

SHARE Museums East a network of know how

Caring for Archives & Records in the Museum

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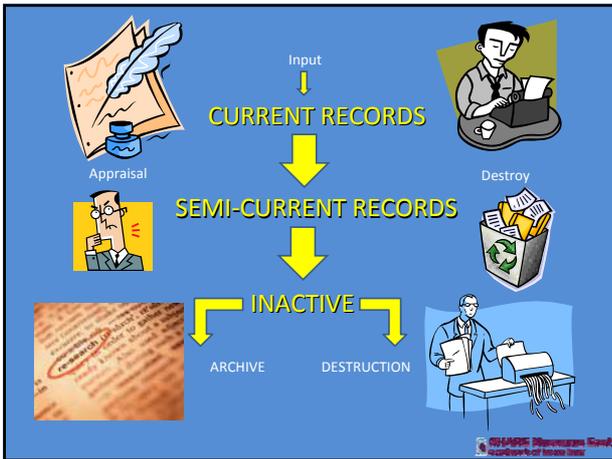
What is all this stuff?

Records

'Records are all those documents, in whatever medium, received or created by an organisation in the course of its business, and retained by that organisation as evidence of its activities or because of the information contained'

P. Emmerson 'How to manage your records' (1992)

Sedgwick Museum of Earth Sciences, Geological Conservation Unit, Archive Room, 2010



Archives

'Those records...adjudged worthy of preservation for reference and research purposes and which have been deposited or have been selected for deposit in an archival Institution'

JR Schellenberg, 'Modern Archives' (1956)

Sedgwick Museum of Earth Sciences, The Papers of William B.R King, [Wales 1910/1911] ref. WBRK 3/1

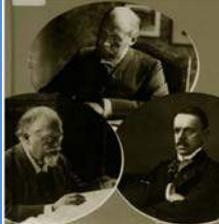
Sedgwick Museum of Earth Sciences, The Papers of the Sedgwick Club [Portmadoc 1885] ref. SGWC 2/2/5

Museum Records

- Administrative records, illustrating history and activities as an institution.
- Documentary material associated with the museum's collections.

- Records and documents acquired for the museum's collections by gift, purchase or loan
- Any records deposited in the museum by statutory authority.

Archive Principle: Original Order
 (Archives) 'must be kept carefully separate and not mixed with the archives of other creators, or placed into artificial arrangements....and the arrangement must be based on the original organisation of the archive collection, which in the main corresponds to the organisation of the administrative body that produced it'
 Muller, Feith and Fruin, *Manual for the arrangement and description of archives*; Rules 8 and 16 (1898)



Why should we be bothered??

- 'DON'T RISK IT, KNOW YOUR RECORDS!'
- **Revealing** - 'History' of objects, society etc.
- **Engagement** - exhibitions, collaborations.





Threat?



American Archivist Volume 68 • Number 2 • Fall/Winter 2005




- **Dirt & Dust**
- **Water - mould**
- **Light exposure**
- **Foxing**
- **Rust - staining**
- **Humidity - red-rot**
- **Chemicals**
- **Pests**
- **Physical damage**
- **Inappropriate repairs**
- **Theft**
- **Fire**

Archives Damage Atlas: a tool for assessing damage



What should we be doing?

➤ **Following Standards**

The National Archive Standard for Record Repositories

- Constitution and finance
- Staffing
- Acquisition
- Access
- Storage and Preservation
 - General
 - Situation
 - Construction
 - Security
 - Fire protection
 - Environment and storage
 - Disaster plan
 - Conservation




British Standards

BS ISO 15489-1-2:2001 Information and documentation. General & Guidelines.

PD 5454:2012 (previously BS 5454:2002) Recommendations for storage and exhibition of archival documents; environmental stability and protection and display of archival material.

PAS 198:2012 Specification for managing environmental conditions for cultural collections.

ISAD(G) International Standard for Archival Description
 Provides guidelines for creating the content of an archival description.






What can we do?

Professional Advice?

'In the case of a small repository where no appropriately qualified professional staff can be employed, the governing body should formally seek regular advice on such matters as acquisition, storage, conservation and cataloguing from a professionally qualified archivist in another repository or from The National Archives....' [TNA Standard]



Funding

The National Archives (TNA) Cataloguing Grants

Programme
Administering the distribution of more than £2 million over six years to tackle cataloguing backlogs (average in 2013 was £30K per project).



