Unlocking the British Library’s Sound Heritage

BAAC 2017
Second life of heritage collections - management and use of audiovisual content
11 October 2017

Richard Ranft, The British Library
British Library’s sound archive

• 7 million tracks
• Published / unpublished/broadcast
• from 1857
• …to this morning
• many formats
• 120 years of non-stop listening
Uses of the collection

• Academic research on music, dialects, etc
• Education
• Science
• Creative uses
• Exhibitions, broadcasts, film soundtracks
• Documenting cultures
Russian Revolution exhibition, 2017
DJ Yoda – live BBC radio broadcast at BL
Punk exhibition 2016
Reconnecting / reviving cultures

- Batwa community in Uganda
- [Photo: Chris Kidd] Jeremiah Bunjagare listening to his own father performing
Composer-in-residence

https://youtu.be/5OqN5L5w-Ak?t=11s
Inspiration for graphic arts students
Sir Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle (1859–1930), writer, was born at 1 Edinburgh, on 22 May 1859, the eldest son and third of the nine children of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1832–1893), an artist and draughtsman in the Edinburgh office of the Morning Journal. His mother, Mary, née Foley (1839–1921), daughter of Catherine Foley, née Pack, was the sister of the Poor Law Commissioners. His father was at one time a Anglican clergyman, and was an officer in the British Army. His parents were immigrants from Ireland and were descended from landed Irish Catholic stock. They supplemented their meagre income by taking in lodgers, one of whom was Sherlock Holmes, played by Basil Rathbone. In 1864 Charles's growing alcoholism led to a temporary breakup with his parents, who were domiciled at Liberton Bank with sisters of the historiographer-royal for Scotland. He was educated at Eton College and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he met his future wife, Mary, née Foley (1839–1921), daughter of Catherine Foley, née Pack. 

Early life and education

In 1867 the Doyle family reunited and inhabited the overcrowded tenement at 159 Fettes Place, Edinburgh, the poorer half of a Newtoning cul-de-sac. Artistic talent ran in the family, and Doyle is said to have been inspired by his father's artwork. Doyle was a child prodigy and showed an early interest in writing. He was educated at Eton College and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he met his future wife, Mary, née Foley (1839–1921), daughter of Catherine Foley, née Pack.

Bibliography of British and Irish history

British Library, Sounds: early spoken word

National Portrait Gallery
Oral histories: Food Stories radio programme
Academic Research - dialects

• Janice and her grandson Jonathan in conversation:
  http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p016p6sp

• Spoken British National Corpus
Artistic re-use

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7bwx4uUnbV4
From these....
...to this
Providing access

- Copying service
- Sound & Moving Image Catalogue [http://sami.bl.uk/](http://sami.bl.uk/)

The Library can provide copies of recordings held in the collections to users who are able to obtain the appropriate copyright clearance. This is a charged service. Please read the information below before submitting an application.

Published date: 10 March 2017

Copyright

You must obtain permission from the copyright holder(s) before a request for a sound recording can be made.
British Library Sounds

Listen to a selection from the British Library’s extensive collections of unique sound recordings, which come from all over the world and cover the entire range of recorded sound: music, drama and literature, oral history, wildlife and environmental sounds.
### Top played tracks

**All time**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Track</th>
<th>Plays</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Piano trio in C minor op.1 no.3 / Beethoven (1905)</td>
<td>36,262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Barn Owl Screams, Wales, 1988</td>
<td>18,346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>First known recording of computer music, 1951</td>
<td>13,621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Babbling Brook, Cornwall, March 1996</td>
<td>9,155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Music from India: Sora ancestor song</td>
<td>7,717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Beethoven's tuning fork</td>
<td>7,445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Laughing Kookaburras</td>
<td>3,327</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kotawiec sawannowy [edytuj]

Kotawiec sawannowy[3], koczkan tumbili, werweta[potrzebny przypis] (Chlorocebus pygerythus) - gatunek ssaka z rodziny koczkanadowatych (Cercopithecidae).

Spis treści [ukryj]
1 Występowanie
2 Rozmiary
3 Tryb życia
4 Przypisy
5 Bibliografia

Występowanie [edytuj]
Południowa Afryka, Etiopia, Tanzania i Kenia. Zamieszkuje sawanny i góry na wysokości do 4 000 m n.p.m.

Rozmiary [edytuj]
Samce osiągają długość 45 do 85 cm i oraz masę ciała od 3,5 do 7,5 kg, z kolei samice, są mniejsze i cięższe. Kotawiec sawannowy to jeden z największych szarbaków.

Kotawiec sawannowy
Chlorocebus pygerythus[1]
(F. Cuvier, 1821)
## Wikipedia page views

### Views per file

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Image title</th>
<th>Views</th>
<th>Used on pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Unlocking our Sound Heritage project

• 2017-2022. Funded by UK’s National Lottery

• Lead by British Library (BL), with 10 UK partners

• Aims:
  – Transform access to and preserve the UK’s most vulnerable and at-risk audio heritage
  – Raise awareness of the importance and value of the nation’s sound heritage
  – Create sustainable centres of excellence in digital audio preservation around the UK
  – Involve new audiences in engaging with their audio heritage in innovative ways

• Digitised items & metadata stored and accessed from BL
The ‘hub’ partners working with BL

- National Library of Scotland
- Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums
- Manchester City Council
- Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru
- The National Library of Wales
- University of Sussex
- University of Leicester
- Norfolk Record Office
- British Library
- London Metropolitan Archives
Expected audiences

Typically: ‘Converted’ (Users)

Highly receptive (Limited / under developed use)

Passive interest (non-users)

Key types:
- Academics
- Researchers
- Lecturers
- PHD students
- Research practitioners
- Teachers
- Primary
- Secondary
- Community practitioners
- Learning activity coordinators
- Reminiscence therapists
- Community educators
- ‘Activists’ / Enthusiasts
- BAME / LGBT / ‘Buffs’
- Interested in history / heritage
Story of Skiffle Jazz in Liverpool

A promenade in Liverpool which reveals how teenagers were swept up by the music after hearing Lonnie Donegan’s Rock Island Line.

The Cavern Club

Eric’s Club
Thanks for listening!

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http://sounds.bl.uk
www.bl.uk/save-our-sounds
@soundarchive