



Archives & Records
Association
UK & Ireland

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Conference 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.



**Archives & Records
Association**
UK & Ireland

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WELCOME **ARC**

EDITORIAL

Welcome to November's issue of ARC Magazine. This month we revisit the annual ARA Conference which took place in Cardiff, with the principal themes of accountability, culture and ethics. As usual, the conference was a huge success and a wide range of speakers and participants covered a broad range of areas, providing delegates with ideas and inspiration.

The articles in this issue include contributions from keynote speaker Dr Sarah Tyacke, who provides an overview of her involvement in the Hillsborough Independent Panel, describing how archivists can play a major role in ensuring vital records are accessible in the future. Likewise, Michael Jones from the University of Melbourne reflects on the Find & Connect Web Resource which makes hundreds of record collections more discoverable and accessible online. There are also opinion pieces from exhibitors and ARA Conference Bursary winners, including overseas delegate Helen Afi Gadzekpo from the National Archives of Ghana. Readers will also find highlights from the conservation stream - a popular and often hands-on alternative to the archive and records sessions - and a synopsis of the conference Twitter feed and hashtag. Twitter users can check out these online conservations for themselves:

@ARAconf
#ara2013

Many of the articles highlight the popular conference social events, including the wine reception at the National Museum Wales, the gala dinner, and the ceilidh where some delegates took part in traditional dancing.

Elsewhere in the issue you will find information about forthcoming revisions to ISO 15489, about the ARA Core Training Free Places Scheme, and about the International mobility programme for Finnish, British and Irish archivists and records managers.

When you have finished reading this conference edition of ARC, remember to visit the ARA website for additional information about the conference, and for even more photographs:

www.archives.org.uk/ara-conference/the-ara-conference.html

Ceri Foster, Sarah Norman, Ellie Pridgeon, 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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Left: Photographs by Tim Fok for the ARA. Right from top to bottom: ARA Diversity Working Group. Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA; Keynote Speaker Jones Lukose. Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA; Photographs by Tim Fok for the ARA.

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Opening Lines



Photograph by Mark Davey.

As chair of ARA Wales, it was a pleasure to welcome the conference back to the region, more than ten years since its last visit. The big themes of conference: accountability, culture and ethics were articulated through a plethora of interesting, informative, humorous, thought-provoking, and sometimes harrowing, presentations. The value of archives to heal and reconcile, protect human rights and establish identity was confirmed by speakers from all over the world. The critical role of the record in delivering accountability was forcibly demonstrated by Dr Sarah Tyacke, a member of the Hillsborough Independent Panel. Through the archival processes of sorting and cataloguing, which were applied in a consistent manner to records from a large number of sources, the panel revealed the truth about an extremely emotive and

Sally McInnes is Chair of ARA Wales and Head of Collections Care at the National Library of Wales. She writes about her reflections following the ARA Conference in Cardiff.

tragic event. This use of archives has generated a new understanding of history, based upon a neutral re-examination of the evidence.

The neutrality of the archivist was a theme that was considered by several speakers. Should we be keepers and remembrancers, or activists, creators, gate-keepers, whistle-blowers? Should we consciously try to fill gaps, to ensure that hidden voices are heard, or would that risk introducing personal bias and threaten our impartiality? Should we be fixed in our professional persona, or engage outside our comfort zone? Caroline Williams, in her presidential address, exhorted us to be fuzzy in our approach and embrace, rather than exclude, new challenges and audiences. For me, this call to change behaviour was echoed by the tactile presentation given by Kate Barber and Jane Henderson. As a double act, Kate and Jane shared their research on the benefits that can be gained through physical interaction with collection objects. Touch provision enables the transmission of knowledge, the sharing of meaning and significance and is an enjoyable experience. As someone with responsibility for collections care at the National Library of Wales, I must confess that my natural inclination leans towards discouraging the handling of original material.

However, Jane's vivid demonstration of the pleasure and meaning to be had from stroking original material has made me consider new ways in which we can provide more 'hands on' experience.

In an age of austerity and cutbacks, where services are at risk, we must be vocal about our role in ensuring accountability through our professional activities in preserving, and providing access to, the authentic and reliable record. Although we may not be the whistleblowers ourselves, we must be able to provide the trustworthy record to enable the truth to be revealed. Although we may not actively create the archival record to fill gaps, we must describe and provide discovery mechanisms whereby non-dominant voices can be heard. We must not be afraid of 'fuzziness', but welcome interaction with new users and partners and even, on occasion, encourage the stroking of our archives!

Edrychwch ymlaen at groesawu'r gynhadledd yn ol i Gymru cyn bo hir/
We look forward to welcoming the conference back to Wales before too long.

Sally McInnes

National Library of Wales

Registration Scheme News

New Enrolments

We welcome the following new candidates to the Registration Scheme and wish them good luck with their progress:

Wesley Geddis

Curatorial (E) Public Records Office of Northern Ireland, Belfast

Zoe Wilcox

Curator of Modern Literary and Theatrical Manuscripts, British Library

Elizabeth Sykes

Records, Archives and Information Officer, Together Trust

Keri Nicholson

Archivist, Lancashire Archives

CONTACTS:

General Registration Scheme Enquiries:

registrar@archives.org.uk

Registration Scheme Events Enquiries:

regschemeevents@archives.org.uk

Registration Scheme Admin and Bursaries:

regschemeadmin@archives.org.uk

Registration Scheme Communications Officer:

regschemecomms@archives.org.uk

Registration Scheme Mentor Queries and Advice:

regscheme Mentors@archives.org.uk

Richard Wragg

Communications Officer,
Registration Sub-committee

ISO 15489 is being Revised: Your Chance to get Involved

The International Records Management Standard ISO 15489 is being revised - the aim is to publish a revision in the middle of next year.

Who's responsibility?

International standards are published by the International Organisation for Standardisation - ISO. ISO 15489 is the responsibility of the ISO Records Management Committee. This committee currently has representatives from the standards bodies of over 30 countries. 16 regularly attend meetings of the committee, including the UK through the standards body British Standards Institution (BSI).

Each national standards body has its own records management committee to represent the national view, and to be responsible for producing national guidance and any supporting publications. The BSI Records Management Committee members include representatives from ARA, Information and Records Management Society (IRMS), Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM UK), Association of Research Managers and Administrators (ARMA UK), the National Archives and the University of Northumbria. The committee is chaired by Philip Jones who, as many will know, was very closely involved in producing the original ISO 15489 back in 2001.

Why is there action now?

All ISO standards have to be reviewed every five years by the relevant ISO committee. When reviewing standards, ISO committees have a number of options: they can confirm the standard without amendment, make minor amendments, withdraw the standard or revise.

After a ballot of national standard bodies, the ISO Records Management Committee decided to revise ISO 15489. BSI voted to revise.

ISO 15489 needed to be amended - if it was not to be withdrawn - for a number of reasons. The definition of records and a number of other key terms in the new management system standard for records management (the ISO 30300 series) are different to those in ISO15489. There is overlap between

the content of ISO 30300 series and ISO 15489. Several other new standards in the records management field have been produced since ISO 15489 was published, including the ISO 23081 standards covering records metadata.

As the decision has been made to revise rather than simply amend, it is an opportunity to have a good look at the standard, and to consider how far it still reflects records management principles and present day practice. In particular, to review how far the standard needs to be revised to cover changes to the management of electronic records.

The ISO Committee created a new working party to be responsible for producing the revision. The BSI members are Philip Jones and myself (Rod Stone).

What's happened so far?

The working party met for the first time in June 2013 and had a day and half session to discuss the outline of possible changes. BSI were represented by Zoe Smyth and myself.

At the meeting, there was broad agreement that ISO 15489 needed to be revised to reflect the new ISO 30300 series and other new standards, and to review the text to make sure that the standard is still relevant in the digital world. This has been the view of the BSI Records Management Committee. There was a push, however, from some countries for a much more radical change to the standard.

Those who saw the need for radical change felt this should be much less a revision and more a new standard. Being 'format neutral' was no longer possible and ISO 15489 needed to be modernised so that the focus was on electronic records - to the almost total exclusion of paper records. Some countries emphasised that records management is now very much a matter of capturing and managing metadata and they felt this needs to be a very much larger part of the standard - and be moved to the very first section of a revised standard.

Those who expressed the need for radical change proposed that the standard be used to address a crisis in records management as a discipline and a profession: records management for them has come to mean the implementation of electronic document/records management system software. They have suggested that ISO 15489 needs to be a kind of manifesto to drive major change, and get the records and archival professions back on track.

What's next?

