

May 2010

Issue 23

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MARM 2009-10

LIVERPOOL UNIVERSITY

LUCAS

CENTRE *for* ARCHIVE STUDIES

MARM 2009-10

This year's MARM students have now finished the taught part of the programme. Here are some of their thoughts on the year – the asterisked comments were voted the most significant by the group.

What we learned

A ridiculous amount!

Respect the *fonds*.

Everyone has the same fears (and hopes) and we should be confident in ourselves!

Working in archives is much more than just cataloguing! Policies, strategy and targeted services are very important.

Records Management isn't that bad.

I never realised that politics is so embedded in my thinking – worrying!

Theory behind practice.

How varied the profession is + how interesting the work will be.

That you can never know everything and sometimes there are no right answers!

What we enjoyed

The opportunity to discuss current archival issues + theory with others with a similar interest.

Meeting new people and forming contacts with like-minded individuals.

Visiting archives in preservation [the Preservation and Access module] and having the opportunity to put theory into practice on the work placement.

Group and team work.

Sharing knowledge / experiences.

Trips to London and other repositories – was a good reminder of the practical side of what we've been learning in class.

Archives and History + developing understanding about the documents we've been handling in the workplace.

Records Management project week – putting theory into practice!

London! Fun, inspiring, fascinating [trip to London in Semester 2].

Finding such a friendly, like-minded group of people!

Message for next year's students

Don't panic! It gets easier (slightly)

Enjoy the year while it lasts – it's over before you know it!

It gets easier after Christmas.

You will have learned a lot more than you think you have. Keep going and have confidence in your ability.

Start writing essays before you've finished your reading – it'll clarify where you need to focus.

'Respect the *fonds*' Things may seem tricky, but it will be worth it in the end.

Group work might involve a lot of work BUT you will learn a lot from each other!

Make the most of outside speakers.

Don't get too stressed in Semester 1, Semester 2 is fun!

Do Latin

WHAT WE'VE DONE

Records Management Society Conference 21-23 March 2010

Margaret Procter and Michelle Alexander both attended the RMS conference in Manchester.

The RMS conference, titled 'Springboard,' was themed around making transition from records management to information management. Speakers included LUCAS Executive Committee member Ava Wieclawska (pictured below) and there was a good turn out both from former MARM students and from the distance learning students from the DPS: Records and Information Management programme. The catching-up and networking are the real highlights of conference-going.



Ava Wieclawska

Three keynote addresses. Included a motivational session on how to deal with challenging and changing times. Of more professional interest was the update from Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) on recent changes to the DPA compliance regime on the recent changes to the ICO's powers and considered their future impact, while a third keynote, from Chris Head, of CHH Consultancy Ltd reflected on the use of social media might be and already is being used, encouraged

his audience 'to adopt it before it adopts them'. Elsewhere Steve Bailey from JISC introduced the JISC RM impact assessment calculator (see <http://www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/records-management/measuring-impact>) and David Reeve (Dorset County Council) talking about the differences between a records manager and an information manager. James Lappin led an excellent 'conversation' session on Sharepoint, worth the price of admission alone (just – it's a pricy conference).

The gala dinner (no dancing unfortunately) took place at the Hilton Hotel; and the most oversubscribed post-conference trips was Deepstore, the records storage facility sited in a Cheshire salt mine. Conference abstracts are available at <http://www.rms-gb.org.uk/conference-sessions-speakers-2010>.

Michelle Alexander, with contributions from Margaret Procter.

ICA 8TH European conference on digital archiving, Geneva, 28-30 April

Margaret Procter managed to evade the volcanic ash to join 500 delegates attending the Digital Archiving conference in Geneva.

With seven or eight parallel sessions at any time, there were difficult decisions to be made, but as a showcase for (inter)national projects it was good to be able to catch up with Richard Blake's account of the progress of the ICA's model specifications for electronic

recordkeeping, and learn for the first time about other potentially significant (and certainly interesting) projects. In particular, professional colleagues might like to catch up with Chris Prom's 'practical e-records' pages (especially the resources section at http://e-records.chrisprom.com/?page_id=22 and keep an eye on some really interesting work being done by Gary Brannan of West Yorkshire Archive Service. He doesn't seem to have published anything yet (though there's a blog at <http://archives20.ning.com/profile/GaryBrannan>) but his paper (with Evert Florijn) on the acquisition and preservation of born digital records raised some intriguing possibilities for future research and application.

Wearing my MARM hat, I chaired a panel of European educators from universities in Sweden, Switzerland and Norway and the UK which discussed – with lively audience participation – the challenges and possibilities of educating future professionals for the digital environment. Wearing a more touristy hat I made the most of the glorious weather by crossing Lake Geneva on the shuttle ferry, part of the city's remarkably efficient integrated transport system.



Lake Geneva shuttle ferry

FUTURE EVENTS

MARM Open Day

The next MARM Open Day for potential applicants will be held on 19th May 2010. Further details are available on the LUCAS website. (Another Open Day will be held in November.)

Text and Place

On 27th May 2010, LUCAS in association with the Liverpool Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies will be holding a one-day conference which seeks to explore the relationship between texts and the places in which they may be situated - inscribed on their fabrics, locked within their walls, intrinsically identified with a particular location as the point of origin or use.

