

# Max

Digitisation & Archiving Services  
Opening the Past for the Future



By Appointment to  
Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II  
Supplier of Digitisation & Archiving Services  
Max Communications Ltd London

# Max

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## Max Archive Services

Digitisation, Preservation & Access  
Opening the Past for the Future





## About Max

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“ Archives are increasingly seen as not simply a place to deposit historic material at the peripheral edges of an organisation, but rather as a vital information resource that sits at the operational centre, informing decision-making across multiple departments. ”

— **David Cordery**  
Managing Director

Max have specialised in high quality digitisation and archiving services for more than 20 years. Our association with a wide range of organisations and sectors has created an understanding of digital production workflows and quality assurance principles that we believe is second to none.

We have an impressive array of high-specification equipment, as well as a number of open-source data management software solutions. This end-to-end approach is supported by robust quality control standards and adherence to strict project management procedures to ensure that deadlines are met within budget. Official recognition of our

commitment to these standards comes in the form of our ISO9001 accreditation for quality management systems.

In addition, we of course take very seriously the safeguarding of our clients' material and data, as evidenced by our ISO27001 and Cyber Essentials Plus accreditations for Information Security Management.

In 2016 we were granted the Royal Warrant for 'Digitisation and Archive Services' By Appointment to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. We are privileged to be the only digitisation company in the country to hold this award.





“ The Digital Library delivers our collections to users at home, at work, or in the classroom, anywhere in the world. It helps to build, diversify, and engage our audience. In the first two months, we had more visits to the Digital Library than our physical library might see in years. ”

— Dr Edward Weech  
Librarian, Royal Asiatic Society



## Clients

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Lloyd's Register Foundation, Royal Society of Arts, TfL, Foster + Partners, Imperial College London, BBC, Rothschild Bank, The National Archives, News UK, Victoria & Albert Museum, Royal Academy of Art, Historic Environment Scotland, Fortnum & Mason, National Trust, King's College London, Find My Past, Army Museums Ogilby Trust, Royal Scottish Academy, Courtauld Institute, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Historic Royal Palaces, Chartered Insurance Institute, REME, University of Oxford, University of Cambridge, West Sussex Council, Canterbury Cathedral, IET, Cameron Mackintosh Ltd, Royal Opera House, MCC, Bexley Local Studies, London South Bank University, Lambeth Palace, Science Museum, Cartier, Liberty, Imperial War Museum, Henry Moore Foundation, Natural History Museum, Portman Estate, IMechE, Wallace Collection, Royal Geographical Society, Geological Society, Palace of Westminster, RHS, National Army Museum, RWHA, Sir Quentin Blake



## Case Studies

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### Heritage

Digitisation and digital preservation for Lloyd's Register Foundation's breathtaking collection of ship surveys and plans. Running for 3 years we will catalogue, digitise, index and preserve 1.2 million items.



### Publishing

Mass digitisation projects at The National Archives in Kew for several large academic publishers. Examples include 19th and 20th century Commonwealth/Foreign Office records rich in historical significance.



### Education

Set up, hosting and management of Imperial College's archival access and digital preservation systems using DRYAD and SOTERIA. Since deployment, the library at Imperial has also taken up SOTERIA.



### Arts

Migration of the Royal Society of Arts' archive from Calm to AtoM. This process included the export of existing records and data from Calm and then mapping it to AtoM using our in-house Crosswalker utility.



### Local Government

Having digitised material for numerous local authorities it was a natural step to develop Borough Photos together, an online photographic archive and revenue-share e-commerce site.



## Case Studies

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### Banking and Insurance

With many city-based financial institutions within 30 minutes of our main facilities, we are privileged to have undertaken a range of archive services for these clients, including for Rothschild and CII.



### Architecture, Engineering and Construction (AEC)

Foster + Partners' audio visual collections, including films, videos and audio cassettes. It is perhaps telling that, within the AEC sector, the business archive often sits within the marketing department.



### Theatre, Film and TV

Digitisation of scores, programmes, scripts, films, videos and audio cassettes for Cameron Mackintosh Ltd. The digitised content was then ingested into DRYAD and digitally preserved on LTO tapes.



### Retail

Uniquely beautiful collections held at Fortnum & Mason's archive. We are making the digitised content accessible throughout the business using our DRYAD service, prior to being digitally preserved in SOTERIA.



### Museums, Galleries and Historic Sites

We provided a conservator on site at the National Trust's Sutton Hoo location. Conservation centred on the original photographs which recorded the discovery of the Anglo-Saxon royal burial site in 1939.