A sub-committee of the working party is producing a draft revision. This will be distributed to the working party for review in October and November 2013. The plan is for the

working party to meet again in January 2014 to review the comments made, and to agree the scope, structure and much of the detail of any revision to ISO 15489.

The BSI Records Management Committee is creating a small panel to focus on revision of ISO15489. The objective of this panel is to make sure that we get broad feedback to the proposed changes to the standard from across the records management and archival professions in the UK, and are able to respond in detail to drafts as they are produced.

The BSI Records Management Committee panel will be chaired by Rod Stone and consist of Zoe Smyth, Alan Shipman, Julie McLeod and others from across the records management and archival professions and institutions.

Members of the BSI Committee are very concerned with the suggestions for radical change for a number of reasons. The points raised by some members of the working party - which led to the suggested requirement for a radical change - do not appear to be issues in UK records management practice. Using a standard to drive change or a particular agenda appears to cut across the purpose of a standard - which is to be the norm, the consensus position. And this is a revision rather than a new standard: we need to be careful with making major changes when the standard is extensively embedded and referenced across national and local government, businesses and other organisations.

This is not to say that ISO 15489 cannot be improved.

What you can do

If you have views on how ISO15489 can be improved, or gaps that need to be addressed, now is the time to get make your voice heard. Please send comments or suggestions you have on ISO 15489 to members of the panel:

Rod Stone

Email: rod@rodstone.org

Zoe Smyth

Email: zoe.smyth@dojni.x.gsi.gov.uk

Alan Shipman

a.shipman@group5.co.uk

.....
Rod Stone, ARA Representative

BSI Records Management Committee
.....

Fellows on the Move!

International mobility programme for Finnish, British and Irish archivists and records managers.

The Finnish Institute in London is looking for participants to a mobility programme for archives and museums sectors' professionals in Finland, the UK and Republic of Ireland for 2014 - 2016.

The mobility programme supports professional development of archives and museums sector professionals by the means of increasing international mobility. The programme encourages participants to learn skills they would never learn at their home organisations, to expand their professional networks and to create new knowledge, thus widening the perspective of participating institutions and disseminating best practices within the professional field.

The programme will focus on a handful of selected key themes that will benefit the whole archive and museum sector in Finland, the UK and Republic of Ireland.

How it works?

Participating organisations will send a professional to a hosting organisation for a three-month period to work on a pre-arranged project/topic. The moving professional will report back to the sending organisation as well as share the lessons learned within the larger community i.e. museum and archive professionals and curators. The sending organisation covers the salary of the professional for the period of working abroad. The programme will last from 2014 until 2016 and is aiming at moving eight professionals per year.

The Finnish Institute in London works closely with the key partners, discusses the themes, establishes the contacts between the right stakeholders,

is responsible for the practical arrangements, and covers the funding of travel and accommodation of the professionals.

The key lessons learned will be disseminated during the programme using a set of multiple web-based methods and in a publication, which will be compiled after the programme. Findings will be further promulgated in various fora within the participating countries.

Themes and modules

The programme covers key topics that will be selected together with the participating professionals.

Some of the pre-identified themes relevant for archives professionals include:

- Archive education and popularisation of materials
- Open data
- Copyright, licenses and the use of resources
- Long-term preservation and accessibility of digital items/objects
- Preservation of social media content
- Anonymisation and identification
- Archives and records management in international development

Expected benefits

The programme aims at various benefits. For instance, in the age of rapid digital development there is an urgent need to ensure that archives

and records management professionals possess relevant digital information management skills. Also, since most of the information created is now born digital, there are plenty of unanswered questions regarding the long-term preservation and accessibility of this information. Many of the benefits are relevant for both archives and museum sectors and thus cannot be separated by discipline.

Some of the expected benefits include:

- Increased mobility and professional expertise of archives, museum and records management professionals in Finland, the UK and Republic of Ireland
- More accessible and reusable information in Finland, the UK and Republic of Ireland
- Archives, museums and records management becoming more prominent in the wider society
- Increased collaboration and stronger international networks between archives, museums and records management professions
- Dissemination of best practices within the museum and archive sectors

Many of the wider-scale societal benefits will be cumulative. For instance, opening up cultural data for software developers' free reuse is expected to result in various digital innovations. These innovations can result in improved access to rich cultural contents and have various educational, cultural and also economic benefits.

THE FINNISH INSTITUTE IN LONDON

Follow up and evaluation

Project management team will develop a diagnostic tool which will be used to measure the benefits. Many of the benefits will be intangible and therefore difficult to measure by quantitative terms. Specific attention will be paid to developing alternative measurement methods, which will take qualitative assessment into consideration.

How to apply

The programme is open to museum and archive/records management professionals and free-lance curators from Finland, the UK and Ireland.

Applications for 2014 will be addressed to the Finnish Institute in London by 16 December 2013
Email: antti.halonen@finnish-institute.org.uk

The applicants are required to:

- have more than 5 years' work experience within the museum/archive/records/curatorial sector
- speak and write fluent English
- be able to work in an international environment for approximately 3 months
- be willing to share the lessons learned with a wider community

The applicants are expected to send:

- Motivation letter and an outline of the theme/topic/project of applicant's interest
- Agreement from the sending organisation
- Applicant's CV

Antti Halonen

Finnish Institute in London

Archiving the Arts

Increasing knowledge of archival collections and ways of sharing this.

Adapted from the Museums Association, the definition of underpinned The National Archives' Archiving the Arts' workshop at this year's conference.

Participants considered key objectives for the two-year programme:

- How to prioritise collections for cataloguing and digitisation
- How to build effective partnerships across arts, cultural heritage, academic, private and public sectors
- How to recognise funding opportunities to support collections development, access and preservation
- How to identify and address knowledge and skills gaps

All the materials from the workshop are available online, so if you were not there you can still contribute.

Try the matrix designed to help prioritise collections for digitisation. Does it demonstrate value and significance? Will it support arguments for investment and funding applications?

Think about the partnerships you already have. Are they focused on your collections? Are you working across different sectors, supporting new

communities and reaching new audiences? Do you have any advice on establishing successful partnership projects?

Review past and current funding sources. When was the last time you applied for external funding? Have you secured awards because of partnership projects? Do you know where to look for potential funding?

Be honest about what you do not know. Are you limited by a lack of skills, experience or knowledge in areas specific to collections development? Is training available to meet your professional development needs?

None of these questions are particular to arts collections but a thematic approach provides a framework for answering them in a connected way.

The success of Archiving the Arts depends on you so let us have your feedback, thoughts and ideas and remember the programme's mission:

Supporting the Arts, Supporting Archives

Cathy Williams

The National Archives

Email: asd@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

Website: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/collections-strategies.htm

Keynote speaker Dr Sarah Tyacke.
Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA.

Keynote Speaker: Dr Sarah Tyacke

This account gives a brief view of the Hillsborough Independent Panel's work in reporting on the Hillsborough Football Disaster 1989. In particular it emphasises the contribution of records to the final panel report, to the archiving recommendations, and in publishing the records disclosed to the panel between 2010 and 2012 by a digital website to be archived permanently at The National Archives (TNA). In this role the archivist on the panel and the archivists in Sheffield Archives, Liverpool Record Office and elsewhere were needed to contribute actively to the accessing, copying, cataloguing and disclosure through the website and to the digital publication of the relevant records.

This was not the usual internally generated archival process by records managers and archivists according to the policies of their respective organisations or at state or local level, but a response to the perceived needs of society for transparency and by the expressed requirements of the people involved in the disaster. These were the often much maligned families of those who lost their lives and the survivors of the disaster; this was, and is, a conflicted history, causing much personal pain for everyone who has been, in some cases, involved for now well over 20 years.

The terms of reference were explicitly record-focussed:

- Full disclosure of the documentation
- No redaction of content except in the limited legal and other circumstances outlined in a disclosure protocol

- Establish an archive of documentation including a catalogue in consultation with the Keeper of Public Records
- Consult with those most affected by the tragedy
- Produce a report to illustrate how the information disclosed adds to public understanding

In order to do this work effectively the panel were to be provided with access to records in advance of the 30-year point for public disclosure.

It will be obvious that the process was to be record-based and that it was not a judicial procedure and thus it would not proceed as if it were an inquiry. There had been two already by Lord Justice Taylor in between 1989 and 1990, and then a scrutiny of the evidence by Lord Justice Stuart Smith in 1997. There was also mention of a number of

civil proceedings against some police officers and a judicial review. This was to be a different approach using the records to produce a report to illustrate how the information disclosed 'added to public understanding' given all that had been written in the intervening 20 years. Not necessarily a promising start and some commentators were reported as saying that there was no more to be learned.

