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Welcome...



Welcome to the December 2020 issue of ARC Magazine

Welcome to this last issue of ARC Magazine for 2020, a year which I suspect we shall all remember, but probably with little fondness. I hope you are keeping safe and well, and I am sure you would all join me in holding those who have lost people close to them on account of Covid-19 uppermost in our thoughts during these difficult times. In addition, many within our community of readers will currently be going through particularly challenging professional experiences as a consequence of the pandemic. We should all aim to provide whatever support we realistically can.

It has nevertheless been a pleasure to have edited an issue on film, sound and photographic collections for the second time. Several of the articles relate to the ongoing Unlocking Our Sound Heritage project, which as David Baldwin explains in our Backchat interview, aims to preserve and provide access to thousands of rare and unique sound recordings from across the UK, and is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Fittingly, the issue describes work taking place in each of the home nations. Thanks are due to David, not only for providing his insights into the project and the challenges of sound collections, but for co-ordinating most of the issue content.

I should also like to take this opportunity to thank ARC's designer, Tim Baigent for all the work he puts in, to turn a mass of Word files and digital images into the finished product for us to read. The last redesign gave the magazine a fresh new appearance, and Tim's keen eye for how the content can be presented to best effect is invaluable.

ARC relies on receiving a steady flow of suitable articles, and in 2020 this has at times been a little fitful. So do look out for the calls which go out and consider submitting something of interest to arceditors@archives.org.uk. Indeed, there is no need to wait until specific issues are scheduled, as separate features are often included.

I hope you manage to have a pleasant Christmas in spite of whatever differences there may be this year, and I hope 2021 brings greater cheer.

Matti Watton
ARC Editor

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Rural deanery tent displays at a fair at Petworth, 1962 (ref: CIO/PHO/NEG/196b), image courtesy of Lambeth Palace Library/Church Information Office

Opening lines

Charlotte Brunskill, archivist at the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, reflects on the copyright challenges and lessons learnt following her involvement in a project to create an online research platform providing open access to millions of images.



It was difficult to start writing this piece because copyright – not least in a cross-border online context – is an incredibly complex and notoriously dry subject. My own involvement with these concerns began nearly twenty years ago. Having read hundreds of thousands of words, engaged in myriad conversations and devoted many hours to the topic, how could I successfully distil its intricacies? What should I communicate? Above all, how could I make this piece interesting and informative for readers of ARC?

Reflecting on my experiences, I realised that my work in this area has been amongst the most intellectually stimulating of my career, and that the key issues involved are central to the record-keeping profession. With this in mind, I decided to take a step back from the legal complexities and write from a personal perspective, focusing on the issues that have resonated with me.

Sitting at the heart of the profession are the core principles of preservation, access and engagement. As record-keepers, we must ensure the collections in our care are preserved for future generations and readily accessible to the widest possible audiences. This traditionally involved storing the material in optimum conditions, cataloguing it, making the resulting data available and facilitating in-person access. These days, particularly if the collection is image focused, it may also mean digitising the items themselves and providing access to these e-facsimiles. Making material available online and without charge, particularly as part of an aggregate catalogue, is truly revolutionary in terms of audience reach, but whilst there have been huge strides in developing relevant technologies, issues of intellectual property remain a considerable barrier.

My own engagement with the subject began in 2003 when I took up post at the National Portrait Gallery (NPG). The NPG houses a photographic archive containing hundreds of thousands of images acquired from a variety of sources, access to which was exclusively in-person. Conversations were taking place about how to translate this superlative analogue collection into an online resource. Several pilot

projects were established, but permissions proved an insurmountable barrier.

When I started working at the Paul Mellon Centre (PMC) in 2011, the same issues were being considered. It was only following the foundation of PHAROS in 2013 that the question of how best to provide online access to the Centre's own photographic archive of 100,000 images gained momentum. PHAROS, an international consortium of fourteen European and North American art-historical photo archives, is committed to creating a digital research platform facilitating comprehensive, consolidated access to tens of millions of photo archive images (pharosartresearch.org).

Over the next seven years, the PMC – alongside other PHAROS institutions – made great progress, undertaking mass digitisation projects and developing the technologies needed to store and present the material. Copyright, however, remained a stumbling block. The images, often containing multi-layered rights, came from innumerable sources; creating an aggregate online catalogue seemed impossible when the copyright laws in each local jurisdiction were different.

An international workshop involving representatives from all fourteen PHAROS members, and also legal and intellectual property experts from the United States, European Union, and the United Kingdom, was organised. Held at the PMC in March 2020, this facilitated pioneering discussions. The proceedings and findings have been documented in a report, published online in October 2020 (paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk/about/news/pharos-ip-workshop-report).

From a personal perspective, the most significant issue resonating with me, was the need for continued dialogue and sector-wide engagement in the issue. Clearly there are discrepancies between US, UK, and EU jurisdictions regarding rights in reproduction layers, and specifically any claim to copyright in photographic reproductions. However, the workshop revealed that, in practice, stakeholder relations are frequently the most important

factor in determining appetite for risk with regard to copyright. All fourteen PHAROS photographic archives include images sourced from significant public collections (eg the British Museum) and private sources (eg auction houses). Whilst PHAROS members were happy not to assert rights in their own images, they were far more hesitant to adopt this practice where copyright might be asserted by another body. Mutually supportive relationships between institutions are a strength of the sector, but in this instance, they act as a barrier to progress.

It remains unclear whether these risks are real or perceived. To move forward, we must be more open and collaborative, publicising projects at their inception, sharing lessons learnt throughout the process, not just on completion. We must engage with stakeholders and revisit issues of ownership and control: what do these concepts mean in an online environment? We must foster and embrace open conversations highlighting both the mutual benefits, and also the drawbacks, of online publication. Securing at-your-desk-access to the world's most significant collections is an exciting prospect, but the potential loss in revenue for under-funded UK museums and galleries, for example, needs to be considered.

Good record-keeping is essential with regard to successfully identifying and managing rights. Employing internationally recognised standards – such as Creative Commons, Rightsstatements.org - to effectively communicate these rights to users is vital. These principles sit at the heart of our profession: in an online environment they remain as important as ever.

In conclusion, the copyright issues involved in developing online aggregate catalogues are undoubtedly complex, but many can be overcome by dialogue, engagement and collaboration. Core professional principles remain vital and together we can achieve amazing things – opening up our collections as never before. I hope this piece will encourage further conversation about these important issues.

The PMC's Photo Archive and the PHAROS Pilot Project will be published online in 2021.

Collecting matters: exploring government film in archives

Sarah Castagnetti, manager of the Visual Collections team in the Collections Expertise and Engagement Department at The National Archives (UK) reports

The National Archives (UK) (TNA) has many underexplored areas of its collection, and government film is definitely one of them. It is easy to see why it has been overlooked. It is difficult to untangle the relationship between the paper collections held at TNA and the actual films, which are mostly held at the British Film Institute (BFI), and to a lesser extent at the Imperial War Museum (IWM). Our new research guide, 'Government film-making and the film industry', is the best starting point for anyone interested in researching in this area.

Government has used film to educate and inform the public – think of those public information films of the 1960s and 1970s for example – but film was also used to recruit to the armed forces and key industries, explain and promote government policies, and project an image of Britain abroad. Different bodies have been responsible for the government's film output, with the most significant (in terms of volume) being the Central Office of Information (COI) which began operating in 1946, taking over from the wartime Ministry of Information.

Internal administrative files from TNA show that, following the Grigg Report in 1955, processes were established with the BFI (which was then the National Film Archive) for the selection, accessioning and preservation of government films. Films were reviewed by both parties, and those which were deemed worthy of permanent preservation as public records were sent to the BFI to be conserved and presented on behalf of the Public Record Office (TNA's predecessor body). Films that didn't fall into this category were sometimes collected by the BFI independently, and others were offered to the IWM. Some, of course, were not kept by anyone.

We have a large collection of over 2500 film production files, and almost exactly half of these correspond to films kept at the BFI. At least some of

“*Our new research guide is the best starting point for anyone interested in researching in this area*”

the remaining production files relate to films at the IWM, but matching these up is a work in progress. The production files are not always as exciting as you might hope, but they often contain contracts, shot lists and music cue sheets among other things.

A good number of archived government films can be seen on the BFI player and YouTube channel, and on the IWM film website. Our own website has an online exhibition featuring a selection of public information films put together in 2006 to mark the 60th birthday of the COI. The COI closed in 2012, but when I realised that 2021 marks its 75th anniversary, I thought it would be a great opportunity to try and showcase the collections held by the BFI, the IWM and by us and to explore how they complement and inform one another. Luckily for me, colleagues at the IWM and BFI were equally keen, and we have been exploring ways to mark this event as creatively as we can, given the obvious constraints of the times.

Through our online meetings, we have established relationships which would have been more difficult to develop had we all had to find the time to travel and meet somewhere in person. There's a definite sense of enthusiasm about the possibility of working together beyond this initial project, and of increasing our understanding of each other's collections. The catalogue of government films has so much to offer. It portrays the concerns, values and lifestyles of the past in an engaging and accessible way, as well as mirroring back the image Britain wanted to show the world. The possibilities for academic study and public engagement are just waiting to be explored.

