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Newsletter

BUSINESS ARCHIVES COUNCIL

Round Table on Business Records: Update

Those of you with good memories will remember that the Round Table on Business Records met twice last year to discuss many of the issues affecting business archives and records. At the last meeting there was a concensus that solutions to many of the problems could only be found through the creation of a dedicated post. Consequently, in December the Round Table wrote to The National Archives (TNA) requesting a meeting to discuss the possibility of creating a two year, full-time post for a Business Records Development Officer, based at Kew. TNA welcomed the approach and a meeting was then held in April to discuss the objectives, governance and funding for such a post. The mood of the meeting was very supportive and encouraging and the creation of such a post has moved from a possible to a probable position. The final pieces of the funding jigsaw are now being put in place and we hope to be able to bring you more definite news in the near future.

If you would like to find out more about the proposed Business Records Development Officer please contact Sara Kinsey on sara@kkinsey.fsnet.co.uk

Save the Date: BAC Annual Conference Tuesday 8th November 2005 From Family to FTSE

The John Lewis Partnership has kindly agreed to host the BAC's 2005 Conference at its Peter Jones department store in Sloane Square, London. The theme will be the transition from family business to multinational.

THE DIRECTORS' ROOM.

This is the hub of this great business organisation, and the centre from which its policy and its far-reaching business activities emanate.

Bainbridge Board Room 1925. Reproduced with permission of the John Lewis Partnership archive collection.

The Conference aims to look at different business sectors to examine the transition from family firm to public companies and will investigate such questions as what makes family firms more durable in certain industries or regions? Why do families relinquish control of their firms? Does family ownership inhibit or encourage growth? How is the changing structure of the firm reflected in the archival record and how should it document the history of family business? We will be adopting an approach which will provide speakers from both the field of historical research and archivists to indicate the different viewpoints of this intriguing aspect of business development.

The Wadsworth prize will be presented following the Conference - at the same venue. There will be a reception to accompany the presentation of the prize.

Further details will follow but any enquiries should be directed to: Judy Faraday, Partnership Archivist, John Lewis Partnership, Cavendish Road, Stevenage, Herts SG1 2EH. Tel: 01438 312388 ext. 4202.

Big Pit: National Mining Museum of Wales wins UK's largest arts prize

A former South Wales pit that once produced 100,000 tonnes of coal a year, and which is staffed by miners, has won the £100,000 Gulbenkian Prize for Museum of the Year, the UK's largest arts prize.

Sir Richard Sykes, Chairman of the Gulbenkian judges, who made the winning announcement at a ceremony at the Royal Institute of British Architects, comments,

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"Any one of our four finalists would have been a worthy winner of this year's Gulbenkian Prize for Museum of the Year but Big Pit offers an exceptional emotional and intellectual experience. It tells the individual stories of its community better than any museum I have visited and makes you contemplate the scale, and even the cruelty, of our industrial past which inspired a spirit of camaraderie and pride.

"All our finalists clearly show that museums today are not solely about displaying objects but are about the exposition of history, told with real passion alongside a commitment to a community's heritage."

Visitors at Big Pit in Blaenafon have been able to visit the underground mine since it first opened as a museum in 1983 but, until 2001, lack of funding left many of the sites on the surface untouched. Big Pit reopened in February 2004 after a £7 million redevelopment.

The thrilling underground tour, where visitors are led by miners down the 300ft mine shaft into the dark, dank subterranean passageways, past the pit ponies' stables and along the tracks of the coal trucks, is still an integral part of the Big Pit experience.

Now, above ground, all the colliery buildings, including the pithead baths, the winding engine house and blacksmith's workshop, have been restored and brought back to life with the sounds of the miners at work echoing from the past. The pithead baths, built as recently as 1939 and the first baths the miners had on the site, house the main exhibition. This tells the story not only of the coal mines themselves, but also of the communities that grew around the industry from the earliest days to the miners' strikes and pit closures of the 1980s.

The Gulbenkian judges were unanimous in their praise of Big Pit. In recounting the story of the people of the South Wales Coalfield in a simple yet captivating way, Big Pit keeps alive the story of British coal, particularly for the generations born after the closure of the mines.

