



Newsletter

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Archives join forces to celebrate human rights

The Archive Awareness Campaign (<http://www.archiveawareness.com>) was launched with hundreds of archives across the country planning special events to celebrate the history of human rights in the UK.

The theme of the 2007 campaign is 'Freedom and Liberty', looking at the struggle for rights in history, including the Chartists, the Suffragettes and the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade.

This year archives reach out to people of all ages and ethnic backgrounds and have teamed up with artists, theatre and community groups to make their material more fun and accessible

Learn about Britain's history of gay rights activism at *1967 and all that*, a travelling exhibition about the decriminalization of homosexuality. Discover the link between your region and the slave trade

at talks and events such as Hertfordshire Archives' *Hidden History* workshops or London Metropolitan Archives' Slave Walks. Visit the Women's Library and find out about the unsung heroines behind feminism.

Jonathan Pepler, Chairman of the National Council on Archives, said: "The Archive Awareness Campaign offers something for everyone and gives people a unique chance to play detective and reinterpret the past themselves.

"This year archives will explore the more hidden history of the UK and are highlighting documents which haven't been as visible in the past. Almost every region has a connection to the slave trade, for example, and your local record office is the place to find it."

Paul Carter, historian at The National Archives,

said: "Everyone can find something relevant to them in an archive.

Looking at authentic materials offers immediate access to Britain's history of ordinary people who fought for many of the rights and freedom we take for granted today."

Special websites are offering access to newly digitised material, including the Parliamentary Archives slave trade registers (<http://slavetrade.parliament.uk>) and TNA's Human Rights online exhibition (<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/humanrights/>)

Events run throughout the autumn and are listed on <http://www.archiveawareness.com>.

Many archival projects have received funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, which is supporting schemes targeted at reaching new audiences.

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MLA LONDON SUPPORT FOR ARCHIVES

Following the resignation of Isobel Siddons in June 2007, MLA London expects that the postholder will join the MLA London team by January 2008. In the meantime we consultant Janice Tullock will support our on-going work for the archives sector in London. Janice is a qualified archivist, former archives development officer for MLA North West and Archives Fellow on the Clore Leadership Programme 2005/6. She now runs a consultancy service working with archive and heritage services, not for profit organisations, commercial companies and non-cultural organisations to research, plan and deliver archive and heritage projects. Contact her at archives@mlalondon.org.uk

Landmark resource gives 'vivid and extraordinary' picture of 19th century Britain's population.

A major new resource which makes freely available for the first time all British census reports from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was launched in London today. The Online Historical Populations Reports project's website gives an extraordinary picture of Britain's changing population from 1800 up to the Second World War, making available almost 200,000 pages of digitised reports and data. This resource provides a rich and compelling picture of a period of great change in British history.

Made available by AHDS History at the University of Essex and through JISC's digitisation programme, the new resource also contains Registrar-General's reports of the period, thousands of pages of documents relating to the administration of the census, specially commissioned essays giving the context of included materials and the complete texts of relevant legislation.

As a rich and accurate picture of a period of immense change and upheaval in British history, the resource also contains vivid examples of some of the prejudices and stereotypes then held among the population. For example, traces of anti-Catholic bigotry can be detected in remarks about occupational mortality in the Registrar-General's report of 1875: 'The mortality of catholic

priests after the age of 55 is high; perhaps the effects of celibacy are then felt.'

Class distinctions were reinforced by the report of 1851 which spoke of 'young children drink[ing] scalding water out of the spout of the tea kettle, or fall[ing] into scalding water. This often happens in the lower classes...', while an example of over-zealous reporting of 'accidents and diseases to the eye' is provided by an Irish census report of 1851 which includes details of 'the colour of eye'.

The resource has advanced functionality, including searching by date and geographical area, zooming, rotation of pages and the ability to download statistics into spreadsheet format.

