



Archives & Records  
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# ARCmagazine

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WELCOME **ARC**



## EDITORIAL

**W**elcome to the March edition of *ARC*. This month our focus is on Advocacy, which particularly in these economic times is an issue that is dear to all our hearts, following the 2011 conference and given the current climate in which all sectors are battling to be heard.

ARA's Head of Public Affairs Marie Owens reflects on how advocacy and 'reputation management' can achieve extraordinary results for those with vision and planning. Gerry Slater recalls the story of how the widely-acclaimed PRONI building in Belfast became reality, especially as it came so near to disaster which is heartening to read and provides a shred of optimism for all archivists. Richard Margrave, a professional advocate, shares how his professional skills paid dividends when he became fascinated by a project which led him into the archives world. Elizabeth Oxborrow-Cowan's research, soon to be published by the ARA, shows just how much the sector has been transformed by build improvements and a 'Manager' shares just how tough life is, even with great advocacy skills and ideas.

We also have received the excellent news that Julian Thomas, a Conservator has been awarded the MBE in the New Years Honours List. The editorial board would like to say a big well done to Julian and it is cheering to know that the efforts of our fellow professionals are being recognised. Perhaps with the lessons we can learn from the advocacy being put in place, we will be able to see many more such awards in future years. There are also articles on a recent trip by University of Liverpool Archive students to meet their counterparts in Germany and the development of a new website that will allow for the exploration of regimental archives.

We always welcome your comments and suggestions. Please send any you have, along with articles to [arceditors@archives.org.uk](mailto:arceditors@archives.org.uk)

**Sarah Norman, Gary Collins, Ceri Forster, Rose Roberto and Richard Wragg**

## 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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Item from the Sedgwick Club Archive: group photograph taken in Tan-y-bwlch, 1891.  
The British Library.

ARCHIDIS students and teachers at the Bundesarchiv Koblenz, Germany, August 2011.  
E series, Missionary Reports, Africa, Asia, Australia, 1859

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# Opening Lines

Dr Hywel Francis MP is Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Archives and History. He is Labour MP for Aberavon. A historian, he was previously Professor of Adult Continuing Education at the University of Wales. He founded the South Wales Miners' Library, which is housed at the University of Swansea.



Dr Francis, centre, helps celebrate the Memory of the World UK Register. Parliamentary copyright image reproduced with the permission of Parliament.

It's a pleasure to write directly to the members of the Archives and Records Association in this special Advocacy edition of ARC.

As a historian, I have had the opportunity, indeed the privilege, of using archives not only in the United Kingdom but in many parts of the world including Washington, Moscow and Madrid. I have always been impressed by the courtesy, professionalism and guidance provided by archivists everywhere. In the 1970's I was involved in establishing the South Wales Miners' Library and the South Wales Coalfield Archive (now known as the Richard Burton Archives) both at Swansea University: through that work I

know of the exacting institutional, professional and increasingly now financial and public access challenges faced by those who work in archives.

I shall always be grateful to archivists; they have assisted me as a researcher, lecturer, author and have even helped me rescue important collections and conserve them for present and future generations.

I have been Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Archives and History for nearly two years. In that time the work and activity – and the size of the Group – has grown significantly. There are currently more than 30 members; administration is provided by the Head of Public

Affairs of the Archives and Records Association.

There is now a recognisable and pleasing shape to the Group's year: a lunch, with subsequent publicity, to honour the outstanding contribution of both an archivist and an historian; an annual lecture by a leading historian; at least one visit to an archive; and a number of invitations to the leaders of the archive world to 'meet and talk'. Through these activities the Group is learning more all the time about the work and issues of the archives sector and the current issues concerning the study of history. I hope we are also highlighting the successes and helping, where we can, to relieve the challenges.

Sometimes, you need friends in 'high places' and, when new legislation is threatening or danger lurks, that is how an All Party Group can rightly be seen. Our Group is certainly happy to be that 'formal' friend in parliament by ensuring that the right questions are asked and the unintended consequences of new legislation are recognised. The Group has also written letters of support more generally when there have been concerns. Like other interested bodies, we backed the ARA's call for a fairer distribution of Renaissance funding (which all goes to regional museums) or a similar generous fund for the archives sector.

I'm very keen that the All Party Group is not only a friend when you are in need. It's also a great pleasure to join you in celebration. Last year I spent a memorable afternoon with archivists whose collections had been recognised as being of national

significance under UNESCO's Memory of the World initiative.

All Party Groups are curious bodies. They allow MPs and Lords who share an interest to meet, talk, act and advocate. They operate under strict rules and have to comprise a certain number of MPs and Lords made up in the correct ratio from the party in power, the opposition and other parties. They must hold an AGM and register their core 20 members. As All Party Groups have no formal power, it would be easy to dismiss them as irrelevant. But there are currently hundreds of All Party Groups in operation across Westminster and the number grows daily. There is a Group registered for virtually every country of the world; one for most illnesses and professions. Just under 'B' there are Groups for Bingo, Biodiversity and Brass Bands. The core interest that brings members to the All Party Group on Archives and History, is

a love of and respect for history. A number of the members are highly respected historians. Lord Paul Bew, is our Secretary; Tristram Hunt and Chris Skidmore are Vice-Chairs. Others come to the Group from a commitment to education or a love of learning. In joining the Group they are, in effect, saying 'I give my support and I'd like to know more'.

Scratch a historian and you will nearly always find someone passionate about archives. When the Group, last year, honoured the work of two of the greatest historians of the twentieth century, Eric Hobsbawm and Lord Hugh Thomas, both spoke forcefully about the debt they owed archives all around the world. 'Historians come and go' said Hobsbawm 'archives go on forever'.

In these fast-moving and difficult times, every sector needs friends. The All Party Group on Archives and History is determined to be a good friend to you.

# When did you last click on [www.archives.org.uk](http://www.archives.org.uk)?

We're working hard to improve the website and make it the one-stop-shop for everything you need to know about your Association and the archive and record-keeping world.

Read the latest news and views. And share some views of your own on the community pages. Forgotten your password? Send an email to [membership@archives.org.uk](mailto:membership@archives.org.uk) – and you're ready to join in!



# Collecting Matters

Accessions to Repositories 2011 is well under way and in the first few weeks we received more completed returns than over the same period last year.

The information collected is used to update the National Register of Archives and Manorial Documents Register, to analyse how archival collecting is developing and to track the movement of public records across the UK.

Some edible accession delights include the Brown's Banbury Cakes entry for Oxfordshire History Centre. These are the records for the original bakers that developed the famous Banbury Cake. And from Plymouth and West Devon we have gin recipes of the Cookworthy & Co wholesale chemists dating from 1811-1842.

In the London area we have had material from the Southwark Travellers Education Support Service and from the North East of England there has been a deposit of papers collected about the children's author Enid Blyton.

If you have not responded yet, there's still time! The deadline for completed accessions returns is Thursday 5th April 2012.

Please send them to  
nra@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

And if you have any questions, please get in touch.

**Rosie Logiudice and Elisabeth Novitski**  
Collections Knowledge Officers, The  
National Archives

asd@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk  
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/accessions/

# Registration Scheme News

By the time you read this, as part of March's issue of ARC, 2012 may feel as though it's truly under way. January is quickly receding into the past and with it, perhaps, go those New Year's resolutions.

Assuming the diet is going well, you're on the way to learning Medieval Latin, and haven't touched a cigarette all year, what's left to do? If 2012 is going to be the year when you achieve a particular goal as a professional, have you thought about how the Registration Scheme can support you?

It might be that you have a particular task to complete at work; maybe a training event or conference that you plan to attend. If you have enrolled on the scheme, not only might this lead to another credit gained but the process of writing-up the credit will ensure you think in detail about what you have achieved. It is this process of reflection that can so often be forgotten. Yet, by thinking about what has been done you get the most from the events and activities in which you take part; it might even result in the identification of further opportunities to explore.

What's more, there is a support network ready and willing to help you make the most of the process of working towards registration. Talk to friends and colleagues who are registered or are working towards registration. Don't forget your candidates' representatives; we're only an email away. And make sure you're in contact with your mentor; talk with them about your professional development plan, who knows what advice they might have.

If you haven't yet enrolled on the scheme, perhaps now is the time. All of the above comments will stand and you'll have, along with everybody enrolled, the opportunity to apply to the ARA's registration scheme bursary. Have a look on the ARA website for further details of the scheme at [archives.org.uk/training/registration-scheme.html](http://archives.org.uk/training/registration-scheme.html); and contact us if you have any questions.

Registration Scheme workshops are also a good opportunity to ask questions and pick up ideas. They're suitable for candidates, mentors and those thinking about enrolling. We're currently planning a number of workshops to be organised for 2012. Details of the first event, to be held in York, can be found on page 7.

## CONTACTS:

General Registration Scheme Enquiries: [<registrar@archives.org.uk>](mailto:registrar@archives.org.uk)  
Registration Scheme Events Enquiries: [<regschemeevents@archives.org.uk>](mailto:regschemeevents@archives.org.uk)  
Registration Scheme Admin and Bursaries: [<regschemeadmin@archives.org.uk>](mailto:regschemeadmin@archives.org.uk)  
Registration Scheme Communications Officer: [<regschemecomms@archives.org.uk>](mailto:regschemecomms@archives.org.uk)  
Registration Scheme Mentor Queries and Advice: [<regscheme Mentors@archives.org.uk>](mailto:regscheme Mentors@archives.org.uk)

## Richard Wragg

Communications Officer, Registration Sub-committee



# Registration Scheme Workshop at Explore York Library Learning Centre, York, Wednesday 25th April, 1-4.30pm

This FREE half-day workshop is suitable for candidates, referees, mentors and anyone interested in enrolling on the scheme or becoming a mentor.

