Preservation Awareness Week: The Experience of the University of the West Indies Mona Library, Jamaica.

Dunstan Newman and Tereza A. Richards

ABSTRACT
Preservation, the safeguarding of the collection for the future, is a key area of practice in Libraries, Archives and Museums (LAMs). Using the UWI Mona Library’s experience as a case study, this paper provides guidelines, discusses the experience of one academic library in Jamaica, and attempts to introduce a Preservation Awareness Week (PAW) as a wider preservation campaign initiative. It demonstrates how this initiative can potentially shape and be used effectively as a preservation strategy to advance the agenda of preservation management of (LAMs) and other professional associations.

Keywords: Dunstan Newman; Tereza A. Richards; Preservation awareness; Preservation campaign; Preservation management; Preservation Awareness Week; Jamaica.

INTRODUCTION
Preservation Management (PM) provides the principle and framework that underpins and guides the different strategies for safeguarding the physical and digital collection (Brown, 2011, 191). Hence the preservation of materials is an essential element in the mission of Libraries, Archives and Museums (LAMs). Despite the principle of PM there is disparity in several LAMs worldwide. One way to address this disparity is to recognise that the practice of preservation begins, not when items begin to deteriorate from use, abuse or age, but from acquisition of the items and that LAMs need to plan and manage a preservation programme. The typical preservation programme contains the following components: Disaster planning, binding and book repair, conservation treatment, staff and user education/ training, care and handling, housekeeping, environmental conditions, and digitisation. Within each of these components, policies and strategies
are developed to ensure the various preservation guidelines are observed and enforced to ensure posterity of the collection and the mission of LAMs.

The preservation of materials and the implementation of guidelines governing the activities are the responsibility of staff, each department and the clients that use the materials. Therefore the treatment materials receive will directly affect the lifetime of their usefulness. Preservation requires establishing a balance between the degree of protection an item is given and the use it receives.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Preservation Challenge
One of the main concerns in LAMs since the 1980s is the conservation and preservation of their holdings. Materials in both developed and developing countries are still housed in conditions that are less than desirable and as a consequence many areas of the collection have been subjected to neglect. Some of the reasons for neglect are due to the challenges of funding, insufficient staffing, and the lack of expertise to take the necessary action to correct the situation. As a result of neglect, several areas of these collections are faced with rapid deterioration which is due to the effect of time, temperature, humidity control, usage, the constant increase in the cost of materials for the preservation and conservation, and the lack of trained and knowledgeable staff.

Traditionally, the view was that preservation planning should be made when the items are acquired and also should be considered on an item by item basis. However, Higginbotham and Wild (2001), note that since the 1980s the strategy is to address the entire collection, a preventative versus a retrospective preservation activity. “This newer approach, coupled with a strong interest in the protective (versus curative) aspects of preservation, emphasizes activities like staff and reader education,
emergency planning and recovery, and sound environmental control” (Higginbotham and Wild 2001, x).

A large number of LAMs worldwide have established preservation programmes in traditional, digital or a combination of both media. The sustainability of these programmes depends on these institutions being adequately equipped with knowledge, staff and financial resources. Therefore preservation is a pressing concern for librarians, archivists, and museum curators in all parts of the world. Despite this realization, several LAMs face serious challenges, there is a substantial number of institutions that lack the knowledge, physical space, human and financial resources. Similarly in the Caribbean, LAMs face these challenges and have recognized the need to perform basic components of a preservation programme. However, the success of any preservation programme will depend largely on the availability of knowledge, physical space, human and financial resources. One of the important components of PM is user and staff education, training and orientation which forms the wider preservation awareness campaign. Through this component, staff, users and the wider community are made aware of the techniques and strategies to preserve items for posterity.