The permanent outcome would be the accessibility of the records themselves through archiving and disclosure. A simple archiving task no doubt!

The events of the fateful day are well known and in the public domain. The archiving and disclosure task was challenging. The relevant records - about 400,000 of them - had to be accessed, catalogued and most then copied digitally. 85 bodies were involved and many were not subject to any legal obligation to produce their records to the panel; some were private and so the accessing of the records was of necessity by negotiation. Those that were relevant and could be disclosed digitally through publication on a digital website then required some very limited redaction for data protection reasons. All the government and public records involved were released on to the digital website catalogued by archivists, records managers and other colleagues up and down the country. Indeed some of the archivists and records managers are still involved with the further investigations by the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) and other authorities.

The other central task was to keep the families updated with the panel's progress and to ensure they were able to hear the panel's findings first and from the panel members personally, before the media became involved. At the launch of the report and website this became critical. For the archivists this required the setting up a team of staff from Sheffield and Liverpool Archives to help the families and survivors use the website, answer questions and, in some cases, provide the necessary social worker back-up to help those in distress. A far cry from the normal internal records management or from the care of historic collections, but nevertheless part of many an archivist's job. Apart from the actual archiving work, the digital website itself is now the permanent digital archive of the Hillsborough Disaster 1989: the records gathered together in one place. Moreover, participation in the panel demonstrated visibly that there are occasions when society recognises the work of archiving and archivists. They together with other experts can play their part in helping to deal with issues of the moment and record them.

Dr Sarah Tyacke

Former Member of Hillsborough Independent Panel

ARA Conference Overseas Bursary Winner: A Ghanaian Perspective

I am so grateful for the chance to attend the ARA Conference in Cardiff, made possible by an ARA Overseas Bursary. I made so many professional and personal contacts and learned so much about both the archives profession and Wales.

I arrived in Cardiff by train from Paddington Station on 27 August 2013 for the ARA Conference held at the Hilton Hotel, all the way from Ghana. The taxi took me by Cardiff Castle and the driver informed me about the recent renovations before depositing me in front of the hotel. The Cardiff Hilton is just across the street from the castle and a beautiful park with flowers and a large statue. Everything was arranged at the hotel and I was handed my keys to my room after a name check. I was tired having travelled for more than 20 hours.

The conference began the following day and I was overwhelmed by the numbers - the room was packed. I had never guessed the event was going to be so huge, and I never knew there were so many dedicated people in the archives profession. The majority are women.

No time to stare because we were welcomed by ARA President: a woman!

Helen Afi Gadzekpo and Lorraine Logan. Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA.





Delegates gathered for the drinks reception at the National Museum Cardiff. Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA.

The presidential address 'Fuzzy or Fixed' sounded very much like those piles of documents sitting in one of my repositories waiting to be tackled. You can only discover what they contain by managing them or the information they contain will remain fuzzy. I was finally able to see and hear the legendary Dr Sarah Tyacke, and was not surprised by her command of the subject and her delivery. I also realised that this is my future project number one as Ghana also suffered a similar football stadium disaster some years back and there was a public enquiry. I must locate those documents and take charge on behalf of the archives.

I attended the conservation stream and listened to Dr Elizabeth New's paper on seal preservation and interpretation. I made note to take better care of the independence seal which we have at the National Archives of Ghana and start checking for others that we may be neglecting. I promised to send the speaker a digital image of our independence seal.

Conservation Ethics: I teach 'Ethics in Records Management' at our training school and must get my hands on a copy of their presentations. "Will it work?" How to Update your Emergency Plan' was an eye-opener: such meticulous planning with so many different people involved. I got a copy of the presentation at once as we actually have nothing to talk about in that area. Since I check the ARA website at least twice a week I felt I should be making a presentation myself!

At the welcome reception at the National Museum Cardiff I saw a Rodin for the first time: 'The Kiss'. I also saw a picture of a woman dressed in colourful robes just like my late Auntie Nancy, a stool that looks like the one at my village grounds with two men playing 'oware', a traditional game, and an African tribal mask. All these in a European museum? Plenty of drinks and talk, talk, talk.

On the second day, the keynote speech by Dr Jones Lukose Ongalo was well delivered and I was amazed at the courage of the investigators, archivist and judges all working on such delicate issues in the International Criminal Court. Elephants do not forget so hopefully humans will not forget about those atrocities being committed daily. I introduced myself to Dr Ongalo for networking purposes.

At the archival descriptive standards roundtable I listened carefully as this was a discussion of the 'Bible' of archival standards: fonds, origin, provenance and dates. I saw Professor Michael Cook, my old-time mentor, listening carefully. Our meeting at the conference was one of the highlights for me. I realised colleagues were referring constantly to or mentioning digital and e-archiving and I felt lost. Maybe next time half a day could be devoted to migration from paper to digital archiving and preservation.

The information marketplace was an overdose for me. So many essential items necessary for daily activity on display - scanners of all types, cameras, conservation materials, machines to convert microfilms to digital formats. I wish



Delegates inspecting a painting at the National Museum Cardiff. Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA.

Michael Jones: The Find & Connect Web Resource

and wish! Collected 3 kilos of pamphlets and was weighed down at Heathrow airport.

'The role of Truth Commissions' Archives in Dealing with the Past Processes' was another interesting project for me as Ghana also has a Truth and Reconciliation Commission. We should find and take charge of those documents for the National Archives of Ghana. Thanks to Professor Cook for pointing me in the direction of the Swiss peace lady, and I hope something will come out of our meeting.

Pre-dinner drinks at Dr Tyacke's where I met a lot of interesting people - thanks. Post-dinner dancing included exotic food and a harpist playing along with the hum of a thousand voices. The dancing looked Irish - maybe they are cousins to the Welsh?

I made a lots of friends from the ARA office, as well as from Singapore, Thailand and from all over the world. The hotel staff were very professional, polite and always going the extra mile. The room was very comfortable, the food may be strange sometimes but was plentiful, and wine was flowing.

Oh! The flowers all around town and in that beautiful garden right across the street from the hotel, around the museum and all over town. I wish a day or half had been reserved for sightseeing as I never got to see the inside of the Cardiff Castle. Meanwhile, my ARA Conference pictures on Facebook are generating a lot of comments!

.....
Helen Afi Gadzekpo

National Archives of Ghana
.....

A key characteristic of our work as archivists is the description and preservation of context. But we also spend much of our professional lives working within particular contexts. Mine is the eScholarship Research Centre at the University of Melbourne, Australia.

Though our centre works with many and varied collaborators, the everyday demands of funded projects mean that we spend much of our time working hard to ensure our ideas and practices make a contribution to the areas in which we are directly engaged. Conferences allow us to step outside these immediate contexts; to share and compare ideas with people working on similar problems and with similar issues, but in different social, political and technological environments to our own. Engaging with people from diverse contexts helps us examine our own ideas and practice in a different light.

The 2013 ARA Conference in Cardiff provided an invaluable opportunity for this type of engagement.



Michael Jones. Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA.

As an Australian archivist visiting the UK I presented our work on the Find & Connect web resource: www.findandconnect.gov.au, a national collaborative project where archivists, social workers and historians work in consultation with government and the community to make hundreds of distributed record collections more discoverable, accessible and understandable online.

Over three days we also heard from archivists working in the UK and beyond, including presentations on: the Hillsborough Independent Panel, American civil rights collections, the National University of Ireland and issues of accountability in Ireland, the work of the International Criminal Court, the Black Cultural Archive, Kurdish collections, and collections related to Singapore, Northern Ireland, Latin America and more. These local and international perspectives were brought together through a united focus on the conference theme of accountability, culture and ethics.

Alongside specific projects and collections were fascinating perspectives on archival provenance, business archives, and the current state of archival standards. As someone interested in the potential of archival standards and the development of standards-based tools, the latter was of particular interest. Many of the attendees from the UK work in a theoretical and technological context different to that found in most Australian organisations, and this perspective brought

“Conferences allow us to step outside these immediate contexts; to share and compare ideas with people working on similar problems and with similar issues, but in different social, political and technological environments to our own.”

the effect of context on the perception of archival standards into clear focus.

As is often the case, discussion between sessions was equally important. Conversations ranged from the archival and theoretical, to the merits of Australian punk, Scottish independence and Welsh ales, and the communal atmosphere resulted in many new connections which I am continuing to explore since my return to Melbourne. As an avid Twitter user, some of these conversations started before the conference commenced, ran throughout, and have continued over the past month. Social media is itself a way of broadening one's connections and context. As an overseas visitor to the ARA Conference - arriving with few established connections - it was through Twitter that I managed to arrange a pre-conference dinner with fellow archivists; and Twitter conversations were the catalyst for a number of new friendships and fruitful offline (and online) conversations.

