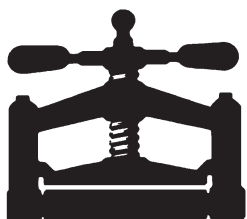


# Newsletter



**BUSINESS  
ARCHIVES  
COUNCIL**

## TOUGH TIMES FOR THE BAC

Like many other small charities - including sister associations in the history and archives community - the Council has faced severe pressure on its finances and other resources over the last two years. In our own case, and as a result of continuing deficits, the Executive Committee announced at the Annual General Meeting in January that it had been necessary to close our London office. Sadly this means that we are now saying farewell to Sharon Quinn-Robinson, who has given us such splendid support as Office Manager since 1990. Sharon has been a loyal friend of the BAC, often in very demanding conditions, and we shall all miss her contribution and commitment. The day-to-day administration of our activities has been transferred to members of the Executive Committee.

Why has the closure of the office been necessary and what is the outlook for BAC? At the AGM Edwin Green, Hon Treasurer, explained that in recent years a gap of approximately £15,000 had opened up between basic income of between £20,000 and £25,000 and basic outgoings of between £35,000 and £40,000 (of which the office accounted for close to £30,000). In some of these years the gap was bridged by valuable income from the Advisory Service, from the residential course, from conferences and training, and from other projects. In 2001-2, however, there were no such additions, leaving the Council with a deficit of £17,000 and the probability of similar deficits to follow unless drastic action was taken. From the spring of 2002, the Treasurer pointed out, various efforts were made to substantially increase income and reduce expenditure. For example the creation of a new category of membership - corporate patrons - brought a welcome response and the Council is particularly grateful to those corporate members who contributed enhanced subscriptions as a signal of their support for our objectives.

By the autumn of 2002, nevertheless, these measures were not enough to halt a steady and potentially terminal drain on the Council's resources. It was also clear that plans for collaboration with other bodies on new projects were unlikely to come to fruition in the short- or medium-term. It was in these circumstances that the Executive Committee (whose members are ultimately responsible as Trustees) agreed that BAC cannot continue to live beyond its means. Very reluctantly the Committee decided upon the closure of the office. The Executive

Committee has also sought a new home for the Library, which for many years has been an actual cost to the Council but has been relatively little-used by members or by researchers. The priority here has been to keep the collection together and to make it accessible (or more accessible). An announcement about the future of the collection is expected shortly.

Faced with such a major change in its operations, the Executive Committee was determined that the objectives and core activities of the Council should be maintained if at all possible. The Trustees agreed to take on and divide up this work among themselves on a voluntary basis. Consequently, the Treasurer reported, the Trustees and other members of the Council are now carrying forward the core activities of the journal and newsletter; the annual conference; the Wadsworth Prize and the Business History Bursary; and, not least, advice and comment on issues in business archives. Trustees have also taken over the day-to-day administration and finance of the Council, including the storage of the BAC's own archives and office records. Terry Gourvish, incoming Chairman of the Executive Committee, emphasised at the AGM that this strategy will mean that the Council will now operate on a smaller scale but, with the loyal support of its members and after the reduction of its overheads, these core activities will continue to represent a major contribution in the world of business archives and business history.



Terry Gourvish making a farewell presentation to Sharon Quinn-Robinson

## NEW BAC CONTACTS

General enquiries should be sent to the Deputy Chairman and Hon Secretary:

Fiona Maccoll, Records Manager, Rio Tinto plc, 6 St James's Square, London, SW1Y 4LD.  
[tel: +44 (0)20 7753 2338; fax: +44 (0)20 7753 2211; e-mail: [fiona.maccoll@riotinto.com](mailto:fiona.maccoll@riotinto.com)]

Enquiries about membership or subscriptions and all payments should be sent to the Hon Treasurer:

Edwin Green, Group Archivist, HSBC Holdings plc, Level 36, 8 Canada Square, London, E14 5HQ  
[tel: +44 (0)20 7991 0645; fax +44 (0)20 7991 4883; e-mail [edwingreen@hsbc.com](mailto:edwingreen@hsbc.com)]

# MAJOR NEW PUBLICATION FROM BAC

The results of BAC's survey of historical records of the pharmaceutical industry are about to be published. The book is part of the Council's series Studies in British Business Archives under the title *The Pharmaceutical Industry. A Guide to Historical Records*; its editors are Lesley Richmond, Julie Stevenson and Alison Turton. It follows books on the brewing, shipbuilding and banking sectors and on the chartered accountants profession and adopts the same style and format.