There are some institutions that have the financial resources to establish a preservation programme but, Higginbotham and Wild (2001) have implied that “perhaps not every institution has yet gotten the word,” because to some of them, “preservation may still seem irrelevant” (Higginbotham and Wild 2001, x). The view expressed by the authors could also imply that this is a major challenge but from a different perspective. Some institutions only have partial programmes, while at others such initiatives are non-existent.
Preservation Awareness

Awareness of preservation problems over the past 40 years has seen where LAMs have introduced a number of initiatives to address the various preservation issues. These preservation issues are not confined to any single region as they are found both in developed and developing countries. LAMs have recognized the importance of promoting preservation awareness. This is normally executed in preservation awareness campaigns: preservation awareness through education, training, orientation and various promotion strategies to staff, their clients and the wider community through outreach programmes.

Vaughan (1997) expresses the view that, “preservation education for library users is more than just posters and no-food- or- drink policies” (xiii). They further explained that it involves the commitment and involvement of library administration to bring about a heightened awareness of preservation issues. Additionally, the author reinforced the fact that “raising preservation awareness of staff and userstakes an on-going commitment of library personnel” (xv). However, raising awareness and promoting preservation awareness in LAMs should not be limited to these groups only, but also to include persons from the wider community so that the message will have a much wider, greater and lasting impact.

Baird (2003) also supports the promotion of preservation awareness strategies and elaborates on a number of strategies that can be utilized in a preservation programme in small academic and public libraries. He suggests that there are several relatively simple things that libraries can do to promote preservation efforts not limited to training staff and patrons on the care and handling, but also to utilize posters, signs and book markers which can be effective and can be sourced from a number of suppliers. In addition, he further supports the fact that libraries can be creative by developing and designing their own posters and book markers by promoting preservation competitions among their
patrons. Those posters and bookmarks will be very effective in raising awareness of the issues early in the process, and that the effectiveness of any awareness strategy is not to work with library patrons alone.

One strategy of a preservation awareness campaign is the hosting of a Preservation Awareness Week (PAW) which was first introduced in May 2010 in the United States when the American Library Association (ALA) responded to the perceived need to attend to some 630 million items in collecting institutions which required immediate attention and care from preservation and conservation perspectives. The data highlighted that some 2.6 billion collected items are not protected by an emergency plan and these resources are in jeopardy should a disaster strike while personal, family, and community collections are equally at risk. (American Library Association 2011).

Based on the above discussion, the objectives of the paper are threefold:

- First, it discusses the experience of the University of the West Indies (UWI) Mona Library's launch of PAW, as a preservation awareness campaign, which is an expansion of the Library's preservation awareness programme. With the introduction of PAW at the Mona Campus library this can evolve into an annual or bi-annual event, as well as influence other LAMs to introduce PAW. This can be seen both as a strategy to increase preservation awareness and as an initiative to introduce components of PM at their institution if none exists.
- It provides guidelines/blueprint for institutions which are desirous of initiating and sustaining a PAW.
- Finally, it evaluates the event and makes some recommendations concerning the implications of PAW.
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRESERVATION AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

Genesis

The University College of the West Indies, was established in 1948 at Mona, Jamaica, and was the first Campus of the University of the West Indies. Subsequently, campuses were also established at St. Augustine, Trinidad in 1960, and Cave Hill, Barbados in 1962 and a conglomeration of centres across the region formed the Open Campus in 2008. The Mona Campus’ Library system consists of the Main Library, which serves the faculties of Humanities and Education and Social Sciences; four branch libraries Science, Medical and Law serving the corresponding faculties and the Western Jamaica Campus located in Montego Bay which is a multi-faculty campus. The operational structure of the Library consists of Technical Services, IT, Preservation, User Services and Administration. The Mona Campus has a decentralized preservation programme with a dedicated Preservation Librarian who has oversight for the traditional preservation components while digital preservation is operated out of the IT unit by a Systems Librarian.