Matthew Woollard, project director at AHDS History at the UK Data Archive at Essex, said: 'The Online Historical Population Reports (OHPR) histpop website will provide an extremely valuable tool for learning, teaching and research and is yet another milestone in the growth of vital historical documents which are now freely available online. Although focused heavily upon historical census data the design and functionality of the histpop website is equally applicable to dissemination of other analogous material. I am confident that historians, demographers and

others will find histpop an essential tool for their analysis and research.'

Catherine Grout, JISC's programme director, e-content, said: 'This resource provides a rich and compelling picture of a period of great change in British history and will be of enormous interest to lecturers, teachers, students and researchers in a wide range of subject areas. JISC is delighted to have supported the development of a resource which has not only delivered such important materials but which complements so well other primary research resources being created by the JISC Digitisation programme.'

Online Historical Population Reports is part of an overall programme amounting to a total investment of £10m in the digitisation of high-quality online content, including sound, moving pictures, newspapers, census data, journals and parliamentary papers for long-term use by the further and higher education communities in the UK.

For further information, go to: www.histpop.org www.jisc.ac.uk/digitisation_home.

Contact: Matthew Woollard (UKDA) on 01206 873704, matthew@essex.ac.uk or Philip Pothen (JISC) on 020 7848 2935 or 07887 564 006

Twentieth Century History Online Resource

Readers interested in Twentieth Century History may like to visit the website <http://trenchfever.wordpress.com/> which is by QMC historian Dan Todman. On a recent visit to the site the front page had items on subjects as diverse as the impact of V1's on Londoners, the Armenian Genocide (a link to Roger Fiske's article in the Independent) and Radio 4's "Book at bedtime" reading of *Singled Out*, which seems not to have met with the reviewers entire approval. There are links on a range of topics as diverse as Books, First /Second World War, Mentioned in Dispatches, Myth and Memory, Society and Culture, and What is History?

The Institute of Race Relations has been awarded a grant of £49,800 from the Heritage Lottery Fund to create an educational Black History Collection.

The grant has been made to allow the IRR, which has been collecting materials created by Black organisations and/or on Black struggles since the 1950s, to form these into a coherent collection, increase accessibility to all the holdings and interest young people in Britain's Black heritage.

'We are absolutely delighted', said Jenny Bourne. 'Although we know we've got incredibly rare and exciting documents at IRR, they are in all kinds of different files and boxes at the moment and so cannot readily be used. Because we've not had money for the library in the last thirty years, we've not been able to preserve things properly, let alone catalogue and arrange things. Now we have the chance to create a professional Black History Collection, and to digitise its catalogue. That should help many more people know about our holdings. But we are also going to create from the Collection an educational resource for use in Citizenship and History teaching. That way we hope to interest young people - from all ethnic groups - in Britain's Black and anti-racist heritage. It's something we've wanted to do for so long.'

An exhibition at the Hunterian Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons that deals with an earlier period of black history has also been advertised: Lincoln's Inn Fields, open Tuesday to Saturday from 10am to 5pm.

Exhibiting Difference is a unique contribution to the commemoration of the 2007 Bicentenary of the Parliamentary Abolition of the Slave Trade in the British Empire. It is an opportunity to broaden current awareness of the history of the Transatlantic slave trade through the history of medicine.

The exhibition focuses particularly on the hidden histories of Black Africans living with skin pigmentation conditions in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The project encourages us to explore issues of identity, self-image and cultural distinctiveness in modern society and examine our own attitudes and behaviour towards

people with a visible difference.

The forgotten histories of black Africans living with skin pigmentation conditions in the 18th and early 19th centuries are explored through this exhibition.

On display are two rare paintings of black African slave children. The little-known portraits depict Mary Sabina, who was born in South America in 1736, and George Alexander Gratton, who was born in St Vincent in 1808. Both children had piebaldism - a rare genetic skin pigmentation condition causing extreme white patches on the skin.

George and Mary were among

many black African men, women and children with similar conditions who were exhibited at public fairs and in private 'curiosity collections' as freaks of nature. These paintings illustrate the popular fascination with unusual bodies.

During the Enlightenment period when new theories about the nature of human races emerged, these skin conditions challenged established definitions and conventions. As social outcasts and medical phenomena, black people with spotted, patched or white bodies became a sought after commodity.

