



Archives & Records
Association
UK & Ireland

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Archives & Technology Special Issue



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The Archives and Records Association (UK & Ireland) is pleased to announce its new Core Training programme.

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

The first eight courses have now been designed. More will follow.

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

Copyright

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

Audience Engagement

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

Freedom of Information

The course will cover the basic principles of the Freedom of Information Act as well as exploring some practical case studies. This will be a great opportunity to develop your knowledge about the Act and how to implement it in the workplace.

Archives and Volunteers

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

Digital Preservation

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

Data Protection

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

E-records management

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

New and refurbished Archives Buildings

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

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



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UK & Ireland

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 Left: Cloak from RSC collection, worn by Jeremy Irons as ‘Richard II’ in 1986 © SBT/RSC.
 Right Top: Gary Brannan speaking on 21 November at the Houses of Parliament. Photograph by Simon O’Connor for the ARA.
 Right Middle: Augmented reality on display at MIMAS.
 Right Bottom: Postcards from the Shropshire Archives collection.

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the first edition of *ARC* for 2014. We very much hope that you had a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

This issue is on Archives and Technology. Often archivists are accused of being stuck in the past and disliking technology, the articles in this issue disprove that and show how our sector is embracing technology to make collections more accessible than ever.

We have an interesting article on the use of virtual volunteering, an exciting initiative which could mean that archives are more accessible for users who are unable to visit the services in person and links in to the current Explore Your Archive campaign. The use of digital technology at Shakespeare Birthplace Trust has also helped to bring collections to life, meaning that props and costumes that are otherwise too fragile to display can still be examined and make links between the archive material such as designs and the real thing. One particular highlight is a costume worn by a famous actor...we won’t say any more here – you’ll have to read the article.

There is also an insight into how the British Council has been involved with the development of English Language assessments around the world and how the process has changed over time. It also raises the question of how, now that the world has become more technological, the process will change in future and how we may go about capturing these changes.

We hope the articles and features are thought-provoking and make technology seem far less scary. They might even inspire you to apply for funding to undertake a technological project to make your own collections more accessible - perhaps you have a collection you’d love to digitise or material you would like to create educational materials for that can bring the collection to life using technology...the possibilities are endless.

As always feedback and contributions are always welcome. Please email us using arceditors@archives.org.uk. Special thanks go to Simon Wilson and Amy Hurst for coordinating the content and doing such a fabulous job.

Sarah Norman, Ceri Forster, Ellie Prigeon, 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.

Opening Lines



Martin Taylor is City Archivist of Hull, and has been Chair of the ARA since 2011. Here, Martin offers some personal views about First World War commemorations.

“History became Legend, Legend became Myth” says Cate Blanchett’s Galadriel at the beginning of the *Fellowship of the Ring* film. No event in our recent history illustrates the truth of this, or the speed of the evolution, like the First World War does. 2014 sees centenary of the outbreak of the war and most publicly accessible archives have given some thought as to how to participate in these commemorations. Many services will soon be advancing along the well-worn duckboards towards a muddled landscape of Pals Battalions, The Home Front, Zeppelin Raids, Stately Homes Used as Hospitals, and so on.

Nearly a century after the end of the war, and all combatants now having passed away, most people have their own vivid picture of the First World War, which may say more about them, and 21st century popular culture, than the war itself.

Last year as Chair of the Association I attended the launch of the Heritage Lottery Fund’s *First World War: Then and Now* grants programme. The Secretary of State for Culture spoke of the First World War as a regrettable conflict between plucky little Britain – and her Empire – against the might of the Kaiser. The omission of our European allies was striking. The failure to mention that not everyone in the United Kingdom, for the best of reasons, was seized with the urge to fight for their country was also striking but more understandable.

The statement that every family in the country was affected by the war has become a truism. Except of course it isn’t true – or at least not to the same extent. My maternal

grandfather’s favourite story of his Great War childhood was of watching a German lean out a Zeppelin over Scunthorpe literally to drop a bomb, which only decapitated a pig. Both he and my paternal grandfather were too young to have fought; their fathers were too old. Doubtless they had friends and more distant relatives who did, but we have not inherited any censored letters from the Front, no death plaques, none of the other family ephemera of conflict. Not all wartime experiences, both at home and at the Front were the same; not all comfortably fit within our modern views of the War.

There is a danger with the First World War commemorations that, doubtless for the best of reasons, they will become the reconfirmation of a national mythology, without the nuances and challenges which exploration of the records would show. And it’s the nuances and challenges which are far more interesting and which provide the richer contrasts of human experience in that terrible conflict.

The next five years will provide a great opportunity for records professionals to showcase their First World War archives, and add to the national story in ways which challenge or confirm prevailing myths. Just as importantly in these difficult times, the commemorations will demonstrate the value of what we do as archivists, conservators and records managers. The Great War will be high in the national consciousness. The centenary should enable us to embed the records of the war, and ourselves as the custodians of those records, in the national consciousness too.

Collecting Matters

Archives & Technology: Potential for Finding Archives

"History is a gallery of pictures in which there are few originals and many copies".
Alexis de Tocqueville, French political thinker and historian.

Whether you are looking for the originals, or are content with copies, our past is vibrantly depicted in archives across the country. To that end, a number of systems hosted by The National Archives have been developed to serve researchers. These include: the National Register of Archives (NRA), Access to Archives (A2A), the ARCHON database, the Manorial Documents Register (MDR), and Accessions to Repositories.

In an effort to really enhance the usability and content of these resources, The National Archives has been working to incorporate them into its Discovery service as part of the Finding Archives project. The goal is to develop a simple, easy to use 'one stop shop' for information about records relating to UK history wherever they are held, including The National Archives.

Following consultation with the archives sector, and detailed design work, a Beta version of the new service including the NRA and ARCHON data was developed and released in 2013. Following user testing and feedback, and additional work to incorporate the other content, Discovery will continue to evolve towards a more comprehensive service in 2014.

Whatever you are looking for, this promises to be a fantastic resource for all archives users and will re-emphasise the enormous value of the nation's archives.

For more information about the project, please see:
<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/finding-archives.htm>

Please also keep an eye on our blog, which will feature updates on Discovery, and our other services:
<http://blog.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

Why not try the beta?
<http://beta.discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

If you have any feedback regarding the Finding Archives project, please contact:
FindingArchivesProject@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

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Registration Scheme News

This month Jessamy Carlson explains what will be happening to the Registration Scheme over the next few years. ARA Board member Jessamy is the co-Chair of the Professional Development Portfolio along with Wesley Geddis. They have been tasked with overseeing the introduction of a CPD scheme to the ARA, and are in the process of establishing a pilot group to test the framework fully over the next two years. The pilot project will begin in Spring 2014.

RW: Hello Jessamy. What will ARA's CPD Framework mean for the Registration Scheme? How will it change as a result?

JC: Hello Richard. In essence, not a great deal. The objectives remain the same: supporting reflective practitioners in their early years. The information and evidence we ask for to demonstrate development and progress will remain similar. Candidates will still have mentors, and assessment will still be twice a year. There will still be a registrar, and there are no plans to change the minimum time period for completion. What will change are the criteria against which we benchmark, and against which candidates will need to demonstrate learning, development, progression and achievement. The shift to competencies means that we're asking more about the skills and less about the process, but just as much about what you learnt and what you will do with that learning.

RW: Why is this new CPD framework necessary?

