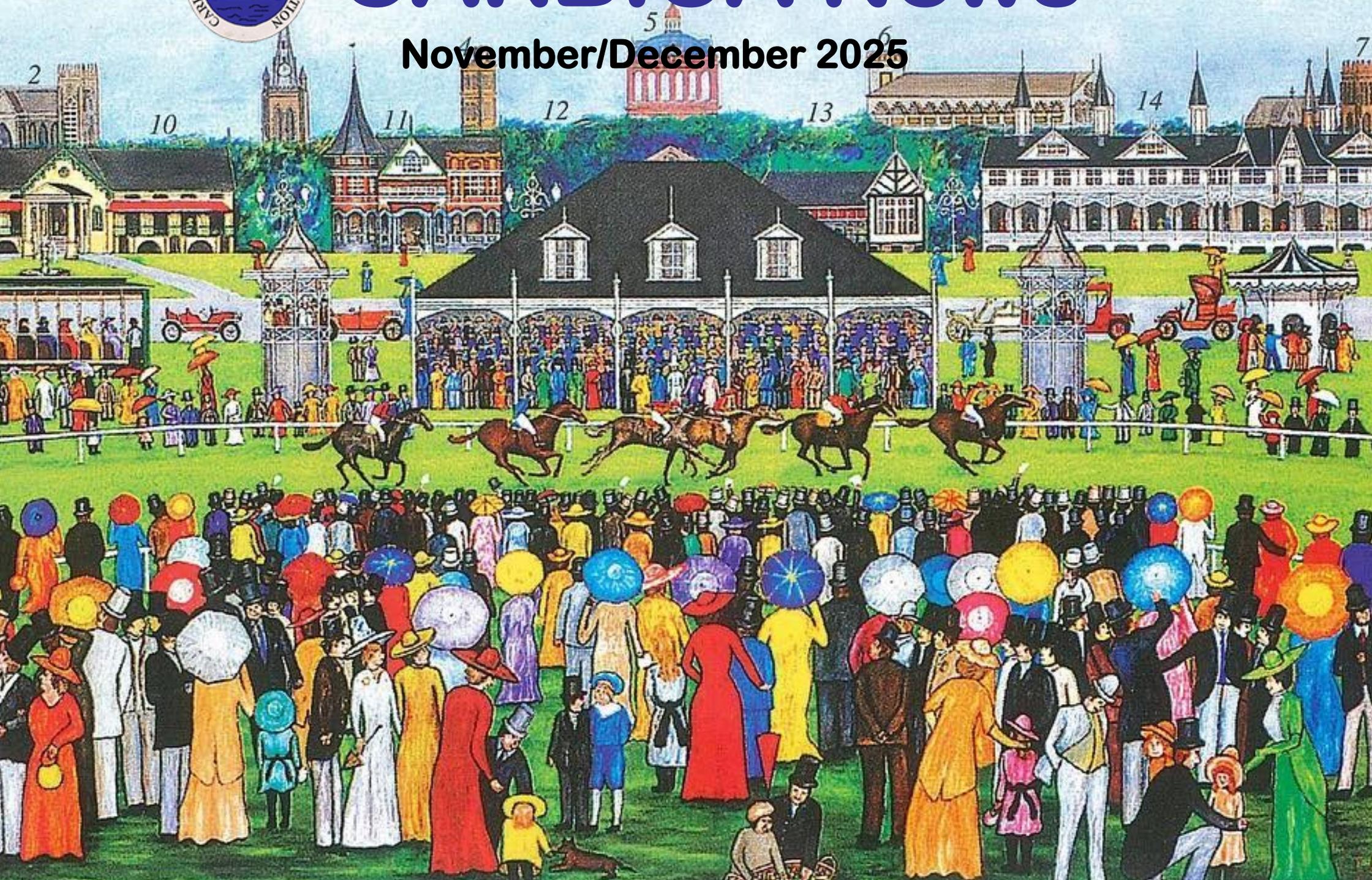




CARBICA News

November/December 2025



Front Cover: Christmas Meeting of the Trinidad Turf Club, Queen's Park Savannah—1912, A postcard by Adrian Camps-Campins (courtesy the National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago Postcard Collection)

Back Cover: The Polo Match, Queen's Park Savannah—1910, A postcard by Adrian Camps-Campins (courtesy the National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago Postcard Collection)



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Category A: US\$ 150
Category B: US\$ 100
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Category D: US\$ 30

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About CARBICA:

The mission of the International Council on Archives (ICA) is to promote the preservation and use of archives around the world. In pursuing this mission, ICA works for the protection and enhancement of the memory of the world and to improve communication while respecting cultural diversity. The Caribbean Regional Branch (CARBICA) is responsible for carrying out the policy and programmes of ICA in its region, where these are relevant to CARBICA members.

The 2023-2027 Officers

President: Max Scriwanek (Government Archivist, Curacao)

Vice President: Kevin Montero (Director of Archives, Belize)

Secretary: Halcyon Wiltshire-Busby (Campus Records Manager, The UWI Cave Hill Campus)

Treasurer: Stephen Butters (University Archivist, University of Guyana)

Over CARBICA:

De missie van de International Council on Archives (ICA) is het bevorderen van het behoud en gebruik van archieven over de hele wereld. Bij het nastreven van deze missie zet de ICA zich in voor de bescherming en verbetering van het collectieve geheugen van de wereld en voor het verbeteren van de communicatie, met respect voor culturele diversiteit. De Caribbean Regional Branch (CARBICA) is verantwoordelijk voor de uitvoering van het beleid en de programma's van de ICA in haar regio, voor zover deze relevant zijn voor de leden van CARBICA.

De functionarissen voor 2023-2027

Voorzitter: Max Scriwanek (Government Archivist, Curacao)

Vicevoorzitter: Kevin Montero (Director of Archives, Belize)

Secretaris: Halcyon Wiltshire-Busby (Campus Records Manager, The UWI Cave Hill Campus)

Penningmeester: Stephen Butters (University Archivist, University of Guyana)



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Fresh Perspectives, Enduring Legacies

In this issue of CARBICA News, *Fresh Perspectives, Enduring Legacies* comes to life through stories of resilience, renewal, and regional pride. From the launch of the first Caribbean Cultural Emergency Response Sub-Hub in St. Maarten to the continued salvage work in Barbados, we spotlight the dedicated efforts that safeguard our shared heritage. At the same time, we celebrate the vibrant new voices shaping the future of the profession — graduates entering the field with record-breaking achievements, first-time attendees preparing for ICA Barcelona 2025, and emerging professionals forging innovative paths in archives, records management, and cultural memory work.

Across the region, archives are transforming: institutions are embracing digital preservation, revising academic curricula, building e-depots, and experimenting with crowdsourcing to uncover new layers of Caribbean history. These advancements stand alongside inspiring milestones, including the recognition of Caribbean excellence on the global stage through fellowships, bursaries, and leadership appointments.

Together, these stories remind us that while our legacies endure, they are continually enriched by fresh perspectives, renewed energy, and the commitment of those who safeguard, interpret, and reimagine the historical record. This issue celebrates both where we have come from and where we are boldly headed as a Caribbean archival community.

