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Chair's blog

Well what a summer! And of course I'm not talking about the weather. I do hope that the records of current events in the worlds of politics, finance and business will end up in archives and be properly preserved for the future.



The ARA's Section for Business Records Summer Seminar at the Jaguar Heritage Trust Archive , 23 June 2016 (image courtesy of Rachael Muir)

Aside from all of this excitement, what have I been up to? In May I was in Berlin attending the annual conference of the Association of Business Historians, which was a joint affair with GUG, the organisation representing German business historians. There was a very successful session on business archives which included a paper by our Deputy Chair, Judy Faraday. And it was great to meet some other business archivists, including Martin Mueller who leads the BAC equivalent in Germany. Unsurprisingly, we discussed some common problems, not least digital preservation.

And talking of digital preservation, I had a very enjoyable time at the Digital Preservation Coalition's Unconference held in York (It was also my birthday – don't say I'm not committed to the cause!). Again I was able to talk to people about some of the specific digital preservation issues faced by corporate archives. We are currently working with the DPC to develop some training ideas which will be of direct relevance to our sector. After the Unconference, there was a reception to mark the launch of the new Digital Preservation Handbook, so at least I did have a drink on my birthday. The audience was also shown a case study in digital preservation: www.youtube.com/watch?v=8dhp_20j0Ys

The following day it was off to the British Motor Museum to take part in the ARA's Section for Business Records Summer Seminar. An excellent event hosted by the Jaguar Heritage Trust Archive. The theme was how to make business archives relevant to your business and there were some brilliant case studies from Sophie Clapp (Boots), Charlie Whitehead (Robert Welch) and Deirdre McParland (Electricity Supply Board). We also heard from Jaguar's Martyn Hollingsworth about the building of some missing 1960s 'E Types' which made use of plans and other records from their Archive. And to return to digital preservation, what if they had wanted to recreate a car from say the 1980s which had been designed on CAD? Could that information still be accessed? Oh and there was a top goody bag by the way!

Many of you will no doubt be aware of the work currently being undertaken by The National Archives to develop a future vision for archives. I am taking part in this and I would encourage you to get involved and ensure that the views and concerns of the business archives sector are fully articulated. Find out more at: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/whats-happening-now/developing-a-future-vision-for-archives

Finally, we've been planning our annual conference (see details elsewhere) and I'm hoping that we will be able to make some exciting announcements about new initiatives! In the meantime, I hope that you enjoy the remainder of the summer!

Mike Anson
BAC Chair

Save the date! BAC annual conference, 21 November 2016

The BAC annual conference will be held on Monday 21 November 2016 at HSBC, Canary Wharf, London. The theme will be diversity, including: diverse uses of archives; practical ways to diversify, including working with partners and communities; and engaging new audiences. More details and a programme to follow soon.

Following the conference there will be a reception for the presentation of the **BAC Wadsworth Prize** for Business History, taking place nearby at Barclays Bank, Canary Wharf, London. All conference delegates will be welcome to attend.

For details of past conferences and Wadsworth prize winners, please visit the BAC website at: www.businessarchivescouncil.org.uk/activitiesobjectives/conference/
www.businessarchivescouncil.org.uk/activitiesobjectives/wadsworthprize/

BAC bursary for research in business history - winner 2016



Winner, Dr David Turner, receives cheque from BAC Chair, Mike Anson (image courtesy of Mike Anson)

The BAC is delighted to announce that the winner of the 2016 BAC Bursary for Business History Research is Dr David Turner of the Centre of Lifelong Learning, University of York. David will use the bursary to look at *Brewing and British railways, 1870 to 1914*. His research explores the evolving business relationship between British railway companies and two of its major customers; the breweries of Bass, Ratcliffe & Gretton of Burton-on-Trent and Whitbread of London. He will examine on-going negotiations over cost, provision of transport services and the influence this had on the business activities and performance of both. David plans to use business records located at The National Archives, Kew, The National Brewery Centre in Burton-on-Trent, and the London Metropolitan Archives.

Last year's winner was Sergio Castellanos-Gamboa of Bangor University. Read the report of his research project into the *Origins and long-term development of consumer credit in Britain* here: www.businessarchivescouncil.org.uk/activitiesobjectives/bursary/bursary_past

BAC cataloguing grants 2015 – final project reports

The final reports of last year's winners are now online.

Cataloguing grant for business archives 2015

The winner was The University of Manchester Library for *Behind the Headlines: documenting the people in the Guardian Archive*. The project was part of a new cataloguing strategy for the Library and proved a great success. Not only did the project result in an enhanced existing catalogue but also an online guide to tracing and researching people associated with the newspapers, the digitisation and publication of images online, and social

media promotion. The Library continues to be committed to this important collection, drawing on the assistance of volunteers for further work and seeking out funding opportunities for related projects.