“ A good number of archived government films can be seen on the BFI player and YouTube channel, and on the IWM film website ”

Professional development news

ARA professional registration: advice from assessors

Chris Sheridan, ARA UK & Ireland Head of Professional Standards and Development explores the professional registration application process through the lens of the assessor.



COVID-19 brought unprecedented challenges for the sector and the wider economy. But despite the disruption to our professional lives, ARA UK & Ireland members have seen the opportunity to think about career development and the benefits that the professional registration programme can bring. The first six months of 2020 showed a 17% increase in the number of enrolments. We ended the year having received a total of 27 applications for professional registration, over 20% more than 2019.

Professional registration is a great example of how the ARA supports the betterment of professionals and professional standards across the record-keeping sector. Candidates use experiences from their career to demonstrate how they meet their chosen competency levels. Working with their mentor, candidates develop their application online and submit it for assessment.

The application is then assessed by members of the ARA's assessor team of volunteers. The assessors are practising professionals holding Registered or Fellow status and trained in the evaluation of professional registration applications. For those candidates whose applications are unsuccessful, assessment feedback highlights the changes they should make in order to resubmit a successful application.

Assessments are subject to ARA's own quality assurance process. The assessor team meets annually to help monitor the programme, share

experiences and insights, agree amendments to published guidance and comment on any issues or emerging trends. The annual meeting also reflects on the reasons why some applications fail. This valuable assessor feedback is published annually as part of our suite of advice, guidance and support. Candidates, mentors and those interested in professional registration are strongly advised to follow their guidance to ensure their applications receive the best chance of a successful assessment. With pass rates around 75% we can be confident that the assessment process is both robust and versatile, able to recognise all kinds of sectoral experience.

Below is this year's feedback from assessors to give your application the best chance of success.

Read the guidance and blog posts: please make sure you read and understand the programme guidance before you enrol onto your chosen programme. You should also check this resource regularly for new content.

Make it personal: avoid using the passive voice and collective 'we' when writing the content for your competency forms. Remember you are trying to convince the assessors how your experience meets the required levels in your chosen competencies. Make absolutely clear what you were responsible for. Avoid general statements such as "we aim to change the policy" or "improvements were made". Instead say "I proposed the following policy change to my line manager, who agreed to implement it" or "I initiated a training programme to improve staff skills in ..."

Keep within the word count: the ability to write clearly and concisely is another vital competency that is improved by the application process. Applications may be returned to candidates if competency forms are found to be in excess of published word limits.

Keep it clear and brief: ensure the content in your competency forms clearly demonstrates how you meet one or two examples given in your chosen competencies' levels. Avoid the mistake of just explaining a relevant project or work experience. Candidates should not treat each chosen competency in isolation. Candidates may cross-reference other competencies in their application.

Use key words: these are provided in the programme guidance: archivesandrecords.smapply.io/res/p/programme-guidance/ (section 1.2, page 4 & 5), and will help the assessor to judge the level of competency demonstrated in your application. For example, "I managed the process", "I formulated the policy", "I negotiated for resources".

Be specific: give examples to back up the content in your competency forms, for example "I sought to identify and address potential sources of conflict, by

“This valuable assessor feedback is published annually as part of our suite of advice, guidance and support. Candidates, mentors and those interested in professional registration are strongly advised to follow their guidance to ensure their applications receive the best chance of a successful assessment”

explaining in person to the whole team the reasons for new work procedures”.

Reflection: ensure that the reflection part of the competency form is informed by the activities described, and your development as a result. Candidates are encouraged to reflect on both positive and negative experiences. You learn from mistakes as well as successes.

Supporting information: this validates or substantiates the content used in each competency form. So make clear what each piece of information being used is meant to demonstrate, and what role you took in creating it. For example, an extract or document setting out a policy might be used by you to show your skills in communicating a well-established policy to colleagues or service users, or it might be used to demonstrate a policy that you developed and negotiated acceptance of. Supporting documentation must provide evidence that the submission is the candidate's own work.

Check and check again: assessors will consider spelling and presentation, so please don't rush your application. Spelling mistakes and poor presentation will have a negative outcome on the decision if an application is considered a borderline pass. Make it clear to candidates that they should not submit before they are ready.

Seek support from your mentor: if your application is unsuccessful, discuss the assessor feedback with your mentor, reflect on the advice and prepare for your next assessment! Take your time, work with your mentor, and ensure your application is the best it can be. Unsuccessful candidates will have to pay a second assessment fee if they reapply.

Backchat...

David Baldwin, Project Manager, Unlocking Our Sound Heritage at London Metropolitan Archives, speaks to *ARC* Editor, **Matti Watton**



How did you get involved in working with sound material?

Like many archive professionals, my introduction to sound was through the odd cassette or CD-R haphazardly wedged into an archive box alongside more familiar records like minutes, photographs and general ephemera. As audio within these boxes proved difficult to access (usually due to a lack of suitable playback equipment) I was often only able to get a sense of the recording from either the label or its depositor.

This casual interaction with sound archives changed significantly when I joined London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) and began to support the management of their audio-visual collections, which include a dynamic range of oral history, world music, poetry and performing arts. For example, there is a series of interviews with Eric and Jessica Huntley conducted by Harry Goulbourne in 1993, in which they discuss their move to London from Guyana in the late 1950s and their subsequent work as political activists involved in national and international campaigns for racial and social justice.

Working alongside these collections, I wanted to learn more about best practice and so I joined the Archives and Records Association (ARA) Film, Sound and Photography Section. I also attended a three day training workshop at the British Library where I was taught basic skills on how to identify, handle and store different types of audio, ranging from wax cylinders to MiniDiscs. As the world of sound archives is relatively small, by reaching out to organisations like ARA, the British and Irish Sound Archives (BISA) and the International Association of Sound and Audio-Visual Archives (IASA), I was able to connect and engage with an experienced network of sound heritage professionals from the UK and beyond.

Following on from my work with the audio-visual collections at LMA, I now project manage the London Hub of Unlocking Our Sound Heritage (UOSH).

Continuing access to sound recordings is very much under threat. In addition to format obsolescence,



David Baldwin, London Metropolitan Archives

what other challenges can working with sound recordings present?

Alongside format obsolescence and the need for specific playback equipment, sound formats such as vinyl, reel to reel and cassette are prone to degradation, like most archival records. This is largely caused by how tapes are stored, how they are handled and even how many times they have been played.

In addition, unlike its more glamorous audio-visual relations, your average sound carrier (and recording) can require much longer to be made accessible by an archive service. Common obstacles to accessibility (and discoverability through the catalogue) include insufficiently labelled carriers, lack of summaries and transcripts, poorly captured recordings, and crucially recordings which aren't available to listen to digitally. This is why digitisation is so important.

Could you give an outline of the Unlocking Our Sound Heritage project?

LMA is one of ten regional hubs across the UK to

join the British Library's Unlocking Our Sound Heritage project, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Other regional hubs include National Museums Northern Ireland, Archives+ in Manchester, Norfolk Record Office, National Library of Scotland, University of Leicester, The Keep in Brighton, Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums, National Library of Wales and Bristol Culture.

This ambitious project is part of the wider Save Our Sounds programme, which aims to digitally preserve almost half a million rare and at risk sound recordings, establish a network of audio preservation centres across the UK, and engage more people with the value of sound recordings. Further details can be found at: www.bl.uk/projects/save-our-sounds

The project has been running for over three years now. What have been the achievements so far?

By September 2020 the project had digitised over 220,000 recordings, worked with over 550 volunteers and delivered training events that welcomed over 4,000 participants (designed to build and expand skills to care for audio archives as well as how to use them and what to do with rights).

Over the last three years, the hubs have worked on some truly phenomenal sound archives, engaging local communities with folk music, oral history, rural soundscapes and much more. At LMA for instance, we have worked with different BAME and LGBTQ+ groups to showcase how the oral history collections we have digitised provide a unique insight into under-represented histories from the people who have experienced and lived through them.

How will the success of the project be measured?

The success of the project will be measured against set targets within different areas of the project. These include the number of recordings digitised, catalogued, made available online and onsite, how many people we engage with through professional training and public workshops, and the development of sustainable resources. It will also be measured using data collected before the project that assessed confidence within the sector about working with sound archives; following the project further data will be collected to see if this confidence level has increased.

What sort of impact can access to sound material have?

From the outreach work we have delivered so far, it is extraordinary to see the impact sound, whether a poetry reading, music or an oral history, can have on an individual or community, either because it sparks a memory, supports health and wellbeing or, more broadly, because it encourages inclusivity and shared experience.

In June 2019, for example, the project co-delivered a memory workshop in partnership with Culture&, the artist Michael MacMillan, performers Keith Waithe and Sandra Agard, and Friends of the Huntley Archives at

LMA. Partly using sound to inspire memory among people living with dementia from BAME communities, the event used the backdrop of a 1960s West Indian front room alongside popular music to explore how sound can support mental health. With a positive response and experience from all involved, it was encouraging to see how music can help trigger memories from childhood or adulthood.

Could you talk about your work with oral history collections?

Working with oral histories has been a highlight of the project. Unlike more traditional accounts, oral history offers an important platform to individuals and communities, amplifying their voice for years to come and providing fresh insights into documented and undocumented events, experiences, and people.