JC: It's been a while since any such framework was developed with our professions in mind. When we recently surveyed the membership about what they wanted from the ARA, tangible benefits such as a CPD scheme were mentioned time and time again. The Board tries to act upon what the membership tell us they want, and so we commissioned this piece of work from Caroline Williams. The framework has now been published and we are embarking upon a pilot project in order to fully test the framework before it is rolled out to the wider membership.

RW: What benefits do you think these changes will bring to the process of becoming a Registered member of ARA?

JC: I think placing the Registration Scheme in a clear and wider scale of professional development adds value to the Scheme. It will enable people to see where their development may progress beyond the Registration Scheme and work across the different professions the ARA represents. I know that several services intend to use the framework alongside their generic staff assessment schemes, to allow their staff to demonstrate their specialist skills and I hope that this broader use of the framework will raise the profile of the Registration Scheme and registered status as a result.

RW: What is ARA doing to prepare for the changes to the Registration Scheme?

JC: Lots! We have a four year plan, which we drew up with the Registrar to ensure a smooth transition. The Registration Scheme will continue in its current format until the end of 2014, when there will be a moratorium on enrolment and submission for a year. During 2015, we will rewrite and reissue all the relevant guidance for candidates, mentors and assessors and run workshops and training events to make sure as many people as possible are confident in making the new scheme work for them. The new scheme will roll out in 2016. In addition, we have a number of current candidates in the pilot group who will be testing out how the new CPD framework works for registration.

RW: Should those professionals currently enrolled on the Registration Scheme stop working on their portfolios?

JC: Absolutely not. If you enrolled in the Registration Scheme before 31 December 2014, then you will be able to submit under the old scheme up until the October assessment round in 2017. Alternatively, you can choose to migrate your partially completed learning record to the new scheme and then work towards submitting under the new scheme from 2018. So plenty of time! Anyone enrolling after 31 December 2015 will automatically go into the new scheme

RW: Will existing Registered members of ARA have to enrol on the new scheme?

JC: We are keen to see as many people as possible use the ARA's framework to document their professional development, whatever stage of career they are at. One of the criticisms levelled at the Registration Scheme was that people often completed it whilst still in the early years of their career and then found there wasn't anything to be going on with. By bringing in a CPD framework which covers a much broader area of career development, we hope to engage with far more members and emphasise that career development doesn't stop when you finish the Registration Scheme. One possibility we are considering is revalidating registered status at set periods after members have attained registered status, but there's lots to think about and explore during this pilot phase.

RW: Where can we find out more information?

JC: Keep an eye on the ARA in Action pages on the website. We will also be publishing regularly in ARC and getting in touch with the wider membership. You can also get in touch with the Registration Scheme Committee, or with me or Wesley and we will do our best to help you.

CONTACTS:

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Registration Scheme Admin and Bursaries:
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Registration Scheme Communications Officer:
regschemecomms@archives.org.uk

Registration Scheme Mentor Queries and Advice:
regschemementors@archives.org.uk

ARC magazine is a great read - but are you also reading **ARA TODAY?**



ARA TODAY is your fortnightly e-newsletter. If you haven't been reading it, you may not know about the latest training courses, the availability of bursaries, special member discounts, what the latest sector research is telling us.... Every issue also has up-to-the-minute news from the ARA's Chief Executive.

If you're not receiving ARA TODAY in your inbox, you may need to add ARAToday@news-archives.org.uk to your address book to make sure your newsletter is not being rejected – or talk to your local technical colleagues.



Gary Brannan speaking on 21 November at the Houses of Parliament
Photograph: Simon O'Connor for the ARA

West Yorkshire archivist tells it like it is – in the Houses of Parliament

The Explore Your Archive campaign began on 16 November. With around 200 archives in the UK and Ireland putting on special events, more than 2000 tweets and more than 100 pieces of local press coverage in the opening few days of the campaign, we believe the sector has delivered the most successful public awareness push ever. We shall be asking for feedback and evaluating what we all achieved – and where we want to go next with the campaign - in early 2014.

There were formal campaign launches in Wales, Ireland and, on 21 November, at the Houses of Parliament in London, sponsored by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Archives and History. On that day there were speeches by the Acting Chief Executive of The National Archives, Clem Brohier, by ARA President Caroline Williams and by a number of the Campaign's ambassadors including ARA Patron Professor Lisa Jardine.

Also speaking on that day was archivist Gary Brannan. In a passionate yet humorous speech, Gary told the audience what is like to be an archivist. The speech was so well received we're delighted to share it here in ARC.

Marie Owens

Head of Public Affairs, ARA

At the risk of sounding like someone attending a self-help session – my name is Gary Brannan and yes, I am an Archivist. I don't own any tweed. Bow ties make my face look a bit funny. I don't often come home covered in dust and neither do I spend my day making a researcher beg for access to a document. And I haven't worn a pair of white gloves in ages.

My day job is officially 'E Services Co-ordinator' for West Yorkshire Archive Service. I look after our website, social media, and records that we have had digitised (and are still having digitised). There's an audience in the millions for this all around the world. They connect them with a past and a place that – despite maybe having roots somewhere for hundreds of years – they still feel like is home.

I also play a role in my professional body – the ARA. This is teamwork in action, skilled, knowledgeable and dedicated professionals, working together in a small profession to help each other. And that's what I associate most with this profession.

How did I get here? On the tube. Old joke, I know. My first degree was in history. It was during this time that I became inspired to be an archivist. I was specialising in the history of cocoa adulteration, and working at the University Archives. It was the end of the day, near the point where I'd have to stop reading and start writing.

I was starting to get desperate. In short, I was thinking of becoming a full time academic. And then it hit me – if I did that, I'd get to play and use this stuff once every few years. I'd be stuck in a world of marking, and teaching and paperwork. These guys, here at the archive – they got to play with history every single day. What an opportunity!

After that followed by another year's postgraduate study in Aberystwyth, this time for an MSc (Econ) in Archive Administration. Here, we learnt Latin, handwriting styles back to the 12th century, legal history back to the 1100s, archival theory, records management practice, cataloguing skills and the Welsh for 'this train is cancelled due to snow'. I also met my wife. Romance in the archives.

I'm very lucky. My first job was at West Yorkshire Archives. Very few Archivists are lucky enough to look after their own records. I'm in there, just as a number in a birth register. I should also be there as a baptism, but they missed me out of the Register. I'm doing the best job I can to be invisible.

There is no such thing as a typical day in my job. Anything can – and on weekdays, probably will – happen.

We're aware that – sadly – for some of the older regulars, we may be the only human contact they have all week. We know so much about them already, beyond their research needs. When we don't see them for a few weeks, we worry.

We'll almost certainly need to be able to read and interpret documents back to the 1500s. The content and meaning of land deeds. Old local authority boundaries. The electoral system 1840 to the present day. How to comfort someone when they read a mental health file about their grandmother. Later, we could need to extract once 'destroyed' records from a basement, safeguarding records of local decisions for the future.

The modern archivist needs to look two ways. Once, to the past, to the creators and custodians of the records we hold, to the duty of their memory and the hardships they may have faced to make sure they survive. But

we also look to the future, to records that have only ever existed digitally, and to the coming generations to make sure that their history is as well documented as the pasts. And finally, to inspire a new generation to care for, and interact with their past.

I'm proud because I help people make sense of where they have come from, and where they may be going. I can provide a defence in their time of legal need. I can provide a resource which can help older people develop their skills in IT, help kids see history brought to life and see personal and national pasts investigated and re-interpreted time and again.