The £7 million redevelopment of Big Pit was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (£5.5 million); Wales Tourist Board; Local Regeneration Fund; Garfield Weston Foundation; Lloyds TSB; Pilgrim Trust; SR & PH Charitable Trust; Coalfield Regeneration Trust; and the National Museums and Galleries of Wales. Admission is free; over 140,000 people have already visited Big Pit since it reopened.

The winner receives £100,000 and an enamelled silver bowl designed by award-winning metalwork artist, Vladimir Böhm.

The three other finalists were:

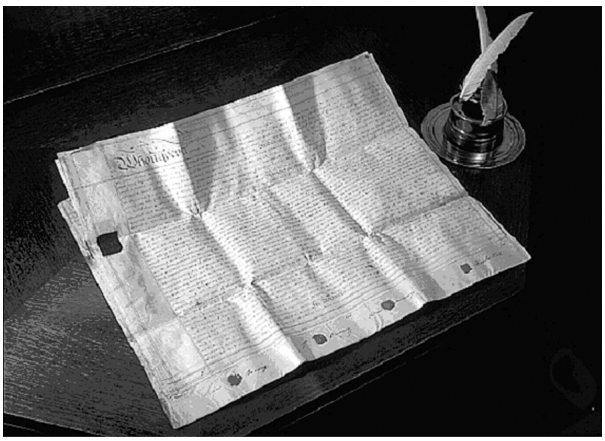
- Coventry Transport Museum
- Time and Tide, Museum of Great Yarmouth Life, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk
- Locomotion: The National Railway Museum at Shildon, Co Durham

The Gulbenkian Prize celebrates the innovative and excellent work taking place in museums and galleries today that is challenging traditional public perceptions of their role. It is open to any museum, large or small, in the UK, and its prize money of £100,000 makes it the largest single arts prize in the country.

Last year's winner was the Scottish Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh for its dramatic Landform by Charles Jencks – part sculpture, part garden, part land-art. The winner of the inaugural Gulbenkian Prize in 2003 was The National Centre for Citizenship and the Law housed in the Galleries of Justice in Nottingham.

Image reproduced with permission of NMGW

Archive Awareness Campaign 2005



The Articles of Partnership of Baring Brothers, 1762. Reproduced with permission of ING Bank N.V, London Branch.

'*Beginnings*' is the national theme for AAC 2005. Articles of partnership, trust deeds, records of births, discoveries, inventions – business archives should have plenty of material worthy of inclusion in AAC related events. The AAC organisers ask

- Is there an interesting "first" in your collection that could form the basis for a talk or that might interest the local paper?
- What is the oldest document in the archive and might people be interested in reading about it in your newsletter?
- Could you hold a Beginners' workshop of "how to" session?

You can register your events and request new promotional material at
www.archiveawareness.com/contributors/register/howto.html

UNESCO "Memory of the World" Programme

Joan van Albada, Secretary General of the International Council on Archives is developing a proposal to submit to UNESCO in order to encourage archival institutions which to date have shown little interest in the "Memory of the World" programme, to put forward archives for the Memory of the World register. The proposal calls for UNESCO's criteria for selection of documents for the International Register to be harmonised with archival ethics and practice as accepted by the archive profession worldwide and laid down in the ICA Code of Ethics, in 22 languages, on the website www.ica.org UNESCO "Memory of the World" Programme, http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en.

