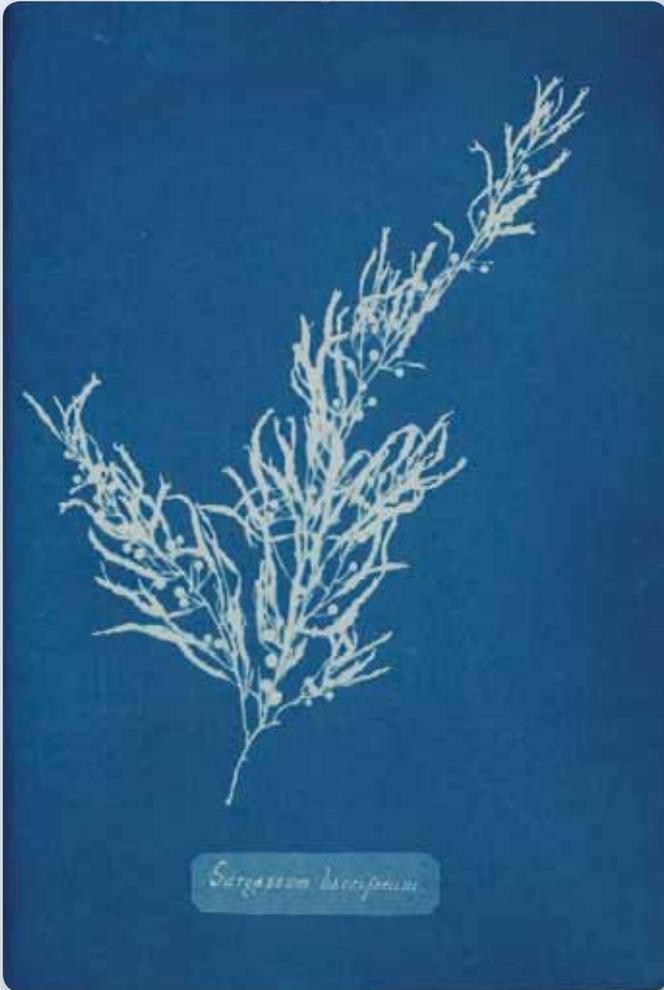
GALA

Researching Anna Atkins in the Talbot collection

Zoe Wolstenholme investigates an understudied figure from the early days of photography.

I first saw Anna Atkins's 'Photographs of British Algae: Cyanotype Impressions' (1843) on display in the exhibition 'Fox Talbot: Dawn of the Photograph' at the National Science and Media Museum (NSMM) in 2016. Amongst Talbot's monochrome salt prints of Lacock Abbey, British landscape and the wintry outlines of bare deciduous trees, this vibrant blue book stood out. The copy of 'Photographs of British Algae' that was on display, held in the Talbot archive at NSMM, is the personal copy of the polymath and pioneer of photography William Henry Fox Talbot. Further study of Atkins's work led me to find her under-represented in histories of photography and her work understudied. This led me to propose Atkins and 'Photographs of British Algae' as a topic for the Science Museum Group Journal. Here I discuss the process of researching and writing this article on her private publishing and the relationship between photography and botanical illustration.

Atkins's 'Photographs of British Algae' accompanies correspondence, notebooks, other publications and around 5,400 photographic works in the Talbot archive. These works comprise photographic salt prints, photoglyphs and negatives produced by Talbot during the development of his photographic process in the 1840s. Talbot's process, announced in 1839, brought the ability to print several positive images from one negative, the premise that modern photography would be based on. His invention was based on the light sensitivity of silver salts. His contemporary, the mathematician, astronomer and chemist Sir John Herschel, developed the 'cyanotype' medium in 1842, a phrase he intended to cover all forms of photography made in the iron pigment known as Prussian blue.



'Sargassum bacciferum' from Photographs of British Algae: Cyanotype Impressions by Anna Atkins (1843); copyright Science and Society Picture Library/National Science and Media Museum

This cyanotype process, which produces photographs in tones of blue, was the form that Anna Atkins chose for her work on 'British Algae'. She used it to make photograms, photographs taken without the use of a camera, to record, as she put it, 'impressions' of natural specimens. The first instalment, published in 1843, was the beginning of a ten-year project photographing the algae that reside on British shores. Her work was an exploration into the potential of this new artistic and scientific form, just four years after its public announcement by Louis Daguerre and then Talbot himself. Atkins was very much a part of the conversation surrounding the invention of photography. Indeed, the reason 'British Algae' is now in the Talbot archive at NSMM is because she shared copies of her work with her photographic contemporaries.

“Atkins was very much a part of the conversation surrounding the invention of photography.”

“My examination of photography as a form of botanical illustration suggests the potential for alternative narratives of the natural world.”

Whilst Talbot and Herschel are well known in histories of photography, little writing exists on Atkins. What writing there is, with a few notable exceptions such as Larry Schaff's 'Sun Gardens: Victorian Photograms' from 1985, tends to make passing reference to her rather than extended study. As I started to read more about Atkins it became apparent that she was often disregarded, and often in place of Talbot. Several photographic historians have written that Talbot was the first to produce a book illustrated with photographs. Other writers cite Talbot as the first to produce such a publication commercially, instead of looking to Atkins's self-published work that was created and shared with her contemporaries, including Talbot, the year before his publication 'The Pencil of Nature' (1844). This led me to question the perception and status of private publishing, often the only way for marginalised people to distribute their work. The exclusion and disregard of private publishing had excluded Atkins's contribution from photographic history. This is something I sought both to interrogate and readdress in my article in the Science Museum Group Journal.

My research is also concerned with photography as a form of botanical illustration, exploring why photography is still discounted in the face of hand drawn illustration, and what this and Atkins's work says about Victorian relationships with the natural world. To do this I undertook a close reading of Atkins's work, examining how she composes her page with botanical specimens, how using photography records individual instances of plant life.

My research into this early photographic work has sought to emphasise the importance of private work and private publishing as a medium for alternative histories of photography. Moreover, my examination of photography as a form of botanical illustration suggests the potential for alternative narratives of the natural world. At a time when our relationships with nature are fraught, works such as Atkins's allow us to reassess our place in the natural world.

Zoe Wolstenholme

National Railway Museum, previously National Science and Media Museum

A race against time: the Kenyon photographic collection

Kate Parr outlines how an important collection has been preserved and made accessible.

The South West Heritage Trust has been working with local organisations and volunteers to save and make available a remarkable collection of 60,000 images taken by a local photographer, before they are destroyed by vinegar syndrome.

Stanley Walter Kenyon was a photographer based in Wellington, Somerset. His early career involved photographing local people and daily lives. He became interested in industrial architecture, and won contracts to photograph industrial sites throughout Britain and abroad. The many thousand industrial images include landmarks that have fallen into disrepair or no longer exist. There are images of factories making everything from biscuits to sewing machines, with his collection showing the world of work in the decades following the Second World War. Closer to home they provide a window on local Somerset life including schools, fêtes, amateur dramatics and changing high streets. There are shots of state-of-the-art classrooms, sparkling new offices and newly-installed hi-tech machinery alongside more personal images of the local community.

Kenyon was a skilled photographer who was awarded the Fellowship of the Institute of British Photographers and was made an Associate of the Royal Photographic Society, and his images are of excellent quality. After his death his collection of c.60,000 acetate and glass plate negatives was deposited with the Somerset Studies Library. It was only later that the acetate negatives started to exhibit signs of vinegar syndrome. This is a chemical reaction where the acetate layer of the negative degrades, causing blistering and pitting of the negative, and releasing a noxious acid gas. I still have flashbacks to opening one of the cupboards and being knocked back by the smell!

