



Newsletter

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The independent voice for
archives in the Capital

Hammersmith & Fulham Archives

This is my chance to let members as a whole know how things have progressed and what we are trying to achieve.

When Hammersmith and Fulham Council first published proposals based on a consultancy report, they proposed to close the archives and local history to direct public access altogether and only provide a paid researcher to respond to enquiries. In January we added our voice of protest to those of local societies, though recognising that the scale of the cuts proposed made it unlikely that the service could survive in its previous form. The archives formed part of a heritage division that the Council was determined to remove. Fulham Palace has been transferred to a newly formed trust and the residual budget left to the archives did not include the salaries of the two remaining staff.

Jane Kimber, the borough archivist, ensured that we liaised closely with local society members and we joined representatives from the Fulham Society, Fulham and Hammersmith Historical Society, the Hammersmith Society and the Hammersmith and Fulham Historic Buildings Group for a meeting in February with the Director of Fulham Palace, Scott Cooper, who line managed the archives at that stage up to 31 March and retained a residual role until June.

It became clear at this meeting that there would remain a residual budget and that this could fund a reduced service involving a professional archivists and supported by volunteers. Although councillors are keen to trumpet this as a Big Society solution, we and the local societies were firm on the need for an archivist in a supervisory role. Initially this might have been a single contractor, but the picture rapidly changed when Dr Deborah Jenkins, head of the London Metropolitan Archives, who had been in discussions with Scott Cooper came forward with an offer for LMA to provide the temporary access service, with the support of volunteers recruited through the local societies. Budget was also found to recruit an intern to work on the collections – aiming at providing expenses to a qualified archivist looking for work for whom the additional experience would help with CV development.

I agreed to chair subsequent meetings of

what has now become the Hammersmith and Fulham Archives Consultative Group. Jane Kimber has supported the Group and will do so until she and Anne Wheeldon leave the Council in late May. We have been joined by Malcolm Todd from the National Archives Advisory team and by staff from London Metropolitan Archives. The service offer had developed sufficiently by 26 February that we could say the service was not to close and that there would be continued professional involvement.

So what is to happen to the service? LMA will have an informal agreement with Hammersmith and Fulham Council to maintain the collections and offer a public service. Following a closure for preparation for LMA to take on their new role, the archives will reopen for two days a month, on the first and third Wednesdays from 15 June. An additional half day will be used to respond to letters and emails.

Prospective visitors will be able to make appointments using a newly created line at LMA, which will be answered by staff in their opening hours. Opening days will be supported by two volunteers – a team of twelve is likely to form the basis of the offer, ably directed by Maya Donelan of the Fulham Society. Reprographic arrangements and charges will be the same as those at LMA. Back office services will include collection management, supported by two interns – one funded from the societies and the other by LMA. LMA have appointed their experienced staff member Wendy Hawke from their access team to be the public face of the service, but she will be supported by access team colleagues and staff in collections management and education and interpretation. There may also be some level of outreach activities – this is under discussion. Details of the public service will be given on the LMA and Hammersmith and Fulham websites.

This is seen as a temporary arrangement – lasting up to March 2012 at the latest – while discussions take place on the long term future of the service and its collections. The outcome is not ideal but AfL has taken an active role in negotiating this outcome because we feel it is the best that can be achieved at present. The consultative committee will continue to monitor the temporary service and contribute to discussions on the longer term future of the collections and the public service.

David Mander, AfL chair

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The National Archives

Several items on the National Archives (TNA) have crossed the editor's desk in the last weeks ...

Culture Minister Ed Vaizey has announced that support and leadership for the UK's archive sector will transfer to TNA from April 2012 following the closure of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA).

The MLA's current role, as the government's agency for developing and improving England's museums, libraries and archives, involves acting as advocate for over 2,000 bodies in the archive sector and helping archives improve their services and public access. Responsibilities are being transferred to The National Archives following the Government's review of arm's length bodies.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport is now working with The National Archives and the MLA on the transfer of responsibilities and the timing of the transfer.

For further information, see the full story at [the national archives news](#).

A report in The Guardian records that TNA has won the Queen's Award for Enterprise for developing a system to preserve digital information, which has since been adopted by libraries and archives around the world.

It said that Safety Deposit Box (SDB) helps to ensure the survival of digital information over long periods of time, despite changes in technology.

The award went jointly to TNA and its partner on the project, IT and consultancy services firm Tessella, who delivered version 4 of the package in 2010.

The chief executive of TNA pointed out that whilst paper records can last for hundreds of years in the right conditions, "digital records are extremely vulnerable to changing technology. The National Archives and Tessella have worked together to develop a best-in-class archiving solution which has since been adopted by archives and libraries all over the world. This innovative approach is one key step to ensure digital records remain accessible for good."

60th anniversary of the Festival of Britain

To coincide with the 60th anniversary of one of the most iconic festivals in the UK, images from the National Archives Festival

of Britain collection series (WORK 25) have been published online for the first time. Highlighted as part of the Archive Awareness Campaign, the images include artwork, architectural drawings, photographs of the South Bank and festival preparations.

TNA holds many thousands of unique items telling the story of the Festival. There are papers which reflect the origins of the idea, construction plans, photographs, sketches and colourful designs as well as all the official government memos.

Departments from across the British government took an interest in the Festival. Foreign Office correspondence (FO 953) include ministerial discussions and briefing papers concerning the planning. The Korean War broke out in June 1950: officials were concerned that if the Festival had been cancelled, this would have been interpreted abroad as a signal that Britain was preparing for war with the Soviet Union. Another record shows proposals were put forward in 1952 by the government to use the Dome of Discovery for a meeting of the United Nations General Assembly.

In 1947, after nearly a decade of war time austerity, rationing and making do, the government decided it was time for "a tonic for the nation". Herbert Morrison, Home Secretary proposed to mark the centenary of the Great Exhibition in 1851 with "a national display illustrating the British contribution to civilisation, past, present and future, in the Arts, in Science and Technology, in Architecture and Building Research, and in Industrial design."

