Archive sector update
Winter 2010–11

Shelley’s Ghost at the Bodleian library
An exhibition in Oxford explores the history of Percy Bysshe Shelley and his wife Mary Shelley

‘Unfinished Histories’
A look into the history of the alternative theatre movement and an exhibition about playwright Noël Greig

Religious Archives Survey
A recently released survey outlines the extent and nature of the country’s religious heritage and how it is cared for
The winter edition of Archive Sector Update celebrates collections and the stories they can tell. As you can see, with so many tales from across the sector, there is clearly much to celebrate!

An exhibition at the Bodleian Library, Oxford uses treasures from their own Special Collections and the New York Public Library to tell the amazing story of the Shelley family over three generations. Another exhibition at the Unicorn Theatre in London draws on the archive of Noël Grieg, playwright, actor and director, to showcase the ‘unfinished history’ of the alternative theatre movement. And in Buckinghamshire, the Paralympic Region project recognises the legacy of Sir Ludwig Guttmann, the founder of the Stoke Mandeville Games – the forerunner of the Paralympic movement.

But collections can also inspire new stories to be told: in Portsmouth, the Dickens Archive is encouraging local communities to explore the issues Charles Dickens tackled in his novels and the Stanley Kubrick Archive at University of the Arts, London is inspiring a whole new generation of video artists.

Perhaps these case studies will similarly inspire you to open your collections in new ways to new audiences. As further encouragement, there are opportunities for you to promote what you do. Being awarded Archive Pace Setter status for innovative working practices or successfully applying to the National Cataloguing Grants Scheme are ways to publicly demonstrate the value of your collections.

Don’t forget that the newsletter is for you and about you, so if you have anything you would like to contribute then please contact asd@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk. We are always interested in ideas for future issues so please let us know.

Guest editor: Cathy Williams
Senior Manager, Strategic Collection Development
The National Archives
Unfinished Histories – The story of Noël Greig

‘Unfinished Histories – Recording Oral Histories and Preserving Archives from the Alternative Theatre Movement’ is a project that was established in 2006. The project’s co-directors are writer and historian Susan Croft (who contributed material for this article) and director and voice coach Jessica Higgs, both of whom have a long-standing interest in the alternative theatre movement. This movement changed the face of British theatre in the 1960s, 70s and 80s, introducing theatre to new audiences in non-conventional theatre spaces and making performances for and with communities who had traditionally been excluded from the arts.

The project started by recording lengthy oral histories on audio and video including one with Noël Greig in 2008, a year before his death from cancer. The playwright, actor and director left his personal archive to Rose Brunford College, the first drama school to train students for the new area of community theatre arts. Noël believed that theatre has to have a purpose and there has to be a reason for putting on a play. Though he worked in West End theatres he felt more at ease joining alternative movements. In 1973 he moved to Bradford to join the General Will, a touring socialist collective theatre company. There he became involved in radical gay theatre and in 1977 he joined Gay Sweatshop, a London-based theatre company which reached out to universities, trade union venues and Campaign for Homosexual Equality groups by telling personal stories. In his later years he focused on supporting the work of young writers through workshops, books and mentoring.

Posters in the recent Noël Greig exhibition curated by Unfinished Histories at the Unicorn Theatre, London (photo: Rebekah Purcell, copyright Unfinished Histories)

continued on p4
The material from his fascinating archive provides the content for an exhibition at the Unicorn Theatre in London. Susan Croft said:

‘The exhibition at the Unicorn Theatre is to honour Noël’s memory. His work covered so many areas of the alternative theatre movement. Young people were inspired by him, while older audience members – many of whom had been part of the movement – were often moved to feel that this area of work, which is often marginalised because it deliberately positioned itself outside the mainstream, was being acknowledged as important.’

Unfinished Histories has also created a website where they are making material available in digital form alongside extracts from interviews, lists of shows and individuals’ accounts of their work with the enormous range of companies that formed the movement. The website also gives listings and links to the archives of alternative theatre companies in other collections. The exhibition is available to book for venues elsewhere – for more information email contact@unfinishedhistories.com. 
Cataloguing Grants will make valuable archives accessible

Archive collections across the UK are benefiting from grants from the National Cataloguing Grants Programme, to make archives more accessible.