Non-conformist records for family historians from TNA

The National Archives' collection of nonconformist birth, marriage and death records from 1567 went online on 14 September 2007 for the first time.

A new partnership project between The National Archives and S&N Genealogy Supplies means that you can now access images of these records online. BMD Registers provides access to the non-parochial and nonconformist registers 1567-1840 held in RG 4 and RG 5.

Birth, marriage and death records are crucial tools for anyone researching their family history. Before 1837,

when civil registration was introduced in England and Wales, church registers provided an important source of information on births, baptisms, marriages and burials.

The National Archives holds 5,000 registers of a huge variety of nonconformist congregations, including Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Protestant Dissenters (known as 'Dr Williams Library') and Independents. There are also registers from a small number of Roman Catholic communities. Basic searching is free of charge, but there is a fee for advanced searching and to download images.

The entries are rich in detail and may include material about up to three generations of a family, helping you to add many branches to your family trees.

When the project is complete you will also be able to access further miscellaneous birth, marriage and death records from the series RG 6-8, RG 32-36 and BT 158-160. These include records of Quakers, of foreign congregations in England and of clandestine marriages before 1754, as well as miscellaneous foreign returns, and records of life events occurring at sea.

News from the Guildhall library

Building works and closures:

LMA

London Metropolitan Archives' public search rooms are being redesigned to provide a better environment for readers. This will affect both the Reference Room and the Reading Room and will mean that LMA will be closed to the public for a short period while the building works take place. When it re-opens, it will have more space for researchers including a new computer area to provide greater online access to digital sources.

LMA will therefore be shut from 4.45pm on Friday 2 November 2007 until 9.30am on Monday 21 January 2008.

AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

If you are planning to visit The National Archives at Kew between August 2007 and March 2008 then please check first.

TNA is finalising plans to enable essential works to be carried out to the fabric of its building in Kew. It will also take the opportunity to improve the layout of the reading rooms based on feedback from visitors. These enhancements will entail some building work. As a result there will be disruption to services from late summer 2007 to spring 2008, including the possibility of closing the reading rooms for a short period of time.

TNA is in the process of confirming the timetable of building works, so is unable to provide any additional information at present. However, specific information will be posted on the website at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/kew2008.htm?WT.ac=Kew-2008, and displayed at Kew and the Family Records Centre in Islington as soon as it becomes available.

CATALOGUING NEWS:

Charlie Turpie, Deputy Keeper of Manuscripts, who manages the section's cataloguing programme, describes some recently catalogued records.

Parish of All Hallows Barking by the Tower

Guildhall Library Manuscripts Sec-

tion has recently acquired microfilm copies of the parish registers, vestry minutes and churchwardens' accounts of All Hallows Barking by the Tower. They have been catalogued as Guildhall Library Ms 38526-36.

The microfilm copies of the parish registers (Ms 38526-33) contain (with some gaps):

- * baptisms 1558-1899
- * marriages 1564-1899
- * banns 1754-1809, 1852-99
- * burials 1558-1853

There are also microfilm copies of vestry minutes 1628-1829 (Ms 38534-5), and of churchwardens' accounts 1628-1900 (Ms 38536).

The church of All Hallows Barking by the Tower was founded in 675 by the abbey of Barking. An arch from the original Saxon church remains. The parish registers include entries for the baptism of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania (in 1644), and the marriage of John Quincy Adams, sixth president of the United States of America (in 1797). Visitors are welcome at the church which is open seven days a week. Access details are given on their website, www.allhallowsbythetower.org.uk.

Gabriel, Wade & English

An additional deposit of records of Gabriel, Wade & English, timber merchants, was made in January 2007.

The business was established in 1770 by Christopher Gabriel, focusing on plane, looking-glass and chair manufacture. From around 1812 the company concentrated on the importation and sale of timber. This additional deposit has been catalogued as Ms 38514-25.

Association of Investment Trust Companies

The records of the Association of Investment Trust Companies, which were deposited in the Manuscripts Section of Guildhall Library by AITC in 2005, have now been catalogued. It should be noted that these records are held off-site and require 24 hours notice for access.

