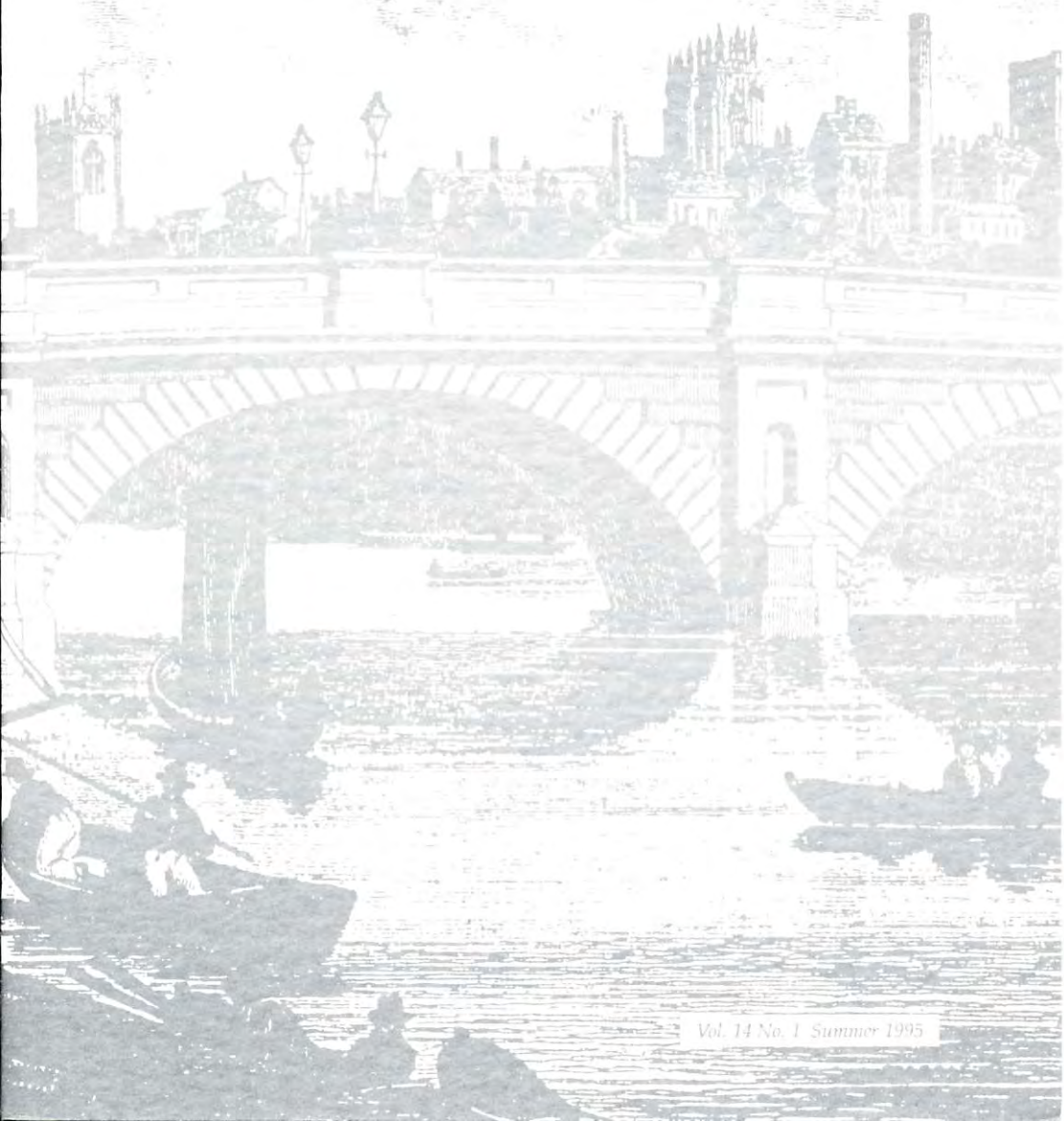


The Local Studies Librarian



Vol. 14 No. 1 Summer 1995



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Cover Illustration:

Ouse Bridge, York, 1829. Courtesy North Yorkshire County Library.

EDITORIAL

Local collections: local pride was the theme of the Group's programme at Umbrella 3. As usual, a wide-ranging series of papers was presented, including this year a contribution from Sweden, and our thanks must go to Paul Sturges and Diana Winterbotham for organising a most interesting programme: the papers will be published later.

