

## **The archivist's nightmare: where are my items?!**

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For centuries archivists have been the persons who know how to retrieve the most peculiar documents, of any type. More recently they were also experts in different documentation techniques, capable to retrieve the sound or image from different carriers. In order to be able to perform these tasks, there were strict itemised catalogues introduced and kept in all archives. The transition to digital preservation has changed the very basis of archival work. The items (manuscripts, prints, tapes, cassettes) have been replaced by perceivable \*material\*, or "content". The archival item is gone: one cannot touch the exact spot of the HDD, where the information resides. And the issue of "born digital" material is even harder. All these issues create quite some difficulty at basically paper-oriented archives like that of the Archives of Latvian Folklore. Both cataloguing and description procedures are not prepared for this situation. But some solution must be found, and there are paths to follow.