As the year draws to a close, I would like to extend warm Christmas greetings and heartfelt wishes for a peaceful, prosperous, and inspiring New Year to all CARBICAnS. May the season bring joy to you and your families, and may 2026 be filled with continued growth, collaboration, and renewed purpose across our regional archival community.

Yours in service
Janelle Duke
Chair, Communications

From our President

Max Scriwanek

max.scriwanek@gmail.com



Dear CARBICAns,

As we approach the end of 2025, I would like to extend my warmest regards to you, your families, and your loved ones. Our thoughts are with the victims of the devastating Hurricane Melissa in Jamaica and Cuba.

I am deeply grateful that our newsletter has been revived. Much has happened throughout 2025, and I am certain that every CARBICA member has a story to share with our CARBICA family.

Since the establishment of CARBICA/CHEN as the Caribbean CER Hub in March 2024, we have dealt with two major cases: the Barbados Archives fire and the destruction of the Carriacou Museum after Hurricane Beryl. I am proud to say that both received CER funding to support their response efforts. This year, 2025, has been equally eventful:

- ⇒ CARBICA was invited to comment on ICA's Expert Group on Legal Matters' Copyright Toolkit.
- ⇒ We launched the first Caribbean CER Sub-Hub in St. Maarten from June 17–20, featuring extensive workshops and training sessions in conjunction with the military's hurricane preparedness exercise on the Dutch Windward Islands.
- ⇒ An advocacy meeting for our CER Hub was conducted by Rita Tjien Foon in St. Vincent & the Grenadines in April 2025.

- ⇒ Training sessions were organized in Belize, and a FIDA funding request was submitted on behalf of Guyana.
- ⇒ The Caribbean CER Hub provided funding to support response efforts following the Barbados Archives fire.
- ⇒ The Caribbean CER Hub also funded a training and salvage mission for the Carriacou Museum, in cooperation with Puerto Rican heritage specialists.
- ⇒ The Caribbean CER Hub helped form a crisis team—together with UNESCO and the Jamaican Ministry of Culture—to support cultural heritage response efforts in Jamaica after Hurricane Melissa.
- ⇒ The Caribbean region was well represented at ICA's Congress in Barcelona in October 2025.
- ⇒ CARBICA received a PCOM grant to publish the Caribbean Heritage Risk Map online.

As the official Caribbean Branch of the ICA, our core mission remains to promote archival standards and best practices across the region. In Barcelona, we met with ICA's PCOM executives to discuss plans for promoting the Records in Context (RiC) standard in the Caribbean. We hope to submit a funding proposal next year to support RiC training sessions in the region. Reviving the earlier MIGAN plans—aimed at establishing a Caribbean Archives Portal—could be an exciting next step, especially now that we will be working with shared standards.

My dear CARBICAns, I am grateful for your contributions in this newsletter and hope you feel inspired and encouraged to continue sharing updates on your archival activities through our social media channels and our newsletter. By supporting one another, we strengthen the advancement of archives throughout the region.

My best wishes for the holiday season and for a happy, healthy new year.

As always, we are stronger together.

CARBICA/UNESCO launches the first Caribbean Cultural Emergency Response Sub-Hub on St Maarten



From left to right: Yuri Peshkov (UNESCO), Marcellia Henry (UNESCO), Elizabeth Riley (CDEMA), The Hon. Melissa Gumbs (Minister of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Sint Maarten), Sanne Letschert (CER), Maximiliaan Scriwanek (CARBICA) and Sueene Ostiana.

The first Cultural Emergency Response (CER) Sub-Hub in the Caribbean was successfully launched during a regional workshop held in Sint Maarten from 17–20 June 2025, under the theme “Decentralizing Heritage Protection in the Caribbean.” The collaborative event between CARBICA, UNESCO and CER brought together 61 participants from across the region, representing more than 15 territories including Anguilla, Curaçao, Jamaica, St. Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, Puerto Rico, and the United States.

A Regional Milestone for Heritage Protection

The opening session featured remarks from officials and heritage leaders who underscored the urgent need to strengthen disaster preparedness and cultural resilience in the Caribbean:

- **Hon. Melissa Gumbs**, Minister of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport (Sint Maarten), reaffirmed government support and proposed mobile conservation units for salvage operations.
- **Maximiliaan Scriwanek**, President of CARBICA, officially launched the Sub-Hub, highlighting CHEN’s evolution since its founding in 2018 and its role as the fourth CER regional hub globally.
- **Yuri Peshkov**, UNESCO Caribbean Office, emphasized alignment with the UNESCO Operational Strategy for SIDS (2023–2029) and the need for inter-island collaboration.
- **Sanne Letschert**, Director of Cultural Emergency Response (CER) Amsterdam, spoke on CER’s global mission to provide rapid cultural first aid.
- **Elizabeth Riley**, Executive Director, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), stressed integrating cultural heritage into regional disaster frameworks.



Maximiliaan Scriwanek gives opening remarks on Day 1 of Workshop

Building Alliances & Expanding Knowledge

Sessions explored the strategic importance of safeguarding cultural heritage before, during, and after disasters:

- **Wilfred Muller** highlighted the role of heritage in psychological healing, community cohesion, economic revival, and resilience-building.
- **UNESCO’s PDNA framework** was introduced, emphasizing why cultural heritage—tangible and intangible—must be part of disaster impact assessments.
- **Christopher Marrion** presented UNESCO’s 2024 Fire Risk Management Guide, offering practical tools for mitigating fire risks to cultural sites.
- **The Red Cross St. Maarten** outlined how humanitarian response efforts support cultural protection by stabilizing communities post-disaster.

Hands-On Disaster Simulation Training

Practical sessions led by Emilie Leumas and Halcyon Wiltshire-Busby strengthened participants’ capacity to manage cultural emergencies. Training covered:

- Disaster management frameworks
- Risk assessment tools
- Emergency protocols
- Salvage techniques for documents, photographs, textiles, artworks, and artifacts
- Institutional planning and allied response networks

Participants engaged in three realistic disaster simulations—water damage in an archives, fire damage to storage areas, and hurricane preparedness—assuming roles in assessment, documentation, and response.



Action meeting to begin the mobilizing process for the Sub-Hub



Emilie Leumas guiding the Hands-on Training Session



Participants at the workshop



Emilie Leumas and Halcyon Wiltshire-Busby facilitate a session together

Strengthening Caribbean Resilience

The workshop concluded with the development of action plans focused on:

- Building island networks and response coalitions
- Mapping cultural resources
- Setting short-, medium-, and long-term resilience goals
- Expanding training and community involvement

Participants also received key resources including the PARBICA Toolkit, UNESCO Memory of the World guidelines, and technical manuals for emergency preparedness.

Looking Ahead

The Sint Maarten CER Sub-Hub marks a major step toward a more coordinated, decentralized, and capable Caribbean Heritage Emergency Network. The knowledge gained will be shared across institutions, ensuring the wider region benefits from strengthened capacity and new opportunities such as collaborative networks to prepare for and respond to emergencies that threaten the region's rich cultural heritage.



Participants and officials pose for a group photo during the Workshop

The DLIS Celebrates Record-Breaking Graduation Season

Dr. Stanley H. Griffin, Head of Department, DLIS



Dr. Griffin relaying opening remarks at ceremony

The Department of Library and Information Studies (DLIS), in collaboration with the Library Association of Trinidad and Tobago (LATT), hosted a Celebration of Information Excellence in at the National library headquarters in Port of Spain, Trinidad to honour 13 graduating students, present awards to 11 students from Trinidad and Tobago and St Vincent and the Grenadines and launch the department's "Trinidad Strategy" aimed at increasing the departmental presence and impact in that jurisdiction.