In 2010 the Somerset Studies Library joined the Somerset Archive Service in the new Somerset

Heritage Centre, but it was clear that an alternative temporary home needed to be found for the Kenyon collection. Vinegar syndrome is contagious, and we couldn't place other photographic collections in our care at risk. The negatives were wrapped in micro-chamber paper to absorb the worst of the gas and given a temporary home in a spare store room at Highbridge Library. My job was to get the train to Highbridge every few months and change the paper in the boxes, taking care to bring a face mask and gloves with me as the acid gas can be a nasty irritant. More than a few minutes breathing it in can result in a sore throat, itchy eyes and in extreme cases breathing difficulties and contact dermatitis.



Vinegarised negatives; reproduced with the kind permission of the South West Heritage Trust



Maynard's Bakeries, Wivelscombe, 1978; reproduced with the kind permission of the South West Heritage Trust



Kenyon working in his studio c.1945; reproduced with the kind permission of the South West Heritage Trust



Van Heusen's machine room, Taunton, 1956; reproduced with the kind permission of the South West Heritage Trust



“Vinegar syndrome is a chemical reaction where the acetate layer of the negative degrades, causing blistering and pitting of the negative, and releasing a noxious acid gas”

Taunton Hospital prizegiving, 1953; reproduced with the kind permission of the South West Heritage Trust

This gave us time to consider what to do next. The main options were restorative conservation work, freezing the collection or digitisation. Given the quantities involved, any work to individually restore each image would have been prohibitively expensive, and freezing the collection was not a long-term solution to providing full access to the collection. Our best option was to digitise the collection, to save the information contained in the image, but not the original media themselves. We were helped by the support of local organisations, in particular the Somerset Industrial Archaeological Society and Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society (Murless Fund) who were aware of the value of the collection and were able to assist with both financial and volunteer support. By 2015 we were able to commission the digitisation of the collection. This was not something that we could attempt in-house due to the health and safety risks of working with the collection.

We are fortunate that Kenyon kept meticulous records of his work, and with a bit of detective work the full registers and card indexes have allowed us to identify every image. The support of volunteers has been

invaluable, enabling us to create a full catalogue and to clean and repackage the remaining glass plate negatives. The end result is a photographic archive that is remarkable in its extent and subject matter, covering Kenyon's professional career of more than 40 years. It provides a detailed picture of the changing industrial face of 20th-century Britain, alongside images of generations of Somerset people and places. The whole collection is now catalogued, cleaned and fully available for the first time. The catalogue is available online via the South West Heritage Trust website, and the images can be viewed in the search room at the Somerset Heritage Centre. In celebration of the completion of the project, we are holding an exhibition at the Museum of Somerset in Taunton from February 2018. This showcases some of the best and most interesting images from the collection, as well as exploring the story of Kenyon's career and our efforts to save his work for future generations.

Kate Parr

South West Heritage Trust

Out of the Ether

Anne Anderton describes how a catalogue of The University of Manchester Library's collection of British Victorian Photography, 1839-1901, has been brought online.

In addition to our manuscripts, archives and printed books, the Special Collections at The University of Manchester Library holds important visual collections, which we have actively curated since 2012. The collections include fine art, decorative art and photography. The photography collection is perhaps the most substantial and significant of these, with more than 100,000 photographs dating from the 1840s to the present. The scope is international with an excellent representation of British and local photographs, and it includes a full repertoire of analogue photographic processes and formats.

With support from the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, the recently completed Out of the Ether project has made accessible a selection of these photographs from the previously undocumented collection of Victorian British photography. The catalogued material is now discoverable via our University of Manchester Library Search and through the Manchester Digital Library, opening up these works to everyone: luna.manchester.ac.uk/luna/servlet/s/0abj12

The collection is richest in the area of British art photography and particular strengths are evident in the genres of portraiture, landscape, and architecture. There are excellent examples of early British photo-books and the collection contains works by eminent British Victorian photographers, including William Henry Fox Talbot, Roger Fenton, Julia Margaret Cameron and Francis Frith.

However, works in the collection by unknown practitioners are no less fascinating than those by some of the more familiar names. Amongst these is a fascinating album from 1901 of the Menston Asylum, detailing the facilities and activities at West Riding Pauper Lunatic Asylum, later known as High Royds

Hospital. The album presents a surprisingly sensitive insight into early medical interventions. Interestingly, there is also a print of the asylum photography studio, which is a room with large windows, filled with daylight and featuring a large camera set upon a tripod. The presence of a studio in the asylum is perhaps not surprising, as the connection between photography and psychiatry had been explored as early as the 1850s by Hugh Welch Diamond.

Another much lighter collection of images is a wonderful album titled *Doppelgängers and Spectres*, again from the early 1900s, which showcases clever and amusing examples of trick photography employed by early enthusiasts.

Out of the Ether has significantly improved the visibility of this treasure trove of early photographic material, which is relevant and of interest to multiple disciplines. Further visual collections material will continue to be catalogued and digitised by the visual collections team at the university.

To contact the team with any enquiries please email: stella.halkyard@manchester.ac.uk

For past posts on the project please see the John Rylands Library Special Collections blog: rylandscollections.wordpress.com

Anne Anderton

The University of Manchester



Margaret and Adeline Norman by Julia Margaret Cameron, 1874; copyright The University of Manchester



A spectre, by an Unknown photographer, c1900s;
copyright The University of Manchester



View of the photographic studio, Menston Asylum, by an unknown photographer 1901;
copyright The University of Manchester



Lady with a big head, by an Unknown photographer, c1900s;
copyright The University of Manchester



Colonel Brownrigg C.B. & the two Russian boys Alma & Inkermann, by
Roger Fenton, 1856; copyright The University of Manchester

Digital still from Railway
Roundabout: The Skye Line, 1959;
image courtesy of the National
Railway Museum

Reels on the rails: the film and sound collection at the National Railway Museum

Angélique Bonamy gives us an introduction to the rich audio-visual archives held at the UK's largest railway museum.

The National Railway Museum (NRM), York, is part of the Science Museum Group (SMG). The NRM holds an exciting and significant railway film and sound archive which sits alongside our vast paper and photographic archive collections. You may be surprised to know that we hold the largest audio-visual archive in SMG, with the National Science and Media Museum in Bradford focusing on film and sound technologies and equipment.

Our earliest films date from 1925 to 1948 and were commissioned, sponsored or made by the railway companies of the time. Films were used not only as a promotional tool for the destinations and services offered, but also as training material for staff, Second World War propaganda and as an educational resource for schoolchildren. By the time railways were nationalised in

1948, film had proven to be a powerful communication tool. As a result, the government created British Transport Films (BTF), which produced films from 1950 until 1985. The museum holds many examples of these films, with the British Film Institute retaining the originals. We also hold the collection of BTF stills and photographs which include incredible images taken during the shooting of the films. We also hold about 500 reels of research footage from the British Railway Research Centre, Derby. The films made between the 1940s and 1980s are especially interesting regarding innovation and engineering, with themes such as the Advance Passenger Train or the magnetic levitation train 'Maglev'. We are currently fundraising for a cataloguing project to make this collection more accessible.



British Transport Films crew near Buachaille Etive Mor in Scotland, shooting *The Heart Is Highland* in 1951; image courtesy of the National Railway Museum

Our smaller collection of amateur footage offers beautiful pictures and unique stories. We have footage shot by prolific unknown filmmakers, combining railway enthusiasm and family holidays. We digitised the silent originals of the ‘Railway Roundabout’ series, broadcast on the BBC between 1958 and 1962, and made by two amateur filmmakers, John Adams and Patrick Whitehouse.

Our sound collections are made up primarily of railway sound recordings and oral history. In addition, we hold a few discs of railway related music performance. The Peter Handford collection is our most significant sound recording collection. Handford was a professional sound recordist who worked for the British film industry and Hollywood, and is best known for his work on *Out of Africa* (1985) for which he received an Academy Award and a BAFTA. He was also passionate about railways, and recorded railway sounds which he published on

“Our smaller collection of amateur footage offers beautiful pictures and unique stories”

disc, starting with his own label, Transacord Ltd, from 1955. This collection contains over 1200 audio items supplemented by papers, correspondence and images. In 2000 the Friends of the NRM began to gather the National Archive of Railway Oral History (NAROH).