The last of the Manchester Evening News ponies, 1952 (image courtesy of the University of Manchester Library)

The final report of the project and other online resources can be found here:
www.businessarchivescouncil.org.uk/materials/baccatgrant2015report.pdf

Cataloguing grant for business archives related to the arts 2015

The winner was The National Gallery for the cataloguing of the correspondence of international art dealers, Thos. Agnew & Sons. The project proved to be a palaeographical challenge, but all 809 items were deciphered and catalogued, and in the process many interesting details were unearthed, including humorous anecdotes, details of the lives of artists, and the secretive and competitive nature of top-level sales of artwork. The project was promoted via social media and ARC Magazine, and to celebrate the completion of the project, the Gallery hosted a two day conference: *Negotiating Art: Dealers and Museums, 1855-2015*. These initiatives have created much interest in this rare collection. The final report of the project and the catalogue can be found here:

www.businessarchivescouncil.org.uk/materials/2016nationalgallery.pdf

An introduction to The Alfred Gillett Trust

The Alfred Gillett Trust is a charitable organisation established to care for the collections of, and relating to, the business of C. & J. Clark Ltd. Founded in 1825 by Quaker brothers Cyrus (1801-1866) and James Clark (1811-1906) the business began making sheepskin rugs, expanding to footwear manufacture when James started producing sheepskin slippers (known as Brown Peters) from rug manufacturing offcuts. Seven generations later, and now an international footwear business, Clarks employs 15,000 people worldwide, sold 50

million pairs of shoes in 2015, and is still based on the original factory site in Street, Somerset.



Factory workers from the turn shoe department, 1923 (image courtesy of The Alfred Gillett Trust)

In 2012 the Trust relocated its collections, staff and offices from a small building on the High Street to Street's historic Manor House; a Grade II listed building built in the sixteenth century and once owned by the seventeenth century politician William Strode. Purchased in 1890 by James Clark primarily for the land, and retained by the business until 2002, the building has played host to a variety of people including housing a School of Housewifery, Belgian and Basque refugees, and was used as a hostel for girls working in the factory following the Second World War.

The Trust have built a passive strong room facility on the Grange site which now houses the family archive collections, a large proportion of the business collections, and is rapidly filling up with shoes following a large scale digitisation project - which involves cleaning, repackaging, and photographing all of the shoes in the collection, including early Roman fragments.

Alongside the extensive business collections, the Alfred Gillett Trust also cares for collections relating to various prominent family members, including many eminent Quaker women. These family collections contain many records predating the foundation of the company and are regularly consulted by researchers due to their interest in the abolition of slavery, and support for suffrage, temperance, pacifism and refugee causes.

Comprehensive collections of business papers are representative of a firm that has been privately owned for almost 200 years and not asset stripped, sold or relocated. Commercial collections include shoe catalogues dating from 1848 to the present day, an extensive visual merchandising collection spanning over 150 years and an AV collection of advertisements and instructional videos. The footwear collection, which contains more than 20,000 items, both Clarks and non-Clarks, and 500 shoemaking machines and associated tools are representative of the footwear industry more broadly and are consulted both by current Clarks' employees as well as for academic research.

Originally staffed by lone Clarks' employees the archive is undergoing a new lease of life overseen by a newly appointed Museum Director who manages two qualified archivists,

three members of curatorial staff and a dedicated team recruited to document the digitisation of the extensive footwear collection. alfredgilletttrust.wordpress.com

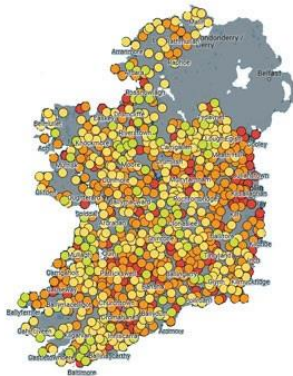
Julie Mather

Archivist, The Alfred Gillett Trust

Shedding light on ESB Archives

On 13 August 1925 one of the most important under-takings for the economic and social life of Ireland began with the construction of the Shannon Hydro-Electric Scheme at Ardnacrusha, Co. Clare. The initial proposal for the Scheme was presented by the German firm Siemens to the Government of the Irish Free State on 1 September 1924. The scheme was the first national integrated (generation, transmission, distribution, marketing and sale of electricity) system in the world and led to the establishment of the Electricity Supply Board (ESB) on 11 August 1927.