This special event marked the record-breaking graduation of 32 graduates from undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in the department, including 8 from the Master of Arts in Archives and Records Management programme. As 13 graduates were crossing the stage at the St Augustine, Trinidad Campus, a formal departmental celebration was organized to mark this occasion, including a congratulatory video with greetings from the Deputy Principal, Dean of the Faculty and members of the DLIS Office.

This year's graduation season brought a total of 47 graduates, since teaching began in 2015, who are qualified archivists and records managers working around the Caribbean region and beyond.

This special event held on Friday evening, 24 October, featured the Department's second Distinguished Lecture in Archives and Records, delivered by Professor Emeritus Kenneth Ramchand, ORTT, (UWI Professor Emeritus in West Indian Literature), on "The Short Life of a Text and Its Reincarnations." Focusing on Christopher Columbus' diary, which initiated concepts of European initiated 'racial insecurity' of the peoples encountered, his presentation highlighted the complexity of records and publications in myth-making, historical politicking, and the loss, recovery and devaluation of information.



All in a row: DLIS Awardees stand together with Dr Griffin, Prof. Emeritus Kenneth Ramchand, retired Campus Records Manager, Ms. Jo-Ann Georges, and officials from NALIS and the Alma Jordan Library at The UWI St Augustine Campus.



Mrs. Jeon Julien receives award from Dr Griffin



Ms. Roxanne Rollocks receives award from Ms. Jo-Ann Georges



DLIS Lecturers look on at ceremony



Dr. Griffin stands with awardees

As part of the Student Awards Ceremony, Dean Deon Edwards-Kerr greeted the awardees and graduates via video presentation. Awards were presented to archival studies students by Ms Jo-Ann Georges (Retired Campus Records Manager, UWI St Augustine), and library studies students by Dr Shamin Renwick (Acting Campus Librarian, UWI St Augustine), with top departmental prizes presented by the Head of Department. Dr Stanley Griffin (HOD) also presented institutional awards to the National Library and Information System Authority (NALIS) and LATT for their unwavering advocacy, support and investment in the DLIS.

As a pre-event activity, a congratulatory video presentation was played, featuring the Deputy Principal Tomlin Paul, Dean Edwards-Kerr, Campus Director for Graduate Studies Professor Marcia Roye, FHE Deputy Deans and Department Office staff. This was well received by the 65 persons in attendance and 140 live online participants. A lively celebratory cocktail reception completed the evening's affair.

On Saturday morning, 25 October 2025, DLIS adjunct lecturers and HOD Griffin attended the St Augustine Campus' Faculty of Humanities and Education graduation ceremony, wherein the Chancellor acknowledged the largest cohort of archivists and librarians graduating outside the Mona Campus. Students expressed appreciation for the Department's presence.



Professor Emeritus Kenneth Ramchand ORTT, gives feature speech at ceremony

¡HOLA DESDE BARCELONA!



THREE CARBICANS RECEIVE UNESCO BURSARY TO ATTEND ICA CONGRESS BARCELONA 2025



From left to right: Audrey Hofwijks-Koenders, Sarah Chun and Janelle Duke

Three Caribbean archivists have been awarded the prestigious ICA-UNESCO Bursary to attend the International Council on Archives (ICA) Congress in Barcelona in 2025. The recipients—Sarah Chun (Belize Archives and Records Service), Audrey Hofwijks-Koenders (National Archives of Suriname), and Janelle Duke (West Indies Federal Archives Centre)—stood out among a highly competitive international cohort. Notably, all three are graduates of the Master of Arts in Archives and Records Management Programme at The UWI Mona Campus, reflecting the programme’s increasing influence in shaping archival leadership across the Caribbean.

The UNESCO Bursary Programme, a collaboration between the ICA and UNESCO’s Memory of the World (MoW) Programme, aims to support professionals from developing nations, Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Developing Economies, and Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations (FCS). Its goal is to enable wider participation in global archival discourse and strengthen professional capacity worldwide.

This year’s programme brought together 24 archival professionals from across the developing world, with participants representing Zimbabwe, Cambodia, the Philippines, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Ghana, Palestine, Colombia, Venezuela, Sudan, Ukraine, Pakistan, and several other countries. The initiative is designed to expand representation from under-resourced regions and support professionals working within challenging socio-economic and political environments.

As part of the bursary experience, participants completed a one-day intensive workshop on UNESCO’s Memory of the World Programme, focusing on the nomination process for inscription onto the National, Regional, and International Registers. The workshop offered practical guidance on preparing successful nomination dossiers, understanding appraisal and selection criteria, and addressing preservation challenges specific to documentary heritage in developing regions.

The sessions were facilitated by leading international experts, including Dr. Forget Chaterera-Zambuko, Dr. Fackson Banda, Dr. Jussi Nuorteva, Natalija Lace, and Dr. Martin Poulter, who enriched the training through case studies, technical demonstrations, and interactive group exercises.



Pictured is Audrey Hofwijks-Koenders and Janelle Duke in group session at the Memory of the World workshop

The ICA Congress, held every four years, is widely regarded as the premier global gathering for archivists, records managers, and information professionals. The 2025 Congress in Barcelona, themed “Knowing Pasts, Creating Futures,” brought together experts from around the world to explore critical topics such as Managing Memories / Preserving Identities, Conflict, Disaster and Displacement, Records of Rights, Digital and Accessible, and Archival Futures.

This year’s bursary recipients represent a significant achievement for the Caribbean and highlight the region’s growing presence in international archival work. Their participation is expected to contribute not only to their own professional development but also to the strengthening of archival practice across CARBICA and the wider region.



Participants and facilitators at the Memory of the World Workshop held at the Museum of Natural Sciences of Barcelona (Museu de Ciències Naturals de Barcelona)

CARBICAN NAMED ICA FELLOW



Avril Belfon

The Caribbean archival community is celebrating a historic achievement as Ms. Avril Belfon, recently retired Government Archivist of the National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago, has been awarded the prestigious International Council on Archives (ICA) Fellowship. This distinguished honour recognizes her outstanding service, leadership, and unwavering commitment to strengthening archival development across the Caribbean region.

The ICA Fellowship is one of the highest accolades bestowed by the International Council on Archives, presented to individuals who demonstrate exceptional contributions to the global archival profession. Fellows are selected not only for their technical expertise, but also for their dedication to international collaboration, innovation, and the advancement of the ICA's mission.

Ms. Belfon's recognition is especially significant: she is one of only two women and persons of colour to receive the honour this year, and notably, the first recipient from the Caribbean region. Her achievement marks a powerful moment for representation on the global archival stage and underscores the growing influence of Caribbean archivists within international heritage discourse.

In her acceptance speech, Ms. Belfon credited Mrs. Helena Leonce, who served as Government Archivist in Trinidad and Tobago during her early career, for encouraging her to attend CITRA at Curaçao in 2006—an experience she described as the catalyst for her long-standing commitment to regional archival development. She also used her platform to highlight the dedicated yet often unseen work of archivists across the Caribbean region and the world who operate under tremendous strain, limited resources, and challenging conditions, yet remain steadfast in protecting and caring for the records entrusted to them.