This year, the scheme – which is funded by a range of charitable trusts – has awarded more than £400,000 to fourteen projects across the country. Archive collections awarded grants include the Sadler’s Wells Theatre Collection, The Children’s Society 1889 to 1979, and the papers of the Earls of Derby, in particular those of the 14th Earl, who was Prime Minister three times in the mid-19th century.

The grants distributed by The National Archives are being awarded to archive collections rich in heritage and value which, without financial help, are at risk of remaining hidden forever. As a result, the archive collections can tackle challenges such as poor or non-existent cataloguing, limited resources and expertise. This will enable wider audiences to access the archive collections. Melinda Haunton, Programmes Manager at The National Archives comments:

‘This grants programme provides essential funding for cataloguing without which these archive collections would be inaccessible to the public. Cataloguing uncovers unknown treasures and makes the documentary heritage available to everyone. Once archive collections are fully described, they become available for a huge range of uses, such as community partnership projects, research and education work.’

The next round of the cataloguing grants programme will open for applications in March 2011. For more information about the programme and the grants that have been awarded, visit our website:

nationalarchives.gov.uk/information-management/our-services/cataloguing-grants-programme.htm
**Is your project an Archive Pace Setter?**

The National Archives together with the Archives and Records Association (formerly the National Council on Archives, the Association of Chief Archivists in Local Government and the Society of Archivists), the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council and other partners are looking to award around 50 projects with the status of Archive Pace Setter. We are looking for a range of archive services, both big and small, and from all parts of the sector, to showcase how they are developing new working practices in their projects.

We already have 13 Archive Pace Setter projects including recent awards to Marks & Spencer Company Archive, Hull University Archives, Hampshire Archives and Local Studies, West Glamorgan Archive Service and the Richard Burton Archives, Swansea University.

For more information on these projects and how to apply, please go to the website:

- nca.org.uk/archivepacesetter

**Digital continuity update**

Digital continuity is the ability to use your information in the way that you need, for as long as you need. Loss of digital continuity is a serious information risk, because it means you can no longer use the information you need to operate accountably, legally and transparently.

This is a risk the public sector can now take action to manage, using the Digital Continuity Service. The service, provided by The National Archives, includes a suite of guidance, a framework of technical tools and services, a risk assessment process, and DROID, a free file profiling tool which tells you what files you’ve got, their format, size and last modified date. Full details of the service are available on our website:

News from The National Archives

Main feature

Religious Archives Survey

On 24 November 2010 representatives from different faith communities across the UK gathered together at Westminster’s Archives Services to mark the publication of the Religious Archives Survey 2010.

The project, which was funded by the Pilgrim Trust, ran for nine months and brought together the Archives and Records Association (ARA), The National Archives and the Religious Archives Group in an initiative to find out the extent and nature of the country’s religious heritage and how it is cared for outside the more formal network of collecting institutions. The result was the first ever survey of religious archives, attempting to map all faiths practised in the UK. In his foreword to the Religious Archives Survey, the Rt Revd and Rt Hon Richard Chartres, Bishop of London, said that the ‘information captured in these records extends far beyond the religious sphere and provides a key to our self-understanding as a diverse union of nations built out of very different communities and traditions’.

The event, which was widely attended by representatives from all the major faiths, included a summary of the findings by Dr Clive Field, Chairman of the Religious Archives Group. In his speech he highlighted the fact that the support available for the sustenance of these archival assets ought to be improved and extended, and that more encouragement should be given to strengthen the culture of record-keeping among faith communities and religious leaders. This was followed by a speech from the Bishop of London drawing attention to the value and importance of religious archives. The report is available on our website:

nationalarchives.gov.uk/religiousarchives

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L–r: John Chambers (Chief Executive of ARA), the Bishop of London and Oliver Morley (Acting Chief Executive of The National Archives) at the launch of the survey
Stanley Kubrick Archive inspires secondary school students

Pupils from secondary schools in the London Borough of Newham were inspired by the Stanley Kubrick Archive at University of the Arts London to develop a video installation, *The Caretaker*, as part of their Creative Media Diploma. A group of students from schools across the borough visited the university’s Archives and Special Collections Centre in April 2010. They looked particularly at archival material from Kubrick’s film *Full Metal Jacket*, because the filming location for this was Beckton Gas Works, which was situated in Newham, and was demolished following the film-making process.