The archives of 300 pharmaceutical enterprises are summarised giving broad details of series and covering dates. Each entry also has a summary of the history of the business and relevant bibliographical references. Introductory chapters include 'The early years of the pharmaceutical industry'; 'The British pharmaceutical industry since

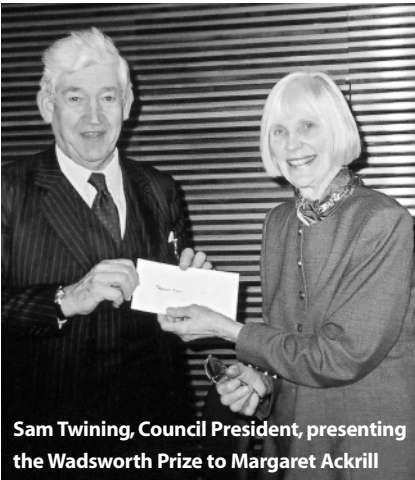
1851'; and 'Archives of the pharmaceutical industry: their scope and use'. The contents also include a chronology of pharmaceutical legislation; a select bibliography; user's guide; glossary of terms; and indexes.

The pharmaceutical survey was undertaken by BAC from the late-1990s and was generously funded by a grant from the Wellcome Trust. The survey's work was pioneering, dealing with an industry whose records were highly dispersed and generally not understood and its results will be hugely helpful for study in a number of disciplines. The book extends to over 500 pages and the cost will be in the area of £55.

For further details contact Lesley Richmond, University of Glasgow Archives Service, at [l.richmond@archives.gla.ac.uk](mailto:l.richmond@archives.gla.ac.uk).

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## WADSWORTH PRIZE FOR BUSINESS HISTORY



Sam Twining, Council President, presenting the Wadsworth Prize to Margaret Ackrill

*Barclays. The Business of Banking 1690-1990*, by Margaret Ackrill and Leslie Hannah, has won the Wadsworth Prize for Business History. The Prize, awarded annually by BAC for the best book on British business history, was

presented at a gathering at The Guardian Newsroom Archive and Visitor Centre on 27 January 2003.

*The Business of Banking* portrays the remarkable history of a bank founded over three centuries ago. From modest origins in 1690 as a Lombard Street goldsmith's shop, Barclays became one of the world's most famous financial institutions. It has been at various times the world's largest bank, the largest bank in Africa and the largest bank in Britain. The successes and failures of global corporate strategies in banking during the past three centuries are mirrored in Barclays' history of innovation and expansion. For example, Barclays was responsible for the world's first automated teller machine. Indeed the twentieth century history of Barclays is especially illuminating.

Margaret Ackrill is currently Senior Lecturer at the Postgraduate Research School, Oxford Brookes University. She is the author of *Manufacturing Industry since 1870* (1987). Leslie Hannah is Chief Executive, Ashridge. His publications

include *The Dynamics of Entrepreneurship* (with Erik Dahmen and Israel Kirzner, 1994), *Inventing Retirement* (1986) and *The Rise of the Corporate Economy* (1983). Barclays was written while they were both on the faculty of the London School of Economics.

It is the 24<sup>th</sup> award of the Prize. Previous winners include Niall Ferguson's *The World's Banker. The History of the House of Rothschild*; David Kynaston's *The City of London: Illusions of Gold*; and Geoffrey Jones's *Merchants to Multinationals*. One of the judges, Nick Bunker, said that the Wadsworth Prize was a vital means of highlighting the importance of knowledge of business history for modern business people.

All enquiries should be directed to Lenore Symons, Wadsworth Prize Co-ordinator

[tel +44 (0)20 7344 5462; email: [lsymons@iee.org.uk](mailto:lsymons@iee.org.uk)].

## BAC'S GUIDE TO HISTORICAL RECORDS OF BRITISH BANKING

The Council has copies of this *Guide* for sale. It was published in 1991 under the title *British Banking. A Guide to Historical Records* with John Orbell and Alison Turton acting as editors. It describes the archives and gives summary histories of some 700 British banks whose archive collections are held in local record offices, university and local libraries and, not least, banks. It extends to almost 700 pages and costs £55 [plus £3 for UK postage and £6 for postage outside the UK].

For further details contact John Orbell on +44 (0)20 7767 1401.