It will provide the opportunity to:

- Find out about the Registration Scheme:  
Why do it? Personal and professional benefits?  
What does it involve?
- Work through the four development areas:  
Formal training courses; Study and research;  
Work achievements; Contributions to the profession
- Work through Learning Outcome Forms:  
Motivation; Achievement; Evidence
- View successful portfolios
- Ask questions

## Programme Structure:

13:00-13:10 - Arrival & registration

13:10-13:50 - Overview of the ARA Registration Scheme; Role of the candidate & mentor; Personal Development Planning

13:50-15:15 - Getting to grips with the four areas of development; Learning Outcome Forms

15:15-15:45 – Tea/coffee; View binders from some of the successful candidates; individual queries

15:45-16:30 – Support; Frequently asked questions; Discussion and round-up

Maximum attendance: 24. Book early to avoid disappointment (no later than one week prior to the date of the workshop)

To register for the workshop, please contact the Registration Events Coordinator at [regschemeevents@archives.org.uk](mailto:regschemeevents@archives.org.uk)

# ARCHIDIS Student's European visit

In August 2011, students and teachers of archives and records management from universities across Northern Europe assembled in Marburg, Germany, for the inaugural Intensive Programme (IP) in Archives and Records Challenges in the Digital Information Society, commonly abbreviated to ARCHIDIS.

Funded by the Erasmus programme of the European Union, ARCHIDIS represented the first ever attempt to gather together students of archives and records management from different European countries. The IP consisted of a two-week summer-school hosted by the renowned Archivschule in Marburg. Working through English, students participated in a full schedule of lectures, seminars and group-work to encourage the exchange of professional experiences, approaches and ideas, and to forge links between future colleagues. The theme of the programme was 'appraisal and social memory'. ARCHIDIS was an accredited module and therefore counted towards each student's qualification in archives and records management in his/her respective country.

Students came from Germany, Sweden, Norway, The Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Germany and Finland, and from University College London (UCL), the University of Dundee and the University of Liverpool in the UK. I was one of four lucky students to attend from the University of Liverpool. Participation in ARCHIDIS began months before we actually got on the plane. Using the open-source 'Moodle' as an online learning environment, participating students were able to 'meet' each other in advance of the IP. Each student provided a brief summary of his/her background and interests and we were divided into six groups, each of which had its own discussion forum. In our groups we read articles from a reading list, summarised them, and then commented on each other's summaries and on the content of the articles. It was surprising to discover that a number of discussions required us to go back to basics and ask each other: "what is a record?"

Once in Marburg we were issued with a timetable which scheduled a morning lecture, midday seminar and afternoon group-work for each day, to be held in the various teaching rooms of the well-appointed Archivschule. The standard of teaching was excellent, with lectures and seminars led by some well-known names in archival science including Eric Ketelaar and Agnes Jonker. Topics under discussion included 'the history of appraisal in different regions', 'silences in the archives', 'ethics in appraisal' and 'appraisal in organisational context'.

Group-work discussions continued face-to-face and, for me, it was those discussions which taught me the most. Each group was working to produce a PowerPoint presentation on its given topic, to be presented to the rest of the students at the end of the summer-school. My group was tasked with comparing appraisal practice in Europe. We focussed solely on the UK, Finland and Germany (the countries of our group members) and yet we found it a difficult assignment. After hours of debate we realised that we were getting nowhere because our conceptions of what appraisal was and when it took place in the records lifecycle were radically different. In Finland, I discovered, there is no distinction between archives and records management and therefore the British idea of appraisal occurring between the two (as a general rule) was alien. Similarly, the Finish practice of determining whether a record is archival or not before it has been created was news to me. In the end I think that the most important lesson I took away from ARCHIDIS was that the British model of recordkeeping - with its lifecycle processes of records management, appraisal, accessioning, cataloguing and preservation – is not the only way of doing things. I had learned about the theoretical differences between the lifecycle model and the continuum model of recordkeeping in the Masters course but it was ARCHIDIS that showed me how different theoretical bases can result in very different daily, taken-for-granted, practices.

The two weeks were not completely dominated by work, however. We had plenty of time to explore the beautiful, historic university town of Marburg with its narrow streets, old buildings, castle and cathedral. Included in the IP were a guided tour around Marburg, weekend activities, a barbecue at the Archivschule (where the quantity of meat on offer outnumbered the people) and an end-of-programme meal on the last day which saw the invention of ARCHIDIS' official theme-tune, 'Archive Fever' (to the melody of 'Fever'). Our education was further enhanced by day trips to the Bundesarchiv, the German national archives in Koblenz where we were shown Schindler's List, and to the archives of the European Central Bank in Frankfurt.

Funding for ARCHIDIS has been secured for three years. The second IP is due to take place this summer, this time in Sweden. If my experience is anything to go by, this year's participating students will find it involving, educational and hugely enjoyable.

#### Louise Bruton

Student on MA in Archives and Records Management at University of Liverpool 2010-2011

ARCHIDIS students and teachers at the Bundesarchiv Koblenz, Germany, August 2011.







# Regimental Matters

The Royal Leicestershire Regimental Museum reopened in 2007, after a complete refurbishment with help from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Leicester City Council. One of the displays included a touchscreen with an old database of former soldiers, but the touchscreen was not childproof and had proved unreliable. In addition, the information on it had been processed by civilians with little military knowledge, and could not be updated by Regimental volunteers. The whole system was inadequate.

The Regimental Trustees met TownsWeb Archiving Ltd (TWA) at the Army Museums Obilby Trust Conference in 2009 and, after some discussions, commissioned them to design a new regimental website to include the old database and create a new medal database. This required capturing the existing data (personnel and medals) from Leicester City Council databases (Modes and Multimimsy), cleansing the data and importing it into new databases in the TWA ArcView system. That system itself had to be expanded to allow Regimental staff and volunteers to log into it on the internet so as to maintain and update the two databases.

A completely new medal database had to be created from information captured from Leicester City's register of accessioned objects, supplemented by images and descriptions of the various relevant medals. In the middle of the project, TWA were asked to include also a list of citations.

Although given some general guidance and photographs, TWA had to design the homepage and other pages. They also had to scan all the Green Tigers (Regimental journals) since first publication in 1904 and make them searchable by keywords. Another late thought suddenly thrust upon TWA was the creation of a remembrance feature on the homepage, "Remember a Tiger Today"; this displays details of a soldier who died on that particular day in history.

Apart from being accessible on the internet, the website had to be available to visitors to the Regimental Museum, so a new PC kiosk has been installed, with help from TWA and Leicester Arts and Museums Staff.



ARRIVAL OF LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR CLIVE AND LADY LIDDELL AT CHELTENHAM, ON HIS ASSUMING  
THE GOVERNORSHIP, 18th JULY, 1900.

Journal of the Royal Leicester Regiment. Copyright Simon Taylor-Barratt.

A small team of Regimental volunteers to update the information on the databases will slowly be increased as we get more experience of what is required. Families and friends of the Regiment will be encouraged to provide biographical details and photographs for inclusion.

The new website [www.royalleicestershireregiment.org.uk](http://www.royalleicestershireregiment.org.uk) is now live, and includes:

- a potted history of the Regiment;
- a 'Family Tree' of Leicestershire's infantry 1688 – 1975;
- an explanation of the significance of Battle Honours, with a list of those won by the Regiment;
- the Regimental quick and slow marches;
- the remembrance feature 'Remember a Tiger Today';
- the database of soldiers who have served in the Regiment – 'Have you a Tiger in Your Family?';
- the database of all the medals in the Museum and those who won them, including the citations where we have them;
- access to all Green Tiger Journals;

[illegible]

- history, and details, of the Regimental Museum;
- a page 'About Us', explaining about the Regiment, its Trustees, the Royal Tigers' Association, the General Committee and the Regimental office.
- a 'News' page, giving latest information from the Royal Tigers' Association.
- details on how to contact us.

The Regimental Trustees extend grateful thanks to TownsWeb Archiving Ltd for their professional and friendly staff. Their willingness to attend meetings, visit the Museum and work with various Leicester City Council staff was greatly appreciated.

TWA have enabled us to bring control of the databases in-house so that Regimental volunteers can maintain and update them. We are clear that we set TWA some pretty difficult challenges, but they delivered what they promised within budget and to an acceptable timeframe. They have helped us understand what can be achieved with modern technology and have created a Regimental website which we feel is now one of the best in the UK. Please visit it!

**Simon Taylor-Barrat**  
Digitisation Consultant, Townsweb Archiving



# Understanding the Earth: Archival Evidence

© Sir Cam 2011, University of Cambridge

Funding secured from the Museums, Libraries and Archives (MLA) Council Designation Development Fund (DDF) during 2010-2011 enabled the employment of the Sedgwick Museum's first professional Archivist. A project to re-box, arrange and describe some of the collections of the Museum and Department of Earth Sciences, University of Cambridge got underway.

Thirty distinct archive collections were identified and consolidated during this initial phase of the project. The invaluable help of several volunteers has also made this possible. The collections range in size from one to over 100 boxes, although many will still need further appraisal. Archive conservation grade boxes, folders and metal racking were purchased making it easier to protect, store and retrieve records in the



Boxing clever – before.