Where should you start? Always check if there is a transcript! This will immediately help you to create a summary and, if time is short, help to identify key points of interest to support discoverability on your catalogue. After digitisation and cataloguing, the project is also aiming to clear rights for interviews to go online. This can be a challenge, as once we've cleared ownership and sought permissions from each speaker there might still be GDPR or sensitivity issues.

Any other particularly interesting sound collections you have worked with that you'd like to pick out?

Of particular interest for me are the sound archives of Culture&, which were recently deposited with LMA. Formerly known as Cultural Co-operation, Culture& is an independent arts and education charity that established an Artist Network in 1998 to support over 1,000 under-represented London musicians to participate in cultural life with promotion, training and performance opportunities. It is an outstanding collection of music and interviews that reflects the diversity of London culture, ranging in content from calypso to Algerian Raï, salsa and Punjabi folk song.

Looking beyond UOSH, what might the future hold in this area?

Sharing our knowledge working on the UOSH project, we hope to encourage heritage organisations to engage more immediately with their sound collections and be inspired to use them to engage their audiences, either alongside more traditional archives or independently.

There are many at risk and vulnerable analogue formats across the UK, carrying important histories that could potentially be lost. Equally, in terms of learning and engagement, from our experience the inclusion of sound within a workshop or exhibition can not only enhance them, but can also be the singular focus, offering a direct connection to a person, place or event and ultimately bringing the archives to life.

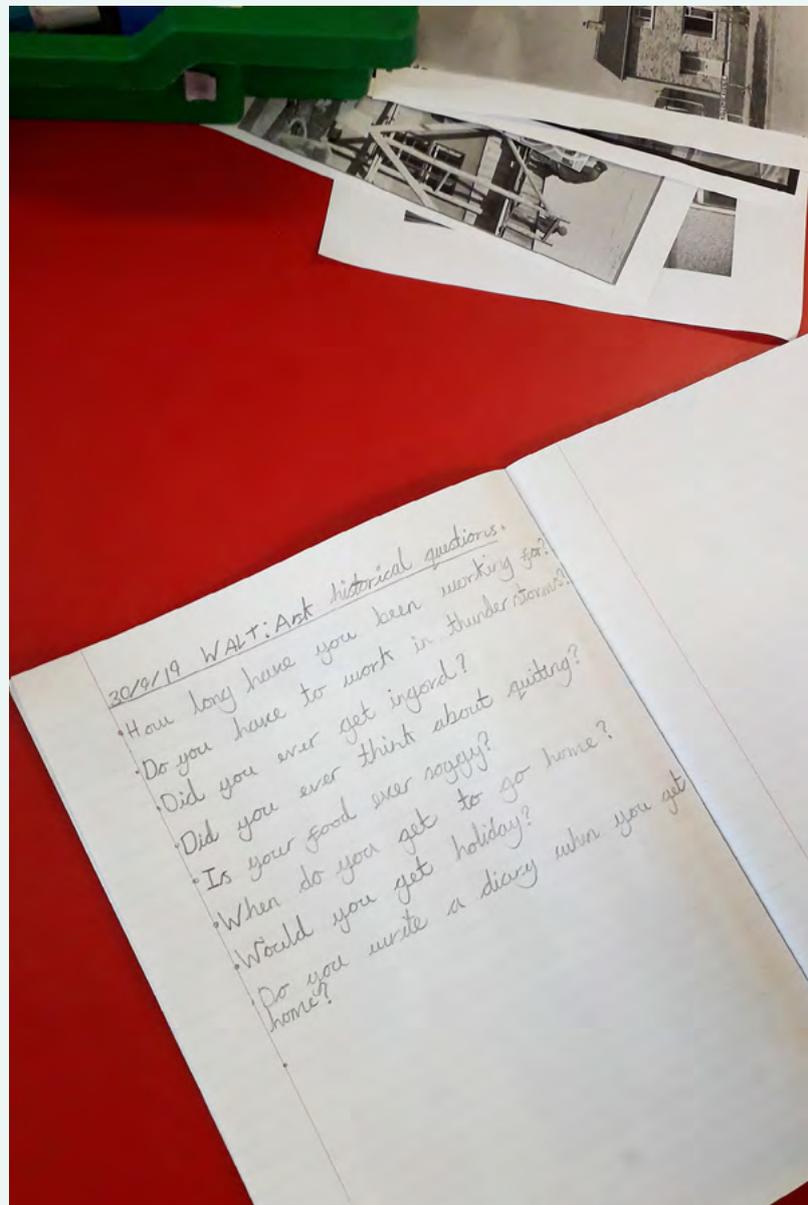
Old and new is good for you: using archive images to inspire intergenerational work

Catherine McHarg explains how a rich photographic collection was the basis for an exciting schools project

Historic England has a rich and unique archive that tells the story of the historic environment in England, and is home to more than fourteen million items. In 2012 the John Laing Photographic Collection (JLPC) was transferred into the care of the archive by the John Laing Charitable Trust (JLCT), with the hope that one day we would make it accessible. John Laing plc was a company that profoundly shaped post-war Britain. It constructed the country's first major motorway, built outstanding sites of worship such as Coventry Cathedral, and created buildings which housed innovative forms of technology such as Berkeley Nuclear Power Station. Throughout the lifespan of the company, photographers captured sites being built; these pictures now form the JLPC.

In 2018, with generous support from the JLCT, Historic England embarked on the Breaking New Ground project. The aim of the 21 month project was not only to conserve, catalogue, digitise and make 10,000 images from the collection available online, but to focus on using these fantastic images as inspiration for school projects. Our aim was for younger generations to understand the impact that the Laing structures had

“We were really impressed by how engaged the children were and how the interviews went, especially as they were being filmed**”**



Examples of questions devised by the pupils, copyright Historic England Archive

I AND THE FATHER
ARE ONE + THE
HATH SEEN ME
HATH SEEN
THE FATHER



on their parents' and grandparents' lives and the places in which they live today. The JLCT's role is to maintain strong links with former employees, which got us really excited. These were the men and women who had built the buildings shown in the photographs. This was a chance not only to engage with them and their experience, but also to ask them to share those experiences with the next generation.

The local focus was central to the project, as we wanted it to complement and build upon our existing Heritage Schools programme. The tricky bit was deciding which of the many sites built by John Laing plc we would choose. Another of the outcomes of the project was to understand the impact that often overlooked heritage can have on shaping a community and encouraging community regeneration, so we also wanted to address this. Inspiration came from an amazing photograph showing 'a group of dignitaries opening the 4000th 'Easiform' house at Swindon'. We discovered that John Laing plc had actually built over 5000 of these Easiform homes in Swindon, so we made contact with some of the former employees.

As Swindon is the home of the Historic England Archive we decided to start with a project there. We approached one school directly, because it was within walking distance

of the 4000th and 5000th Easiform houses to be built in Swindon; these children literally walked past the houses every day on their way to school! The school was really excited to be involved. We ran workshops in the school, showing the children the photos from the archive and explaining to them that they were going to get the chance to interview the people who built them. The pupils created a set of questions to ask the former employees. We were really impressed by how engaged the children were with this and how the interviews went, especially as they were being filmed. These are just some of the questions they came up with: 'was it tiring?', 'what did you do for shelter when it rained?', 'what was your favourite thing you built?', 'did you ever want to quit?', 'how long did it take?', 'why did you become a builder?' and 'did you make friends?'. They also got the opportunity to walk around the local estate together to look at the houses, with the pensioners able to provide lots of extra information about how they were built. Both pupils and pensioners found this part of the day really rewarding.

Having gained more experience in what worked best with the children and the former employees, we felt confident enough to tackle further workshops with other schools across the country. These were based around a 'places of worship' theme and focused on Coventry Cathedral, Clifton Cathedral in Bristol, and London Central Mosque,

Pupils interviewing in a Swindon classroom, copyright Historic England Archive





Pupils at Clifton Cathedral, copyright Historic England Archive

“ John Laing plc was a company that profoundly shaped post-war Britain ”

which were all built by John Laing plc. The workshops all followed the same format used in Swindon, engaging the children with the buildings via the archive photos and asking them to generate questions they'd like to ask the former employees. Feedback from the Heritage Schools Manager was:

“It was most impressive how the children adapted their questions to the different speakers, based on their different roles and stories. They generated impressive supplementary questions, which built upon the answers they were hearing. The pupils really grew into their role and the questions were increasingly sophisticated, relevant, varied and revealing.”

And one of the former employees said:

“I had a wonderful time with the students. They were so inquisitive and eager to learn. They were also extremely helpful that they carried my bag for me. It was truly a memorable day.”

A further intended outcome of the project was that school teachers were supported by those with expertise and experience in delivering heritage-focused workshops that drew on local history. This was delivered through the creation of a number of teaching activities and case studies, all of which can be found online. For further information contact Catherine.McHarg@historicengland.org.uk.



A former employee and a current pupil at an Easiform house in Swindon, copyright Historic England Archive

The 1960s through the lens of the Church of England

Camille Koutoulakis and Krzysztof Adamiec outline the history of the picture library of the Church Information Office

The creation of this outstanding collection of images was made possible in the early 1960s by a generous legacy of £3000 from Harold Burdekin, a photographer famous for his atmospheric images of London streets. The bequest enabled the purchase of photographic equipment, the construction of a darkroom and the employment of the photographer W.R.Hawes, who was himself inspired by Burdekin's work. The collection was intended to picture and record the Church of England's activity and teaching using relevant and often symbolic images taken from everyday life. By 1965 a picture library catalogue had been created, and prints were available for purchase.