The Festival opened on 3 May 1951. During the summer over 8 million people visited the Festival exhibition on London's South Bank, where the name 'Festival Hall' still recalls the time. Events included exhibitions and displays about the land and people of Britain, pleasure gardens at Battersea Park.

Visitors to The National Archives' online image library www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/imagelibrary/festival-of-britain-showcase.htm can browse images of posters, photographs, architectural drawings.

Parking: TNA says it has delayed the implementation date of the imposition of parking charges, and has decided to extend the free parking period. Assuming there are no new external pressures, TNA anticipates the free parking period will continue for 12 months.

London Lives Project

This project, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council and others, has created a massive on-line database with details of 'plebeian' Londoners, rather than the rich and famous.

The aim is to use nominal linkage to create records of those who came into contact with the authorities. In this way a fuller picture of their lives can be fleshed out.

Old Bailey Proceedings have been available on-line for a while. This web site supplements these to create what it describes as "the largest printed source detailing the lives of non-elite people ever produced". It claims that there are over 3 million name instances recorded.

The records include Coroners' Inquests relating to deaths thought to be suspicious, but which did not result in a formal prosecution. The poor relief records of three parishes St Botolph Aldgate, St Clement Danes and St Dionis Backchurch have been transcribed. There are lists of prisoners, and biographies of executed criminals written by the chaplain from Newgate Prison. Plus many more.

There is a search facility: naturally I put in my own name, and was amazed to find that Peter Jackson occurs in 262 entries. One occurrence was a receipt for 2/- for the delivery of 24 loaves to prisoners in Tothill Fields on 12 April 1779.

The site includes plenty of background reading about the sources, and an extensive bibliography. Images of the documents, with a magnifier to help reading, and transcriptions are available. To take full advantage of the site you need to register, but this is free. Visit www.londonlives.org

LSBU Catalogue

London South Bank University (LSBU) launched its online catalogue at www.lsbu.ac.uk/archivescatalogue to facilitate the first ever global access to historical records depicting life as a higher education student in South East London over a century ago.

The catalogue was launched at the same time as the official opening of LSBU's new Archives Centre on 30 September 2010. The Archives contains collections for the Borough Polytechnic Institute (LSBU's predecessor), the South London Polytechnic Institutes Council and for various institutions that have merged with LSBU over its 118 year history, such as the Brixton School of Building and the National College for Heating, Ventilating, Refrigeration and Fan Engineering.

The new online catalogue includes over 1,800 records describing items such as student magazines, minutes, press cuttings, prospectuses, trophies, DVDs, annual reports and building models. The catalogue also contains numerous digitized photographs, many of which date back to the late 19th century. For more information visit www.lsbu.ac.uk/archives

Hackney Archives closure

Regular users of the facility will be aware that Hackney Archives, in De Beauvoir Road, closed back in February.

The archives are moving to a new purpose-built library and archive centre in Dalston Lane. When it opens this will no doubt offer improved facilities for all users, but the editor has seen no firm date for this opening, merely a mention of 'later this year'. Staff at the office said the date would be "late summer". With the current spending cut-backs it is clear that archive services are not a high priority, reasonably so, do not be surprised if the date is later.

Huguenot Society Proceedings

The Proceedings of the Huguenot Society, first published in 1885, cover a wide range of topics related to Huguenot history. As well as academic articles on the Huguenots as a group and as individuals, both in France and in the countries of the Refuge, the Proceedings contains a wealth of sources for family history, including lists of apprentices, soldiers, and recipients of charity. These sources are particularly good for London and the South East, the West Country and East Anglia, and for Ireland. The journal is also strong on the contribution of the Huguenots to British cultural life, and has a broad coverage of the history of Protestantism, immigration, and toleration. The digital archive of the Proceedings is fully word-searchable, and can be browsed via a list of contents.

Access to the database will be by password, which will be available to libraries subscribing to the Proceedings, OR by IP recognition, as agreed between the subscribing institution and the Society. Please see the Society's website at www.huguenotsociety.org.uk/membership for details on institutional subscriptions, or contact the Administrative Officer admin@huguenotsociety.org.uk

Victoria Tower Treasures

To mark the 150th anniversary of the completion of the Victoria Tower the Parliamentary Archives has selected 150 treasures from amongst the three million historic records of both Houses of Parliament for a publication entitled *Victoria Tower Treasures* from the Parliamentary Archives. Written by Caroline Shenton, David Prior and Mari Takayanagi the book features images of each of the treasures which illustrate the history of Parliament and the Palace of Westminster since the fifteenth century. Included are iconic documents such as the Death Warrant of Charles I, the Bill of Rights, the Stamp Act and the Great Reform Act, as well as lesser known but significant items such as a ticket to George IV's coronation banquet, a suffragette banner, a plan of proposed waterworks at Kennington Oval and a sample of an oil slick.

Victoria Tower Treasures is available from the Parliamentary Archives (0207 219 3074, archives@parliament.uk) at £17.99. It can also be purchased from the Parliamentary Bookshop (www.bookshop.parliament.uk).

London Record Society

The publications of the London Record Society (LRS) are becoming available online: several of the earlier volumes are out of print, and at the time of writing volumes 1 to 31 can be found at the British History online website. A full list of the LRS publications, with links to the online text where available, can be found at the LRS web site www.londonrecordsociety.org.uk/publications.html.

Cost Overruns

... would seem not to be a uniquely British problem. The cost of building a digital system to gather, preserve and give the public access to the records of the US federal government has ballooned as high as \$1.4 billion, and the project could go as much as 41 percent over budget, government auditors reported in February.

The Government Accountability Office blames the cost overruns and schedule delays on weak oversight and planning by the National Archives, which awarded a \$317 million contract to Lockheed Martin six years ago to create a modern archive for electronic records.

The Archives' largest and most complex capital project ever has been plagued by problems, and it is still struggling to conduct effective oversight, auditors said.