Boxing clever – after.



Item from the Sedgwick Club Archive: illustrated menu cover.

### Records include:

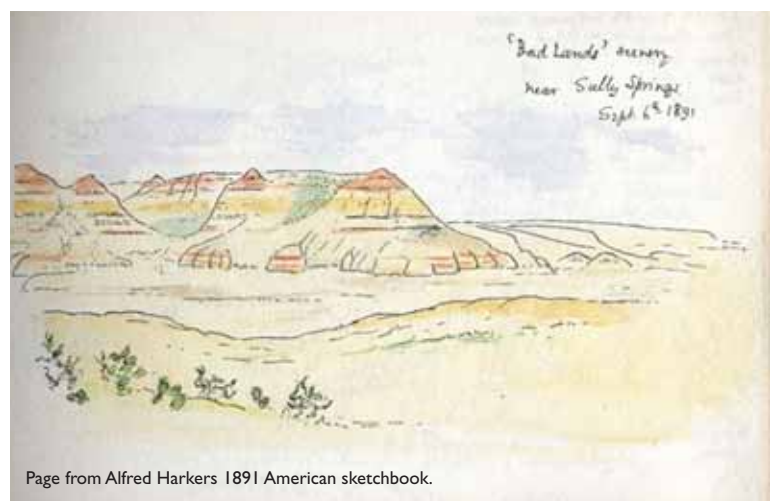
- The geological notebooks of the Rev. Adam Sedgwick, Woodwardian Professor between 1818 and 1873, and tutor to Charles Darwin in 1831.
- Field notebooks belonging to Sir Vivien Fuchs (geologist and explorer) compiled in 1930s East Africa and the notebooks of Professor John E. Marr, Woodwardian Professor in 1917.
- Notes, diaries and photographs belonging to Professor Thomas McKenny Hughes and his wife. They attended five of the early meetings of the International Geological Congress together between 1881-1897.
- Scrap books, photo-albums, and minute books relating to the Sedgwick Club, the undergraduate geological society formed in 1880. The Club encourages students to give geological papers and participate in field excursions.
- Photographs and original manuscript catalogues of rock and fossil specimens held in the museum.
- Paintings and photographs of those associated with the Earth Sciences Department, University of Cambridge and the Museum.

### A greater understanding

In March 2011, funding was secured from Trinity College's Isaac Newton Trust Fund (INT) to secure a further year's employment for the Archivists post. Some of this time has been spent cataloguing the collections in greater detail with a view to getting descriptions on-line. The collection level descriptions are now all available on the Archives Hub.

Documentation software ('Gapi') was purchased from the French company Mobydoc in the first phase of the project. This is compatible with the Sedgwick's collection management software ('SnBase'), and it is envisaged that eventually museum objects will be linked with relevant archival documentation.

In May 2011, funding was secured from the 'Friends of the Sedgwick Museum'. This provided a further 12 months work for the Archives Assistant to work on the notebooks of Alfred Harker (b.1859-d.1939) and others. Harker was a world renowned petrologist but to date there is very little known historically about him other than through sources such as his published work and his obituary. His notebooks are illustrated with sketches of landscapes, geological cross-sections and even caricatures.



Page from Alfred Harker's 1891 American sketchbook.





Item from the Sedgwick Club Archive: group photograph taken in Tan-y-bwlch, 1891.

### Access for all

In October 2010, the Archives Assistant was registered blind. With support from the JobCentre Plus 'Access to Work' scheme, we received a grant to procure equipment from the RNIB – a SmartView synergy video magnifier.

The equipment has a large magnification range from x2.6 to x57 and a 22" flat screen display monitor. It has multiple display and contrast modes, and comes with an easy glide document table which ensures that the study material is immobilized below the camera.

The high levels of magnification enable text which is otherwise difficult to read even by sighted persons to be accessed. Furthermore, faint pencil marks can be investigated by changing the devices contrast or brightness levels.

[NB: A UV sensitive light meter indicated no UV emissions from the white LED light source, so no filter is required. Although the lux level readings were on average 1300, the notebooks are exposed for a relatively short period of time.]

### Future

The Sedgwick Archive collections provide a wonderful resource for those studying the history of geology in the 19th-20th centuries, as well as the social history of the period in which these individuals lived and worked. It is hoped further funding can be obtained to continue work on the legacy records and more recent acquisitions.

An exhibition showcasing a small selection of records from the archive, including original documents, will be on display in the Sedgwick Museum from the beginning of April 2012.

**Sandra Marsh (Archivist) and  
Lyall Anderson (Archives Assistant)**

Sedgwick Museum

Please email [sjm259@cam.ac.uk](mailto:sjm259@cam.ac.uk) for further information about the project.



Dr Lyall Anderson at work at the video magnifier.



# MBE awarded to conservator

Congratulations to Julian Thomas, conservator and bookbinder, who was awarded an MBE in the New Year Honours List 2012, for his services to conservation science and bookbinding.

Julian retired from the National Library of Wales in 2010 having worked there as a bookbinder and conservator for over forty years. After serving his bookbinding apprenticeship and training as a conservator, he went on to become head of the conservation section in 1980, a position he held until his retirement.



Julian Thomas. Copyright Christine Brown.

In the early 1980s Julian also became an instructor for ARA's Training Scheme for Conservators, and his contribution to the scheme and its development and changes through the years, has helped to ensure that many student conservators (especially the fifty-one he taught through the scheme), had the opportunity to gain a high standard of essential skills and knowledge.

During his career he developed the specialist techniques required for the conservation of the diverse collections in his care, as well as his own skills as a conservator and bookbinder. Particularly regarded in high esteem are his skills and talents in conservation bookbinding and designer bookbinding.

Following his retirement Julian continues his bookbinding work at his home workshop and gives talks and presentations around the country.

Christine Brown

Hull Archives and History Centre

# From the edge of disaster: securing the new PRONI building

It was a meeting of the executive team of PRONI's parent Department [Culture, Arts and Leisure], and one that promised to be no different from a dozen others. Then something unexpected happened. During discussion of a possible capital project or projects, a very senior voice intervened on behalf of PRONI. I sat thinking, 'I'm hearing things.' Then there was the rapid realisation that I had heard correctly. Clichés besieged my brain along the lines of 'Not looking gift horses in the mouth' (I never really understood that one) and 'Don't count your chickens until they are hatched'. So PRONI suddenly had a gift horse descending upon it and an interest in hatching chickens. What on earth had happened? Let me keep you in suspense (or confusion) a little longer.

A spectre hung over PRONI's premises for years. Built in the early 1970s, the building and its amenities had reached the end of their projected lifespan. Engineers trekked in and out, and fingers were stiff from being crossed seven days a week and week after week after week. What if the decrepit air-conditioning finally gave up the ghost? A disaster or just a hiccup? What better way to find out than to have a boss – me



The new PRONI building in the Titanic Quarter of Belfast. © Copyright PRONI.



– decide that the breakdown (pun intended) of running costs must include the expense of maintaining air-conditioning for the stores. If figures could not be supplied, then switch off the system for two weeks and make at least a rough calculation on the basis of the drop in electricity consumption.

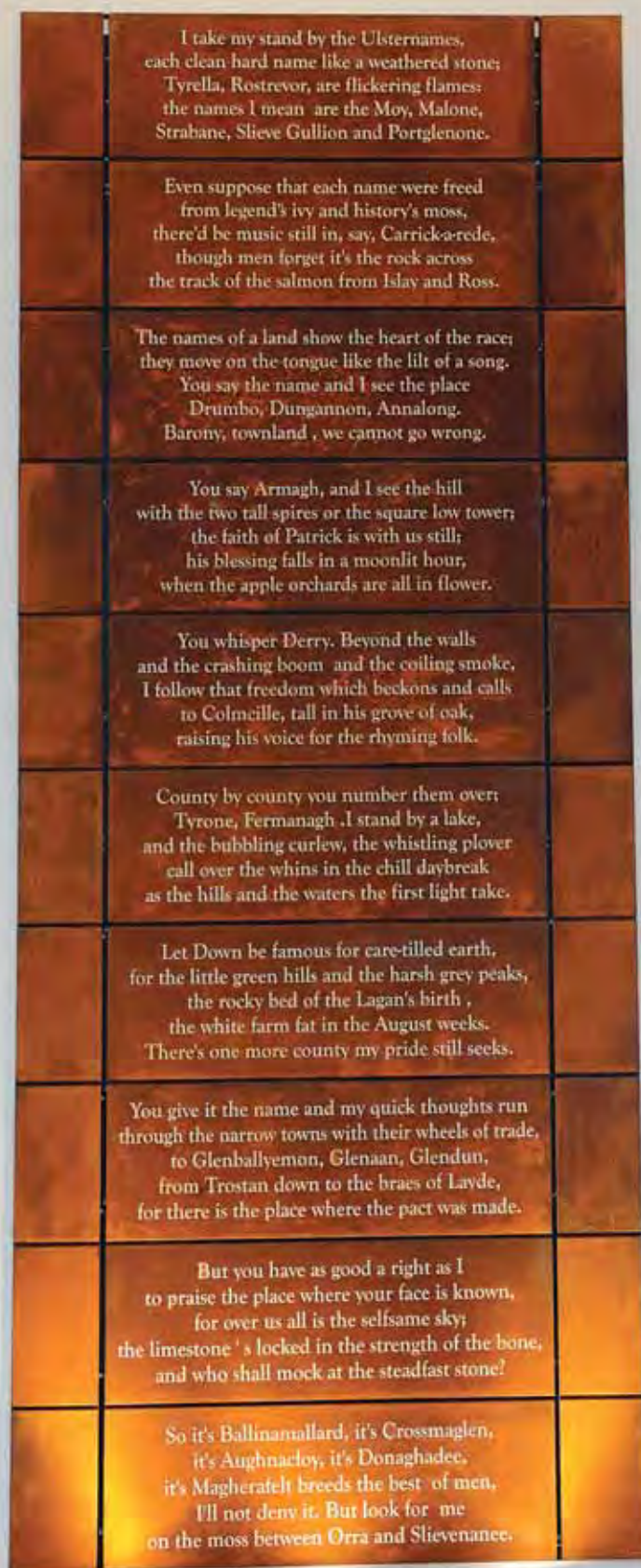
Somehow the figures never did appear on my desk. Something else did, however – reports of an outbreak of mould in a specific area of one of the 21 archive storage rooms. Fortunately, it was quite specific in location and in the type of affected material, but a warning had registered: failure of the air-conditioning system for a lengthy period would have a catastrophic effect on the preservation of the national archives for Northern Ireland. Resources would have to be diverted to searching out mould and then to cleaning affected items. That would have been a major and a disruptive exercise. The blunder of the institution's Director – it was openly admitted – became a key building block in the case for a new PRONI building.