Hawes visited various locations around the country and was also granted exclusive access to photograph events at places like Westminster Abbey. Through his work, photography was used as a tool to create a system of symbols representing archetypes that shaped social identity in Britain, a form of photojournalism that inadvertently captured the spirit of the times.

Although the initiative was ultimately considered unsuccessful, it has left us with a substantial resource that offers a remarkable vision of



Crowds crossing London Bridge, 1962 (ref: CIO/PHO/NEG/117), image courtesy of Lambeth Palace Library/Church Information Office



Outdoor exhibition on Albert Embankment in 2017, image courtesy of Lambeth Palace Library



“ Users can access images that provide a fascinating black and white photographic record of the information services required by Church bodies ”

Everyday life in Fulham, 1963 (ref: CIO/PHO/NEG/314), image courtesy of Lambeth Palace Library/Church Information Office



Hawes at work in the CIO pressing room, 1962 (ref: CIO/PHO/NEG/123), image courtesy of Lambeth Palace Library/Church Information Office

“*The initiative has left us with a substantial resource that offers a remarkable vision of Britain during this period*”

Britain during this period. In 1967 a decline in demand led to the closure of the Photographic Department and Hawes continued to provide his services for the Church Information Office (CIO) on a freelance basis. Unfortunately, there is no record of Hawes' freelance work in the Church archives, and all attempts to trace both his work and Hawes himself have proved unsuccessful.

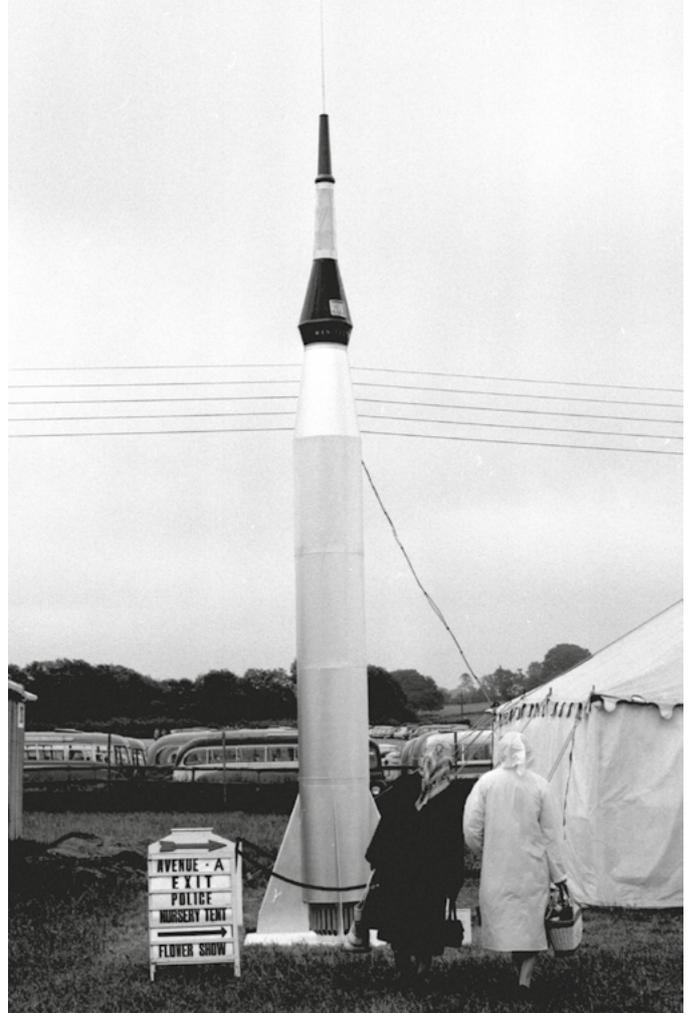
From the 1980s the collection was stored at the Church of England Record Centre, largely forgotten and suffering from vinegar syndrome, but in 2013 the collection was located and catalogued. Originally numbering around 11000 negatives in 1967, there are now 9011, and it is housed in a cold storage environment to ensure its preservation for future generations. Earlier this year over 1500 scans of the negatives were uploaded to Lambeth Palace Library's freely accessible website: images.lambethpalacelibrary.org.uk/luna/servlet/s/36xzcr

Here users can access images that provide a fascinating black and white photographic record of the information services required by Church bodies such as Convocation, the Church Assembly (later the General Synod) and others from 1961 to 1967. Sometimes funny, often thought-provoking and always of interest, the CIO collection provides a snapshot of religious life and community in 1960s Britain during a time of social and cultural change and upheaval.

Making this collection publicly available online has followed on from a series of free outdoor exhibitions featuring photographs from the collection which were staged on the Albert Embankment in London in the summer of 2017 and within Southwark Cathedral in the summer of 2018. The Archives and Digital team at Lambeth Palace Library now hope that users may provide additional information about some photographs and generate further interest with physical and digital displays of these images.

Consecration of John Tiarks as Bishop of Chelmsford in Westminster Abbey, 1962 (ref: CIO/PHO/NEG/735), image courtesy of Lambeth Palace Library/Church Information Office

Rural deanery tent displays at a fair at Petworth, 1962 (ref: CIO/PHO/NEG/196b), image courtesy of Lambeth Palace Library/Church Information Office



The small jobs that need to be done now

Duncan Harrison, Audio Preservation Engineer on the Unlocking Our Sound Heritage project at The Keep in Brighton, discusses a key challenge that he faced

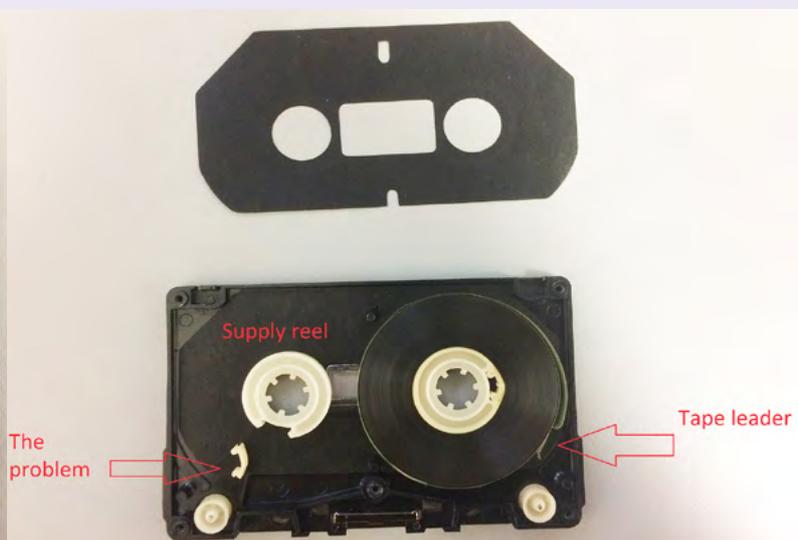
To some extent all digital preservation is a balancing act between identifying the jobs that need to be done and judging what skills, time and resources can realistically be channelled into doing them. This is a balance we often deal with on the Unlocking Our Sound Heritage (UOSH) project, where every hour spent tending to a difficult item represents time lost on doing the key work of digitising the sound collections held across the project's ten hubs. Such was the problem we faced at The Keep when a small collection of cassettes containing an oral history project about Brighton in the late 19th and early 20th centuries required some basic repair work in order to be digitised.

The recordings, which were mostly made during the late 1970s, were held on 83 cassette tapes which mostly contained just twenty minutes or so of audio on the first side only. In theory this would be easy audio to digitise: short in length and held on a format which is generally quite easy to work with. Pushing on through the digitisation I was taken in immediately by the vivid imagery of a now bygone Brighton which emerged from the discussions, and I felt increasingly aware of what a significant and fascinating series of conversations had been captured on the tapes. I had digitised many oral history collections prior to this but never anything detailing what life was like more than 100 years ago in the city I lived and worked in. Towards the middle of the collection was a small group of six cassettes I was particularly looking forward to

“ I was taken in immediately by the vivid imagery of a now bygone Brighton which emerged ”

digitising entitled 'Brighton Working Class History 1890-1914'.

When I reached the first of this group I noticed that the item was showing greater signs of wear than the other cassettes digitised so far. A noticeably older and likely much cheaper brand of cassette had been used for these interviews and it was clear that they had not always been stored and looked after to the same standard as the other items. My initial worry was that this might be manifested in problems with the audio quality, but I didn't notice any issues when spot checking various points on the tape. Upon rewinding the tape to begin digitisation however, I hit a problem: the tape was no longer playing. Assuming that the tape itself had probably snapped and would require a quick splice I carefully opened up the cassette shell to investigate. Immediately I noticed that the problem



The broken cassette and its innards, photographs by Duncan Harrison

“ I attempted to fit the pieces back together, but the components had become brittle and bent out of shape over many years ”

was not with the spool of tape itself but the small piece of removable plastic which locks the tape leader into the supply reel which had come loose from the force of the rewind and lost grip of the strand. I attempted to fit the pieces back together, but the components had become brittle and bent out of shape over many years, snapping as I tried to reattach the leader.