Cleveland Street Workhouse

There was a brief report on the workhouse in the last newsletter. Further news:

Dr Ruth Richardson has discovered that Charles Dickens lived only 9 doors away from the workhouse. His address was in a street called Norfolk Street, which is now the southerly part of Cleveland Street, and is now included in its numbering. None of the biographers seems to have noticed this - they knew the address, but did not notice the workhouse. Remarkably, the house still stands, on the corner with Tottenham Street. The fact that there was a workhouse so close to his home (he lived there twice before he wrote *Oliver Twist*, and for over four years in all) of course means that your support for the workhouse was not for just any old workhouse, but for the very one which may have been the inspiration for the most famous workhouse in the world.

The Dickens Fellowship is supporting efforts to get a blue plaque on the house. An appeal, with new evidence, has been made to the government Minister, which thankfully has been greeted with a request to English Heritage to re-consider its earlier report. The earlier report recommended listing for preservation, and we are hoping the reconsideration will too - especially as the new evidence includes the Dickens connection. English Heritage is about to submit its report any day, and the Minister will then consider it.

News release from the BBC

The **Reel History of Britain** is a twenty part series for BBC2. The programme will focus on different aspects of British life in the twentieth century, told through the rare and unseen film archive of the British Film Institute and regional film archives. It will be presented by Melvyn Bragg.

Each episode will focus on a different aspect of social history and will be filmed at a different location, where we will take our original 1960s mobile cinema, (see link www.vintagemobilecinema.co.uk/), a converted Bedford van. We will be asking people who appeared in the films, or who have memories or stories from the time to come along and share them.

One of the areas that the series will look at is 1930s rural life. As part of this episode we will be showing Mary Field's 'This Was England' and other archive showing daily farming life. We are particularly keen to make contact with anyone who might have appeared in 'This Was England'. We are also looking to speak to anyone whose family farmed in the 1930s or anyone who can talk about any interesting aspect of 1930s rural life.

BBC Archives

Amazing what the BBC digitise and put on the web: they have digitised many of the 'episodes' of Desert Island Discs and put them online, together with details of the interviewees luxury items. The programme began in 1942, there appear to have been quite a few musicians in the early programmes as both Ivor Novello and Dame Eva Turner appeared in April 1942. Even for those programmes not available on the web there is a list of the music the interviewee chose. Visit www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/features/desert-island-discs

The BBC has also teamed up with Cengage, the provider of web-based teaching materials, to put online the archive **The Listener**. The periodical ran from 1929 to 1991, and for the early days of the BBC when much broadcasting was live and not recorded, it formed a journal of record for some of the more 'intellectual' talks that the BBC broadcast under its then Director-General Lord Reith. Although based on radio, and later television programmes, the paper engaged more widely with the issues of the day than purely what was broadcast.

Details at gale.cengage.co.uk/thelistener but you need an institutional subscription to view the content.

Mandela Archive

Nelson Mandela, former South African president, was a prolific letter-writer who produced a mass of personal documents: they are now kept at the Nelson Mandela Foundation headquarters in Houghton, Johannesburg.

Mandela's public documents are stored in the South Africa's National Archives in Pretoria. They include letters he wrote and received while in jail on Robben Island.

A team of experts from Google was to visit the archive to investigate digitising them, as many are now in poor condition

Visit www.timeslive.co.za/local/article976693.ece/Mandela-archive-to-go-online for more details.

Patricia Knowlden 1927-2011

Patricia Knowlden, who died on March 1st this year, was a valued member of the London Archive Users' Forum's management committee from an early point in the organisation's life. A lifelong resident of West Wickham, she joined us recommended for her expertise in the local history of the Bromley area of Kent and her close association with local history at the national level. She was throughout her service, which lasted until LAUF was wound up on the formation of AfL, an active member of LAUF, and was particularly involved in the organisation of its well-supported and varied programme of visits to archive repositories, as well as advising on the production of publications and contributing to local campaigns. She brought to all these fields a knowledge of local history that was deep, long-standing, and also of considerable breadth – ranging from manorial matters to her recall of hands-on personal experience as a (very young) air raid warden in WW2.

At the same time she was on the governing council of the British Association for Local History (she had been present at its inaugural meeting in 1982 in Holborn Town Hall) and over time played a number of roles for BALH. All such organisations continue to need the sort of steady and dedicated support that Patricia gave, and we owe her our gratitude. We understand that she was this year to be the recipient of one of the BALH's annual awards for lifetime achievement in the field, and it is particularly sad that she will not be there to receive it.

Tribute written by Isobel Watson

Kafka's Letters

A collection of letters from the writer Franz Kafka to his sister Ottla are to go on display at Oxford after the Bodleian Library, jointly with the Deutsches Literaturarchiv in Marbach, have bought them. The letters had been scheduled for public auction in Germany, but an agreement has been reached between the two institutions and the sellers. The Bodleian had held some on deposit, but they had remained in the ownership of Kafka's descendants.

The collection of more than 100 items, preserved by Ottla's daughters (comprising letters, postcards and picture postcards) contains almost all the surviving correspondence that Kafka sent to the youngest of his three sisters.

Brixton Windmill

Yes, there is a windmill in Brixton. A grade II listed building it has been restored and should have reopened on 2nd May, just after this newsletter is issued. The structure dates from 1816, and it was in the hands of just one family, the Ashbys, for its working life to 1934.

A local interest group purchased the mill, and restoration ran from October 2010. The web site at www.brixtonwindmill.org has pictures of the mill and its parts (the stones in particular), and some evocative black and white pictures of the mill in last winter's snow.

Egypt Exploration Society

AfL's March visit was to the Egypt Exploration Society (EES) The EES was founded in 1882 by Amelia Edwards. Today its library and archive is located in Doughty Mews, not far from the British Museum, to which it has donated some 1000 objects.

It does not hold any artefacts itself: the aim of the society is to promote interest in Egypt and to sponsor research into the country's history. To this end it holds a substantial library of books about Egypt, and since 1883 it has published, and today continues to publish, records of excavations in Egypt. These records include the *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, the less academic *Egyptian Archaeology*, and very recently the EES newsletter (issue 1 is dated Spring 2011). There is an active programme of seminars and visits, the newsletter lists seven from May to September.