Throughout her career, Avril has been a driving force within CARBICA (the Caribbean Branch of the International Council on Archives). Her passion for regional cooperation, professional development, and safeguarding the Caribbean's documentary heritage has left an enduring mark on the field.



Ms. Belfon giving her acceptance speech

One of her most impactful contributions was her work toward in the establishment of CARBICA's Cultural Heritage Emergency Network (CHEN) in 2018. Recognizing the region's vulnerability to hurricanes, earthquakes, flooding, and other disasters, Belfon together with her colleagues across the region championed the creation of a coordinated emergency network to support cultural institutions before, during, and after crises. CHEN has since grown into a cornerstone of regional resilience and paved the way for the development of the CER Caribbean Hub.

Her tireless advocacy has strengthened professional ties across island nations, elevated archival standards, and inspired new generations of archivists across the region. Her influence extends far beyond the Caribbean, contributing meaningfully to global discussions on cultural heritage preservation, emergency preparedness, inclusive archival practice and the debates on Shared Archival Heritage.

Avril Belfon's appointment as an ICA Fellow is a deeply deserved honour—one that celebrates a career of exceptional service and affirms the Caribbean's growing leadership in the global archival community. Her legacy will continue to shape the preservation of the region's history, memory, and identity for decades to come.



Avril Belfon receives honour from ICA President Josée Kirps (left) and Trudy Huskamp Peterson (right)

THE SALVAGE WORK CONTINUES AT THE BARBADOS DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES

Anne Bancroft, Head of Collection Care & Conservation, Barbados Department of Archives

The Barbados Archives Department serves as the nation's central repository of memory, holding public and private records that help shape the island's cultural identity. Established in 1964, within a building of historical significance, the department holds a wide range of materials that document the islands' history from the 1600s until the present. Its collection includes colonial acts, church registers, wills, maps, artefacts, photographs, government documents, and more. These holdings make it an essential resource for researchers, historians, and individuals.

In July 2024, while in the process of a seminal national digitization initiative and temporary migration with the Reclaiming Our Atlantic Destiny (ROAD), a major fire caused by a previously rare fork lighting event severely decimated one of the repository buildings that housed approximately one third of the Barbados Archives' collection. The success of the first stage was due to rapid intervention collaboration by various national institutions with some emergency response training, international consultants such as the LMI Group, international/regional colleagues and the private sector working alongside the Archives team.

Thousands of documents were salvaged over 3 months; however, extensive exposure to heat and water caused the documents to fuse together (blocked).



Image of the Barbados Archive building destroyed by the fire caused by the lightning strike.



Image of the roof that was impacted by the lightning strike which caused the fire.

As an emergency preservation measure, these saturated blocked documents were stored as immediately as possible at low temperature to mitigate further deterioration from mold and insect activity. The documents are temporarily held at a high security cold storage facility occupying 40 square feet as the first phase of stabilization and treatment. The salvage stage of the project was presented at the 2024 UNESCO International Conference "Fire Resilience for Heritage in a Changing Climate" in Chile.

ROAD is piloting the subsequent second phase, which maps out controlled defrosting and separation so the documents can be made accessible and re-integrated into the collection. The complexity of the process ranges as the extent of the damage does, as many of the salvaged documents that have been surveyed range primarily from 10% to 50% burnt. There are, of course, instances of 80-100% ash fragments. The methodological layering of these blocks has revealed covers, individual sheets and inserts which have been carefully separated, cleaned, paginated, documented, barcoded and placed into interim folders for their throughput to digitisation, transcription and storage. The virtual replicas will provide safe access to the audiences and be used by the stakeholders to prioritise further treatment dependance on significance and use.



Image of the Archives and R.O.A.D. moving objects salvaged from the burnt building.



Image of a "Blocked" object salvaged from the burnt building

As of November 2025, 15 Assistant Conservators have received training to undertake the treatment. Six blocked salvaged packages have been de-layered to reveal forty-seven objects, consisting of an approximate total of 3565 pages and taking 239 hours. The script and text are still legible, thus allowing the identification of the content, persons and dates crucial for reuniting items with existing catalogue records. Any detached fragments are retained as they may contain legible text which too can reveal important information which with specialist technical analysis equipment and imaging will be able to be revealed in time.

The findings of the pilot demonstrated the efficacy of the treatment, the process, and the requisite resources. It will inform how this small island developing nation will go forward building capacity in a challenging environment in its odyssey from the inferno.



Image of the de-layered object being placed in its final housing for storage



Image of a partially delayered Block, in a fume cupboard, showing the front and back cover of two separate objects



Image of a single sheet in an individual folder showing a daily work diary dated 1949 showcasing locations and tasks conducted

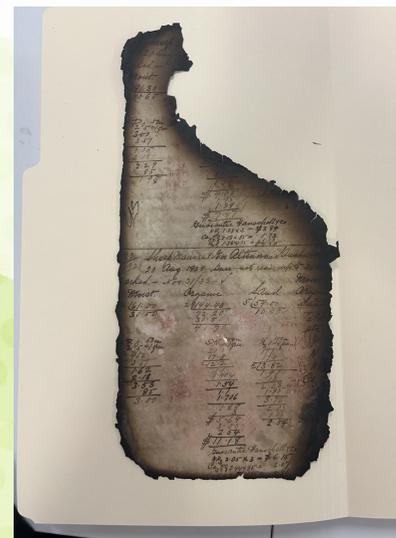


Image of a cleaned de-layered sheet showing chemical analyses and calculations



Image of the delayering process of an object to obtaining a single sheet



Assistant conservator, cleaning fire damage documents in the fume hood

HERITAGE IS ABOUT PEOPLE

Dr. Gretchen Ruiz Ramos



I am from Puerto Rico, the smallest of the Great Antilles in the Caribbean. The land of salsa, reggaetón, and of course, Bad Bunny. The Caribbean is an idyllic tropical Paradise, with white sandy beaches lined up with palm trees and turquoise clear waters where you can swim all year round. However, the Caribbean is also a region where hurricanes pass every year. The season starts in June and extends to November... 6 long months of tension and anxiety...especially for those who have survived a catastrophic category 5 hurricane like myself.

In 2017, hurricanes Irma and María impacted Puerto Rico within 2 weeks from each other. More than 4,000 lives were lost. When this happened, my life changed forever. A survival mode kicked in and the urgency to help others developed. Without knowing, I became a first responder serving the communities in need. 8 years since María, the island is still recovering with a weak electrical grid and frequent power outages.

During the past decade, I have specialized in arts and culture emergencies, a career path that I have realized once you are in it, you are committed forever. Because “Heritage is about People,” and when a group of extraordinary people come together, we can do so much more. With this thought, the Alianza Cultural para Emergencias de Puerto Rico was born. Since our beginnings, we had the vision that after we were well established in our own archipelago, we would extend our services through the Caribbean to support our neighbors. This year, we received the call for help.

In July 2024, Hurricane Beryl devastated the island of Carriacou, Grenada in the Southern Caribbean. With maximum sustained winds of 150 miles or 240 kilometers per hour, the storm damaged practically all of the structures on the island, affecting its entire population.

