



## Previous winners of the ARA Record Keeper of the Year Award

This award acknowledges achievement by an individual archivist, conservator or records manager within the last eighteen months at any career stage.

Information below taken from press releases of the year of the award, winners may now have moved or changed jobs.

### Record-Keeper of the year 2023

The nominees for Record Keeper of the year 2023 were:

- Erika Freyr
- Louise Neilson
- Joanne Shortland

The winner with 37 per cent of the vote was **Louise Neilson**.

Louise was nominated for her work at Lothian Health Service Archive and particularly her work on *Speaking Out* a project that catalogued and rehoused a collection from Lothian Gay and Lesbian Switchboard, the first operational gay switchboard in the UK and the first gay charity in Scotland. Her nominator wrote:

“The last 15 months have been incredibly significant for Louise's career development, taking on a complex, challenging, yet extremely rewarding project of real and lasting significance to LHSA, the University of Edinburgh, and (most importantly) the LGBT+ community in Edinburgh and beyond. Throughout the project, Louise has acted as an ambassador for her archive service, establishing new networks with organisations and individuals and responding to the needs of different groups of stakeholders. Some of the content of the Switchboard collection is extremely upsetting: Louise has not shied away from distressing material (creating anonymised summaries of the thousands of Switchboard calls represented in the collection to aid access decisions, for example), instead building strategies to manage its effects in her daily professional practice. Despite challenges like these, Louise's enthusiasm for and ownership of her role is immediately obvious, and she is the main driver behind the success of a project that will benefit a range of communities for years to come.”

[Read Louise's full nomination here.](#)

### Record-keeper of the year 2022

#### **Katie Proctor**

There were three nominees for record-keeper of the year: Stacey Anderson, Sally McInnes and Katie Proctor. The winner, with 51 per cent of the vote was Katie Proctor, with Stacey and Sally dividing the remainder of the votes equally between them.

Katie is a conservator at the West Yorkshire Archive Service and was nominated for her recent proactive and innovative achievements in supporting the continuing professional

development of conservation and archives professionals across the sector as the Registrar of the ARA Archives and Conservation Training Scheme (ACTS) and the organiser of the online training for ACTS Instructors.

*No awards were made in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.*

### **Record-keeper of the Year 2019**

The 2019 winner of Record-keeper of the Year is **Elaine MacGillivray**, currently at the University of Edinburgh and previously an archivist at Glasgow City Archives, Elaine has worked on projects such as The School of Scottish Studies Archive new facility and currently works on Wellcome Trust funded projects, bringing life to nationally significant collections.

Elaine was nominated for her work on the Wellcome-funded project 'Evergreen: Patrick Geddes and the Environment in Equilibrium' over the last 18 months, ie conserving and cataloguing two geographically diverse collections of papers of Sir Patrick Geddes (1854-1932), a pioneer of the environmental movement, and engaging with a wide range of researchers.

Elaine's nomination centred on one traditional area of recordkeeping and two innovative approaches to advocacy and 'giving back': she has been producing a high-quality catalogue that is opening the door for researchers to access what is a highly complex and extensive collection; also, she has pro-actively built relationships with stakeholders to facilitate engagement with the records on a global scale, including internationally (notably in France and India). She has also supervised and supported the next generation of information professionals by running 35+ high-quality volunteering opportunities and mentoring activities.

### **Record-keeper of the Year 2018**

Winner of Record-keeper of the Year for 2018 is Erin Lee of the National Theatre (UK) in London.

Erin is the National Theatre's archivist, a post she has held since 2013, during which time has become established as a core part of the UK's performing arts heritage network. Under her leadership, for example, the National Theatre Archive became the first theatre to achieve Accredited Archive Service status. She is currently Chair of the Association of Performing Arts Collections (APAC), the membership organisation for professionals, specialists, and other individuals working with or interested in performing arts heritage in the United Kingdom and Ireland. She is also a Clore Emerging Leader, which identifies young, future leaders in the cultural and heritage sectors, and has led a wider range of initiatives, including on theatre and performance collections, the Archive Trainees UK network, and on external advisory boards, such as BAFTA's 70th anniversary project in 2017 and as a trustee of the (UK) National Jazz Archive.

John Chambers added:

"These awards are not just about the past, but the future, and recognising emerging and future leaders in our sector. Erin is very much in this category. She has already given extraordinary time, energy and inspiration to so many initiatives – benefiting so many colleagues – but especially in the past 18 months that covers this award. I note also that she

has been leading the development of digital capacity at the National Theatre Archive, bringing on board a digital archive assistant from outside the normal entry route into the profession. As we all grapple with the need to improve diversity of people and routes into the sector, Erin has shown what can be done at the coal-face by taking a lead in embedding new approaches. I also commend the strong runner-up for this award, Asif Shakoor, founder of the London-based *South Asian Contribution to Great Britain* project”

### **Record-keeper of the Year 2017**

The 2017 winner of the individual award for Record-keeper of the Year is Dr Melinda Haunton of The National Archives (UK) in London.

Dr Haunton currently manages a national standards scheme, the Archive Service Accreditation (ASA) programme, a partnership between TNA and a range of bodies across the UK and Republic of Ireland, including the ARA. In the past two years, the scheme has accredited over 50 successful archives and records offices and has become visible to virtually everyone in the records profession. Without Melinda’s drive and commitment, the ASA’s aims could not have been put into practice or achieved the number of successful accreditations to date. Dr Haunton did her first degrees Exeter University, followed by a doctorate at Royal Holloway in 2000. She qualified as a professional archivist in 2008 via distance learning and working full time.

John Chambers added:

“Melinda is a leading light in the sector, and I am delighted that we – her colleagues – now have the chance to recognise her drive and commitment in our own small way. In addition to her tireless efforts on archive accreditation, in which ARA is a leading partner, Melinda has given her own personal time freely to many other initiatives in the sector in the past eighteen months. These have included the ARA’s Volunteering Committee and as a panel judge for the Business Archives Council Wadsworth Prize for Business History.”

### **Record-keeper of the year 2016**

**Sarah Wickham** is University Archivist and Records Manager at the University of Huddersfield. She is currently seconded as Project Director of the (£2m) Heritage Quay project, which runs from 2012 to 2017. She has worked in records management and archives roles in local government, higher education and the charitable sectors since 1996. Sarah is a Registered Archivist and Records Manager, is on the editorial board of the Records Management Journal and contributes to the work of UK and international professional bodies, including as former Registrar of the ARA.