



International Council on Archives
Section of Business and Labour Archives

NEWSLETTER

No 1, April 1998



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A Message from the Editor

Welcome to the first edition of the Section's Newsletter. In June last year the Steering Committee resolved to produce a twice yearly Newsletter. The Newsletter was seen as a means of providing members of the Section with information on Section activities, mini features on

members, details of projects being undertaken by the Section or it's members, new members, and notes and reviews on new publications.

The contents of any Newsletter is driven by the needs of it's readers. In this spirit, I would like to hear from the membership about what you would like to be included. If you have suggestions on what you would like to see included or better still items for inclusion please send them to me. I have provided a link to the [aims](#) of the Section. They might help to generate ideas on what the Section is trying to achieve as well as ideas for items to include in the Newsletter.

Bruce Smith, Editor

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Meet the Steering Committee

Many readers may not be familiar with members of the Steering Committee. Over the first couple of issues of the Newsletter we will introduce Steering Committee members to you.

Dr Kyrill Anderson	has been a historian by training for 20 years. He is a fellow-researcher at the Institute of General History, Russian Academy of Science and a corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Pedagogical and Social Sciences. Since 1991 he has been director of the Russian Centre for Preservation and Study of Modern History Records (former Central Party Archive of Central Committee of CPSU).
Susan C Box, CA	was recently appointed Corporate Archivist for American International Group Inc (AIG) in New York City. Prior to that she was the Corporate Archivist for Phillips Petroleum Company. She has a Master in Library and Information from the University of Alabama, is a member of both Business Section Steering Committee of the Society of American Archivists and International Council of Archives and is a member of the Academy of Certified Archivists.

Jean Huchins Elliott

has been Archivist and Vice-President of [Chase Manhattan Bank](#), New York City, New York, for the past nine years. Primarily she has been focusing on marketing and outreach, utilising the rich collection she maintains. Exhibits have been created for both domestic and international offices. The Bank is approaching its Bicentennial celebration in 1999, necessitating the planning and implementation of projects which are underway.

Silvia Schenkolenski Knoll

has been Director of the Archives Department of the National Insurance Institute of Israel and a lecturer in the Department of Information Studies and Librarianship (Bar-Ilan University) and the School of Library, Archive and Information Studies (the Hebrew University of Jerusalem) since 1975. She has also been chief editor of *Arkhyoro* of the Israel Archives Association since 1989 and has published articles on archival matters in several professional publications including *Janus*.

Jaap Kloosterman

the current chair of SBL has been at the [International Institute of Social History](#) (Amsterdam) since 1969, originally as a researcher on the nineteenth century international labour movement. Since 1993 he has been the director of the Institute and of the Netherlands Economic History Archive.

Roger Nougaret

is Head of [Crédit Lyonnais](#) Historical Archives. A graduate (1982) of Ecole nationale de chartes (Paris) he was deputy curator of Archives départementales de Loire-Atlantique in Nantes (Public Archives) from 1982 to 1991. From 1991 he has been in charge of increasing, inventorying and marketing the very rich archives of a near 140 years old French bank.

Lesley Richmond

graduated from the University of Edinburgh in 1978 with an honours degree in Scottish Historical Studies. She subsequently worked for the Business Archives Council surveying corporate records and then as an in-house corporate archivist before becoming Deputy Archivist at [Glasgow University](#) in 1987. She is currently Acting Director of Archive Services and is Secretary of the International Council on Archives Section on Business and Labour Archives, sits on the National Council of Archives (NCA), participates on the Research Libraries Group EAD Advisory Group, is a member of the NCA's Networking Policy Working Group, has published extensively in the field of business archives and has been instrumental in the introduction of the EAD in the UK. Her major publications include Lesley Richmond & Bridget Stockford, *Company Archives, The Survey of the Records of 1000 of the First Registered Companies in England and Wales*, Gower, 1986; Lesley Richmond & Alison Turton, *The Brewing Industry. A Guide to Historical Records*, Manchester University Press, 1990; Lesley Richmond, *Overview of Business Archives in Western Europe*, Glasgow University Archives & Business Record Centre, 1996.

Teresa Tortella

is Head of the [Archives and Numismatic Department](#) of the [Banco de España](#).

Having worked for the National Archives in Madrid from 1974 to 1977, she joined the Banco de España as Head of the Historical Archives. From 1984 she has also been in charge of the Records Management and from 1990 has been responsible for the Numismatic Department of the Bank. Teresa was a member of the ICA Business Archives Committee from 1983 and has been a member of ICA/SBL Steering Committee since 1990. She has been a member of the EABH (European Association for Banking History) Academic Advisory Council since 1989 and is currently Deputy Chairman. Her publications include *Indice de los primitivos accionistas del Bank Nacional de San*

Carlos, (Banco de España, 1986) and Los primeros billetes españoles: Las 'Cédulas' del Banco de San Carlos (1782-1829) ('The first banknotes of the Banco Nacional da san Carlos') (Banco de España, 1997). She is currently working on the publication of 'A Guide to sources of information on foreign investment in Spain (1780-1914)' for ICA/SBL.

