



Business Archives Council Newsletter

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The editor of this newsletter is Benjamin White. The next issue will appear in Spring 2021. Prospective copy should be sent to Benjamin White, email: Benjamin.White@bankofengland.co.uk

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Chair's blog

Welcome to my final blog of 2020. Since the last Newsletter we have run a very successful Conference, BAC Wadsworth Prize Reception, and Annual General Meeting. All online events of course, but we were pretty happy with the way that these all went. In particular, I thought that the break-outs on day two of the conference were excellent. We necessarily had to limit capacity for these sessions, and consequently they were hugely over-booked. However, I hope that we can organise a repeat of these so that everyone has a chance to take part in what were very thought-provoking debates. Indeed, we have some ideas about offering more online member events during 2021, so watch this space. All that said, I have really missed physical conferences and workshops and the networking opportunities that these present.

I'm pleased to say that there has been one exception to our enforced online activity. During the relaxation of restrictions back in September, Ben White, my colleague and BAC Trustee, was able to take a trip to West Sussex Record Office and present them with a cheque as winners of the 2020 BAC Cataloguing Grant. This will fund work on the Sir Freddie Laker Archive, which charts a significant episode in the history of twentieth century aviation in the UK. As the picture shows, the presentation was all properly socially-distanced. It was also appropriate for Ben to dispense the cash since it was the place where he received some of his early training!



Presentation of the cataloguing grant winner's cheque to Wendy Walker, County Archivist, West Sussex Record Office (Courtesy West Sussex Record Office)

This issue of the Newsletter is the two hundredth that we have produced. Thanks to the quality of the BAC's Archive (!) we are able to reproduce the very first issue which appeared in October 1958. It was certainly another world back then, though it's fascinating to see that our friends at the British Records Association were running a meeting on 'Practical co-operation in the field of business archives'! That's still very much what we try to encourage today.



While we're on the subject of anniversaries, we must congratulate our friends and colleagues from the Business Archives Council for Scotland (BACS) who marked their diamond jubilee in 2020. Kiara King explains more in her piece below, and she has also looked in the archive to find a fascinating letter discussing the creation of BACS. Obviously, the celebrations have been more muted than planned, but I look forward to being able to travel north of the Border in 2021 to raise a glass!

Of course, I noticed that the inaugural BAC newsletter mentioned a new history of the brewers Truman, Hanbury, Buxton and Co. This reminds me that I have recently read *The family brewers of Britain* written by the noted beer guru and author Roger Protz. It's an excellent overview of the business of beer, and I'm aware that historic records have played a key part in enabling these firms to maintain heritage branding and to develop new beers using recipes from the archives. This book was written pre-Covid and since then the business model of brewers and pub companies has been dramatically ruptured by lockdowns and restrictions. And not just in the hospitality sector. As I write, the news is breaking about Debenhams, this on top of the threat to the other well-known high street brands owned by Arcadia. Rest assured that we, along with colleagues in the archives sector, will be monitoring developments closely.

This all seems a rather gloomy note on which to end a rather gloomy year, so I will simply finish by wishing you a relaxing and safe festive period and let's hope that things improve in 2021.

Mike Anson
BAC Chair

BAC Annual General Meeting, 12 November 2020 – Chair's Statement:

'First of all, thank you to everyone for attending this AGM, the first to be held online (and I sincerely hope that it proves to the last to be held online).

'It goes without saying that 2020 has been a difficult year for everyone, not least for the archive sector in general, and closer to us all here today, for businesses and business archives.

'If we cast our minds back a year, the BAC had just held an excellent conference at the RIBA, followed by a most enjoyable Wadsworth Prize reception at the National Theatre Studio. Richard Wiltshire and others were busy behind the scenes to bring about what is arguably the most high-profile rescue of a business archive, at the risk of hyperbole, I'm going to say ever undertaken. Of course, I'm referring to the transfer of the Thomas Cook archive to the Record Office of Leicestershire and Rutland. In early in 2020, we held a hugely successful training day on business records for archive students at the Baring Archive. Then the global pandemic changed everything.

'Since March we have been working to support BAC members and the wider business archives sector. We have organised Zoom workshops for our members covering various aspects of how Covid-19 is impacting business archives. The Crisis Management Team, with the help of additional volunteers from the BAC membership, has been monitoring business records at risk. We have also, at long last, been able to establish a dialogue with insolvency practitioners about implementing guidelines on what to do with the archives of failed businesses. In many ways we have come full circle – after all, the BAC was founded in 1934 to save business records at risk because of the interwar economic downturn. So, that part of our mission 'the preservation of business records' remains as important as ever.