**When was
your area
connected?**



Interactive Google map for rural electrification (image courtesy of ESB Archives)

Fast forward over sixty years later and ESB Archives was established by a dedicated team of employees who had the foresight to begin to preserve the history of ESB. At the time, the newly formed department travelled the country extensively collecting historical documents, particularly as generation stations were decommissioned, and collating a significant oral history archive, recording the memories of ESB employees, past and present. A digitisation project began, focusing on digitising photographic collections, internal publications and annual reports.

Last year, for the first time, professionally trained archivists were recruited to ESB Archives and both myself [Deidre McParland] and my colleague Dr. Kirsten Mulrennan were the successful candidates. Brian McMahon, an IT professional with ESB and in his spare time creator of the award winning pop culture website and book, Brand New Retro, project managed the development of the website www.esbarchives.ie/.

The research for our website began in earnest early in the new year and from the beginning we all shared the same vision and enthusiasm as to how we could achieve our goal in the

agreed timeframe. It was no doubt a most enjoyable baptism of fire from the point of view of diving into the history of ESB and researching a substantial amount of content.

The story of rural electrification was prioritised as a star story, as this year marks the 70th anniversary when the first pole was raised in Killsallaghan, North County Dublin on 5 November 1946. For the purpose of rural electrification, Ireland was divided into 792 districts, similar to the parish boundaries in Ireland. The use of open source technology through an interactive google map was instrumental in detailing the key information, extracted from original files in the archives. A summary of how many poles were used, dates of installation, how many customers are all recorded, alongside an opportunity to view the original rural map, which is preserved in the ESB archives. We will be unlocking further content over the coming months and hope that by the end of the year, where available, we will have stories for most of the 792 rural areas.

Storyboxes and infographics were created to showcase the depth of many of the stories, along with photographs, videos and extracts from original files. The Shannon Scheme, Advertising and Generation are also all detailed on esbarchives.ie. Highlights include print advertising and the famous television advert 'Going Home' featuring Alan Hughes and a selection of print and TV adverts from the late 1920s – 1980s much of which was previously unseen by the general public.

An interactive google map features for a second time detailing portfolios of generation stations, along with original public relations pamphlets detailing the operations of individual stations. To appeal to academic researchers, all annual reports are available to download and are searchable by keywords. Published books on the history of ESB are also available to download providing a virtual research experience to many users.

Following Easter, we launched our website internally in beta mode. The response was phenomenal and we received very welcome feedback throughout the company. To coincide with the internal launch, we held a staff engagement day to showcase our website and had a display of our archive gems to illustrate the process of digitisation. We were beta for a two week period which allowed time for final editing and prepared us for the official launch to the public on 22 April.

Within one month of launching our website, we have had over 120,000 views from all around the world, realising our ambition to create a virtual archives experience. We continue to receive great interest from an array of media outlets and have featured on the journal.ie, broadsheet.ie, national and regional newspapers and on the Marian Finucane show on RTE Radio One.

We have seen a significant increase in our enquiries and have received many personal stories from people sharing their own ESB memories and sharing their family history through storytelling and, on occasions, donations of photographs.

Since our launch, we have created a blog and continually add stories to the blog as time allows and raise awareness of new stories through our twitter feed @esbarchives.

From my own perspective, a great learning was the use of open source technology, wordpress.com which is extremely user friendly to a non-technical person. Having

previously collaborated with design agencies on developing an archives website, I am a convert to the DIY approach; design and editorial control is massively beneficial as the look and feel of how your content appears is immediately visible and allows for more effective time management. It also helps to have a team who are willing to share their technical expertise and patience!

Launching esbarchives.ie has been a whirlwind experience and it has afforded our vibrant new archive team the opportunity to promote ESB Archives throughout the company and to the greater general public. Now that we have the platform to showcase our story it is back to the grindstone of prioritising our cataloguing and digitising work so we can continue to unlock content to new audiences, contribute to future exciting company projects and ensure we continue to deliver a top class service to all our customers.

Visit the website here: www.esbarchives.ie/

Deirdre McParland

Senior Archivist, ESB Archives

Behind the wireless – a history of early women at the BBC

On 4 May 2016, Dr Kate Murphy, BAC Trustee and Senior Lecturer at Bournemouth University, launched her book 'Behind the Wireless'. The book is a fascinating insight into the then new BBC and its attitude towards women.



Kate Murphy at the book launch
(image courtesy of Mike Anson)

Before her academic career, Kate worked for the BBC for twenty-four years, culminating in her role as Senior Producer on Radio 4's 'Woman's Hour'. Many of us first became aware of Kate's work through her presentation at our 2007 conference, and we are pleased that she has continued her association with the BAC since then.