The inaugural PAW at UWI, Mona Campus Library was launched on April 7th – 11th 2014. The theme of the week was “Be Informed! Come Listen and Learn”. PAW was the first of its kind at the Mona Library, and any of the campuses of the UWI. The aim of PAW was to introduce, discuss, demonstrate, and advance the Library’s preservation programme by focusing on select areas of preservation, to the following target audience: library personnel; faculty and students from the Department of Library and Information Studies UWI, Mona (DLIS); staff and students from the Mona Campus community; library technician students from Excelsior Community College (EXED); librarians from other institutions with responsibility for preservation of their collections and staff responsible for performing basic book repair.

This particular preservation activity had been under consideration for a number of years. However, the discussion came to the fore when it was placed on the agenda of the
Library’s 2012-2017 Strategic Plan under the Strategic Objective- “To Develop Preservation Awareness Programmes for the Campus”. After completing the Strategic Plan, a presentation was made to the librarians who were in full support of the venture.

The Planning
Planning the event took place over a four month period. A series of preliminary activities had to be undertaken before the actual planning began. The Preservation and Conservation Librarian, met with the Campus Librarian, a trained preservation administrator who was able to provide guidance and direction. A proposal of activities for PAW was presented to the Library’s Senior Management Team for further discussion and approval. In drafting the proposal, an examination of what had been done by ALA and other libraries provided insight into what could be included and areas that were unique to our situation and environment were considered. The initial proposal was ambitious, in that it was hoped that PAW would be a weeklong event which would mirror the standard set by ALA and other US Libraries. The final decision to have the activities of Preservation Week over two and a half days was based on two factors. Firstly, the concept for this was new and therefore in order for it to be successful and have great impact it was thought best to reduce the number of activities. Secondly, there was an Archaeology Conference being held at the same time, the theme of which mirrored that of PAW.

The idea of having a week of activities would both reinforce the message as well as cater to the target audience. The Library’s Multifunctional Room and its foyer, and the entrance to each Branch Library were ideal locations, as they were not only the main entrances, but were also high traffic areas for undergraduates, graduate students and faculty to a lesser extent. Additionally, having the presentations, live demonstrations and exhibition in these locations as they were highly visible areas contributed to the number of persons attending the various sessions.
Formation of the Team

To get broad input for the planning process team members were chosen from various sections of the Library. The rationale was that there would be a wide cross section of persons representing the interests of all the possible clients as well as to build a team for continuity. The team consisted of the Preservation Librarian, staff members from the Bindery, a user services librarian, the head of Special Collections and the librarian in charge of the Medical Branch Library.

Following feedback from the Library’s Senior Management Team, the planning team decided on a number of activities which were assigned to members based on their level of knowledge and competency. Activities included creating the theme; preparation of supporting literature and documents (bookmarkers, a brochure and a fact sheet outlining preserving the Library’s collection); creating the themes for posters, exhibitions, and displays; drafting the marketing and promotion strategies; deciding on the types of presentations that would be appropriate; selection of the presenters; determining the types of demonstrations; and logistics for the entire slate of activities.

The Campus Librarian and the management team were updated frequently through oral and written reports. This level of interaction was necessary for a number of reasons: the initiative had budgetary implications and marketing and public relations activities and any other information to be disseminated under the institution’s name had to be vetted and approved by the Library’s administration before being disseminated.

Meetings were held monthly initially, but a month from the event, meetings were held weekly to ensure that various activities were well organised, executed and the planned activities were ready. The team was also cognizant of internal and external limitations that could affect the success of the activities. Examples of these were: budgetary constraints: limited human resource at times; and non-deliveries by external parties.
such as the graphic designer and marketing and promotions. Bearing all this in mind, the team ensured that particular activities were completed at least three to five days in advance of the launch. In addition, the team was cross-trained in some areas to become knowledgeable and capable of assuming any responsibility, in the event that any member was unable to deliver on their assignment.