IN BRIEF

- **Five decades worth of censuses online.** The 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891 and 1901 censuses are online. Thanks to a new initiative by The National Archives and ancestry.co.uk, you can search the index by name and look at scans of original records of the famous, and not so famous. Searching the index is free. Go to www.ancestry.co.uk.
- **Phillimore Prize 2004.** This year the annual Society of Archivists Phillimore prize focused on web content designed to promote archives as learning tools. The winner was the Children's Society site Hidden Lives (www.hiddenlives.org.uk) "for its wealth of information and easy access". Special mention was also made of The Churchill Era by the Churchill Archives Centre; the Learning Zone, created by Durham County Record Office; and Shropshire Routes to Roots by Shropshire Archives and Oswestry Library.
- **OPERA Project** – Online Publications and Electronic Resources in Archives. Since April the Resource Centre and Library at The National Archives (TNA) is providing a new electronic services to its public and staff customers. Seamless, onsite access to a range of electronic publications on CD-ROM and online. Users are able to go to any reading room computer, and access over five hundred electronic publications relevant to researchers using the archives. They include a large number of trade directories, census indexes and major reference works such as the Index to Parliamentary Papers, indexes to The Times, Soldiers Who Died in the Great War, the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography and many more. The project, known as OPERA, was established two years ago. For further information contact Helen Pye-Smith, Head of Resource Centre & Library at TNA.
- **Barry Cox** has been appointed **Chief Executive of the History of Advertising Trust**. Speaking on his first day at HAT, Barry said " I am very excited about the future for HAT. You cannot fail to be impressed by the wealth of historical material and advertising imagery that HAT holds within its collections. What the team here have achieved to date is quite remarkable, and the next stage of development offers us all the opportunity to put HAT on the road to becoming a Centre for Study of national importance for all those studying advertising, marketing and media subjects." Barry Cox has had senior management experience at Grey Worldwide, Publicis and Collett Dickenson & Pearce and trained initially with Walter J Thompson.
- **Call for papers** – Second International Congress on Construction History. Speakers are sought for the Congress which is to be held at Queen's College, Cambridge University, from 29 March to 2 April 2006. Hosted by the Construction History Society. Congress website www.chs-cambridge.co.uk.
- University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK, will be the setting for the **Society of Archivists' Conference** to be held 6-9 September 2005. The conference, entitled From Parchment to Pictures to Pixels, will look at many aspects of archival preservation and access in this electronic age and will be opened with a keynote speech by Sarah Tyacke, Chief Executive of The National Archives.
- Following a successful trial in February and March the **Family Records Centre** is pleased to announce that it will be holding a regular series of Family History Surgeries. The surgeries are intended to help family historians who have come to a dead end with their research. The Centre's expert staff are on hand to suggest ways of getting around researchers' personal brick walls. The sessions will be held on Tuesday mornings starting from 24 May. Each surgery will last for half an hour with sessions starting at 10:30, 11:00, 12:00 and 12:30. People wishing to book a family history surgery please phone the Centre on 0208 392 5300 or email them at: frc@nationalarchives.gov.uk.

Historic Photographs Online

Over 3,700 historic photographs of London are now online at the National Monuments record's *Viewfinder* website – www.english-heritage.org.uk/viewfinder. They include two complete collections, the York & Son collection (2,400 images) and the SW Rawlings collection (1,300 images).

The York & Son collection almost exclusively covers London, particularly Westminster, mostly between 1870 and 1900. It records street views, events, people and public buildings.

Stanley W Rawlings worked for the Port of London Authority and his collection, dated 1945-65, reflects this work interest, recording life on the River Thames, especially dock and harbour installations and shipping.

Also on *Viewfinder* are 47 photographs of the Crystal Palace in Sydenham taken circa 1854 by Philip Henry Delamotte.

FoI and Deposited Private Archives

The impact of Freedom of Information on private archives deposited in a public record office remains unclear - in a recent FoI Update The National Archive (TNA) explained that a case by case assessment would be required to determine whether a deposited archive collection fell within FoI or not. TNA is continuing to explore the issues with its legal advisers and will issue a further update as soon as possible.

In the meantime, TNA's interim advice on what to do if you receive an FoI request involving deposited private archives is as follows:

• if the archives are already open for research, claim the exemption at section 1 for information already reasonably accessible.

• if the archives are closed by agreement with the depositor, claim the exemption at section 41 for information provided in confidence

• if the archives are uncatalogued, claim the exemption at section 22 for information intended for publication.

• if you are in doubt, consult the owner of the archives. If the owner is unwilling for the material to be released, claim the exemption at section 41 for information provided in confidence.

Owners who need reassurance should be referred to Alex Ritchie or Norman James of TNA's National Advisory Service, +44 (0) 20 8876 3444.

Recent Useful Publications

Packing and Moving Library and Archive Collections - National Preservation Office. Guidance on moving a collection. Identifies particular risks and suggests how they might be minimised. www.bl.org.uk/services/npo/publicationsleaf.html.

A Workbook for Archivists - International Council on Archives. A practical approach to managing and preserving electronic records throughout their lifecycle. To download the workbook, see www.ica.org.