The Stanley Kubrick Archive is one of the world’s most comprehensive collections of materials relating to film production. The Archive provides a unique insight into Kubrick’s acknowledged mastery as a filmmaker, his experience as a photographer and the exhaustive research he undertook.

In addition to this archive, the university has an extraordinary range of over 90 archives and special collections that reflect the rich traditions and specialisms of the six constituent colleges (Camberwell College of Arts, Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, Chelsea College of Art and Design, London College of Communication, London College of Fashion and Wimbledon College of Art).

The University is committed to keeping these amazing collections in active use, to support teaching, learning and research in the arts. It actively promotes the archives through study programmes, international screenings, festivals and events. Collections across the University are consulted by 2,300 visitors per year and 24,000 images from the collections are available online through the Visual Arts Data Service ([vads.ac.uk](http://vads.ac.uk)). For more information, contact archive-enquiries@arts.ac.uk or go to the website:

- [www.arts.ac.uk/library/ascc.htm](http://www.arts.ac.uk/library/ascc.htm)
Public Services Quality Group annual forum

The Public Services Quality Group of the Archives and Records Association held their annual forum at The National Archives on 3 November 2010. The topic was ‘The Digitisation Agenda’. Speakers examined digitisation from every angle: from Caroline Kimbell, Head of Licensing at The National Archives, who described the impact of mass digitisation on the organisation’s operational practice, to Joseph Dunne of the University of East London, who used his background in the study of theatre to examine the relationship between the archive, the digitised version of an archive, and audience response to the archive.

Sara Slinn, of the Borthwick Institute, analysed the institute’s on site visitor profiles and explored a future in which many, perhaps most, of their needs could be met through remote services and proactive digitisation. Alexandra Eveleigh – a collaborative PhD student at The National Archives – challenged the sector to consider the participatory digitisation model as an alternative to commercial digitisation. Finally, Sarah Godowski, of architectural firm Bisset Adams, gave an external perspective on archives and their users through an analysis of user needs, and discussed how exhibitions can open up archives for new audiences.

Principles created to support long-term digital access

The digital environment affects everyone in an archive, from the user and the desk staff to the service manager and funders. Digital preservation isn’t just a question of resources, it’s a vital part of maintaining sustainable access and outreach and needs to be integrated into every archive service’s business as usual.

Now, a new set of concise, clear principles to support long term access to digital material have been created that relate a wide variety of perspectives. Funded by the Museum Libraries and Archives Council, they’ve been created and endorsed by organisations across the heritage sector, including The National Archives, The Heritage Lottery Fund, The Archaeology Data Service, The British Library, The Collections Trust, The Digital Preservation Coalition, Museums and Galleries Scotland, The Joint Information Systems Committee, and the UK Office for Library and Information Networking (UKOLN).

Follow the link to download a copy:

Relics of English king found in National Portrait Gallery basement

The National Portrait Gallery has revealed the relics of a king and the secret life of its first director as it completes an archive catalogue supported by a National Cataloguing Grant awarded in 2009.

While cataloguing the papers of the Gallery’s first director, Sir George Scharf (1820-1895), as part of a six-month grant-funded project, it became clear that his interest extended beyond art and contemporary society. Among the hundreds of diaries and notebooks left behind in boxes, were contents from the coffin of a medieval English king and sketches of his skull and bones.

The impact of dedicated time for cataloguing was demonstrated, as the project archivist was able to cross-reference the date on a cigarette box with diary entries and sketches made on the same day. The entries revealed the box probably contained relics from the royal tomb of King Richard II.

The box contained fragments of wood – possibly from the coffin itself – and some fabric. Records from this date reveal that Scharf was present at an exhumation of the royal graves at Westminster Abbey. Krzysztof Adamiec, National Portrait Gallery Assistant Archivist (Scharf Project), says:

'It was a very exciting discovery and one that reveals the hidden potential of Scharf’s papers. By matching diary entries with sketches, notes and other material in the collection a unique record is revealed. Scharf meticulously recorded almost everything he saw and experienced. In reading his papers, one is able to reconstruct in minute detail a day in the life of a Victorian gentleman.’