The Carriacou Museum and Historical Society was not spared

A place described as a “*vibrant space where art, history, and culture come alive*,” the hurricane force winds detached the roof and walls of the second floor, where the main library and part of the collection was located. With basically no funding sources, our network came together and proposed to train a group of volunteers residents from Carriacou who were eager to provide helping hands. A hybrid course with virtual and in person training on basic emergency response and collections salvage was designed.

Last August I traveled to Carriacou, and although it’s our Caribbean neighbor, the logistics of mobility in the region are complex. After a full day of travel including two flights and an inter-island ferry ride, I arrived on the darkness of night. When I woke up the next day, I had flashbacks from hurricane María, the landscape was composed of destroyed and abandoned properties, pieces of roof hanging from trees. A year had already passed, but it seemed like it had just happened.

I went early to the museum to meet the volunteers and see the damages for the first time. I took a quick glance at the first floor, the smell of mold was immediate with a big puddle of water inside. The second floor with roof and walls gone, had everything exposed for more than a year, a mix of debris, office furniture and part of the collection were all over the place. It had rained hard the night before, everything was soaked wet with more rain coming, and quickly realized that this was a dangerous place to be.

A Long-Term Project

I took a deep breath and went down the stairs, telling myself, *let's focus on the people first*. I needed to do a wellness check on the volunteers, get to know them, listen to their stories, learn about their connections to the museum and their motivation to save Carriacou and Grenada's heritage. I was aware that it must have been challenging times for the survivors and it was important to sit down and talk about it, in a respectful and empathetic manner. They were eager to get things moving, but after doing a quick preliminary assessment of the building and collection, safety needed to be addressed first and make it a priority. I put my professor hat on and began with the two days training.

I emphasized that this was going to be a long-term project, this was not going to be resolved in a week.

That afternoon, after lunch, with full personal protection equipment on, we went in the museum and although it looked overwhelming at first, we began focusing on a small section where it appeared like the safest area to work in. Once we got moving, the volunteers began identifying treasures from the collection.



After removing immediate hazards and a couple of hours of labor, we had made great progress. The highlight of the day was when a volunteer found a large Grenada flag in pristine condition with big letters that read, "God bless our nation". A sign that a bright future for the museum was on the horizon. That evening, I wasn't sure how the volunteers felt. It was a long day under rough conditions, including hot weather, no power and no access to water on site. The next morning, I didn't know what to expect.

Would they show up?

Slowly, they began to arrive. We gathered for a morning reflection. I shared my thoughts, they shared theirs. To my surprise, they felt uplifted! They were proud to be able to contribute to the preservation of their island's history, they felt empowered and ready to take ownership of the situation. They were committed to get the museum back on its feet and provide access to the youth to learn about their history. At that point, I realized that the energy had shifted and that preserving our Caribbean heritage had united us as islanders.

Because at the end of the day, Heritage is always About People.



Essential Records Management

TRANSITIONING FROM PAPER TO ELECTRONIC RECORDS

Stephen Butters, University Archivist, University of Guyana

The Archives Department of the University of Guyana hosted a two-day professional development workshop from October 27–28, 2025, under the theme “Essential Records Management: Transitioning from Paper to Electronic Records.” Designed to strengthen institutional capacity in records and information management, the workshop promoted best practices in digitization, preservation, disaster preparedness, and cyber security awareness.

A total of thirty-two (32) non-academic staff members participated in the sessions, which featured five specialized presentations spanning the full continuum of records care—from understanding paper deterioration to protecting digital data. The workshop’s core objectives were to:

- Build staff competence in the management and preservation of physical and electronic records.
- Promote understanding of records scheduling, retention, and appraisal principles.
- Provide guidelines for digitization policy development and the implementation of digital workflows.
- Enhance awareness of electronic records management systems (ERMS) and cybersecurity risks.
- Foster regional collaboration and professional development in alignment with CARBICA and ICA standards.

Comprehensive Presentations

The workshop covered several topics including:

Introduction to Records Management. The principles and values of records management were explored, providing conceptual and practical frameworks for structured information governance.

Introduction to paper, causes of its deterioration and Basic Salvaging Techniques. Participants were introduced to the causes of paper deterioration and the fundamental steps involved in salvaging water-damaged documents.

Records Scheduling: A Comprehensive Guide. Presenter, Johnnell Henery, focused on the creation, approval, and implementation of Records Retention and Disposal Schedules (RRDS), emphasizing appraisal, classification, and secure destruction.

Electronic Records Management. The Facilitator explored electronic recordkeeping systems, focusing on the lifecycle of digital records, EDRMS platforms, and preservation challenges.

Steps to Creating a Policy for the Digitization of Public Records. Nadia Carter guided participants through the process of establishing a framework for the digitization of records i.e. converting physical records into a sustainable digital formats.

Data Security Practices. The presenter examined information security and data protection, including the British Library ransomware attack as a case study for institutional resilience and transparency.

Cybersecurity Security in a Digital Age. Avinash Odal presented best practices for protecting institutional and personal data through cyber hygiene, risk assessment, and compliance with ISO/IEC 27001.



Mr. Stephen Butters presenting at Day 1 of Workshop.



Participants and Facilitators of the Records Management Workshop Series entitled:
Essential Records Management: Transitioning from Paper to Electronic Records

Key Outcomes of the Workshop Series

The Records Management Workshop Series (October 2025) marked a pivotal step in advancing the University of Guyana's archival modernization efforts. It provided participants with theoretical foundations and practical tools to transition from paper-based systems to digital environments. Aligned with CARBICA's regional objectives, this initiative contributes to the broader vision of safeguarding Caribbean documentary heritage in both physical and digital forms—ensuring accessibility, security, and sustainability for future generations through the following:

- ⇒ Enhanced understanding of the records lifecycle from creation to digital preservation.
- ⇒ Strengthened awareness of digitization standards and digital preservation frameworks.
- ⇒ Improved institutional awareness of cyber threats and disaster recovery.
- ⇒ Encourage the need for the implementation of policies for records retention, digitization, and data security.

The UWI Graduate Programme in Archives and Records Management Curriculum Revised

Dr. Stanley H. Griffin, Head of Department, DLIS

The Department of Library and Information Studies is pleased to announce the successful completion of our comprehensive curriculum review for the Master of Arts in Archives and Records Management. This revision reflects our departmental commitment to preparing graduates for a rapidly evolving information and documentary heritage landscape—one in which digital competencies, technological fluency, and ethical information stewardship are central to professional practice.