A large team of volunteers conducted the interviews, collecting the life stories of men and women railway workers. Over 600 interviews were recorded on MiniDiscs and about 500 have now been digitised. A new project led by the Friends is currently underway.

“As with many film and sound archives we face various challenges when it comes to preservation, access and display”

‘Britain’s Railways All Change’ (BRAC) focuses on the later period, covering the privatisation of the railways.

As with many film and sound archives we face various challenges when it comes to preservation, access and display. Our collection contains over 7000 items, in various formats, from audiocassettes, magnetic tapes, to MiniDiscs and born-digital for sound, 8mm, Super 8, 16mm film and different formats of video tapes, mainly U-matic, Betacam, VHS tapes and Mini-DV.

We have various methods for dealing with obsolete formats. We own some video equipment, enabling us to digitise most of our videotapes. Films can be handled and viewed by the archivists on our film viewers and our 16mm Steenbeck, to enable the films to be catalogued. However, access for research is limited to parts of the collection which have been digitised. Digital surrogates are made available in Search Engine, our library and archive centre based at the museum (www.nrm.org.uk/researchandarchive/about). Film and sound formats are digitised through external contractors.

Being part of a museum offers many advantages for our archive. Exhibition and event led projects create opportunities to digitise a selection of the materials to be



Archive footage displayed in a luggage van alongside specially made footage for *The Missing Passenger*, temporary exhibition held in 2017; image courtesy of the National Railway Museum



Peter Handford recordings; image courtesy of the National Railway Museum

displayed and subsequently enables access to them.

The spread of the collection offers large potential for research as well as for display to help tell and illustrate the story of the railways. We regularly consider offers of film and audio recordings for our collection from organisations and members of the public and are especially keen to grow our amateur films and corporate

production collections, as well as to acquire relevant contemporary material. We are also interested in hearing where other archives hold similar collections. If you would like to learn more about our film and sound archive, please get in contact: email:angelique.bonamy@nrm.org.uk

Angélique Bonamy
National Railway Museum

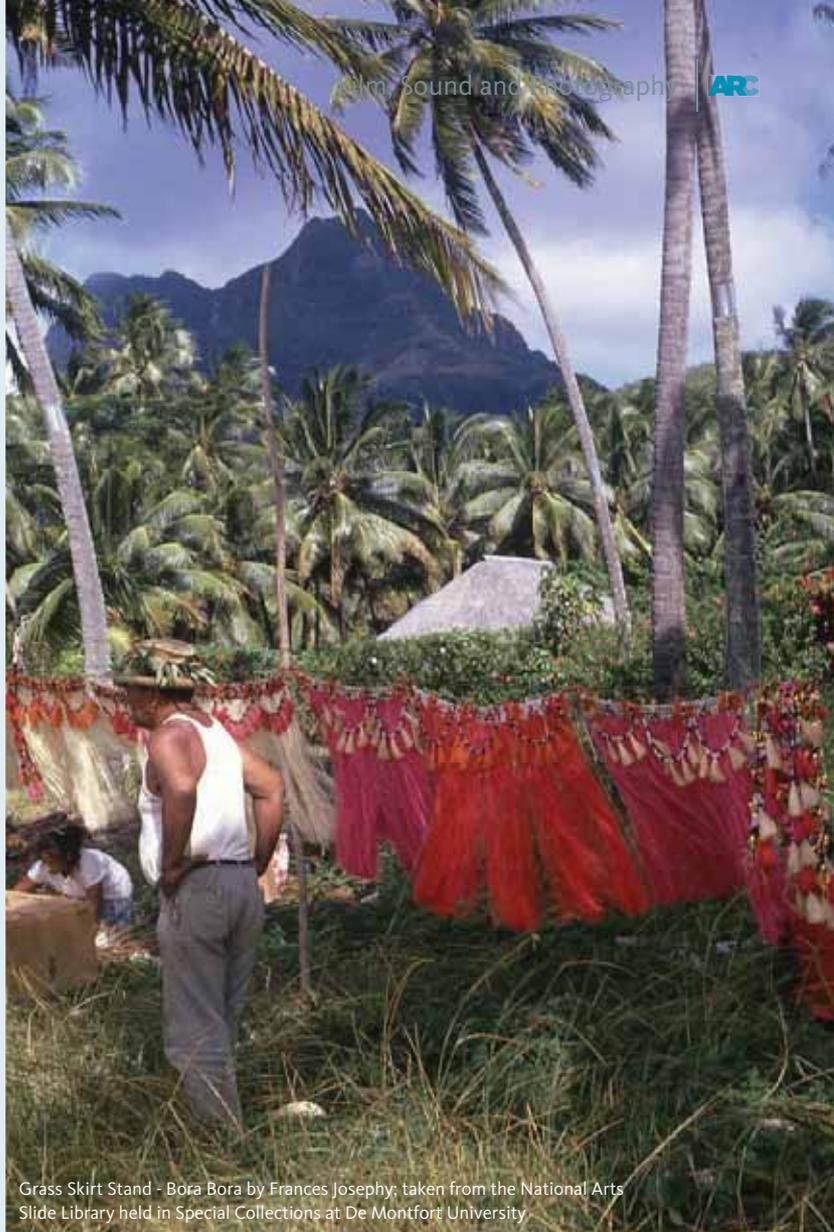
Students in the archive: using photographic objects in research

Molly Caenwyn discusses how a particular collection of slides captured her attention and led to further research.

Whilst volunteering at De Montfort University (DMU) Special Collections, I have been exploring the photographic material and resources that are held within the archive. As a current student on the MA Photographic History programme, I began volunteering to gain experience and knowledge of how an archive worked, but I soon discovered how these fascinating visual resources could inform my own academic writing.

One of Special Collections' volunteering projects aims to catalogue the Victoria & Albert Museum's (V&A) National Arts Slide Library (NASL) which came to the university in the early 1990s. The NASL was a photographic slide lending service that began in 1898. Magic Lantern slides and, later, 35mm positive colour slides would be issued, typically by post, to illustrate teaching and lectures (in the days before Google images and PowerPoint slide shows). The collection is made up of many kinds of slides but mainly depicts items relating to art history and items found at the V&A.

As a part of the project to catalogue and repackage the slides, I had been asked to select a box that would hold my interest and choose a box of images I found 'aesthetically pleasing'. However, the more I studied them, the more I found them strange. They were... ordinary and appeared to be holiday photographs. What was a bunch of tourist photos doing in the NASL? Serendipitously, one of our first modules



Grass Skirt Stand - Bora Bora by Frances Josephy; taken from the National Arts Slide Library held in Special Collections at De Montfort University



Frances 'Jo' Josephy – photographer of the collection; taken from the National Arts Slide Library held in Special Collections at De Montfort University

“I believe it is vital for other students and researchers to go and physically explore archives and I highly recommend doing so”



Penang by Frances Josephy; taken from the National Arts Slide Library held in Special Collections at De Montfort University

during the Masters was to look at photographic objects found in an archive and create an essay from them. It was the ordinariness of these slides that made them so interesting and it was this that had attracted me to them and led to them becoming the focus of my research. I later came across the acquisition file for these pictures when rummaging through the NASL documents. They revealed where they came from, who made them and how they ended up there.

The box was part of a much larger slide collection donated to the V&A in 1987 by Miss M.H. Borman, the executor of the estate of Miss F.L. Josephy. Frances or 'Jo' Josephy was a Liberal Party activist, the British representative in the European Union of Federalists and a keen amateur photographer. The collection boasts approximately 3400 slides and documents Josephy's travels over a span of twenty years (from 1956-1976) in over 20 different countries.

