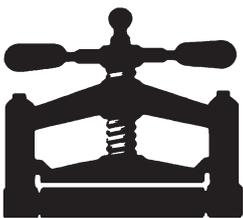


Newsletter



**BUSINESS
ARCHIVES
COUNCIL**

Wadsworth Prize 2008

The Council awarded its Wadsworth Prize for Business History 2008 at Unilever on 12 November 2008. The winner of the prize, which is given annually, was Peter Scott for his book *Triumph of the South: A Regional Economic History of Early Twentieth Century Britain*, published by Ashgate.

Peter Scott is Director of the Centre for International Business History at the University of Reading. His book explores British economic history from the industrial revolution to 1939 from the perspective of regional development. The book argues that the decline of the provincial regions of 'outer-Britain' can be explained, at least in part, as being the product of the economic and political power of the City of London - the growing competitive advantage of which progressively undermined the industrially-based economies of northern and western Britain.

On the panel of judges for the prize were Duncan Campbell-Smith, Professor Robin Pearson and Jeannette Strickland.



Sam Twining (on the left) presenting the Wadsworth Prize to Peter Scott.

D-D-D-Dixons!

A recent acquisition at London Metropolitan Archives

Richard Wiltshire, Senior Archivist - Business Archives, announces the donation of the archives of Dixons Group, retailers of photographic, computer and electrical goods, to the London Metropolitan Archives, City of London Corporation.

Donated by DSG International in December 2008, the archives of Dixons Group consist of minutes and related administration, sales and advertising records, photographs and records of predecessor companies. The Dixons Group collection also includes records of Currys, Freeserve, The Link and PC World. They provide a rich resource for researchers interested in the history of successful high street retailing business. LMA is particularly delighted to receive additional records of Currys which join those already deposited. In addition, Lord Stanley Kalms of Edgware, former Chairman, has donated his own personal papers. These document his involvement with the business and other concerns including Jewish community organisations such as the United Synagogue, complementing LMA's extensive Jewish holdings.

How it started

Dixons began when Charles Kalms, a Jewish immigrant, joined Michael Mindel to open a photographic studio at Southend-on-Sea, Essex, which was incorporated in 1937 as Dixon Studios Ltd. The partners simply picked the name Dixon from a directory! With an increasing demand for portrait

photographs, the business flourished and seven studios were opened in the London area. After the Second World War the market contracted and Dixon was left with a single studio in Edgware, London.

The post-war period saw an expansion into retailing and the business sold cameras and related photographic equipment. Charles's son Stanley (later Lord Kalms of Edgware) joined the business in 1948 and developed the retail angle further. By 1953 the company began opening branches, this time under the name Dixon Camera Centre.

A story of success

With improvements in camera design and falling prices in colour film Dixon saw profits escalate and in 1962 the company became Dixons Photographic Ltd. The 1970s saw the move into electronics and foreign markets. In 1984 Dixons acquired Currys Group plc. In 1991 the first PC World Superstore opened and in 1998 Dixons launched Freeserve Internet services. Now known as DSG (Dixons Store Group) International plc, the company is one of the largest consumer electronic retailers in Europe.

Highlights

The collection includes a presentation comparing the successes of Dixons against the failures of Woolworths when 'Woolies' was facing decline in late 1980s and early 1990s. Further surprising finds included a topical

continued from page 1

'The High Street Fights Back' agents' pack brought out by Dixons in c1996, and a Currys Christmas Cracker.