The best solution to this problem would have been to swap out the broken reel for a new one, but in 2020 our options for sourcing replacement cassette parts are not abundant, forcing us to rely on repurposing such components from items we don't mind rendering unplayable. This meant that to make the tape work would in effect require breaking another. Also, reattaching the tape leader to the new reel can be quite fiddly. The components are small, and the tape spooled onto the opposite take up reel will often begin to unspool, making it a messy and time consuming job if you aren't careful and experienced.

In this collection just four cassettes needed to have reels replaced in order to be digitised which was a small job today but may not have been as straightforward in another year, or in five or in twenty, as the stability of the cassette format and our means to play them continues to decrease. Perhaps more pertinently, we don't know whether an archive without staff trained in audio preservation skills and standards would have been able to tackle the problem.

From one perspective the process detailed here is a minor problem with a simple fix, but it demonstrates the importance of a project like UOSH, which is working to digitally preserve as many sound collections as possible before the skill, time and resources required to do so become unavailable. When I was finally able to listen to this small group of tapes I kept thinking of how many local individuals, groups and institutions would benefit from having access to the recordings. Were it not for a project like UOSH it might be that the memories contained within those cassettes and thousands of others like them would simply never be heard again.

Mining the archive for sounds of the home: If Homes Had Ears

Mary Stewart, Curator of Oral History and **Charmaine Wong**, Digital Learning Manager at the British Library describe a new web resource

For the new British Library web resource, *If Homes Had Ears* (www.bl.uk/if-homes-had-ears) we have delved into the vast treasures of the library's Sound Archive to explore the sonic landscape of the home. Key to this resource are the voices and memories of people speaking about home life over the last 140 years. We invite the audience to open their ears, draw back the curtains, and listen, discuss and reflect upon what makes a home. *If Homes Had Ears* is grouped into five areas found in most homes: the bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, living room and the garden. There are three discursive and thought-provoking articles for each space, and the resource features over 70 fascinating audio clips to intrigue the listener. This is part of the wonderful *Unlocking Our Sound Heritage* project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

How can we represent the complexities of human experience?

No web resource on the home could cover all types of experience, but we have worked hard to try and ensure that there are a variety of voices and sounds from different UK regions and nations, as well as stories from people who have migrated to the UK. We have included examples of different social-economic situations, ethnic backgrounds, cultures, genders and time periods. The oldest recording is a 1911 edition of the popular song 'When Father Papered the Parlour' but we also explore the memories of a Welsh seamstress recalling her childhood in the 1880s. In the most recent material, recorded in spring 2020, a farmer recalls his youthful attempt to harvest Brussels sprouts with the aid of his tricycle.

The curatorial challenge with this collection was to source diverse clips from the millions of items in the Sound Archive, many of which were from projects where the home was not the key subject matter of the audio. How did we do it? The Sound Archive is blessed with an array of skilled curators,

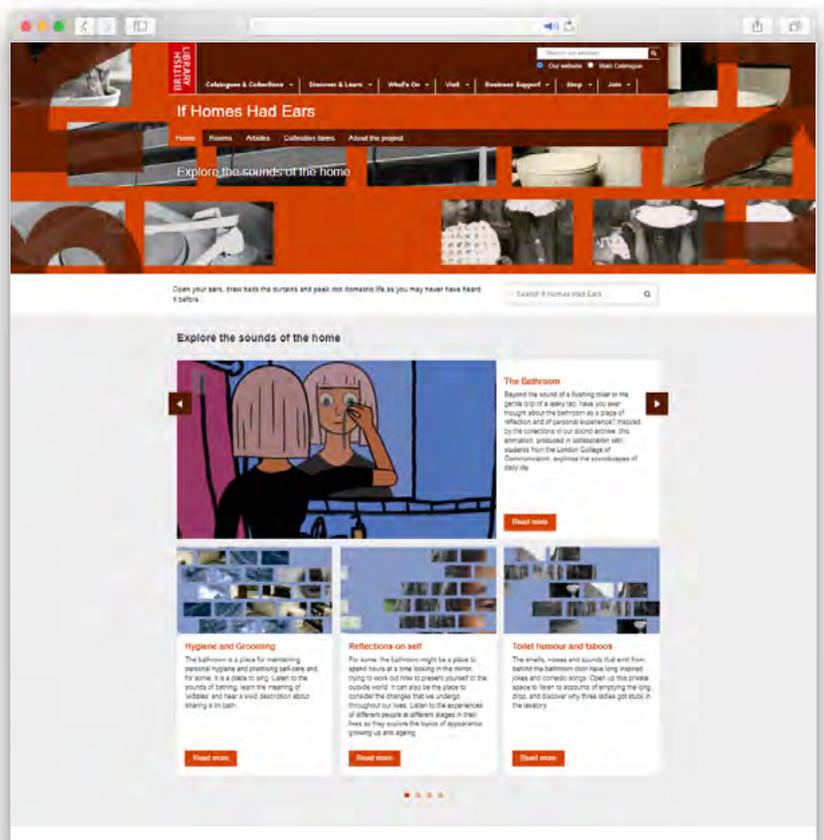
“We hope this resource will open up new ideas and conversations about how we can use our treasured archival material in a contemporary and imaginative way”

cataloguers, oral history interviewers and technicians, and we received recommendations from a host of colleagues about audio items for possible inclusion. The Sound and Moving Image catalogue was another indispensable resource, as the detailed content descriptions painstakingly entered over the decades meant that we could find material. Mary hadn't expected her job ever to involve searching for terms such as 'long drop', 'weeding', 'chapatti' and 'Lego' but all of these brought up recordings that after careful selecting and editing have made it on to the website.

We have tried to represent a full range of experiences, as the home is not always a place of refuge and comfort. Whilst there is plenty of family friendly material, we have not shied away from more taboo topics and there are audio items discussing menstruation, psychiatric care, abortion, ageing and funeral rites. Where we feature more challenging content, this is flagged in both the introduction to the clips and the audio item descriptions, so that listeners (and their teachers or caregivers) can decide whether listening is appropriate.

Creating moments of engagement

With our assemblage of recordings selected, we turned our thoughts to helping people think consciously about home. To some extent, it wasn't hard; the idea of home is easily relatable, especially during a time when many of us are confined to one. Yet, whilst our aim is to help people use the material to relate to their own experiences we also want them to interact with those that were different from their own. How then could we structure a narrative with so



If Homes Had Ears website, images courtesy of the British Library

“

We received recommendations from a host of colleagues about audio items for possible inclusion

”

many disparate recordings? We ask lots of probing questions for people to think spatially and thematically, through different lenses such as identity, technology, gender and language. For us, the website provides opportunities for our listeners to absorb, relate and empathise.

Our digital audiences at the library are more often than not students and researchers, consequently our digital resources are often geared towards these groups, but from the start we knew *If Homes Had Ears* was a different sort of website. Our articles are informative, but not academic, and they don't fulfil a curriculum requirement. Rather, our objective is simple: through sharing articles and sounds thematically grouped around a universal theme of home, we want to help our broad audience reflect. It is our hope that the resource is thought-provoking, informative and at times entertaining; the evocative sounds also lend themselves well to memory, reminiscence and intergenerational work.

New ideas and ways of working

Each person will react differently to the material, based on their own experiences. We decided then to invite others to add their own perspectives, and we have worked with students from the London College of Communication to animate a series of short soundscapes that we have created for each room. Each has been done creatively and with sensitivity. We hope this resource will open up new ideas and conversations about how we can use our treasured archival material in a contemporary and imaginative way.

Sounds of the Blitz hit Bristol classrooms

Lucy Fulton, Engagement Officer, Formal Learning, Bristol Culture and **Katie Scaife**, Project Manager, Unlocking Our Sound Heritage, Bristol Archives, talk about their work based on a digitised oral history collection

“You got to know the sound of the engines...I looked up and I literally seen [sic] the bomb leave the plane. It was right in front of me. I just ran”. Memories like this are central to our collective understanding of the Blitz and, when spoken by those who lived through it, are incredibly powerful. Children in Bristol primary schools have been listening intently to recollections of hunting for shrapnel, nights in the shelter, rationing, and life on the home front as part of the work of Unlocking Our Sound Heritage (UOSH) in south west England. The UOSH hub for the area is based in Bristol Archives.

“*These Bristol Blitz memories come from a collection of 48 oral histories held at Bristol Libraries*”



Image from the Bristol Blitz (ref: BRO33779), copyright Bristol Archives



We are now looking for more classes to work with in 2021



These Bristol Blitz memories come from *A Town in the West Country*, a collection of 48 oral histories held at Bristol Libraries. Digitised by Bristol Archives' UOSH team, the interviews were recorded on open reels in 1988 as research for a play of the same name at the Bristol Old Vic. Bristolians share vivid recollections of their work in Air Raid Precautions, the thrill of seeing the night sky lit up with flares and fire, and the terror of realising your street had been hit. An elderly man recalls putting out fires and moving casualties in the bombed out city and 'just getting on with it'. In a lighter moment, one woman remembers an incendiary bomb landing on her feather bed at a house near the city centre: 'there were feathers all the way to the centre!' she squeals with laughter.