Impact Assessment and Evaluation Report, March 2005 - Archives Awareness Campaign. www.ncaonline.org.uk/pubs.html

S T O P P R E S S

Businessarchivescouncil.com Update

A year after its launch the Council's website is entering a new phase. We are about to launch a members' area. Passwords will be emailed in due course and a fuller description of the changes and improvements this upgrade will bring will appear in the next newsletter. In the meantime I hope you enjoy the new images that have appeared on the website in recent months – many thanks to the BT Archives, Postal Heritage Trust and the John Lewis Partnership Archive.

To end on a practical note…thoughts on choosing a photo management system

This concise article about photograph management first appeared in the March 2005 edition of the Australian newsletter *Practical Archivist*. Author Anne Cooke, a consultant archivist, outlines how she began her search for a simple system to manage digital photographs. The article is reproduced here with Anne's permission (practicalarchivist@hotmail.com).

Over the last couple of years contemporary photographs are more often than not transferred to the Archives as digital images on CD. At the same time researchers requesting photographs for displays or publications want scans with all the attendant advantages for editing and transportability, so a steadily increasing proportion of the existing collection is being copied in digital format.

CDs holding photographs taken on one occasion or on one subject, though there are often also CDs with only one or two images when CDs have been used to 'transport' the images between publications staff and publishers and these may or may not be duplicated on the other CDs. Then there are digital copies of old photographs which may either be in folders on the network server or hard drive or on back up CDs.

While digitising is wonderful for those of us with space constraints, it also creates a range of problems in how to manage the photo collection. We need to continue to provide efficient search and retrieval capabilities, relate various versions of the same photograph – especially to avoid repeatedly scanning our old photographs for difference requests, maintain links between images and contextual information such as series and related photographs, record extended captions where they exist, and acknowledge donors, photographers and copyright holders. To add to the problem digital images may come in a large range of formats some of which may not be easy to view without high level graphics software. In a filing system for hard copy photographs you can browse through the files but with digital images unless they are on a hard drive – taking up masses of space – this is an extremely slow method of locating photographs, so indexing becomes even more vital.

While there are software companies with media asset programmes available, a search of the internet for image management systems also provides hundreds of hits, with many of the programmes on offer free or inexpensive shareware. To help select from among the many programmes we drew up the following simple list of criteria which may be amended as we trial various programmes, keeping in mind we are looking for something easy to use which will give us the ability to index our photographs and locate them either on or off line.

Image Database Requirements:

Image Storage
- Store photos online and offline (CD or DVD)
- View thumbnails of offline photographs without inserting a CD
- View many image file formats
- Easy browsing

Cataloguing
- Caption photographs
- Simple editing of incorrect catalogue details
- Cataloguing – assign keywords, attributes or categories potential to batch catalogue or duplicate catalogue entries
- Include contextual information such as photographer or donor

Searching
- Search capabilities using Boolean logic
- Search on descriptions, keywords, attributes or categories and dates
- Save searches
- View thumbnails of search results

Output
- Print search results
- Print contact sheets
- Create galleries and slide shows
- Print/email individual images with caption details

An image database is still some way off and will require extensive data entry to incorporate the full collection. As an interim measure when a new CD of digital images is received, a contact sheet of the images is created, using a basic software programme a CD reference number is added to the sheet. The images are then catalogued in the existing indexing system.

Our existing photographic collection management system already has the facility to relate negatives and reference copies, this has been amended to include a tick box to record scanned copies, with a reference to the CD these are stored on. As a greater proportion of the collection is scanned these locations may be able to be simplified so that CDs will contain photographs nos 1-200, 200-400 and so on.

While most modern computers come with bundled photographic editing software, I am finding a free software package from Google called *picasa2* extremely useful for managing the photographs currently on my computer. It allows all the photographs on your computer to be viewed together as thumbnails while maintaining their current location. The programme offers simple photograph editing and the ability to move images between folders, great for tidying up and organising a collection of scans that has expanded almost overnight in the process of organising an exhibition, some lectures and publications. *Picasa2* can be downloaded from www.picasa.com.

The Editor of this Newsletter is Jane Waller. The next issue will appear in late Summer 2005. Prospective copy should be sent to Jane Waller at ING Bank NV, 60 London Wall, London EC2M 5TQ; jane.waller@uk.ing.com.

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