Thank you to ARA and the conference organisers for the opportunity to present in Cardiff, and to all those who attended sessions, asked questions, provided feedback and extended the discussion into the Twittersphere and beyond. Though I am back in a familiar context, I have returned inspired, enriched and already hoping I will be able to attend an ARA Conference in the near future.

Michael Jones

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The conservation stream session in full swing. Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA.



The Conservation Stream: An Overview

I was very fortunate this year to attend the ARA Conference located in the Cardiff Hilton. An opportunity to meet fellow conservators from afar and share in the wide variety of topics the conservation program had to offer us.

A warm welcome was given upon arrival with a small gesture in the form of a chocolate love spoon, a traditional gift between lovers in Wales and a strong cultural link to this year's conference location at our capital.

The conservation element of the conference opened with a description of a less interventive approach to conservation starting with preservation. Lisa Childs from the National Museum Wales gave a talk on the surveying of a collection, explaining her findings and how these were implemented. Dr Elizabeth New then highlighted the importance of preservation measures when handling and storing seals in order to preserve the rich cultural information found within the imagery and text. Following on the theme of seals, Sue Hourigan from the Berkshire Record Office offered a more interventive approach to the conservation of seals demonstrating the technical aspect to packaging. Finally, on the theme

of preservation Dr Helen Wilson from The National Archives outlined the development of a preservation framework and tool for the identification and preservation of transparent papers.

Tying into some of the themes of the conference, the ethics and aesthetics of conservation were highlighted by Jenny Williamson, and the issue of ethics in terms of professional practice in the future was dealt with in a talk by Simon Cane. Jean Brown from Northumbria University spoke about conservation education and how economic and technical changes have had an impact on professional practice and education.

The historical aspect to the components of the book was given by Phil Crocket, a paper historian, who talked about the development of paper and sizing. This was followed by 'Lalande's Art du Cartonnier: An exploration of 18th Century Paper Boards' by Jane Eagen from Oxford Conservation Consortium. In addition, on the final day Debby Rohan gave an informative talk entitled 'A Key to Book Clasps and Locks: An Historical Overview of Book Furniture'. On a more technical aspect of book conservation, Dilwyn Williams from the National Library Wales gave a detailed talk on the

'Boston MSS' from acquisition to analysis, conservation treatment, and accessibility through digitalization and facsimile.

On a more practical level we were given a demonstration of paper and book end marbling by Christopher Rowlett from the Presteigne Bindery, followed by a talk by Mark Walmsley on the development and early history of English decorative papers. Anthony Oliver from Sheffield Archives gave a practical demonstration on the use of re-moistable tissue in the conservation of a series of black and white photographs.

A collaboration between archival and object conservation entitled 'Message in a Bottle: The Conservation of a Victorian Time Capsule' by Sarah Money and Beth Werrett was a good example of sharing services, materials and techniques across disciplines to solve the problems that arose from a piece of parchment intent on keeping its secrets!

Another aspect of the conservator's role is marketing or outreach work. Lorraine Finch works tirelessly to make preservation and conservation accessible to the public. She does this using social media to relay her message through 'Comic Book Girl'. Audience engagement



Anthony Oliver (Sheffield Archives) demonstrating conservation of black and white photographs. Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA.

was also highlighted by Natasha Trenwith from Northamptonshire Archives and Heritage Service. She provided us with an insight into the preservation and conservation of 16th century wills. Treatment was documented using social media to increase awareness.

The information market place provided an opportunity to enquire face-to-face about conservation materials, storage solutions and media equipment all under one roof. We were also given the chance to be entered into a prize draw to win a hamper.

That evening upon arrival to the drinks reception, we were greeted by the sound of the Welsh harp which carried beautifully within our setting at the Hilton, Cardiff. The guest of honour at the gala dinner was Professor Aled Jones, Chief Executive and Librarian at the National Library of Wales. Dinner was followed by dancing to a traditional folk band.

On the final day, Matthew Collins, Professor of Archaeology at the University of York, gave a very interesting talk on the use of eraser waste or 'erdu' from the cleaning of parchment as a means of non-destructive sampling of



Conservator Rowena Mair Doughty. Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA.

parchment. He went on to explain the analytical process involved in obtaining the information and the implication this information has to researchers interested in the management and improvement of stock in agriculture. As conservators, this method of sampling can be used to identify the animal origin and the degradation of the parchment in a non-destructive manner.

We finished with Sarah Paul, Collections Adviser for CyMAL, giving an overview of the role of CyMAL. This talk highlighted projects undertaken, support given, and Sarah's training as a textile conservator in her professional role.

Lastly, I would like to thank the Archives and Records Council Wales, funded by the Welsh Assembly Government, for supporting my attendance to this year's conference, through a Workforce Development Grant.

Rowena Mair Doughty

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Simon Cane, Deputy Director of
the Birmingham Museums Trust.
Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA.

The Cruel Practice of Conservation

The act of conservation, the physical intervention with an object to preserve it, is generally viewed by the conservator - the actor in the process - as at worst a neutral act and at best a positive one. This view is perhaps linked to the idea that their actions are governed by an agreed set of ethical guidelines that define what is good practice and therefore what constitutes good conservation.

These codes of ethics, and there are many, have helped define the profession and influenced how the conservation sector has positioned itself, which is in the role as keepers of authenticity, champions of stasis and arbiters of tasteful and acceptable intervention. You do not have to look very hard however to find that the idea of conservation as a neutral or positive act is not one that is necessarily universally held. There are those that challenge the interventions of the conservator, the most vocal which is probably Artwatch: www.artwatchinternational.org, who are highly critical not only of the actions of conservators, but also of a perceived

unwillingness of conservators to engage in a debate about their ethics. Artwatch are not alone in their criticism and as we move towards a more open and connected society, so more people are engaged with the debate and concerned about the actions of conservators. We can then consider the act of conservation to be contested and that contestation is to some degree enabled by inconsistency in the codes of ethics that supposedly underpin the practice of conservation.

The codes of conservation ethics used across the world have generally evolved from the built historic environment and particularly the Athens (1933) and Venice

(1964) Charters. These charters emphasise respect for the original, the need for specialist knowledge, the importance of aesthetic and historical value and that interventions should be easily identifiable. These tenets translated into the ethical canon of conservation of moveable cultural heritage in the form of ideals that were highly aspirational and idealised and not necessarily fit for purpose. Jonathan Ashley-Smith has observed that 'philosophy follows practice' and I suggest that the application of these ethical ideals in a nascent profession formed schisms and contradictions that have not helped the development of conservation practice in an increasingly complex and sophisticated field of practice. We are now however seeing the development of codes of practice, such as that soon to be adopted by the Institute of Conservation (ICON) that guide not only the conservator but also protect the commissioner. This approach raises a number of questions such as: Who or what are ethics there to protect, people or objects? Is the move towards codes of practice a slide towards relativism and the use of pragmatic sanction in the case of transgression?

I believe that the new ICON code reflects the need for conservators to embrace change and adapt their practice as it requires a commitment to CPD. It also allows for professional sanction in the case of a breach and therefore acts to protect not only the object but also gives recourse to the commissioner. The new code reflects the growing confidence and sophistication of a profession that is better prepared to respond to the vicissitudes of the material world and therefore better placed to engage in a debate and discussion about how we conserve our material culture and what that means.

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Simon Cane

Birmingham Museums Trust
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Reflections on the Role of the Archivist

Attending the ARA Conference is a privilege, of that I am convinced having now attended both last year's conference in Brighton and this year's conference in Cardiff. Being asked to write an article about the conference is a challenge. What did I, professionally and personally, take away from the conference?

I am, still, a fairly new archivist having qualified only three years ago. I work in a large organisation, though we are only two archivists. So for me, attending the conference is a great opportunity to expand my network and meet new and old archivist friends. The ARA Conference is great for hearing how other archivists work and find out what challenges they experience at their archive.

It is difficult to say what I professionally took away from the conference. All the talks and presentations were interesting and well-presented. Although there were a wide variety of types of archive represented, I felt that the presentations illustrated the similarities of the challenges relating to the themes of the conference - accountability, culture and ethics - regardless of the type of archive.

Reading though my scribbled notes it is clear that archivists wear many hats. We are negotiators, mediators and facilitators. No doubt other 'hats' could be added: gatekeepers (though it has a somewhat negative connotation), guides and interpreters.

However, the common theme in all these roles are the large parts which accountability and ethics play in the everyday life of archivists.