'Our 'business as usual' work has also carried-on. We are running our conference and awarding the BAC Wadsworth Prize next week – both events online of course. As in previous years, we have also awarded two cataloguing grants. I will make a couple of comments here. First, we are not yet sure how Covid-19 will affect our membership subscription income, and we won't be generating any surplus funds from the conference, as it's free of charge. This means that we have looked closely at our finances and decided that for 2021 at least, we cannot offer two cataloguing grants. I should also like to say that the BAC fully supports the ARA Pay Review Group recommendations on pay rates for freelancers and therefore we must ensure that the cash value of the grant/s reflects these rates.

'Many of you will remember the launch of the National Strategy for Business Archives back in the summer of 2009 – yes it really was 11 years ago! For some time now we have felt that the Strategy had run its course. If nothing else, the landscape of archive sector bodies has changed dramatically since then, and digital preservation scarcely warranted a mention back then. Working together with The National Archives, we have commissioned a review of the Strategy, and I'm delighted that Elizabeth Oxborrow-Cowan is able to join us today to present a summary of the findings. We will of course be looking at how to develop future initiatives from this.

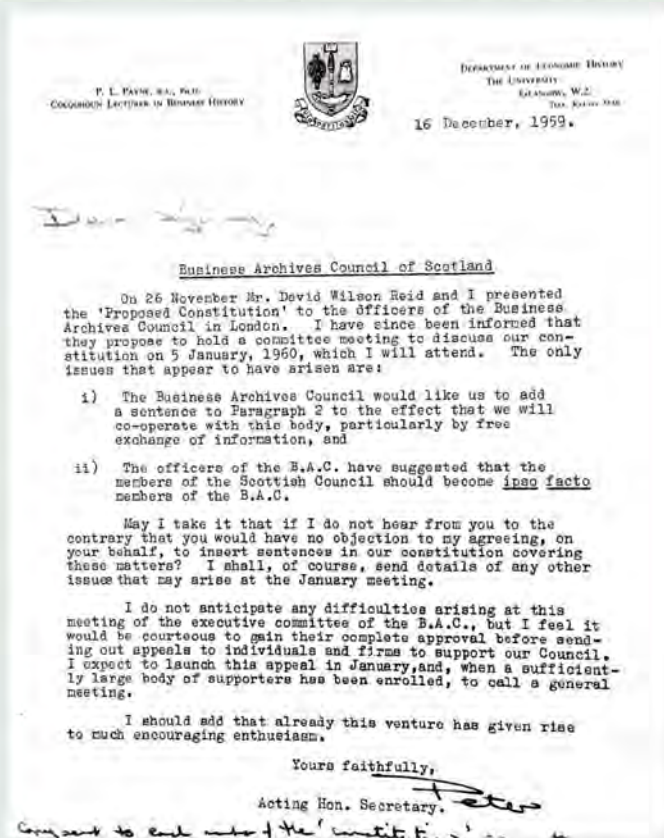
'Finally, you will deduce from the AGM papers that there will be some personnel changes on the Council. First, Judy Faraday will be stepping down as Deputy Chair, having served 10 years, but I'm delighted to say that despite her name not appearing on the nomination papers, Judy will be remaining as a trustee. We also say goodbye to Judith Wright – since 2010 she has undertaken many roles including Conference Organiser, Membership Secretary, and looking after our Risk Register. Last, Moira Lovegrove, who since November 2012 has been our Treasurer – Moira has been a calm and stable influence on spendthrift trustees and at times has made critical interventions to ensure the continued operation of the Council. I would like to record my formal thanks to Judy, Judith and Moira for their huge contribution over the last decade.

'To end, on behalf of the Council I would like to thank all of our members for your continuing support in these difficult times. Let's hope for some improvement in 2021 and I look forward to being able to see you in person rather than on a screen. Thank you.'

The Business Archives Council of Scotland celebrates its sixtieth anniversary

2020 marks the sixtieth anniversary of the Business Archives Council of Scotland. We're a spritely 26 years younger than our sister organisation the Business Archives Council having been established in 1960.

