

**LHSA ARCHIVIST: REPORT FOR LHSA ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING 7 JUNE 2007**

CONSERVATION

A risk assessment of all storage areas was carried out and environmental monitoring continued. A number of collections were treated and/or re-housed including LHB51, GD18, GD41 and RIE admin files. Work to re-house the glass plate negative collection resumed with the appointment of the Archive Assistant. The Preservation and Conservation Policy was developed and is now at final draft stage. The Conservator participated in the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh Arts Committee and the Edinburgh University Library (EUL) Disaster Planning Group. Conservation staff development included attendance at the National Museum of Scotland conservation lecture series, basic HTML training and the Institute of Conservation's Iron Gall Inks Meeting.

The Wellcome Trust Research Resources in Medical History (RRMH) project, *Preserving twentieth-century case notes of the Royal Edinburgh Hospital*, was completed on time and on budget in January 2007. Copies of the final report and an article produced by Toby Gough, the Project Conservator have been made available to Committee members.

A fourth RRMH project, *Preserving Edinburgh's twentieth-century reproductive and sexual health case notes*, began on 1 February 2007, and work is currently slightly ahead of schedule. Dr Gayle Davis and Dr Alison Nuttall (contributors to the project application) visited the conservation studio and were given an introduction to the preservation project methodology.

A report on damage sustained by the shelving collapse of 6 November 2006 was produced by the Conservator.

BUDGET

The level of funding for 2007-08 is £268,532, of which £160,805 is from Endowments and the remainder (£107,727) from Exchequer funding. This represents a c.3% inflationary increase upon the previous year.

STAFFING

All staff made important and valued contributions in 2006, a year that produced great changes to LHSA reminiscent of 1988, when we relocated from High School Yards to the Main Library (ML) building.

The RRMH Project Conservator and Conservation Assistant from the previous project continued to work on the new one. Jenny McDermott left at the end of January to take up an archive post with the National Archives of Scotland. Rosie McLure's Assistant Archivist post was made open-ended. Laura Brouard commenced a two-year Assistant Archivist post in April. A temporary Archive Assistant post was created to reorder the folder-based case notes after the shelving collapse last year. Stephen

Willis began in May. The LHSA Archivist's appeal was successful, but the Assistant Archivist's was not. This remains a matter of disappointment and concern to the reporter.

ENQUIRIES

The circulated *LHSA Enquiry Figures January-December 2006* are broadly in line with those of 2005. This is an achievement in itself, given the significant impact of the Main Library Redevelopment Project (MLRP) upon all aspects of LHSA arrangements and services during the year. LHSA website hits for 2006 averaged over 5,000 a month.

The FOI and DPA related dimensions of the enquiry statistics demonstrate the important role that LHSA plays in assisting Lothian NHS Board meet its legislative obligations concerning access to archival records.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

In the week beginning 12 February 2007, LHSA's office space and staff were moved from the 5th floor to the 2nd floor, EUL. Crown Relocations were again used to assist with the moving of furniture, PC equipment, books and files etc. All LHSA archive staff are now housed in an open plan office, sharing with the Collections Support Team. Some work files and reference materials were moved into the basement store as the office space is limited. Special Collections staff and the shared Reading Room facilities are located next door.

The conservation workspace in the former 5th floor repository area and all conservation materials were moved to the lower ground floor. The new arrangements meet all requirements for core and project conservation working.

Some changes to working procedures have been made as a result of the office area move. A member of LHSA staff spends one day a week covering the office desk and supervising the Reading Room at the Library Research Annexe (LRA). If necessary, material can be transferred between the LRA and EUL on a daily van service. LHSA Special Collections Reading Room duties remain unaltered. At the end of each day, archive material being used by LHSA staff or readers is either returned to the basement store or is locked in a closed trolley that stays in the Reading Room area, which is locked and alarmed over night. The LHSA staff office space is locked, but not alarmed over night.

All batches of material relocated as a result of the MLRP have now been checked and counted by Rosie McLure. None are missing or misplaced. A "Location Database" has been produced, as well as an 'at-a-glance' guide to LHSA collection locations in the LRA, L14 and L15 (ML Basement Stores) or the Strong Room. This is now a vital tool for staff and reader access.

The Archivist produced a report on the Wellcome Trust Medical Humanities Workshop that he attended on 11 December 2006. He continues to second supervise Helen Coyle's PhD on the history of HIV-AIDS policy in Edinburgh and to help medical undergraduates taking history of medicine options based on LHSA and

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related resources, etc. He has submitted a paper on the History of Scottish Psychiatry to *History of Psychiatry*.

Mike Barfoot
LHSA Archivist
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