The theme, however, is a continuing one. Local people continue to have pride and interest in their local area, as has been demonstrated in many cases in representations to the Boundaries Commission and local studies collections need to be there to provide information which helps to maintain that pride. It should not be forgotten, either, that many local studies collections owe their foundation, or at least a good proportion of their core material, to those who in the past gave their own collections of local material to the public libraries for the public benefit. The public library has been seen, from the beginning, as the repository of local information, and collections and use have continually expanded since then. Unfortunately the situation today is not so happy. While undoubtedly new services are being provided and new initiatives are being developed there are also, along with other parts of the public library service, cuts being made. The danger here is that material not acquired now will probably not be available in the future, to the disadvantage of future users. The North West Branch of LSG has been carrying out a survey in their area and hope to publish the results: the Committee, however, would like to hear of cuts in local studies services in other parts of the country, so that a picture can be built up. Please send any information to our Secretary, Patrick Baird.

Please note the change of address for the Editor. Material sent to the University of Northumbria will be passed on, but there will be a delay.

Stop press

The Group has arranged a seminar to take place at Libtech in September. This will take place on the afternoon of September 6th, when there will be presentations on the Durham Record, a database of photographs and old OS maps, and on Gateshead 1900, an interactive multimedia programme. Contact Patrick Baird for further details.

MOVING A RECORD OFFICE: THE LEICESTERSHIRE EXPERIENCE

Carl Harrison

In 1993 a new Record Office for Leicestershire was opened. This brought together the existing Record Office stock, which until then had been held in three outstations as well as at Headquarters in Central Leicester. At the same time, to fulfil a longstanding and eminently sensible policy, the opportunity was taken to relocate the County's Local Studies Collection from the Central Library to the new building. While this collection was on one site, only 20% of its holdings were in or near the reading room, while the rest were dispersed around an extensive and relatively inaccessible basement. To give some idea of the scale of the move, the archives occupy approximately four linear miles of shelving, while the local studies collection accounts for a further mile or so.

The new Leicestershire Record Office is located some three miles from the city centre in the suburb of Wigston. Although no longer in the urban centre the site has good access in terms of local parking and bus services, and the facilities for visitors, staff and collections represent a giant leap forward. Public and staff are accommodated in a converted Victorian school; a freestanding 1920's annexe houses the conservation studio. The staff and public areas are far more spacious and comfortable than before and include, for the first time, an education room, a foyer/rest area and full disabled access.

Apart from the searchroom shelf stock and OS maps which are kept in a room close by, the collections are housed in a purpose-built repository block on what was the school playground. The repository is a heavy building intended to provide high thermal inertia. Dehumidifying and heating plant were provided as part of the original design. Cooling plant was added to deal with excess temperatures experienced before we moved in. The end result is an extremely satisfactory and finely-controllable environment, without air-conditioning. The accommodation is on two floors each of around 350 sq. metres. With the exception of deep shelving for rolls and portfolios at each end of each floor and cantilever shelving for larger rolls on one 'long' wall of each floor, all the shelving is mobile. The mobile units are arranged in three 'blocks' on each floor. Each unit is of twelve, three foot bays and, because of the height of each floor, rises to some 11 ft. The standard shelf is 18 ins. deep and the standard bay comprises eight of these shelves.

The timetable

By late 1990 the overall design and general layout of the buildings had been agreed. The main building contract was placed early in 1991 and work began on site in July. The contract period ran to September 1992 but the contractor projected completion by April, so our initial plans assumed a twelve month preparation period. In the event delays to the builder's programme and technical problems, principally the excess temperatures referred to, delayed hand-over until October so we gained an extra six months preparation time. While immensely frustrating to both staff and customers, this allowed some beneficial fine-tuning to our arrangements for the removal. We eventually began moving on 9 November 1992 and the process was completed on 22 January 1993, allowing just over a week for final preparations before reopening to the public on 8 February.

Planning the move

Both the objectives and detailed planning for the removal were set at a series of meetings of the professional staff, plus representatives of the support and technical staff, which began in April 1991 and continued until February 1992. Our strategic objectives were established very quickly. The potential dangers were perceived to be: damage to or loss of the collections; loss of control over the collections (disorder); and loss of control over the process. On the other hand, the benefits offered by the removal and the new site (in addition to improved storage and working conditions) were equally clear: the opportunity to establish control over the collections' storage pattern; and the opportunity to rationalise and simplify storage for future ease of working.