I then used this collection in my essay, examining tourist images in the public slide library. Focusing on the materiality of 35mm colour positive slides and the tropes and clichés of tourism photography, the piece explored the transferability of these photographic objects. This showed how the collection could move from a private, domestic setting into a public domain and how this institutionalisation affects our reading of these images.

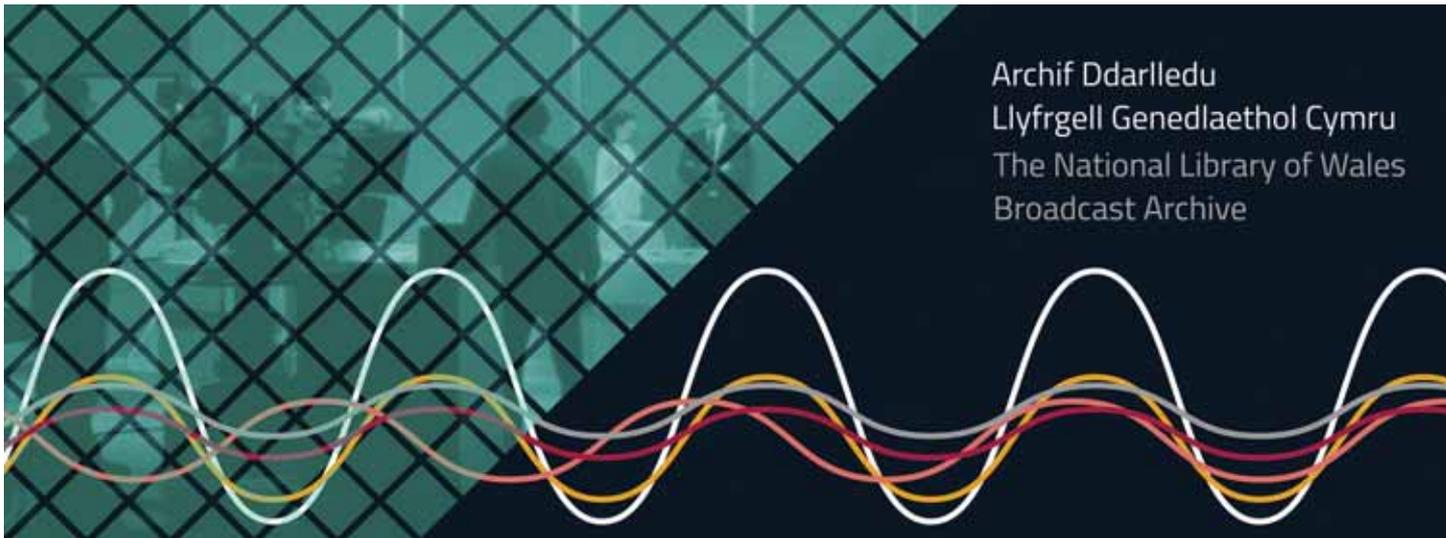
Since the library's move from the V&A to DMU Special Collections, we have seen how the original authorship and biographical background of these images have been rebuilt and re-established. It is unclear whether these photographs were ever used by the public when at the V&A, but since their move to DMU they can now be accessed by a new audience and used in student research.

As much of this collection is yet to be catalogued, it will take some time to make its way on to the online platform; this is a reality found in many other archive collections. With constant technological advancements and developments in the field of photography, more and more archives have growing photographic collections. Examining photographic historical objects in the archive has and continues to be a useful resource to me and students on my MA. I believe it is vital for other students and researchers to go and physically explore archives and I highly recommend doing so, to find materials to work from and see the items held in their collections.

Molly Caenwyn

De Montfort University

NLW project brand



Establishing a National Broadcast Archive at the National Library of Wales

Nia Dafydd explains how a new resource plans to provide access to a broad range of audio-visual content relating to 20th century Wales.

The National Library of Wales is developing an exciting new project - CLIP - to establish a National Broadcast Archive. Working closely with BBC Cymru/Wales, and funded by the HLF, we will receive all of their original sound and video recordings together with digital copies. This collection will be a valuable addition to the ITV Wales archive already housed in the Library, and together they will form the basis of the Broadcast Archive.

There are three main elements to the project:

- Safeguarding the collection by building a new storage area for the physical collection and digital storage facilities for the digital copies;
- Providing digital access to the whole collection by establishing a new digital viewing centre in the Library and in three other centres in Wrexham, Carmarthen & Cardiff and by making 1000 clips available to view online;

- Encouraging access and engagement by developing a lively programme of activities with a variety of audiences.

The Library is excited about receiving such a valuable collection and making it accessible



Ryan and Ronnie; copyright BBC Cymru/Wales



Film cans; copyright BBC Cymru/Wales

across Wales and beyond. The archive is an invaluable collection as it is an audio-visual record of all aspects of life in 20th century Wales. With radio recordings from the 1930s, television programmes from the 1950s and over 360,000 items to choose from, the programmes are as varied as life is in Wales!

It is a vital research resource for those looking at life in 20th century Wales as all key social, cultural and political moments and events in modern Wales' history are recorded. Or for some, it might be valuable because they're looking for items that interest them personally: a clip of their favourite rugby game, news of an exciting event, a piece of comedy that makes them laugh until their sides hurt, a children's programme that reminds them of their childhood, or even a clip of someone they know. This is a dynamic collection that has something that will appeal to everyone and is, to quote the American Archive of Public Broadcasting, one that "provides an authentic and unique window into the past..."

The project provides an opportunity to develop our outreach work further and develop a programme of activities that will encourage and enable users to make use of and

engage with the collection. The project also provides an opportunity to reach a wider audience than ever, by opening multiple permanent external centres. The CLIP centres will be dynamic and ambitious and will provide facilities for the casual browser, researchers and groups to access the collection.

So as to ensure that the activities and the facilities in the CLIP centres answer the needs of our users, a period of public consultation is currently underway. We are also eager that our consultation will lead us to develop partnerships, collaborative projects and build on our relationships with our users to encourage and assist independent use of the collection.

The project is currently in the development phase, and if successful in our bid, we will commence the delivery phase in October 2018. The project will run for a period of five years and I'm looking forward to the challenges that it will present.

Nia Dafydd

National Library of Wales



Jayne Pucknell and Nicky Sugar, Archivists, British Empire and Commonwealth Collection; copyright Ibolya Feher.

Delving into the British Empire and Commonwealth Collection

Jayne Pucknell and Nicky Sugar describe the challenges which come with cataloguing and providing access to this large and fascinating collection.

With the increasing debate about the legacy of empire, it is a fascinating time to work on the British Empire and Commonwealth Collection based at Bristol Archives. We were initially employed in 2015 as job-sharing archivists, to catalogue 40 photographic collections and 20 film collections, mainly funded by the National Cataloguing Grants Programme for Archives. When tackling this material, we are constantly facing both practical and ethical challenges.

The British Empire and Commonwealth Museum in Bristol closed in 2012, and its collections were

transferred to Bristol Culture. Bristol Museum inherited around 7000 objects, and Bristol Archives took in 500,000 photographs, 2,000 films and over 1,000 crates of paper archives, plus sound recordings and library material. The former museum collected some amazing items, its strengths being the photographs, films, and oral history recordings (which will soon be digitised via the British Library's 'Unlocking our Sound Heritage' project). It was the largest accession that Bristol Archives has ever taken in. Until resources were secured for work on the collection, it was left sitting in storage until we arrived to unwrap its secrets.



Surveying in the Karasuk hills in Kenya, taken by District Forestry Officer James Lang Brown (ref. 2001/291/1/4/III/69); copyright Bristol Archives

“The material we are working with sometimes includes challenging imagery or text, and our approach to cataloguing must be sensitive to the cultures and people represented”

The collection consists of material created or collected by white British people living and working abroad, both civil servants and others, who were recording the everyday sights they saw around them. Themes covered include ways of life, both colonial and indigenous, historic events, tourist sites, the military, wildlife, the environment, infrastructure and engineering projects. It

is largely amateur, i.e. photographs and films were taken to be shared with family and friends in the comfort of their living rooms. Most of the material dates from the 1860s to the 1970s, and is a rich source of evidence for researchers which until now has been largely untapped. Various archival questions came with the collection: how do we maintain links between the archives and objects, how do we reflect complex issues of provenance, and how do we resolve problems regarding ownership and copyright when there are gaps in the legacy data?

