

Archivist's Report

My last report outlined the broad considerations which apply when conserving material in accordance with established best practice. My report specifically referred to photographs and work continues to identify photographs of models or meetings which are worthy of preservation in the Society's Archives. We now have a large quantity of colour images, mostly generously donated by members like Bill Pitt, and it is a major task to integrate these successfully into our records. Work proceeds.

Work also continues to repair and rebind the various ledgers and so on which make up a significant part of the Archives. All of these volumes were well worn and needed attention from a qualified and experienced bookbinder, some urgent attention. I utilise the firm which repairs and rebinds books in my own reference library and it has been possible to have BMSS volumes rebound at no cost to the Society. Volumes are rebound in uniform maroon cloth with gilt lettering. Items rebound since my last report include:

- Visitor book (overseas and other guests at meetings) January 1975 – February 1980
- Attendance at monthly meetings and AGMs, December 1978 – December 1992

To some extent, these tasks might be describing as housekeeping. Keeping the records I have inherited (there were two previous Archivists) in good order and attending to identified conservation needs. But I personally think that is too narrow and passive a view of the role of the Archivist. I see our existing records as a springboard for engaging in active research to throw fresh light on the contribution of members to the model soldier hobby. Some of the figures involved in the early history of the Society are not particularly well documented. We may know their names but their precise contribution has been lost with the passage of time. A number of projects are in train to discover more about these individuals.

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