I am proud. Proud to keep the records of the forgotten, so they can be rediscovered. Proud to keep the memories of great deeds alive, and proud to keep the memory of our less-great days alive too, so that in the future we can learn and not make the same mistakes again. Proud to let communities connect with a past that binds them, and proud to know that when I'm gone, the work I have done will benefit someone.

And that's what we do. We keep memories alive, let us reconnect with our shared past, connect to people we never met and never had a chance of meeting. We collect the pieces so we can make the jigsaw of our past a little bit clearer. We need to find, to interpret, to inspire. We're the memory of a proud nation. When we have forgotten, we are there to help us remember.

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Gary Brannan

West Yorkshire Archive Service
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Documenting the History of the British Council's Involvement in English Language Assessment

In Sudan, where I come from, the words 'British qualifications' mean excellence. The British Council in Sudan is seen as a place for exams, higher education, a library and scholarships. In other words it is perceived as a place for opportunities.

British Council Employee, British Council News, November 2013

The British Council has recently begun a three year project documenting the history of its involvement in English language assessment. The British Council is recognised as an authority in English language assessment with a strong international reputation. It is hoped that this project will further substantiate the Council's reputation by demonstrating the longevity of its involvement and expertise in the field. This project is also intended to raise the profile of information and knowledge management within the British Council by highlighting the importance of corporate memory and the potential for archives to be used to meet current business objectives.

The British Council was founded in 1934, with the purpose of promoting Britain abroad by encouraging cultural, educational and other interchanges between the United Kingdom and elsewhere. It was incorporated by Royal Charter in 1940, and is an independent organisation partly funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. It is a public records body and transfers



its historical records to The National Archives in Kew.

Since the early 1940s the Council has both taught and assessed proficiency in the English language around the world. This work took on new significance in the 1950s, when larger numbers of overseas students applied to attend universities in the UK. These universities found it necessary to introduce means of objectively assessing the students' English proficiency. Since this period, the Council has been involved in developing and administering a number of such tests including IELTS (the International English Language Testing System) which was developed with Cambridge English Language Assessment and IDP Education, and Aptis – an independent Council test which was launched last year.

These examinations are a key source of income for the Council and the benefits of using historical evidence to establish its credentials in this field are clear.

The History of Assessment project team consists of two archivists, two researchers and one project administrator. Together we aim to document the history of the British Council's involvement in English language assessment, primarily by locating and describing relevant published and unpublished material. Due to the collaborative nature of the British Council's work, the search for records is not limited to The National Archives, but includes university repositories, subject specific collections and hopefully personal collections. We also plan to create our own records by conducting oral history interviews.

To bring these disparate resources together we will be using the Online Heritage Resource Manager (OHRM), a context-based resource discovery and access system developed at the eScholarship Research Centre, University of Melbourne. This system will allow us to describe and link together the people, projects, organisations and events associated with this history and in so doing create our own ontology of entities and relationships associated with the resources.

The project has already revealed some interesting information, including what is now thought to be the earliest questionnaire of its kind used to assess English language proficiency. The research being undertaken will result in the publication of a book as well as a website which will integrate the content of the OHRM and greatly enhance the accessibility of relevant resources. By creating a central knowledge space the British Council will preserve its corporate memory, achieve intellectual control over related records not in its custody, and ultimately establish its influence in this area, encouraging more students to sit British Council exams. The history of the British Council's involvement in English language assessment is not a story of the past but of the future.

Does your organisation hold material relating to the British Council or English language assessment? Are you conducting a similar project? We'd love to hear from you.
Contact: joanna.rosenzweig@britishcouncil.org

Melissa Downing

History of Assessment Project Archivist, British Council

Joanna Loxton

Records Reviewer, British Council

Joanna Rosenzweig

History of Assessment Project Administrator, British Council

Perspectives on the ARA Conference

ARA Conference 2013 was a series of firsts: first trip to the beautiful city of Cardiff, first chance to be able to attend all three days of an ARA Conference, and first attempt at dancing to a Welsh ceilidh band. Not one strand disappointed.

The conference was centred on the themes of Accountability, Culture and Ethics, a group of topics particularly relevant for a charity archivist such as myself. Our history and archives are a huge part of a charity's accountability, especially when it comes to explaining past decisions. A large amount of our work involves not only providing information on young people who have been in our care to genealogists, but also to care-leavers. This involves ensuring the information that is provided is delivered in a sensitive and ethical way. Therefore this year's conference will be extremely informative to the Together Trust's work to see how other organisations are using their archives to show accountability and ensure their work remains ethical.

As always there were various talks which I looked forward to with great interest and those which surprised me by being more relevant than I had originally anticipated. One of the former was a talk by Michael Jones and the 'Find and Connect' project in Australia helping former child migrants. As expected, this was a thought-provoking lecture and proved the extreme value of archives and records to different communities. It also considered how we as archivists provide access to these collections. Many people wanting access in this sector are not researchers, and websites and finding aids should reflect this to make a complicated process as painless as possible.

Other talks led us into a world unknown to the small-scale archivist. A world far away from the paper document, acid free folders and row upon row of archive boxes. This was the future, the electronic environment where new digital skills are being created to ensure the preservation of millions of born-digital documents being created for business use. Dr Jones Lukose Ongalo, Head of Records and Archives at the International Criminal Court in The Hague took us on an entertaining tour of the court, whilst all the time emphasising the accountability of the archivist and the importance of keeping trustworthy records.

The information management side of me was also stirred with Melissa Suek's excellent talk on Bring Your Own Device (BYOD). This is a current hot topic in the information world and highlighted the very real concern that this can bring to an organisation if safety procedures are not put into place. Other intriguing talks included keynote speaker Dr Sarah Tyacke's sobering insight into the work of those who created the permanent archive for the Hillsborough Disaster. Caroline William's opening address into the 'case of fuzziness' also prompted much debate, whilst Maria Sienkiewicz showed how the archive can offer a positive way forward to organisations which had previously been given a bad press.

As always the ARA Conference provided excellent networking opportunities and the chance to discuss topics with other archivists in similar sectors. It also renewed the magnitude of what we all do within our own companies, of how the preservation of material can be of such huge importance to the individual and the collective memory, and how vital it is to conduct the presenting of this information in a sensitive and ethical fashion. ARA 2013 did not disappoint!

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Liz Sykes

Records, Archives & Information Officer

Welcome to the latest ARC Archives and Technology Special Edition brought to you by the ARA Section for Archives and Technology (SAT)

I must start by thanking two of the Section's Committee members Lisa Greenhalgh and Amy Hurst for their efforts in co-ordinating a veritable feast of interesting articles for you to read and enjoy.

It is evident that there is a huge amount of overlap of archives and ICT in the professional arena - whether it is through the use of ICT to facilitate access to online catalogues or digitised versions of archival material or indeed where ICT is both problem and solution as is the case for born-digital archives. We start with a report from the Section's 'Appy Hour' event and an update from the Section's Descriptive Standards Roundtable event from the annual conference in Cardiff with a related piece on EAD, EAC and ISAD(G) from the Expert Group on Archival Description (EGAD) which would suggest there could be a process and a timescale for the conversations and discussions to evolve into something more explicit.

Although the number of members of the section is increasing the Roundtable is a good example of how the Committee is looking to actively engage with the wider membership and we are keen to hear from SAT members how they would like to receive updates from us:

- e-mail updates via the ARA office to all SAT members?
- via the Section's pages on the ARA website?
- occasional series of webinars on a specific topic or theme?
- is there scope (or demand) for meetings on a regional basis?