# Services

Conservation	Digitisation	Audio Visual Digitisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On-site condition assessment</li> <li>Creation of requirements document</li> <li>Assessment of client material upon arrival at Max's premises</li> <li>Overseeing of return of client material</li> <li>Document handling training</li> <li>Completion of conservation treatments and creation of reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manuscripts, diaries, ledgers</li> <li>Letters, certificates, memos</li> <li>Index cards, catalogues</li> <li>Plans, maps, drawings</li> <li>Photographs and posters</li> <li>Microfilm/fiche</li> <li>Glass plates</li> <li>Paintings and artworks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All video formats inc. VHS, Betacam, U-matic, Betamax, Digi-Beta and DVCAM</li> <li>Film gauges inc. 8mm, 9.5mm, 16mm using Filmfabriek sprocketless scanner for sensitive archive stock</li> <li>All audio formats inc. cassettes, reel to reel, records both shellac and vinyl</li> </ul>
Scanning	Archive Management	Digital Preservation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modern printed items such as reports, contracts, agreements, statements, personnel records</li> <li>High-specification sheet-feed scanners for loose leaf material where appropriate</li> <li>Disbinding of bound volumes for sheet-feed scanning where appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DRYAD service built on AtoM</li> <li>Dissemination Information Packages (DIPs) for access</li> <li>Themed UI based on client's brand guidelines</li> <li>User permissions hierarchy for access</li> <li>Browser-based so accessible remotely (subject to permissions)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SOTERIA service built on Archivematica</li> <li>Digitally Preserved Archival Information packages (AIPs)</li> <li>OAIS/ISAD(G)/EAD compliant</li> <li>File format normalisation and checks for obsolescence</li> <li>Annual health check report</li> </ul>
Data Services	Consultancy Services	Physical Storage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>THEMIS: browser-based project management platform</li> <li>Cataloguing</li> <li>Indexing</li> <li>Data structuring and metadata</li> <li>Unstructured data extraction</li> <li>Transcription</li> <li>Optical Character Recognition (OCR)</li> <li>Legacy file format conversion</li> <li>Media conversion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managed digitisation service on site at our clients' premises</li> <li>Placement of staff on site at our clients' premises (e.g. a conservator)</li> <li>Equipment recommendations, purchase and maintenance</li> <li>Digitisation project consultancy</li> <li>Staff training for our clients' on site teams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure locations connected directly to police and fire services</li> <li>CCTV inside and outside</li> <li>Key fob system to restrict access to certain areas</li> <li>Flexible hours of business</li> <li>Single dedicated space per collection</li> <li>Access to a conservator</li> <li>On-demand digitisation service</li> </ul>
Websites	Photography	Printing/Framing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bespoke website development</li> <li>Website hosting and management</li> <li>Themed heritage sites</li> <li>Online image sales</li> <li>Borough photos</li> <li>Mapchest</li> <li>WordPress training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fine art</li> <li>3D Imaging</li> <li>3D Virtual tours</li> <li>3D Objects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Display prints</li> <li>Fine art prints</li> <li>Canvas prints</li> <li>Mounting services</li> <li>Bespoke framing</li> <li>Manuscript reproductions</li> </ul>

# Why Digitise?

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There are three main reasons why our clients digitise their material:

- Usability
- Access
- Preservation

## **Usability**

Digitising a collection instantly renders it more usable, especially if the OCR and transcription elements are included. Not only is it easier to search for the volumes or documents at item level, but the content contained within the items can be keyword queried across the entire collection. This allows anyone with access to the digitised folders to search for all instances where a particular word or words appear. To achieve the same outcome from the hard copy originals would require reading everything. Furthermore, having created what is in effect a database, the information can be combined with other data to form a larger composite database, often prompting more expansive research, which in turn leads to the curation of new and original content themes.

## **Access**

There is sometimes a misconception that making a digitised collection accessible online means opening it up to anyone and everyone. This is not necessarily the case. In fact most of our clients use DRYAD as a platform for improved internal access to the archival material rather than for external publishing. DRYAD is a browser-based service which, subject to user permissions, allows all departments within an organisation to search for, and interact with, the digitised content from their own desks, either in the office or from home.

## **Preservation**

By creating authentic digital copies an institution insulates itself from risk of damage to, or loss of, the originals through flood, fire, theft or natural degradation. Also, having invested in the digitisation process it is essential that the digital images are themselves preserved against loss, damage and, in particular, file format obsolescence.



# Digitisation, Access and Preservation Process



# Storage and Safeguarding

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Along with our Edinburgh studio, we operate from two large production centres located within the Royal Arsenal complex in Woolwich, London. Both facilities have a dual-com alarm system directly connected to the Police, a fully monitored fire alarm system that is connected directly to the Fire Brigade's monitoring system, security shutters to all accessible windows, full access controls to the building and within various areas of the building, CCTV both internal and external, and 24-hour security patrols within the Royal Arsenal complex.

Our environmental conditions are controlled and systematically monitored by our Conservation Manager and her assistant. Both are fully qualified professional and experienced conservators. The storage areas and digitisation studios are environmentally controlled using fully-serviced air conditioning units and dehumidifiers. These are monitored constantly by Tinytag recording devices to ensure that they do not fluctuate and that the conditions stay within the desired range.

We have a comprehensive pest control regime, including the use of multiple blunder traps along with regular inspections and logging. Where appropriate we prefer that our Conservation Manager attends any project pre-commencement meeting to ensure all aspects of the collection's condition and our working environment are covered.