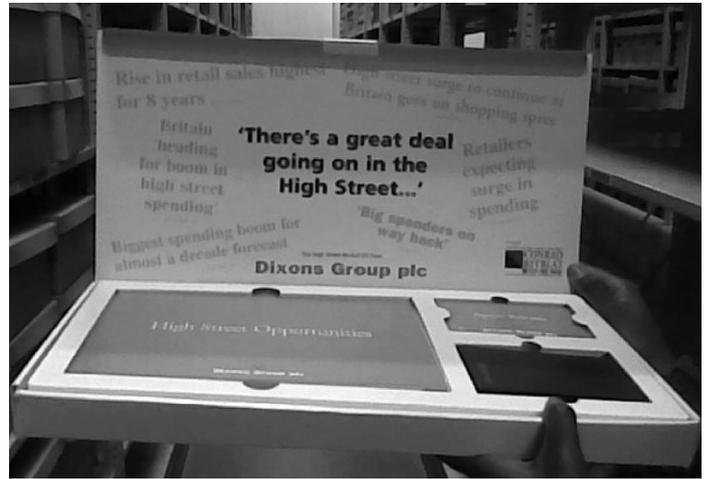
Access

The collection is currently uncatalogued and is therefore only available for consultation by prior appointment. Non-published material is subject to a 30-year restriction. Researchers are advised to contact LMA for further details quoting reference number B08/199-202, email ask.lma@cityoflondon.gov.uk or telephone 0207 332 3820.

Please note that the main Currys Group plc archives are available without prior appointment. Further details are available online: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/nra/searches/subjectView.asp?ID=B33796

LMA, 40 Northampton Road, London EC1R 0HB

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/lma



'The High Street Fights Back' c1996: a pack for agents containing bonus leaflets, opportunities booklet and calculator. In the background can be seen the storage of the Dixons archives. © City of London Corporation.

PAT acquires Lloyd's Superannuation Fund Pensions Management Limited archives

The Pensions Archive Trust (PAT) is pleased to announce the acquisition in December 2008 of the archives of Lloyd's Superannuation Fund (LSF) Pensions Management Limited, a welcome edition to the PAT archives held at London Metropolitan Archives and at the Guildhall Library Manuscripts Section.

The Pensions Archive Trust was formed in 2005 by a group of concerned pension professionals who wished to safeguard and preserve the history of occupational and personal pensions in the UK. The main aims of PAT are:

- To establish and maintain the Archive, in formats that will ensure both the security of valuable historical records and optimum accessibility to all interested parties
- To advance the education of the general public and those involved in the operation of such schemes

Recent additions to the PAT collections have included records from the National Association of Pension Funds, records from the Raising Standards in Pension Administration Group and papers from the notable pensions journalist and researcher Sue Ward.

Established in 1929 as the Lloyd's Clerks' Superannuation Fund, Lloyd's Superannuation Fund, the corporate trustee of which is LSF Pensions Management Ltd, was set up for 'members', or 'underwriters' at Lloyd's who wished to 'establish under irrevocable trusts in connection with their said business a fund for the purpose of providing pensions for male Clerks employed in the said business on retirement...' The role of underwriters at Lloyd's is still the same today as it was in 1929; that is, to evaluate, define and price insurance and reinsurance risks including where appropriate the rejection of such risks. The Fund continues to provide pensions services to Lloyd's underwriters, and to work closely with its members as part of the Lloyd's group.

The records deposited with the Pensions Archive cover all areas of the Fund's administration. The original Trust

Deeds and Rules, and Inland Revenue Approval documents which allowed the Fund to begin work, state its intentions and ambitions. The acquisition also includes minutes of all the major committees involved in the running of the Fund, from the Management and Finance Committees, to the Board of Trustees; and correspondence and papers of various chairmen, giving a unique insight into the running of the Fund. Actuarial reports, which value the assets and the liabilities of the Fund and then establish whether the Fund had a surplus or deficit of assets over liabilities, have also been deposited.

The records also contain great detail about the individual underwriting companies which chose to have their staff pension scheme managed by LSF. The records include guides for staff members of companies whose pension was being managed by LSF and correspondence between the managers of these companies and LSF regarding their financial arrangements, in particular their establishment or removal from LSF's care.

As well as forming part of an archive showing the development of a very large occupational pension scheme throughout the twentieth century, these records will also allow researchers to investigate an aspect of the fascinating history of Lloyd's of London which has until now remained out of public view.