# GORDON PHILLIPS

We were greatly saddened to learn of the death of Gordon Phillips in February. For many years Gordon was a lively member of the UK business archives scene and he was a good friend of BAC. From time to time he sat on Council committees and until recent years he regularly attended BAC events. He will be most remembered for his work as Archivist of *The Times* from 1970 to 1982 when his department became a separate entity from the library. In achieving this he laid the foundations for the present archive which serves the four national titles of News International and other publications besides.

After leaving *The Times*, Gordon was involved in the early evolution of the library of Eddie Shah's *Today* newspaper where he built a team of professions; 'It gave

rise', according to Gordon's *Times* obituarist, 'to amused speculation that the paper's librarians were considerably more erudite than the journalists'. He is, however, better known for his work with the archives of the advertising industry. He was quick to see potential here and in 1983-84 received a Leverhulme research fellowship to track down and survey the industry's archives. Inevitably he became closely associated with the History of Advertising Trust.

But he was a true all-rounder. He was author of many books, several on business history and others on cricket which was his passion. Well read, cultured, diligent, unassuming and with quiet humour he will be greatly missed.

A full obituary appeared in *The Times* on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February.

## THE JOHN MURRAY ARCHIVE

The fabulous archives of this distinguished old publishing house are in the process of being sold and it is hoped they will find their way to the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh. John Murray, London-based but Scottish-founded, is one of the most distinguished names in British publishing but its business was recently sold by the Murray family to Hodder Headline, part of WH Smith. The archives, however, remain their property and they are now intent on making long-term provision for them.

The price tag being mentioned is an astonishing £40 million which is testimony to the enormous riches of this particular archive. For this is no ordinary accumulation of publisher's papers but comprises correspondence, manuscripts and the like of writers such as Jane Austen, Charles Darwin, David Livingstone, Samuel Johnson, William Gladstone and, not least, Lord Byron; apparently there are a great many papers of the latter. Much of this material has not seen the light of day for many years but exact details of content are remaining secret for the time being.

The Murray family intends to place at least some of the proceeds in a charitable trust to fund the proper cataloguing, care and access to the collection. And the National Library of Scotland is anxious to be the recipient. Already a major centre of international study in the arts, it would transform its standing. 'This is an incredible opportunity in terms of the scale, quality and importance of the material', says the National Librarian, Martyn Wade. 'It is the largest private collection and possibly most exciting holding of material covering the development of British intellectual, political and social activity in the last 150 years'. Well steady on now! - but every good wish in raising the money. An informative article appeared in *The Scotsman*, 5 March 2003.

## NEW INITIATIVE AT ROTHSCHILDS

*Along Rothschild Lines. The Story of Rothschild and Railways Across the World* draws together sources for the involvement of the various Rothschild banks and of the Rothschild family with the railway sector. It is a new initiative by The Rothschild Archive, based in the London investment bank of NM Rothschild & Sons Ltd, to make the outside world more aware of the content and potential of its archives. The resulting 32 page booklet, with full colour illustrations, outlines the connection from the 1830s to the present day.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century Rothschilds were pioneering financiers of railways around the globe issuing bonds and sometimes making advances to finance the building of some of the first lines and networks. They provided capital which the railway companies could not raise in their own countries and in doing so facilitated the creation of transport systems that opened up of continents and created modern economies.

All of this is recorded in the archives but there is much else besides. Rothschild family papers shed light on the impact of railways on social and domestic life; not only did they appreciate the speed at which they could visit one another, they even built lines to facilitate the construction of their magnificent chateaux.

For more details contact The Rothschild Archive at [info@rothschildarchive.org](mailto:info@rothschildarchive.org).

The cost is £8.50 inclusive of postage.

## NEWSPAPER BANTER

There is some amusing nonsense in a recent *Daily Telegraph's* City Diary column. Legal & General, the canny insurance giant, turned City heads by not cutting its dividend. In fact it increased it against all the odds. So the *DT* asked Public Relations when the dividend was last cut. 'Don't know', was the response. 'Don't you have an archivist?' said the *DT*. 'He was sacked 10 years ago - it was a very easy cut' was the

second response. The next day the Chief Exec was involved. Oh dear! 'It certainly hasn't happened under my watch', he said, 'PR will find out for you'. The next day came half an answer. 'No cuts since L&G Group Plc was formed in 1979', said a relieved PR man. 'But what about your predecessor', asked a well-informed *DT*, 'L&G Assurance Society formed in 1836'. At the last count PR was still checking!