The archivists working with the Hillsborough Independent Panel took on the role of negotiators to collect documents from 85 organisations and people, and negotiated terms to ensure that the documents are permanently accessible via the online catalogue. The Hillsborough archivists also had to negotiate the level of redacting with the families of the 96 victims of the disaster.

In Prairie Hady's talk on the lynching of three black men in Duluth, Minnesota, in 1920, the archives and the archivists became mediators, a kind of 'co-witness' between the archival records and the community. By examining the records created at the time, the archivists could create a more nuanced view of the event than the one the community might have through the 'public collective memory' created by news reports at the time. These were particularly biased against the three black men.

Archivists are also gatekeepers: although it makes us sound like we frequently attempt to keep researchers out of the archive, it also indicates that we frequently enable the public to investigate their own history. Michael Jones in his talk about the Find & Connect web resource, demonstrated how the project enabled people known as Forgotten Australian and Former Child Migrants to identify collections which might hold essential records which could help them reconstruct their own story and personal identity, or indeed help them find evidence when seeking redress for abuse experienced while in care. In this case, the archivists act as gatekeepers in a positive way by facilitating access to archives.

Personally, the talk which I most identified with was the one given by Maria Sienkiewicz, Group Archivist at Barclays. Her presentation on how Barclays have used the archives to create more transparency, learn from mistakes, show commitment to the communities they serve, and boost staff morale, was an inspiration to any archivist working in organisations which have gone through periods of negative media coverage and low brand reputation. I could certainly nod in recognition with much of what Maria said.

In her concluding remarks to the conference, Sarah Tyacke told us not to hate Barclays as they have a wonderful archivist. I think that is the main point which I took with me from the conference: the fact that many archivists all over the world are making difficult ethical decisions every day to enable accountability. If that does not restore my faith in the greatness of my profession for another year, nothing will. So my message would be: do not hate any organisation! They probably have truly great, hardworking archivists doing their very best to make the right decisions often under difficult circumstances.

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Anne Jensen

News UK

Ruth Kusionowicz: The Newly- Qualified Archivist

As a recent graduate and newly-qualified professional, I am always looking for ways to immerse myself in the archives and records community and make sure that I keep up-to-date with its current challenges and thinking. I was thrilled to be awarded a bursary to attend the ARA Conference in Cardiff, as being in the early stages of my career meant I never would have been able to afford to go otherwise. The conference theme of accountability, culture and ethics promised to provoke debate and new perspectives on some old continuing issues that face many records professionals during their careers. I was not disappointed.

Each of the three days was packed with talks from a variety of speakers from various countries, backgrounds and collections. As would be expected when discussing topics such as ethics, rights and identity, there were talks that were rather heavy going, some that were inspiring and moving, but all were incredibly interesting and thought-provoking.

As well as the given topic of the conference, other slightly more hidden but shared themes seemed to emerge as the talks went on. The concept of 'fuzziness' and accepting or pushing for less fixed boundaries and more flexible identities within the archive world was one that was established in the presidential address by Caroline Williams. This was then touched upon by several speakers throughout the conference. The advocacy for collaboration and working with others not just within our profession, but with IT specialists, government, businesses, communities and users, was another clear connection between the talks. The incredible range of activities, causes and roles that a records professional can be part of also seemed to be a theme. Although not expressly stated, this idea was very present in talks such as those by Dr Sarah Tyacke about her role on the Independent Hillsborough Panel, by Dr Jones Lukose Ongalo about the use of archives in the International Criminal Court, by Maria Sienkiewicz about a business archive during a time of scandal and reputation damage, and by Elisabeth Baumgartner about Truth



ARA Conference Bursary Winners 2013. Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA..

Commission archives. Archivists and records managers can enable people, survivors and communities to find justice, a sense of identity, assurance that atrocities will not be forgotten, a way to rebuild after terrible events, and be trusted to protect, preserve and provide access to the 'truth' within their records.

It was not all work and no play at the conference. There were regular breaks each day when you could network, chat to speakers, exchange thoughts on the talks you had just heard, or just simply have a cup of tea with new friends. I tried to take these opportunities to make a quick summary tweets about the discussions I had just been listening to, as I found it impossible to do it while taking notes during the talks. I respect those who seemed to be tweeting throughout and still caught everything the speaker said!

On the Wednesday evening we were treated to a visit to the National Museum Cardiff for our welcome drinks - a fabulous building with some lovely artwork. Thursday evening was the gala dinner with good food and everyone looking wonderfully dressed up. Followed by

“ Being introduced to the other nine bursary winners instantly enabled me to relax - here were kindred spirits of a similar age, at a similar point in their career, in the same situation as me, and for most it was their first conference too. Getting to know them, where they worked, which talks they were looking forward to and swapping stories about the difficult job market really helped settle my nerves. ”

the ceilidh! Sort of like a barn dance, the band gave us our instructions and then we were off, trying to remember the moves and not get tangled. I had thought initially it would be difficult to convince people to get on the dance floor, but everyone was in high spirits and up for taking part. Many stayed up after the last dance excitedly chatting and drinking, and I admired how awake they

seemed the next morning for our last day of talks! Better stamina than I have, clearly.

I think one of the best parts of the conference for me was meeting the other bursary winners. Before arriving in Cardiff, I had been very nervous about the fact that I was on my own, at my first ever conference, and I did not know anyone else who was going. As it turned out there were actually a few familiar faces at the conference who I had met while studying at Aberystwyth University. But being introduced to the other nine bursary winners instantly enabled me to relax - here were kindred spirits of a similar age, at a similar point in their career, in the same situation as me, and for most it was their first conference too. Getting to know them, where they worked, which talks they were looking forward to and swapping stories about the difficult job market really helped settle my nerves. With my regained confidence, I was able to go and talk to speakers and other delegates with ease. It also meant I had people to hand to discuss the talks we had just listened to and to share a table with at the gala dinner.

Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed my time at ARA Conference 2013. The hotel, its staff and its food were great, and the delegates and speakers were friendly, engaging and approachable (you really can just start talking to anyone). I was able to immerse myself in important debatable issues which I had so enjoyed doing on the Masters course, but sadly is often missing in a day-to-day workplace. I even managed to make contact with a speaker from Australia who



Gala Dinner with guest of honour Professor Aled Jones, Chief Executive and Librarian of the National Library of Wales. Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA.



Delegates enjoying the post-dinner celidh. Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA.

I knew I would be working with in the near future - it was nice to meet in person when we will only be corresponding remotely during the project. I will take away my experiences of those first attempts at 'networking' which I can now build on and improve, some new archival friends, and a broader idea of where I can best use my skills and knowledge, both within and outside the records profession. My only regret is not having time to explore Cardiff

and its sights. I am so grateful for being awarded the ARA Conference Bursary. I have learned and experienced a lot in just three short days.

Ruth Kusionowicz

Imperial College

Twitter: @Ruthio85

Blog: <http://babyarchivist.wordpress.com>



Archives Wales stand at the conference information marketplace. Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA.

Key Conference Themes: Professional Partnerships

ARA 2013 was my second conference, the first being Manchester three years ago. Being involved in the ARA Wales region and attending many archives training sessions and meetings during the last three years of professional working life, I was much more confident in attending this year's conference as I knew that everyone would be as welcoming as ever and there would always be someone to talk to.

The conference focussed on the themes of accountability, culture and ethics. Speakers concentrated on our key purpose - responsibility for keeping records as evidence of decision-making. All of the speakers offered an interesting perspective and the case studies highlighted were fascinating in themselves. These varied from the workings of the International Criminal Court, to adopting an e-court strategy to civil rights collections in the US, to the notion of co-creatorship and plural provenance.

Key questions were asked such as: Are we ever really objective? Are the boundaries we impose too rigid? Is the way we describe too one-sided? Should we re-examine the way in which we describe to allow for other parties to have an input? These are not new questions, but the speakers put forward their case

studies of how they have addressed these issues in various projects and methods of working.

One of the underlying themes that came through many of the talks was that of partnerships and how we work with others. This was demonstrated by Sarah Tyacke in her keynote address regarding the Independent Hillsborough Panel and how the project (impressively!) brought together records of 85 separate organisations on one website. A whole session focussed on the work of Archives Wales and how staff are working together to achieve common objectives in Wales. This included our digital preservation coalition, our national marketing strategy Cynefin - a project to digitise and make available online surviving tithe maps and collaborative projects aiming to raise the profile of business records including the steel and nuclear industries. It was evident from these speakers that there are some successful projects going on all over the country to utilise resources and expertise across multiple organisations.