**Marketing and Public Relations**

Another major responsibility of the team was the drafting of notices, invitations, and designing the banner. Several promotional initiatives were employed in promoting PAW: the Library’s newsletter *Librations*, marketing and promotion activities by the Library’s Marketing Team; utilizing the UWI’s email system (Campus Pipeline); sending correspondence to the Campus’ Marketing and Communications Office to advertise it on the University’s homepage. In addition, invitations were sent to the Head of the DLIS who had to advise faculty and students; Heads of other Campus affiliated libraries; EXED for students enrolled in the Library Technician programme and the Library and Information Association of Jamaica (LIAJA) for posting on the Listserv.

At the launch, the Campus Librarian encouraged the audience to continue to develop good policies and practices of PM at the Mona Library, within the wider UWI community and at the institutions. She also challenged the audience to consider pursuing training in PM to put libraries in a good position to effect good practices and to ensure preservation of the institutions’ collections.

Whereas the theme for PAW was initially targeted at libraries, the presentation took a more holistic approach in that it focused on LAMs as well as broader Campus operations. The first presentation was by the Senior Assistant Registrar for Employee Relations, Compensation, Environment, Health and Safety, UWI Mona Campus. In this presentation, he spoke of the importance of occupational safety and health in the context of
preservation management addressing the need for carrying out work in the proper work environment, disaster preparedness, good policy and practice, prudent use of institutional resources, and the importance of developing good partnerships between the Library and other entities on the Campus. He commended the role that the Library played in advising, consultation and participation in mould abatement exercises. He further emphasised the vital role that PM has not only for the Library but also for Campus wide activities and suggested that the Library should have representation on the Campus’ Joint Occupational Safety and Health Committee.

Another presenter who touched on the issue of health and safety was the Occupational Safety and Health Manager who spoke about natural and man-made disasters and their impact in the work environment. He also addressed a mold outbreak at two locations on the Campus and the implication for the health of employees and productivity. The discussion concluded by highlighting the occupational safety and health issues for the bindery staff as well as exposure of library staff to certain hazards.

The Preservation & Conservation Librarian spoke on “Preservation Management at a glance.” He provided an overview of the history of preservation management; definitions of both preservation and conservation and postulated that the trend was to move from conservation to more preventative preservation for libraries’ entire collections.

The presentation covered:

- The factors or causes affecting the deterioration of library materials
- Persons responsible for preservation
- Programme planning
- Elements of a preservation program
- Factors contributing to the sustainability of the Library’s preservation program.
The success of the Mona Campus Library’s Preservation Program was attributed to the appointment of a Preservation and Conservation Librarian, support from the administration of both the University (Mona Campus) and the Library, establishing preservation activities and policies which have been developed and are fully integrated with other major library operations and functions. As evidence of this, preservation is positioned in the Library’s daily activities to ensure institution-wide support at all levels; the commitment to preserve the collection is incorporated into the Library’s Mission statement; the allocation of human and financial resources; the five year strategic plan addresses preservation activities; e.g. for building expansion digitization, the improvement of library binding and conservation techniques, on-going strategies to address environmental conditions and grant funding is solicited.

A panel discussion was held in line with the theme of PAW to ensure that if any questions arose from the presentations these could be addressed and finally, that the panellists were key players in preservation. The panellists were the Preservation Librarian; the Head of the West Indies and Special Collections; the Systems Librarian with responsibility for digitization and digital preservation; the Chief Binder and the Binder with responsibilities for binding, preservation and basic conservation treatment; and campus officers with responsibility for workplace and environmental safety and compliance.

Two posters were designed and mounted as part of the activities; a Preservation Assessment Model and Care and Handling Tips. Both posters catered for the diversity of the audience who were likely to attend the week’s activities. The first poster entitled Preservation Assessment Model highlighted six areas that can be used in the assessment of preservation initiatives. The areas are physical environment, facilities improvement, individual treatment, education and control, human environment and characteristics of the material. The theme for the second poster was Care and Handling
**Tips.** The tips that were highlighted were, retrieving items from the shelves, the necessity of using appropriate book marks, protecting books from liquid damage e.g. rain and moisture, not repairing damaged items without a trained person undertaking the repair, the possible damage that can result in using book drops, and showing respect for LAMs’ property. In choosing the areas for *The Care and Handling Tips* poster, the types of damage that occur most frequently in the libraries were borne in mind, hence the use of this medium to get the message across to all users and persons who are handling material. Miniature copies of the poster on *Care and Handling Tips* were printed and circulated to be mounted in the various sections of the Main Library as well as the Branch Libraries.