All Max staff are given training and instruction in the handling of delicate and sensitive material. This training is delivered by our in-house conservators and is based on industry standard

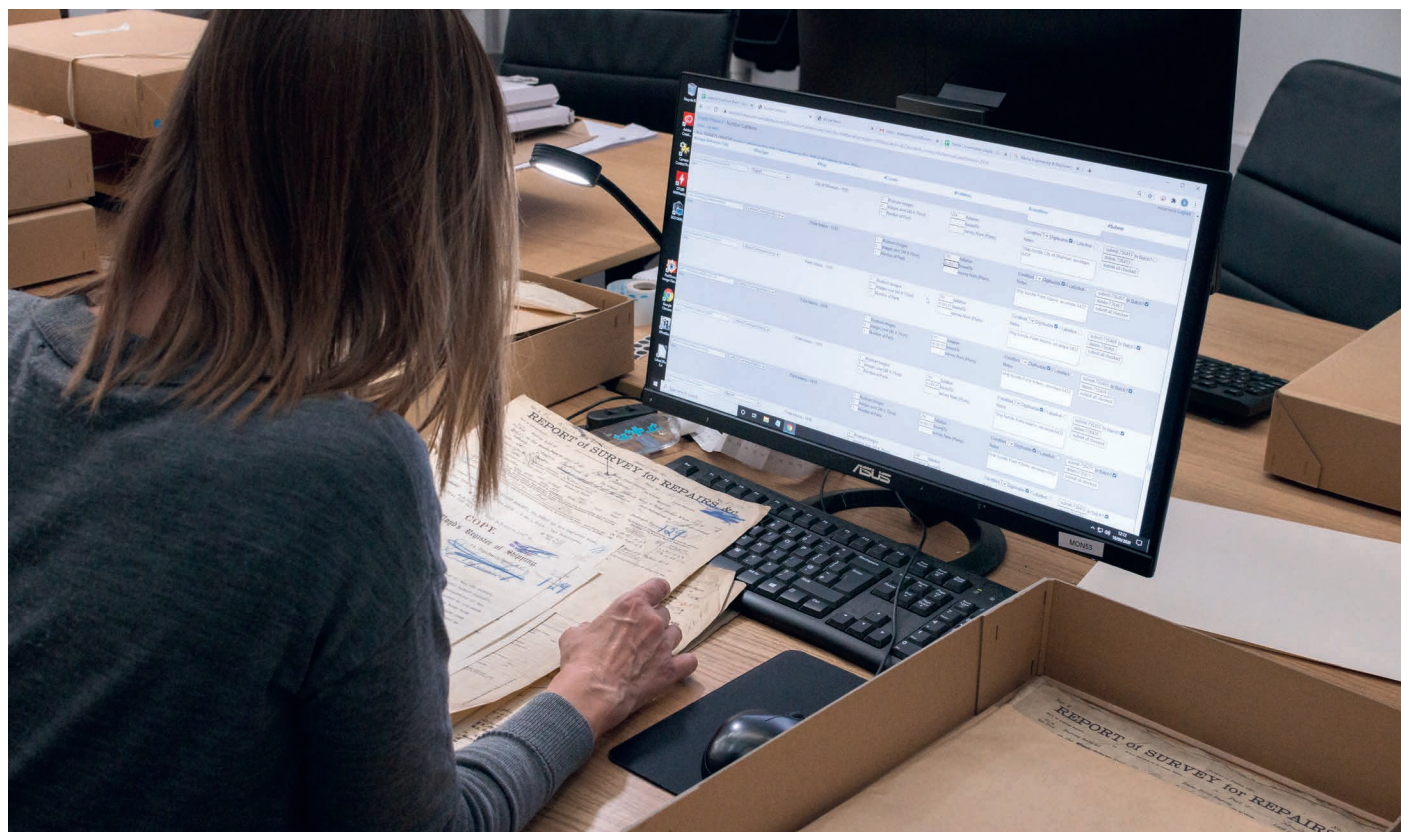
guidelines from The National Archives, where we also have a permanent team of 13.

As a company, our guiding principle is that the preservation of the original material is paramount. To this end we have a wide range of equipment to ensure that whatever the size and condition of the original, it is handled gently and with care, and that we can obtain the best images possible without stressing the material in any way. All team members are aware of this and are instructed to stop and seek guidance from one of our conservators should they have any concerns that the material is at risk of damage. Each staff member is trained to respect and safeguard the integrity of the material at all times and to regard themselves as custodians, not just during capture but also during processing, QA and delivery of the final digitised output.

Clients who have entrusted their material to our care in the past 12 months include: AMOT, Lloyd's Register, HSBC, Fortnum & Mason, Find My Past, Historic Environment Scotland, TNA, Imperial College, King's College, SOAS, RUSI, Royal Society of Arts, National Trust, TfL, Royal Archives, Sir Quentin Blake, National Portrait Gallery, and many others.

As well as safeguarding our clients' material for the duration of their digitisation projects, we also offer long-term storage services. Unlike many other storage facilities we provide flexible opening hours, a single dedicated space for the archive rather than it being dispersed across several locations, access to a conservator, and on-demand digitisation for specific items.





## Cataloguing

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The first decision to be made when cataloguing archival material is what level is required i.e. how much detail do we record for each item.

The answer will be based, following consultation, on how we envisage the archive will be used. As a minimum we should conform to the ISAD-G (International Standard for Archival Description (General)) cataloguing standard. This has 26 descriptive elements for cataloguing, however, most archives ensure they cover the primary 6 elements:

- Reference code (unique code to be defined)
- Title
- Creator
- Date
- Extent of the unit of description
- Level of description

Within THEMIS we will include the digital image and provide the document's OCRd text. These will make up part of the catalogue information pertaining to the item.