Another example of partnership working became apparent during the 'Managing the Digital World' session. Speakers - namely Toi Chi Kwok from the National Archives of Singapore and Melissa Suek from PwC Forensics- Information Governance - stressed



Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA.

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the importance of archives and records management staff working closely with ICT professionals. This is particularly important in my organisation where archives and records management departments have been amalgamated with staff previously under the ICT umbrella. Engagement with records management and ICT specialists is more important than ever to tackle digital preservation in a unified and consistent way. Issues surrounding bring your own device to work policies and the challenges that will bring to information professionals were raised by Suek who noted that 86% of employees use their own device at work and this could lead to data loss through hacking or losing hardware resulting in ICO fines and potential gaps in records collections.

I plan to return to the office with what I have learned at the ARA Conference and discuss with colleagues how to bring these issues home to our stakeholders. As Sarah Tyacke asked in her closing comments: How do we go forward and tell people what we do? This was not my first conference and I hope it was not my last. The conference is a really useful learning experience and I would encourage all ARA members to attend in the future and find out what is going on in our profession.

Sarah Winning

Denbighshire County Council

Key Conference Themes: Impact, Influence, Identity

In the past I have found attendance at the ARA Conference incredibly motivating. When you live and work in a remote location as I do, is it difficult and expensive to sustain professional relationships, attend training or ARA events, and keep abreast of developments in the sector. The ARA Conference provides an opportunity to foster new relationships with colleagues, and nurture existing ones. Yes, much of this can be done via email, reading ARC and the Journal of the Archives and Records Association, but the motivational benefits of hearing about a ground-breaking or challenging project from an inspiring speaker cannot be underestimated.

I decided, at the last minute, to apply for an ARA Conference Bursary. I nearly fell off my chair when I was successful as I was sure competition would be tough. I was delighted to be able to attend the full conference. The weather had other ideas and I missed all of Wednesday's sessions due to thick fog. I was sorry to have missed Sarah Tyacke on the work of the Hillsborough Independent Panel.

Thursday morning began with the best paper of the conference. Dr Jones Lukose Ongalo, Head of Records and Archives at the International Criminal Court spoke on the work of the court. His work seems a world away from my own - the world's first fully digital archive, secure satellites, using archives to ensure crimes against humanity are solved and the perpetrators brought to justice, versus re-boxing, endless genealogy, numbering bundles, gathering

statistics, sorting out volunteers, and thinking up new ideas to simply get people through the door. He emphasised the accountability of the archivist and really made me think about how the decisions we make as archivists impact on wider society. He explained that our role is to help orchestrate the flow of information between the creator and the user. I came away from his talk with a renewed sense of how important archives are, particularly for social justice, something which is easy to forget when you are plodding away doing the day job.

Patricia Whatley then also spoke of the impact and influence that archivists can have on wider society. The role of the archivist is no longer that of a passive record keeper, if it ever was. It is not always possible, or desirable, for us to be impartial.

I was also touched by Michael Jones' paper about his work on the records and needs of child migrants in Australia. His work involved helping provide information about where and how to find collections relating to Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants. He spoke of the very real personal consequences for the individuals involved, many of whom have no sense of personal identity relating to

their own childhoods. Archives, even ephemera, can really help validate their childhood memories. Both his and Dr Jones' papers really brought home the huge impact that records can have to personal justice, identity and memory. What also struck me during this session was the emotional impact on the archivists of having to communicate with researchers who are looking at their own personal history. Often we are dealing with people who are looking for ancestors and so the connection is that little bit more distant and the emotional response more muted. It must be difficult, stressful and emotional to work with researchers who are looking at their own childhoods, particularly when those childhoods were not happy times for them. It shows the need for archivists to be compassionate, understanding, patient and sensitive.

The breakout sessions I attended were also thought-provoking. Hannah Ishmael from the Black Cultural Archives spoke on the work of her organisation in general. She also raised issues such as the importance of knowledge being held by the organisation rather than by the individual and that it is vital for relationships to be cultivated between a community or user and the organisation rather than individual staff. I think this can be difficult if you work in archive

Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA.



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The ARA Conference provides an opportunity to foster new relationships with colleagues, and nurture existing ones. Yes, much of this can be done via email, reading ARC and the Journal of the Archives and Records Association, but the motivational benefits of hearing about a ground-breaking or challenging project from an inspiring speaker cannot be underestimated.

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with only a few members of staff, and the community views the archivist himself as the archive's service. The session on education and outreach was interesting too. Rachel Hosker spoke passionately about the importance of having a sense of fun when we are doing outreach. It is important new users catch the archives bug and do not go away with the idea that archives are dull and not for them. She also stressed that we are not just there to help serve the curriculum and that outreach needs to reach beyond school visits.

The themes of archives as tools to aid memory, support reparation, justice, human rights, and building identity continued on Friday morning. Mario Ramirez spoke on the role archives have played in justice and reconciliation in post-conflict Latin America. Michelle Caswell discussed how it is preferable for a non-governmental archive (NGA) to look after records which document human-rights abuses by a state. The NGA is a more trustworthy steward of such records, and the archivists who look after such records have responsibility to the victims and survivors of the abuses rather than to the state. She spoke of trust as being a guiding principle for archivists. Again, these speakers caused me to think about my own work, and even question whether the role I play is of value. Some of my day-to-day work now seems so unimportant compared to what some archivists elsewhere in the world are dealing with - threats, political corruption and pressure, victims of horrific human rights abuses. But it is important to remember that archives, whatever their nature, are of value and the work we all do is important for societal memory and personal identity. I must try to remember that the next time a genealogist tells me their ancestor 'came from somewhere in Scotland' and 'no I do not know their name or when they lived'.

I would like to thank the ARA for giving me the opportunity to attend the conference.

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Joanne Wishart

Shetland Museum and Archives
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The Experience of a First-Time Delegate

As a first-time delegate I had only a vague idea of what to expect from the ARA Conference. Thanks to a bursary I was able to attend all three days and was very much looking forward to it. The speakers' abstracts I had read sounded impressive and I hoped to gain a better understanding of the subjects under discussion. Also, as I usually work alone, I was keen to meet other archivists, although I had not anticipated holding hands and galloping around the room with them at a ceilidh!

The conference programme incorporated a wide range of international speakers from vastly different backgrounds. Both keynote speeches concerned trust in records and the transparency of proceedings and were very memorable. The shorter presentations were arranged thematically and were quite fast-paced, with little time to absorb or think between speakers. Tea-break chatter proved that I was not alone in finding some of the topics challenging, in particular those involving civil rights issues and national identity in post-conflict societies.

My personal favourite presentations include Kate Barber and Jane Henderson's enlightening explanation of the benefits of touch, complete with comedy miming of different ways of touching. I had not realised that there can be a psychological need for some people to touch archives and that allowing this can convey a sense of privilege for the user. I will try to avoid smacking any hands in future!

I found Emma Dadson's talk on updating your emergency plan very informative and have since passed on her practical advice in my own workplace. She made many important points, such as incorporating a disaster plan into your wider business continuity plan to ensure that the two do not clash, and agreeing on terminology with building management/facilities before a disaster



View of the conference information marketplace. Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA.

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The conference provided a welcome opportunity to discuss fascinating and important matters with friendly, like-minded people.
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happens. Otherwise, if you ask for assistance with ‘a leak’, would they arrive immediately with wet vacuums and waterproof extension leads, or turn up the next day with a mop and bucket?

For me, Antony Oliver’s practical demonstration of the conservation of damaged photographs was a must-see. The archive collection that I am currently working has around 10,000 photographic images, some of which are in poor condition. I was pleased to see that such good repair results are achievable on torn photographs, although I did not envy Anthony carrying out such fiddly work in front of a room full of people.

During the break-out sessions I attended ‘Wales through Film’ presented by Iwan Jenkins of the National Screen and Sound Archive of Wales, which specialises

in collecting recordings relating to Welsh culture and people of Wales. This included seven short clips of animation, promotional film and amateur footage dating from the 1930s to 1970s. All were quirky and charming, but the most entertaining were the story of Billy, a seal that lived in Cardiff’s Victoria Park, a day in the life of Glamorgan Rhoose airport with ‘such lovely girls’ at the check-in desks, and Wales Empire swimming pool proudly advertising its modern, noise-reducing asbestos ceiling.

Overall, the organisation of the conference and the catering were excellent. The drinks reception at the National Museum Cardiff on Wednesday evening was very pleasant - when else would you be allowed to wander around Impressionist galleries with a glass of wine in your hand? The organisers’ tactic of getting

delegates to visit the information marketplace to have their prize draw entry card stamped by the exhibitors appeared to be working.