Our host, Chris Naunton, gave us a talk about the society and its work, and then showed us round. It soon became apparent that the society needs different premises, there is an enormous tree growing right outside one of the windows, a threat of substantial development at the end of the Mews, and the space is not of archival standards: but the present site is very convenient, and with central London prices ...

In theory the society hold records only of work when it is completed and published; current work is (theoretically) not included, but some runs on for many years, so some records of work in progress are made. These records also include day-books and note books written by the excavators.

The society holds an enormous collection of pictures in many formats: there is a large collection of glass plate slides that has now been digitised; collections of photographs and 35mm slides of excavations in progress and items retrieved. Anyone who has visited the Nile valley may well have been to the temple of Hatshepsut near Luxor; the image is of work there in 1889.

Picture
© Egypt
Exploration
Society,

with thanks for permission to use it. Web site: ees.ac.uk



Local History Day 2011

The BALH local history day this year returns to its accustomed venue at Friends House (after an outing to the IWM last year). It takes place on 4th June, with a lecture "Eviscerating, Embalming and Boiling" by Dr Archer of Oxford.

The day comes at the end of Local History Month, running through May. At the time of writing the Local History web site shows very few events in the London region in May, so (editor's personal view) there would seem to be scope for better publicity.

Sir Thomas More

The London and Middlesex Archaeological Society organizes a monthly lecture (from October to May), at the Museum of London. At the meeting in February 2011, the lecture was the presidential address, the last of her 3-year term of office, by Prof. Caroline Barron. Its subject was the life of Thomas More.

Thomas More is probably best known for his book *Utopia* (from the Greek for 'good place', published in 1516), a commentary on contemporary European politics. His family was a London one: Thomas was born on 7th Feb, 1478. He benefited from a bequest to his father John from the latter's maternal grandmother, Johanna Leycetser, an heiress who inherited from her father John, a Chancery Clerk. Johanna's husband John Joye was a brewer, a member of the Fraternity of St. Botolph Aldgate. The bequest enabled Thomas to take a legal training at Oxford. He may have thought about joining the Carthusian order: the London Charterhouse was near his home in London. But he chose a secular career, rose through the ranks, became undersheriff, a lawyer and an MP. He entered the service of Henry VIII, becoming chancellor in 1525 when Henry dismissed Lord Wolsey. But as a Catholic Thomas was unhappy with Henry's break with Rome, for which Henry did not forgive him, and he was executed at the same time as the first Charterhouse monks in 1535.

More knew Erasmus: Erasmus' *Praise of Folly* was begun at More's house in Bucklersbury in 1509. As well as *Utopia* More's own writings include the *History of King Richard III*. This book was hostile in tone to the king's deeds, and may have been one of the influences for the unflattering picture painted by Shakespeare in his play. More was canonised in 1886.

A short summary like this cannot capture the wealth of incidental detail with which Prof. Barron illustrated her talk.

Hungarian Records

The website of the Canadian Historical Association has the following news:

"A deeply problematic piece of legislation currently in the works in Hungary, which would allow for the destruction of a significant portion of the country's national archival heritage. In December 2010, Hungary's parliamentary secretary for justice announced that his government believes that a democratic state cannot "preserve the immoral documents of an immoral regime." By November 2011, the Government of Hungary plans to introduce legislation that will permit the removal and destruction of Hungarian communist secret police, interior ministry and state security files currently held at the Historical Archives of Hungarian State Security in Budapest, and available to researchers, as well as to survivors and effected communities.

"The new law will allow survivors to remove original and irreplaceable files from the archives and do as they wish with them, including selling them or destroying them at home. As copies will not be kept of these original documents, researchers and future generations will no longer have access to tens of thousands of files. Additionally, the logistics of removing and scattering these documents is deeply flawed, considering that

most of these files refer to groups of people, rather than just individuals, raising the question of who will be able to walk away with the original of any single document."

National Archives Pictures

The National Archives has digitised the entire African section of the Colonial Office Photographic Collection, and made them freely available to view online.

The collection covers more than 100 years of British rule in Africa, dating back to the 1850s and including some of the earliest known images of Africa. The 2nd Earl of Granville, Secretary of State for the Colonies in the 1860s, requested that governors in the region collect and create the images, instructing them to record "noteworthy buildings and scenery....together with individuals peculiar to the colony". The images and their original captions reflect the era in which they are made, explains Jenni Orme, record specialist of diverse histories at the National Archives, so they often name the white Europeans but usually refer to the Africans in blanket, now-offensive terms.

In response the National Archives has launched a public outreach programme, making contact with communities who can help build fuller, more contemporary readings of the images. The programme has visited three areas so far, and has already thrown up some interesting responses. "At a session in Battersea, London we learnt that a caption referencing Queen of the Gallas, Ethiopia contains a racial term now considered extremely offensive," says Orme. "We had had no idea. At another session, a man who identifies as lbo was able to give us an incredibly full description of Nigerian fishing apparatus, both historical and contemporary."

Visit www.flickr.com/photos/nationalarchives

Personal Archives

Recent archives news has included the details of two personal archives.

Alan Turing: The National Heritage Memorial Fund has made a generous donation to keep Alan Turing's notes and scientific papers in the UK, rather than allow them to go to a private buyer. Turing was one of the founding fathers of modern computing and a key figure in breaking the German Enigma code, and his work will now be kept in its "spiritual home," Bletchley Park, which was the centre of Britain's top secret code-breaking effort during the war. Jenny Abramsky, the fund's chairwoman, said the collection would be a permanent memorial to "a true war hero."

John Le Carré has given his literary archive to Oxford University. The collection was contained in 85 boxes of material that le Carré, 79, has given to the Bodleian Library. It contains the many drafts of his novels plus piles of correspondence and private photographs. Le Carré studied at Oxford as did the fictional Smiley, and in 1995 he unmasked his Lincoln College tutor, the Rev Vivian Green, as the inspiration for the character. "Oxford was Smiley's spiritual home, as it is mine. And while I have the greatest respect for American universities, the Bodleian is where I shall most happily rest," he said.

