



Business Archives Council Newsletter

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Chair's blog

Well it's been a busy few months since my last Blog. The highlight was undoubtedly my trip to Dublin where I spoke at the Annual Conference of the Archives and Records Association. During my session, on the morality of corporate archivists, I leapt off the podium to get among the delegates, though from the picture it looks as if I'm in a dodgy karaoke bar! Anyway it was great to be able to hear and debate some interesting papers, to network with colleagues old and new, and of course to enjoy a night on the dancefloor after the Gala Dinner. Oh and of course, Guinness... I also took the opportunity to engage in some advocacy – the BAC joined the ARA's Section for Business Records on a stand at the Marketplace. We made some useful contacts and it was good to gain a feel for the state of business archives in Ireland. I also paid visits to a couple of corporate archives – both drinks related! I was delighted to see how effectively these were contributing to their businesses – just what I love to see. Thanks to Carol at Pernod Ricard, and Deidre and Eibhlin at Guinness.



Mike Anson, BAC Chair,
presenting at the ARA annual
conference in Dublin

In the last couple of weeks, I have been at presentation ceremonies for our two BAC Cataloguing Grants (see story below). It's very pleasing that the announcements of these grants have received such excellent coverage on social media. This year has probably been the best ever in this respect, and this benefits both the winners and the profile of the BAC.

Talking of profile, we have invested in an upgrade of our website. The work included a number of technical elements which were required in order to make the site compatible with mobile devices. At the same time the navigation and look of the pages have also been improved. The website plays an increasingly critical part in communicating our work and often it is how people gain their first impression of the BAC, therefore we will continue to review the site to ensure that it can achieve its purpose. If you haven't visited recently, do take a look and let us know what you think: www.businessarchivescouncil.org.uk

As mentioned above I always get excited when I discover a business which appreciates its archive. One example of which I wasn't really aware of until I attended a book launch recently is the company founded by the designer Robert Welch. The speakers at the launch emphasised the power and richness of the archive not just for the business itself, but also for the wider history of design in the post-war period. Charlie Whitehead, the Archivist at Robert Welch, tells us more about this important collection in this Newsletter. Let's end by looking ahead. I can't believe that it's that time of year already, but next month will see our Annual Conference and the Reception where we will present the BAC Wadsworth prize. These are two high points in the BAC year and I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible in November.

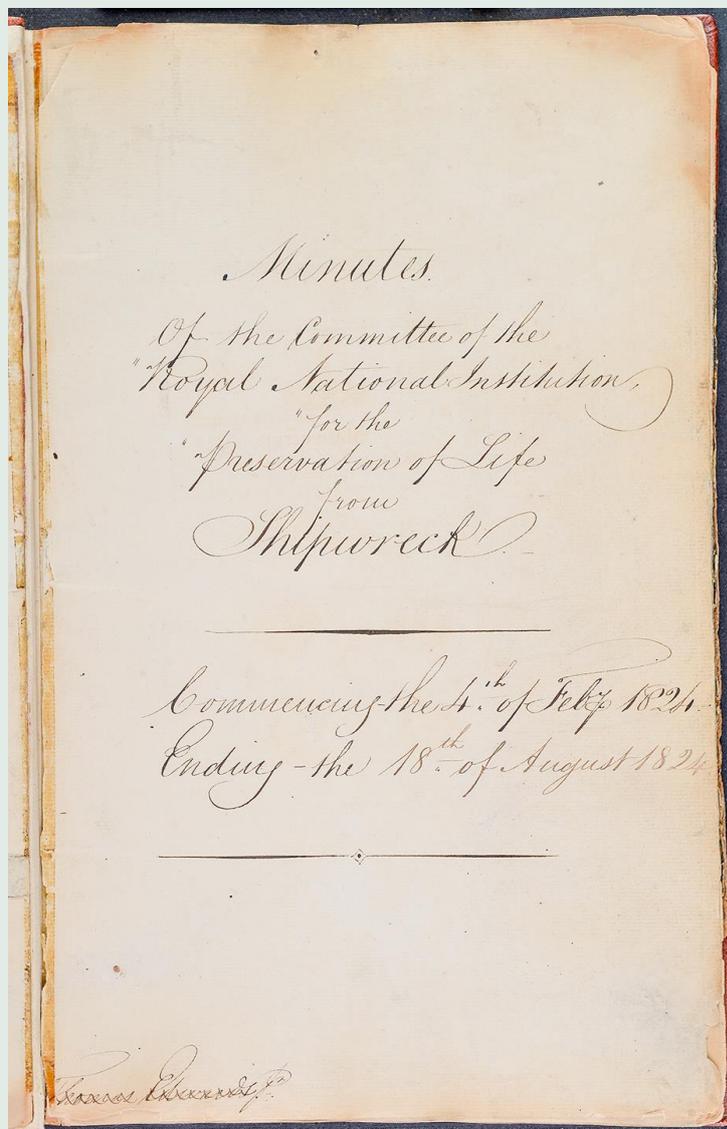
Mike Anson
BAC Chair

Welcome to New Members

The BAC is pleased to welcome the following new members:

- Harrods
- Manchester City Football Club
- Standard Life

- RNLI (Royal National Lifeboat Institute)
- Robert Welch Designs
- Cambridge Assessment Group
- Richard Taylor



First minute book of the Royal National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck, 1824 (image courtesy of RNLI Archive)

Reminder – BAC Annual Conference 'Hunter Gatherers: Collecting Today's Business Archives'

This year's conference is being hosted by Prudential Assurance Company on Tuesday 10 November 2015 at the impressive gothic revival style Holborn Bars, London, EC1N 2NQ.

The conference is now fully booked but for those of you who are signed up, here is a reminder of what is in store for you.



The Prudential Assurance Building, Holborn Bars

Here is the programme:

10.30-10.40	Welcome from Prudential
10.40-11.10	Keynote presentation Isobel Hunter, The National Archives - The challenges facing business archives and all independent archives and the buying and selling of business archives
11.10-11.30	Refreshments
11.30-12.30	Theme 1: Collecting from inside the organisation Claire Tunstall and Ruth Loughrey, Unilever - The Records Journey in Unilever Archives and Records Management Claire Twinn and James Mortlock, HSBC Archive - The Same but Different: Collecting in the Digital World: What we did, how we changed it, what we do now, and where we go next
12.30-1.00	Host Presentation John Porter, Prudential Archives - Reaching new audiences: gamification and the business archive
1.00-2.00	Lunch
2.00-3.00	Theme 2: Alternative Collecting Dr Rob Perks, Lead Curator of Oral History and Director of National Life Stories, British Library - Oral history and business archives: an overview Dr Katharine Haydon, former Project Interviewer, National Life Stories - An oral history of Barings

	Dr Michele Blagg, Visiting Research Associate, Institute of Contemporary History, King's College London -Voices of the London Bullion Market
3.00-3.15	Refreshments
3.15-4.15	Theme 3: National Strategies M Stephen Salmon, Canadian Business History Association - "... to the amount of \$600": A Brief History of Business Records at Library and Archives Canada Cheryl Brown, Business Archives Surveying Officer, Ballast Trust and University of Glasgow - From Boom to Bust: Documenting Scotland's business history
4.15-4.55	Discussion: The challenges of collecting business archives: what can the BAC do to help?
4.45-5.00	Summary and close

As usual the conference will be preceded by the BAC AGM and followed by the Wadsworth Prize for Business History. This year's Wadsworth Prize is being hosted by Lloyds Banking Group, nearby at 25 Gresham Street, London, EC2V 7HN.

For more details please visit the BAC website at www.businessarchivescouncil.org.uk/activitiesobjectives/conference

Winners of the BAC cataloguing grants 2015



Cataloguing Grant Administrator Ben White and BAC Chair, Mike Anson present cheques for £3000 to The National Gallery (top) and University of Manchester Library (bottom)



The Business Archives Council is delighted to announce the winners of the two cataloguing grants for 2015.

The original cataloguing grant for business archives was awarded to the University of Manchester Library for the cataloguing of the archive of the *Guardian* (formerly *Manchester Guardian*) newspaper.

The cataloguing grant for business archives related to the arts was awarded to The National Gallery for the cataloguing of the correspondence of international art dealers *Thos. Agnew & Sons*.

Both organisations were awarded £3,000, and their respective collections will be catalogued by April 2016.

For more information about the winners and the grants please see the BAC website at www.businessarchivescouncil.org.uk/activitiesobjectives/catgrant/

Introducing Harrods Archive



Harrod's Stores Price List, 1895
(image courtesy of Harrods Archive)

Walking down the Brompton Road, it is impossible to miss the terracotta palace that is Harrods! The Harrods Archive was established in 1989 and is home to records and artefacts dating from the last quarter of the 19th Century onwards. These document the fascinating progress of the company from its humble beginnings as a grocer's to the internationally renowned institution it is today.

In 1834, Charles Henry Harrod began trading as a grocer and tea merchant in Cable Street, East London. By 1853 he had moved from the East End to small grocer's shop at 8 Middle Queen's Buildings, which would later become 105 Brompton Road, and the Harrods legend began to unfold. After he sold the business to his son, Charles Digby Harrod, the shop began to expand and became 'Harrods Stores,' confronting fierce competition from the co-operatives and overcoming disasters such as a fire in 1883 that destroyed all the Christmas stock. The store went from strength to strength and was floated on the Stock Exchange as a limited liability company in 1889. The company went on to flourish under its first managing director, Sir Richard Burbidge, expanding from a General Store and beginning to establish itself as the enormous luxury department store that it is today.