The old Record Office had long suffered from chronic shortages of space in all departments, not least storage. The result had been to remove most of the logic from our storage arrangements, other than the logic of convenience. Broadly, two rules applied: collections or classes of archives which were in regular demand were at 57 New Walk, and large new accessions were squeezed in wherever space could be created. The main accession series were dispersed and our numerous mnemonic series were stored illogically or fragmented. It followed that a major benefit of the move was seen as the opportunity to reconstitute the various series. This required, of course, that the removal must be more than a simple store by store move: it would also be a large-scale reshuffling exercise.

At an early stage of the planning process it was also decided to close as many of the separate class and storage series as possible (there had been around 30, although some were in their nature closed or had already fallen into disuse) so that the majority of future accessions will simply be added to the main numerical accession sequence. In addition to disposing of a number of over-complex and confusing referencing practices, this had the great advantage of concentrating most of the required expansion space in one place. In view of the height of the shelving the top two shelves of each standard eight-shelf bay were allocated largely to series of unboxed

documents such as City Council deeds and contracts, and the local studies book stock. This decision was made on the assumption that single deed packets or books would be easier to retrieve than loaded boxes. In practice locating the book stock where the titles and Dewey numbers could not easily be read has created retrieval problems and the entire collection is being relocated to its own block of shelving. At this stage various key decisions were taken. We decided that we would permanently box or temporarily package all the archive collections so far as possible and opted, largely, for one standard shelf size and one standard box size in the new repository. The disposition of the collections in the new premises was considered, and in the process decisions were taken to radically simplify existing referencing and storage practice. We also decided to create an entirely new index of existing shelf location, using DataEase, which in turn would generate an index of new shelf locations and box labels. A detailed removal specification and timetable was drawn up, and finally it was decided that the re-shelving would be done by Record Office staff and that we would close the Record Office completely during the removal so as to concentrate all available staff resources.

Organising the move

Colleagues who had prior experience of moving archive collections argued strongly in favour of boxing and packaging all the collections as far as possible, for protection and ease of handling. Since boxing also offers physical protection and a measure of environmental protection in storage we decided that once boxed the archives should stay boxed permanently. Consequently we purchased some 12,000 additional archive boxes, largely to accommodate volumes which had stood on open shelves, and undertook an extended programme of boxing and, where essential, reboxing, in order to make best use of the standard 18 ins. deep shelves in the new repository. Over-size volumes, rolled plans and other awkward objects were packaged using limp polythene tube, cut to size from a roll and the open ends heat sealed. Working together the Office's three conservators produced hundreds of these 'parcels' in a remarkably short time.

Most of the Leicestershire Collection's book stock was to be moved loose, although a quantity of fragile items such as newspapers and maps were packaged in the same way as the archives. Small items such as videos and a variety of miscellaneous materials were boxed in standard archive boxes.

To my surprise we found that boxing volumes generally took up no more space than simply standing them on the shelves, although it does require a deeper shelf, hence our decision to standardise on one 18 ins. deep. In this we sacrificed some space but gained flexibility of storage. We were able to forget the half-dozen or so shelf sizes of the old stores, and the specific series which were tied to them.

Our other key decision was to create an entirely new location index and to use this as the primary tool for planning the new storage and executing the removal. The old manual location index was notoriously inaccurate, and it was agreed that the only way forward was to start afresh. The DataEase database package was seen in use for a similar purpose at Nottinghamshire Archives Office, and promptly 'lifted' and tailored to our needs by the Museums Service's Informations Systems staff. Information on each accession was logged, shelf by shelf, using 'Psion Organisers' (hand held computers which allowed data to be recorded directly in the strongrooms) and then transferred automatically via a link to the P.C. Details recorded included the reference number of each accession, subnumbers where appropriate, the series in which it was to be allocated in the new repository, format, number of items, number of shelves (estimated to one decimal place) and present shelf location. A total of 10,000 entries was made in just over six months. The computer then sorted the accessions into the numerical order agreed for their storage in the new Record Office and produced print-outs for each series with a total number of shelves for each accession. From this the space in the new location could be allocated. A total of some 28,000 linear feet of shelving was installed, which had to accommo-