Jewish Records

Anyone researching Jewish families may be interested in the records of the Great, New and Hambro Synagogues. These have been transcribed over the last few years. The last of three volumes has recently been published, the volumes amounting to some 2000 pages in total. The Hambro closed in 1936 when it merged with the Great, the latter destroyed by bombing in 1941.

More information about the synagogue on the website at www.jewishgen.org/JCR-uk/London/hambro/index.htm and on the publications direct from harmir908@gmail.com

Woolmark

The London College of Fashion has put online some 2000 photograph images taken from its 'Woolmark' collection. An initially small collection of around 400 digitised images has now been extended with the help of a Heritage Lottery Fund grant, and includes over 2000 further digital images. These additional images include many more famous designers, and also increase the span of the whole collection into the early 1980s.

The site says:

"The International Wool Secretariat, now The Woolmark Company, was established in 1937 to undertake research and the global promotion of wool. To that end, they built up a large library of promotional photographs and accompanying press releases which they generously donated to the London College of Fashion in the 1980's when they relocated and were short of space. The two thousand or so black and white photographs date from the 1940's through to the early 1980's and capture both the fashion of the time and the style of photography. The press releases, which in some cases are still attached to the photographs, give additional information about the garments, designers/manufacturers, the photographer and any points of interest reflecting the promotional style and language of the time."

Visit www.vads.ac.uk/collections/LCFWOOL.html for details and to view the images.

Dickens' House

The editor went on the visit to EES (see p4), and was delighted to find that the neighbouring Doughty Street houses London's Charles Dickens museum. Dickens family lived here from April 1837 to December 1839, so a relatively brief period in the author's life (1812-70).

The first floor holds two rooms reproducing the decor as it might have been in his time, with carpet wallpaper and furniture all based on contemporary records. The sun was shining in on the occasion, and the room was wonderfully inviting.

Whilst living here Dickens completed the *Pickwick Papers*, and wrote *Oliver Twist* and *Nicholas Nickleby*. *Oliver Twist* was first published in Bentley's *Miscellany* in 1838. A copy is on display and it cost 2/6d: was this

quite a lot of money at the time? A serial version of *Great Expectations* (1861) in *All the Year Round* cost just 9d.

The basement has a large library of books on and by Dickens. Visit www.dickensmuseum.com

Connecting Communities with Content

This new SOAS project will link digital resources with local communities in Asia and Africa. Funded by JISC, it runs from 1 March to 30 September 2011.

The key is to extend the idea of 'community engagement' both geographically and technically so that it includes local people in Asia and Africa who use mobile phones. We will digitise a rare collection of more than 4,000 fragile glass lantern slides, accompanied by scripts, which document cultural life and missionary activity all over the world during the first half of the twentieth century. London-based missionary societies brought slides home from their travels to entertain and inform people in the UK about their work abroad.

Jointly with the University of London Computer Centre, we will make this content accessible through mobile phones. We will also create a new model for partnership with two of the communities whose history is shown in the slides. If successful, this project will produce a model that other public bodies, and the private sector, can use for programmes of knowledge exchange with overseas communities.

The project will engage with two specific communities—one in Sierra Leone and one in south India—whose history is recorded in the slides. We begin with this limited goal so that we are able to develop a model, which we will later improve and extend to other communities. We will work through local coordinators in these two locations to engage these audiences, by organising events to inform them of the project and to encourage their participation.

Images and commentary uploaded to our website by local people will help researchers to trace the changes, for example, in a community in rural India from the 1930s to the present day. Similarly, our images of what the people and village looked like in the 1930s will add to the local community's understanding of its past.

Our objectives

1. Enable local communities to access archival resources via mobile phones; to view these resources, comment on them and upload their own material
2. Provide a new model for knowledge exchange between UK institutions and overseas communities
3. Contribute to public knowledge about world history, anthropology and religion
4. Enhance research on the history of Christianity and its engagement with communities across the world.
5. Conserve a rare and fragile resource at SOAS.

National Maritime Museum

The NMM has withdrawn all access to its library and manuscripts services until 5th September 2011. The announcement can be seen at www.nmm.ac.uk/researchers/library/visiting/.

London Metropolitan Archives

The editor received the following (via email). LMA exercised its right to reply and the response from director David Pearson.

Rumours and worries abound amongst readers at the London Metropolitan Archives (LMA), where there seems to be a dearth of official information concerning how the cuts will affect staff and access. Information cannot easily be found on the official LMA website, and there have been no notices placed on desks or computer screens there recently. The suggestion seems to be that there is a proposal for permanent Saturday closures, but there has apparently been no official announcement concerning this at the LMA, only at the main Guildhall Library. The 'consultation period' ends 25th April, and yet readers at the LMA have not been circulated with any hard information about what is really being proposed. It seems to be assumed that we can read between the lines - but there are no lines to read between in this low-key 'consultation'! The very limited time-frame permitted will of course limit responses.

Saturdays, it seems are less busy than weekdays, so it might be a good idea for more of us to visit on Saturdays, so as to make the case. Readers of the AFL website who love the LMA and recognise its importance to the history of the fabric of London might like to contact David Pearson at the Guildhall, and to let friends/contacts know what might be afoot.

Saturdays and evenings are highly important for part-time historians, who cannot get away from work or family responsibilities at conventional times, and the value of these hours of opening seems not to be understood, or at least appreciated on high.

There appears to be a proposal, too, that the LMA should close down completely on Fridays, so henceforth it will only operate between Monday and Thursday.

It might be a good idea if the archives of London would agree on a single day closure - at the moment some close Mondays, others Wednesdays - it is very confusing for readers. If such closures are really necessary, why not let's all agree to observe Saint Monday, and keep Saturdays?

