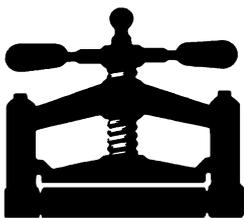


Newsletter



**BUSINESS
ARCHIVES
COUNCIL**

A BRIGHT OUTLOOK FOR 2004

The BAC begins its 70th year with a very positive outlook. A successful conference, stable financial position, clearly defined objectives and the Wadsworth Prize Giving all contributed to 2003 closing on a high note. We look forward to the coming year and wish members and friends all the best for 2004.

THE BAC ANNUAL CONFERENCE 24 November 2003

The conference 'Business Records in a changing archival landscape' was a real success – many thanks go to the speakers, the organisers, Chairman for the day Vic Gray, and to Rio Tinto for providing us with an excellent venue and lunch. Inspiring presentations and a room full of colleagues, both familiar and new, combined to make 24 November a memorable day for the BAC.

The day began with the Annual General Meeting and a warm welcome to delegates from BAC Chairman Dr. Terry Gourvish. Terry delivered his Chairman's statement (published in the previous Newsletter), commented on the Council's stabilised financial position and congratulated and thanked the conference organisers for an imaginative and stimulating programme. Treasurer Edwin Green followed with a summary of the year's report and accounts and noted an exceptional item - the sale of the BAC library for £10,000. Edwin thanked BAC members for their support throughout the year.

Three free conference places were made available, two of which were sponsored by Resource, and successfully applied for by Sarah Coombs, House of Lords Record Office, and Susan Edwards, Bedfordshire and Luton Archives & Records Service. Sarah and Susan have kindly provided the following accounts of the day. In addition they have compiled reports for Resource, extracts reproduced here, on how useful they found the day.

The morning by Sarah Coombs, House of Lords Record Office

Dame Stella Rimington gave a fascinating talk about influencing decision makers, based on her own experiences (including her work in the Security Services) to enhance what she was saying and enthrall the audience. She described some crucial elements of convincing decision makers that archives are relevant to current business, rather than just being viewed as a luxury. These included

identifying "agents of influence" and maintaining their interest (without overdoing it and boring them), understanding the agenda of the company and making the archive relevant (such as linking business archives with education and the community), using older designs in marketing, combining historical records and modern records, cutting costs, and having good relationships with other archivists.



Dr Stuart Davies, Director of Strategy and Planning, Resource and Sarah Tyacke, Chief Executive of The National Archive

Sara Kinsey's interesting and thought-provoking talk was titled "Keeping good company: Friend and foe" in business archives and was presented in the form of a weather report. The prevailing conditions were generally sunny, with increased media coverage and interest in business history. Sara described how this conflicts with the unsettled business climate, where archives are vulnerable to economic conditions and restructuring. However, the sunny aspects remain. Sara emphasised the importance of making the archive relevant to current business needs, such as Corporate Social Responsibility

Attending the BAC conference gave me a fascinating insight into the issues which are currently being discussed by archivists and records managers. The conference has enabled me to view my current repository in a wider context and to see how I and my organisation may be able to influence key decisions in raising the profile of archives and building stronger links between private and public repositories. The talk by Dame Stella Rimington gave me some practical ideas on how to influence decision makers both within and outside of my organisation, and make archives relevant to current business. Sara Kinsey linked strongly with many of the themes from the previous talk, and most importantly, stirred up discussion and action in developing more national and regional strategies towards record-keeping and access to archives. Sarah Tyacke and Chris Kitching informed us of the impact that the creation of a National Archive will have on the private sector, an issue I had not previously considered. *Sarah Coombs*

policies (being accountable to society), maintaining the organisation's reputation (by using history to build respect and trust), using the archive in marketing, and protecting the company in litigation. She went on to describe how archivists need to engage their audience (managers, staff and the public), be creative, and exploit opportunities; using several examples to emphasise the impact of this. There are limiting factors in business archives but Sara suggested that these could be combated in several ways; a national strategy to protect collections at risk; a national centre for advice; possible tax breaks for private owners; regional centres and collecting policies; public funding for projects which enhance public access and services; and partnerships with the higher education sector and local communities. Sara's suggestions provoked a lively discussion and emphasised that much is within our own control.