National Manuscripts Conservation Trust (NMCT)

Grants towards the cost of repair, binding and conservation of manuscripts of historic or educational value.
Awards ranging from £1000 to £22,000.

EERAC (East of England Regional Archive Council)

Supplies, conservation, storage, cataloguing, digitisation.
Awards £500-£750, not normally exceeding 50% of total costs of project.

Training?

TNA Archives Sector Training

'Giving Value' project (Heritage Lottery Fund). Improving archive sectors fundraising knowledge, skills and capacity.

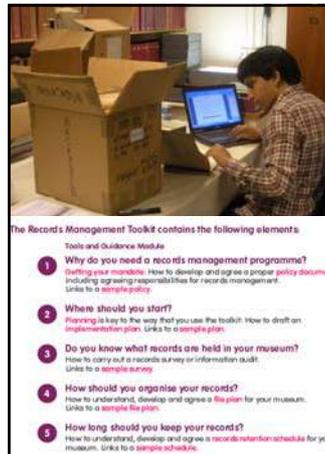
- Building a case for support
- Developing an effective fundraising plan
- Financial Preparedness
- Measuring outcomes and Commissioning

Archives and Records Association (ARA) Core Training Courses

- Copyright
- Audience engagement
- Freedom of Information
- Archives & Volunteers
- Digital preservation
- E-records management
- New and refurbished archive buildings

British Library Courses (West Dean College collaboration)

- Preserving historic photographs
- Damaged Books, first steps
- Understanding and caring for bookbindings
- Environments- effective monitoring and management
- Disaster response and salvage



Basic listing

Records in boxes and files

- Title of box/file
- Date(s)
- Brief Description of records
- Condition/Notes

- ✓ Unlocks the records (for staff!)
- ✓ Assist with funding applications.
- ✓ Saves wear and tear of records needlessly produced.
- ✓ Will assist with cataloguing at a later date.

London Museums Hub
Records Management Toolkit

January 2010

Minimise environmental damage

Minimise light exposure (See section 6:13 Lighting, PD5454)

- ✓ Pulling curtains or blinds
- ✓ Switching lights off in unoccupied area
- ✓ Storing material in boxes
- ✓ UV screening film on windows
- ✓ Fitting UV filters on artificial lighting



Control temperature and relative humidity (see PAS 198:2012)

PD5454 recommends 13-20 degrees for the storage of library and archive collections, and 35-60% RH.

- ✓ Cool and dark
- ✓ Good ventilation, fans if necessary
- ✓ Keep windows shut/covered in sunny weather
- ✓ De-humidifier
- ✓ Storage enclosures



Integrated Pest Management Programme (IPM)

SHARE Courses available!!

Minimise physical damage

The Lord of the Rings: The account of Isildur



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- ✓ **Training** -staff, volunteers, and researchers- correct handling techniques?
- ✓ **Invigilation** - those looking at archives?
- ✓ **Reading room** rules?
- ✓ Use of **surrogates** - minimise damage to fragile material?
- ✓ Special **equipment** - accessing certain items?

- **Improve Storage & Accommodation**

IF safe to do so, and no disruption to 'original order'.....then you can safely remove:

- ✓ Elastic bands
- ✓ Loose cello tape
- ✓ Steel paperclips, staples, tags
- ✓ Plastic wallets and bags!!
- ✓ Unusual items!.....

TRY to use chemically inert materials, (lignin and acid-free) to repackage documents:

- ✓ **Boxes** - physical protection to files/volumes from pests, environmental & physical damage
- ✓ **Folders** - replace old damaged folders, better protection

Sedgwick Museum of Earth Sciences, Geological Conservation Unit, Archive Room, 2012

Sedgwick Museum of Earth Sciences, Geological Conservation Unit, Archive Room, 2014

- ✓ **Acid free paper** -protection for fragile/dirty papers & newsprint
- ✓ **Acid free tissue-paper** - protection for fragile items, photographs
- ✓ **Archival tape** - tie for folders, loose maps & rolls
- ✓ **Melinex** - non static protection for loose photographs
- ✓ **Specialist boxes/folders** -for slides, negatives, plates, films, maps

Summary

•Advice

•Funding

Professional staff
Resources

•Training

•DIY Activities!!

Basic survey & listing
Repackaging



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