While the two organisations have always enjoyed close links, they could have been even closer as we've discovered when looking at records relating to the establishment of the Council. Interestingly, early discussions in 1958 centred around a proposal for a local committee of the Business Archives Council to cover Glasgow and the West of Scotland. However, by 1959 when a draft constitution was drawn up and agreed ahead of the first AGM in May 1960, it was for a separate organisation called the Business Archives Council of Scotland, (BACS), albeit with a commitment to co-operation between the two organisations emphasised from the outset.



A letter from Acting Hon. Secretary of the Business Archives Council of Scotland and Colquhoun Lecturer in Business History, Peter Payne, to Professor Sydney Checkland regarding the 'Proposed Constitution' of the BACS (16 December 1959) (Courtesy of the Archives and Special Collections at the University of Glasgow)

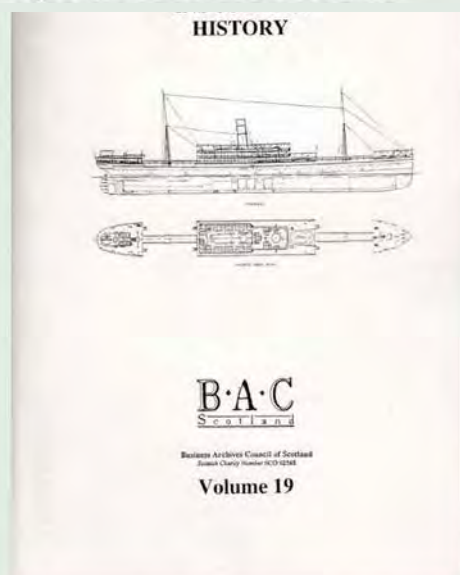
Looking back through our own records to begin to catalogue fully the BACS archive held by the University of Glasgow has been one of our priorities during this unusual anniversary year. It has revealed to us changes in the composition and focus of the Business Archives Council of Scotland. From an initiative started by a group of academics, archivists and businessmen with a determined focus on surveying the historical records of firms to becoming a networking organisation for creators, custodians and users of business archives delivering a range of activities including an annual conference, corporate connections events and publishing the journal *Scottish Business and Industrial History*.

The BACS executive committee started 2020 with lots of plans to celebrate the anniversary throughout the year with a May launch event, an anniversary themed conference in October, a publication, and we hoped in particular to make use of social media to raise awareness of BACS and business archives in Scotland. As lockdown continued throughout the spring, our plans to celebrate the anniversary with a physical launch event and even our autumn conference were abandoned with the executive committee taking the decision instead to extend our activities into 2021.

However, all was not lost! On the social media front, we were pleased to take part in the ARA Scotland *#Archive30* campaign throughout April. We were assisted in this by Alexandra Foulds, a University of Glasgow archives student who looked through content we'd digitised from our records and created a series of tweets to tie in with the daily themes and showcase our anniversary, history and key BACS facts at the same time. This social media activity has been continued under the hashtag *#BACScot60* and leading up to May next year we will be sharing milestones in BACS' history and interesting BACS facts, showcasing Scottish business archive collections and projects and giving an overview of significant events in the development of the Scottish business archives sector. Follow us **@BusArchScot** to keep up to date with this.

During this year we've also focused our attention on our website and logo, adopting a different look for BACS and launching our brand new website <https://busarchscot.org.uk/>. Our 'new look' actually comes from our own archive as we re-visited an early version of the BACS logo and updated it! As part of the planned celebrations we had already commissioned three new films to highlight the breadth, depth and value of business archives in Scotland. Thankfully filming for them was completed before lockdown and they are now available on our website. In the three films we answer the question: What is a business archive? We explore the types of records held in business archive collections and the different ways they can be used. We also reflect on the history of BACS, the community it has created and how it has changed since the Council was established.

As we've looked back over sixty years of the Business Archives Council of Scotland, one of the lasting contributions has been the impact of the surveying activity encouraged and delivered by the Council. This was first carried out in the 1950s and 1960s by the Colquhoun Lecturer at the University of Glasgow, then by the National Register of Archives for Scotland's regional surveyors before a dedicated BACS Surveying Officer was appointed in 1977. There is still a Surveying Officer today funded by the Ballast Trust with strong links to BACS. The success of this post and its continuation has been a significant achievement and contributed greatly to the strength of the Scottish business archive sector. In this sixty year period, thousands of businesses have been approached and nearly 600 surveys completed and added to the National Register of Archives for Scotland and many hundreds of collections rescued or transferred for deposit to public archive repositories across Scotland.