(Left to right) Fiona Maccoll, Records Manager Rio Tinto plc and BAC Deputy Chairman; Sara Kinsey, Deputy Archivist HSBC Holdings plc and Convenor, business archives module, Liverpool University Centre for Archive Studies; Dame Stella Rimington, Former Director General Security Services, non-executive Director Marks and Spencer, and non-executive Director BG Group plc, member of the Archives Task Force; Vic Gray, Director, Rothschild Archive, Member of the Resource Board and Vice-chair of the Archives Task Force

The afternoon by Susan Edwards, Bedfordshire and Luton Archives & Records Service

After a brief overview of the remit of The National Archive [TNA] and the reasons behind its merger with the HMC, Sarah Tyacke, Chief Executive of TNA, addressed the challenges faced by business archivists. Reiterating a key element of Dame Stella Rimington's earlier talk, Sarah Tyacke stressed the importance of using those in a position of influence to raise the profile of business archives with decision-makers. Although TNA does not collect private archives they can offer guidance and advice on the disposition and disposal of archives of redundant companies. Chris Kitching, TNA, followed this with a plea for the business archives community to decide upon and inform bodies such as TNA of the help they needed and their opinions on the way forward. Policy towards the private sector had to be inclusive but not intrusive, and he suggested that working in partnership should be the way forward. Chris stressed that they were in listening mode and were not going to impose their opinions on the subject without consultation.

During the discussion which followed there was a suggestion of a 'think tank' to help in a crisis, such as when a company went into administration. Facilities for interim storage, sorting and selection would also be important. The proposition of a National Strategy for business archives was welcomed but it was stressed that a smaller meeting with representatives from the BRA and BAC would help to produce such a strategy. It was generally agreed that continuing the dialogue stimulated by the conference, and acting upon it, was vital. Richard Taylor from the National Railways Museum suggested that there should be a Register of Material of National Importance, with tax concessions allocated for companies maintaining such records. Teresa Doherty from Wellcome stressed how useful a publication from TNA outlining such tax incentives and giving advice would be for business archivists. Richard Storey suggested that Trade and Business Organisations could be useful, the unenlightened of the business community could be approached in this way.

One of the key themes throughout all of these discussions was the importance of establishing and maintaining relationships. This was emphasised most strongly by speaker Stuart Davies of Resource. He also stressed the importance of making yourself known to and influencing your own organisation, stakeholders, government, other sectors and of course Resource. The conference proved that communications and relationships are key to building and maintaining the profile of business archives.

Editor: Stuart Davies also advised that shared bids for additional resources, particularly in partnership with other sectors, are often met with a favourable reception and he commended highly the excellent presentation made by representatives of the BAC to the Archives Task Force.

As an archivist working with large collections of business archives in a Local Authority Archive Service it was interesting to meet and listen to those working with business records in the private sector. Sadly, many of the same issues we face were reflected in comments from those in the private sector. Having recently worked with colleagues to catalogue a large deposit of records from Whitbread Breweries another issue raised – that of what to do with archives when companies merge or go into receivership – was particularly pertinent.

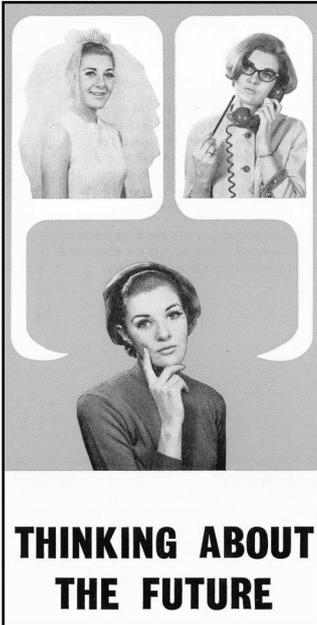
The discussion which raised the issue of producing a National Strategy for Business Archives was particularly interesting to me, but I felt frustrated that the remit of TNA and Resource does not yet extend beyond the will to listen to and assist the business archives community. Local authority archives are already in place and are often an appropriate repository for records taken from local businesses, but lack the finances and storage space to actively safeguard the records. Multi-national companies and their records present an even greater challenge. Should legislation be passed to ensure that companies have a responsibility to safeguard their historical records and those of the companies they absorbed through merger and acquisition? And passed by whom, a national or international body? Should businesses be obliged to contribute toward the cost of the storage and provision of their defunct records for the public to study them? Perhaps there should be a centre in the UK similar to that run by the Archives Nationales at Roubaix in France where the collections of defunct companies are stored. The cost of keeping and facilitating access to the records is of course the key issue. *Susan Edwards*

WHAT DO HISTORIANS WANT FROM ARCHIVISTS? (and vice versa)

An interesting discussion took place on 21 October 2003 at the Institute of Historical Research during the Royal Historical Society's [RHS] annual Gerald Aylmer Seminar convened under the joint auspices of the RHS and The National Archives. Taking as a starting point an article by Ian Mortimer, 'Discriminating

between readers: the case for a policy of flexibility', (Jl Soc. Archivists vol. Xxiii no.1 (April 2002), 59-67.) the gathering of sixty or so representatives of both the archival and historical professions debated such issues as the decline of the 'scholar archivist'; the current drive towards regionalisation; challenges to studious research; and the 'two tier service' for researchers suggested by Mortimer in his article. A report on the seminar is available on the RHS's recently revamped website at <http://www.rhs.ac.uk>.