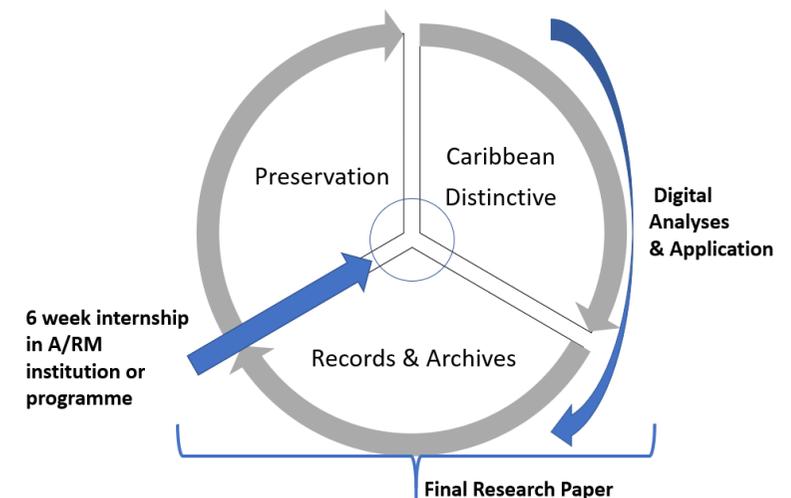
A defining feature of the updated curriculum is the digital emphasis woven throughout all courses. Whether students are exploring appraisal, preservation, or access, they will now engage deeply with themes such as digital archiving, information governance, and information rights, digital preservation and digital heritage. These perspectives ensure that graduates are well equipped to manage contemporary archival ecosystems and to lead in designing sustainable and inclusive digital futures.

The programme now includes several new courses, each shaped by industry needs, international best practice and infused with a Caribbean and global southern focus:

- Archival Advocacy and Community Archives in the Caribbean
- Digital Preservation and Curation
- Information Governance: Philosophy, Strategies and Applications
- Information Rights and Workflow Management

These courses expand the conceptual, technical, and ethical foundations of the programme and offer students robust opportunities to develop advanced, practice-based competencies in digital recordkeeping.

All courses across the programme are now assessed entirely through coursework and portfolio-based learning, with no examinations. This approach allows students to build meaningful, practice-oriented bodies of work that reflect real-world contexts, professional standards, and personal research interests.



As part of the review, the department also designed two new postgraduate diploma programmes, now pending final approval:

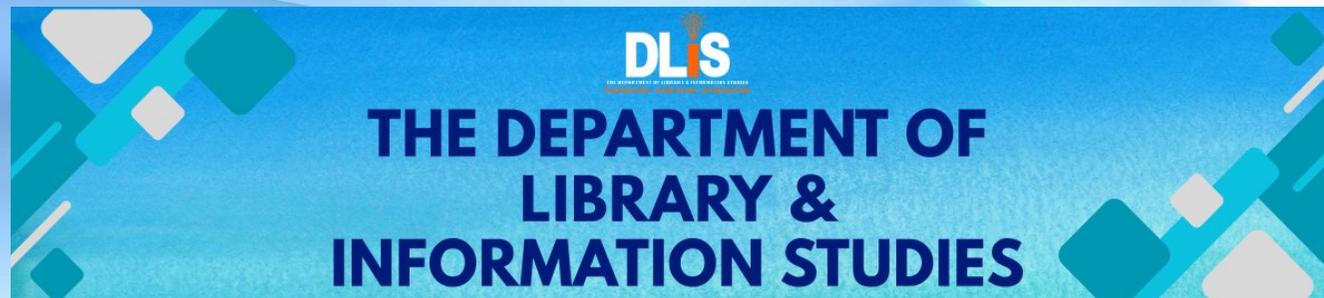
- Postgraduate Diploma in Archives Administration
- Postgraduate Diploma in Information Governance

Both diplomas are graduate-level, consist of seven courses, and—unlike the full master’s programme—have no internship requirement and no examinations. They are designed to be flexible, accessible pathways for working professionals or individuals seeking specialized training.

Across all programmes, courses are delivered primarily online, supporting participation from diverse learners, including those balancing study with professional or personal responsibilities.

We encourage prospective students, information and cultural heritage professionals, and anyone passionate about protecting, organizing, and shaping society’s documentary heritage to explore our Archives and Records Management offerings. Whether you are beginning your journey or seeking to advance your expertise, these programmes provide the knowledge, skills, and digital confidence needed to lead in today’s information-driven world.

The DLIS looks forward to welcoming you to our learning community.



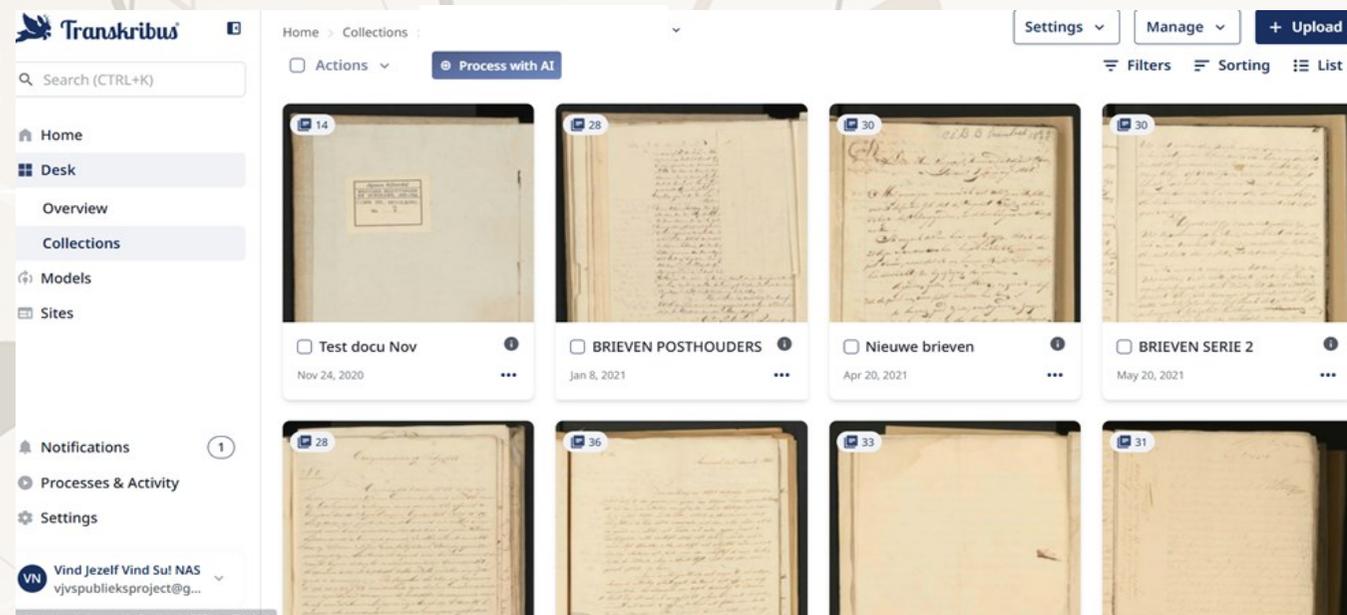
CROWDSOURCING INITIATIVES UNCOVER FRESH PERSPECTIVES @NAS

Audrey Hofwijks-Koenders, National Archives of Suriname

Archives are no longer merely repositories of documents but active guardians of memory, offering critical insights into the events that have shaped the region's present. In Suriname the National Archives of Suriname (NAS) plays a vital role in preserving the history of the Surinamese nation. The National Archives of Suriname preserves and reuses the nation's history through innovative crowdsourcing initiatives that uncover fresh viewpoints and revive memories. Crowdsourcing, a blend of "crowd" and "outsourcing," enables archives to delegate tasks to volunteers, achieving goals beyond their limited time, budget, or staff capacity.