date around 20,000 feet of archives and 3,000 feet of books and other local studies materials, leaving 5,000 feet for future expansion. Various series or types of material, such as building plans, newspapers, rate books, rolled plans and portfolios, had already been allocated specific non-standard shelving because of their size or other awkward characteristics. Space had been left free of shelving on the ground floor to accommodate a double row of map cabinets and plan chests. Next it was decided to locate certain heavily used series, such as photographs, probate records, parish and nonconformist records, tithe and enclosure maps on the ground floor nearest the door. Other series, including the two large general accession series followed on, continuing onto the first floor. Once all the accession data had been input, new shelf locations were calculated manually on a printout and then entered into the database. A disc was then sent to County Hall where some 48,000 labels were printed, showing the new shelf or range of shelves for every single box or package to be moved. The labels were colour-coded by hand to correspond to the coloured end panels of each block of shelving. These coloured areas were of great assistance in delivering material quickly to the correct position in the repository but have no use beyond this, although they are decorative. Remarkably, staff stuck on all 48,000 labels in three weeks. One advantage of the building delays was the opportunity to 'fine tune' this aspect of our preparations; on the other hand, because of last minute contractual hitches we were only able to label the shelves after the building had been handed over, so this and some shelf-adjustment were the last pieces of preparation before the removal properly began.

The Removal Contract

For our own benefit in assessing and planning the actual removal process, and to meet the County Council's tendering requirements, we devised, with help from the Council's central purchasing unit, a detailed contract specification. This set out the quantities and nature of the materials to be moved from each site together with special requirements relating to such matters as site access restrictions, security, care of the collections, insurance and so on. It then required the contractor to show not only the price for removal of each store but also the anticipated time, resources in terms of labour and vehicles, and the number of van journeys required. As part of the process we toured the would-be tenderers round all the sites. We also specified the time period which we had estimated (by rule of thumb) that the job might require and stressed that we wanted a measured, steady removal and not a weekend blitz. In the words of the specification, "The speed of the removal will be governed by the restricted space on the recipient site, (i.e. the fact that we would only have one aisle available in each block of mobile shelving at any time) and the speed with which the Record Office staff can sort and re-shelve the collections as they are delivered". The decision that our staff would re-shelve the collections was taken on the grounds that it was likely to give us greater control over the process and a more satisfactory end result. However, the bulk of the physical work was assigned to the contractor, whose staff removed the collections, under supervision, loaded and unloaded their van and delivered the boxes and packages to the appropriate colour-coded block of shelving. Comparative costings required by the tender indicated that only a limited financial advantage would have been gained by requiring our own staff to do more, by removing the collections from the old shelving, at the likely cost of strain, complications and delay.

This detailed tender document gave us a reasonable basis on which to compare the relevant tenders, not only on cost but also on understanding of the nature of the job, and the resources and approach required. The prices varied widely, the most expensive of the nine being some five times more than the cheapest. Pickford's, who were appointed, were not the cheapest (although they were far from the most expensive) and met our required criteria. We also came to a firm understanding with them that the price was fixed and there would be no 'extras'!

The move

In the event, although arduous and tiring, the removal itself was one of the most satisfactory parts of the overall job of relocation. Having established a 48 day timetable and a plan of campaign, the removal contractor provided either one or two vans and crews each day to keep within this. To my relief the Record Office staff proved able easily to keep pace with the re-shelving, despite the restrictions of the mobile shelving. The problem was eased somewhat by staff supervising the 'despatch' operation, who selected, as far as possible, material intended for different parts of the new repository for each van load: since everything was marked with its destination the order of despatch did not matter. Security was maintained by having our staff at both ends and travelling on or with the van as necessary. Rigorous checking of the old stores was necessary to ensure that nothing was left behind.

A certain amount of adjustment of new shelf allocations was required to compensate for the unavoidable difficulty of assessing the space which would be required for divided or awkwardly shaped collections. We foresaw that work would have to continue on removing the temporary packaging and improving the final shelf order of large collections, but did not foresee how long it would take. (We are still at it, but at the same time we did not foresee how far we would be distracted by having our visitor figures leap up by around 70%).

The location index provided the fundamental documentation for the removal as it had in planning the disposition of the new site. It was used as the guide and checklist at both despatch and receiving ends. No further documentation was found to be necessary. In fact the location index has been a great success and we are presently examining the possibility of extending its use into other areas of collection management, particularly accessioning functions.

Conclusion

Overall, I was very satisfied with most of the major aspects of our planning. The removal specification and timetable were valuable tools; the removal contractor, I think, was well chosen and our relations with him excellent. The level of staff involvement in the physical removal (i.e. the concentration on re-shelving) was taxing but not overwhelming. The preparatory boxing and packaging helped to streamline many aspects of the job and were of permanent value.

The disposition of the collections has also been generally satisfactory, although some adjustments have proved necessary under pressure of public demand for production - the Leicestershire Collection book stock is perhaps the prime example. On the other hand our decision to opt for a standard shelf size has allowed us to correct these errors and adjust our storage arrangements in practice, rather than being tied to one untested solution, agreed only on paper.

