

**Health Archives & Records Group**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2010 at King's College London**

**Present**

Sally Godstone	
Geoffrey Browell	King's College London
Nick Baldwin	Great Ormond Street Hospital NHS Trust
Kevin Mulley	The National Archives
Jonathan Evans	Barts and the London NHS Trust
Stephen Soanes	University of Warwick
Andrea Tanner	Kingston University
Marion Stone	Freud Museum
Matthew Piggott	Surrey History Centre
Victoria Rea	Royal Free Archives Centre
Jennifer Haynes	Wellcome Trust
Francis Maunze	Royal College of Psychiatrists
Colin Gale	Bethlem Royal Hospital Archives & Museum
Laura Taylor	London Metropolitan Archives
Meliisa McGreechan	Cambridge City Project Archivist
Annie Lindsay	UCLH NHS Foundation Trust
Victoria Cranna	London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine
Joanna Besley	Museum of Brisbane
Kath Webb	York Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Max Mwakitalu	Lambeth NHS Primary Care Trust

**Apologies for absence**

Louise King	Royal College of Surgeons of England
Frank Rankin	NHS Education for Scotland
Stuart Green	Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Carol Parry	Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow
Anne Gadsden	North Cumbria University Hospitals NHS Trust
Kevin Brown	Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust
Theresa Parks	Tees, Esk & Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust
Julian Pooley	Surrey History Centre
Gordon Jones	Queen Mary's Hospital Roehampton
Angela Skitt	Birmingham Archives and Heritage
Alison Spence	Cornwall Record Office
David Huddleston	Public Record Office of Northern Ireland
Lesley Ackeroyd	Cambridgeshire Archives
Marie Bourne	Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals NHS Trust
John Corkery	St George's Hospital, Tooting
Eleanor Burgess	National Maritime Museum
Hilary Ritchie	Addenbrooke's Hospital

**1. Roundtable Introductions**

Colin Gale (CG) welcomed members and London Museums of Health and Medicine guests to the meeting, and roundtable introductions were made.

## **2. Presentation**

Joanna Beasley, Churchill Travelling Fellowship holder from the Museum of Brisbane gave a presentation, entitled 'Remembering Goodna', on the therapeutic potential of archives and museums.

## **3. Minutes of the last meetings**

The minutes of the last committee and general meetings, held on 3 July 2009, were accepted.

## **4. Committee Matters**

CG reported that Sarah Coombs had stepped down as HARG's web officer and Specialist Repositories Group (SRG) representative. Vicky Rea (VR) having offered to act as HARG's new SRG representative, she was appointed nem con.

## **5. Finance**

CG reported that he was awaiting notification of the amount of HARG's allocation in SRG's 2010 budget, and clarification concerning allowable expenditure, and that in the interim no costs had been incurred by HARG in 2010. He further reported that, having had a total of £1050 allocated it over the four previous calendar years, HARG had spent 79% on facilitating meetings, 15% on leaflet production and 5½% on its website, leaving ½% unclaimed.

Jonathan Evans (JE) asked whether MLA might be a possible source of funding, for one-off projects if not for meeting and other administrative costs. Kevin Mulley (KM) noted that the Society of Archivists' proposed merger with the National Council on Archives and the Association of Chief Archivists in Local Government may have future implications for how groups affiliated to SRG are funded.

## **6. HARG's future**

CG introduced discussion of a previously circulated discussion paper about HARG's future, which had been prompted by recent and prospective departures from its committee, and the attendant problems of continuity of the committee structure (which was set up by resolutions adopted at HARG's inaugural annual general meeting in 2006). He considered that, unless people could be found to fill the roles of Chair and Secretary by the time of the 2010 AGM, HARG would have to find a way to fit its aspirations as a group to the willingness and availability of its members to contribute time and effort, perhaps by putting the committee structure and the resolutions adopted in 2006 in abeyance, and reverting to an informal association.

In a wide-ranging discussion

- the continuing value of HARG as a recognisable 'umbrella' under which members could usefully collaborate in project and advocacy work was acknowledged;
- the possibility was acknowledged that, if HARG were move to an informal footing, the holding of meetings might become even more reliant upon the initiative of members who could offer a prospective venue, in the absence of anyone tasked to keep up a regular schedule of meetings;
- the desirability of maintaining a members' email database for circulars and a website (which, if it could offer opportunities for online interaction, perhaps via a listserv-style or

bulletin board discussion group, might mitigate a decrease in meeting frequency) was expressed, CG offering to continue to maintain the former but pointing out that a web editor and discussion administrator would need to be found to enable the latter; and

- the desirability of maintaining some democratic or ‘common consent’ mechanism by which members could claim (or disclaim) ownership of initiatives carried out under the HARG ‘umbrella’ was acknowledged.

## **7. Booklet**

Kath Webb (KW) reported that a booklet entitled ‘The Value of Health Archives for Research’, containing the results of HARG’s research sub-group, was published with Wellcome Trust funding and launched at the British Records Association’s conference in December 2009. CG reported that he held a small stock of copies, and would welcome ideas as to how they might be distributed for maximum effect. Geoff Browell (GB) expressed an interest in distributing copies to attendees of an event King’s College Archives were planning for March 2010 (see item 9 below). KW undertook to ascertain whether a pdf of the booklet was available, with a view to making it available on HARG’s website once the supply of hard copies is exhausted.

## **8. Occupational Codes**

CG reported that in 1907 the Lunacy Commissioners (subsequently known as the Board of Control; regulators in England and Wales of lunatic asylums and mental hospitals until 1960) had issued a set of diagnostic codes for use in medical register entries, and that a key to these codes for the use of archivists and researchers was published on the HARG website at the initiative of Kath Webb in 2009. He further reported that the Lunacy Commissioners also issued a list of occupational codes for use in medical registers. This list was re-issued, and underwent alteration, an unknown number of times, consequently making understanding of the codes used in medical registers dependent upon knowledge of the changes made to the list over time. However, copies of the list are comparatively rare, and all copies found by CG and KW so far date from 1933/34. If it proved possible to determine how the occupational codes be altered over time, there might be a case for publishing this information on HARG’s website alongside the information about diagnostic codes. Members with relevant holdings or ideas about leads to follow in compiling this information were asked to contact CG or KW.

## **9. Open Forum**

GB invited members interested in an event on historic mental health records at King’s College London on 9 March 2010 to contact him for details.

JE sought information on members’ photographic / reprographic charges for purposes of comparison. GB drew attention to a recent email exchange on the subject on the Archives-NRA email discussion list, and Jenny Haynes (JH) referred JE to Wellcome Images’ website.

JH noted that details concerning the future direction of the Research Resources for Medical History funding scheme were now available on the Wellcome Trust’s website.

## **10. Notice of Annual General Meeting**

It was noted that the Annual General Meeting would be held in Meeting Room 6a, Addenbrooke’s Treatment Centre, Hills Road, Cambridge CB2 0QQ on the afternoon of Friday 18 June 2010.