Anna Christina Ulfsparre

is a Professor in Archival Science at Stockholm University and was chair of SBL from 1992 to 1996. She is the project leader of 'Records Creation in Corporations and Businesses in the Age of IT' which so far has investigated the use of different computer systems in several businesses. The aim of the project is to find out what records are to be retained for future research.

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Website

The Section has established a [page](#) on the World Wide Web. It can be accessed via the [ICA](#) page or directly at URL <http://www.iisg.nl/~icasbl/>.

The Steering Committee acknowledges the support of the [International Institute of Social History](#), Amsterdam in maintaining the web page.

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Business Archive Listserv

The University of Glasgow, [Business Archives Centre](#) has set up an international business archive discussion list to facilitate the discussion of current issues and future development of business archives.

To subscribe:

Just send the message: subscribe busarch

to: majordomo@gla.ac.uk (with no subject line or signature).

There is a web [archive](#) of the discussion list where you can search by thread.

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Minutes of Meetings

Minutes of the Steering Committee [meeting held 2-3 June 1997](#), at Stockholm, can be viewed on the

Section's Web page.

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Recent Publications

The Records of American Business

Edited by James O'Toole. Published by the [Society of American Archivists](#), \$US 39.95 plus shipping/handling.

Contact SAA, Publications Department, 527 S. Wells Street, 5th Floor, Chicago, IL 60607, USA. [SAA's new address]

Published in August 1997, and according to the advertising in the SAA Archival Outlook November/December 1997: "This dynamic book explores the challenges of preserving the documentary record of American business enterprise, large and small. For those whose archival responsibilities include the selection and care of this documentary material, these 14 essays will provide insight, advice, and encouragement. Beyond that, the book presents a timely discussion of issues that are pressing, day-to-day concern to all archivists."

[Eds Note: There will be a review in the next edition]

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Book Review:

Les Archives dans l'entreprise: Guide des durees de conservation, Association des archivistes francais, Paris, 1997.

This Guide to retention periods is aimed mainly at small and medium-sized companies. It was undertaken by French business archivists members of the Association of French archivists. It provides the reader with an overview of retention periods for files and documents relating to functions common to all businesses. Its contents is divided into five sections: Administration, Technical function, Commercial function, Accounting/ Finances, and Human resources. Each section, after an introduction defining the activity, gives a series of tables where one can find the actual legal period, the reference to legal and regulatory texts and the period recommended by the authors. The reference to all texts is given in full at the end of each section.

In spite of several successful archives services (Saint-Gobain, Elf, Total, Societe generale, RATP, Credit Lyonnais, France Telecom, etc.) and recent developments that have led business archivists to from 20 to over 100 within the Association of French archivists in a period of 5 years, too many companies in France are still lagging behind in the organisation of their archives, which is an essential part of information procedures. This guide deals only with one dimension of the archival profession, but its insistence on an aspect that can be easily grasped in economic terms should help decision makers in having a clearer view of what archives really are.

Henri Zuber, Directeur du CARAN

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New Directory:

The [Business Archives Council](#) has announced the publication of the fourth edition of the *Directory of Corporate Archives*, edited by Lesley Richmond & Alison Turton

An essential work of reference for anyone requiring information about British companies which have formal archives facilities, this publication gives details of the archives maintained by many corporate members of the Business Archives Council. This edition of the guide contains entries on eighty-eight businesses which offer access to their archives on a quasi-formal basis. Of these eighty-eight, twenty-three businesses did not appear in the last edition of the Directory of Corporate Archives published in 1992.

The Directory gives such information as the name of the archivist; history; access policy; extent, description and scope of archive; finding aids; deposited collections; and reader facilities.

The Directory costs 15 pounds sterling and can be obtained from the Business Archives Council, The Clove Building, 4 Maguire Street, London SE1 2NQ Tel +44 171 407 6110; Fax +44 171 234 0300

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[Noel Butlin Archive Centre, Australian National University, Canberra](#)

Many members will be aware of the significant collections of Australian business and labour archives held by this institution. Over recent months the archive has been faced with the threat of closure and the possible dispersal of the collection. Adrian Cunningham who was very much involved in the lobbying that went on to save the archive has prepared the following summary of what happened.

Lobbying Averts the Closure of the Noel Butlin Archive Centre

As we all know archives need friends. This is especially so in the case of business and labour archives, which in many countries appear to heading rapidly towards

'endangered species' status. The precarious nature of business and labour repositories and the value of cultivating and mobilising influential friends was highlighted recently in the battle to avert the closure of one of Australia's premier business and labour archives, the Noel Butlin Archive Centre at the Australian National University.