Arthur Brown and Company

A small collection of records of the firm Arthur Brown and Company, traders in naval stores, turpentine, tallow etc, has also been catalogued recently (Ms 38438-44). The records were given to Guildhall Library by a private individual in 2007.

Amongst the handful of ledgers and other financial records, there are two interesting sketch books of staff, with caricatures and cartoons dating from 1931-47.

Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China

Assistant archivist, Wendy Hawke writes about the archive of the Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China which she has just finished cataloguing. Chartered Bank, as it was known from 1956, was established by Royal Charter in 1853. It was an exchange bank, controlled from the City of London, with a network of branches and agencies throughout India and the Far East. Despite its name, the bank never operated in Australia.

Perhaps of more general interest are the returns of staff, 1854-1960 (Ms 38433-434) and bank premises (Ms 38435-437). William Livingston was a typical recruit. He joined the Bank in 1888 at the age of 21 and spent a couple of years training at head office. In the Kobe agency in Japan in 1924. Here the agent, H L Mullins, was assisted by no fewer than 84 additional local staff who worked as typists, clerks and coolies. This small army included Miss Obata and Miss Nagatani, 'telephone girls', and Messrs. Fukuda, 'No 1 rickshawman' and Yoshioka, 'No 2 rickshawman'

Torn to shreds

Assistant archivist, Matthew Payne, reports on what happens to records not deemed worthy of permanent preservation. The Manuscripts Section frequently receives deposits of new material, as often as not now from businesses. Organisations will contact us with the offer of records for a variety of reasons: they are relocating, they need the space, they think the records might be of interest, the busi-

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News from the Guildhall library.

(Continued from page 4)

ness is now defunct etc. Usually staff from the Section go to view the material before deciding whether it is suitable, or selecting which records should be transferred. Sometimes (it seems increasingly so) time is minimal. We often have to survey records amidst the clearing of offices, or with the knowledge that anything we do not select in the next hour or so will be heading straight for destruction. In some instances, we have to arrange to take material unseen, with the provision that we have full power to destroy. Indeed we try to obtain power to destroy over all collections that we accept. This allows us to dispose of unwanted material, duplicates, ephemera, and worthless series or strays.

The Company of Watermen and Lightermen

The records of the Watermen and Lightermen's Company are some of the most consistently popular records held in the Manuscripts Section. Watermen and lightermen carried people and goods up and down the River Thames, and the Company had control over their activities on the River. The records are well-organised, very detailed and can provide more information about the company's members than those of many other City of London livery companies. Consequently they are very popular with those searching their family history.

Lloyd's of London Captains Registers indexes now available online!

We are pleased to announce that the indexes of the Captains Registers of Lloyd's of London are now available to consult online on the Manuscripts Section website at www.history.ac.uk/gl/capintro.htm. While there is still plenty of work to be done (and the slightly daunting tasks of the giant S and T indexes), we hope that readers will benefit from having the finished letters available online to help them with their searches.

Also coming soon to the website will be the indexes to the marriage licences of St Katharine by the Tower, currently only available to consult in the Reading Room. These indexes are

the result of another volunteer project, which was completed last year. You can find out more in at www.history.ac.uk/gh/newsletter3.htm. Watch this space for further details!

Events

Guildhall Library Manuscripts Section's Archive Awareness Campaign 2007 free events

The events will take place in the Whittington Room, Guildhall Library and all begin at 2pm, and are free. Numbers are limited. Please book in advance by telephoning 020 7332 1863 or email manuscripts.guildhall@cityoflondon.gov.uk. However, you are welcome to come on the day and see if there are any last minute places available.

7 November 2007: "A Place in the Sun: fire insurance records for local and family history", Brenda Griffith-Williams, A Place in the Sun (the Lottery funded project to index the policy registers of the Sun Insurance office). (1hr). 20 people maximum.

An introduction to fire insurance records as a source of information on London householders and traders in the early 19th century (i.e. pre 1837), of interest to family, social and business historians.