From the early days of working on these collections we had to build relationships with a new community of donors, many of whom were concerned about what had happened to the material they had donated to the closed museum. We have striven to show that we are a safe place for archives, and as a mark of success have had several additional donations from former depositors, as well as accessions from new sources.



Yoruba woman with two babies, taken from the Verdin collection (ref 2000/098/2/82). The Verdins ran a palm oil business in Badagry, Nigeria; copyright Bristol Archives

“It was the largest accession that Bristol Archives has ever taken in”

The material we are working with sometimes includes challenging imagery or text, and our approach to cataloguing must be sensitive to the cultures and people represented. We also need to be aware of and respect the position of donors, as without their involvement, this material wouldn't exist. Our role as custodians who protect the collection but also enable access is sometimes a thorny one.

Along with the items and legacy data, we also inherited digital copies of images, which we are incorporating into the catalogues as we go. However the former

museum only digitised selected images to help generate income. In contrast, when we have had the capacity to carry out any digitisation our approach is to digitise complete volumes or collections.

As the first outing for some of this material since the closure of the museum, we are pleased to promote our Empire Through the Lens exhibition which is on display at Bristol Museum & Art Gallery until the end of August 2018. In planning this exhibition with our museum colleagues, we were worried about the selection process and the risk that it might perpetrate inherent biases in the collection. So instead of having one curator, we decided to involve 27 people in selecting an image or film from the collections and to provide some text to say why they had made that selection. The result reflects many different voices such as community groups, historians, photographers, artists and donors. Selectors have given their thoughts about colonialism and its legacy, or simply talked about how things used to be in other parts of the former British Empire.

By its very nature, the British Empire and Commonwealth Collection includes material from many countries around the world, and our future ambition is to work towards sharing items with their country of origin via digitisation. As a start, the Empire Through the Lens exhibition is also available for viewing online to reach audiences beyond the confines of Britain:

exhibitions.bristolmuseums.org.uk/empire-through-the-lens/

As we have now completed the initial project and our role has been made permanent, we are starting to delve into the paper archives and continuing the mammoth task of cataloguing this fantastic collection! For further information, email: archives@bristol.gov.uk

Jayne Pucknell and Nicky Sugar

British Empire and Commonwealth Collection



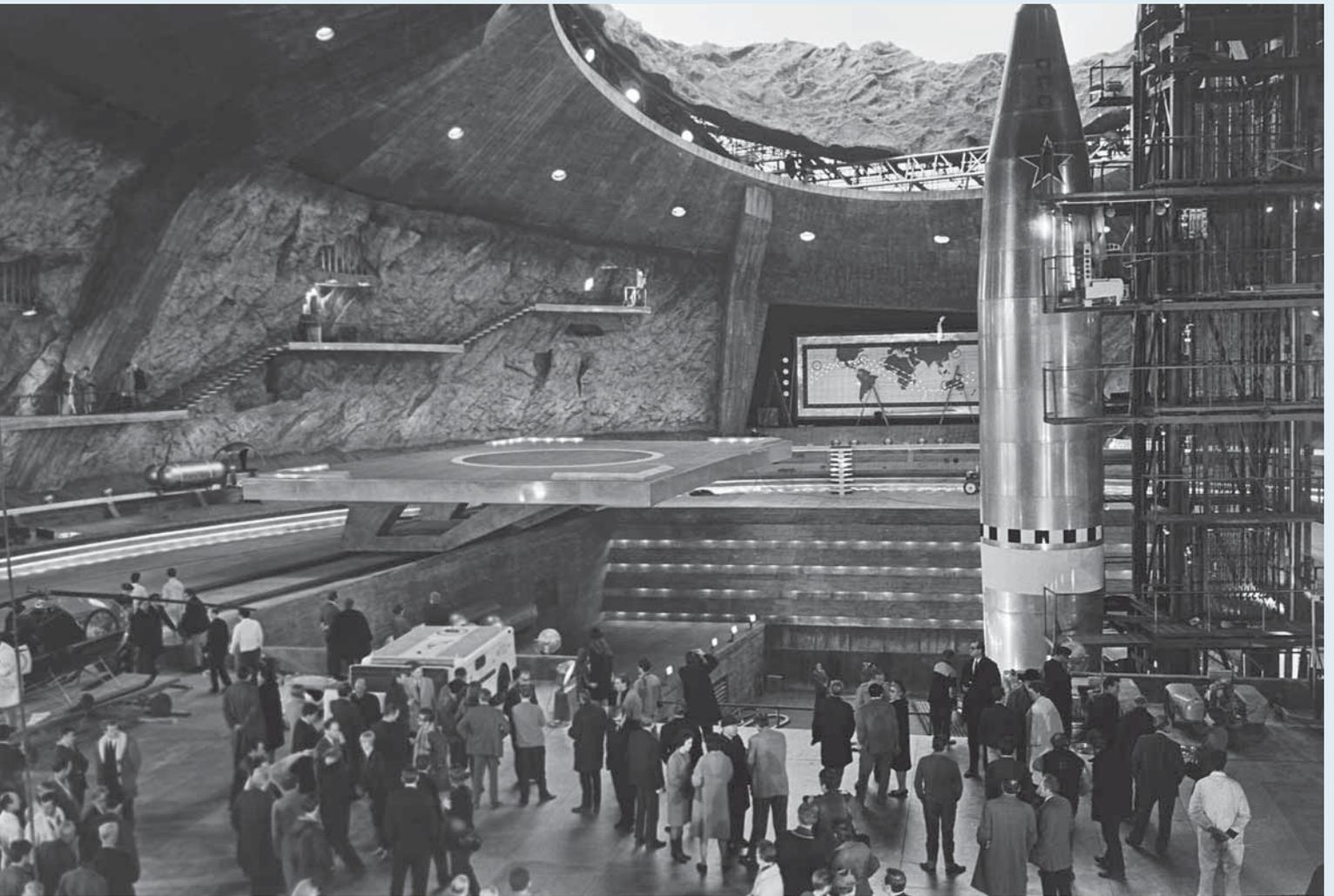
Sean Connery and Karin Dor (right) on set at Pinewood Studios, 1966; News UK Archives

Diary scanning project at News UK Archives

Michael-John Jennings and Anne Jensen explain how responding to daily internal requests at News UK Archives has been made far easier and more efficient.

The News UK Archives recently invested in a large scanning project which digitised over 250 handwritten photographic diaries and more than 100,000 handwritten negative index cards. These records catalogue the photographic assignments of The Times, The Sunday Times, The Sun and The News of the World as far back as 1915 and cover the majority of significant news and features stories from the past century. The records have previously only been searchable manually by our team of Content Specialists.