The Noel Butlin Archive Centre was established in Canberra during the 1950s and operated for many years under the name 'Archives of Business and Labour'. It now holds in excess of 13 shelf kilometres of records which have been deposited by many of Australia's leading companies, trade unions, employer organisations and professional associations. Over the years the Centre has earned an international reputation as a leading example of a successful business and labour collecting archive and research facility.

Over the past few years the Centre has experienced substantial staffing reductions at the hands of its parent body, the Australian National University. Since 1994 the staff have been reduced from 6 professional archivists and 2 support staff to just 2 archivists and one support staff. Matters came to a head in late August when the University announced that the Centre would close at the end of 1997, with its collection being either mothballed, dispersed or returned to depositors.

Alarmed at this threat to one of Australia's premier collecting archives, the Australian Society of Archivists (ASA) immediately launched a lobbying campaign aimed at forcing the University to reverse its decision.

At the same time efforts were made to locate and enlist the support of influential allies in the cause. Media releases generated national interest and coverage, which in turn brought forth further friends and allies. A group calling itself the 'Friends of the Noel Butlin Archive Centre' was established which brought together a disparate array of supporters including archivists, researchers, trade unionists, historians, cultural heritage managers and politicians. The friends group provided the means whereby lobbying efforts could be pooled, ideas shared and pressure points identified and exploited.

The University was bombarded with letters and petitions calling on it to reverse its short

sighted decision and decrying the cultural vandalism that it entailed. At first the University showed no interest in responding to the campaign. However, after many weeks of adverse media coverage and the application of some high-level political pressure, the University finally buckled and announced a 'rescue package' for the Archives in late October. This package, whilst unsatisfactory in many ways, at least averted the immediate threat to the Archives. Moreover, the change of heart by the University opened the door for representatives of the ASA to meet with the University hierarchy to discuss constructively the means of securing a long term future for the Centre as a flourishing and partly self-funding facility.

As a result of these discussions a future vision for the Centre has been proposed by the University and endorsed by the ASA. This entails a three year transitional period whereby efforts will be made to raise external funds which can, together with matching funding from the University, support the operations of the Centre. The external fund raising efforts will focus on depositing organisations and the pursuit of recordkeeping consultancies in the business and labour sectors. At the end of the transitional period it is envisaged that governance of the Noel Butlin Archive Centre will be reconstituted through the establishment of a Board of Governors consisting of appointees from within the University and from external sources such as depositor organisations, user groups and the archival profession. This should give the Archives a much greater degree of long-term security, independence and autonomy. In addition it is envisaged that an internal University archives/records management unit will be established and will be co-located with the business and labour archives facility.

The Noel Butlin Archives is not 'out of the woods' yet. Much work awaits the fund raising team. Reinventing a long-established archival facility along self-funding/consultancy lines will be a painful, but nevertheless exciting process. The University has promised to provide the Centre with at least four staff during the transitional period, a staffing level that is minimal to say the least, but hopefully adequate for the maintenance of basic services. At the same time the University has indicated that it wishes the Centre's holdings to be reappraised against a new mission statement and collecting policy which are yet to be developed. The ASA is very concerned that this process is carried out in a professional and orderly manner and that the collection is not dismembered through a precipitous and ill-

considered reappraisal process. Moreover, the ASA is concerned to ensure that undue pressure is not placed upon a small cadre of staff during this transitional period and that professional staff are treated as professionals and allowed to make professional decisions.

In summary, the ASA Council is gratified that its lobbying efforts proved to be fruitful and is extremely grateful for the willing and enthusiastic support for the Archives which came from such a variety of quarters. Much work, however, remains to be done to ensure that the 'rescue package' is properly implemented. Much more work needs to be done by similar archival facilities in Australia and elsewhere to ensure they have sufficient security, support and independence to enable them to avoid falling victim to similar sets of circumstances to those that so nearly led to the demise of the Noel Butlin Archive Centre.

Adrian Cunningham
Acting Director, Electronic Service Delivery
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Silicon Valley's Librarian - HP's archivist has history of era in her hand

This item was posted to the Business Archive Listersev by Susan Box. It originated from The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) Web site and is dated Thursday, January 8, 1998.

Silicon Valley's Librarian
HP's archivist has history of era in her hand
By JAMIE BECKETT
© 1998 San Francisco Chronicle

In future-oriented Silicon Valley, Karen Lewis is a guardian of the past. As corporate archivist at Hewlett-Packard Co., Lewis is custodian and compiler of the computer and electronics maker's 60-year history.

Besides more than half a million photographs, more than a million documents and about 150 oral histories at HP headquarters in Palo Alto, she keeps watch over such treasures as the world's first hand-held calculator and the first ink-jet printer.