Find out more about the book here:

www.palgrave.com/in/book/9781137491725#otherversion=9781137491718

BAC members can receive a 30% discount when entering the code PM16THIRTY on the Palgrave.com website.

Collecting Business Archives now published

The Business Archives Council (BAC) has just published *Collecting Business Archives*, the proceedings of the 2015 conference *Hunter Gatherers: Collecting Today's Business*

Archives. The document includes an overview of the conference themes and discussions and notes from each of the sections: Shifting Landscapes; Collecting from Inside the Organisation; Alternative Collecting; National Strategies; and Collecting Challenges. It includes case studies on:

- oral histories
- digital records
- collecting within a business
- checklists for tackling collecting challenges

Visit: www.businessarchivescouncil.org.uk/publications/guides

Also learn about game playing and business archives through the Gamification case study of the Prudential Archive www.businessarchivescouncil.org.uk/materials/gamification.pdf A big thank you to attendees, speakers and bursary note takers for their contributions/support in helping us document the conference.

Richard Wiltshire

BAC Trustee and Editor of Collecting Business Archives

How major UK brands are creating value from their business archives

It goes without saying that brands' corporate archives are rich sources of knowledge about both the brand's heritage and wider social history.

But brands are increasingly seeing further value in their historical collections and viewing them as assets to the wider business that should be utilised. Digitisation is one way to open up access to material and unlock value.



Diageo Archives (image courtesy of Diageo Archives)

With this in mind and to highlight the brilliant work brand archivists do – TownsWeb Archiving approached archivists at **John Lewis**, **Diageo**, **British Pathé**, and **Zandra Rhodes** to find out what fuelled their decision to digitise and the fascinating ways that digitised collections are being used.

From John Lewis using digitised fabric patterns to inspire new products, to Diageo incorporating digitised vintage print advertisements into modern marketing campaigns - each archivist offers a unique insight into their heritage digitisation projects and their archive collections.

Read the full stories from John Lewis, Diageo, British Pathé and Zandra Rhodes themselves on the TownsWeb Archiving blog: www.townswebarchiving.com/2016/05/brand-archives-making-most-of-digitised-heritage

Ryan Kyle
TownsWeb Archiving

Save the date! Free workshop on Wellcome research resources grants, 7 October 2016

Some of you may be aware that the Boots Archive have recently received funding from the Wellcome Trust to help develop its collections. The Wellcome's Research Resources Grants Fund is something that could well benefit other business archives and Sophie Clapp (Archivist at Boots) has kindly offered to share their experience of the process at a workshop to be held at the Wellcome on Friday 7 October 2016.

Final details are yet to be confirmed, but this workshop will be a great opportunity to hear about this potentially important source of funding.

Museums Association conference and exhibition 2016



Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum (image courtesy of Museums Association)

The Museums Association Conference and Exhibition will be held on the 7-9 November 2016 in Glasgow. It is the largest event of its kind in Europe for museums and heritage professionals. Over 1,500 senior staff discuss the latest issues, discover new practice and meet the world's leading suppliers and consultants.

The themes this year are People and Places, Being Brave and Health and Wellbeing. Delegates will have the opportunity to debate and discuss big ideas with colleagues from around the UK and internationally. Keynote speakers include Jackie Kay, national poet for Scotland and Oonagh Aitken, chief executive of Volunteering Matters. Another keynote will be delivered by two representatives from the Museum of Tomorrow in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

There are a host of other sessions, practical workshops and training - all developed to facilitate fresh thinking. The social events will give you the opportunity to network with colleagues at Kelvin Hall, Riverside Museum and Gallery of Modern Art (GoMA).

There will also be a third day to the conference this year with a programme of special events, exhibition tours, expert talks and behind-the-scenes visits to Glasgow's museums galleries and cultural venues all included in the price.

Conference is a vital forum for debate, exchange and networking – join the biggest event of its kind in Europe and help shape the future of museums.

Early bird booking ends on 5 August 2016. For more information and to book your place go to www.museumsassociation.org/conference

Reminder! Membership survey 2016 - have your say as a member of the Business Archives Council.

We have extended the survey until the 1 September.

Help us by giving five minutes of your time to tell us what you like about the BAC and how we can improve: www.surveymonkey.com/s/9XGSBZ6

Results will be reviewed and used by the BAC Executive Committee to help shape the future of the BAC and what we offer.

Thank you for your feedback and supporting the BAC's work.

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