The Business Archives Council of Scotland has published the Scottish Business and Industrial History journal, formerly known as Scottish Industrial History, since 1977

(Courtesy the Business Archives Council of Scotland)

We hope that one of the outputs of our anniversary year will be a better understanding of this surveying activity and the collections it has delivered to the public. We are therefore beginning a project to review and update our survey database and will use this information to reveal some of the key collections BACS has been involved in. This work will be shared on social media over the coming months. We are also currently working on an anniversary edition of our journal *Scottish Business and Industrial History*, which will look back at the history and achievements of BACS. It will be published in May 2021 to mark the anniversary of our first AGM and we hope to finally enjoy a launch event and birthday party then if possible!

Kiara King

Ballast Trust Archivist and member of the Executive Committee of the Business Archives Council of Scotland

The BAC Wadsworth Prize 2020

The BAC Wadsworth Prize is awarded annually by the Business Archives Council for a book judged to have made an outstanding contribution to the study of British business history.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic it was not possible to hold a physical reception this year, so the 2020 Prize was awarded at an online reception held on the evening of Tuesday 17 November 2020. The winner was Jonathan Conlin, for his book *Mr Five Per Cent: The Many Lives of Calouste Gulbenkian, the World's Richest Man* (Profile Books, 2019).

This year's judges were Brian O'Sullivan (one of the joint winners of the 2019 prize); Alix Green (Senior Lecturer in the Department of History, University of Essex); and Tamara Thornhill (Corporate Archivist at Transport for London). Speaking on behalf of the judges, Brian O'Sullivan said:

'The books shortlisted for the prize this year were uniformly of a high standard. They dealt with a variety of topics from the medieval wool trade through the development of the mass food market in Victorian London to industrial relations in the British car industry. However, the judging panel felt that one of the books was quite exceptional in its coverage and especially in the author's extensive use of archival resources in several countries. The chosen book is far more than a biography of a fascinating individual, who through times of great turmoil managed, despite everything, to maintain his lucrative stake in the oil industry. The book provides considerable detail about the development of the international oil industry, which will be of great value to business historians. It also provides an interesting insight into the elite world of art collection, and the safeguarding of its legacy.'

In his acceptance speech Jonathan Conlin, who is a Senior Lecturer in History at the University of Southampton, thanked the BAC and the judges, and those who had been involved in his project. In particular, he paid tribute to the support given by the late Professor Richards Roberts (himself a two-times winner of the Wadsworth Prize).

This was the forty second occasion on which the Prize has been awarded. Previous winners are listed [here](#).

Surveying the archives of UK Aircraft Manufacturers

Regular readers of the BAC Newsletter will recall that in spring 2020 we carried articles on both the first conference of the Aviation and Aerospace Archives Initiative (AAAI) and its survey of the archives of UK aircraft manufacturers. The initiative was established in late 2018 by a range of aviation-related companies and heritage organisations to encourage the best practice preservation of archival records relating to the history of flight, and related industries and technology, and to promote their wider use. The Business Archives Council itself was a founder member.

Work on the survey of the historical records of aircraft manufacturers has continued during the year - despite the challenges arising from the impact of the global pandemic - with the generous support of archives and archivists, museums and museum curators and other owners of, or experts on, aviation archives and heritage nationwide. Archives relating to some 90 aircraft manufacturing companies and related organisations have so far been identified and the first tranche of survey entries will be published on the AAAI's [website](#) in January 2021.



*Hawker Hurricane Mk IIC aircraft on the production line at the Hawker Aircraft Ltd factory at Langley, 1943.
(Courtesy Royal Aeronautical Society/National Aerospace Library)*

If you hold archives relating to a business that built entire aircraft (as opposed to just components or sub-assemblies) and have not yet been contacted by Alison Turton, who represents the Business Archives Council on the initiative and is leading the survey project, do get in touch (via alison.turton@hotmail.co.uk) with a brief description of your holdings. Any archives reported by the first week of January will be included in the initial survey results which will be published later that month.

TownsWeb Archiving's Heritage Digitisation Grant 2020: Winners' Announcement

A message from Jess Sturman-Coombs of TownsWeb Archiving:

'After an incredible turnout to our winners' announcement webinar, we are now able to spread the good news!