We are also starting to think about an event for the summer of 2014 – but we are always open to ideas and suggestions from members – please do get in touch about this

Beyond the SAT the newsletter contains pieces on augmented reality, virtual volunteering, bicycles, costume and Shakespeare to name a few whilst those with an interest in digital preservation we have an update from Sarah Norris at the Digital Preservation Coalition and a case study from the Northumberland Estates as part of the SPRUCE project.

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Simon Wilson

Chair ARA Section for Archives and Technology

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Augmented Reality (AR) in Education

Augmented Reality (AR) can be defined as the process where computer graphics are layered on the real world through a camera (normally a handheld device) controlled by the user to enhance understanding.

In 2011 the University of Manchester and Mimas were awarded funding under JISC's Learning and Teaching Innovation Grants programme to develop an AR application for Special Collections.

Benefits to Students

The benefits to student learning are key for the adoption of new technologies to be successful. Some of the most persuasive arguments for AR are described below:

- Students can view and touch manuscripts/editions combined with guided support from trusted sources.
- Layering AR on texts/images can encourage interaction (e.g. augmented 3D models that overlay the physical image and require user touch gestures to proceed) and spark enthusiasm, preparing them for solo research.
- AR promotes 'active' teaching, maximizing the opportunity for interaction, encouraging critical response and the adoption of new perspectives and positions.
- Users retain a very small amount of the information that is delivered, and a slightly larger percentage of what is shown to them, but when we become actively involved in an experience (e.g. touching 3d objects on screen), learners will remember and retain the majority of the information presented to them.

SCARLET

The SCARLET project addressed one of the main obstacles with the use of special collections in learning and teaching – the fact that students are required to consult archives, manuscripts and rare books within the controlled conditions of reading rooms, isolated from much of the secondary supporting materials and a growing mass of related digital assets. AR can enable students to experience the magic of original primary materials, enhancing the learning experience by surrounding the book with digitised content; images, texts, online learning resources, and information on related objects.

Sources for primary content were ten key editions of 'The Divine Comedy' by Dante (between 1472 and 1555) particularly important in terms of

publishing and intellectual history and the world-renowned oldest fragment of the Gospel of John papyri.

For the SCARLET project, students used illustrations related to the various editions as visual cues, uncovering surrounding content with mobile devices. Support materials included academic commentaries introducing the text, 3d models, bibliographies and high quality photographs.

The majority of students had a positive experience using AR; it was especially useful to those that had little prior subject knowledge. The learning experience was most enhanced by AR when information delivered was contextual and less generic. Bolting on existing web assets to these objects was insufficient, it



Augmented reality on display at MIMAS



More augmented reality on display

was important that the content was translated into a palatable format that enhanced the intellectual engagement. Student evidence also highlighted the fact that AR experiences should be best employed as part of a learning activity (either independent or group based) acting as enabler to achieving a key course objective (e.g. planning for essay or presentation).

SCARLET+

Following the success of the SCARLET project, further funding was made available to work with two other UK institutions (University of Sussex and the Crafts Study Centre at the University for the Creative Arts) to facilitate and guide them in the development of AR content. Mimas liaised with staff at these universities to transfer relevant skills and improve the toolkit. This could then be used as a high level framework for replicating similar AR practices in education. Crucial to the success was ensuring that, as with SCARLET, a multi-disciplinary team approach was adopted. This ensured that the content developed made an impact on learning and teaching as well as enabling AR skills to spread across the institutions.

Handing over the display cases....

In a first for the John Rylands Library, primary school children have been given the responsibility of guest curating on one of the exhibition themes; the faiths display cases. The project provides a

layer of interpretation through AR allowing visitors to uncover more information and providing additional activities on their mobile devices. It is collaboration between Education and learning at The John Ryland's Library and Mimas. The young curators have shared their experiences of the objects through short videos and fun facts they have learnt researching. One of the most exciting features enables users to picture themselves with virtual models of the objects, and then upload them to the library Flickr page to show them to friends and family.

Conclusion

Although the projects were necessarily small-scale, due to funding and time constraints, all have succeeded in showcasing unique holdings at their institutions and opening up collections to a wider audience. AR opens up huge possibilities for creating immersive learning activities in library environments. It is particularly effective in explaining abstract concepts visually; allowing active based learners to better absorb the transfer of knowledge. While it may not be suitable for all students and situations, when employed well it can capture the attention like few other technological mediums.

Matt Ramirez

Lead AR Developer, Mimas, University of Manchester

Shropshire's Heritage Heroes who will be volunteering, virtually

Shropshire Archives is running an exciting project that will allow volunteers who are unable to get to museums or archive centres in the county to volunteer virtually. The project, which is being funded through the Arts Council, is an innovative venture that will link directly to collections databases. We believe this to be the first of its kind.



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

Volunteers who cannot get to the centres perhaps because of physical disabilities or that they work during normal opening times will be able to work from the comfort of their homes and choose the hours they volunteer to suit them. Some people do their greatest work when everyone else is sleeping. The project is hoping to attract volunteers with specialisms who can provide expert advice. As with any museum or archive there are a large number of holdings which are never seen by the general public; this project aims to allow greater awareness of these unseen collections.

Key to the success of this project is the development and launch of a website. The development is through a local company, Orangeleaf Systems, who have been working with heritage organisations for over a decade. A recent product of theirs was demonstrated to the Queen recently. Orangeleaf Systems understand the idiosyncrasies of the sector and this knowledge has already been invaluable to the project.

The website will be launched later this year and thought is being given to how this will happen. It is anticipated that a soft launch, using social media, other existing websites and promotion through local links will be used. Lessons learnt from other projects suggest that promotion through press and media channels may provoke a response which will be difficult to manage. We are aiming for quality not quantity.

Access to Shropshire's historical artefacts is through a website, called Discovering Shropshire's History. This site allows visitors to search collections from Shropshire museums, archives and the Historic Environment Records. The virtual volunteers website will be linked to this site by the collections databases and therefore will increase access.

Discovering Shropshire's History website



The virtual volunteers site will be accessed through a registration process where volunteers can select projects they wish to work on by placing them in a virtual shopping basket. When work is completed it is submitted awaiting moderation by a professional and, if accepted, re-imported back into the collections databases. It is this re-import process that makes the project unique. This replacement of records has not been attempted before.

As with all new ideas there are challenges and these have up until now been mostly technical, for example it is important to give volunteers access to the best possible images to ensure that they can transcribe with little loss of image clarity. To achieve this we have had to investigate other ways of storing images locally. We have also had to negotiate some bespoke work to enable the re-import back into the collections databases.

One element of working with volunteers is ensuring that they enjoy themselves and we understand that in the virtual world is going to be harder to achieve. We have discussed this element with existing volunteers and although many are happy just to be involved, some would like greater recognition. It was felt that the name of the site "Shropshire's Heritage Heroes" went some way to subliminally achieving this satisfaction. We are also aiming to ask volunteers at the beginning of the project what they hope to achieve and check that these expectations have been met when the project is nearing completion. The website will also incorporate a social area which will feature virtual coffee mornings and for example an "Ask the Professional" session.