Complementing both posters were four different bookmarks which included photographs and preservation tips and a list of preservation guidelines that patrons should observe and were distributed to attendees and viewers. Photographs included items that were preserved by the Preservation Unit and were also used to advertise the Library’s website, Face Book page, search portal UWILinc and opening and closing hours of the Main and Branch libraries.

Although there were only three half days of activities, an exhibition was mounted for the entire week. Three displays were mounted highlighting:

- Items from West Indies and Special Collections that had received preservation treatment, preservation enclosures and basic conservation treatment.
- Tools, equipment and material used in the book binding and conservation processes.
- The workflow process for damaged books and pamphlets from the stage of being damaged by users to being rebound in the Bindery.
Demonstration of salvaging water damaged items were held at the Main and Branch libraries to reach a wide audience. The demonstration was aimed at advising and showing the lay person simple techniques of salvaging wet printed material. Brochures were designed to highlight key points of the salvaging process and were distributed to attendees. The information in the brochure focused on: salvaging wet books, documents and photographs; outlined precautionary measures for pre-handling of wet books; listed general supplies required and principles of air drying and freezing. The demonstrations were conducted by team members from the Bindery and at each location attendees had the opportunity to participate in the hands-on session.

The exercise exposed participants to some of the basic techniques in book repair. In selecting the techniques the level of the participants as well as the type of book repair that they could perform in their environment were considered. Owing to the fact that the duration of the workshop was scheduled for a maximum of three hours, only select types of book repair were addressed. Prior to the start of the workshop, the participants were asked to view the exhibits on the tools and materials used in book binding and the treatment of conservation. It was felt that it was important for them to view the exhibition so that they would know the tools as well as the types of materials used in the process.

The presenters were the Preservation Librarian, the Chief Binder, and Binders. The areas covered were: the anatomy of a book and tools required to perform select book repairs, breaking a new book to reduce damage, removal of dog ears, removing and cleaning marks from documents (crayons, gums, pencils and food), inserting loose pages (inserting missing pages using photocopied page/s), mending torn pages, breaking in new books and techniques to preserve damaged items. The participants were shown how to make book weights and they were informed of the importance of this piece of equipment in the book binding and repair process. The Chief Binder demonstrated the
techniques used in the different types of simple book repair. He was assisted by a team of binders who provided individualized help to the participants. The workshop culminated with each participant receiving a certificate of participation.

Evaluation of the PAW

Having been active participants in the planning and execution of the PAW, the authors would recommend that if an institution decides to introduce PAW and to make it in an annual event where it can be sustainable, then it is suggested that the institution start off with a small and manageable programme so that the outcome will have a meaningful impact. Because the field of preservation is wide and not all areas can be covered in any one event, there is the opportunity to identify different themes and areas of focus each year which will depend on the clientele, the institution and the type and nature of the collection.

In selecting the team it is advisable that there be representatives from all areas of the Library as this will ensure a group where individual’s exposure, interest, expertise, and concerns will guarantee success and sustainability of the event. In addition, consideration should be given to other persons who can make a contribution whether it is the guest speaker, presenters, panellists or demonstrators. To reach the widest possible audience we recommend that most of the activities be held outside the walls of the Library for greater visibility.

From the target audience over 280 persons attended the week’s activities. The participants were from the following organizations: Jamaican Archaeological Society, EXED Community College, and from the immediate UWI Mona Campus community: the Department of Library and Information Studies, the Human Resources Department, UWI Main and Branch libraries, SALISES, United Theological College of the West Indies, Faculty and students. It may be somewhat difficult to determine the actual success of
PAW and its impact on the various participants in such a short time after the activities. While the impact is too soon to be realized, one anticipate some change in behaviour, knowledge increase, awareness of some preservation issues and adoption of some of the principles in LAMs, and private collections.