OFFICE POLITICS: WOMEN AND THE OFFICE 1860 TO THE PRESENT



"I am not jealous of women, but I think it would be rather awkward to have men and women working together, shoulder to shoulder in the same department. I do not wish to see it. If we think of employing women, we always think, is there a room where we can put them by themselves." Minutes Evidence given by the select committee on Post Office servants, 1913.

Office Politics, a free exhibition to be held at the Women's Library in London between 12 February and 1 May 2004, will showcase material from numerous business archives, including BT Group, the Bank of England, ING Bank, Lloyds TSB, Prudential and Royal Mail.

How has women's presence changed office life from the design of office interiors, the clothes people wear to work, to the marketing of office technology? And what has it been like for women working in offices? From office girl to breaking the glass ceiling, *Office Politics* takes a fresh look at the jobs women do and how

they have changed. Architectural plans and drawings illustrate the segregated work spaces of the Victorian era including an office roof garden and a women's living room, whilst blueprints plot hierarchies of the 1960s open plan office. Company records uncover how threatening and provocative women's physical presence in the office was seen to be by their employers and reveal the steps taken to control their appearance. Using cartoons, careers literature and advertisements, the exhibition dissects the stereotypes associated with women office workers: the 1920s business girl, the 1960s 'dolly bird' secretary and the power dressing executive of the 1980s.

There is a full programme of talks and events to accompany the exhibition. For further information, visit <http://www.thewomenslibrary.ac.uk>. The Women's Library, London Metropolitan University, Old Castle Street, London E1 7NT.

To coincide with the exhibition, The Women's Library, in association with the Business Records Group of the Society of Archivists, is organising a one-day inter-disciplinary, cross-domain symposium to examine issues relating to women, history and the business environment. The symposium will take place on Thursday 26 February and aims to bring together those that care for business records and collections in a variety of contexts with those who exploit them for research. It will explore the often hidden potential of these materials for the study of women's lives. Keynote speakers include Clare Bunkham, Assistant Archivist at Prudential plc, and Gregory Anderson, editor of 'The White Blouse Revolution: Female office workers since 1870'.

For symposium programme details, e-mail moreinfo@thewomenslibrary.ac.uk or telephone 020 7320 2222. Symposium cost (including lunch) £28, £23 concessions. Telephone booking: 020 7320 2222, Postal booking (by cheque, payable to The Women's Library) to: The Women's Library – address given above.

WADSWORTH PRIZE GIVING

In the stunning surroundings of host HSBC's reception area the 2003 Wadsworth Prize was awarded to Martin Fransman, Professor of Economics, Institute for Japanese-European Technology Studies, University of Edinburgh, for his book *Telecoms in the Internet Age. From Boom to Bust to...?* The Wadsworth Prize, now in its 26th year, is awarded annually to an individual judged to have made an outstanding contribution to the study of British business history in that year. Judges for 2003 were Nick Bunker, Lucy Newton and John Wilson.

Nick Bunker, Chair of the Judging Panel for the past two years, reported, very entertainingly, on behalf of his colleagues and described the difficult decision faced with a very strong field of submissions. Nick Bunker highlighted Professor Fransman's fresh approach to his subject and remarked that in some ways *Telecoms in the Internet Age* might be considered to fall outside the remit of the Wadsworth Prize however its obvious qualities far outweighed any doubts and the book emerged as a firm favourite with the judges.

Following the award presentation, the prizewinner, judges and guests enjoyed a reception against the magnificent backdrop of HSBC's History Wall. The wall comprises thousands of



Professor Martin Fransman winner of the 2003 Wadsworth Prize

images from or related to the archives and history of HSBC with interactive terminals allowing viewers to access information about any image - an immense project and one that has tremendous impact as you enter the bank's London headquarters.

The reception was also the opportunity to thank Lenore Symons, who retired from the Executive Committee at the Annual General Meeting on 24 November. Lenore has been a tower of strength for the Council since she joined the Executive Committee in 1984. Her calm presence and wise advice have made a huge contribution over the long and continuous period of service since then. In particular she has carried the heavy responsibility of organising the Council's Wadsworth Prize for Business History for nearly 20 years. The Prize - an undoubted success for the Council throughout that period - has won a fine reputation. That achievement is Lenore's and the Council is indebted to her as a result.

Dr. Iain Black a member of the BAC Executive Committee will now assume responsibility for the Wadsworth Prize.



Details of *Telecoms in the Internet Age. From Boom to Bust to...?* Hardback, ISBN 0 19 925700 0, 308 pages. Publication date 22 August 2002.