The collection is currently uncatalogued. It is envisaged the collection will be fully catalogued and available by Autumn 2009. Until this time, access will be by prior notice only. For further information and requests for access to this or any other Pensions Archive collection, please contact the PAT Archivist, Susan Gentles at susan.gentles@cityoflondon.gov.uk

If you would like to know more about the work of the Pensions Archive Trust, please visit our website at www.pensionsarchive.org.uk

BAC 2008 Conference

The 2008 Business Archive Council Conference was Beyond the Ordinary!

The title of the conference demonstrated the many and varied ways archives are supported by their parent body. The issue of sustainability was high on the agenda and was particularly relevant in the year in which the BAC celebrated entering its 75th anniversary.

The Council's long serving President, Sam Twining, gave us his reflections on how far business archives have come since the Council was formed in 1934. Twining was one of the founding members of the Council along with other companies including Barings, Whitbread and W H Smith who all participated in a move to secure the future for business archives at a time of great commercial fragility - something to which we can all relate in 2009.

This economic turmoil has also encouraged others to look at ways of ensuring archives remain available to researchers and John Quail presented his views on how we could strive to protect and make accessible business collections in the future through the more formal approach of legislation.

As business collections are not only the responsibility of the businesses that create them, Richard Wiltshire from LMA presented a view of collections which are to be found in public repositories. Funding for business collections, along with those in private hands, has always been an issue and this was addressed by the Archive Lottery Adviser, Louise Ray, who advocated the development of partnership working to

ensure business collections could benefit from grants available from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Once the material has been saved and made available it is, of course, of vital importance that it is utilised, and the Knowledge Transfer project run by MLA London was explained by Ellen Collins using case studies to identify how business and the public sector can make the most of our unique business collections.

After lunch, during which time delegates were able to see examples of material held in the Wellcome Collection, inspiring presentations were delivered by Joan Heggie, who runs the British Steel Collection, Teresa Wilmshurst of the Waterways Trust and Richard Taylor from the National Railway Museum. All of these collections demonstrated different ways of sustaining their archives, and their contributions led into a discussion panel on the National Business Archive Strategy which was explained by Katey Logan. She has been working on this strategy for the past year, on behalf of the BAC, TNA, NCA and other bodies.

After a stimulating day, held in the inspiring setting of the Wellcome Library, delegates transferred to the headquarters of Unilever for the presentation of the Wadsworth Prize for Business History. A great end to a fascinating day.

Judy Faraday

Through the digital looking glass

Simon Chandler-Barratt from Townsweb Archiving Ltd reports on a major project currently being undertaken for the porcelain manufacturer Royal Doulton of Stoke-on-Trent. This is how the task was approached.

Royal Doulton is a quintessentially English name in tableware and collectables, with a pedigree dating back to 1815. We first met with the archives manager and discussed how we could help him archive and secure their precious collection and how to make it more accessible to the company and possibly the public.

Before starting we provided a report detailing some key information, which would assist in the overall success of the project:

- How long it would take to digitise, crop and process certain documents
- How long it would take to index certain documents
- Assessment of sample objects at various digitisation settings to view quality
- The storage size of the digitised documents in various file formats
- An approximation as to how long it would take to digitise and index individual parts of the collection

This document became the blue-print and monitoring tool for the project, especially needed for such a unique and immense

archive with over 1 million individual pieces of artwork on paper, card, canvas, cloth and in thousands of bound volumes containing designs, manuscripts and photographs.

We started onsite digitisation (in Stoke) and indexing, working in conjunction with the archivist, assigning a unique reference number to each image within a local directory structure. The detailed indexing, completed off site, allowed the image capture process to be quick and efficient.

The digitised images were cropped and processed to full colour tiff & jpeg formats at 300dpi and supplied back to the client on external hard drives. Indexing of the images was carried out with additional information being added in free text, such as 'Red Roses', which allowed a more flexible search system, and then uploaded onto a web server and plugged into TownsWeb Archiving's Arcview Software. This online system is secure and accessible by staff wherever there is an internet connection. There are plans in the future to allow licensees and members of the public to access the system.

This project is ongoing and the anticipated completion is 3 years from the start date.