The blunder opened up the whole question of the condition of the archives held in the stores. PRONI opted for a nationally recognised assessment tool, the Preservation Assessment Survey (PAS). Securing and assessing the condition of a truly random sample developed into a collaborative project involving conservators, archivists, administrators and ICT staff. They went into the stores as individuals and emerged as a team, each of whom had made their own particular contribution. The data had been gathered, and it was over to the then National Preservation Office (NPO) at the British Library.

“  
who thought that a cup of strong tea  
should precede her outline of the  
findings of the condition survey  
”



The lyrical sounds of Northern Ireland's place names in a John Hewitt poem – a floor to ceiling artwork in the new PRONI. © Copyright PRONI.



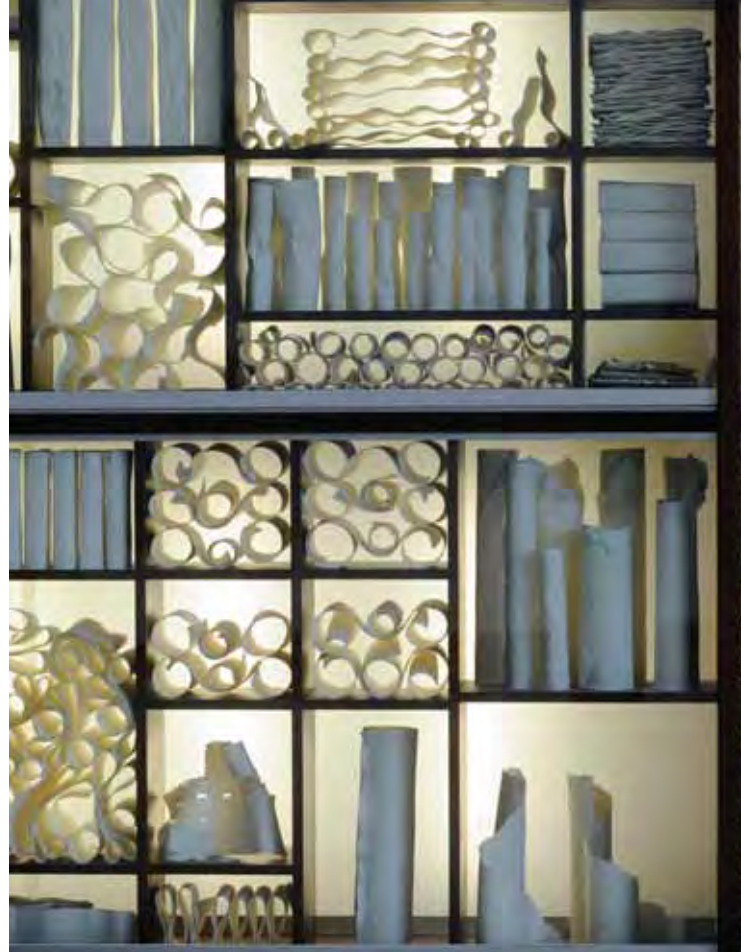
I can remember the conversation with the NPO director, who thought that a cup of strong tea should precede her outline of the findings of the condition survey. The news was not just bad, it was the worst possible. The PRONI-held archives were in worse condition overall than those of any other institution so far surveyed. Had PRONI been stunningly negligent? No, it had acted as a safe haven for 'at risk' material from all over Northern Ireland under threat during the 30 years of 'The Troubles'. The need for the archivist to act quickly often meant there was neither time nor resource to appraise and, in many cases, to sort and pack properly.

Appraisal (or rather lack of it) – quickly came to the fore. A great deal of dross had found refuge in the stores. How we ended up where we were was understandable – even commendable – but before daring to ask for even a new shelf, PRONI had to be confident that it had eliminated the low-grade material in a re-appraisal exercise. It was time-consuming, resource-intensive but absolutely necessary.

The result? The released space rapidly filled as records waiting in Departments and public bodies flowed in. It was the last throw of the dice. There was a pressing need for more storage. There was some amelioration. Off-site storage was found and made broadly acceptable in terms of both security and environment. Archives were moved so that the least used (by government or the public) went off-site.

All credit to everyone who participated in that exercise but it was a short-lived relief. The spectre still lurked in the stores in the PRONI HQ building – the sudden death (albeit long expected) of the air-conditioning system.

If the deficiencies of the air-conditioning system were a spectre, the public records legislation under which PRONI operated was a backdrop. Passed in 1923, the Public Records (NI) Act proved resilient and positively benefitted from age. The legislation reflected the determination of the then Northern Ireland government to keep costs down by the creation of a single all-purpose archives repository serving the whole country. All the archival eggs were placed in one basket. In the middle of the basket sat Ministerial responsibility. The Director of PRONI was the Minister's deputy in the discharge of that responsibility. The Minister (not the Director) was Keeper of the Records of Northern Ireland. That was useful inasmuch as it encouraged a sense of Ministerial ownership, or do I mean a realisation that it was their headache?



Two views of Felicity Staker Graham's stunning artwork in PRONI's reception area.

All these elements – the deficient air-conditioning, the danger of an expensive exercise to eliminate an outbreak of mould, the poor condition of the archives and the storage problems – might still have added up to nothing had it not been for the archives being unique. One senior civil servant summed it up simply, 'There is only one archives, only one PRONI.'

The promised keeping of you in suspense has been more of a meander along a verbal road sign-posted with key factors that led to PRONI's successful quest for a new building. Perhaps one of the most important factors was PRONI's delivering a consistent message as to its needs. It varied not a jot whether uttered behind closed doors, explained to staff (who helped frame the message) or set out in public. Over the years, the statistics were gathered and therein lay the evidence that PRONI had done its best to work within the resources available to it (e.g. reappraisal). Clarity, consistency and absolute conviction are at the heart of successful advocacy. Add to those 'seizing opportunities to put your case'. That does not mean every opportunity – boredom can set in easily – and it does not mean bombarding with lots of details. A few well thought out and finely-honed sentences can intrude themselves very effectively at the proper time and in the proper place. For example, if the core business of a meeting is considering what appears to be financial Armageddon, it might be a little insensitive to add (at least too overtly) your own woes.





The scripts and roll are made from porcelain. © Copyright PRONI. Centre: Gerry Slater, 2012.

The race was on to convince the Treasury that PRONI had a case, one well-considered and perhaps above all sensibly costed. While PRONI had the enthusiasm and much of the data, it simply did not have the expertise to pull it all together into a case that would convince individuals well versed in sensing an over-egging of the advocacy pudding. It was a key decision that securing the new building was not merely a PRONI project but one for the Department and indeed one of importance to Northern Ireland. It was never inward looking but rather sought to bring together expertise from wherever it could be found. There was a mixture of consultancy, vital input from the Department's own economist and an array of expertise from a specialist Division in another Department (they designed everything internal and external and managed procurement). It is in a way invidious to pick out one individual but it seems appropriate to do so on this occasion. Dr Chris Kitching, the former secretary of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, is The author of the British Standard 5454 standard. He provided both independent archival advice – why should the Department rely wholly on PRONI for such advice? – and the key reference work for the architects and designers of the new building to consult. Bringing together a wide range of expertise meant immense potential for misunderstanding – eg, the use of different technical language – but the reality was wholly positive. Everyone was listened to, the team 'gelled' and slipped easily into a co-operative exchange of expert opinions.

Such tensions as there were emerged within PRONI as staff sought to undertake their day-to-day work while meeting the often tight deadlines for information or action in support of the project. There were disagreements, the occasional wringing of hands (no, not necks) and the pressure was sometimes considerable. However, the deadlines were met and the key milestones became a reality one-by-one on the road to delivering the project.

Probably my biggest contribution to the project was taking early retirement. It meant leaving the real work to others who had the vision, the determination and the expertise to deliver a building that came within budget, was handed over ahead of schedule and re-opened to the public some two months ahead of the projected timeframe.