The conference provided a welcome opportunity to discuss fascinating and important matters with friendly, like-minded people. I especially enjoyed hearing about the international perspectives on accountability in archives and records management, but all the speakers emphasised that what we do as a profession is vitally important and that the decisions we make really matter. I left the conference feeling like part of a super-crucial and global record-keeping community, albeit a tiny part.

Sandra Hicklin

Rotherham Heritage Services

Tweeting the Conference

I was fortunate enough to receive a bursary to attend this year's ARA Conference, and as part of my application I had offered to tweet during the conference as a way of enabling those not able to attend to get a feel for what was being discussed each day.

My reasons for offering to do this had been two fold. Firstly, having tweeted from other conferences and events I had found that I paid more attention to the speakers as I was constantly thinking about how to summarise the key points in 140 words or less. Secondly, Twitter allows you to engage and discuss what is being said as it happens, both with other delegates on Twitter and with those not able to attend who were following the hashtag from work.

The most important things to consider when deciding to live tweet from a conference, particularly one that lasts several days, is to know how long the battery in your laptop or tablet will last and make sure both it and your mobile phone are fully charged (ready for when the other battery dies!). Tweeters should also research which Twitter tools are the best ones to enable you to write your tweets whilst keeping up with what else is being said. Heather Romaine summarised the various tools excellently in her piece about Twitter for ARC Conference 2012 Special Issue and I would whole-heartedly agree with her that using Tweetdeck and Tweetchat side-by-side is the most efficient way of not only

being able to tweet what the speakers are saying, but also to keep up with what else is being said on Twitter both by colleagues at the conference and those following #ARA2013 from afar.

According to Twitter over 2,600 tweets were generated from this year's conference, of which I can proudly (or shamefully) say I was responsible for just over 450 of them, which works out at a rate of about a tweet every two minutes.

Often the conversations being generated on Twitter around particular points can be as interesting as the sessions themselves, and being able to engage non-archivists/sector professionals in the debates can be a valuable insight into how our issues are perceived by others. The sessions delivered by Sophie Houlton on a records and archives strategy for the National Trust and Mike Jones on records and archival evidence in Australia certainly seemed to spark the most interest from outside the sector. The question of co-provenance was introduced by Nathan Sowry, Prairie Hady and Leslie Nellis, all US archivists working with civil

Karen Stapley and Catherine Taylor engrossed in social media. Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA.

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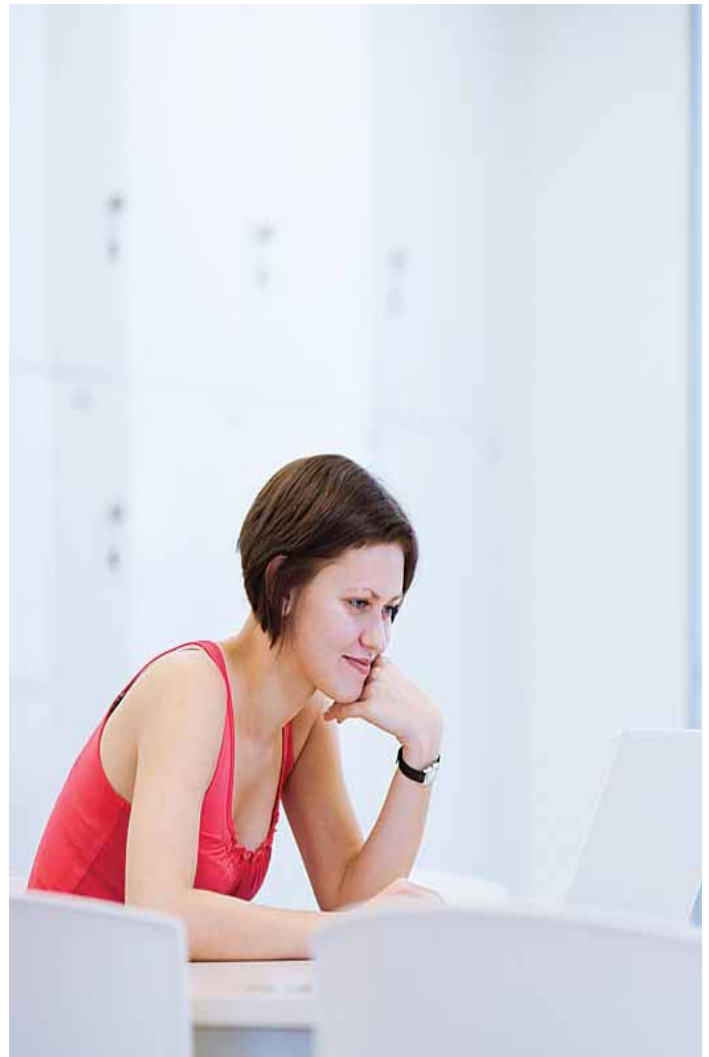


rights collections. These sessions seemed to spark the most debate amongst the archive sector itself, with a strong response from UK archivists against co-provenance and the various ways in which the standards enable us to identify these other contributors without having to amend our stance on the importance of a single provenance for archival collections.

Other topics that were perhaps less pertinent to the conference itself but equally as interesting include counting the number of name checks archival (and other) theorists received. Eric Ketelaar and Aristotle were the most popular people to quote at ARA 2013, and there were also a number of references to animals, including fuzzy the poodle, elephants and donkeys! Looking back at my tweets from ARA Conference 2012, this was also a popular theme, with leprechauns, elves and penguins getting a mention. I thoroughly enjoyed this year's conference. The speakers were excellent and the topics discussed were incredibly relevant and thought-provoking. Having looked back over all my tweets from the 3 days, I certainly appear to have taken a comprehensive set of notes which I hope also proved useful to colleagues not able to attend. Now all that remains is for me to turn my 452 conference tweets into something slightly more readable 140 words summaries of key points.

Karen Stapley

British Library



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The Student Experience

Since an epiphany moment in a lecture theatre a few years ago which sparked my desire to embark on a career in archives, I have always found events run by the ARA very useful and interesting. So it was a huge privilege this year to be awarded a bursary to attend the conference in Cardiff.

Prior to the conference I had no idea of what to expect. Excitement at receiving an ARA Conference Bursary was slowly turning to increasing apprehension as the conference drew closer. What if I did not know anyone, or nobody spoke to me? Needless to say I should not have worried. Everyone was very welcoming and friendly, and I even recognised a few faces.

The papers at the conference covered a wide range of topics, some of which included sensitive issues such as civil rights in the USA, and were all very informative and thought-provoking. It is difficult to highlight a few of the papers as they all deserve recognition, but perhaps for me the most interesting presentations were from the international speakers, especially Dr Jones Lukose Ongalo, Head of Records and Archives at the International Criminal Court in The Hague. His presentation really stressed the importance of ensuring records are trustworthy and reliable, especially in a digital world, and how archivists must take on a new role of orchestrating the flow of information. The international elements of the conference also enabled me to expand my understanding of archives and place them in a wider global context.

The conference provided me with the chance to experience more directly some of the work of the ARA which I had not previously been involved with, such as the Archives for Learning and Education Section (ALES) and the Diversity Working Group. I attended break-out sessions for each group which enabled me to understand how archivists can communicate their collections through education and developing lifelong learning opportunities, but also how it

is important to add to the skills of our profession by encouraging people from a variety of backgrounds to enter it.

Accountability, ethics and culture, the themes of the conference, are perhaps more important now than ever before at a time when financial pressure and cut-backs can also mean cutting corners. Yet these themes are also increasingly important in explaining to others what we actually do. I am still regularly met with a blank expression when I tell anyone that I am studying Archives and Records Management, and have to admit that I struggle to provide any simplistic answer when they ask me to explain what an archivist is. However, as the conference progressed I increasingly felt that the themes went a long way in broadly summing up what is involved in archives and records management, from the preservation of heritage to ensuring the efficient running of business. So when I am confronted with blank faces in the future about what an archivist is, I will be using these themes in my answer.

Despite attending the conference at what was a very busy time for me, what with finishing my dissertation and applying for jobs, I feel the event really complimented my studies by providing me with a 'real' perspective of archives, rather than the 'theoretical' perspective of my studies. As someone embarking on a career in the archive profession, the conference provided a unique opportunity for me to network and build relationships with individuals who were keen to share their knowledge and experience. It has given me an insight into current archive practice and the opportunities and challenges faced by archives throughout the UK and across

ARA Conference Bursary Winner Emma Down.
Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA.



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As a student attending the conference, people often spoke to me about the dire job market, but I also learnt that I must turn the current job situation within the archive profession to my advantage, and use short term contracts to broaden my skills and knowledge, from FOI legislation to Latin. In fact, at the time of writing this article I am just about to embark on my first cataloguing job, so there is light at the end of the tunnel!