The Vind Jezelf. Vind Suriname!/ Find Yourself, Find (Su)Riname! Project which was launched in 2020. This project recruited volunteers via local media and trained them in Transkribus handwriting recognition software and paleography (the study of reading old handwriting). Focusing initially on the theme native population, volunteers transcribed hard-to-read 19th-century documents, boosting public access and engagement with these archives. Results aim to reshape historical narratives, prioritizing stories of Maroons and indigenous communities. Where in the past the voice of the colonizer prevailed, now the voices of the marginalized groups will be heard. This can contribute to rewriting our history, thus uncover fresh perspectives.

NAS also employs open-source Loghi software, achieving up to 96% transcription accuracy. For now, mainly notarial archives and a few other small archive blocks have been edited with Loghi. By making archives user-friendly and participatory, these efforts foster broader public involvement and promise enduring legacies for Caribbean heritage preservation.



A view of the Transkribus handwriting recognition software

Making the Shared Memory from the Netherlands Antilles digitally accessible through an e-Depot

by Julienne Fabias, National Archives of Curaçao

In connection with the responsibility to make the archives accessible in all forms, the National Archives of Curaçao (NAC) is working on the implementation phase of an e-Depot. The e-Depot will be used as an archive repository for the sustainable and secure storage and accessibility of digital objects.

Given the obligation that Curaçao has to make the documentary sources of the shared past, or shared memory, accessible or grant public access to the population of the other islands from the former Netherlands Antilles, this can be realized by digitization and by a digitized form in an e-depot. The digital archives will be made accessible through the e-depot on the website of the National Archives of Curaçao. The server resources will be fully under the control of the country of Curaçao. However, the server resources will be available to all islands of the former Netherlands Antilles, which can offer them in their own management environment.

For maintaining full control data sovereignty will be applied for ensuring that the country of Curaçao remains the owner of the archives of the people of Curaçao. By applying data sovereignty, the application of laws to a user's data, specifically which laws from which jurisdiction will be applied to the data, and the rights will be protected for each individual user regarding privacy, use by an organization, and consent. Data sovereignty allows data to be subject to the laws and regulations where its owners reside. In general, data sovereignty rules place responsibility for managing and protecting user data on the organization that collects and processes it. Data sovereignty makes it possible that data legal issues, regulations, and restrictions will fall under the jurisdiction of the country, state, or region where the data originates. Data sovereignty is in line with the guiding archival principle of original order and provenance.



Julienne Fabias presenting her Lightning Talk at ICA Barcelona Congress 2025

By implementing the e-Depot, the principles of original order and provenance will be applied, making sure that every archive object should remain or become part of the archive for which it is intended by its nature and to which it should be returned in an appropriate case and that an archive is a whole, the historically determined structure of which may not be disturbed but must be restored if necessary.

Compliance with archival standards for documentary archive management guarantees proper management, preservation, and accessibility of archival data, and in this case, when digitizing the Colonial Archive, the colonial past of the islands of the former Netherlands Antilles.

By implementing and setting up the e-Depot, the digitized part of the Colonial Archives of the Netherlands Antilles that is in the custody of the National Archive of the Netherlands and the archives that have yet to be digitized will be stored in the e-Depot and made accessible to the other islands of the former Netherlands Antilles and also to the rest of the world.

In addition to the e-Depot project, a three-year digitization project will soon begin. This project will digitize the 579-meter portion of the colonial archive currently located in Curaçao. After digitization, this portion will also be made available through the e-Depot.



National Archives of Curaçao (The Wedding Cake)

ICA Barcelona: My First Global Professional Experience

Sarah Chun, Belize Archives and Records Service



Attending the International Council on Archives (ICA) Congress in Barcelona was an extraordinary experience, and I am deeply grateful to both ICA and UNESCO for granting me the opportunity to participate in the Workshop on Documentary Heritage and the International Archives Congress held at the end of October. Having recently completed my Master's Degree in Archives and Records Management at the University of the West Indies, I found the sessions deeply enriching and highly complementary to my academic training. It was truly inspiring to hear how archivists, records managers, and other information professionals around the world are advancing their practice by adopting and innovating with digital technologies.

My first day was spent at the Museum of Natural Sciences of Barcelona, where I joined the other bursary recipients for the Promoting and Safeguarding Documentary Heritage workshop. The discussions emphasized the importance of identifying and safeguarding records of immeasurable value while also advocating for their relevance. It is not sufficient for us, as custodians, to preserve these records only to let them remain quietly in storage. Throughout the workshop, participants shared unique experiences, including accounts from professionals working in regions affected by conflict. Even if our own circumstances seem more stable, their experiences offered invaluable insight into how others are navigating challenges that any of us may confront in the future.

During the following three days, I attended several sessions that formed part of the broader congress. Of the five subthemes, I was particularly drawn to those focusing on Digital Accessibility and Managing Memories. While every session offered compelling insights,

I was most impressed by the work presented by Mr. Alvaro Ruiz Cuevas. He demonstrated how geographic data from historical maps can be used to create digital visualizations that link to related records such as building permits and architectural plans. This innovative approach provides new avenues

This innovative approach provides new avenues for engaging with archival materials, enabling users to visualize the past and interact with records without being physically present in an archive.

The keynote presentations also left a lasting impact. One idea that resonated deeply with me was the reminder that the work archivists and records managers do ultimately affects everyone. Hope, as described by the speaker, is the force that drives cooperation, and our ethics of responsibility require us to embrace that hope. As someone still early in my professional journey, I found this perspective both grounding and motivating.

Although I was unable to participate in the optional tours offered during the days of the congress, I did visit the exhibition Barcelona: The Archive We Are. The Documents of the City's History. Tracing centuries of the city's evolution, the exhibition beautifully illustrated how documentary heritage shapes collective memory. It reinforced how archives help us understand the past and appreciate the magnitude of societal transformation over time.

Overall, my experience in Barcelona provided immense food for thought. It reinforced for me that while university training is foundational, learning does not end in the classroom. Growth happens when experiences and perspectives intersect—and I feel privileged to have witnessed such purpose and passion among professionals dedicated to the archival mission. The event has left me hopeful and eager to participate in future conferences and congresses.



Sarah Chun (center) poses with (l. to r.) Audrey Hofwijks-Koenders, Kevin Montero and Janelle Duke at the opening ceremony.

CREATING HISTORY

Julien Blends Memory, Heritage, and Craft at CARIFESTA XV

Jeon Julien, National Archivist, St Vincent and the Grenadines

When art meets history, memory comes alive. This truth was powerfully demonstrated by Julien, co-owned by Jeon Julien, who made history as the first Archivist by day and craft artisan by night from St. Vincent and the Grenadines to showcase at the Grand Market during CARIFESTA XV.

Her participation marked not only a personal milestone but also a cultural moment that bridged the worlds of heritage preservation and creative expression.

As the National Archivist, Jeon Julien's daily mission revolves around safeguarding the documentary heritage of the nation, records that tell the stories of Vincentian people, their struggles, triumphs, and evolving identity. Yet, beyond the archival vaults, Jeon Julien nurtured another passion: art and craft as a means of storytelling. The intersection of these two passions, preserving history and crafting tangible expressions of memory, formed the heart of her showcase at the regional cultural festival.