The accompanying learning programme for year six children (age 10-11) has so far included a history lesson using oral history recordings, artefacts, maps and photographs of the Blitz to discover how historians use evidence. Another element is a notetaking session, which helps children's spoken language skills, a key part of the national curriculum. Building on these two sessions, children take part in a day long drama session run by professional actor and playwright Toby Hulse. Using drama techniques and oral history recordings, children write and produce their own short sketches about an aspect of life in the Blitz.

We are now looking for more classes to work with in 2021 and are offering free continuing professional development for teachers on this subject. Selected clips from this collection about the Bristol Blitz will shortly be available free of charge for all teachers.

Making the future of archives

Laura Aguiar, Community Engagement Officer and Creative Producer, PRONI and **Lynsey Gillespie**, Curator, PRONI report on a large engagement project in Northern Ireland

Archives are moving from being institutional treasure chests of 'few' to becoming creative spaces of collaboration for 'many' and projects like *Making the Future* in Northern Ireland are offering best practice models to support this. *Making the Future* is a three year programme (2018-2021) aimed at empowering people to use archives and collections to explore the past, have their voices heard and learn new skills. The programme is being delivered by the Nerve Centre, National Museums NI, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) and Linen Hall Library. It is funded under the European Union's PEACE IV Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

Making the Future is structured around nine strands, encompassing themes such as gender, identity and history, which are explored across exhibitions, events and community engagement. Two years into the programme, PRONI is already seeing the benefits after completing two exhibitions, an events series and twenty community engagement programmes for over 400 people from diverse backgrounds. Here we highlight three programmes to show how film and image collections can be used to support learning and engagement in creative and collaborative ways.



Participants captured behind the scenes, acknowledgement: Laura Aguiar, *Making the Future*



Embroidered postcard by Arlene Crummy: 'Hope', acknowledgement: Making the Future

Rural filmmaking

Changing the Narrative was a three month programme delivered to 25 women (aged 13-60) based in South Armagh, a rural area associated with violence during the Troubles. The programme sought to change this narrative by highlighting women's roles, and the traditions and stunning landscape of the area through film.

Delivered in 2019 in partnership with the Nerve Centre and the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, the programme brought women together for weekly filmmaking sessions in local community centres and for a guided tour of PRONI. Participants made five documentary shorts: Voices of Gullion (song tradition and landscape), The Threads That Bind Us (lace-making), Breaking the Mould (sports), Women in Farming, and ROGHA (hand-crafting).

The programme helped participants to engage with and value their local and personal archives while creating films that highlighted women's roles in their area. For PRONI, it offered the opportunity to reach out to a new audience, experiment with iPad filmmaking and produce films that will complement our archives.

“ Making the Future is structured around nine strands, encompassing themes such as gender, identity and history ”



Embroidered postcard by Anne Bodel: 'A photo for daddy', acknowledgement: Making the Future

YouTube and archives

When the Covid-19 pandemic hit Northern Ireland in March 2020, Making the Future moved all outreach work online. During the first week of August we delivered a programme to 15 aspiring YouTubers aged 11-16, which used audio-visual archives to discuss gender discrimination and help them develop filmmaking skills.

Supported by the Nerve Centre and Northern Ireland Screen, the programme offered daily Zoom workshops, including smartphone filmmaking, archival re-use, and a YouTube masterclass.

Participants also engaged with each other through a chat room platform called Slack and created short videos re-purposing footage featuring sexist content from 1960-1990 taken from the UTV Archive. UTV was Ireland's first commercial television broadcaster and the archive is PRONI's biggest audio-visual collection. For participants, the programme offered the opportunity to enhance their filmmaking skills, make new friendships and think about gender discrimination. For PRONI, it opened up the UTV Archive to a young audience in an engaging way and showed them how archives can be useful in video production.



Facilitator Jude Mullan helps participant Blaithin capture the perfect shot, acknowledgement: Laura Aguiar, Making the Future

Photo embroidery

Textile Stories was another online programme and took place over four weeks in autumn 2020. Nineteen women based across the north of Ireland came together on Zoom and Slack to explore PRONI's collections and take part in a series of talks about conflict textiles, theatre costume and fashion history.

They also received a pack in the post (with embroidery material and two postcards featuring images from PRONI's archives) and took part in a workshop to create their own embroidered postcards. Interestingly, each participant created a backstory for their postcards and reported becoming 'attached' to the people portrayed in them. The postcards are displayed online.

Participants also found embroidery 'therapeutic' and this demonstrates not only how photographic collections can be used creatively and re-shaped, but also how handcraft can expand the effect of archives. The programme illustrates the power of virtual engagement in bringing together people who are geographically apart as well as taking archival collections to the comfort of people's homes.

Takeaways

We believe that what we bring to archives is as valuable as what we take from them and that it is through collaboration with the public that the true value of archives can be realised. As the three projects show, archives can be fundamental spaces of co-creation and co-ownership of knowledge and can capture a sense of belonging to those represented in them. Making the Future has enabled PRONI to re-think its archival and engagement practices, break down barriers and add new voices to its collections. This shows what happens when archives, communities and institutions work together: they make archival collections more plural, fun and creative, and make them come alive.

The result of these projects can be seen at www.makingthefuture.eu/news

The Cusichaca Trust Archive

Sean Macmillan from Senate House Library describes the value of the film, sound and photographic material in this collection from Peru

If a picture can paint a thousand words, then how many can a video paint? It probably depends on the length of the video and the resolution. However the images, films and audio files within the Cusichaca Trust Archive at the University of London unquestionably add colour, detail, and depth to our understanding of the work of the Cusichaca Trust that we would otherwise not enjoy.

The Cusichaca Trust was an archaeological organisation which operated in Peru from 1977 to 2013. It was founded by the esteemed archaeologist Ann Kendall, and its diverse team actively set out to work with the local population to understand their environment. It began with the intention of studying Incan social culture and architecture, before realising that ancient Inca ways of cultivating land and environment had merit in the 20th century. Thus what had begun as an archaeological endeavour morphed into a several decade long large scale rural development project that revitalised ways of living off the land forgotten since the Spanish conquest of Peru in the 16th century. When the Spanish colonised Peru,

“*The Cusichaca Trust was an archaeological organisation which operated in Peru from 1977 to 2013*”



The area of land that Cusichaca staff were working on as part of the Patacancha project, image copyright Senate House Library (shelfmark CUS_191)

little attention was paid to Inca irrigation, farming, and agricultural practices, which were well developed and efficient. Inca society was pre-industrial, yet it was capable of feeding its vast empire through clever management of the terrain.

The Cusichaca collection arrived at Senate House Library in 2017. It was housed in more than 300 boxes, and it included an array of complex scientific and archaeological materials, and also various digital and audio-visual objects. The collection included some material in Spanish, and pertained to various places in Peru with inconsistently spelled names.

The collection includes 75 boxes of photographs which depict the people, locations, and activities of the project. The photographs, which include some aerial images, cover the entire period of Cusichaca activity. The audio-visual files are particularly engaging. One of the cassettes includes a musical performance, an interview with a child who benefited from the Trust's work, and medical interviews in which Louise Parsons (the Cusichaca field doctor) discusses some of the issues she encounters (pregnancies, births, breathing, stomach upsets, head injuries, stab wounds) and how she treats them. Her first-hand accounts of her experience give the viewer the opportunity to see her in a setting which is far removed from that of a regular British doctor.

Ann Kendall, founder of the Cusichaca Trust, image copyright Senate House Library (shelfmark CUS_191)





Cusichaca rope bridge, image copyright Senate House Library (shelfmark CUS_191)

Another of the films is a Channel Four documentary (titled Valley of the Inca) which describes the Trust's work to restore terraces and rural networks. It includes interviews with Peruvians discussing the impact of the Trust's work on their lives, such as enhanced medical treatments and new food supplies. In the late 20th century Peru was beset by political tensions and poverty, and the Cusichaca Trust was able to obtain social development funding to enhance the quality of food production and water management in the regions in which they worked. In some cases members of the local population gained jobs as farmers, gardeners, or medical assistants.

One of the biggest challenges when cataloguing the collection was ensuring that it was as representative as possible, and that people who used the materials fully grasped the extent of the Cusichaca Trust's achievements. We translated parts of the catalogue descriptions into Spanish so that people in Peru would be able to better understand what we held. We also created an index of place names with alternative spellings to enhance discoverability. Moreover, we collected written accounts from people involved in the project which gave the collection greater context.

Ann Kendall masterminded the Trust's work for almost 40 years. Fortunately the collection includes various

audio files and documentaries in which she describes her groundbreaking achievements with great pride and determination. The images and films in the archive also greatly enhance our understanding of the exceptional conditions in which Cusichaca Trust workers operated. Peru lacked the infrastructure that they would have been accustomed to in the United Kingdom, and crudely designed rope bridges such as the one pictured here were a feature of their daily lives.

We have used material in the collection in a series of blog posts designed to promote and encourage access to the collection. One was entitled 'Leadership in the Face of Adversity' (london.ac.uk/senate-house-library/blog/cusichacaleadership) and included embedded images and video footage. In February 2020 we organised an event to commemorate Ann Kendall. We invited her former colleagues and family, and used the images and footage from the archive to champion her work.