The lessons learned from the experience of the planning, execution and launch of PAW have allowed the authors and team members to be able to provide guidelines to other LAMs who are desirous of considering PAW either as a preservation strategy or initiative or as an outreach programme. Finally, the experience which we have shared in this paper has also highlighted certain challenges as well as protocols that should be considered in order for PAW to be successful and sustainable.

**BENEFITS of a PAW**

An organisation implementing a PAW can derive several benefits:

- It has the possibility to make the connection across a wide cross-section of persons from the local community and not just persons who are associated with LAMS because of their varied interests as well as the varied types and formats of materials and how the materials can be preserved.
- It can further deepen the collaboration and cooperation among LAMs and their professional associations to get preservation on their agenda where it is non-existent or minimally practiced, thus increasing the knowledge and awareness to a much wider community.
- As an outreach activity for LAMs, PAW increases the awareness of users/clients as to how to respect, use and care for materials in their collections. In turn, it also increases users’ awareness of how to use and care for their own personal materials.
• LAMs can use PAW to connect with communities through events, activities, and resources that highlight what they can do, individually and together, to preserve their personal and shared collections.

• It has the possibility to enhance further research or documentation in preservation management. In addition, unknown family and personal collections can become known. This will facilitate the possibility of not only documenting but also preserving, enhancing and showcasing items and research which will increase knowledge about the items.

• It increases visibility of LAMs by putting information, photographs, and publications on institutional websites which can serve as a repository.

• Through Preservation Awareness Week activities, LAMs can promote displays of personal, family, or community heritage.

• LAMs may further benefit from the acquisition of items through donations.

• It provides the opportunity to organize a preservation workshop or event.

• It can be an avenue through which LAMs can secure funding or grants for preservation management programmes or preservation initiatives.

LESSONS LEARNT

Although the Mona Library has an on-going preservation awareness campaign, PAW was a first of its kind, where the team attempted this strategy to spread the preservation message. We recognized that there is room for improvement, in areas such as, marketing, promotion, and collaboration with local and regional institutions. A collaborative approach is ideal in order to have this initiative (PAW) develop and become successful with wider acceptance and lasting impact, which can continue to spread and promote the message of preservation for posterity in Jamaica.

The introduction of PAW at Mona and other LAMS in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean is quite possible, but with some degree of challenges. Despite the challenges of gaining
acceptance, and limited available resources, the authors would recommend the model used by the ALA in which there is a national impact catering to a diverse audience as well as wide-ranging institutions. If we adopt the ALA model, there would need to be a great deal of collaboration with the other campuses and the local library associations.

The administrative structure of the UWI Campus Libraries can facilitate the introduction of PAW on their respective campuses. The authors recognize that there will be a number of challenges in getting the initiative started such as financial and human resources. However, the blueprint provided here as well as the available literature on preservation awareness and the various activities and events that are available from other LAMS’ websites in North America will provide enough information that can be used for the planning of PAW. We would also suggest that it be held biannually, as hosting it annually may be challenging due to the lack of or limited available human and financial resources.

Professional associations of LAMS have an important role to play in sustaining a PAW. Therefore their assistance in advocating preservation awareness campaigns can be placed on their agenda. Their resources can also be tapped to ensure the programme has a national scope and coverage.

CONCLUSION
From the experience gained from the planning, execution and launch of PAW it can be concluded that the activities were successful in that the aims and objectives were achieved. In addition, it fulfilled one of the Library’s aims to be viewed as one of the leaders in preservation nationally and regionally. The success of the event was not only attributed to the overwhelmingly positive comments from participants and observers, but also from the possibility of making PAW an annual or biannual event and the strategic alliances forged with entities both inside and outside of the institution.
References


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