The catalogue is now available on the web revealing to a wider audience fascinating stories about the Gallery’s activities since it was founded in 1856:

archivecatalogue.npg.org.uk
Freedom of Information update: Information Rights Tribunal decisions

Cases involving the interaction between Freedom of Information and the Data Protection Act continue to come before the Tribunal. In a case involving the Electoral Commission, the Tribunal reiterated that fairness requires consideration of the interests of data users as well as data subjects (paragraph 60) and the identity and motives of the applicant can be relevant in some cases (paragraph 65):


In another case involving the Department for Employment and Learning in Northern Ireland, the Tribunal looked at the expectations of those providing personal data and the distinction between information about a person's public life and their private life as part of consideration of fairness. The authenticity of the information was also an issue (paragraph 68):


In a case involving Hampshire Constabulary, the Tribunal introduced Article 8 of the Human Rights Convention – the right to respect for private and family life – to consideration of whether the exemption at s 40 applied:


What do you think?

We want your feedback. Send your comments and suggestions about this newsletter to asd@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk
Paralympic Region: Buckinghamshire, the birthplace of the Paralympic movement

The Paralympic Region project aims to ensure the Southeast's heritage as the home of the Paralympic movement is recognised by the world. Sir Ludwig Guttmann revolutionised treatment and life chances for those with spinal injuries after the Second World War, and organised the first 'Stoke Mandeville Games' in Stoke Mandeville, Buckinghamshire to coincide with the opening ceremony of the 1948 London Olympics. This was the forerunner of today's Paralympic Games.

In the lead-up to the 2012 Olympic Games, the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies is involved in a project to celebrate the legacy of Guttmann through a range of creative and educational projects inspired by archive material. Using archive and object collections as a basis, work is being undertaken to uncover personal stories and memorabilia to piece together the Stoke Mandeville story. This will ultimately be showcased through an online platform (due to be launched in April 2011) and will continue to be added to in the lead-up to the London 2012 Games and beyond.

Paralympic Region is part of Accentuate, a transformational programme of 15 projects, inspired by the Paralympic movement, which seeks to change perceptions and offer opportunities to showcase the talents of deaf and disabled people. Accentuate is funded by Legacy Trust UK which is creating a cultural and sporting legacy from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, SEEDA and the regional cultural agencies.

accentuate-se.org/paralympic-region

An archery contest, from the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies
Celebrating Dickens’ birth in Portsmouth

Next year will see the bicentenary of the birth of Charles Dickens in Portsmouth in 1812. To celebrate, the Dickens Archives will engage the communities of the city in a project aiming to inspire participants to work with the city’s archives in exploring some of the issues that Dickens wrote about in his novels. This project has been awarded £265,000 by the Heritage Lottery Fund with additional funding provided by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, Hampshire Archives Trust and the Portsmouth Museums and Records Society.

The project started in January 2011 with small projects involving family and community archives – from digitising family photos to recording oral histories of community members – and familiarisation visits to the city's record office and search room. At the same time the archive will train colleagues who already work with the target groups in archive-related techniques so they can both support the project and gain insight into how archives might be used to deliver their own service objectives in the future.

Freelance photographers, film-makers and actors will be employed to help participants share their work with a wider audience and the results will feed into an exhibition opening in February 2012 at Portsmouth City Museum and an online community archive. The centrepiece of the exhibition will be Dickens’ manuscripts on loan from national collections.

For more information, visit the website:
- [portsmouthmuseums.co.uk](http://portsmouthmuseums.co.uk)

This rent book (accession no: 752/1945) records the Dickens family in residence in the house in Portsmouth that has now become the Charles Dickens’ Birthplace Museum. It will be included in the exhibition at Portsmouth City Museum.
Shelley’s Ghost at the Bodleian Library

An exhibition entitled ‘Shelley’s Ghost: Reshaping the Image of a Literary Family’ opened at the Bodleian Library, Oxford on 3 December 2010. It is organised in partnership with The New York Public Library and is dedicated to one of the most renowned literary families in Britain: Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822), his wife Mary Shelley (1797–1851), and Mary’s parents, William Godwin (1756–1836) and Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797).

The story of the exhibition spans three generations: from Godwin and Wollstonecraft’s months as lovers and their brief marriage between 1796 and 1797 through the eight years Percy Bysshe Shelley and Mary spent together – from their elopement in 1814 to Shelley’s sudden death in 1822 – to the lives of the Shelleys’ only surviving child, Sir Percy Florence Shelley.