We are now focussing on how we can make this collection, including the image, audio, and audio-visual files, as accessible as possible. We are aiming to digitise as many of the photographs as possible and we are experimenting with ways to make our audio and audio-visual materials accessible to users, albeit this is likely to be part of a broader digital preservation and access strategy.



Albert Memorial Church Whit Walk, Harpurhey, 1910 (ref: m69190). Manchester Image Collection, Manchester Libraries, Information and Archives

Online memory boxes at Archives+

Vicki Caren, Cataloguing Manager, Unlocking Our Sound Heritage - North West hub, looks at how Manchester photographic collections and audio clips were brought together to create an intergenerational resource.

The Archives+ project created an archive centre of excellence in Manchester, and as part of its audience development plan a series of memory boxes for the city's districts was created, including photographs of each area and a prompt sheet to facilitate conversation and reminiscence. The boxes were used successfully in branch libraries and other venues as a way of getting material out from the archives held in Manchester Central Library to communities across the city. The start

of the Unlocking Our Sound Heritage (UOSH) project coincided with a refresh of the memory boxes. The UOSH project aims to preserve and provide access to at risk sound recordings, and this seemed to be a great opportunity to use audio to add a new dimension to this resource.

Work had already begun on digitising and cataloguing the Manchester Studies Oral History collection, which consists of interviews conducted in the 1970s by the then Manchester Polytechnic. The collection is grouped by broad academic research interests, including area surveys. We felt confident that we could create audio clips from the interviews to match selected images from the photographic collections held in the archives at Manchester Central Library - the Manchester Local Image Collection and the Town Hall Photographers' Collection. While we were looking into the logistics of making audio clips available within a physical box, lockdown hit.

Memory boxes then became digital. Moving the content online provided a new way for staff to work together and a new way to engage with audiences. New worksheets follow the Archives+ themes of industry, place, health and living conditions, pastimes, radical thinking and communities. Along with the photographs and oral histories they can be used as prompts to start conversations and discussions. Family members of different generations can connect online to share their stories and memories, as well as look back at the history of their local area. As Siobhan O'Connor, community engagement officer, described "sharing memories of days gone by can bring families closer together; listening to elderly relatives can be a comfort for families as they gain an insight into their lives."

In total seventeen online memory boxes were published on the Archives+ blogsite, with additional promotion on social media, in the local press and on local radio. It is quite evocative listening to people sharing their stories and seeing the places where they lived, worked, played and socialised. This is also reflected in the feedback for the site; by September Archives+ had 99,589 views on the blogsite, compared with 23,136 for the whole of 2019. Visitors were encouraged to share their own stories and photographs. Comments people posted ranged from the memories they sparked to how they had been inspired to dig out and share their family photographs.

Lansdowne House, Wilmslow Road, Didsbury, 1959 (ref: m42690). Manchester Image Collection, Manchester Libraries, Information and Archives

Inspired by the Didsbury memory box, BM found an old photograph of her grandmother, who was a servant at Lawnhurst, a magnificent building in Didsbury, home of Lord Simon.

"My grandmother is listed as age 21, servant, kitchen maid. Got a photo of her somewhere in the kitchen but cannot for the life of me find it...found it if I can download it. Grandmother is Charlotte M on right of picture. Think the dark haired lady on the left is her sister, Muriel. Not sure who the man is."

On reflection this was possibly a better outcome than if a physical box had gone to a specific library. We were able to reach a much wider audience, make a greater impact, and hopefully, encourage different generations to learn together.

For further information and to view the online memory boxes: manchesterarchiveplus.wordpress.com/
To follow the progress of the UOSH North West hub: northwestsoundheritage.org/

To access the photographic collections online, free of charge:
The Manchester Local Image Collection: images.manchester.gov.uk/

The Town Hall Photographers' Collection:
www.flickr.com/photos/manchesterarchiveplus/albums



In total seventeen online memory boxes were published on the Archives+ blogsite, with additional promotion on social media, local press and local radio

The Unlocking Our Sound Heritage (UOSH) project team at London Metropolitan Archives (LMA), image courtesy of LMA



Copyright and sound – a year with the Unlocking Our Sound Heritage project

Victoria Hogarth, Rights Officer for the UOSH hub at London Metropolitan Archives, provides some valuable tips

Copyright is everywhere. Each time you listen to a piece of music, watch a television programme, or open a magazine, you will come across ideas, images and products protected by copyright law. Copyright exists to serve the interests of creators, ensuring that their work is not exploited or misappropriated. Yet for most people, it's the last thing they think of when looking at a painting or listening to a piece of music.

I have spent a year with the Unlocking Our Sound Heritage (UOSH) project working as a rights officer. I have cleared copyright for a variety of sound recordings, including oral histories, educational resources and commercial radio broadcasts. I have come to appreciate how vital copyright is, and how complex and multi-layered copyright in sound recordings can be. Here are some of the most important things I have learnt over the past year.

1. Always do your research

For a UK-wide sound heritage project like ours, it is vital to get clearance from rights holders before recordings are put online. There are often multiple rights holders to

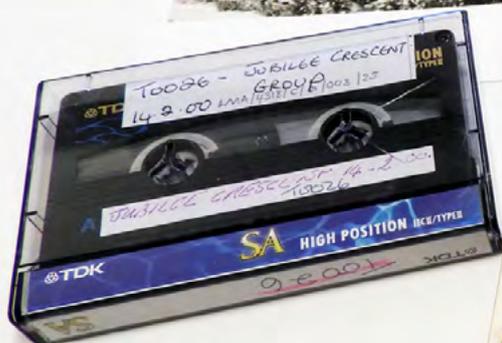
“For most people, copyright is the last thing they think of when looking at a painting or listening to a piece of music”

contact for sound recordings. The three main categories of rights holder for such material are:

- the sound recordist or producer (whoever physically recorded the material)
- the performer(s) – this is anyone who speaks, or otherwise creates a sound on a recording
- the owners of the embedded rights included in the recording, that is authors of literary works included in sound recordings or composers/lyricists of pieces of music included in the recording.



“Talking to rights holders has been the highlight of this past year”



Cassette and photographs from the Samuel Lewis Trust Oral History Project, copyright Southern Housing Group

In an ideal world, sound recordings come to you with fully documented provenance, consent forms, and a full list of credits for everyone involved. However, in reality this rarely happens. You need to use all the information you have and be diligent with your research to fill in blanks and identify contributors. I have found social media very useful for identifying performers. Never be afraid to approach people via these platforms. It can yield really positive results.

2. Log everything

All your research should be thoroughly documented to ensure you have met due diligence standards. Set up detailed logs to document your research and make sure they are updated regularly. Keep on top of the paperwork from the outset, and you will have a clear paper trail proving you have made your best efforts to trace copyright holders.

3. Know when to cut your losses

I decided I would contact people three times before assuming that they wished to decline permission if there was no reply. It is important to have a cut-off point to avoid the feeling that your chase is fruitless, and to be efficient with your time.

4. Have a friendly and straightforward cover letter

The documentation that accompanies rights clearance is, by its nature, full of legal language and can be off-putting for rights holders. It is a good idea to have a

cover letter that sets things out in plain and simple terms. This signals to rights holders that you want the process of clearance to be as transparent and easy as possible.

5. Detail is everything

Make sure you have everything listed correctly in your official documentation. You need to ensure all recordings are named correctly and nothing is left off. This saves time and means you don't have to keep going back to rights holders for additional clearance.

And finally...

6. Prepare to speak to some amazing people

Talking to rights holders has been the highlight of this past year. I have spoken to such a diverse range of people, all with fascinating stories to tell. Playing a small part in reuniting people with memories of times gone by has been an honour. Sometimes relatives are hearing the voices of loved ones for the first time in years and are thrilled to know these memories will be preserved. It goes to the heart of what makes the UOSH project so special – preserving moments in time for future generations to hear and allowing voices from the past to be enjoyed well into the future.

You can read more about the Unlocking Our Sound Heritage project at London Metropolitan Archives here: www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/london-metropolitan-archives/about/Pages/uosh.aspx

Unlocking our soundscapes: a fresh collaboration for Unlocking Our Sound Heritage at National Museums Northern Ireland

Alice Malseed explains how young people have drawn on the audio archive to make their own soundscapes

National Museums NI is one of the ten hubs of the Unlocking Our Sound Heritage (UOSH) project, and in September 2020, UOSH joined with the Reimagine, Remake, Replay (RRR) programme at National Museums NI to create opportunities for 16-25 year-olds to connect with historical recordings from its sound archive. During four online workshops, participants listened to newly digitised clips from this sound archive and learned how to use cutting edge digital technologies for audio production. Afterwards, they spent two weeks creating new soundscapes to be showcased in exhibitions and online.

The UOSH project aims to help save the nation's sounds and open them up to everyone. The team at National Museums NI is working hard to digitise the organisation's own archive, as well as the collections of selected external organisations across Ulster and the Isle of Man. After being digitised, the material is catalogued and assessed for rights clearance before being submitted for public access.

The common threads of opening up collections and creating meaningful engagement with museums and heritage are what inspired this collaboration between the projects. The UOSH team was inspired and enthused by the prospect of reaching younger audiences. The workshops were led by Aidan Deery and Aidan Kelly, who are both experts in using sound technologies and digital software to re-interpret audio and create new aural works.