Speakers: Dr David Griffith (University of Birmingham): *Words beyond books: Towards a corpus of vernacular inscriptions from late medieval England*; Dr Damien Kempf (University of Liverpool) *A book for a crusading king: MS Vat. Lat. 2001*; Dr Gillian Rudd (University of Liverpool) *The Wilderness of Wirral in Gawain and the Green Knight*; Prof. Richard Marks (University of Cambridge) *Situated texts in the late medieval church*; Becky Williams (University of Liverpool) *Location, location, location: Contextualising the graffiti of the late medieval church*; Dr Neil Macdonald (University of Liverpool) *Epigraphic records: a valuable tool in flood reconstruction*; Dr Lynda Rollason & Dr Pam Graves (University of Durham) *Fifteenth-century graffiti in*

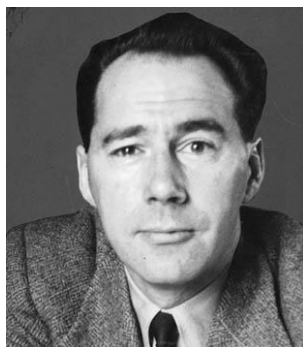
the Prior of Durham's private chapel; Prof. Peter Horsman (University of Amsterdam) *Dordrecht's Palladium: Access to Archives in the early modern Netherlands*.

Attendance is free. Enquiries and bookings should be addressed to Becky Williams at r.j.williams@liverpool.ac.uk.

LUCAS AGM

The LUCAS AGM will be held at 5.30 on Wednesday 9th June in the Rendell Building, Lecture Room xxx. It will be followed at 6.00 pm by a lecture by David Ketterer entitled

'Trouble with Triffids: Writing John Wyndham's Biography by Mining and Supplementing the Archives'



John Wyndham

Emeritus Professor of English at Concordia University, Montreal, David Ketterer is currently writing a biography of Wyndham. In this lecture he will speak on his experience of using the archive: its treasures, pleasures... and omissions.

Liverpool University Library has one of the finest collections of Science Fiction in the UK, including the archive of John Wyndham Parkes Lucas Beynon Harris (1903 – 1969), author of classic works such as *The Kraken*

Wakes, *The Chrysalids* and, most famously, *The Day of the Triffids*.

The lecture will be followed by drinks and nibbles.

All are welcome – please R.S.V.P. to Trish Haider on P.Haider@liverpool.ac.uk or 0151 794 2393.

I-CHORA5 1-3 July, London

LUCAS is co-hosting the International Conference on the History of Records and Archives with University College London and the National Archives in London in July. ICHORA5 is the fifth in the series of such conferences which began in Toronto in 2003 and which were subsequently held in Amsterdam (2005), Boston (2007) and Perth (2008).

The conference's main theme is 'Records, archives and technology: interdependence over time' and speakers will explore the ways in which technological developments have resulted in changes to recordkeeping practices, and introduced new opportunities (or problems).

The geographical and chronological scope is wide: papers range from knot-tying as a recordkeeping system in Ancient Peru to the introduction of the telephone in the British Civil Service, taking in the Venetian Patriciate, Tudor England and colonial Hong Kong along the way.



LUCAS executive committee member Dr Michael Cook will be presenting his own research on the damp-press

copier process which was patented by the engineer James Watt in 1780, and which allowed for the easier duplication of records. A full programme can be found at www.liv.ac.uk/ichora5

There are no special rates for LUCAS members, but the day rate is a reasonable £75 (or £25 for students) and the full conference, over three days, £180.

LUCAS COMMITTEE NEWS

LUCAS is delighted to welcome Leonie Sedman as a University representative on the Committee to replace Roy Lumb.

Leonie Sedman is the University of Liverpool's Curator of Heritage Collections, based at the Victoria Gallery & Museum.



Leonie and a Superlambanana

The University has a vast array of heritage collections, formed by researchers and for teaching purposes. Some remain within their parent departments but others have become 'orphaned' – and since 2004



Leonie has been their curator, having previously surveyed them in preparation for the development of the Victoria Building (the original University, a magnificent building by Alfred Waterhouse). She had previously worked with the University's Art Collections, which are now also displayed in the Victoria Gallery & Museum.

Leonie is also responsible for the development and implementation of the displays in the Tate Museum, and the storage of those collections not on display. She therefore brings to LUCAS considerable experience in issues of preservation, access and exploitation – we look forward in particular to the forthcoming HLF funded exhibition, (working title) 'John Garstang and the Discovery of the Hittite World' which she is working on in collaboration with staff and students from SACE, featuring the glass slide collections of archaeological sites excavated by John Garstang, the University's first Professor of Archaeology.

She has a long connection with Liverpool and the University, having come to the city in 1998 to study for a BA (Hons) (1991) in Archaeology, supplemented by an M.Phil (2000) also in Archaeology.

STUDENT NEWS

D/CPS Records and Information Management

Students from the distance learning Diploma in Professional Studies: Records and Information Management visited Liverpool for two days of intensive work at the beginning of February.

Drawn from across the public sector, principally central government, the students are in the second year of the Diploma programme which involves completing eight modules over two years, a substantial achievement when they're also in full-time work. Students pictured above are drawn from the Ministry of Defence, the Northern Ireland Office, the Home Office, The National Archives and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, among many others.