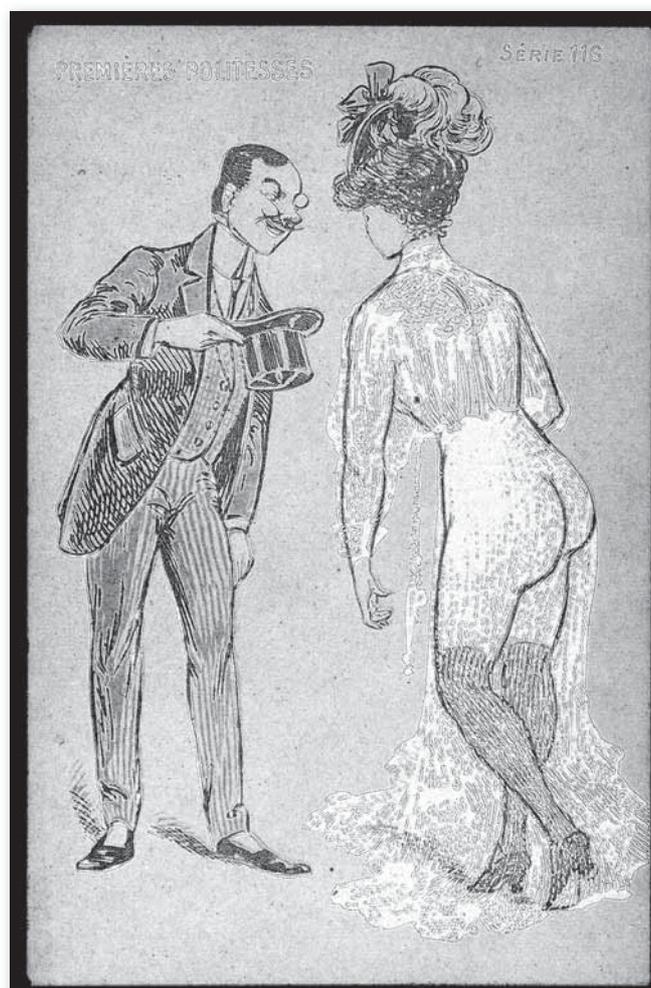
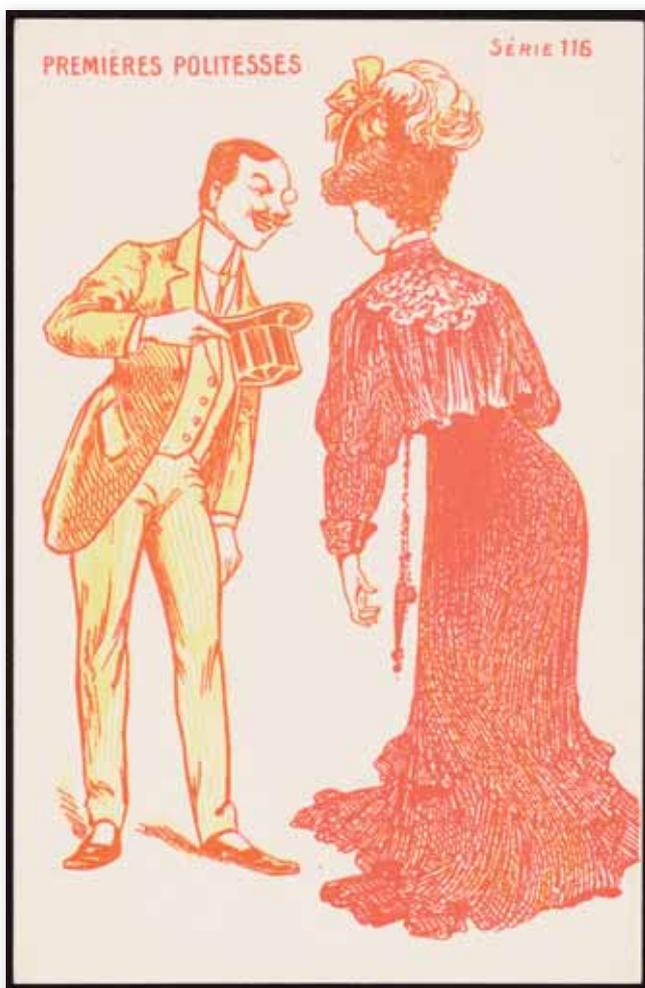
To ensure there is variety available for the volunteers we have been looking at the types of collections that can be included and have spent time in getting them prepared. Some items are easier to prepare than others, for example coins are simple to photograph and catalogue, diaries and books are not. At present volunteers can choose whether they want to research coins that are currently held at Ludlow Museum, transcribe an eighteenth century recipe book or war time diaries from Shropshire Archives, send in recent photographs of buildings and structures in Shropshire, Geo-reference collections or

grammar and spell check catalogue entries. Every accepted contribution will enhance the records that are currently held and provide opportunities for all volunteer skill levels. Whilst looking at Shropshire Archives' collections we came across some very interesting postcards which were accompanied by sheets of red film, it took us a minute to realise that if you placed the film over the postcards they revealed a completely different picture! This could be an interesting research project for a volunteer who has an interest in this area.

This is still the first stage of the project so hopefully we will be invited to provide an update when the project is up and running. If anyone is interested in either becoming a virtual volunteer or talking about the project in more detail please get in touch. I'm Alison Pritchard, the Project Manager. Emily Nicklin is the Volunteer Co-ordinator. We would love to hear from you. We can be contacted by emailing alison.pritchard@shropshire.gov.uk or by telephoning 01743 255377.

Please wish the project luck!

.....
Alison Pritchard
 Shropshire Archives



Postcards from the collection

Image from the 'Anfield Digitisation' collection

Those Amazing Anfielders and their Cycling Machines

During the Olympic summer of 2012 David Birchall from the Anfield Bicycle Club (ABC) was guest speaker at a Cheshire Archives and Local Studies (CALs) event to promote our sporting collections. The audience was struck by the depth and value of his Club's archive, as were the Heritage Lottery Fund who in March 2013 awarded a Your Heritage grant of almost £16,000 to make the treasures of one of the world's earliest cycling clubs accessible for new audiences.

The Club, formed in March 1879, spans the history of cycling itself, pioneered long distance cycle racing, and provided the sport's early trail blazers, like prolific record breaker George Pilkington Mills. But as Victorian Liverpool boomed, many of the Club's members moved to new homes in the Wirral and Cheshire, and the Club moved with them. The Club continued to prosper and promote the sport in Cheshire. The Club's annual 100 mile time trial, first run in 1889, is the oldest surviving cycling event in the world.

The Club's Circulars, Year Books, Photographs, Minute Books and Race Cards tell remarkable stories of

record-breaking racing and distinguished service in two World Wars. The First World War Roll of Honour records that 41 members – a third of the membership – served and four were killed.

The aim of the project was to collect records held by the club's members together, to digitise and make them accessible online and then to deposit the collection with the archive service. In advance of the funding bid conservation and collections surveys were carried out that allowed the size and scope of the digitisation work to be assessed: what proportion of the work could be carried out by club volunteers – what items would require specialist reprographic staff and equipment? What was the value of this work? Could enough duplicate copies be gathered in to create a set of club magazines that could be disbound for bulk feeding through a scanner? This information would inform the funding bid not only in terms of volunteer and reprographic department staff time, but also the decision for the project to purchase a sheet feed scanner with optical character recognition (OCR) software. Understandably loathe to recommend such a purchase, a google search for 'digitisation' and 'ocr' led to the Leeds University

Special Collections blog, <http://blog.library.leeds.ac.uk/blog/special-collections/> and thanks to the digitisation suite for a quick trip to see their Fujitsu scanner in action.