I delivered two talks in the workshops, which covered the concept of a sound archive, the history of the archive at National Museums NI, the purpose and work of the UOSH project, and the history of sound hardware. Participants were made aware that many of the technologies previously taken for granted were now becoming obsolete. Very few participants had ever bought CDs, instead opting for Spotify to play their favourite tunes. None had heard of the MiniDisc player, which is when a few of the facilitators really began to feel their age! The participants also gained an insight into the work of the curators who built up the National Museums NI collection through decades of travelling around Ireland and collecting stories, songs and sounds via audio recording.

“The participants also gained an insight into the work of the curators who built up the National Museums NI collection”

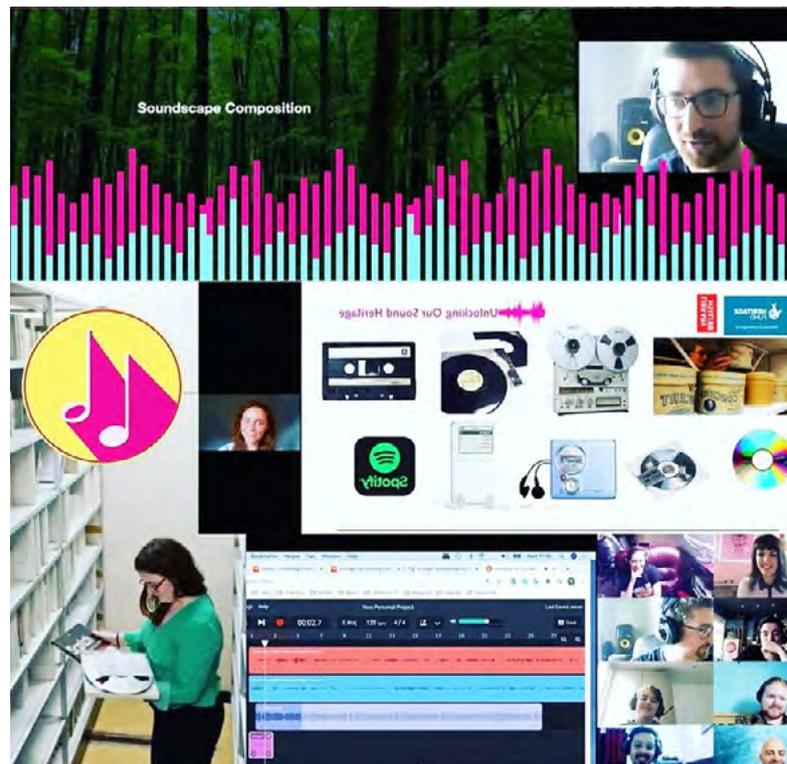


Image from the project, courtesy of National Museums Northern Ireland

This was a really exciting project. Participants learnt how to use new software such as Bandcamp while gaining in-depth knowledge about museum and heritage practice. We can't wait to hear the finished soundscapes and to see these new experts interact more with our heritage and museum sector in future.

“The UOSH team was inspired and enthused by the prospect of reaching younger audiences”

Composers create

Alison Smith, Unlocking Our Sound Heritage Hub Project Manager, talks through an innovative use of oral history recordings in Wales

The National Library of Wales (NLW) is one of ten partners across the UK participating in the exciting Unlocking Our Sound Heritage (UOSH) project, which is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and led by the British Library. NLW's contribution will involve sound recordings from Wales, relating to a range of subjects from oral history, lectures, dialect to Welsh pop and folk music. The aim is to transform access to sound collections in Wales, making them available online and onsite at the library.

During May and June 2020 commissions were awarded to 25 musicians to compose brand new pieces based on some of Wales's oral history collections. They listened to a number of interviews recorded either in Wales or by people from Wales, and used them to inspire the creation of new pieces of work. One of the composers who took part was Geraint Rhys from Swansea, who said:

"It was really an honour to be given the opportunity to be able to sit down and to take some time to just listen. Often these days, when we receive sound clips they are often coupled with some visuals. So to have the opportunity to be able to just listen was a pretty special process."

He listened to various stories included in the oral history collections and was drawn to interviews by Colin Edwards with friends and family of the poet Dylan Thomas. He found a personal connection to the recordings and

"In order to create the music, it was important for him to use the original clips in the final piece"



"NLW's contribution will comprise sound recordings from Wales, relating to a range of subjects"

Digitising sound items, acknowledgement National Library of Wales



Copper Storage Room, acknowledgement National Library of Wales

wanted to create a sound map of Dylan's Swansea. After listening several times, he identified different places around Swansea mentioned in the recordings that were connected to Dylan.

In order to create the music, it was important for him to use the original clips in the final piece because the stories and voices were unique. It was also important that the music and the visuals spoke to each other. To do this, Geraint drove around Swansea at night to capture the streets mentioned

in the interviews, by connecting the sound recordings to the streets. The main challenge faced was the lockdown, and the restrictions on the time spent outdoors. However, Geraint managed by filming the streets from his car during his daily routine. According to Geraint, "This has created conditions for artists to work within and forced me to be more creative with what I had."

To see Geraint's video of 'These streets' and to view all of the compositions, visit: www.youtube.com/user/llyfrgen

First steps to caring for sound and moving image collections found in community archives

Audrey Wilson, Community Engagement Officer for the Scottish Council on Archives, describes their successful recent training events

The results of a recent Scottish Council on Archives (SCA) community archives survey demonstrated such archives' desire for training in basic conservation, cataloguing and digital preservation, and the need for a network of resources to support people working with community archives. In response to the survey results, the SCA delivered a training day on 26th February for community heritage groups caring for sound and moving image collections, in partnership with the National Library of Scotland (NLS) and the Unlocking Our Sound Heritage (UOSH) project.

The one day event provided advice on how to identify and care for sound and moving image formats, digitisation planning, what information to include when cataloguing, and how sound and film can be used to support learning and engagement. An important element of any successful training event for community archives is hearing from people working or volunteering on these types of project, and our day included three case studies featuring the successful use of sound and moving image materials in community collections, namely:

- Dr Karen Buchanan, Curator, Gairloch Museum, the recently announced joint winner of Art Fund Museum of the Year 2020



Conor Walker, NLS Audio Preservation Engineer, First Steps: Caring for Sound and Moving Image Collections, image courtesy of SCA.

- Katie MacDonald from West Dunbartonshire Council Archives: Singer Stories, a collection of memories and short films from former employees of the Singer Sewing Machine factory in Clydebank
- Maya Darrell Hewins, PhD candidate, University of the Highlands and Islands, alternative approaches to archiving audio-visual materials in community archives based in Shetland.

“ SCA would be delighted to collaborate and deliver more training ”



Attendees at First Steps: Caring for Sound and Moving Image Collections, image courtesy of SCA

“ SCA were delighted to be collaborating once more with the NLS and Unlocking Our Sound Heritage project staff, to present a webinar on the care of sound and moving image collections ”

Given the need for social distancing, we accommodated 22 attendees onsite whilst the free event sold out! SCA and NLS agreed to repeat this event later in the year in another part of Scotland. We thought initially during lockdown that our next event would take place in early September at the Highland Archive Centre in Inverness. How naïve we were! By early June our thoughts had turned to how to deliver such an event on a digital platform.

On 25th August, SCA were delighted to be collaborating once more with the NLS and UOSH project staff, to present a webinar on the care of sound and moving image collections. We have also made available several handouts and useful links for information on the identification and care of sound and moving image materials.

SCA received a generous grant from the Archives and Records Association (ARA) research and advocacy fund. This allowed us to commission a film from Amanda Rogers and Anni Asikainen, final year students on the Film, Exhibition and Curation MSc course at the University of Edinburgh. We were delighted with the new audiences our film was able

to reach on YouTube, Vimeo and on our website. The film was sent out on social media channels to 17,200 followers, and we were thrilled when it won 'best film explaining the relevance and importance of archives and records management' at the International Council on Archives' SPA Film Festival Awards 2019.

To ensure that the Zoom webinar was a quality experience, we ensured it was interactive and included a 45 minute question and answer session, plus show and tell sessions. All the speakers were available to answer questions, and participants were signposted to relevant resources. We also encouraged general and specialist networking through our chat room, with opportunities for attendees to bring along pieces from their collections, discuss them and seek the advice of experts.

The webinar's popularity exceeded our expectations, and after only a week we had to close down our Eventbrite page as our Zoom licence only allowed for a maximum of 60 participants. We had people from all over the world signing up and this is perhaps the greatest benefit of online training: the absence of travel costs

and the time saved. The downside was that we couldn't enjoy the delicious local made doughnuts whilst chatting before the event started!

Thanks are due to Jeni Park, the UOSH project manager at NLS, her team, Vicky Plaine, the Head of Media Management at BBC Scotland, who gave an insightful and observant opening presentation, and our three case study speakers.

At the start of the year a new community archives and heritage group - CAHG Scotland - started. This is a two year pilot regional project of the Community Archives and Heritage Group, a special interest group of the ARA. SCA would be delighted to collaborate and deliver more training with the other nine regional hubs of the UOSH project. Please do get in touch with a.wilson@scottisharchives.org.uk

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