

**Meeting of the Group for Literary Archives and Manuscripts  
Friday 10 March 2006 at Leeds University Library  
Minutes**

**Present:** Chris Sheppard (chair), Fran Baker, Judy Burg, Alex Cave, Chris Fletcher, Elizabeth Gow, Stella Halkyard, Duncan Heyes, David Sutton, James Travers, John Wells.

**1. Apologies for absence:** Jamie Andrews, Elisabeth Bennett, Charlotte Berry, Nia Daniel, Philip Endean, Jessica Gardner, John Hodgson, Bernard Meehan, Richard Price, Marie Reddan, Dorothy Sheridan, Bill Simpson, Simon Smith, Maureen Watry, Anne Young.

**2. Minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2005:** approved. **Matters arising:** two queries were made in relation to the UK Literary Heritage Group. It was confirmed in response that the proposals to HMT have not yet been accepted. D. Sutton also clarified the advantages of the Acceptance in Lieu proposals: these are intended to give certainty to a writer and his/her estate that the acceptance of the archive is assured on the death of the writer; a valuation would be made at the time of initial deposit, and a second valuation made at the time of the author's death.

### **3. GLAM constitution**

In response to suggestions made by J. Wells, the following changes to the constitution document will be made:

- Section 4, point 2: wording to be amended to take into account literatures in other languages.
- Section 7, point 1: to include statement indicating that elections for additional committee members may be called if the number of volunteers coming forward would take the committee over the ten member limit.
- Section 7, point 6: second sentence to be deleted.
- Additional section on changes to the constitution, indicating that changes may be proposed by any member, but these will only be made if agreed by a majority of members at the AGM.

### **4. Publicising GLAM**

It was agreed that publicity is an immediate priority, and that GLAM should be widely publicised before the survey is sent out.

Possible sources of publicity were identified as: ARC; the AMARC newsletter; the *Museums Journal*; TNA's *Recordkeeping* magazine; the archives-nra listserve; MLA; RLG; LUCAS and other postgraduate archive training courses; member institutions' local newsletters and noticeboards; and the possibility of CILIP and the Society of Authors publishing details of GLAM free of charge as an advertisement.

Committee members will draft and send out a press release.

## **5. GLAM website**

### **Hosting the website**

Two hosting options have been identified: (1) obtaining an independent domain name and web space through a hosting company, with an .org.uk-style URL, which would involve regular payment by credit card; (2) making use of space on a JRUL server which is available free of charge, and which would involve having a URL along the lines of 'archives.li.man.ac.uk/glam'.

In the absence of subscription charges or any other mechanism for raising funds, it was agreed that the latter option was preferable. It was suggested that a simpler 'shadow' URL could be set up, which would transfer to the more complex address. F. Baker will speak to JRUL Systems staff about the possibility of setting this up.

### **Proposed web content**

In response to comments and suggestions from J. Burg, E. Gow, C. Fletcher and D. Sutton, the following changes will be made to the text which was circulated:

- A list of GLAM member institutions will be added, with links to their websites.
- A single 'contact us' option will replace e-mail addresses of individual committee members to avoid Spam.
- The 'Rationale' section will now precede 'Parameters'.
- Definition of 'literary' to be extended to 'writing in all genres, whether or not intended for publication'.
- The statement about literatures in other languages will be revised in the light of the change to the constitution document (see above).
- The constitution document will be available as a link.
- A definition of archives and manuscripts will be added, which will emphasize the variety of record-types and different formats which can form part of literary collections.

### **Images and logo**

S. Halkyard reported that the letter artist Stephen Raw may be willing to produce a logo for GLAM, and she will approach him about this. Examples of his work can be seen at <http://www.stephenraw.com/>

It was agreed that the website would benefit from the inclusion of appropriate images drawn from member institutions' literary collections. Initially – for practical reasons – these will be supplied by committee members, but in future it is hoped that other member institutions can also be represented. It was suggested that an image gallery might be set up, and that online exhibitions could be used to reunite related archives/MSS held in different institutions. Copyright clearance for images would have to be obtained by submitting institutions.

## 6. Draft survey of collecting policies and practices

C. Sheppard reported on the decision to omit the detailed collection-mapping element of the survey. It was felt that this would have lengthened the questionnaire to such an extent that recipients (especially non-literary specialists) might have been deterred from completing it. Collection mapping may still form a future project for GLAM, entailing surveying work, visits to repositories, and extensive analysis of existing finding aids and other resources.

In response to comments and suggestions from J. Burg, C. Fletcher, E. Gow, C. Sheppard and J. Wells, the following changes will be made to the survey document:

- Section 2.3: Writers associated with a particular institution to be added as another option.
- Section 2.4: there will be two lists of tick-boxes here, to distinguish between 'willing' and 'able'. Electronic records will be taken out and given its own question for emphasis.
- Section 2.5: 'or would not' will be added after 'do not'. Final sentence will be simplified to clarify meaning.
- Section 3.2: Acceptance in Lieu to be added as an option in the 'Type of acquisition' column.
- Additional question to be added after current 3.3: 'On balance, over the last 5-10 years, how have most of your literary acquisitions been made?' Purchase/gift/bequest/loan or deposit/acceptance in lieu/other.
- Section 3.5: 'Yes' option to include qualifier – 'once' or 'more than once'.
- Section 3.7: 'Literary' to be added before 'archives/manuscripts' in question. Acceptance in Lieu to be added to list of sources.
- Additional final question asking for comments, issues of concern raised by the survey, or other areas which should have been covered.
- Questionnaire to be reformatted so it can be filled in electronically.

C. Sheppard asked for volunteers to pilot the survey; their feedback will be used to inform the final version of the questionnaire. A. Cave (Leicester University), J. Wells (Cambridge University), J. Burg (Hull University), and S. Halkyard/F. Baker (JRUL) agreed to take part in the pilot.

The importance of providing guidance on filling in the questionnaire for non-GLAM members was stressed. C. Sheppard is willing to provide his own completed questionnaire as an example.

## **7. Circulation of the survey**

D. Sutton has provided an edited list of around 120 target institutions, drawn from his Location Register work. This will be supplemented to take into account the earlier chronological period and the 'author's house' category of institutions. The final list of around 150 repositories will be sent copies of the survey electronically.

D. Sutton recommended making personal contact with key individuals shortly before their institutions are sent the questionnaire; he also suggested dividing the target institutions into categories and undertaking the process in stages based on these. C. Fletcher and J. Wells will alert college librarians in Oxford and Cambridge prior to the survey going out.

Advance publicity for GLAM and a live website are considered vital before the survey is sent out. The website will include a link to the survey and an invitation to any non-GLAM members to participate if they believe their institution holds relevant collections.

It was suggested that recipients of the questionnaire should be given three weeks to fill it in, and contacted again if it has not been returned within a month.

It is hoped that some of the findings of the survey might be presented at the UK Literary Heritage Group conference which is taking place on 19-20 October at the British Library; GLAM have already been offered a slot at this event.

## **8. A.O.B**

J. Wells reported that the Cambridge University Librarian has been asked for advice by a funding body on putting together a national digitisation strategy. He has asked whether GLAM members can provide any comments or advice on the inclusion of literary archives and manuscripts in such a strategy.

D. Sutton suggested looking at US models, and particularly at work which has been done by Cornell University.

J. Wells invited GLAM members with comments to contact him direct, at [jdw1000@cam.ac.uk](mailto:jdw1000@cam.ac.uk).

## **9. Date of next general meeting**

The next meeting will be held at the Bodleian Library on Friday 1 September 2006 (tbc).