At the Grand Market, the creative hub of CARIFESTA XV, Julien's booth drew curious visitors with handcrafted pieces that combined artistic beauty with deep cultural resonance. Each creation, whether an embroidered Island Thread, a Heritage Sculpture, a handmade natural loofah scrubber, or a patriotic sticker, was rooted in Vincentian heritage. Traditional patterns, natural materials, and local symbols were reimagined through contemporary craftsmanship, transforming everyday objects into carriers of history and identity.

This unique presentation reflected a philosophy that archives are not only written or recorded, but they can also be woven, carved, and shaped. Julien's work demonstrated how craft can extend the function of the archive beyond institutional walls, giving ordinary people a tactile connection to their collective past. In his hands, art became a living archive, capturing memories that formal records might overlook, the rhythm of Market Day, and the pride of national symbols stitched into canvas.

Julien's presence at CARIFESTA XV was therefore symbolic on multiple levels. It showcased St. Vincent and the Grenadines' creative talent while emphasizing that cultural preservation can take many forms.



Jeon Julien presenting Grenada Island Thread to Prime Minister of Grenada, Hon. Dickon Mitchell



Vincy Island Thread

It was also a moment of historical creation, where the role of the Archivist expanded from custodian of documents to active cultural ambassador. In blending professional practice with artistic creativity, Julien offered a model for how heritage professionals can engage communities through art, ensuring that history remains vibrant, accessible, and relevant.

Throughout the festival, the Grand Market buzzed with regional energy, musicians, dancers, writers, and artisans from across the Caribbean displaying the richness of their traditions. Amid this colourful tapestry, Julien’s exhibit stood out for its fusion of innovation and artistry. Visitors often left not only with craft pieces but with a deeper appreciation for the narratives embedded within them. In conversations and demonstrations, Julien emphasized that crafting is, in itself, an act of remembrance, a way to hold on to what time might otherwise erase.

By blending his dual callings, Jeon Julien demonstrated that the preservation of culture is both an archival duty and an artistic act. Her participation at CARIFESTA XV did more than display craft, it created history and inspired a renewed vision of how art and archives together can sustain the Caribbean’s living memory.



Heritage Sculpture, Market Lady with Breadfruit



Heritage Sculpture, Market Lady with Water Jug



Natural Loofah Product Line



Heritage Sculpture, Market Lady Shelling Peas

“ A NEW JOURNEY HAS BEGUN ”

Embracing a New Professional Path in Archives and Records Management

Desaray Pivott-Nolan

Gemma B. Alexander



Since graduating with distinction as part of the first cohort of the Master of Archives and Records Management Programme at the DLIS in 2019, I have longed for the chance to put my training into meaningful practice. So, when the opportunity arose to serve as Assistant Archivist at The UWI Mona Archives, I did not hesitate. I stepped forward—nervous but determined—and now, more than a year later, I can confidently say that the hat I once timidly placed in the ring fits quite well.

Championing the preservation and accessibility of The UWI’s documentary heritage is no small task. Yet it is one I embrace fully. The ongoing challenges—both the familiar,

long-standing ones and the emerging complexities of today’s rapidly evolving technological and information landscape—only deepen my commitment to exploring how, as an archivist, I can leverage new tools, systems, and opportunities to strengthen our operations.

The mantra, “The value of an archive is in its use,” first shared by Dr. Stanley Griffin and echoed throughout the programme, continues to guide me. It remains my north star, reminding me why this profession, and my role within it, matters profoundly.

B.C. Forbes once said, “How you start is important, but it is how you finish that counts. In the race for success, speed is less important than stamina. The sticker outlasts the sprinter.” If I could talk to my 10-year-old self, she would be puzzled by the career path I have chosen. I would sit her down and explain that archival management found me—not through haste, but through steady steps and openness to opportunity. In many ways, this mirrors the journey of records themselves: often created without long-term purpose, yet preserved because their value elevates them to enduring significance.

Like the records I am now entrusted to protect and share, I intend to endure—steadfastly navigating the challenges and embracing the opportunities that shape the ever-expanding world of archival management.

After working as a Library Assistant at the UWI Open Campus (now Global Campus) for sixteen years, I was reassigned to the Registry – Records and Information Management Unit as a Junior Records Analyst which falls under the ambit of the Office of the Campus Registrar. This opportunity was given to me after successful completion of my Master of Arts Degree in Archives and Records Management (Online) from the University of the West Indies, Department of Library and Information Studies at the Mona Campus in Jamaica.

In my new role, I have come to appreciate records the fact that whether professionally or personally, all records cannot be kept or preserved. As individuals, we decide on the records we keep based on the value to us. Birth, marriage and academic certificates must be kept permanently because they carry evidence of who we are. So too for land deeds and wills that have legal value – proof of rightful owner. However, in an organization, a retention and disposition schedule – the guide to ensuring that records are kept for a specific length of time is key.

Owing to The UWI’s status as a regional university, I have had the opportunity to work with various departments and colleagues not only in Trinidad and Tobago but in other Caribbean Islands where the UWI Global Campus Sites are located to guide them in preparation of their records inventory, records retention, the destruction process and other records management related activities.

If you or anyone you know is thinking about changing their careers, encourage and motivate them. You never know where it will take them. When I decided to pursue my Masters, I was not thinking about changing careers; I always wanted to pursue it and I took the opportunity. There were challenges but I prayed and I kept trying; and most important I had the unwavering support of my family and friends. I am very happy that I pursued the degree programme; to my lecturers, family, friends and colleagues thank you for supporting me through this process.



Celebrating Leadership, Service, and New Beginnings in the Caribbean Archival Community



The Caribbean archival community is pleased to extend heartfelt congratulations to **Mr. Maximiliaan Scriwanek**, President of CARBICA and Director of the National Archives of Curaçao, on his successful election as **Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean on the FAN (Forum of National Archivists) Steering Committee for the 2025–2028 term**. This achievement marks a proud moment for the region, and we are confident that Mr. Scriwanek will bring vision, dedication, and a strong Caribbean voice to the international archival stage.



As we celebrate new leadership, we also honour two distinguished archivists whose careers have profoundly shaped the preservation of Caribbean memory:

- **Ms. Avril Belfon**, Government Archivist, National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago – retired April 2025
- **Mrs. Margot Thomas**, National Archivist, National Archives Authority of Saint Lucia – retired June 2025



Their unwavering commitment to safeguarding and promoting the region's documentary heritage has left an indelible legacy. We extend our sincere appreciation and warmest wishes as they embark on the next chapter of their lives.



We also recognize and congratulate the following professionals on their recent appointments, each marking an important step forward in strengthening archival leadership across the Caribbean:

- **Mrs. Avalon Dougan-Abdool**, Government Archivist (Acting), National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago – appointed April 2025
- **Mr. Patrick Freeman**, National Archivist, National Archives Authority of Saint Lucia – appointed July 2025
- **Dr. Stanley H. Griffin**, Head of Department, Department of Library and Information Studies, The University of the West Indies, Mona – appointed August 2025



Finally, we are delighted to welcome **Mrs. Jeon Julien**, Government Archivist of the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines National Archives, **Mrs. Charlene Riley**, University Archivist, The UWI, **Ms. Sarah Chun**, Archives Officer II, Belize Archives and Records Service and **Ms. Julienne Fabias**, Digital Acquisition Officer, National Archives Curaçao.



We look forward to their leadership and contributions to the continued development of archival work in the region.





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