Reply

Like all publicly-funded bodies, the City of London Corporation (through which LMA is resourced) has to implement some serious cutbacks in expenditure. We have to lose just under 16% of our budget during the coming year and inevitably this will mean some service reductions. After giving careful thought to the options for doing this across libraries and archives, we decided that we should avoid closing any services altogether, while looking at patterns of use. At LMA, we know that Saturday visitors have dropped by about 50% during the last three years - partly a consequence of digitisation, we believe - while there has always been a desire to extend weekday evening opening.

We therefore proposed to end Saturday opening (currently, LMA is open two Saturdays a month), and to close on Fridays (deliberately avoiding Mondays at the request of our users as it is the closed weekday at TNA), but by way of mitigation, to stay open on

Wednesdays (as well as Tuesdays and Thursdays) until 7.30 p.m. We posted this information on the website, placed leaflets in the Searchroom, and sent out a notice to our 6000 Patronmail subscribers to invite comment. We also organised two drop-in sessions at LMA, where I met users together with my LMA colleagues, as well as meetings with our consultative groups of academic historians and family historians. It therefore seems neither fair nor true to suggest that there has been a dearth of official information.

We did receive many comments by email, letter and word of mouth and the good news is that we have been able to respond to that by reversing, at least partly, the Saturday closure proposal. Savings will be found instead from staff restructuring. We will retain Saturday opening at LMA, but it will be one Saturday a month rather than two. The dates will be posted on the website well in advance. We must continue with Friday closure - we had many fewer concerns expressed about that - and we will also begin extending evening opening so that LMA stays open till 7.30 three nights in a row. The new timetable will take effect from November 2011. If Saturday opening is to be sustainable, it will have to be justified by use, and we will review the position after a year.

Naturally, we wish that we did not have to implement any service reductions, but the economic climate makes some change unavoidable. We know that we are not alone among archive and library services in facing cuts and we have appreciated the sympathetic and supportive comments which many users made while making their representations. I hope that readers of this newsletter will find this information clear, and understand that the situation has changed and developed over the last few months. I also hope that they will know that we fully share that recognition of the importance of LMA and its collections, and that we will continue to do our best to safeguard them and make them accessible, in the interests of all our users.

London in Peril: Bishopsgate Institute

The Bishopsgate Institute has been undergoing redevelopment, and has recently announced a re-opening programme under the title 'London in Peril'. It comprises walk, talks and discussions looking at the challenges and threats that will impact the city. The Institute says "Some of these may be considered opportunities rather than a danger, but they all impact on the culture and environment of London and its inhabitants."

London in Peril is curated by award-winning writer and broadcaster Robert Elms. Full details of the events are at www.bishopsgate.org.uk. They run through to July.

The editor's eye was caught by a tour that looks at the life of diarist Pepys and the events of 1665/66 (16th July). If present day London is of greater interest, 3 days earlier (13th July) sees a panel discussion of the 'Gentrification' of London. This will look at the impact on Islington, Docklands and Clapham of the arrival of wealthier residents, and the affect on the areas' businesses and shops of this change in demographics.

Events are charged, and all need to be booked.

Medway Archives win award

Medway Archives and Local Study Centre was the winner of a competition run by *Your Family History Magazine* for the title Archive of the Year Award 2011. The award is based on recommendations submitted by the magazine's readers.

The staff were praised for their knowledge and attention to detail, ensuring every visitor was given a friendly welcome and as much assistance as they needed to conduct their research. The range of resources is described as 'vast', and particular mention was made of the collaborative work with the Kent Family History Society, and the range of exhibitions that were put on at the centre to stimulate local interest. This is augmented by a database of local photographs at www.medway.gov.uk/medwayimages.

Archivist Alison Cable, Lyn Rainbow, Strategic Librarian for Medway Council, and Tessa Towner, Chairman of the Friends of Medway Archives and Secretary of Kent Family History Society, collected the award at the Who Do You Think You Are? Live show in London Olympia on Saturday, 26 February.



Web watch

The editor is indebted to London and North Middx FHS magazine for a note of several web sites of possible interest to London researchers.

An extensive tour of **Hampstead** with reproductions of pictures (mainly by Lindy Newman) of the area. There are descriptions of pubs in the area, both active and closed; a good list of local resources for family history, transcribed and searchable on-line. Visit thevirtuallourofhamstead.co.uk.

www.westendatwar.org.uk does what it says, describes events of the borough of **Westminster** during WW2. The site invites contributions from anyone visiting the site with recollections of the area during that time. It includes photographs of bomb damage. Also pictures by war artists, including notes on the pictures and artist biographies.

Epsom and Ewell have a site with an interest in the post-war period epsomandewellhistoryexplorer.org.uk. Again contributions area invited, and there are several submitted on the joys of living on prefabs

And now for something completely different: It would seem to say something about the speed of modern life that magazines mentioned in an on-line archive of 'pop' **magazines** are from way back ... the 1990's! Richard Beckett, a web developer, is putting items from his personal collection online: at present it contains images from just one magazine, *Select*, but there may be copyright issues. An article about it in *The Independent* suggests that this habit of hoarding past issues of favourite mags is a male thing. Any ladies out there arguing? Visit selectmagazinescans.netii.net

Film Archive : collapse averted

A report in the Eastern Daily Press www.edp24.co.uk/news :

An archive film collection offers fascinating glimpses into the lives of people in Norfolk in years gone by. The Digital Heritage Project, a scheme which converts films dating back as far as 1896 so they can be watched online, looked in danger after Screen East, one of the partners for the project, collapsed.

Norwich Heritage Economic and Regeneration Trust (HEART) has stepped in to support and fund the Anglo-French project, which means the project can continue, working with two major film archives from both sides of the channel, the East Anglian Film Archive and Pôle Image Haute-Normandie.

Footage in the collection includes holidays in Great Yarmouth in the 1920s and a day out cockling in Wells in the early 1950s.

Project manager Jane Jarvis said: "As well as being a wonderful resource to both entertain and educate, this 'French connection' brings a new edge to how we compare and contrast our lives on both sides of the Channel during the last century – films shot during World War Two show East Anglians protecting the Home Front whilst the French were under occupation.