With a particularly strong visual impact, Harrods' archive and museum collections are rich resources for social, retail and advertising history, often inspiring the contemporary design and creative endeavours of the business, as well as in-store events and architectural developments. As new members to the BAC, we're really looking forward to sharing our

experiences and learning from our colleagues as we continue to develop the collections held at the Harrods Archive and the service it provides.

Sebastian Wormell and Helen Wong
Harrods Archive

60 years of Robert Welch Designs in a book

For those who may have never heard the name, Robert Radford Welch (1929-2000) was a British silversmith and industrial designer. Born in Hereford and brought up in Malvern, he studied Silversmithing at Birmingham College of Art and at the Royal College of Art in London.



Alice Welch and Rupert Welch, with Archivist Charlie Whitehead, at the launch of Robert Welch - Design: Craft and Industry (photograph courtesy of Robert Welch Archive and Collections)

For those who may have never heard the name, Robert Radford Welch (1929-2000) was a British silversmith and industrial designer. Born in Hereford and brought up in Malvern, he studied Silversmithing at Birmingham College of Art and at the Royal College of Art in London.

In 1955, after his studies, Robert set up a studio and workshop at the Old Silk Mill, Chipping Campden. Here he combined silver work and industrial design, establishing himself as one of the country's leading designers of post-war stainless steel. Inspired by trips to Scandinavia whilst a student, his precise and modern work in this once avant-garde metal still has an enthusiastic following, but he designed in many other materials including cast iron, plastics, acrylic, glass and ceramic, and, of course, silver. His work is represented in international collections, such as the Victoria and Albert Museum and British Museum in London, Museum of Modern Art, New York and KODE Art Museums of Bergen, Norway - who still display a piece they bought in 1954.

In the early 1990s, Robert's daughter Alice and son Rupert joined their father in the business. Over 20 years later they manage Robert Welch Designs, in the same building where he established his workshop 60 years ago.

Towards the end of September 1955 came the moment of truth for Robert. With his workshop operational he vividly recalled pinning the first sheet of paper to his drawing board, sharpening his pencil and thinking 'what now?'

Luckily, the trace he left behind tells us what happened over the next 45 years. The Robert Welch Design Archive holds several thousand drawings, hundreds of sketchbooks, thousands of glass plates, transparencies, slides, negatives and prints, project files and a growing assortment of nearly 4000 objects - which represent all stages of the design process, from material samples and trials, to models, prototypes, and finished pieces.

In early 2013 the collections were relocated to Gloucestershire Archives for 12 months of cleaning, repackaging and cataloguing. In 2014 they were returned to company storage and I took on a permanent role, immediately making the archives accessible for local authors and renowned design historians, Charlotte and Peter Fiell, as they began research for a new book.

The archive is, unsurprisingly, a particularly visual one and whilst usable, tested during the book's research, the process reinforced my feeling that a written catalogue cannot be the end.

The book is a great step in making select contents from the collections accessible visually, but to make the catalogue into a more meaningful resource it demands large-scale digitization. To achieve this, and provide a logical structure for web delivery and display, the initial cataloguing work now needs to be significantly built upon. Ideally much of the material will be scanned or photographed, but before this is possible it will first be necessary to record individual drawings, pages of sketchbooks and bundles of photographic media. This work will eventually support an online display, opening up the archive to inspire, inform and educate.

Planning is now underway to establish how we will achieve this but, for now, as the archive becomes more and more central to the business it finds itself being used for a range of different projects and purposes. From design and marketing, to training, exhibitions and as a general point of interest for visitors to the business, all the while underpinning the inherent character and credibility of the brand. The new book, *Robert Welch - Design: Craft and*

Industry provides a wonderful way of communicating our heritage, and of celebrating 60 years of design in a Cotswold workshop.

Learn more:

www.robertwelch.com/customer/pages/robert-welch-design-craft-and-industry

www.robertwelch.com/customer/pages/landing_pages/the-1950s

Charlie Whitehead

Heritage Officer (Archivist), Robert Welch Archive and Collections

HSBC 150th anniversary historical films online

As part of HSBC's 150th anniversary programme this year the HSBC Archives team has been involved in producing a series of films exploring some of the stories from the bank's past.

To see business archives brought to life take a look at the first three on YouTube [www.youtube.com/user/HSBCNOW].

The remaining films will be released over the coming weeks, so keep checking back!