# Conservation

We are always mindful that the preservation of the original material is of paramount importance to our clients, especially when handling historic material. To mitigate the risk of damage, we employ a team of full-time conservators. Their roles include:

- Condition assessment on site at the client's premises
- Creation of a requirements document following assessment
- Creation of company policy for client material handling and the undertaking of remedial work
- Overseeing transportation of client material
- Assessment of client material when received at our premises
- Confirmation of the proposed digitisation process to ensure that it has zero impact on the condition of the client's material
- Providing the mandatory handling training to all digitisation technicians
- Completion of relevant treatments as identified and defined at assessment stage
- Project management reporting detailing what treatments have been completed and when
- Responsibility for the environmental controls within all locations. For example temperature, humidity and pest control.





# Digitisation and Scanning

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We offer clients the maximum flexibility when it comes to location. In general there are four options:

- Off site at one of our studios in Woolwich or Edinburgh where we also safeguard the material, for example AMOT, Lloyd's Register Foundation and Historic Environment Scotland to name but a few
- On site at the collection holder's premises with Max staff embedded, for example Lambeth Palace, Canterbury Cathedral, Leeds University, Bristol City Archives, National Library of Scotland
- On site at a central repository with Max staff embedded on behalf of our clients, for example The National Archives, Senate House and the British Library
- Set up and maintain a studio at the collection holder's premises that is staffed by the collection holder

Prior to beginning each project, a pre-commencement project meeting or call is held with the client's project team to confirm all aspects of the project. From Max's side this meeting is chaired by the appointed Account Manager for the project and attended by the project scanning technician and post processing supervisor.

Following the pre-commencement meeting, initial samples are captured by the project operators, overseen by the Project Manager. Having passed through QA, these images are issued to the client's project team for internal review and sign-off. If for any reason the images do not match the requirements, they will be recaptured/processed until sign-off from the customer has been received. These approved images are then used

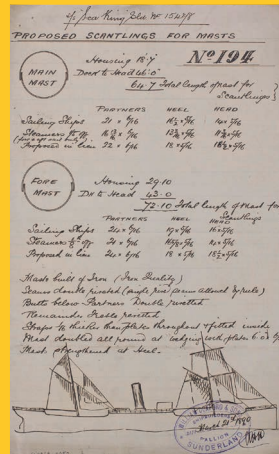
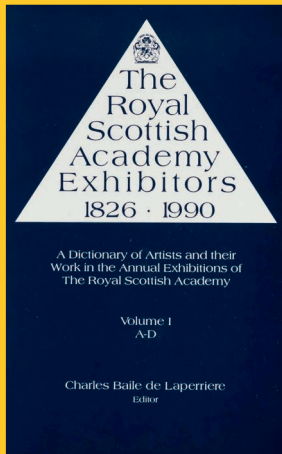
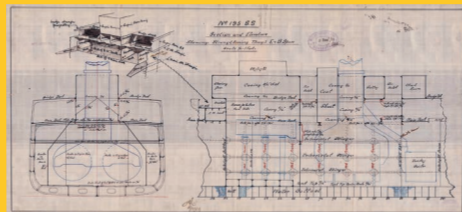
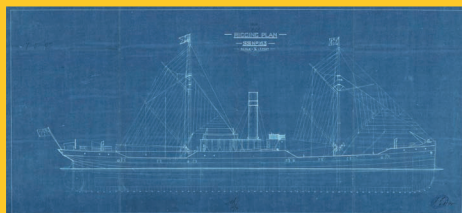
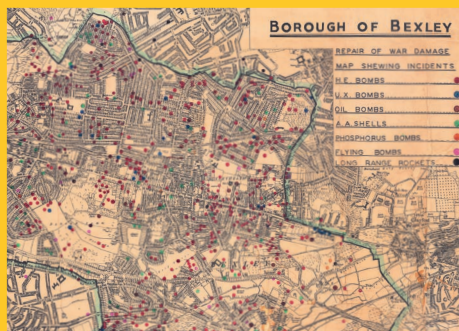
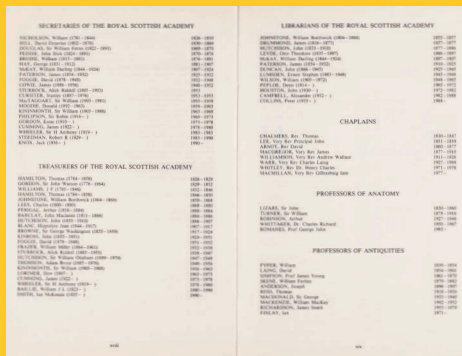
as benchmarks throughout the project, ensuring a true and exact reference point.

On a continual basis the Max production team updates an archival listing within Google Sheets. This listing records capture counts, capture notes, queries, feedback, sign offs, and outstanding actions. Max also complete a weekly MI report that shows target vs actual throughputs, target vs actual deliverables and cumulative figures. This is an invaluable tool for the weekly project progress calls.

Every image captured undergoes a QA inspection by an appointed member of the dedicated QA team. Following QA assessment, the images are then delivered to the client either weekly, monthly or at the end of the project depending on the client's preference. On the rare occasion that an image needs to be recaptured, this is at no cost to the client.

