



## *Mozart is a Records Manager!*

### *A personal view of the International Congress on Archives held in Vienna from 23 August to 28 August 2004*

I know that these international events are full of important papers and presentations, and an opportunity for records and archives suppliers to market their products, but I always feel that most benefit is extracted by making informal contacts with professionals from all over the world – commonly called “networking”. This is not meant to devalue the tremendous amount of work that obviously goes into organising the event and the considerable effort expended by the presenters. The sessions I managed to attend were extremely interesting and have added to progress in the field.

Right from registration there were shouts of delight as many of us caught up with old friends – some not seen since Seville in 2000. For my own part I was delighted to spot a former student at University College London; Djoko Utomo seems to have gone from strength to strength in Indonesia. There are many others who have passed that way but the older I get the more difficult it seems to be to remember everyone’s name!

The Commonwealth was well represented this year, especially the Caribbean. Congratulations to all those who managed to find a way to fund their trip at the last minute. I am sure their sponsors would agree that it was well worth it.

One of the most enjoyable visits I have made in recent years was to the Arkib Negara in Kuala Lumpur, and it is always a great pleasure to

meet up with the Malaysian contingent. There was special significance this year as they

prepare for ICA 2008. I wish Rahani Jamil and her colleagues the best of luck – no doubt the planning is already well under way.

It is always a great pleasure to meet for the first time people with whom you have been in either email or telephone conversation; for me this was the case with Karla Hayward from Bermuda. Last year we had been trying to arrange some exchange visits between UK and the Bermudan Archives. Hopefully this will come about very soon.

The visits arranged by ICA are always a great feature of the Congress. It would be sad if we were not given the opportunity to see local sites – it is not often that we are able (or lucky enough) to travel abroad. I took the chance to visit some of the Hapsburgs residences, including the magnificent Schönbrunn Palace. Being more or less ignorant of the Hapsburg Dynasty I found their story fascinating, especially that of Empress Elisabeth.

Outside the Congress, my abiding memory of Vienna is the sight of Mozart on every street corner. He has numerous shops and museums in the city, and his sales are still up there with, it seems, the modern pop stars of today. Not being a great aficionado of classical music (I love particular compositions rather than all the music of particular composers – I know what I like (happy to discuss), I resisted the temptation to contribute to the growing income. Well, there was one exception – my staff at The National Archives threatened dire consequences if I did not bring something back from Austria, so I returned with a box of chocolates; yes, you’ve

guessed it, they were decorated with the head of Mozart! Then, when I saw him outside the Congress venue every day, I became convinced that Mr Mozart is in fact a records manager. I'm sure I spotted him sitting at the back during the opening ceremony.....

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