"Digitising opens so many more doors for archive film and we're looking to explore digital technology bringing more footage to the fore for all generations, students, businesses and tourists in both towns and rural communities."

The website will launch in 2012 and between now and then there will be a programme of events and screenings planned throughout the region. The project will be funded until June 2013.

Waifs and Strays

The Waifs and Strays Society, now known as the Children's Society, was funded in 1881 by Edward Rudolf. With his brother Robert they opened their first home at Lampson House in December 1881.

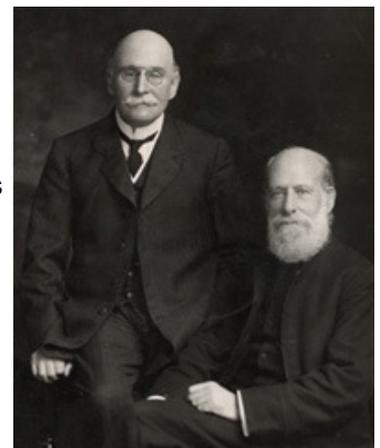
The society has set up a website with information on its history. There are pages with correspondence on specific children (their names are not revealed) from the early years of the Society's work: this might make excellent source material for a social history study. A short biography of Edward Rudolf is on the site.

All the homes both past and present are listed (there must be over 250), with notes on the location and dates of operation: where possible pictures relevant to the home are included.

An article on the social condition of England in the later C19 can also be found on the site, which is an excellent resource.

Visit www.hiddenlives.org.uk.

Picture of the Rudolf brothers :used with the permission of The Children's Society © The Children's Society.



SEMINAR REPORTS

It's the bizz: managing London's business archives

This was the title chosen by Richard Wiltshire, Senior Archivist for business archives from London Metropolitan Archives for his talk at AfL's January seminar.

The evening began with a series of short clips from promotional films from the archives of Chubb and Son, which, apart from their intrinsic interest, also shows the variety of media that LMA's 20th century records include. Between one third and a quarter of the records at LMA are business archives, of which the earliest records are City draper's accounts from the late C15.

Richard highlighted the scope and importance of business archives. Through the employment and trade that they generate, businesses are often important to understanding the development of a locality, and hence their records are vital for studying local history. Business records are mainly arranged and listed by archivists by function, into the following categories: corporate, administrative, financial, legal, operational /production, marketing, staff/employment and premises. Richard highlighted the value of the operational records and the way they differ greatly between different kinds of business. Marketing records, covering publicity, events and sales brochures, are also of value for social history for the 'feel' they give for the period in which they were produced. Staff and employment records can often be disappointing in only recording brief details of individuals who were employed, and recent ones may throw up data protection issues, although there is no doubt that family historians may be interested in these series for any record of their forebears. But Richard said that staff magazines and items covering recreational activities at a business are often very rewarding for painting a picture of life and work of a business. Richard emphasised the large extent of records of breweries held at LMA. Through the tied-house system, breweries often had extensive property holdings with associated records, some well outside the immediate London area. LMA has records for over 20 brewery companies including Courage, Truman, Watney and Whitbread. The utility companies have also generated plentiful records which include those of predecessors which the present company has acquired. Thames Water's records alone occupy three miles of shelving!

As the talk was given in the Huntley Room, Richard could not omit records relating to publishing, including those of Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications Limited, a radical Black publishing company run by Eric and Jessica Huntley, Hodder and Stoughton, and Pollinger Limited, literary agents, which LMA holds. Richard also highlighted his practical experiences of dealing with large acquisitions and appraising records, such as Rio Tinto, mining firm, and J W Falkner and Sons, builders, and also the issues faced with dealing with administrators to acquire records of companies which have failed, such as with William Verry Limited. Finally the National Strategy for Business Archives website, <http://www.managingbusinessarchives.co.uk> was covered along with some achievements of a national Crisis Team which has been helping advise on business archives at risk.

The Valuation Office Survey of 1911

The February seminar was given by Rose Mitchell, map archivist at TNA. This seminar was an informative and comprehensively illustrated presentation on the archives of the 1910-15 national survey of property ownership. This was conducted by the Government's national Valuation Office as a result of Chancellor of the Exchequer David Lloyd George's Finance (1909-10) Act, which introduced a new prototype Capital Gains Tax on property appreciation values. This proved short-lived and abortive following mass appeals against it by larger landowners, and was repealed in 1920, but the records generated by the Act provide a wealth of detail on British society just before the Great War which has not yet been thoroughly exploited by researchers, and complements other records, especially the 1911 Census.

The survey's records principally comprise Ordnance Survey maps with property numbers added and their related 'Field Books' compiled by the surveyors, whose structure and best means of accessing was explained. The great majority of the country is covered, although records of some areas were lost during World War II and those for central London are patchy, for reasons not always clear. There is less detail on Government-owned properties, as they were not eligible for the new tax. Rose Mitchell demonstrated the recently introduced feature on the TNA website enabling the relevant maps and field books for a particular geographical area to be rapidly identified.

The records include information on land and property ownership and usage, the owners' tenants, data on the architecture and contents of buildings, and provide considerable sociological detail on the properties' occupants, (from London's poorest slum areas to the great country house estates) and details of their functions (such as church furnishings and factory equipment). The emerging modern technologies appear in the form of motor garages, cinemas and telephone exchanges. At times a degree of personal bias by the surveyors is evident, in observations on the character of neighbourhoods, church denominations and architectural styles. The range of contents makes the series a potentially valuable source for social, demographic, genealogical, urban and architectural historians. Examples of a variety of London properties were illustrated, from East End soup kitchens and workhouses to Gentlemen's clubs.

The talk generated a host of questions from the audience, and several further suggestions from those present on other archival sources, such as Fire Insurance plans, that could complement the Valuation surveys and fill the gaps left by the at times patchy London data in the surveys.

Review by Nick Baldwin, Archivist, Great Ormond Street Hospital

SEMINAR REPORTS

How Green are Your Archives

The seminar for March was given by Jonathan Rhys-Lewis, a consultant in preservation and collections management, on how to ensure archive buildings are 'green'.