The overall planning approach, thrashing out our plans at staff meetings, felt a little 'loose' at the time, as most of us were finding our way as well as finding answers, but had the immense virtue of tapping into the ideas and skills of a wide range of staff. I am convinced that the whole exercise benefited enormously from this.

To sum up: the prospect was daunting, the preparations lengthy, and the actual removal wearing. But we lost nothing (and even found one or two things) and nobody (staff that is), and gained some valuable skills and insights en route. There are always things which, with hindsight, one would do differently the next time around but happily, in this case, not too many.

Carl Harrison is County Archivist, Leicestershire.

DOING LOCAL STUDIES: a new course from the Open University

Michael Drake

DA301 *Studying Family and Community History: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* is an Open University course for people who want to do a project based on local sources. Some 550 successfully completed the course in 1994, its first year of presentation, including a number of Local Studies librarians. Indeed we have had a letter from one student who, she firmly believes, got a Local Studies librarian post because she had taken the course!

Were DA301 to have a motto it could well be that used by the Local Studies Group for its contribution to Umbrella 2: 'Local but not parochial'. That this message has not got through to all our students, however, is evidenced by the disappointment of some last year who, in spite of all our advice to the contrary, thought DA301 would show them how to do their family tree. That is not to say that a family tree would not make a good starting point for DA301. Indeed many students have used the course to set their family's experience in a broader context, be it temporal, spatial, descriptive or theoretical. The same message applies also to research projects on local communities. Here one might justly recall Rudyard Kipling's well known *bon mot*: 'And what should they know of England who only England know'. Showing how a matter of purely local interest can enter a whole new dimension once it is looked at comparatively, set into a wider context, and tackled with appropriate methods, is what DA301 is all about. The goal is then to take students from their own personal knowledge, experience or interest, to a broader understanding of families and communities. By so doing they come to see their point of origin in a new light.

The presentation of DA301 draws on the cumulative experience of the Open University in teaching at a distance. The core materials consist of four volumes published by Cambridge University Press at £11.95 each in paperback; a hardback edition is also available. Three of these take the student logically through the materials of the course viz: Vol. 1 *From Family Tree to family history* covers the meaning of family history, population history; families and households; relationships in the domestic economy and family myths and experience. Vol. 2 *From Family History to Community History* tackles migration studies, towns and regions; spatial divisions within towns and villages; place and community; Vol. 3 *Communities and Families* covers work and occupations; social mobility; politics and government, religion and leisure. All include case studies. Vol. 4 *Sources and Methods for Family and Community Historians* is a handbook students find useful both when studying Vols 1 - 3 and when researching their project. It covers research strategies; how to find, access and use sources (visual, audio and written); oral history; quantitative techniques; computing opportunities; presenting (and possibly publishing) their findings in written, audio or video form; information on libraries, archives, museums, societies and referencing. Finally we have a Reader or Anthology, *Time, Family and Community: Perspectives on Family and Community History*, published by Blackwell, which contains articles of key significance in family and community history. There are also six audio tapes on how to use key sources and methods, to be used in conjunction with illustrated booklets: we call this audio-vision. There is a video (with handbook), *How to Shoot Video History*, put out by the BBC for students to record, and six radio programmes broadcast by the BBC. Students also receive study guides, a project guide, assignments, offprints, a couple of course newsletters and the current *Local Population Studies and Family History News and Digest*. As their work proceeds, most students, like more experienced family historians and demographers, become very conscious of the adage that genius is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration. There is much perspiration in DA301, but given the motivation, it has already proved intensely pleasurable and satisfying.

An OU course is far more than a set of materials, no matter how splendid. What gives it its unique status is the combination of tutorial support, the rapport with fellow students and the help they bring to the materials being studied. DA301 is a

very participatory course. Not only must the students take an active role when studying the materials (the texts are designed as tutorials in print) but in researching and writing their project (or presenting it audio visually), they have to get out and apply their knowledge to new materials, historical sources which have perhaps never been looked at before, or at least not with the insights provided by DA301. Students are expected to spend between 12 and 15 hours a week from February to October. About half their time is spent in locating sources, analysing them and presenting their findings.