27 November 2007: "City of London and Livery Company Freedom Records", Elizabeth Scudder, London Metropolitan Archives, and Philippa Smith, Guildhall Library. (1hr 30 mins). 20 people maximum.

An introduction to the use and interpretation of the Freedom Records of the City of London and of City of London Livery Companies. The session will provide an opportunity to see examples of relevant documents and to discuss their content. You will find this seminar useful if: you are unfamiliar with the use of City of London and Livery Company Freedom Records and would like to know more; you are interested in family or social history; and you have an interest in the history of the City of London.

6 December 2007: Behind the

scenes tour of the Manuscripts Section store and Conservation workshop. (1hr 15 minutes). 16 people maximum.

Guided tours of Guildhall Library

Each session starts at 1.00 p.m. and will last for one hour. Sessions are free, but you must book in advance by phoning 020 7332 1868/1870 or by emailing printed-books.guildhall@cityoflondon.gov.uk

General tours: If you are interested in finding out more about Guildhall Library as a whole, a tour will take place on Wednesday 5 December 2007. You will hear about the history of the Library, see the collections, and visit behind the scenes.

Electronic resources in Guildhall Library: if you would you like to know more about our computer-based resources and receive help in using them? Practical sessions will take place on Wednesday 7 November 2007

Sources for family historians

You will be shown resources for tracing family history in the Printed Books Section, and then view a selection of original documents in the Manuscripts Section. Tuesday 13 November 2007

EXHIBITIONS:

The changing face of Cheapside, at Guildhall Library Print Room, 29 May to 13 October 2007. Admission free

Cheapside is currently undergoing a radical makeover. Over half of its buildings have been demolished in the past year and will shortly be replaced with up-to-date offices and shops.

SION COLLEGE, at Lambeth Palace Library, 3 September-1 November 2007. Free admission.

SURVIVING AGAINST THE ODDS - CARE OF BRITAIN'S HERITAGE REWARDED.

The battle to look after hundreds of years of British history was recognised last night at a ceremony at the British Museum. People and projects who have done most to ensure the preservation of valuable heritage items won deserved acclaim at the Conservation Awards 2007, which are supported by Sir Paul McCartney.

The top two awards, which come with a glass trophy and £15,000, went to contrasting projects - the miraculous preservation of a 400 year old silk jacket, and a unique university project in the north-east that will ensure the proper preservation of precious documents across the region.

Judging Chair Dame Liz Forgan, said: "It is only possible to enjoy and learn from our past because of the ingenuity, dedication and hard work that go into ensuring heritage items are kept and looked after with meticulous care and in the right environment. The winners of these Awards are an inspiration to others."

The miraculous preservation of a 400 year old silk doublet won the Award for Conservation. The fragile man's jacket dating from the 1620s had been painstakingly conserved in a 300-hour operation based on detailed analysis of the material and the way it had been made. Broadcaster Dan Cruickshank presented the award to Tu-

ula Pardoe of the Scottish Conservation Studio and Sue Payne, curator at Perth Museum, where the doublet is on show for the first time ever. The project was up against stiff competition from the multi-Award winning ss Great Britain and a National Trust project to restore an Elizabethan table carpet.

And a trailblazing scheme to spread advice on how to look after book and paper collections across the north-east ensured that Durham University Library picked up the Collections Care Award. The project, with funding from the Museums Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) North East, helped 50 organisations across the region equip themselves with the know-how to preserve vital documents, books and manuscripts in buildings ranging from a castle tower to an industrial unit.

MLA Chair Mark Wood presented the award to Liz Branigan, resident conservator at Durham University Library and Sheila Hingley, Head of heritage collections.

Other winners were:

Rachel Morrison and The Courtauld Institute of Art won Student Conservator of the Year for research into

cleaning unvarnished paintings.

Loyd Grossman presented The National Archives, Kew, with the Digital Preservation Award for the 'Active preservation at the National Archives: PRONOM and DROID' project.

Professor Norman Tennent and Dr James Nobbs won the Anna Plowden Award for inventing a computerised technique to improve colour-matching in ceramic conservation, presented by Baroness Sharp of Guildford.

