

**Meeting of the GLAM Committee
Thursday 25 March 2010,
The John Rylands University Library, University of Manchester**

Minutes

Present: Stella Halkyard (SH, Chair), Fran Baker (FB, Secretary), Fiona Courage (FC), Chris Fletcher (CF), Chris Sheppard (CS), David Sutton (DS), James Travers (JT), John Wells (JW).

1. Apologies: Jamie Andrews.

2. Minutes of the committee meeting held on 30 September 2009, and matters arising

The minutes were approved. Matters arising:

- Item 2, VAT: call for information was circulated, and Helen Broderick of the BL produced a report on this; the issue of VAT exemption has been discussed at a UKLH Group meeting, but there is a general feeling that there won't be further progress in this area until after the General Election.
- Item 3, Access event: actions re. access section of website ongoing (and see item 4 of present minutes).
- Item 4, GLAM survey: permissions have all been sought and received; the headline statements have all been prepared and are awaiting upload to the GLAM website; GLAM NA still intends to produce guidance on using literary MSS; the focus will largely be on Yale, but may be of wider relevance; Heather Dean of the Beinecke Library is now Acting Secretary of the renewed ICA Literary MSS Section and DS is Chair (although the Section has not yet been formally constituted); DS will be attending an ICA meeting in June in South Korea which may result in the Literary Section being formalised.

3. GLAM's role in relation to export licences (JW/SH/all)

JW had been asked by the MLA to advise on an item which had been selected for a possible export stop. Expert advisors are encouraged to do research and consider comments from colleagues in other institutions; they are asked to provide evidence that they have taken advice and disseminated information to potentially interested parties. They are also encouraged to consult other experts in the relevant field (i.e. not just curators in other institutions). JW was interested in whether GLAM should have a role in this process; he identified various potential problems with this, including:

- Confidentiality: it wouldn't be appropriate to disseminate information about potential export stops to the entire membership.
- Disseminating information more widely would increase the risk of conflicts of interest.
- The responsibility of the advisor is to the MLA.
- It isn't clear what kind of authority GLAM's opinion would have.
- GLAM's primary responsibility is advocacy rather than expertise.

The issue was discussed, and the general conclusion reached was that:

- The GLAM committee should have a role in the provision of information in these circumstances, e.g. recommending appropriate expert advisors. The committee should therefore contact the MLA officers to make them aware that GLAM is available as a source of information.
- It was also seen as important that a preserved copy of any exported item is retained in the UK if the original of a literary manuscript goes abroad.

Actions

- *SH to draft a communication to MLA officers.*
- *CS and DS to contact Andrew Motion, to ensure he has a copy of GLAM's communication and takes it up with the MLA.*

4. GLAM Committee roles (SH)

Many of GLAM's current and future projects require increased use of the website, which is currently maintained by Jan Whalen at the JRUL in her spare time, and hosted by the JRUL. It was agreed that ideally the GLAM website should be independent of any one institution, and be capable of a wider range of functionality.

Having an independent website would involve some degree of cost, and future events like workshops are also likely to incur costs. Although there is currently no plan to charge subscriptions, the committee agreed that it would be useful to apply for a pot of funding to cover speakers' expenses and the hire of meeting space.

In light of this SH feels that GLAM needs two new officers: a web officer and a treasurer.

FC's offer to take on the role of treasurer was unanimously supported by the committee. A call for a volunteer to take on the role of web officer will be put out to the membership.

Actions:

- *FC to investigate and report back on what is likely to be involved in the treasurer role, and look into appropriate bank accounts.*
- *FB to put out a call for web officer post when circulating minutes.*

5. GLAM Cataloguing Working Party (FB)

In the interests of time, this item was deferred until the general meeting, where Christine Fauch was to report back on progress.

6. Conference papers re. literary archives (FB)

FB had been in contact with Jennie Hill at Aberystwyth University, who suggested that papers from conferences with a focus on literary archives/MSS might be made available via the GLAM website. It was generally agreed that this was a good idea, but that the administration may be time consuming, and it would not be practical to apply this retrospectively to recent conferences. However, it was agreed that GLAM might contact conference organisers in advance of any forthcoming conferences to discuss the possibility.

Actions:

- *All: to notify FB of forthcoming conferences of interest.*
- *FB: contact organisers of October's conference on literary archives at Exeter University re. making papers available.*

7. Focus and location of next meeting (SH/all)

The committee agreed to take up Leicester University's offer of hosting the next meeting, focus tbc.

Actions:

- *FB: arrange date with Alex Cave at Leicester.*

8. A.O.B.

SH reported on changes in roles at the JRUL following a recent restructure; she may have to consider stepping down as Chair and coming off the committee over time in order to focus on other areas for which she now has responsibility.

DS reported back on the Location Register project:

- He is currently expanding the information on recent acquisitions acquired through the GLAM survey by actively seeking further information.
- He is incorporating information on all post-2002 literary accessions from the NRA.
- Additional information is being taken from websites. The main problem at the moment is a lack of information from non-GLAM member institutions.
- He is looking into developing a name authority list. A grant from the Arts Council will be used to produce a revised, bibliographic standard name authority list, covering approx. 3,000 authors. This may be mounted, or linked to from, the GLAM website. He will circulate this to committee members to identify any gaps.
- Funding has been received from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, the Pilgrim Trust and the Arts Council. DS is in the process of applying for a large British Academy Research Development Award, and has reached the second round; Andrew Motion will be one of the external evaluators for this stage; SH and JW also agreed to act as evaluators.

The committee congratulated DS on his great success with this project.

9. Date of next committee and general meetings

The next committee meeting will be held at the British Library on 30 June 2010, with members of GLAM NA in attendance. The next general meeting will be held at Leicester University Library in September/October 2010 (date tbc).