Once the funding was secured, the service could develop the training and project management elements of the project. Adding up-to-date online and global advice to experience from developing the digitisation and digital preservation units of the West Yorkshire Archives Community Archive Accreditation Scheme helped to create a project plan that combined best practice with real-life experience. For example, the 'Digitisation Doctor' event at the Wellcome Library was over subscribed by the time funding was confirmed, but quickly made presentations from the day available. <http://blog.wellcomelibrary.org/2013/05/resources-from-digitisation-doctor-workshop-now-available/>

An intensive project training day was held at CALS in June 2013, concentrating on digitisation decision-making, workflow and digital preservation – in the hope that understanding these imperatives would help deliver quality digital files and metadata. There was clear appreciation of a new understanding of what the group was about to embark on, tinged with some disappointment that the training has not been hands on with documents and equipment. Here, the project leader, David Birchall was key – balancing the enthusiasm of volunteers who wanted to get going 'let's rock and roll' with his determination that the work proceeded to agreed standards. There were difficulties, at times individuals were out of control – by their nature, competitive road cyclists intent on arriving at their destination as quickly as possible – why would they not try and adapt workflow to achieve a quicker result? Some work had to be repeated. Around 90% of the monthly circulars had been available as duplicates to butcher for duplex bulk scanning; the remaining 10% of issues had to be photographed from bound master volumes, and black and white prints fed through the scanner so as to achieve some consistency with end results for online display. The group had to wait for reprographics staff to feed this into their workload, resulting in hold-ups. A staffing gap meant that CALS had office space to host the group, its collection and equipment, an arrangement that helped mutual support and understanding. Demands for on-site support have never been unreasonable (a useful test

of the quality of our training?); and the day-to-day demands of public service have been understood dispelling any frustration whenever the cyclists had to wait for us to catch up!

By the middle of August 900 (16,000 pages) issues of the monthly Club circular had been completed. Optical character recognition (OCR) has made the digital version searchable, and in quality testing has proved fast and accurate in finding references to people and places – that in turn has helped date and place the newly digitised photographic collection of 1,000 images from 1879 onwards. Some newly digitised photographs have revealed details not seen before with the naked eye, such as the penny farthings lined up next to the catering staff and tent laid out for tea at the Preston Guild Meet in 1882.

Some concern remains about how the collection will be made fully accessible. The group opted not to budget for website development at the outset; their 'in house' solution for access to over 100 years' monthly club circulars based on a matrix seen on the Bibliothèque Nationale de France website's display of issues of *Le Vélosport* has been successfully adopted – but the photographic collection is proving more problematic. Budgeting and contingency may allow funds to be directed to a solution. This is not the first and will not be the last project to falter at this point, a risk whenever digitisation is seen as an end in itself.

The project has allowed CALS to deliver its stated aim of supporting community history groups to develop their projects and activities and to manage and care for their collections. The Anfield Bicycle Club website and members will still be the first point of contact for researchers interested in the wealth of personal, local and social history contained in its records. See the project progress at www.anfieldbc.co.uk

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Lisa Greenhalgh

Cheshire Archives and Local Studies

SPRUCE Project Award – Northumberland Estates Case Study

Northumberland Estates were delighted to be awarded a SPRUCE Award to carry out a detailed analysis of current digital repository solutions suitable for small to medium organisations. The SPRUCE Project (Sustainable PReservation Using Community Engagement) is all about fostering a vibrant and self-supporting community of digital preservation practitioners and developers. To this end, Northumberland Estates in conjunction with The University of London Computer Centre (ULCC) created a toolkit justifying investment in a recommended solution. The business case will aim to implement a sustainable digital repository for the long term management of Northumberland Estates digital content. With a particular focus on small to medium organisations this project aims to address the lack of knowledge in the digital preservation community on preservation as a service (PaaS) providers.

What is a digital repository?

When you think of a traditional repository, you imagine a structure for the preservation and safety of paper archives and collections. Digital Repositories are harder to define due to their intangible nature, but in essence they provide a system for managing and preserving digital content.

Requirements

There are a number of high level requirements which the adopted solution must meet. For this purpose, we created an organisational and technical assessment based on the methodology of the OAIS Reference Model. The technical specification is essentially a “shopping list” of what the chosen system has to do to perform digital preservation. The overall aim was to keep the specification concise, manageable and realistic so that it would meet the immediate business needs of

NE, while also adhering to best practice.

The organisational assessment was based upon ISO 16363 and tackles the broader requirements not captured by simply covering repository software functionality. Both the technical and organisational assessments resulted in a mini gap analysis on the digital preservation capacity of Northumberland Estates (NE). Blank templates for these assessments along with guidance are included in the toolkit so that other organisations can follow a similar approach.

Options

We identified three potential options based on the requirements identified:

1. Open Source: Many Higher Education institutions already have mature repository instances

through the use of open source software such as DSpace, EPrints, and Fedora. These repositories support research, learning, and administrative processes.

2. Out of the Box: The emergence of PaaS providers such as Tessella Preservica and Ex Libris Rosetta has enabled digital preservation functionality to remain at the systems core. Often based on OAIS, they provide active preservation and curation of digital assets. Preservica uses AWS to provide bit level preservation in the cloud while Rosetta implements an in-house solution with storage provided by the organisation.

3. Hybrid: The combination of commercial services with an in house/open source route is feasible. For instance, Arkivum provides bit level preservation while open source OAIS digital preservation systems such as Archivematica can

provide the extra level of preservation required for the creation of SIP's, AIP's, and DIP's.

Lessons Learnt

There is no one size fits all solution!

- Much of what is concluded will be based on your own organisational context, all of which can influence the right approach towards digital preservation. However, it is hoped that this project can establish a methodology which other small to medium organisations can adopt.

Identify existing business drivers/organisational goals.

- Aligning organisational goals from the onset will save you a great deal of work further down the line. By identifying these key drivers you can begin to build up support for your recommended solution before the big pitch to senior management.

Use existing work already available.

- There are a number of fantastic resources out there which can save you reinventing the wheel. The first and most obvious point of contact is the new Digital Preservation Business Case Toolkit (http://wiki.dpconline.org/index.php?title=Main_Page). A fantastic resource including everything you need to get started.

Lay out the options clearly and concisely.

- Nail down upfront costs for at least the first three years. After all, you want a solution which can be sustained into the future. For any costs include benefits and any potential returns on investments which can be identified.

Conclusion

This methodology shows it would be possible for any small organisation to devise a suitable specification. It is based not exclusively on OAIS, but on the business needs of NE and a simple understanding of the user workflow.

This method should be regarded as quick and easy. With this project we have shown how it is possible for an organisation to perform a credible ISO based self-assessment in a very short time. This could be a viable alternative to using an expensive consultant.

The full Northumberland Estates case study can be found at: http://wiki.dpconline.org/index.php?title=Northumberland_estates_case_study

Christopher Fryer

Digital Curator and Assistant Records Manager, Northumberland Estates

Edward Pinsent

Digital Archivist/Project Manager, University of London Computer Centre (ULCC)

Description Standards News: Encoded Archival Description (EAD)

The Society of American Archivists' (SAA) Technical Subcommittee for Encoded Archival Description (TS-EAD) has had an extremely busy time continuing the revision of EAD.

The year from October 2012 has seen ten conference calls and two face-to-face meetings:

- The Schema Development Team (SDT) met at the University of Virginia in October 2012
- The tag library editorial team met at the OCLC Research in San Mateo, California in February 2013

The alpha version of the revised EAD schema was released in February. The following comment period gave rise to extensive feedback, which resulted in significant changes to the schema for the beta release. The beta, a completely re-written schema, was released in August with a two month comment period. The committee is now dealing with the final bugs and issues, such as how to allow EAD to capture geographical co-ordinates and formal relationships between archival description entities.