The story is often tragic, but also one of remarkable creative achievement. It is told through manuscripts, rare books and personal relics from the family archive now in the Bodleian, together with selected treasures from another great collection – the Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle in the New York Public Library. The Bodleian archive came to the library in several parts, from Lady Shelley’s first gifts in 1893 and 1894, to the purchase of the Abinger Papers in 2004.

Richard Ovenden, Associate Director and Keeper of the Special Collections at the Bodleian said: ‘This is a unique opportunity to bring together treasures from the great Shelley collections in the Bodleian Libraries and The New York Public Library. We are excited that the exhibition will travel to New York after closing in Oxford and enable even more people to learn about this extraordinary literary family.’

The exhibition at the Bodleian library runs until 27 March 2011. For more information, visit the website:

www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/news/2010-dec-01
Collecting born-digital archives at the Wellcome Library

The Wellcome Library is a collecting repository with no legal mandate to acquire archives. This means they are dependent on the goodwill of potential donors of both paper records and born-digital collections (those which originated in digital form). Natalie Walters, the Wellcome archivist says:

‘So far, we have found it easier to persuade people to part with boxes of papers than their digital equivalents. Ironically, while there is no hurry to transfer paper based archives, which can survive for hundreds of years with no intervention, it is vital that we acquire digital material as soon as possible. Degradation of digital data, rapid obsolescence of hardware and software, and the fragility of items such as memory sticks all contribute to the vulnerability of digital archives.

‘The longer digital material remains outside the archive, the higher the cost of working with it, and the less chance of being able to access all the data. While working with digital archives is challenging, many of the lessons we have learned from working with paper are still relevant. Where this does not apply, we are working with colleagues from archives across the world to find suitable solutions.’

What’s your story?

If you’ve got a great story to tell us about your archives, we want to hear about it!

Submit an article for a future issue of Archive Sector Update by emailing asd@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk
16 February 2011
Facing the Future (Leeds)
West Yorkshire Archive Service and the Community Archives and Heritage Group are hosting a free conference on 'Facing the Future'. Aimed at community archives, museum, archives and library workers, the conference will take place at the Leeds United football ground on Elland Road. It is a full day of talks, speakers and training workshops. It is free of charge and lunch will be provided. If you would like to book a place, please contact Sarah Shooter on Tel 0113 289 8222 or email sshooter@wyjs.org.uk.

2 March 2011
Archives Discovery Forum (The National Archives, Kew)
The last 15 years have seen a revolution in the ways archives are discovered. The Archives Discovery Forum, hosted by the UK Archives Discovery Network at The National Archives, is an opportunity to connect with the latest thinking around online access to archives and archive data. It is aimed at archive and heritage professionals involved in making collections accessible through online development. With a mix of plenary speakers, group sessions and informal networking, it will be a chance to make connections and develop new partnerships. There will also be a space set aside for informal demonstrations, so you can bring along a laptop and showcase your latest work.

To book a place at this free event, just email archives.discovery@gmail.com. Please give your full name and institution when booking. Please also let us know if you’re considering bringing your laptop along to demonstrate.
Main feature

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The wider archives world

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Contacts

If you would like to get in touch with us, or if you have ideas for inclusion in future issues of Archive sector update, email us at asd@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk. Please note that we reserve the right to edit articles.

Some key contacts in Archives Sector Development are given here, but for a full list visit our contacts page on The National Archives’ website:

- [nationalarchives.gov.uk/information-management/our-services/contacts.htm](http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/information-management/our-services/contacts.htm)

Head of Archive Sector Development: Nick Kingsley

Public sector team leader: Richard Blake

Private archives team leader: Norman James

Development team leader: Amy Beeson

Strategic Collection Development team leader: Cathy Smith

The following people are the current lead roles for each region/country:

- Northern Ireland: Norman James
- Scotland: Alex Ritchie
- Wales: Jessamy Carlson
- South-East: Melinda Haunton
- South-West: James Travers
- Yorkshire and Humberside: Andy Rowley
- East of England: Liz Hart
- North-West: Kevin Mulley
- East Midlands: Dan Gilfoyle
- West Midlands: Nick Coney
- North-East: Tim Callister
- London locals north of river: Malcolm Todd
- London locals south of river: Rosie Logiudice
- London specialist: Sam Velumyl and Fleur Soper

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