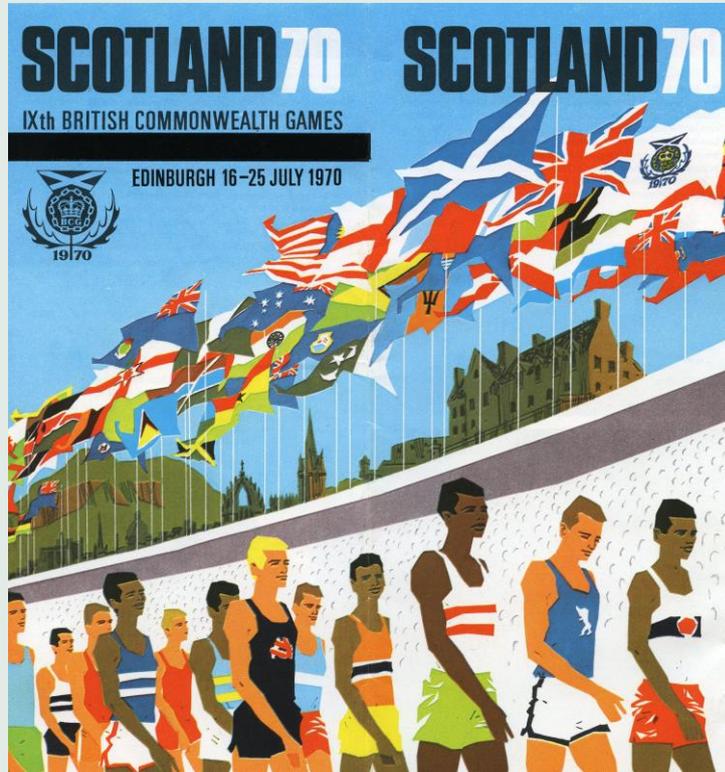
HSBC's YouTube page (image courtesy of HSBC Holdings PLC)

British Records Association Annual conference 'In a League of their own: archives of the history of British sport and physical recreation'

The BRA's annual conference will be held at Swedenborg House, 20-21 Bloomsbury Way, London, WC1A 2TH, on Thursday 26 November 2015.

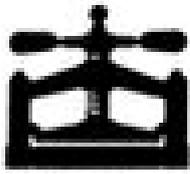
The theme is the history of sport and includes talks on women's sports, sport at Eton since the 15th century, national football, the Rugby Football League, and more.

For the full programme and more details, please see the BRA's website at www.britishrecordsassociation.org.uk/events/annual-conference-26-november-2015



Poster for the IXth British Commonwealth Games (image courtesy of Commonwealth Games Scotland Archive, University of Stirling)

BAC Tweets



BAC

@_BusinessArch

The Business Archives Council is a registered charity dedicated to the preservation of business records & encourage i
businessarchivescouncil.org.uk

899

TWEETS

225

FOLLOWING

The BAC has been tweeting since 2013 and is now reaching over 650 followers.

The Twitter feed has been used to promote events, grants, announce winners of awards, re-tweet interesting tit-bits, and to generally engage with and support those interested in business archives and history.

Here are some of our favourites:

25 Sep 2013 @_BusinessArch: The Business Archives Council is now on Twitter! Watch this space for the latest on business archives and business history

6 Jan 2014 @_BusinessArch: It's not just about hedgehogs! Final reminder to look at last week's [#BACin2013](#) review by [@BAC_Chair#bizhis](#) [#archives](#) [#Twitterstorians](#)

20 May 2014 @_BusinessArch: [@LdnMetArchives](#) thanks for the mention. Saving the Chubb Archive is one of the BAC's most important interventions in our 80 years. [#BAC@80](#)

16Jul 2014 @_BusinessArch: [@BAC_Chair](#) met [@johnarchives](#) [@ARAPubAffairs](#) yesterday & gave BAC support to forthcoming [@KnowYourRecords](#) campaign & [#exploresearchives](#)

3 Nov 2014 @immaterial_me: [@ BusinessArch](#) [@ARABusinessrec](#) enjoying considering many sideways links I can make using bus archives in [#PhD](#) research! [#meetthearchivists](#) 3 Nov 2014

5 Nov 2014 @_BusinessArch: [#BACcatgrant](#) makes a difference! Page from [@PentabusTheatre](#) Annual Report. pic.twitter.com/XI5dAnMmsi

19 Jan 2015 @_BusinessArch: Tomorrow we'll be sharing the joys of business archives at [#HistDay2015](#) along with [@ARABusinessrec](#) historycollections.blogs.sas.ac.uk/history-day-pr...

7 Aug 2015 @UOM Library: Proud to have received the [@ BusinessArch](#) cataloguing grant for our Guardian archive! rylandscollections.wordpress.com/2015/08/07/beh...

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