Though much involved in pushing the project, that did not mean I had a total grasp of all its most important strands. The lesson is simple: no-one can keep a grasp of everything in a major project, and therefore a team of all the talents really is a vital ingredient for success. Use the best to strive for the best.

**Gerry Slater**

Gerry Slater was Director of PRONI and Deputy Keeper of the Records from 1999 to 2008. He is now a consultant. The new PRONI building opened, to virtually unanimous acclaim, in early 2011.

# Do archivists dream?

As archive professionals we have a remarkable role. We are part of a succession of curators of knowledge with a lineage that can stretch back perhaps a thousand years and, if we and our successors do well, last another millennium. We have little concept of who will use our work in generations to come or why. Yet we collect and care so that these unknowns will be able to remember. Our work enables lives to speak across the centuries. In fiction we are solitary figures in turns both valued and feared for the annals we guard and the knowledge we hold. Our work is vital, slightly mysterious and rolls out across time. How can our purpose be described? Unique? Out of time? The essence of civilisation? Romantic?

Yet is this how you view yourself? Probably not. And I know why. Pragmatism – that mix of realism and practical nature which guides us in our daily work. Pragmatism is what enables us to face 5km of records without passing out. Pragmatism is what enables us to cope with yet another leak and find more plastic sheeting to protect the collections. Pragmatism is what enables overstretched services to provide 95% customer satisfaction. Pragmatism is what will prevent us from realising our true potential.

At this point you may well have given up or be planning how to email me your opinion on my opinion. But hear me out gentle reader, I have proof.

Over the last year I have been undertaking research (funded by the Archives and Records Association) into capital investment in archives. I was all ready to learn about better searchrooms, more storage space and wider audiences. What took me completely by surprise was the reaction to successful building projects. It was a reaction of pure euphoria – so I have christened it the ‘euphoric intangible’. Let me explain.

For all but one of the case studies I looked into the capital project was planned in very clear terms around very concrete issues such as storage to BS5454, a new bespoke searchroom, new office space. Goals were clearly defined and based on known issues such as lack of storage. The planning was pragmatic. Once built the investment delivered all these practical solutions. But it also delivered something else – a reaction.

This reaction came from all quarters – the operational staff, the senior managers, the decision-makers, the users (old and new), the depositors, and the general public. It was a delight in the visual appearance, a fascination with the archive work that was taking place, a powerful pride in the new landmark within their community, astonishment at how the archives could now be used. This powerful response was out of proportion to the investment. Both small and large services exhibited the same pervading response.

So what was going on? Simply put, the new building was an incontrovertible and unavoidable advocate for the archive service’s true potential, against a backdrop of underinvestment and low profile. The physical change was transformational and eye-catching. But the non-physical was just as altered with suitably designed services for individual audiences and professional collection management. The new building enabled visitors and staff to fulfil their own tasks and goals. It created a new and flexible space in which people could interact both with the service and with each other on their own terms. The new building provided a theatre for the service to showcase its talents. Yet this potential for such powerful engagement

“We collect and care so that these unknowns will be remembered.”

had not been specifically articulated nor consciously designed for in the original project plans.

What the research clearly demonstrates is that archive services can inspire and excite. As a profession we can cast our pragmatism to one side and present in our advocacy the vision of what we can be and why our work matters. In doing so we can create inspiring and relevant arguments to engage others. When we are not sure how to cast this vision we can learn from the success of other services. This need to create a motivating vision is not just management speak. Stakeholders want to be part of something inspirational and different rather than solely looking at how problems can be practically solved. Other sectors, such as museums and galleries with whom we compete for funding, are more naturally adept at presenting their services from this aspirational angle. Archives have so much to offer to so many and should articulate this to compete in these straitened times and design services that can fulfil the vision. Rather than the euphoric intangible being an unexpected by-product once an investment project is complete, it can be harnessed to be a motivating force in the development of services. So perhaps we need to step away from the problems just for a while and dream of where we want to be. After all, it can’t do any harm can it?

To learn more about my research contact me at [elizabeth@elizabethoc.co.uk](mailto:elizabeth@elizabethoc.co.uk)

Elizabeth Oxborrow-Cowan

Consultant Archivist

Elizabeth’s research will be published in March 2012.



The British Library.

# Reflections on successful advocacy

**A**rchives are special and different. We all know that. But when it comes to successful advocacy, our sector is just like all the others and our messages are competing in a very noisy world. Advocacy is about making people listen. At its most extreme definition, it's about 'pleading for support'. There are good examples from our sector on how advocacy has worked, but I'd like to look at some very visible projects in the wider world and see what lessons we can learn as we increasingly recognise that the outstanding work of our sector is only half the mission – we also have to make sure people know about it and support it.

## The Camilla project

On 31 August 1997 Diana, Princess of Wales, died in Paris. On 9 April 2005, Prince Charles married Camilla Parker Bowles at Windsor.

No one who wept in the streets for Diana would have believed it possible that, less than eight years later, a sizeable crowd would cheer Charles' second Princess of Wales. But cheer they did, though the bride diplomatically took the title 'Duchess of Cornwall'.

The nation 'changed its mind' after the success of a well-executed plan to 'rehabilitate Camilla' and portray Charles as serious thinker, good man and excellent father. Charles had only a 20% popularity rate with the British public

when Diana died; it was at 75% when he remarried. The architect of this persuasion was Mark Bolland, who was the Prince of Wales' Deputy Private Secretary for five years. What can we learn from Bolland's project? First, consider the time frame. Eight years. Not a lifetime, but hardly an overnight success. Patience really can be a virtue when hearts and minds need to change. Advocates must be willing to take the long view.

Charles and Camilla on their wedding day.





The entrance hall of the British Library.

If things take a long time, it's really important to stick to the plan. What most of us may recall is a gradual process of seeing Charles and Camilla together, more and more of the time. Of hearing more about Charles' good causes, particularly the Prince's Trust. Of seeing proof of his affection for his sons. And, more persuasively, of theirs for him. But there will have been 'one step forward, two steps backwards' days, when it all seemed impossible again and there will have been those who will have wanted to change course/give up.

It has occurred to me more than once in my communication career that very few professions are quite so dependent on the whim of humanity. Lawyers have the laws of the land; doctors have some certainty from biology. Those of us who need to persuade are entirely dependent on human reaction. We need people to listen and to understand; there are very few rules at play here.

Good communication and advocacy is actually about detail as well as a big picture. As a professional admirer of Bolland, it was visible to me that the Charles PR ship lost smoothness and confidence when Bolland moved on. There was chaos over the wedding itself - first it was to take place at Windsor Castle, then at Windsor Guildhall. Really good PR people are good at administration and obsessed with detail. Ironically, these people are often envied

“  
He and his team would change minds,  
one by one if necessary  
”

because of their 'luck'; but, to steal a famous golfing joke, the harder they practise, the luckier they get!

In the last 20 years there have probably been only two PR/communication professionals who deserve the 'genius' label for the sheer scale of what they achieved. Much more famous and visible and much more 'marmite' (love him or hate him) is Alistair Campbell.

The single biggest lesson I would take from Campbell's successes is his focus. In 1997 he, Tony Blair and New Labour had done what had seemed impossible only three years before - won a general election. What was Campbell's key message to his tribe on that day of victory? He reminded them that they had to win next time. Because that was the real prize - getting elected and staying there. So another lesson: even if the final prize has not even been voiced - never lose sight of it yourself.

Are Duchesses and Labour spin doctors relevant to anything in the archive world as we seek to be heard and supported?



“

incredible things can be achieved if the message makes sense and is well delivered over a period

”

If the world was fair, those who work in archives would have the funding, the respect and the admiration of the nation and the world. We are clearly not in that position, though we do have the respect and admiration of those who have contact with us. But for the majority of people in this country we do not register at all. Who Do You Think You Are? has helped considerably, even with the downside of some people believing that their family history can arrive in a brown envelope in seconds. But many of those viewers may not notice the profession at the heart of the programmes; they are watching a ‘celebrity’ programme.

We are not in the consciousness of the people. But – and it’s a huge but – that is as bad as it gets. People are not negative about the word ‘archive’; they are just uninformed. A recent poll of ‘toxic’ professions was led by tabloid journalists and politicians. Doctors, as is usual, were the most trusted profession. (Are we so different from doctors? They save lives; we save history, heritage and culture. Both professions are vocational, highly qualified with centuries of endeavour and professionalism).

The Camilla project teaches us that perceptions can change quite quickly. Not overnight, but within a very few years.

An example of ‘changing minds’ which is perhaps closer to home to our sector is the British Library story. I believe it demonstrates exactly the same advocacy lessons as the Camilla or the New Labour projects.

Plans for a new national library dated from 1964. Building work began in the late 1970s. Progress was painfully slow and very expensive. By the early 1990s there was no possibility of announcing an end-of-construction or an opening-of-a-library date and there were frequent calls for the whole project to be mothballed. Prince Charles famously likened the architecture to ‘a secret policeman’s academy’; Gerald Kaufman MP, Chair of the National Heritage Select Committee called it ‘the ugliest building in the world’. The ‘new Library’ – with no recognisable division between a building site and an organisation that had its roots in the foundation of the British Museum –

The Kitaj tapestry in the entrance hall of the British Library.



had entered the consciousness as a 'bad thing'; it had become national shorthand for failure. The government was building a building; the Library was being blamed for its appalling project management. In 1992 there was a real possibility that the Library's new home would never be completed.