Simon Chandler-Barratt can be contacted on 01536 480015; website www.townswebarchiving.com

Management History Research Group

Conference and call for papers

Hosted by The York Management School
22-23 July 2009, Heslington Hall, University of York

The group welcomes papers in any area of management and business history, in particular themes that encourage diversity and development of the discipline: management thought and theory, mainstream and radical, professionalisation of managers and management, financial management, managerial elites, rise and fall of ancient and modern, management in the public

services, entrepreneurial history, women and management, financial intermediaries, corporate social responsibility and employee welfare, boards, governance and audit.

Fees and registration

The conference fee is expected to be c £90 per person and c £40 for PhD students. Abstracts, proposals for panels and other expressions of interest are welcome at this stage.

Further information can be obtained from Professor Steve Toms at management-hod@york.ac.uk

The Firetail Sector Review

Those of you who are also members of organisations such as the Society of Archivists will have read about the major organisational review which is currently taking place within the archive sector. I would like to provide you with a summary of the Business Archives Council's position.

In 2008 the consultants Firetail were commissioned to undertake an overview of the sector as concern had been expressed that there were simply too many bodies representing its views to the outside world. The BAC fully co-operated in the consultants' work, but Firetail quickly took the view that given our unique group of stakeholders

- embracing companies, archivists and historians, not only in England & Wales, but also on an international basis - we did not seem immediate candidates for any merger plans.

At present the Society of Archivists, The Association of Chief Archivists in Local Government (ACALG) and the National Council on Archives (NCA) are discussing the structure and organisation of a potential new body to be created by the merger of their three organisations. The BAC trustees will be keeping a watching brief on these developments.

Terry Gourvish

Call for applications

5th EBHA Doctoral Summer School

Writing, Presenting, Publishing: How to make the best use of your research

The 5th EBHA (European Business History Association) Summer School will take place in Italy from Monday 31 August to Sunday 6 September 2009. The school aims to provide doctoral students with an overview of relevant research results and of innovative tools and methodologies in the field of Business History. It is organised jointly by the EBHA, the Istituto per la Cultura e la Storia d'Impresa Franco Momigliano (ICSIM) of Terni and the Italian Association for Business History (ASSI). Students will spend the week in an Italian villa in the beautiful hills of Umbria debating and discussing their research with leading international scholars.

The school will focus on theoretical and practical issues which are of relevance for advanced research in business history. In this session, special attention will be focused on the issue of making the best use of a research project; in terms of writing and argumentation, presentation at conferences, and publication in academic journals. In the mornings, invited scholars will give lectures and seminars on specific topics. In the afternoons, students have a

chance to present their own research project or preliminary findings. On Sunday, an excursion to visit the region will be organised.

The organisers will cover all local costs (accommodation and food), but participants are expected to pay their own travel to and from Terni. Participation will be limited to 15-20 PhD students.

Those interested in attending the summer school should send the following documents by email to the academic organiser Dr. Francesca Polese:

1. A half-page CV
2. A summary of their dissertation project, not exceeding three pages
3. An example (if possible) of their work in progress, eg a draft chapter or a working paper (in any language).

The deadline for applications is 1 May 2009. A maximum of 20 participants will be selected from these applications and will be notified before the end of May 2009.

francesca.polese@unibocconi.it

The editor of this newsletter is Alan Gall. The next issue will appear in Summer 2009. Prospective copy should be sent to Alan Gall, Tel: 0161 745 7029 (daytime) 01706 344429 (evening) Fax: 0161 745 9649 email: alanguall@hotmail.com Post: c/o SDA Electronics Ltd, Unit 30, Willan Industrial Estate, Eccles New Road, Salford M50 2GR.

The Hon Secretary of the BAC is Karen Sampson, Group Archivist, Lloyds TSB Group Archives, 5th Floor, Princess House, 1 Suffolk Lane, London EC4R 0AX (Tel: +44 (0) 207 489 3945); Karen.Sampson@LloydsTSB.co.uk.

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