Ensuring colour fidelity that matches the captured archive material is paramount if the project is to create an authentic digital copy of the primary source material. We ensure colour fidelity by rigorously maintaining an end-to-end colour management workflow. All our capture equipment and image processing software are calibrated to, and compliant with, both FADGI and Metamorfoze imaging standards.

As well as at our own studios, our equipment is used at locations such as The National Archives, where we have up to fifteen workstations, The Office for National Statistics where we have twelve, and the British Library in Boston Spa, where we currently have a team of two.







The most prominent member of the Angerst family was John Julius Angerst (c 1732-1823). John Julius was apparently from a Russian family, although his precise origins were unclear. A family story maintained that he was the son of [Empress Anne](#) and a merchant Andrew Poulett Thompson, and that the name Angerst came from the doctor who delivered him. He came to England aged 15 and worked in the counting-house of Andrew Poulett Thompson. By 1770 Angerst was established as a broker, with an office in Cornhill. He worked in a succession of partnerships until his retirement in 1810, by which time he was handling 200 accounts.

Angerst was among those who subscribed to the 1771 fund to find premises for a new Lloyd's Coffee House and in 1773 negotiated with the Gresham committee for the lease of rooms in the Royal Exchange. He served on the Lloyd's Committee from 1786 to 1796, and in 1810 represented those doing business at Lloyd's at the select committee on marine insurance. Angerst's interests extended beyond Lloyd's and he was chairman of 5 subscription funds, as well as having varied private philanthropic interests.

Angerst lived at 103 Pall Mall and Woodlands, Blackheath, built for him in 1774. He accumulated a notable private art collection and was an active patron of contemporary artists and writers, particularly Sir Thomas Lawrence who painted his portrait. Angerst died in 1823. 38 paintings from

## OCR

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For printed content we believe that Optical Character Recognition (OCR) is a vital part of the digitisation process. Undoubtedly the creation of digital images increases access to the content on one level, however the value of the information contained within the document is still in effect 'locked in'.

By running the digital images through our OCR software the content is extracted and converted into searchable PDFs, creating a content database that allows keyword searches across all PDFs contained within a collection.

# Indexing and Transcription

For the majority of our indexing and transcription projects we use our in-house project management platform, THEMIS.

THEMIS is built on a relational database for secure internal/external access and can accommodate any existing catalogue information while allowing the addition of further metadata post digitisation. The interface uses a simple hierarchy structure with the top level page showing a list of boxes or books. Each book can be clicked on to show a list of the items within that book; each item can be clicked to show the images that make up that item. The images are shown on the right, the

metadata on the left. Both sides of the screen scroll independently. It is possible to zoom into the image while still in THEMIS, a crucial aspect of the software. Content metadata can then be added and edited. There are authority files behind the drop down menus for the content metadata.

The indexing and/or transcription can either be completed by our teams or we can make a version of THEMIS available to our clients for use in-house, including if there is a requirement to give remote access either to staff working from home or to volunteers.

Lloyds Phase 2 - PROMETHEUS Logo

boxes - cat items

Box "W1260" Number Cattlemis for Box 1953 • Split Cattlemis for Box 1953 • Edit Cattlemis for Box 1953 • prev • next •

## LRF-PUN-W1260-0106-P

Submit Catalogue Data

unique Ref LRF-PUN-W1260-0106-P

box Code W1260

img Count 2 large plans 1 num Parts 1 Miss ing 0

folio 106 conditio 3

captureNotes

cataloguersNotes

Found in envelope

conservatorsNotes

contentNotes

Earthquake occurred 18th April 1906

QANotes

recorder - Adriano Palumbo

recordingDate - 2020-05-26 15:49:15

editHistory - 2020-09-09 09:53:51

editHistory - andrew herdon - 2020-03-17 15:33:20 - ITEM ADDED andrew herdon - 2020-03-17 15:33:56 - ITEM EDITED andrew herdon - 2020-03-17 15:34:11 - ITEM EDITED State left as code 16 by Evgenia Bili - 2020-04-20 10:27:20 lin mayer - 2020-05-12 13:16:31 - LEFT STATE AS 350 user17 - 2020-05-20 09:04:24 - LEFT STATE AS 1 user17 - 2020-05-23 07:24:24 - ITEM INDEXED user7 - 2020-05-23 13:45:07 - LEFT STATE AS 3 Adriano Palumbo - 2020-05-26 15:49:15 - LEFT STATE AS 4 State left as code 69 by Florence Bradshaw - 2020-09-09 09:53:51

doc Type Plan

CHANGE DOC TYPE AND RENAME IMAGES

Ship Details

Mexican 1907(63091) Search Year

lloyds/1.WORK-IN-PROGRESS/LLOYDS/C26-0006-RandD/030SPS/W1260/LRF-PUN-W1260-0106-P/LRF-PUN-W1260-0106-P\_0001.jpg