Fast forward 20 years. Today, the British Library is the natural backdrop to any story about scholarship. It is one of London's key meeting places. The building works. Debates are about the correct things: undergraduates in reading rooms and approaches to a digital future.

Even ten years ago, the hostile tide had turned. When the Queen opened the building in 1998 she was able to joke that 'the invitation had been in her in-tray for slightly longer than most' and staff were able to laugh. Because by then the press were calling Sir Colin St John Wilson's building 'the finest space in twentieth century architecture' and the staff and systems were delivering items quickly to the reading rooms. Users liked the new building because it worked.

### How did it happen?

There was a plan. The Chief Executive, Dr Brian Lang, took the long view. He and his team would change minds, one by one if necessary. They would build up support by concentrating on what the Library staff could and would deliver – a first class Library. So, from portacabins at the back of a building site, invitations went out to those who had influence, to those who would visit a building site, hear the vision and 'get it'. People who were likely to chatter to someone else who might influence someone else. Politicians were important; but the most important group were the high-profile writers and academics who were a research library's essential stakeholders. Even before it was fashionable to support the new Library, a core group of these people – Lady Antonia Fraser, Harold Pinter, Michael Holroyd – had bravely done so. They would be cherished. Journalists were important too; the door was opened and the architect gave his time to any architecture journalist who wanted to break away from the sheep instinct and recognise the efficacy and beauty of the last 'handmade' building the UK would ever see.

So, you decide what you want to achieve, get a plan, pinpoint who you need to influence, stick to it through thick and thin.....and it all works?

Yes and no.

There's one more key ingredient for success. And then there's the 'small print' of life to factor in. There is always room for the unforeseen. There are things that you simply cannot control: acts of God; economic downturns; untimely death. But if you've nailed down what is likely, you stand a good chance of surviving the unexpected.

## An advocacy ticklist:

What's the aim? Describe it in a sentence.

What's the plan? No more than three bullet points

Who do you need on your side to succeed? Define a short list of groups or individuals. Pages of stakeholder analysis have their uses. Do the thinking, then have a very short list

Agree the basis on which you will change your plan – do not allow change to happen easily. A season of rejection may be telling you something. One headline is not.

Who is your leader? Are they actually leading? Does anyone want to follow them?

The last and probably the most important ingredient for advocacy success is leadership. The leader may or may not be the person who developed the advocacy plan. The Campbell/Blair partnership worked because Tony Blair was a brilliant front man, Campbell the loyal and far less charming strategist. Bolland was the clear leader of the 'Camilla' project. He would have been highly visible to the press and media, whose coverage would make all the difference.

You can read any number of text book definitions, but you know leadership when you see it. A good leader can explain clearly where you're going and keep saying it. You do not necessarily have to like your leader, but you do have to know s/he is right. Battle analogies are often useful in the PR world. A good leader gets you on a war footing and engenders trust within the team; you will be content to go over the top with him or her. It helps tremendously if the leader has charm, humour and media presence. If you doubt any of this, consider recent advocacy by Joanna Lumley or Hugh Grant.

Every advocacy mission ('rehabilitate Camilla', 'gain support for a new Library', 'convince the electorate Labour is re-electable') is different. But every advocate has the same tools at his/her disposal. And incredible things can be achieved if the message makes sense and is well delivered over a period. 'Understand and support the archive sector' is not really a big ask; let's keep in mind those who have asked far more – and achieved it.

### Marie Owens MCIPR

Marie Owens MCIPR is Head of Public Affairs for the Archives and Records Association UK and Ireland. She led communication at the British Library from 1992 to 1999 and at Middlesex University from 1999 to 2008.





# archivists

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# Advocacy: history, political context and resonance for our future

Dr Richard Margrave, taken by Marjorie Ellis Thompson

A procession of lighted lanterns and school bands proceeded slowly amidst the large cheering crowds. It was early December last year in Oxford and the city was out in force to celebrate the annual parade, concert and official switching on of the municipal Christmas lights. Crash barriers, excited families and the twinkling lanterns contrasted mightily with the earlier calm, quiet and subdued light of the library and archive in Rhodes House, part of the Bodleian Library of the University of Oxford.

The visit to the library and archive was to find again manuscript material for a study of emigration from Liverpool in the nineteenth century that is now housed in the Library of Commonwealth and African Studies collection at Rhodes House as part of the special collections of the Bodleian Library. I know Rhodes House well from attending biennial week long conferences of education ministers drawn from around the world for over twenty years.

These Oxford Round Table on Education Policy meetings made full use of the magnificent building completed in 1928 and designed by Sir Herbert Baker who had been Cecil Rhodes's architect back in South Africa. The building is part Cape Dutch farmhouse, part English country mansion and influenced by the arts and crafts movements of the 1900s; a beautiful place to study.

The custody of the historical records and archives of the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (USPG) was transferred from the then Tufton Street, Westminster, London headquarters of the Society to the Rhodes House Library in 1986.

I was there in Tufton Street as the collection was being packed ready for the journey over to Oxford. The connection with the archive began around 18 months before then when as a recent PhD graduate from the London School of Economics I had joined the USPG Archives on a one year Manpower Services Commission job creation scheme. Such was the severity of the government cuts to university jobs and funding in the early 1980's. My PhD was in labour mobility on the migration of silk textile workers from Macclesfield in Cheshire to the United States of America in the nineteenth century. There were two of us with PhDs working in the USPG Archives on the scheme – researching biographical information on the first missionaries sent out by the Anglican Church to North America and to the Far East.

## First missionaries

In 1701 the forerunner Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) prepared to send out the first clerics or missionaries to the British colonies of America. A charter from King William III dated 16 June 1701 established



the SPG in order to send out priests and schoolteachers to America to help provide the church's ministry to the colonists and take the message of the gospel to slaves and native Americans. By the time of American independence around 300 men and a handful of female school mistresses had made a substantial contribution to the foundation of the Episcopal Church. And soon after 1701 the society expanded its horizons to encompass the West Indies and Nova Scotia and then later in the eighteenth century to the rest of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and West Africa.

### Expansion

Early in the nineteenth century it expanded into India and South Africa and in the second half of that century to countries outside the British Empire such as China and Japan. The pattern of mission work as it evolved was pastoral, evangelistic, educational and medical and it was an organisation that needed to report back and communicate internally. The records and archives now held in Rhodes House include correspondence 1701-1975, committee minutes, 1701-1966 and crucially for my discoveries, missionaries' reports, 1856-1951.

My role in the USPG archive was to apply my expertise in British and American history to research the biographical backgrounds of the first missionaries sent out to America. My interest in migration history led me to look at the reports from missionaries scattered around the globe from 1701. And one day, with help from the USPG archivist, I made the discovery that the earlier SPG had stationed a chaplain to emigrants on the dockside in Liverpool at the very heart of the great nineteenth century outward migration of people from England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland and the rest of Europe.

Around the time of the Irish Famine the society had become increasingly concerned as to the spiritual and temporal welfare of the huge numbers emigrating through Liverpool and decided to station an emigrant chaplain in their midst. Page after page of nineteenth century script detailed not just the souls baptised and the expenses claimed but also described the condition of people emigrating through the port and city of Liverpool. The first Emigrants' Chaplain, the Reverend Welsh began his work on the river Mersey in 1849 and reported to his superiors in London each quarter. Many of the manuscript reports survive in the archives.

Against a background of the recent shipwreck on 28 April 1859 of an emigrant ship from Liverpool, the United States ship the 'Pomona' off the coast of Ireland with the loss of all but two of the 396 Roman Catholic passengers, he described the emotions evident at the government emigrant depot in Birkenhead before departure.

*"We have commenced to hold our services in the open transit shed, in front of the depot, and close by the dock, where the vessel is lying ready to receive her living cargo. The sight of their ship, the nearness of the hour of embarking, the seeing of friends for the last time, who now join heartily with them in Common Prayer, all combine to solemnise and hallow the last evensong."*

### 'A better life'

During the period 1830-1930 it is estimated about 40 million people left Europe in search of a new and better life and that nine million of them sailed from Liverpool emigrating to the 'New World' of mainly North America, Australia and New Zealand.

It was an exciting discovery and one that I returned to many times to make notes ready to write a second book on emigration – this time one based on Liverpool as a migration port.

E Series, Missionary Reports, Africa, Asia, Australia, 1859.



XLIV th  
Quarterly Report  
Birkenhead  
May th 1860

The 12th day of this month  
completed the eleven<sup>th</sup> year  
of my ministry amongst  
emigrants at the Port of  
Liverpool. I thank God  
for his continued mercy to  
me in many a perilous  
adventure ~~during~~ on the  
Mersey, in the performance  
of my duty, during that large  
portion of my life. I am  
able to say also that  
withstanding constant  
pressure to mind and rain

The beginning of Reverend Walsh's quarterly report from May 1860 'in the eleventh year of my ministry.

### Political context

The opportunity for that study has had to wait many years with a career in politics, journalism, public relations and consulting taking precedence but last October a chance meeting at the Labour Party Conference in Liverpool has opened up new possibilities and I suggest is an interesting case study so far of how advocacy for archives needs always to take advantage of broader developments.

The city of Liverpool is in the process of considerable economic, social and cultural regeneration. A lot of work has been carried out there – not least the historic preservation of the Albert Dock and more recently the largest retail-

led regeneration project in Europe, the £1 billion redevelopment of the Liverpool One area as a shopping and leisure area. On the Mersey Waterfront the Cruise Liner Facility opened in September 2007 and the new £150 million Arena and Convention Centre launched the European Capital of Culture celebrations in January 2008.