The Conservation Awards are the UK's leading awards for the preservation of cultural heritage. They are sponsored by Sir Paul McCartney and supported by key organisations in conservation and collections care: the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), English Heritage, the Institute of Conservation (Icon) and the National Preservation Office. The Digital Preservation Coalition and the Anna Plowden Trust sponsor the awards in their names.

For more information visit www.conservationawards.org.uk. Pictures of the winning projects are available from www.picselect.com under English Heritage/Conservation Awards.

Heritage Builds Bridges has been funded by the HLF and is a partnership between the British and Foreign School Society, Brunel University and the London Borough of Hillingdon. The website is a combination of online catalogue and educational resources. The catalogue has been created using Adlib and combines both archive and museum databases for all the partners. The educational resources have been created with the help of local schools. At present there are resources for KS2, Victorian childhood and KS3, Industry and Empire, with a section for adult learners on Using Archives. They follow the national curriculum and use examples from all the collections as illustrations. There are activities, worksheets and teachers resources. These resources are designed to be of use in any school, not just locally, so any help in promoting it to any schools you have contacts with would be greatly appreciated. The site is not yet complete, we have funding for a further year to add to the cataloguing and create some more educational resources. Please visit www.heritagebuildsbridges.org.uk If you have any comments, good or otherwise, please let us know.

'The Hornsey Spirit' exhibition

This year, Middlesex University celebrates the 125th anniversary of the establishment of Hornsey College of Art. To mark this event, an exhibition about the history of the College, using material from the Hornsey College of Art Archive, will run from 1 October to 21 December 2007 at the Cat Hill campus of Middlesex University.

The exhibition looks at the origin and development of the College from its first home in Crouch End in 1882, through its growth and spread across north London, to its final location to the Cat Hill site in 1970 just before it became part of Middlesex Polytechnic in 1973. It explores the changes in art education over the last century and a quarter, as well as the historical context of events and developments at the College.

For more information, please go to www.mdx.ac.uk/arts/history/index.asp

The Women's Library Completion of cataloguing projects

The Women's Library is pleased to announce the completion of two projects:

Association for Moral and Social Hygiene

A revised and now complete catalogue of the Records of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene has recently been made available to researchers. This project was generously funded by The Wellcome Trust.

The Association for Moral and Social Hygiene is a gender-equality pressure group. It was established in 1915 following the amalgamation of the Ladies' National Association, and the 'British, Continental and General Federation for Abolition of Government Regulation of Prostitution', which later became the International Abolitionist Federation. These organisations were founded by Josephine Butler as part of

her campaign against state regulation of prostitution in England and Europe during the 1860s and 1870s. The Association, known as the Josephine Butler Society since 1962, is still active and continues to uphold its original principles of social justice, equality of all citizens before the law, and the need for a standard of morality, for both men and women.

This archive consists of: administrative papers; papers relating to numerous campaigns such as opposing traffic in women and children, and the state regulation of prostitution; material relating to the Association's work in de-regulating prostitution around the world; papers relating to the International Abolitionist Federation. There are also 454 photographs: the majority are portraits of individuals connected with the Abolitionist movement; there are also some portraits of Josephine Butler and members of her family. (163 A boxes; 4 albums)

Josephine Butler Letters Collection.

This project was funded by the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation. This collection consists of 2,480 letters primarily by Josephine Butler, but also by key members of her family (such as her husband, Rev George Butler) and by colleagues and friends (eg Henry Wilson). Josephine Butler was a Victorian social reformer who campaigned against prostitution and the Contagious Diseases Acts (1864, 1866 and 1869). The Collection has been described to item level. In addition to the original letters held by The Women's Library, this archive includes photocopies of correspondence held at the University of Liverpool Special Collections. (12 A boxes)