Create tiles return Image To Split

Order Image Up

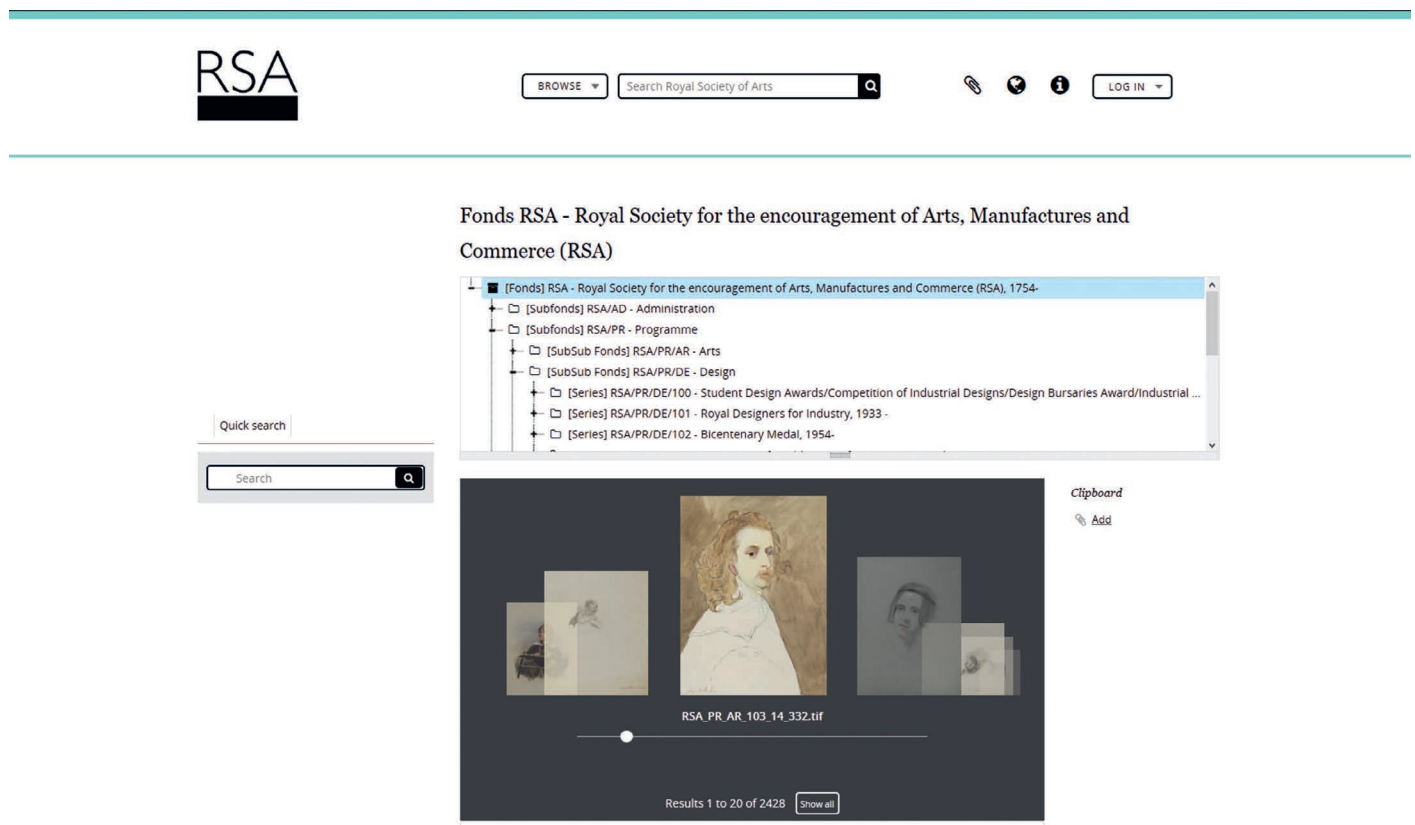
# Online Access

Max's Archive Management Service, DRYAD, is built on AtoM, a modern day web-based archive management system used around the world by hundreds of archives. AtoM is an open source product, freely available under a General Public Licence.

Although AtoM is open source and freely available, the effort and expertise required to make it operational and fit for purpose is considerable. Therefore, to help clients achieve a seamless transition, DRYAD provides

a complete AtoM solution that includes installation, data migration, hosting, training and ongoing support.

DRYAD also offers plug-ins and applications for specific tasks not catered for within the core AtoM software. These include our Crosswalker tool, typically used to migrate data from other software such as Calm, and our Query Builder, which allows users to run compound reports for user activity and the composition of the digitally preserved material.







## LSBU Archives Home

The University Archives Centre collects and makes accessible the institutional archives of London South Bank University (LSBU) and the institutions that it was amalgamated from. We hold material tracing LSBU's history from its foundation as the Borough Polytechnic Institute in 1892 to the present day. We are an Accredited Archives Service.

### ENQUIRIES AND VISITING THE ARCHIVES

The University Archives Centre is open to all LSBU students as well as staff and external researchers and we welcome all research visits.

We are happy to answer enquiries on the history of the University and the items we hold, however we are unable to carry out extensive research. Please see our contact page for more information.

### TWITTER FEED



LSBU Archives @LSBUArchives

#Archivez is R this week, so here is a of the New Kent Road annexe of Rachel Macmillan College of Education. The annexe joined with the Polytechnic of the South Bank in the 1976.

