

AN INTERMITTENT WANDER THROUGH THE PAGES OF THE PHONOGRAPHIC BULLETIN

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I have recently finished the task of scanning the sixty-one issues of the Phonographic Bulletin – the predecessor of the IASA Journal. The scanned journals are now available for consultation on the IASA website. The task was not undertaken by me alone: thanks for their help must be given to Richard Ranft, who had the job of tidying up the raw scans, and Bertram Lyons for his help and support. Also to be thanked is Detlef Humbert, the de-facto archivist of IASA's history, who supplied copies of journals missing from my collection.

As I was using a scanner with a document feeder, scanning was not a full-time job. I had time to browse and read some articles. The range of subjects covered by the Phonographic Bulletin is wide. The topics included “craft” subjects such as discography, documentation, technical matters and oral history. The future – and past – of IASA regularly cropped up. There are also many articles about the AV archiving methodologies used in institutions and the state of AV archiving in countries.

Articles that caught my eye included the following selection:

Bulletin 7 July 1973 – Timothy Eckersley provides the first of a number of articles over the years that consider the future of IASA. The article includes a question that is asked in various ways in later editions - “What is a Sound Archive?”.

Bulletin 18 July 1977 – David Lance on the role of the National Branches within IASA.

Bulletin 20, April 1978 – Dietrich Loticius expressing sadness at the lost chance to include TV archives within IASA because of the formation of FIAT in 1977.

Bulletin 21 July 1978 – Joop van Daltsen of NOS in Hilversum writing the Bulletin's first article about the use of computers in AV archives – a subject that grows in future editions.

Bulletin 25 December 1979 – Rolf Schuurmsma looked back over the eighty years since the founding of the first sound archive in Vienna in 1899 and the first ten years of IASA.

Bulletin 34 November 1982 – carried an article by Klaus Compaan of Philips of Eindhoven about the compact disc. This is a significant article because Mr Compaan was in many respects the Father of the CD.

Bulletin 39 July 1984 – Bill Storm wrote about the rationale and construction at Syracuse University of that rare thing in the AV world – a specially designed audio archive building.

Bulletin 51 July 1988 – in contrast to the paper about the CD by Klaus Compaan, Friedrich Karl Engel of BASF looked back to 1888 and the origins of magnetic tape recording in his article.

Bulletin 55 November 1989 – This edition carried an item by Joanna Bornat about oral history that provoked a response from Joe Pengelly in Bulletin 56. This, in turn resulted in letters from Ronda Jamieson and Joanna Bornat in Bulletin 56.

Bulletin 56 May 1990 – An article by Ray Edmondson entitled “Towards 2000 – A Frightening Future” sparked responses in Bulletin 57 November 1990 from Rainer Hubert and Helen Harrison.

Bulletin 59 November 1991 – Christopher Roads wrote about the key elements in the work of an AV archive – preservation and access. This foreshadowed the creation of the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme the following year which has Preservation and Access as the primary aims of the Programme.

This is only a small selection of the many articles carried by the Phonographic Bulletin from its first edition in 1971 to its 61st and last in 1992. Similar ranges of articles on the many topics that are of interest to the members of IASA are, of course, to be found in the pages of the IASA Journal.