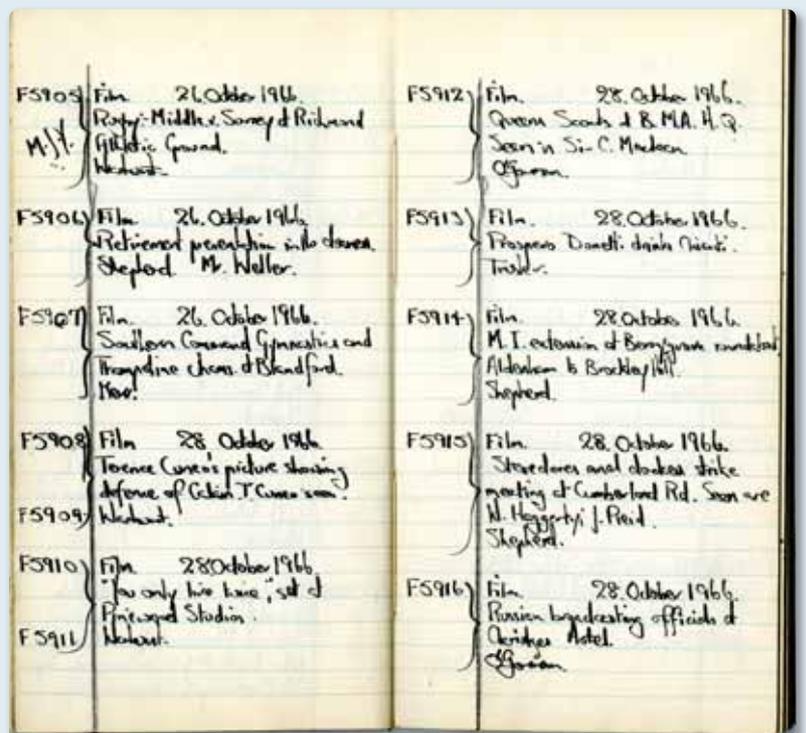
The digitisation project was challenging and involved high resolution scanning and transcription of handwriting, a difficult task on its own, to make it a live searchable database within our internal picture and text management system. The pages and index cards were scanned by an external company and sent elsewhere to be transcribed. Each record was transcribed by two people and if the transcribed data matched, the record was accepted. If there were discrepancies a third person would validate the information.



The elaborate set and production staff on set of "You Only Live Twice" at Pinewood Studios, 1966; News UK Archives

This has created a truly searchable index, which can now be used to respond to daily urgent demands from editorial and licensing departments. Before the digitisation of the diaries, the card index of negatives and print files to get a conclusive answer. Now we can search all those in one place.

“Over 100 years of content from politics, sport and entertainment is now more accessible than ever”



Original Times Negative Diary from 1966 listing Times photo job: FS910 "You Only Live Twice" set at Pinewood Studios, 28.10.1966; News UK Archives

The benefits are numerous and wide ranging, but the main ones are:

- Faster and more efficient response times for urgent requests.
- A more comprehensive search facility across all negative jobs.
- Cross checking print files and negative jobs is now much easier.
- Multiple searches for person, place, year, subject are now efficient.
- Increased ability to search and pinpoint jobs by specific photographers.
- Editorial and licensing departments can now independently do the initial searches for un-scanned material from digitised diaries then contact the team to provide scanned images.
- Enhanced collaboration with editorial and licensing departments regarding scanning content and project management.

We frequently receive requests following the deaths of famous people. A recent request for photographs of the actress Karin Dor, who starred in the James Bond film *You Only Live Twice*, provides a good example of how the digitisation project has

“Each record was transcribed by two people and if the transcribed data matched, the record was accepted”

opened up the collection. We instantly searched the database of digitised diaries and found a few jobs on her. Unfortunately, nothing from the Bond films showed when searching “James Bond” and her name. However, by simply searching for the title of the film we got a result for a Times job shot in 1966 at Pinewood which sounded intriguing. This set of negatives would have been impossible to find without the use of this new facility as it was not filed under the film name nor in the James Bond files. It would have taken lengthy research to get a date for filming in the first instance, after which we would have had to flick through the diaries for 1966 manually.

We found two rolls of film featuring the stars and crew of the film on set at Pinewood Studios in 1966. The set was then the largest, most expensive set built at Pinewood and the photos were shot by the esteemed photographer from The Times, Bill Warhurst. There were over 60 frames that had not previously been scanned, so the content was swiftly scanned and archived on to our systems and provided to the editorial and licensing departments. Our licensing department is currently in discussions with Pinewood Studios about these images.

This is just one of many examples over the last few months to reach our licensing and editorial departments, as we digitise more content from the untapped potential in the News UK Archives. Over 100 years of content from politics, sport and entertainment is now more accessible than ever and there is a vast amount yet to scan.

You can see more from our collections on Twitter @NewsUKArchives and our blog: medium.com/@NewsUKArchives

Michael-John Jennings and Anne Jensen

News UK

ENVIRONMENTAL MONITOR and LOGGER

Humidity
Light
Ultra-violet
Temperature
Dewpoint

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Sound recordist Stuart Bowditch recording at Stansted Airport; copyright Stansted Airport

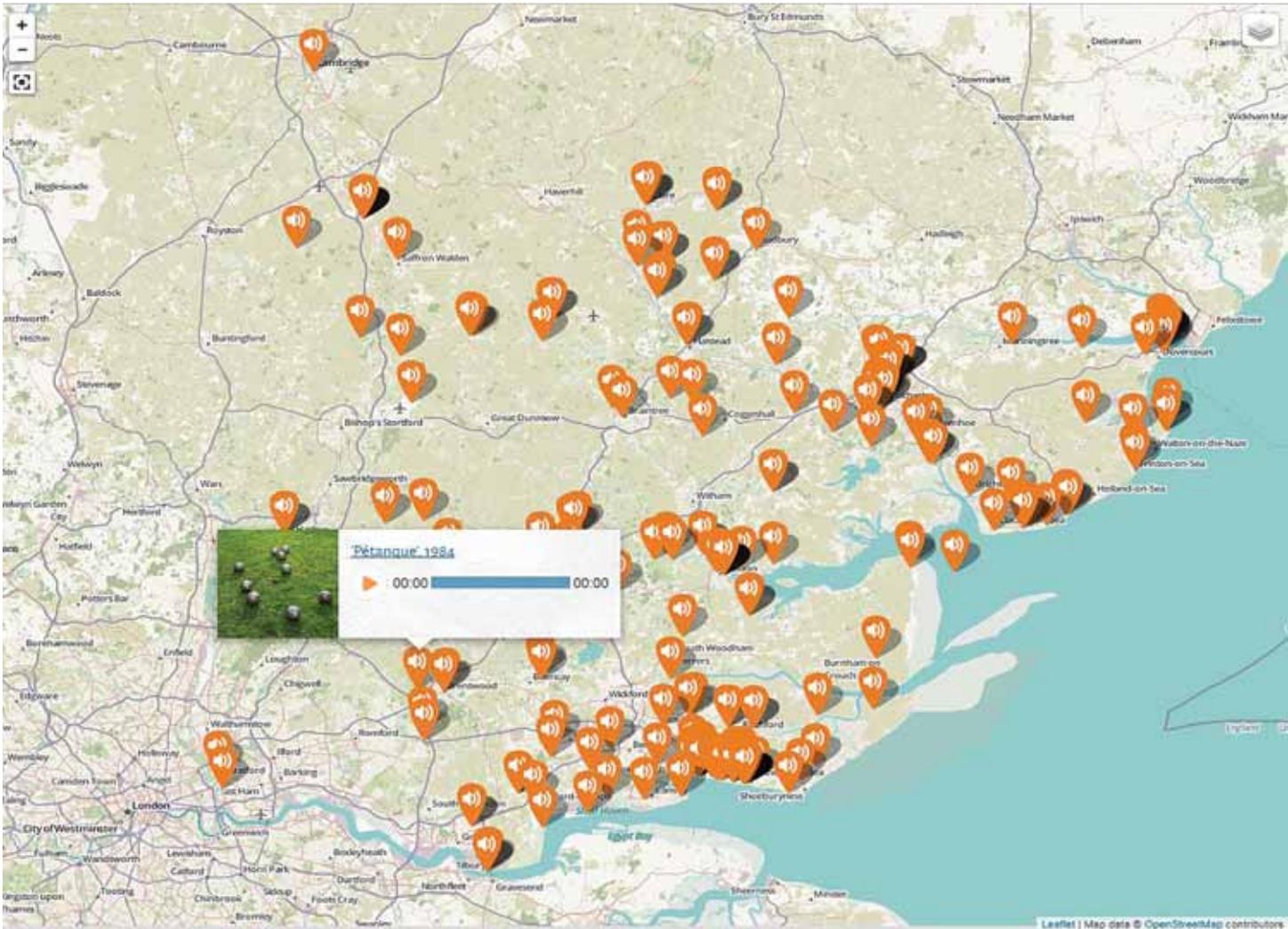
Sound + environment + archive = potential

Sarah-Joy Maddeaux, Project Archivist on the *You Are Hear* project at the Essex Sound and Video Archive, describes her recent engagement with a new and growing field of professionals.