The final version of the schema and related documentation will be released at the end of January 2014 with a comment period in February. It is hoped that the result, which it has now been agreed to call EAD3, will be formally adopted by the SAA Council at their meeting in May.

All the documentation and presentations relating to the revision can be found at the TS-EAD's revision page at <http://www2.archivists.org/groups/technical-subcommittee-on-encoded-archival-description-ead/ead-revision>.

Those interested in the technical detail can consult the GitHub repository for the revision where comments and issues are tracked and the developing schema can be found at <https://github.com/SAA-SDT/EAD-Revision>.

Encoded Archival Context – Corporate Bodies, Persons and Families (EAC-CPF)

The sibling Technical Subcommittee for Encoded Archival Context (TS-EAC-CPF) has also been busy with the consolidation of the first version of the standard rather than its revision. Most of the work has centered on the improvement and dissemination of the tag library including:

- translations in French and Italian (completed) and Greek, German and Spanish (in progress);
- augmentation and amendment of the examples.

A draft of the new tag library has been prepared and is awaiting the development by the SDT of a dynamic infrastructure for the encoding and management of all versions for both EAC-CPF and EAD. Comprehensive information about the standard and all its documentation can be found on the EAC-CPF website at <http://eac.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/>.

Encoded Archival Context – Functions (EAC-F)?

A related initiative has also got underway with a meeting of interested parties in Brussels in November 2013. It is proposed to develop a formal schema for functions aligned to the International Standard for Describing Functions (ISDF) taking account of previous international initiatives in the area.

International Council on Archives (ICA) Description Standards

The ICA committee responsible for the development and revision of ISAD(G) and other description standards has been re-formed as the Expert Group on Archival Description (EGAD): See <http://www.ica.org/13799/the-experts-group-on-archival-description/about-the-egad.html>. The group had their first face-to-face meeting in Brussels at the end of November 2013 and began the work of developing a formal conceptual

model for archival description to be completed in 2016. The aim of the model is to identify and define the essential components of archival description and their interrelations so as to:

- promote a shared understanding of archival description;
- facilitate the development and use of archival descriptive systems;
- enable national, regional, and international collaboration, in the archival community as well as allied cultural heritage communities and;
- lay the foundation for the revision of ISAD(G) and its related standards thereafter.

It is hoped to involve the wider community in this work – so watch this space!

Bill Stocking

EGAD and Co-chair TS-EAD

Victoria Peters

EGAD and TS-EAC-CPF

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Unlocking The Wardrobe Door

Theatre Costume and Archives at the Royal Shakespeare Company and The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust

There are wonderful resources relating to the RSC's costume collection! Firstly, there's the collection itself – hundreds of garments and accessories, from Laurence Olivier's costume for 'Macbeth' in 1955, to the jeans and t-shirt worn by David Tennant as 'Hamlet' in 2008. Then there's the archival material held by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust – original designs, production photos showing costume worn in performance, and much more.

'Shakespeare by Design', a one-year project funded by Arts Council England, is a great opportunity to review these collections and make links between them, in order to create the potential for new ways to access and use them.

Working across museum and archive collections has been a challenge. Stored in different places and administered by two organisations, catalogued onto different databases (Modes for the museum collection and CALM for archives) – or not catalogued at all – we've had our work cut out!

The review process has involved identifying significant items of RSC costume and then assessing condition, storage, and potential for public engagement, before moving to the archives at the SBT to identify related material that provides context and meaning for the garments themselves.

Linking a costume with its original design drawing and production image showing it worn in performance, is the first exciting step to unlocking these previously disparate collections for learning, discovery and enquiry.

Key to widening access here is the use of digital technology. While there's nothing like seeing 'the real thing' on display, high quality images and scans can provide access to material that is too fragile, complex or difficult to exhibit. They can reveal details of costume construction and decoration that are normally hidden – the exquisite reverse of the cloak collar in the image is a good example. They can enable on-line access to design drawings and production photographs for those who are geographically too far away to see the originals in the SBT archives. They provide the raw material for on-line exhibitions, resource packs and learning packages for audiences of different ages and needs.



Cloak from RSC collection, worn by Jeremy Irons as 'Richard II' in 1986 © SBT/RSC

Cloak back, showing detail of brocade lining to the collar © SBT/RSC



Shakespeare birthplace trust

With the help of volunteers, we have digitised over 1000 design drawings, plus relevant production images for all of the 600 costumes that we've reviewed so far.

By the end of the project, we will also have taken high quality images of approximately 100 costumes. The disparity between number of costume designs scanned and actual garments photographed highlights the very real difference between digitising archival material and complex 3-dimensional items like costume.

While the scanning of drawings has been relatively straightforward, mounting costume onto mannequins has been a more demanding and time-consuming business – even with one of us being an experienced costume curator!

The project finishes at the end of December. There is more work to be done, but we are laying the foundations for future development by making those vital connections between a museum collection and its archive that will enable imaginative and meaningful use of these unique resources.

Maggie Wood and Robyn Greenwood
Shakespeare-by-Design Project Team

Production image showing
Jeremy Irons wearing the cloak
in performance © SBT, Joe Cocks
Studio Collection



'Appy Hour' at the Section for Archives and Technology AGM

The Section for Archives and Technology AGM was held this year at the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust in Stratford-upon-Avon in June. Following the SAT annual open meeting we hosted a lively event on the use of mobile application technology to promote collections and services. The 'Appy Hour' event proved to be a popular and animated session. Thanks should certainly go to the three excellent speakers who presented their experiences of the archival apps, and who were followed by an enthusiastic discussion session.

The three speakers offered different perspectives on the subject. Kicking off the event was Tracey Williams, Chartered Librarian and Archivist, who presented her research on the adoption of mobile technology in the cultural heritage sector. Her talk *'Is there an app for that?'* provided a valuable overview of the use of apps in the heritage sector. Interestingly, her research revealed that archivists have been slower than museum and library colleagues to embrace apps. Does the popularity of this event suggest a sea change here? Tracey's talk provided plenty to think about for anyone wishing to pursue app development. She covered opportunities for the technology to provide 'edutainment' (definitely my favourite word or the day) and how apps are a new tool for communicating with users and developing new audiences. The take away messages for me were to thoroughly consider the needs of users being targeted and the technology used by the target groups and finally, but most importantly, to make sure the app is servicing the needs of that group. Tracey's introduction to heritage apps set the scene for the next two speakers, who provided practical case studies on developing apps for archives. The first case study was from Tracy

Wilkinson, Archivist at St John's College, Cambridge. Tracy presented on a project from her former role at King's College, where she developed a historical walking tour app relating to the Alan Turing archive. This was particularly interesting as Tracy had taken the initiative and worked with an 'off the shelf' touring app provider. This low cost and low technical approach, would likely appeal to many services and this presentation showed that the use of apps is within reach of even the smallest services. The Turing touring app combined maps, geo-tagging, digitised archives and interpretative description. Its aim was both to encourage current users to view the collection in new ways and to draw in new audiences from the large number of people who visit Cambridge with an interest in Turing, but no knowledge of the archive collection and service. The app was about taking the collections outside the walls of the archive and re-contextualising items in and around the college where Turing studied. As well as the successes, Tracy also talked about the risks of relying on an external provider. Guaranteed longevity was the drawback and the developer (Rama) no longer exists. However, the research and digitisation output remain useful and the aim of the app was to serve an increased interest in Turing during an important anniversary year, so its short life did not negate from the success of the project.