Lenore Symons, organiser of the Wadsworth Prize for nearly 20 years and Edwin Green, Archivist, HSBC Holdings plc, and BAC Treasurer

IN BRIEF

- Copies of the Newsletter are now being sent to students on the Archive Management courses at Dublin, Liverpool, Aberystwyth and London. Students are encouraged to contact the Editor with suggestions for content.
- The British Cheque Collectors' Society has changed its name to the British Banking History Society. In its recently redrafted constitution the Society lists its aims and objectives as a) to encourage and popularise the collecting of Banknotes, cheques and other ephemera and memorabilia relating to banking, b) to promote the study of the history of banking. www.banking-history.co.uk.
- *First Steps in Archives: A Practical Guide* published February 2004 by the ARLIS/UK & Ireland Visual Archives Committee. The publication aims to provide a straightforward introduction to the key principles of archive work and is designed for anyone whose collections include archive material but who has no formal training in this area. It includes contributions from experienced archivists on the core subjects of acquisitions and appraisal, cataloguing, preservation, reader services and marketing, as well as a glossary of archive terms. ISBN 0 95196674; £25 ARLIS/UK Ireland members; £30 non-members; 55 pages.

- The Mills Archive, a centralised archive and resource library that allows users to store and retrieve information and records about traditional mills and milling is now up and running. The site was set up to preserve and where possible integrate the various threatened sources of information on the windmills and watermills of the UK and the rest of the world, More than 7,000 records have already been uploaded and more will be. There is a Mill Index and a People Index – visit www.millsarchive.com.
- www.1837online.com, dubbed ancestors-reunited, details every birth, marriage and death in England and Wales since records were centralised in 1837. Visitors to the site pay 10p to view each image. 1837online will be more generally marketed to the public later this year.
- The Society of Archivists Business Records Group will be holding its AGM at the offices of Prudential Plc in London on the afternoon of 9 March 2004. The AGM will be followed by a panel discussion session on orphaned records. The panel will comprise: Helen Ford (Transco), John Davies (Credit Suisse), Deborah Jenkins (London Metropolitan Archives) and Chris Kitching (The National Archives). Please contact the BRG's Joint Training Officer, Clare Bunkham, e-mail: Clare.Bunkham@Prudential.co.uk, tel: 020 7548 3948, for further information.



Congratulations to members and friends

Chris Kitching of The National Archive (HMC), has been awarded the CBE in the New Year's honours. Chris was for some years the HMC representative on the BAC Executive.

Robert McWilliam, an individual member, has been awarded his doctorate at the University of Reading, Centre for International Business History, for his thesis on 'The Evolution of British Standards', supervised by Geoff Jones and Michael Utton.

Professor Peter Mathias has been awarded The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon. Professor Mathias is being decorated in tribute to his valuable role in promoting academic exchange and deeper mutual understanding between Japan and the United Kingdom. One of the UK's pre-eminent scholars on modern economic history, Professor Mathias is particularly known in Japan as the author of *The First Industrial Nation*.

And finally many congratulations to Vic Gray, Director of the Rothschild Archive, on his inclusion in the new edition of Who's Who. Who's Who describes its biographees as people of influence and interest.

BAC BURSARY NEWS: 2004 AWARD FOR BUSINESS HISTORY RESEARCH

As a result of the generosity of Sir Peter Thompson, former Chairman of the National Freight Corporation, and the Wellcome Foundation, the BAC instituted a trust fund, the income from which is used to offer annually a bursary to help an individual to further his/her research into business history through the study of specific business archives. The value of the award in 2004 will be up to £1000. Please see the advertisement enclosed with this mailing of the Newsletter for full details of the bursary.

STOP PRESS

In first quarter 2004 the BAC will launch its new website. The Executive Committee is extremely grateful to the University of Glasgow for hosting and maintaining the BAC web pages to date. Details of the new website will appear in the next edition of the Newsletter - watch this space.

WORLD NUCLEAR ASSOCIATION ARCHIVE – LOOKING FOR A HOME

Melbourne-based Ian Hore-Lacy, Head of Communications at the World Nuclear Association [WNA] in London, has contacted the BAC for assistance in finding a home for the WNA's archive. The WNA, an international trade organisation set up in 1978 (www.world-nuclear.org), covering the whole nuclear industry from uranium mining through power generation to waste disposal, is preparing to move offices. Unfortunately the move is likely to put in jeopardy the survival of some of the WNA's older records. Ian is also General Manager of the Uranium Information Centre [UIC], Melbourne. The UIC has an arrangement with Melbourne University Archives [MU Archives] whereby the Archives appraises the UIC's older records and then provides storage for those selected for permanent retention with UIC paying a set-up fee per metre of shelf, retaining ownership and control of access. Melbourne University provides this service to a number of other companies and organisations. Ian would like to hear of any opportunities to replicate this arrangement in the UK with the WNA's archives. If you have any suggestions please contact Ian at hore-lacy@world.nuclear.org

The Editor of this Newsletter is Jane Waller. The next issue will appear in Spring 2004. 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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