In this era of energy constraint, all organisations, including archives, are now under pressure to ensure that their activities are environmentally sustainable. There are also the additional worries of climate change (will growing rainfall levels cause greater proliferation of mould?) and the current economic crisis, which has led to diminished or extinguished budgets. Together these present a number of challenges to archive professionals who often operate within inherited, old and poorly insulated buildings, who need to comply with the recommendations of BS 5454 (which often requires the use of expensive energy-sucking air-conditioning units), and who need to save money. With this in mind, Jonathan went through the main options available for archive professionals who want to ensure that their activities have minimal impact on the environment and on their purse, without compromising the longevity of the records in their care.

He began by outlining a new standard, PAS 198, which is due to be published in 2011. Intended to be used by museums and libraries as well as archives, this proposes a broader environmental range that can be achieved without the use of air-conditioning, with a temperature range of 16-25 degrees Celsius, and 40-60% relative humidity.

Jonathan also stated various other ways in which archive buildings can save energy (and money) and be environmentally sustainable, which range from the very basic, such as turning off air-conditioning units and switching to low-energy light-bulbs in strong rooms, to the more adventurous, such as installing wind turbines, or harvesting rain water. He is also a big proponent of using the existing structure and thermal mass of your building to provide natural insulation. While some of these options may be more practicable than others, Jonathan argued that any change is better than none, though he conceded that due to the lack of research into the subject, there is difficulty in deciding which option is best for your repository.

Jonathan concluded by iterating the importance of collecting data about your building, and using that to inform the decision-making regarding environmental sustainability. Not only do we need to save money, but we also have a moral obligation to think about the future.

The seminar finished with a question and answer session, in which questions were posed about the cheapest options for a limited budget; Jonathan replied by saying that at the very least, archive material should be placed in boxes, effectively sealing them into their own micro-environments.

Both reviews by Sarah Hale

Winning Endeavours

With preparation for the 2012 London Olympics hotting up, London archives are getting in on the act too, with many having provided material for a new website, Winning Endeavours. Organised jointly by Archives for London, London Metropolitan Archives and the British Library, Winning Endeavours aims to celebrate the 2012 London Olympics by providing archival sources for historic sporting events in London and South-East England, but especially for the two Olympic games previously hosted in London, in 1908 and 1948.

The website launched at the end of March, and on 7 April Nicola Avery, from the London Metropolitan Archives, gave a demonstration of the site. Based around four main themes, the 1908 London Olympics, the 1948 Olympics, other Olympic games, and general sporting events in London, the website provides a search facility that enables members of the public to view 1700 records from 25 archive repositories in London and SE. England related to numerous sporting activities that have taken place in the capital. The site also provides information on related educational events, such as 'Field of Dreams' and 'Game On', and guided walks around the new Olympic park in East London, and the site of the 1908 Olympics in Shepherd's Bush. Resource packs for schools will also be uploaded soon.

The images available on the site are wide-ranging, and on one side provide a fascinating insight into the general coordination of London-based Olympics and sporting events, for example via letters written to Lord Desborough, who was instrumental in the success of the 1908 Games, and on the other they provide visual depictions of the unsung heroes of the events, such as the Boy Scouts who were drafted in to hold up signs, act as waymarkers on the marathon, and run general errands in the 1948 Games.

The website will be live for 18 months, after which it will be archived and will be made accessible via the British Library. To find out more, visit the Winning Endeavours website: www.winningendeavours.org Picture of the 1948 site © City of London, London Metropolitan Archives





AfL Events: Seminars and visits

The following seminars are planned: please check your monthly email for last minute changes.

2 Jun *Lambeth Palace Library and its London collections* given by Rachel Cosgrave, Lambeth Palace Library, Declan Kelly, Director of Libraries, Archives and IT for the National Church Institutions, and Dr John Maiden, Building on History project

7 Jul *Researching Jewish Ancestors in London: Where can I look and what will I find?* by Jeanette R Rosenberg of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain and the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies.

No meeting in August

8 September: *London's Local Archives: the Shape of Things to Come* by David Mander Chair of AfL

6 Oct *An introduction to oral history* with (we hope) given by Rob Perks, Oral History Curator, British Library.

Visits

The visits programme is still being finalised, but we hope to run the following

30 June (6pm) National Theatre with Gavin Clarke (20 people max)

July Vestry House with Jo Parker - details to be finalised

No visit in August

24 September 2pm Blitz Walks, Chelsea at War with Steve Hunnisett (15-20 people max)

October: Institute of Education, date and details still to be finalised.

Centre for the Historical Record

To mark the launch of the new Centre for the Historical Record at Kingston University, the Centre is inviting people with an interest in the future of public history to join a workshop and discussion of the challenges and opportunities facing providers and researchers in the 21st century, and to contribute to the direction this important new Centre should take. Speakers from the Museums, Archives and Heritage sector will share their experiences of engaging with public history and there will be with ample time for discussion and networking.

The event will take place on 10th June, 10.30am - 5pm

The Centre plans to promote collaborative research and knowledge exchange between historians, archivists, curators, heritage providers and the public. By acting as a forum for debate the CHR also plans to provide a central location where historians, professional and public researchers, and all those who are devoted to preserving, displaying and presenting historical artefacts, can meet to share their concerns and formulate new strategies.

Admission: free (including celebratory lunch), but please register early at www.kuchr.eventbrite.com to avoid disappointment as numbers are restricted.

Newsletter layout

Regular readers will notice that this newsletter has a different layout: the committee decided that it should be brought more in line with the other material that AfL publishes, and this is the first step, although probably not the last. Do send in any comments to the editor's email (see below).

The editor welcomes contributions to the Newsletter and letters for publication. Please send your contribution to: Peter Jackson, Archives for London, c/o London Metropolitan Archives, 40 Northampton Road, London EC1R 0HB. Or preferably by email to: newsletter@archivesforlondon.org

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