For the online catalogue see www.thewomenslibrary.ac.uk/archivemuseumcatalogue

Communist Party of Great Britain Archive Microfilming Project

The Labour History Archive and Study Centre (LHASC) in conjunction with the Communist Party Archive Trust and Microform Academic Publishers are undertaking a project to microfilm the Communist Party of Great Britain Archives. This is part of the ongoing preservation and widening access to collections undertaken by LHASC. As part of this process sections of the CPGB archive collection will be unavailable for researchers while being microfilmed. The majority of this work will take place from the 1 December 2007 and it is hoped that the project will be finished in approximately six months. However in order to be able to provide a more accurate timetable of the process a sample batch will be sent for microfilming. The following material will be unavailable for researchers beginning the week commencing 5 November for at least 2 weeks: CP/CENT/EC, CP/CENT/PC and CP/CENT/COMM. It is hoped that we will be able to ensure a quick turn around time and apologise for any inconvenience caused to researchers during this project. Any researchers wishing to use the CPGB archive are advised to check the website <http://www.phm.org.uk/> for regular updates and fuller timetables and to contact archive staff if arranging a visit.

THE ARCHIVAL IMPULSE: ARTISTS & ARCHIVES

Organised by ARLIS\UK & Ireland Visual Archives Committee in partnership with Tate Britain

There is increasing interest among artists in the processes of documenting practice, the construction of archives, and in the interrogation of the meaning of the past. This study day explores why the archive has become a central issue in contemporary artistic strategy. Bringing together leading artists, archivists, museum professionals and theorists it examines how the archive has been figured, contested and constructed by artists and seeks out the theoretical thinking behind a critical engagement with the past in order to provide a creative space for the future. Contributors include Bruce McLean, Julie Bacon, Ruth Maclennan, Uriel Orlow, Neal White, Sue Donnelly and Clive Phillpot.

Venue: Tate Britain Auditorium, London, SW1P 4RG.
Date and time: Friday 16th November, 10:00am - 6:00pm
Cost: £25.00 (£20.00 concessions)

EVENTS

1 November at Kings College London, Franklin-Wilkins Building, Stamford Street, SE1
Archives for London Seminar on Dating Family Photographs: techniques, fashions and flashiness.

Wednesday 14th November AfL visit

The Royal College of Surgeons of England: Cost: £5.00 Number of places: 15. Members please book.

Guildhall events are details in the Guildhall news on page 5.

Royal Society Library has advised us of the following events. They are open to the public, but space is limited, so please email library@royalsoc.ac.uk to reserve a place. Each event will last an hour, and will take place in the Library reading rooms at the Royal Society, 6-9 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AG.

Friday 2 November, 1.00pm

Robert FitzRoy FRS: sailing into the storm

John Gribbin of the University of Sussex is the author of more than a hundred books of popular science, including FitzRoy: the remarkable story of Darwin's Captain and the invention of the weather forecast'. In this talk, he discusses FitzRoy's career as captain of HMS Beagle and as a pioneering meteorologist.

Friday 9 November, 1.00pm

"Dr Livingstone I Presume": David Livingstone online at www.livingstoneonline.ucl.ac.uk

David Livingstone FRS, missionary, explorer, doctor and natural historian, was a prolific correspondent. A team of experts is now publishing his letters online, including those in the Royal Society's archives. Professor Chris Lawrence, Professor Anne Hardy, Dr Michael Hawkins, Dr Sharon Messenger and Caroline Overy, The Wellcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine at UCL

Friday 16 November, 1.00 pm

'Lord Cable': telegraphy, empire, and the making of Lord Kelvin PRS

Professor Bruce J Hunt, of the Department of History, University of Texas, speaks on Sir William Thomson. Known to later generations as Lord Kelvin, he was the quintessential Victorian physicist. He was also a leading figure in the development of the submarine cable network that linked the far-flung British Empire.

Digital Preservation 'Beautiful Promise or Insolvable Problem'

A report by Angharad Meredith on the AfL Seminar 6th September 2007, King's College London.

Digital preservation is a problem which is facing not only information professionals, but everyone. In the recent seminar held by AfL at King's College London, David Ryan offered simple explanations, practical advice, and workable solutions to this unwanted side effect of digitisation. David Ryan is Director of Records at The Royal Household and formerly Head of Digital Preservation at The National Archives.