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the world, which will no doubt be invaluable as I start my career. As a student attending the conference, people often spoke to me about the dire job market, but I also learnt that I must turn the current job situation within the archive profession to my advantage, and use short-term contracts to broaden my skills and knowledge, from FOI legislation to Latin. In fact, at the time of writing this article I am just about to embark on my first cataloguing job, so there is light at the end of the tunnel!

As a first time delegate I do not have any previous conferences to compare with this year's, but I would encourage any students or new professionals to attend and get involved with the ARA as it is a great way to engage with the profession and meet other archivists from a wide range of organisations. I found the conference very interesting and enjoyable and will definitely be attending other ARA conferences in the future!

.....
Emma Down

UCL
.....



A View from the Information Marketplace

This year has seen Conservation By Design (CXD) celebrate a huge milestone in its history by marking its 21st Anniversary. It has proved an excellent time for reflection on what we have achieved with the business over the last two decades and our current position in the industry, but also the importance of the relationships we have built within it.

Significantly, the ARA Conference is always a very useful event for us to help develop these kinds of relationships. It provides a substantial platform from which we can communicate with such a large number of clients or potential clients in a short period of time - the primary aim being that those who do not know us well can finally put faces to names and get to the real heart of what we as a business can offer.

We hope that our attendance at the conference gives our brand a very human face - making us much more approachable and showcasing our willingness to learn from, and help to solve our customers' queries or problems, whatever they may be.

Ensuring we keep abreast of these requirements is what drives forward CXD as a business. From our product development, to our investment into research, to improving our service offering, everything we do is motivated by the customer's needs. To do this we need to ensure we have a real 'sense' of what is happening in the market, and if, or how, CXD can help. Our annual attendance at the ARA Conference facilitates those kind of discussions, which we hope results in us becoming an ever more client-focussed and innovative supplier to the industry.

This year we were able to road-test a selection of our newer products and gauge public reaction to them. Collections such as our high-clarity CXD Timecare Crystal Polyester Type 2 pockets, which are specially designed and manufactured at our in-house manufacturing facilities in Bedford, have been a key development for us over the last 12 months, so it was vital to understand perception of them in the market.

It is very much an on-going process. These are the same people we spoke to during the research and

development stages of Timecare Crystal Polyester Type 2, but from whom we need confirmation that we have met their needs and requirements. Only then can we be sure we able to remain leaders in the industry.

Of course a trade show is only ever as good as the delegates it attracts, but we can easily confirm that this is one which consistently draws the most influential personnel. This is significant from our perspective as these are the individuals who are driving innovation in the archiving sector. The quality of the speakers is of course imperative to drawing such a noteworthy delegation, but by delivering a truly comprehensive schedule of industry leaders speaking on such pertinent subjects year on year, we can be sure we will be in the very best of company at the ARA Conference. We certainly look forward to being a part of this pivotal event for many years to come, and will continue to work with the peers who we meet there to deliver greater innovation for this industry in the future.

Chris French

Conservation By Design

Conservation By Design Product Manager Chris French. Photograph by Tim Fok for the ARA.



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Key Conference Themes: Archival Standards and Processes

It would be a reasonable assumption that this year's conference would advocate strict adherence to the profession's standards and rules. However, this really was not the case. The event documented real issues faced by people all over the world and explored how we, as recordkeeping professionals, can use our wide variety of skills to help people investigate, analyse and overcome these issues.

We know that there are frequently times when people seek information: for instance relatives of Hillsborough disaster victims, adult Australian child migrants trying to uncover facts about their childhoods, Cambodian citizens exploring the truth about the rule of the Khmer Rouge, parents from Singapore wanting to retrieve records of their education so that their children can go to the same school. Maybe these powerful issues and quests for information should come first and strict standards and procedure in our profession should take a back seat in return for simple transparency.

We heard how adults trying to find out about their past abuse in Australian care homes through the Find and Connect project found the original website too complicated. By removing tricky archival terminology, the satisfaction rate went up from 40% to 96%. CyMAL also encouraged students to create web pages for other students, showing them the best ways to use business archives in their own language.

The archival descriptive standards roundtable asked the question: How relevant are our paper archives in our fast paced, throw-away environment? We learned about the prevalence (and risks) of personal technology being used for work processes. The more people experience technological change in their personal lives, the more they will expect it in other parts of their lives. Trying to navigate a complicated multi-level description, or understand non-repetition of data (probably more relevant for paper catalogues) may not tally with the quick-fix digital age, and perhaps people are likely to give up on archival searches that incorporate these traditional standards.

We need to think about how existing archival processes will endure current and future leaps in technology. Dr Jones Lukose Ongalo, Head of Records and Archives for the International Criminal Court, showed how a fully digital court enables evidence and documentation to be handled quickly, efficiently and sustainably in the

pursuit for justice. In the future will the location of archives matter? The archives of the International Criminal Court are contained on servers scattered all over the world, the Hillsborough archive is centrally stored on the internet, with various record classes all over the country. Likewise, the National Trust's records are spread over many locations.

Traditional access via the repository is still the main way people access information, although perhaps we need to review the way we traditionally produce paper in our search rooms. Conservators from the University of Cardiff argued that it sometimes is really best to let people touch and handle archives in order for them to feel a connection.

The ARA Conference was a brilliant experience and showed how, as a profession, we are exploring modern questions and striving to provide people with ethical, transparent and relevant access to archives in a modern age. I have come back to work with ideas and evidence that I can use in my day-to-day work.

Alison Kay

National Railway Museum

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Et in Archiva Ego: Artists in the Archives Conference

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Friday 8 November 2013

Researching Scottish Artists
Contributors are expected to include:

Dr Ben Greenman

(Glasgow School of Art)

Rose Roberto

(University of Leeds)

Kirstie Meehan

(Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art)

Sandy Wood

(Royal Scottish Academy)

Francesca Baseby

(Edinburgh College of Art)

Artists Inspired by Archives
Contributors are expected to include:

Steve Connelly

(Perth & Kinross Council Archives)

Susannah Waters

(Glasgow School of Art)

Tiffany Boyle, Jessica Carden

www.mothertongue.se

Hugh Buchanan

www.hughbuchanan.co.uk

Joanne Soroka

www.joannesoroka.co.uk

Artists Inspired by Archives

Conference fees: £17-20 (optional lunch extra)

For further details and a booking form visit: www.scottishrecordsassociation.org

**The Scottish Records
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ARA Core Training Free Places Scheme

ARA Core Training courses are high quality, consistent and essential training for record professionals. They are offered regularly across the regions and nations and focus on the core training needs for all of us who work with records. Each course is supported by ARA funds to make it as affordable as possible for ARA members.



The topics in the Core Training Programme are:

- Audience Engagement
- Copyright
- Data Protection
- Digital Preservation
- E Records Management
- Freedom of Information
- Managing Volunteers
- New and Refurbished Buildings

For full details of all of courses see: www.archives.org.uk/training/core-training

Or follow us on Twitter: @TrainingARA

The Core Training programme has been developed to ensure that key courses of interest to many in the sector are offered frequently and in all parts of the UK and Ireland. They are subsidised by ARA and also supported by Link 51.

ARA Training Group are now delighted to announce that we will be launching a Free Places scheme for all Core Training courses from October 2013. The scheme will offer between one and three free places for every course, plus assistance with travel costs. The Free Places scheme is open to all ARA members and places will be reserved on every course for the successful applicants, so you do not need to worry about missing out on popular courses. Applicants can also request assistance with travel costs, although we cannot guarantee that we will be able to cover these in full.

Application details are available at: www.archives.org.uk/training/core-training Or email ctfree@archives.org.uk for an application form and guidance for applicants. The closing date for applications will be one month before each core training course.

The Training Group are also keen to continue to develop the Core Training programme and are now developing the second phase of the programme. We are seeking two ARA members to join the Training Group with a remit to research, carry out consultations and pilot the second phase of Core Training. This is a great opportunity to get involved with an active group in ARA and develop new skills and knowledge. If you would like more information about the role and the commitment needed please contact the chair of the Training Group Lizzy Baker: lizzy.aratraining@outlook.com

Lizzy Baker

ARA Training Group Chair

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.

If you would like to send something for inclusion in the magazine, please send articles to arceditors@archives.org.uk, or write and let us know what you'd like to read about. Guidelines for articles for ARC can be found on the Association's website: www.archives.org.uk.

From beetles to The Beatles



Entomology Products (pages 71-75)



Phonograph Record Storage Sleeves (Page 27)

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