The thriving National Museums Liverpool group of museums and galleries attracted 2.5 million visitors in 2010 and now includes the new Museum of Liverpool (opened in 2011), the Merseyside Maritime Museum (opened in 1980) and the International Slavery Museum (opened 2007). In addition to the city archives there are other collections such as the Cunard shipping line papers deposited with the University of Liverpool. It is a triumph in many ways given the social and economic decline that claimed Liverpool as the twentieth century progressed, culminating perhaps in the Toxteth Riots of July 1991.

The Toxteth riots brought the plight of Liverpool (and of Brixton in London) to national and international attention at that time.

Indeed government cabinet records just opened to the public under the thirty years rule by the National Archives caused controversy in the New Year when they revealed that the then Chancellor of the Exchequer Geoffrey Howe had advised Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher on the "managed decline" of Liverpool. The wiser counsel of Michael Heseltine, later dubbed Minister for Merseyside, prevailed and spasmodic regeneration initiatives began in the years following. Indeed the now Lord Heseltine is the co-author with Sir Terry Leahy, former chief executive of Tesco, of a new study of the future of Liverpool for the coalition government.

Published last October, the report calls for England's regions to be given the same level of devolution as London if they are to compete successfully with Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales and close the north-south divide. It suggests that future growth in Liverpool could come from biosciences, port expansion, advanced manufacturing, renewable energy, tourism and the creative industries.

The coalition's proposals on new localism powers aim to empower local communities but are not on the scale advocated by Heseltine and Leahy, who suggest a new mayor for Liverpool who represents the 1.5 million people in the six boroughs of the city region rather than simply the city of Liverpool's 400,000 inhabitants.



### Advocacy opportunity

It is a political context that again opens opportunity for advocacy.

My idea for a new book on emigration based in part upon the emigrants' chaplains' reports has been around for a while. It is a project that really has to wait for the time and resources to carry it out. The chance conversation at the annual Labour Party Conference in Liverpool last October has opened up the possibility again. It clearly illustrates the importance of networking for advocacy.

My meeting was with staff members of the latest economic redevelopment vehicle in the city – an organisation called Liverpool Vision. They have secured the contract to host the 2012 Kellogg global entrepreneurial conference and staff explained they wanted to hone in on Liverpool's emigration heritage and the city's key role in the development of global trade and manufacturing. They then revealed that Liverpool Vision had been charged with the delivery of a feasibility study for a visitor attraction on emigration located in the old Cunard Building – one of the Three Graces or three widely recognised historic buildings on the Liverpool waterfront.

After talking through my earlier research on migration a proposal was sent to Liverpool Vision that outlined both the entrepreneurial experience of the silk workers in the US, who of course emigrated through Liverpool and of the previously undiscovered new angle on emigration through the eyes of the emigrants' chaplains. That proposal has in turn led me to participate in the consultation process with the international consulting company commissioned to work on a report as to the feasibility of the new visitor attraction on emigration in the old Cunard Building.

### Resonance

It may be time for the emigrants' chaplains at last to stir and I am currently working on a new book proposal for an accessible yet scholarly study of Liverpool provisionally entitled 'Living Cargo: Migration from Liverpool in the Nineteenth Century'.

The outcome of all this activity will be known in due course but offered here as a story in advocacy and the long lasting legacy of records and archives as guardians of our past that can offer such resonance for our future ambitions.

### Richard Margrave

Director of Margrave Communications Ltd

No.	Name	Destination	Expense
15	John Bright	N. York	5.0
	Vanguard	N. York	
27	Fred. Leffland	Melbourne	3.0
28	Ocean Home	Melbourne	2.6
29	Diamonds	Quebec	2.6
30			
1	Ocean Home	Melbourne	3.6
2	Marmin	N. York	2.6
3	Harvey Birch	N. Orleans	2.6
4	Manhattan	N. York	3.0
5	Tudor	A. Orleans	
	Carulier	N. York	3.6
6	Melton	N. York	3.0
7			
8	Tudor	Sydney	2.6
9	Elizabeth	Quebec	2.6
10	Harlequin	Quebec	2.6
11	Palatine	Quebec	3.6
12			

Date, ship, destination and expenses

Dr Richard Margrave is director of Margrave Communications Limited, London an independent advocacy consultancy ([www.margrave.co.uk](http://www.margrave.co.uk)) and an Academic Fellow of the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, Washington D.C. ([www.potomacinstitute.org](http://www.potomacinstitute.org)).

The author is very grateful to The United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and The Bodleian Library of Commonwealth and African Studies at Rhodes House for permission to photograph E Series, Missionary Reports, African, Asia, Australia, 1859.

# Hard times, even with powerful advocacy

## A Manager reflects

We are increasingly familiar with the concept of advocacy. Having people who can help us influence at a senior level is constantly placed before us as a key tool in our archive box. People who can help, assist, aid, back, champion, campaign for, defend, encourage, plead for, fundraise for, promote, uphold, use and urge on our behalf. Public and celebrity support for a particular cause can be very effective - as we have seen with some of our local libraries.

We who work in archives, work with our collections to ensure they are managed to the best of our professional ability. The past 15 years have seen a huge development in our ability to improve our services within common standards. We have used standards to catalogue our holdings and put those catalogues freely in the public domain. From this we have strong collaborations – such as Access to Archives or the Archives Hub – that have improved access to our collections. We have successfully applied to schemes to promote the significance of our collections and the excellence of our services - Designated Status, UNESCO, the heritage Volunteer Awards, or Web Awards. The forthcoming Archives Accreditation standard is another tool to robustly demonstrate value, and use to benchmark against others in the sector. We have promoted our collections in the press - local, national, and international, paper, in radio, television, web and film. We have refurbished old buildings or moved to new premises with the support of funders such as Clore and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

All these opportunities have built our profile and attracted advocates. And yet, despite achieving all this, when a recession hits some of us find ourselves in the firing line. Sadly some of our parent bodies – whether private, business, university or local authority – cannot retain all of their services. When a decision has to be made to cut

street lighting, to reduce the number of lecturers, facing the immediate concerns of local tax payers or fee-paying students often makes it truly difficult to justify the place of archives.

Another concept of advocacy is as the profession of a legal advocate. In our work to protect our existence, the area of legal responsibilities is an important one. Few archives are directly covered by a mandatory requirement to exist. Where this does occur the existence of the archive as opposed to what the archive service consists of, can be rather hazy.

Where legal responsibilities exist, completely closing an archive becomes less of a quick cost saving exercise. Unravelling red tape is time-consuming and costly, two things that many organisations shy away from especially when they are searching for cuts in the immediate financial year. This may only keep a skeletal archive in existence – but given how small many archive services are, this may also be our saving grace.

One advocacy tool rarely mentioned is a decent deposit agreement. The Heritage Lottery Fund has long argued that each accession should be a gift accompanied by a decent deposit agreement. The deposit agreement should include clauses that mean any substantial change in the provision of access or a change in ownership must be negotiated with the depositor. If a repository has several hundred depositors to be traced and appraised of, any archive closure becomes a time-consuming, public and expensive process. Often depositors include the great and good of a local or subject area, and the associated risk to the

wider organisation's reputation may act as a deterrent to change. Where depositors are supportive of the archive service a strong body of advocates is created, and negative press is hard to avoid.

Similarly Heritage Lottery Fund's insistence that monies should be repaid if a building to which they have contributed is closed also acts as a deterrent. Closure is less of a 'quick win' – it is expensive, time consuming and more likely to create prolonged bad press. The need for negotiation with the Heritage Lottery Fund and other funders who require options to be discussed with them if costs are to be avoided also creates a layer of advocacy – albeit made of red tape.

The archive sector is small, specialist and segmented. Public sector museums and libraries have relatively centralised funding streams. The Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) provides national museums funding; it also provides core funding for local libraries through their authorities (though this is not ring fenced) as part of the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act. The Higher Education Funding Council also provides funding for 31 university museums and galleries. Funds such as these are facing substantial cuts in the coming months. They may indirectly provide funds for archives – but archive funding is not ring-fenced, tends to be hidden and does not receive as much attention when cut.

The National Archives recent work to act as an advisor and advocate to our parent bodies is to be welcomed. However unless our advocates come with substantial pots of money despite all our best efforts there will probably be more services closed in the coming months.

.....  
Anonymous  
.....



# British Black Dance Archives project wins Heritage Lottery Fund support

A project that aims to collate, preserve, document and make accessible up to 10 collections from eminent individuals and organisations from the British Black dance sector has just started.

The project is being led by State of Emergency Productions, a national arts organisation based in Somerset, in partnership with the National Resource Centre for Dance (NRCD) at the University of Surrey.

The project came about as a result of research commissioned by State of Emergency in 2010 entitled *Altered States*. This aimed to explore the needs of Black choreographers and the Black dance sector in the UK. Key findings from the report highlighted the fragmented history of Black dance in the UK and the fact that there is little trace of the work or impact of many companies involved. At present, the only catalogued and accessible archive is Kokuma Dance Theatre, which is held at the NRCD. State of Emergency celebrated 25 years of pioneering work in 2011, and like many other Black dance companies has a rich history, which is at risk of being unrecorded, unseen and lost to future generations.