An audio ecologist? What's one of them then? As I recently discovered when I attended an audio ecology conference at the University of Hull, audio ecologists and sound artists are a largely untapped source of collaborative projects waiting to happen. The Sound + Environment Conference held at the end of June 2017 brought together a broad range of people with the shared interest of sound, and particularly how sounds reflect the state of our environment. Sound artists take inspiration from the soundscapes around them, and use the medium of sound for their

artistic expression: sound art installations or acoustic compositions. Audio ecologists use the sounds of an ecosystem to judge the health of that environment. When the two are joined together, the outcome can be powerful; re-presentations of atmospheric soundscapes that prompt people to action.

I attended the conference to co-present a paper with sound artist Stuart Bowditch, with whom I collaborated to create an online audio map of Essex Sounds (essexsounds.org.uk). This was one aspect of



Essex Sounds online audio map; copyright Essex County Council.

“Audio ecologists and sound artists are a largely untapped source of collaborative projects waiting to happen”

the Essex Sound and Video Archive (ESVA) project, *You Are Hear: Sound and a Sense of Place*, which is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The map draws together historic recordings from the Archive with present day recordings made by Stuart (and members of the public), in some cases recordings made of the same place or activity. We aim to encourage reflection on how the sounds of Essex have changed, how the soundscapes represent the county’s diversity, and how the sounds might change in the future.

Essex Sounds is special because it gathers together old and new sounds. I was keen to showcase the project at the conference as a way of introducing the world of archives to these practitioners. Now, in a bit of professional matchmaking, I introduce to you the world of audio ecology.

Archive services are increasingly working with visual artists to encourage public engagement and creative use of the archive. This is exciting, but what about broadening the remit to include sound artists? Engaging the sense of hearing can draw visitors more actively into the exhibition. Sounds can make longer-lasting impressions: is it easier to remember the lyrics of a song you heard on the radio, or the lines of a poem you read in a book? When you hear the chimes of an ice cream van, does it take you back to your childhood?

At the Essex Record Office, we are fortunate to have a sound archive full of recordings which can be drawn on for works of sound art. But there is potential for collaboration drawing on visual sources as well, or the very experience of using the archive. If you want

“When you hear the chimes of an ice cream van, does it take you back to your childhood?”

to appeal to new visitors, why not entice them with the rustle of turning pages; the scratching of pencil on paper; the hushed tones of the search room amidst the frenzied world outside? Or perhaps an exhibition based on reading sources: old words spoken in new voices?

From the audio ecologist’s point of view, historic environmental recordings would be of interest, serving as points of comparison to gauge changes in the ecosystem. But again, visual sources can be used for comparisons: diary descriptions of the individual’s environment or weather patterns; farming records of harvest yields.

Finally, engaging with this field can encourage practitioners to consider the long-term. If a recording made 50 years ago is of interest to audio ecologists today, so too will their present-day recordings be useful in another 50 years. Can you advise them on preservation, or take their work into your archive?

Collaborating with Stuart Bowditch has been one of the most enjoyable aspects of *You Are Hear*. It was exciting to listen to his recordings as he uploaded them, providing virtual escapes from the office as I donned headphones and imagined being in that location. A formal commission setting out the terms of the project, plus frequent communication, helped to balance our project targets and priorities against his artistic freedom to record as he felt moved.

It has also been exciting to see people’s reactions to the Essex Sounds map. Google Analytics gives you interaction statistics, but positive comments and active engagement through uploading recordings go much further in demonstrating the site’s interest value. It can be difficult to get people to pick up headphones to invest the time to listen to a whole oral history interview. Essex Sounds means people can dip their toe into the sea of sound archives from the comfort of their own homes.

Now it’s your turn! Listen out for the possibilities of acoustic collaborations in your archive and reach out to an acoustic ecologist or sound artist near you. For further information email: sarahjoy.maddeaux@essex.gov.uk

Sarah-Joy Maddeaux

Essex Record Office

Rewind: 7 decades of stories from Leonard Cheshire Disability

Stephanie Nield talks us through how her organisation worked on the challenges of a digitisation project where accessibility for people with disabilities was a key consideration.

Leonard Cheshire Disability is a charity supporting disabled people in the UK and around the world to fulfil their potential and live the lives they choose. It started in 1948 in our founder Group Captain Leonard Cheshire’s home in Le Court, Hampshire and today has 163 services in the UK and is part of a Global Alliance of Cheshire services in 54 countries.

The Leonard Cheshire Archive Centre was set up by our founder in 1985 to preserve the history of his humanitarian work and that of the many staff, volunteers, residents and service users that have contributed to the charity’s work. It is based near the town of Swadlincote in south Derbyshire, in a purpose-built building constructed in 2005.



“The main priority for the project was to make the digitised film and sound as accessible as possible through an online resource”

OXO Tower, exhibition view from outside; copyright Leonard Cheshire



OXO Tower, visitor listening to film and audio archive; copyright Leonard Cheshire

“Web accessibility for disabled people is a constantly evolving field”



OXO Tower, visitors viewing the exhibition; copyright Leonard Cheshire

Supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, for the past three years we have been working on a project to make a selection of our film, sound and photographic archives accessible online, and to facilitate access and engagement with these resources. This has consisted of a large digitisation project and a supporting programme of workshops with disabled people based in our services in the south east of England. We also held exhibitions in the locality of these services and a final exhibition at the OXO Tower in London in October 2017.

Hydon Hill workshop, using digitised and subtitled film; copyright Leonard Cheshire

The main priority for the project was to make the digitised film and sound as accessible as possible through an online resource. Work started at the beginning on testing what this would mean in practice for people with disabilities. This was done by consulting archive volunteers and staff, some of whom used adaptive equipment (such as screen readers and switches) to use computers, and others who had a need for audio description, subtitles and transcripts due to sensory and other impairments.





Project workshop; copyright Leonard Cheshire



Archive material used in workshops with images of our founder Leonard Cheshire; copyright Leonard Cheshire

As the demand was there from our users to have digitised media on a website, it had to have level AA Compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) as well as being ‘screen readable’. We decided to tender for an external company with experience of delivering WCAG compliant websites, and the project team concentrated on what needed to be done to make the resources accessible.

To find a benchmark of current practice, we reviewed how similar recent archive digitisation projects presented their digitised collections online. We found out that many used YouTube and Vimeo for digitised film and SoundCloud for sound. Our search was by no means exhaustive, but no digitised archive films that we could find online used audio description to make silent films accessible for blind people, and if films were subtitled (many were not) they often relied on automatically generated subtitles, which were not accurate.

We could not find a way of making SoundCloud or similar tools accessible for deaf people so we decided to present digitised sound as a film on YouTube. This allows for both the use of subtitles (which were based on transcripts done by Digital Volunteers and uploaded as a .srt file to the YouTube films) and audio description.



OXO Tower Chief Executive Neil Heslop opening the private view; copyright Leonard Cheshire

The audio description narratives were made for us by an external supplier. The digitised archive films were treated in the same way as the sound, with subtitles and audio description where appropriate. To increase accessibility, the host website was designed to allow for the embedded films from YouTube to be presented alongside a Word transcript. Word was chosen because it is the most reliable format for screen readers to read.

Finally, to test our website once all the digitised media were embedded, we used a free screen reader called NVDA (NonVisual Desktop Access) to check that it was compatible. One of our Digital Volunteers was an Eye Gaze user (an eye tracking technology that enables disabled people to use computers) which gave us valuable feedback as well.