Most of the College records are with the University of Greenwich, but we have this photo! <https://t.co/2FOuGhNIC>



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# Digital Preservation

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Max have developed our own Digital Preservation service – SOTERIA. As a fully hosted and managed service, SOTERIA takes the following approach:

## **Assessment**

- Review any existing catalogues
- Review formats and file types
- Produce manifest of digital content/data
- Correlate catalogue and content

## **Ingestion/validation**

- Make it safe
- Virus Check
- Standardisation
- Corruption Check
- Deduplication
- CheckSum
- Save Back up

## **Organise/Catalogue/Metadata**

- THEMIS – contains tools to classify preservation status of data before ingestion
- Match catalogue metadata with digital objects
- Give users different privileges for assigning preservation states e.g. – Clearly Archivable, For Review, Destroy

## **Preserve/Disseminate:**

- Create Archival Information Packages (AIPs) in Archivematica

- Create and publish the Dissemination Information Packages in AtoM
- Copy the AIPs to LTO tapes – two sets in different geographic locations
- Copy the AIPs to Amazon Glacier or MS Azure
- Retrieval request service through AtoM

## **Technical specifications:**

Where possible we build on open source software. This means we can ensure:

- Flexibility and customisation (three tier service)
- Migration from other software (e.g. Calm)
- Client-lead development
- No vendor lock-in
- No licence restrictions
- Transparency
- Community engagement and improvement

At the end of the digital preservation process the client will have a fully preserved set of digital content stored securely in the cloud and on LTO tapes. One set of tapes is held by Max in one of our safes; the other is held by the client.

We then perform annual risk checks for any future file format obsolescence and, where necessary, create additional preservation copies of the data in more recent formats to mitigate this risk.