The second case study was from a very different perspective. David Hopes, Research Fellow, The Shakespeare Institute, gave a talk and demonstration on the 'Eye Shakespeare app'. This app was developed by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and Coventry University's Serious Games Institute with considerable investment. The app has been tailor made for the collections and with its users in mind. Like the Turing app it is also an historical touring

app (combining digitised collections and interpretative description, with geo-location). However, additional functionality, like being able to skip from the Google maps navigation to early maps of Stratford, and features such as augmented reality which allow users to hold up a smart phone and 'see' a Tudor building overlaid on a modern street, show what benefits investment can bring. Indeed, David talked about the need for a 'wow' factor to draw in users. Interestingly, the aim of this app was also to entice new visitors to the service, though with a stronger aim of converting non-paying visitors into paying visitors to the Shakespearean properties. This showed how free apps can have a commercial model behind them. Indeed, the additional commercial features, like links into e-commerce and print orders, sparked a lot of interest in the session. David also talked about the challenges of developing an app from scratch. He mentioned the importance of good communication with technical staff and the extended time needed for testing and debugging. It was apparent that with opportunity come challenges, though that is the nature of innovation and the group were certainly impressed with the many 'wow' factors of the Shakespeare app.

The event left me with lots of food for thought with the presenters generously sharing their experiences of the benefits and pitfalls of mobile apps in the archives sector. While words of warning were sounded with regards to the need to have clear goals, permission was certainly given to get excited about the opportunities for growing audiences and creating new revenue streams. I'll admit that the event left me feeling pretty 'appy'.

.....
Amy Hurst

Shakespeare Birthplace Trust

Hundreds 'Get Started' in Digital Preservation with DPC Roadshows

The Digital Preservation Coalition is an advocate and catalyst for digital preservation, and enables its members to deliver resilient long-term access to content and services, and helping them derive enduring value from digital collections. The organisation raises awareness of the importance of the preservation of digital material and the attendant strategic, cultural and technological issues. The ARA is a corporate member of the DPC enabling members to benefit from the expertise and opportunities offered as part of their membership of the Association. This means ARA members can attend many DPC events at DPC member rates and for certain courses can apply for a bursary.

The day-long introductions assume no prior knowledge, just a willingness to engage with digital preservation. Through a series of presentations, case studies and exercises, participants learn techniques of assessment, risk management and planning to help secure their digital collections.

The DPC's Executive Director, William Kilbride, chairs and presents the sessions alongside his hosts and guest speakers and explains that "digital preservation is a growing challenge for agencies and individuals in all contexts. We all depend on digital materials to satisfy ubiquitous information needs and expectations." The roadshows began from a dialogue between TNA and the Society of Archivists in 2009, and since then the DPC has also collaborated with the British Library's Preservation Advisory Centre to raise awareness of digital preservation issues, increase involvement with digital preservation activities and sign-post the support and resources available to anyone embarking on a digital preservation project.

Starting with some 'bleak reading' about attitudes and issues faced in digital preservation, William provides an introduction to the reasons for preserving digital content, concluding in a eureka moment that 'digital preservation is not just about 'data': it is not just about 'access': it is not just about 'risk': it's about people and opportunity!' Having established the human element of a digital issue, he outlines the opportunities available to us the people,

in order to maintain continuing access to our ever-degrading digital objects. Reassuringly, he tells us, we don't have to wait for perfection (or follow the Open Archival Information System (OAIS) to the letter), we just have to do something.

All very well, but where to start? And how do you decide on a strategy if you don't know what you are trying to preserve? Enter some handy tools, tips and some daring feats of live demonstration! TNA's PRONOM and DROID appear firm favourites in helping characterise the file formats for preservation, but the introduction also provides a whistle stop tour of other freely available tools like C3PO, JHOVE, TIKKA, FITS, UDFR, TOTEM, CRISP, and JUST FIX IT with the qualification that these tools are only as good as the data they contain: so join in, get your hands dirty and in doing so, help improve the quality of resources available!

Having declared that 'Digital Preservation is not just about 'risk', the session concedes that risk management does play a part. Engaging in some good old fashioned audience participation, attendees 'have a go' at a simple risk assessment exercise with a view to understanding how to tackle some of the most prevalent issues. As a reward for joining in, participants are treated to some handy resources for creating their own risk management plan, with principles and guidance from ISO: 31000, DRAMBORA, TIMBUS, TNA digital continuity service and SPOT.

The session draws together all lessons to create a six step process for 'how to plan' your digital preservation activities: 1) Know what you have, 2) Prioritise the risks, 3) Plan what to do about them, 4) Test the plan, 5) Implement the plan and 6) Check the plan has worked. Tackling the somewhat daunting OAIS, participants are also given four tips for using the standard in practice: Monitor Technology, Monitor 'Designated Community', Develop Preservation Strategies and Standards, and Develop Packaging Design and Migration Plans.

Concluding the day, participants are reminded that they are not alone and are encouraged to sustain the digital preservation community by making friends, joining the DPC and sharing the resources available.

Attendees at the most recent stop in Dublin called the day an “excellent event,” and thought that the “specific resource links for reference were great, and the exercises really useful!” There were even calls for the DPC to “come again to Dublin - we really need a chance to attend more events like this one.”

While the 2013 Roadshow ends at The National Archives in December, a 2014 Roadshow is already planned and there is even more opportunity to keep up to date with the latest developments in digital preservation next year, thanks to the bumper programme of DPC events and publications which is now officially underway. Amongst the packed schedule, you will find briefing days on:

- Procuring Preservation: writing and understanding requirements in digital preservation
- Cost Modelling for Preservation
- Virtualization and preservation: New directions
- Updating OAIS - ISO 14720
- Preserving PDFs
- Preserving E-Books

And you can download ‘Getting Started in Digital Preservation’ slides from the DPC website now: <http://www.dpconline.org/events/previous-events/1050-getting-started-in-digital-preservation-> The ‘Getting Started in Digital Preservation’ events are designed to provide an introduction to the activities necessary to ensure that digital objects and data can be found, accessed and deployed beyond the limits of technological obsolescence, media failure or creator dependency; a growing challenge for agencies and individuals in all kinds of contexts. Our generation has invested as never before in digital resources and we’ve done so because of the opportunity they bring. Digital collections have grown in volume, complexity and importance to the point that our children are baffled by the inefficiencies of the analogue age. Pervasive, fluid and vital: digital data is a defining feature of our age. Industry, commerce, government, law, research, health, social care, education, the creative industries, the heritage sector and private life depend on digital materials to satisfy ubiquitous information needs and

expectations. But digital objects are fragile: at risk of loss, corruption or obsolescence, not to mention unlawful alteration or theft. Collection managers, IT officers, academic researchers, broadcasters, developers and industrial regulators need to ensure that the digital collections which they use and depend upon are accessible for the long-term: but training in these new skills can be hard to acquire.

More information on the coalition may be found on the website: <http://www.dpconline.org>

Sarah Norris

Senior Project Officer, Digital Preservation Coalition

Calling All Colleagues!

ARC is always seeking articles reflecting the issues that matter to you most. We would love to publish pieces that reveal the sector’s opinion and showcase successful best practice.

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From beetles to The Beatles



Entomology Products (Pages 71-75)



Phonograph Record Storage Sleeves (Page 27)

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