At the beginning of the project, making the digitised archive resources accessible seemed like a great challenge. The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines were vital for the website build, but we also realised that we had to make some decisions about how we wanted to present our digital content. Web accessibility for disabled people is a constantly evolving field, and we learned a lot about new and emerging technologies by consulting with actual users. We learned very quickly that there is no ‘out of the box’ solution, but that simple things such as providing Word transcripts and adding subtitles as part of the online resource were great steps towards making resources fully accessible.

Our project website ‘Rewind: 7 decades of stories from Leonard Cheshire Disability’ is available at www.rewind.leonardcheshire.org. You can see our film and audio collections and also find out more about the project, including blogs from some of our Digital Volunteers about their experiences transcribing the material.

Stephanie Nield

Leonard Cheshire

Getting to know our crowd: raising money for digitisation

Cassandra Pickavance provides an example of a successful crowdfunding campaign to preserve a local photographic collection.

During a recent crowdfunding campaign Dorset History Centre (DHC) raised £8,000 towards digitising a local photographic collection suffering from vinegar syndrome. Graham Herbert was a professional photographer based in Weymouth who captured many aspects of local life, including festivals and performances, shop displays and interiors, street scenes and every-day occurrences, and agricultural and industrial work. The collection of negatives, dating from 1950s to 1980s, is deteriorating due to vinegar syndrome: an irreversible process of decay which will eventually render the images unusable.

We had an urgent need to capture the images in the Herbert Collection before the deterioration progressed too far. We had previously digitised the earliest and most deteriorated negatives during short-term projects; the funding for which had since dried up.

In the summer of 2017, DHC won £5,000 of digitisation services in TownsWeb Archiving's national competition. This enabled us to digitise a large portion of the remaining negatives. However, we still had a shortfall to finish the collection. We needed to raise some extra funds fairly



“ I would definitely recommend crowdfunding as a way of raising funds for a specific project quickly ”

Fishing vessels in Weymouth Harbour at the International Sea Angling Festival, 1958; copyright Dorset History Centre

Photographer Graham Herbert
on a crane in front of Weymouth
Pavilion, 1960; copyright Dorset
History Centre



quickly to take advantage of the economies of scale offered by mass digitisation.

Crowdfunding felt like an obvious (if daunting!) way forward. The collection captures a time within living memory and has broad appeal. The photographs would provoke nostalgia and reminiscence in local residents and holiday-makers alike. But would this be enough for people to part with their cash? We hoped so!

We chose crowdfunder.co.uk as it seemed the best fit for heritage projects. Our support charity, Dorset Archives Trust (DAT), agreed to be banker for the campaign. This allowed us to avoid tricky local government accounting procedures as well as claim gift aid on some of the donations. The campaign ran for five weeks from mid-November to mid-December. We reached our target, partly thanks to a large donation from the Dorset Freemasons at the end of the campaign.

There is a lot of advice available online for people running crowdfunding campaigns. This ranges from how to make a campaign video to choosing rewards to

offer and finding your ‘crowd’. Sometimes we found this advice did not translate to our specific context. Social media is often touted as the tool that will direct people to your crowdfunding campaign. This very much depends on the specifics of the audience your campaign is targeting. As part of the planning process we undertook some audience profiling – thinking about the kinds of people that would be interested in the project and what their motivation would be. It was very useful to consider which media or news outlets each group would be most likely to access. This helped tailor our communications plan to ensure we would reach all of our target groups.

We included the option to donate to the campaign by cheque or cash (via our on-site donations box), knowing that many of our regulars are uncomfortable transferring money online. Offline donations were not subject to Crowdfunder's processing fees, but we were unable to include them in the online totaliser. Analysing the campaign statistics revealed that the more traditional media, television and local newspapers, caused spikes in



Weymouth Corporation publicity shot on Weymouth Beach, 1958; copyright Dorset History Centre

“We had an urgent need to capture the images in the Herbert Collection before the deterioration progressed too far”



The effects of vinegar syndrome on acetate negatives; copyright Dorset History Centre

our funding. Whilst social media was useful in raising awareness of the campaign, interactions on posts didn't translate into people pledging any money.

We spent considerable time planning rewards to offer as part of the campaign. We settled on things that were inexpensive or free to produce, and that would not cost much staff time. Ultimately, over 60% of pledgers donated without selecting a reward. Of the rewards that were chosen, our postcards featuring images from the collection were by far the most popular.

Aside from raising the much-needed funds, our crowdfunding campaign had an ulterior motive. We hoped to use the publicity generated by the campaign to raise our profile, and that of our supporting charity, DAT. We chose rewards that would help this goal – such as membership of DAT and introductory sessions to resources at DHC.

It was lovely to hear from people with a personal connection to Graham Herbert and his photographic business. A woman who worked as Graham's assistant as a teenager and a man who lived next door to the Herberts as a small boy shared wonderful memories with us as a result of the campaign. After spending so long delving into the collection it was fantastic to add more personality to the man behind the camera.

I would definitely recommend crowdfunding as a way of raising funds for a specific project quickly. Just beware that it has the capacity to take over everything and become something of an obsession!

Twitter: @dorsetarchives

Crowdfunder project page: www.crowdfunder.co.uk/save-herberts-weymouth

Cassandra Pickavance

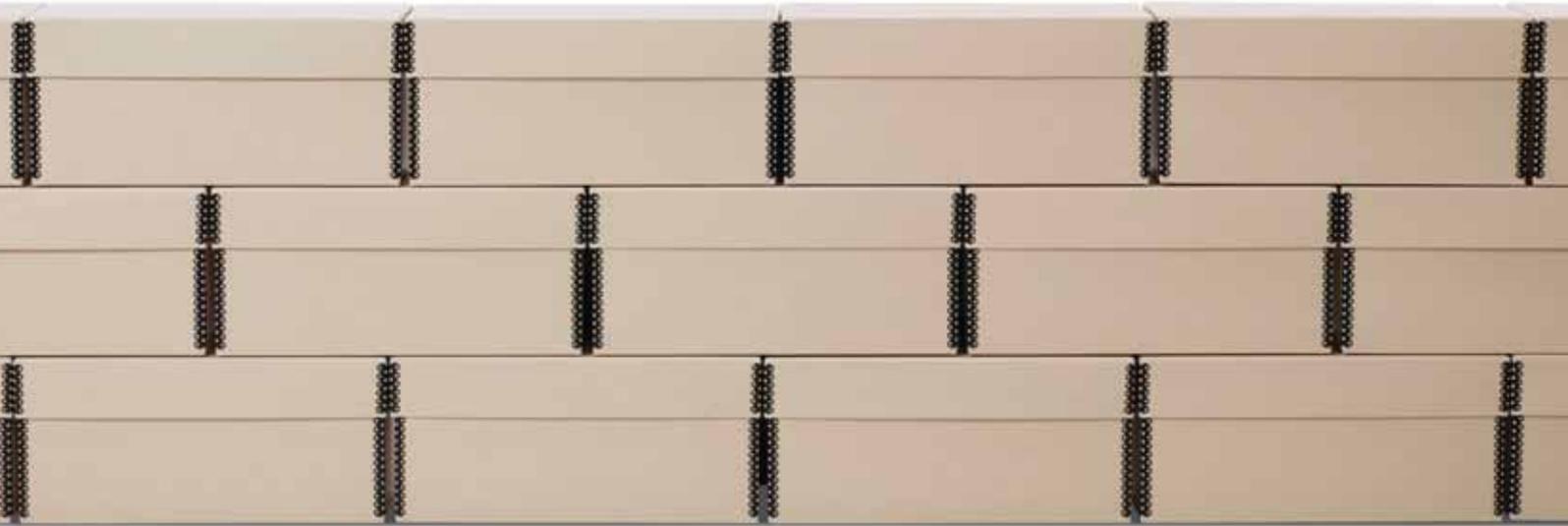
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