The collection is the most comprehensive in Silicon Valley, and it traces the birth of one of the valley's seminal companies.

One of what Lewis calls her ``real eureka's" was a big gray box that had been sitting in storage collecting dust. Having no idea what it was, Lewis searched historic HP employee magazines, which had been put online.

In a 1955 issue, she found an article with a photograph of a similar-looking box, with an identical coffee stain on the front and a nick in the corner.

The picture was identified as the prototype built in 1938 by William Hewlett when he was a student at Stanford University for an audio oscillator.

The oscillator, which measures sound, became HP's first product and was used to make the Walt Disney film "Fantasia".

The prototype now sits proudly on a display shelf in Lewis' combination office-museum.

"Being an archivist now is like being an archivist in the industrial revolution," Lewis said. "Someday, people will look back and wonder what we did here and why, and they'll be studying HP because we have an archive and we put together a record."

Lewis, who trained as an archivist at Harvard University, came to HP a little more than 10 years ago to help the company prepare for its 50th anniversary.

"I walked into a room with piles and piles of boxes, and on those boxes were Post-It notes saying, 'Save this may be historical'" she recalled. "As I started to open those boxes, I realized I was sitting on the edge of the history of Silicon Valley."

Among the papers stuffed inside those boxes were the minutes from the first formal meeting between company co-founders William Hewlett and David Packard in 1937, when they were considering calling their new venture "The Engineering Company."

The two set up shop in the now-legendary garage in downtown Palo Alto.

Included in the HP collection is an old black-and-white photograph of the company's first factory, built in 1942.

As the story goes, Packard walked into the sprawling structure, looked at the vast space and said, "I want it to be undivided, so it could be used as a supermarket in case it fails."

And so, according to Lewis, HP's "offices without walls" were born, a model that has been duplicated all over Silicon Valley.

The story of the factory is just a small piece of the HP lore that Lewis keeps. Another story involves the first hand-held calculator, one of 200 historic machines in the HP collection.

The calculator was invented by HP engineers after Hewlett challenged them to make a desktop computer that fit into his shirt pocket. The engineers measured Hewlett's shirt pocket, Lewis said, and then went to work.

When they had a prototype, they sent it out for market research.

"The study said no one will buy it. But Hewlett knew that if engineers would walk around with slide rules, they'd walk around with a battery-operated calculator," Lewis said.

He insisted on producing the calculator, which made the slide-rule obsolete.

Besides managing the archives, Lewis was an editor on Packard's book, "The HP Way." Much of the material in the book came from the company archives.

"I've always been a natural archivist, a person who arranges things in groups that have meaning," said Lewis, 53.

As a child, she collected stamps, pennies, old advertisements and baseball cards (she had 1,000). She still collects stamps, and she's since added "Star Wars" memorabilia, photo postcards, plastic credit cards and free discs sent by America Online and other Internet services.

Although an archive might seem a luxury in the competitive high-tech industry, HP doesn't see it that way, said Roy Verley, director of corporate communications and philanthropy, whose department includes the archives. The archives yearly cost the company "in the six figures," a sum that Verley said he doesn't even have to defend in his budget because the archives are seen as essential to preserving the corporate character that's made HP successful.

"Archives are a way of institutionalizing your corporate memory," said Glenn Bugos, a Redwood City-based corporate history consultant and professor at the University of

California at Berkeley. "Especially in Silicon Valley, where turnover of high-tech employees happens pretty quickly, it's crucial you have an archive so that memory is preserved and available when problems come up."

Since HP set up its archives, chipmaker Intel has opened a museum, and Digital Equipment Corp. and Texas Instruments have established archives. In November, Apple Computer donated its historical collection of hardware, software and documents to Stanford University Library.

HP's archives are not open to the public, but they are used daily by employees -- top executives looking into the history of decisions, attorneys searching for copyright information, training staff researching company culture, marketers studying HP's joint ventures in Japan. In addition, HP shows off the archives to customers and visiting dignitaries.

"It's the only significant professionally run business archive in this area," said Henry Lowood, curator for the history of science and technology collection at Stanford University Library.

Although she deals in history, Lewis, who some describe as "the dean of business archivists," isn't worried about being seen as irrelevant in fast-paced Silicon Valley. She is very much involved in the present. The daughter of a doctor and a psychologist, Lewis subscribes to Scientific American, Science, Wired and 21 other magazines. She reads daily newspapers and online news. She monitors company lines of communication daily, always watching to see where historic decisions are being made.

"I think archivists are always futurists," she says. "Archivists make decisions about what is saved that history will learn from in the future."

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Conferences 1998 and 1999

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The next issue of the Newsletter will be published October/November 1998.

Closing date for inclusion is 15 September 1998.

This page was last updated 7 July 1998