This year saw a huge response with the standard incredibly high and the competition fierce, and each judge had an enormous job on their hands deciding on the winning three. So it is with great pleasure that we announce the following winners:

Corinthian-Casuals Football Club



This project will see the [Corinthian-Casuals](#) Football Club's unique collection of match day programmes and newsletters digitised, protected and made 'access ready'.

Liverpool Cathedral



Designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, [Liverpool Cathedral](#) is the proud owner of over 1,000 examples of Scott's work. This will be digitised, protected and made ready for public display for the very first time.



The [Merton Heritage & Local Studies Centre](#)'s photographic collection, documenting post war through to the 20th Century, will be digitised, protected and utilised for a variety of resources.

Please join us in congratulating the above organisations and visit our [Winners' Announcement blog](#) to find out more.

A huge thank you to all who took the time to apply. Each contribution was greatly received and uniquely recognised.'

'Call for content' – the ARA Business Records Special Issue, spring 2021

The [ARA Section for Business Records \(SBR\)](#) invites you to contribute articles to the next ARA Business Records Special Issue Magazine in spring 2021.

The SBR would like to hear from you about new projects, latest developments, events, hidden collections, or any other business archives related issues. And, they are particularly keen to have submissions from different formats, so feel very welcome to experiment!

Articles should be between 400 and 800 words and accompanying images should be supplied at not less than 300 dpi (TIFF or JPEG). All images should have a caption, source and acknowledgement.

As part of your submission, please complete and return the [Disclaimer for Photographs](#) and the [Copyright Acknowledgement](#) forms:

For general style guidelines, and contributor guidelines, please follow this link:

www.archives.org.uk/images/ARC_Magazine/2019/ARC_Magazine_Contributor_Guidelines_February_2020.pdf

If you are interested in submitting an article, please contact [Elizabeth Thompson-MacRae](#) (Joint Communications Officer for SBR), marking the subject header 'Call for Content' by COB on Friday 29 January 2021.

Digital innovation: broadening audience engagement learning event, 14 January 2021

On 14 January 2021, BT and its EIRA (Enabling Innovation: Research to Application) partners will be holding a 'hothouse' event aimed at exploring the opportunities and challenges associated with digitally-enabled technologies that have the potential to enhance community engagement with the archives and libraries sector.

For a description of the event and booking details please click [here](#).

***Journal of Historical Research in Marketing* – special issue ‘call for papers’**

The Journal of Historical Research in Marketing invites submissions for a special issue focused on *International Sources for Advertising and Marketing History*. Anyone embarking upon advertising and marketing history research in addition to a literature search will seek out primary sources. However, locating such primary sources can be challenging. Many government archives, such as Library and Archives Canada, contain a wealth of material relating to advertising and marketing history which remains unexplored because researchers are mostly unaware of the collections. Similarly the digitisation of historic newspapers around the world is making available an ever increasing wealth of advertising and marketing content which is underutilised by historians. Other online digitised primary sources such as those available through family history websites can be investigated by historians.

Submissions for this special issue will be open from **1 August 2021 until 30 September 2021** with an expected publication as part of the 2022 volume of the journal. If you are unsure of the suitability of your topic or have questions regarding a submission, please contact the special issue guest editors Richard Hawkins, r.a.hawkins@wlv.ac.uk and Leighann Neilson, leighann.neilson@carleton.ca.

How to submit to the *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing*

Submissions for this special issue of *JHRM* should be made using ScholarOne Manuscripts, the online submission and peer review system. Registration and access is available on the journal's ScholarOne site: <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/jhrm>.

The *eabh* working papers series for 2020

For the benefit of those readers who might have missed them, the following papers were published as part of the *eabh* working papers series this year:

Tying peasants to their land: The rise and fall of private property rights in historical Vietnam by Hoang-Anh Ho, University of Economics Ho Chi Minh City

http://bankinghistory.org/wp-content/uploads/eabhPaper_202001.pdf

Gold rush. The political economy of gold standard adoption in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia by Aleksandar R. Jevtic, University of Oxford

http://bankinghistory.org/wp-content/uploads/eabhPaper_202002.pdf

Not an ordinary bank but a great engine of state: The Bank of England and the British economy, 1694-1844 by Patrick K. O'Brien, London School of Economics & Nuno Palma, University of Manchester; Instituto de Ciências Sociais, Universidade de Lisboa; CEPR

http://bankinghistory.org/wp-content/uploads/eabhPaper_202003.pdf

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