archivematica							
Transfer	Backlog	Appraisal	Ingest	Archival storage	Preservation planning	Access	Administration
Standard	import37		import37	Browse	Start transfer		
Transfer type	Transfer name	Accession no.	Access system ID	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve automatically			
Transfer	UUID	Transfer start time					
bandw	d9c449fc-b542-4771-bb62-5970b078a763	2020-09-14 15:01					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Microservice: Create SIP from Transfer</li> <li>Microservice: Complete transfer</li> <li>Microservice: Examine contents</li> <li>Microservice: Validation</li> <li>Microservice: Parse external files</li> <li>Microservice: Characterize and extract metadata</li> <li>Microservice: Update METS.xml document</li> <li>Microservice: Extract packages</li> <li>Microservice: Identify file format</li> <li>Microservice: Clean up names</li> <li>Microservice: Generate transfer structure report</li> <li>Microservice: Scan for viruses</li> <li>Microservice: Quarantine</li> <li>Microservice: Generate METS.xml document</li> <li>Microservice: Verify transfer checksums</li> <li>Microservice: Reformat metadata files</li> <li>Microservice: Assign file UUIDs and checksums</li> <li>Microservice: Include default Transfer processingMCP.xml</li> </ul>							

```

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1197 <premis:size>171996</premis:size>
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1212 <ffprobe>
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--enable-gnutls --enable-ladspa --enable-libass --enable-libbluray --enable-libbs2b --enable-libcaca --enable-libcdio --enable-libflite --enable-libfontconfig --enable-libfreetype --enable-libgdb
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## Testimonials

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“ I have worked with Max Communications and the team for some years. In recent work with their Archivematica iteration in the College Archives and Corporate Records Unit, and other digital work required by varying cohorts in Imperial, Max Communications have been responsive, innovative and demonstrated great problem-solving abilities. The Max Communications team, from the top down, is approachable, friendly and keen to help.

An example is in their engagement for some major confidential scanning projects. The projects were discussed, scoped and agreed to a high standard of hand scanning. Benchmarking was agreed to our satisfaction when the project started, with a fast progress time for the work. They provided rapid access to files, including digitising out of sequence, e.g. one such turn around for hand scanning, editing and proofing a large file was within 3 hours. The digital delivery was by secure online transfer, and the hard disks and hard copy delivered securely by courier.

On a lighter note, digitisation of 1960s academic cine film was carried out promptly and to a high standard, such that it can be reshowed at a major conference. ”

— **Anne Barrett** | College Archivist & Corporate Records Manager | Imperial College London

“ Max have been a trusted digitisation and solutions partner with King's College London Archives for more than a decade. They have always undertaken work to a high standard, and on time, and are a friendly team who are ready to help at short notice. ”

— **Dr Geoff Browell** | Head of Archives and Research Collections | King's College London

“ Max Communications and the RSA Archive have a successful, long standing working relationship. We have undertaken several digitisation projects together to scan our numerous large sized artworks, prints and diagrams. More recently we successfully migrated to Max's archive management and digital preservation services, DRYAD and SOTERIA. I cannot fault either the consistent quality of the digitisation or the quality of professional service provided and would recommend, Max Communications, without reservation. ”

— **Eve Watson** | Head of Archive | The Royal Society of Arts

# The Max Factor

Managing Director and founder David Cordery established Max in 1998 with just one other colleague and when the digital landscape looked very different! Written communication was mainly by post or fax, the internet was called the 'World Wide Web' and picture libraries sent copies of their photographs as film duplicates. In the 20 odd years since then, not only has the digital world exploded but the company too has grown and expanded significantly. We are now an organisation of 100 plus people, with teams working from Max offices in London and Edinburgh and employees based at sites around the UK working on specific client projects.

The team at Max comes from a diverse range of backgrounds, including digital technology, photography, conservation, classical history and art. Many have studied to degree and MA level. Those who aren't bring their own range of work-related or life experience skills, all of which feed into a collective team ethic that permeates throughout the business. What unites the team is a real interest in the collections they work on and

an appreciation of our clients' responsibilities as guardians of the material entrusted to their care.

As one of our Senior Operators Agnes says: 'The range of collections is fascinating. One month I might be digitising important scientific journals, the next letters and diaries from the First World War. It's interesting and rewarding work because I can see that what we are doing is vital.'

Of course, every organisation has its own culture. At Max, we work hard to find and retain people who share our values of professionalism and integrity, and our passion for the sector we work in. We are pleased that once part of the Max family, people often stay with us for many years and develop within the company. And life at Max isn't just about working hard! Our staff newsletter *The Max Factor* gives us an opportunity to get to know each other a little better, including what members of the team enjoy doing outside of work. It also records our team visits to client collections and exhibitions, which we love to do, and our regular social events.



## Podcasts

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### **Eve Watson** | Head of Archive | Royal Society of Arts

Eve Watson talks with gusto about the challenges and opportunities that go with managing a hosted archive, her hopes for the archive's future and the importance of digitisation. She also introduces some of the gems from the collection including letters from Karl Marx and a country postmistress with a great fondness for silkworms.



### **Steve Riedlinger** | Club Archivist | Roehampton Club

Steve Riedlinger shares his unique insight into his approach to what was essentially setting up an archive from scratch. He tells us about some of the interesting and often unsung members from the club's history. He also reveals how the club's decision to 'go digital' with the commemorative materials makes them more readily available.



### **Dr Geoff Browell** | Head of Archive Services | King's College London

With his customary authority, Geoff Browell discusses the ins and outs of managing a large, eclectic archive. Divided into two, the Military Archive and Kings College's own records, it contains many notable artefacts including 'Photo 51', the photograph used to discern the double helical structure of DNA and the original 'Green Line map'.



### **Andrew Nichol** | Deputy Head of Archives | Historic Environment Scotland

Andrew Nichol provides an invaluable window into the scale of work required to manage 50TB of data and catalogue a 30TB backlog. He shares his great enthusiasm for the shift to digitisation and the use of online resources to enhance our experience of archived collections.



### **Andrea Tanner** | Company Archivist | Fortnum & Mason

Andrea Tanner speaks passionately about her multi-faceted role and the role of new technology in overcoming the difficulties surrounding rebuilding a war-damaged archive.

Andrea provides an engrossing account of Fortnum & Mason's history, the unusual nature of the collection and tells us about some of her favourite pieces from the archive.



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[www.maxcommunications.co.uk/podcasts/](http://www.maxcommunications.co.uk/podcasts/)

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**Tamara Thornhill** | Corporate Archivist | Transport for London

Tamara provides a compelling and humorous insight into the TfL Corporate Archives and TfL's relationship with the city and its people. Tamara talks about the pressures of working with and maintaining a large collection and shares numerous anecdotes about the fascinating materials found within the archive.



**Stuart Bligh** | Head of Research | Royal Museums Greenwich

Bringing his decades of experience, Stuart focuses on what it is like to work with a huge collection of objects and documents and the challenges faced by archivists in the Coronavirus era. Stuart also looks at the importance of archives in understanding how we as a nation came to be who we are today.



**Dr Edward Weech** | Librarian | Royal Asiatic Society

Edward Weech shines a bright light on the particular considerations for managing a linguistically diverse, multi-format archive and how the Royal Asiatic Society is rising to meet these needs. He shares fascinating insights into not only the history of the Society but also European attitudes in the 18th and 19th century towards Asian culture.



**Ruth MacLeod** | Archivist | London South Bank University

Ruth MacLeod is Data Curator and Archivist working with research teams and academics, as well as looking after the University's historic collections. Ruth discusses relationships with the local community, the opportunities for raising the archive's profile that a new location will provide and documenting current student voices for the future.



**Anne Locker** | Archivist | The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET)

Anne Locker covers a wide range of subjects including the challenges faced in globalising an unusually varied archive. She describes the role the archive has played in the push for diversity and in highlighting the work of female engineers down the years. Anne explores some of the highlights from the collection, including Chaucer's little-known 'Treatise on the Astrolabe' and his desire to make engineering texts available in English as opposed to Latin.

# Accreditation

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Max's IT team has five dedicated members of staff, headed up by an experienced IT Director. With 18,000,000 high-resolution images in this year's digitisation pipeline, across several locations, it would be impossible to deliver our projects without robust IT and data management procedures and standards. We are delighted, therefore, that these standards have been rigorously assessed, and then accredited, under ISO27001 and Cyber Essentials Plus for information security management systems (ISMS).

Similarly, we have a large QA team responsible for ensuring that our clients' high standards are met at all times. These standards extend beyond the quality of the deliverables and into project management and information, communication, knowledge transfer, delivery deadlines and budgets, and continuous improvement. Our ISO9001 accreditation for quality management systems provides formal recognition of our commitment to the best possible project outcomes for our clients.



By Appointment to  
Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II  
Supplier of Digitisation & Archiving Services  
Max Communications Ltd London



ISO / IEC 27001  
Certificate No. ISM7799342



ISO 9001  
Certificate No. GB2004574



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# Max

Digitisation & Archiving Services  
Opening the Past for the Future



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