## IN BRIEF

- The Modern Records Centre, Warwick University, has won funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to catalogue the archives and publications constituting the National Cycle Archive. For more details go to [www.modernrecords.warwick.ac.uk](http://www.modernrecords.warwick.ac.uk).
- **Companion to British Road Haulage History**, compiled by John Armstrong, John Aldridge, Grahame Boyes, Gordon Mustoe and Richard Storey, is being published by the Science Museum. Go to [www.nmsi.ac.uk/publications](http://www.nmsi.ac.uk/publications) for more details.
- In what is potentially an important move for business history, the official Gazettes - London, Edinburgh and Belfast - have embarked upon a programme to give access to back copies via the internet. The twentieth century is currently being dealt with but having online details of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century partnerships - for which the **Gazettes** are a hugely important source of information - will be a real asset. Go to [www.london-gazette.co.uk](http://www.london-gazette.co.uk).
- The Centre for Photographic Conservation has a busy course programme in 2003. For further details contact the Centre at 233 Stanstead Rd, Forest Hill, London SE23 1HU or via [xfa59@dial.pipex.com](mailto:xfa59@dial.pipex.com). Its website is [www.cpc.moor.dial.pipex.com](http://www.cpc.moor.dial.pipex.com).
- The National Archives [NA] has launched a periodical newsheet called Archivista. It deals with new initiatives and details the programme for integration of certain PRO/HMC activities. The NA wants to draw on the ideas and views of its multiplicity of users about how this new body should evolve.
- With this in view, in 2003 it will be organising a number of events to inform and consult. To obtain electronic copy of **Archivista** and to ask questions go to [archivista@pro.gov.uk](mailto:archivista@pro.gov.uk).
- London Museums, Archives and Libraries, with support of Resource, is holding a seminar at Charity Centre, 24 Stephenson Way, London NW1, on the morning of 29 April called 'Taking Positive Action'. It aims to demonstrate why and how a more representative workforce can and should be achieved in museums, archives and libraries. For more details go to [culturaldiversitynetwork@londonmuseums.org](mailto:culturaldiversitynetwork@londonmuseums.org).
- **Counterfoil** [No 65, Feb 2003], the British Cheque Collector's Society's journal, carries a lengthy note on the early development of the cheque which will give context to collections of cheques held in the archives of banks and record offices. Contact the editor, Michael Lord, at [michael.lord4@btopenworld.com](mailto:michael.lord4@btopenworld.com).
- **Bulletin**, the newsletter of the European Association for Banking History, carries short articles on the development of archive units at the Bulgarian National Bank and the Banca Popolare di Milano and on the 'Company History Department' of the Dutch-based Rabobank. For more details contact [eabh@bankinghistory.de](mailto:eabh@bankinghistory.de)
- The Ironbridge Gorge Museum, Coalbrookdale, has won funding of £2.5 million to restore the Craven Dunhill Tile Factory where decorative tiles were mass-produced from the late nineteenth century. For more details ring +44 (0)1952 433522.

## BIG BUSINESS AND HISTORY

In September a new Economic & Social Research Council [ESRC] funded project will be launched dealing with - in broad terms - the use of history by big business. It is under the direction of Professor Michael Rowlinson, Professor of Organization Studies, London Metropolitan University.

The project involves analysing for the 100 largest British companies, and a smaller sample of US companies, annual reports, websites, sponsored house histories, newsletters and corporate visitor attractions in order to discover 'how companies present their history and how they learn from their historical knowledge of the past.' 'We are also conducting case studies of a smaller number of companies that make particular use of their history', writes Michael. 'These include Sainsbury, which uses history in staff training and for its award-winning educational website, and Cadbury, which has a strong historical theme at Cadbury World, a highly successful visitor attraction. We are particularly interested in companies that have commemorated, or even deliberately ignored, salient events in their history, such as centenaries or critical junctures where history has been invoked, such as threats of takeover.'

The project has in its sights previous research that sought to determine whether old organizations are more likely to survive than new ones. It is quick to recognize the enormous staying power

of UK corporates - four of the ten largest British companies by 2001 market capitalization were established in the nineteenth century or before. Yet it recites an [unattributed] allegation that, when set against US businesses, 'British firms are reluctant to look back and therefore miss the opportunity to learn from their own rich history.'

Michael Rowlinson is particularly interested to hear about novel ways in which companies use history, commemorate historical events and so on. For this and for more information generally contact him on [michaelrowlinson@unl.ac.uk](mailto:michaelrowlinson@unl.ac.uk)

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The Editor is John Orbell and he can be contacted on 020 7767 1401.

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