The seminar was split into two sections. Ryan began his talk by discussing digitisation and how it is both empowering and problematic. The problems have arisen as digital storage media has changed over the years and is made worse by a vast variety of rapidly superseded software and hardware. These problems are not new – digital preservation is just the latest and largest in a line of technical preservation issues stretching back over 150 years since the invention of electro-mechanical means of record creation.

So how do we manage these issues? The second half of the seminar took a more practical form, with advice on where to go for more information and useful tips about preserving digital information for the longer term. Ryan chose digital photographs as an example of data which requires migration from old technologies to new, and recommended the website <http://www.savemymemories.org/> as an excellent source of advice for protecting digital images with easy to follow, step by step guides. Sensible storage makes preservation easier and taking simple steps such as updating the date and time of your camera, deciding on a suitable format to store your photographs in, deleting junk photographs and naming them sensibly by name or correct date, then backing your photos up to CD and deleting from the camera can make all the difference to their long term preservation. Also avoid cheap unbranded media especially with USB sticks and CDs, and keep up to date with computer magazines for useful advice. Once you have started your maintenance, stick to it as electronic data requires regular active preservation. Just a little bit of time spent storing photos in this way will make retrieval much easier and prevent the possibility of irretrievable loss of memories. For further advice on how to protect digital material see The Digital Preservation Coalition, The National Archives, British Library, and JISC.

October update from The Archives Hub

**** Collections of the Month: Betty Boothroyd ****

This month we look at Betty Boothroyd. Baroness Boothroyd of Sandwell is well known for having been the first woman Speaker of the House of Commons, a position she held from 1992 until her retirement in 2000. The Betty Boothroyd Collection is held at the Open University, where she was Chancellor from 1995 until 2006. The collection mainly contains papers regarding her time as Speaker, but also contains correspondence and materials regarding her career as an MP and her activities since stepping down as Speaker in 2000. <<http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk/oct07.shtml>>

**** Latest additions ****

Additional descriptions from the University of Bradford, the London School of Economics, and Loughborough University Archives; and also via the National Cataloguing Unit for the Archives of Contemporary Scientists (NCUACS) there are descriptions from Glasgow University Archive Services, Oxford University Museum of Natural History, the Royal Society, the University of Essex, University College London, and the Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge University. <<http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk/inst>>

These include the Youth Movement Archive, photos of Loughborough University events in the 1920s, and the papers of molecular biologist César Milstein (1927-2002).

<<http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk/news/>>

* Latest Additions newsfeed <http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk/blog_latest/atom.xml>

**** Archives Hub introductory course ****

The next Mimas Bibliographic Services course will be held at The University of Manchester on November 7, 2007. This includes an introduction to the Archives Hub. The same course will also be held at South Camden City Learning Centre, London on November 22, 2007.

<<http://www.mimas.ac.uk/courses/calendar.html>>

**** Archives Hub Blog ****

Your comments are welcome! You can post a comment here whether or not you have a Blogger account.

<<http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk/blog/>>.

Digital Lives Research Project

We are pleased to announce that the Digital Lives Research Project webpages and blog have gone live on the BL website - see www.bl.uk/digital-lives/. The Digital Lives project is designed to provide a major pathfinding study of personal digital collections. The project team drawn from the British Library, University College London and University of Bristol is led by Neil Beagrie of the British Library (the lead partner) and funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC).

The research for Digital Lives commenced in September 2007 and will run for 18 months to March 2009. We expect outcomes from our research to be of significant interest within the Arts and Humanities and the libraries, archives, and information sector. It will also be of potential interest to researchers exploring applications of digital memory in other areas such as health and aging populations and for individuals who wish to manage their own personal digital collections for family history or other purposes.

The web pages provide access to further information on the project, the latest project news and developments via the Blog, and publications and other research outputs from the project as they are finalised and released. If you are undertaking similar or related research we will be very pleased to hear from you and exchange information.

The editor welcomes contributions to the Newsletter and letters for publication. Please send your contribution to:
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