The project's nine-month development phase started in December 2011 and will work towards a second round Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) submission in October 2012. Project Manager Jenny Williams and Scoping Archivist Gary Collins are already on board and will be joined by an Education and Community Officer in March 2012.

The development phase will assess the requirements of the full project, make contact with potential donors, plan project activities, formulate the budget, make

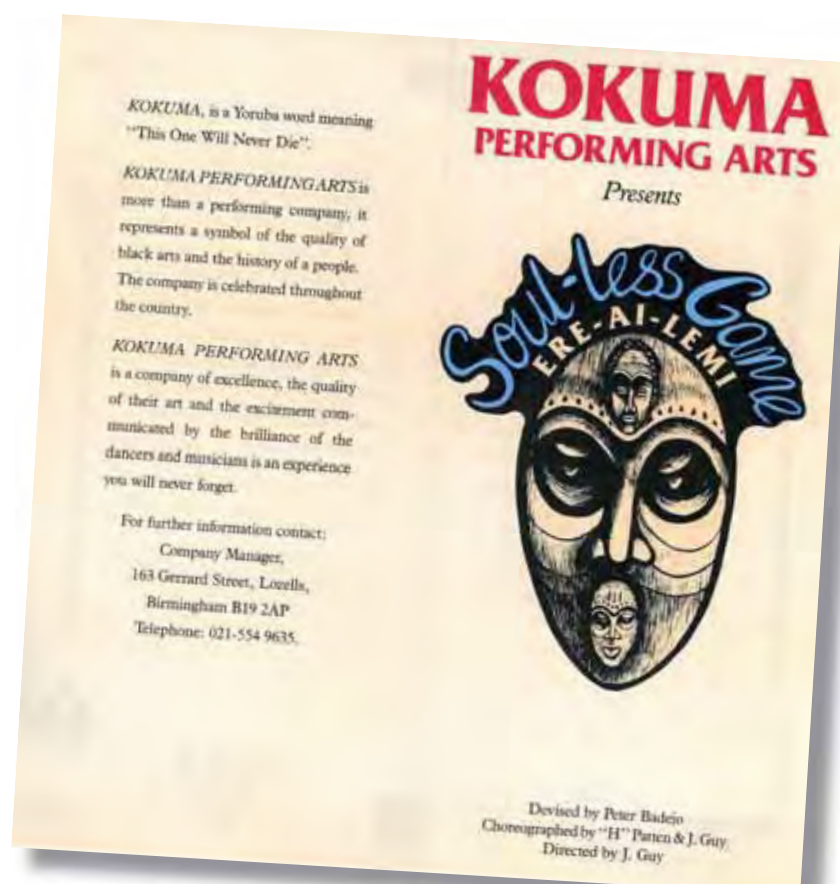
partnership funding applications and appraise archive requirements for the potential second round.

If the partners are successful with a second round submission, it is planned that the assembled archives will reflect the past 50 plus years of British Black Dance, and the collection will be supported by a lively and engaging learning and participation programme, where dance activity will 'animate' the archive collections. The project has potential to engage with the broadest possible audiences and include communities who might not otherwise engage with archives. If successful, the second phase will take place over the course of two years, and on a national scale will engage with the formal and informal education sectors and with community groups

all over the country. It will include a touring exhibition; master classes with professional dancers, community dance practitioners, and prominent dance schools; and develop sustainable relationships with national dance agencies.

The project also aims to have some significant long-term outcomes – for instance, it will raise awareness of the importance of archives amongst Black dance practitioners themselves. Over the next few months a series of information events will be held in partnership with the Strategic Alliance for Black Dance, a national network of dance companies, individual dancers and choreographers. The project will also offer a high quality and well thought out positive action training opportunity for an aspiring Black and minority archivist.

Kokuma Leaflet Soul-Less Game.jpg - Programme for Soul-Less Game (Guy & Patten, 1989), Kokuma Performing Arts, Ref. No. KO/H/6



Archive collections discovered as part of this project will be deposited there to join the Kokuma Dance Theatre archive. These collections will ensure that a critical mass of material is gathered and made available to researchers where very little is currently accessible. They will also preserve and celebrate the diverse British Black dance heritage and its contribution to the dance sector and the shared cultural and artistic heritage. Links to Black dance material held by other organisations will also be highlighted. A project website (at [www.blackdancearchives.co.uk](http://www.blackdancearchives.co.uk)) will be available in February.

Deborah Baddoo MBE, Artistic Director of State of Emergency said: 'We are thrilled that the Heritage Lottery Fund has given us support for this valuable project. Without this initiative the contribution that British Black dance has made to our nation's dance development and cultural life will remain



**STATE OF EMERGENCY** THE INDEPENDENT VOICE FOR BLACK DANCE

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hidden and undocumented. It is great to know that we are a step closer to preserving this lost history for future generations.'

Nerys Watts, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund South West, said: 'We at the Heritage Lottery Fund are pleased to support State of Emergency and bring their vision a step closer to reality. British Black Dance has had a real impact on our country's cultural heritage over the last 50 years, and this project meets a real need to draw together and preserve collections relating to this history. There is still work



to be done in developing the project but HLF will be offering their full support in taking their application further.'

The project would be interested to hear from people or organisations holding Black dance archive material. If you can help or would like further information please contact Gary Collins or Sharon Maxwell.

**Gary Collins and Sharon Maxwell**

British Black Dance Archives and National Resource Centre for Dance, University of Surrey

[archive@stateofemergencyltd.com](mailto:archive@stateofemergencyltd.com)

[nrcd@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:nrcd@surrey.ac.uk)

[www.surrey.ac.uk/library/nrcd/archives/index.htm](http://www.surrey.ac.uk/library/nrcd/archives/index.htm)



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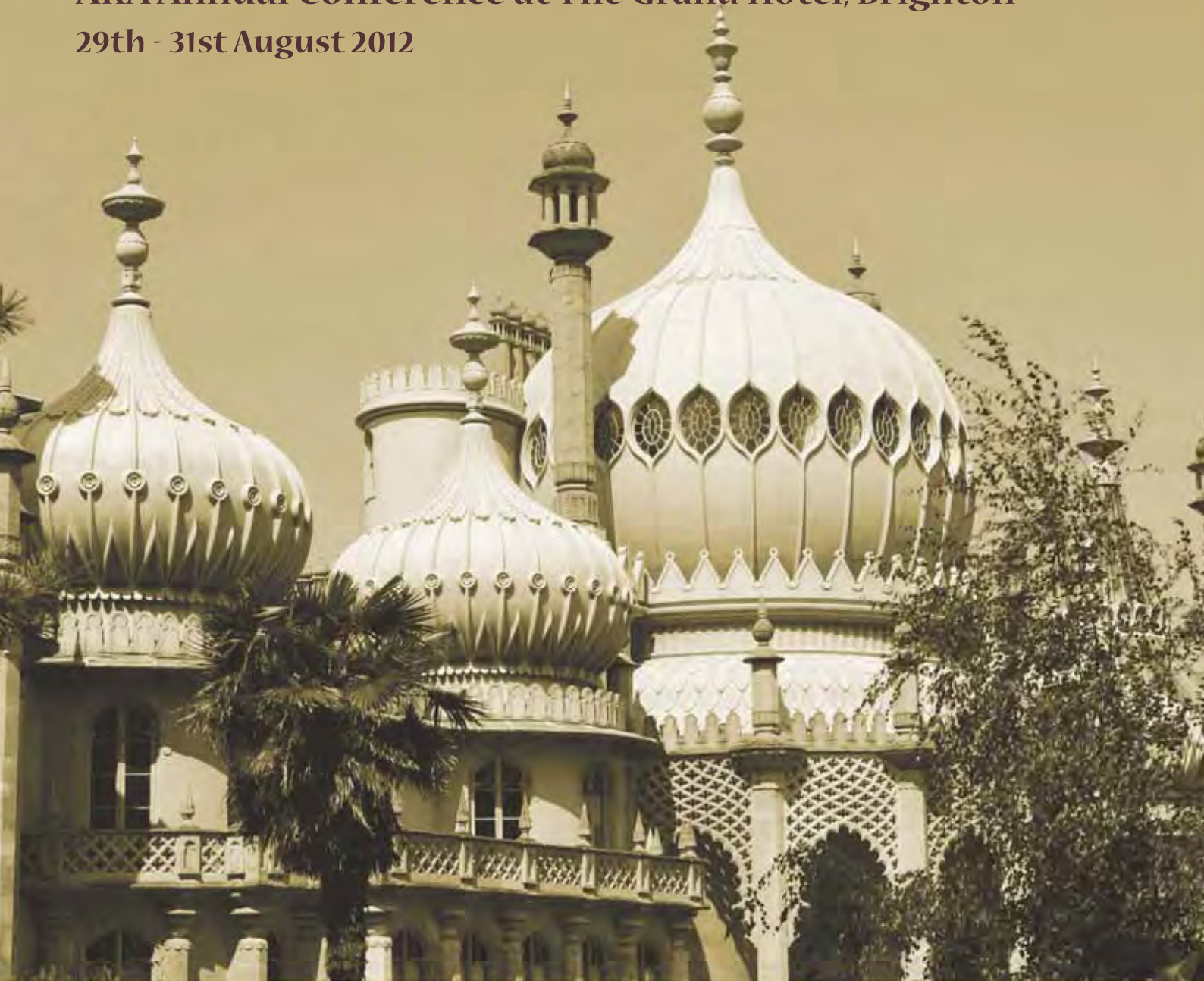
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