To guide them through the course, students have their own personal tutor. He or she plays a crucial role through discussion, commenting on written work and setting problems, failures, and successes into both an academic and human context. Also, if they so wish, students have the opportunity of meeting fellow-students at day and weekend schools. As well as the project, students write six essays of between 1500 and 2000 words each. In the early ones they describe what they have learned from the materials sent to them and from other reading and local enquiries. Later ones consist of reports and progress on their project work; the sources they've found, the strategies they've adopted, their findings and the presentation they believe most appropriate. The project report is presented just prior to the examination and is double marked by their tutor and an examiner. The examination, which lasts for 3 hours and in the jargon of the day, has been made as user-friendly as possible, consists of some short answer questions and a couple of essays. Fees in 1995 are £279 if taken in the undergraduate programme and £485 in the Associate Student programme.

The range of topics covered by students in their DA301 projects is immense: migration; suburbia; women's work; education; refugees; evacuees; marriage; religion; social security; leisure activities; housing; domestic servants; childhood etc. Many reflect the fact that around two-thirds of students are women. Currently the vast majority of 1994 projects are being put onto a CD Rom. An abstract for each report is being scanned in and an index prepared. The latter covers the date/period covered by the project; its geographical area; topic/time; and main sources used. Over the coming years the production and dissemination (to Local Studies Libraries perhaps!) of the CD Rom will be one of the main tasks of the recently formed DA301 Archive. This, it is hoped, will become a national centre for research into the twin fields of family and community history.

It will be apparent from the above that Local Studies librarians will play a major role in DA301. Indeed the ears of many must already be burning, if the numerous laudatory comments about them already received from many students, are to be believed! The Local Studies library has proved to be the first port of call for many students and the only necessary one for some. That, as mentioned earlier, some staff in Local Studies libraries have already taken DA301, and, what is more important, found it a useful aid in their work, is very gratifying for those of us who produced and are currently running the course.

It goes without saying that any comments, criticisms or suggestions about DA301 would be warmly welcomed. I can be reached at The Faculty of Social Sciences, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA. Tel: (01908) 654484/654535. Fax: (01908) 654488. Network: K.M. DRAKE @ OPEN.AC.U.K.
Michael Drake is Emeritus Professor, The Open University.

DA301 - Studying Family and Community History: Some Comments.

These contributions have been made as a result of a request for comments by students in the last issue of LSL. Our thanks to those who replied.

Anne Barnes of Wakefield Local Studies Department, writes:

I took DA301 in its inaugural year as the final element of my B.Sc. programme with OU. I am not a chartered librarian, but for the past ten years I have worked as an assistant in the Local Studies Dept. of Wakefield Library HQ. This is a very busy department and we deal with all types and levels of enquiries from schoolchildren undertaking their first project to those researching doctoral theses, from family historians to novelists seeking background 'colour'. Additionally, until his retirement last year, the Head of Department was John Goodchild, who had published more than 130 books and papers on aspects of local history, and who was himself the recipient of an Honorary Masters degree from the OU for his contribution to Local History, etc. My duties included acting as research assistant and secretary to him, in which capacity I not only helped to locate, extract and compile data, but typed many of his books and notes for the one hundred or so one-off talks he gives each year. In these capacities I have become familiar with many types of primary and secondary source material: Mr Goodchild's personal Collection numbers (quite literally) many hundreds of thousands of manuscript items and ephemera. The library's Collection includes poll books, parish registers, directories, census returns, electoral rolls, maps, etc. etc.

It may be that I was expecting too much of the course: in retrospect I can see that for me, there was little virgin territory left in the way of source materials and the uses to which they could be put. Nevertheless I found that the course gave me a new perspective on local history, it also 'concentrated the mind' wonderfully and made me get on with several small and one major project that I would otherwise have probably still been procrastinating over.

I met some of the other students at tutorials and they were, without exception, extremely enthusiastic about the course, and felt that they had learned a great deal and benefited much. I also met several students who came into our Department during the course of their research for their major projects; some of these had travelled a couple of hundred miles and put themselves to considerable expense and inconvenience in order to stay in the district for a few days - or in one case a week - to undertake work in the area. In terms of 'voting with their feet' there can probably be no greater testimonial for the course.

There were some practical difficulties - as there are in any course in its first year - such as late arrival of material, ambiguities in wording etc. In part because of the lack of information provided on the early assignments there were some misunderstandings about their aims, and this led to disastrously low marks for some students on parts of their assignments. Having discussed the marking and attitudes of different tutors with a number of students I can only conclude that one or two tutors were particularly strict with their marking. This, of course, is a very subjective area, but I did feel, both as an experienced OU student and as someone already conversant with sources and methodology in local history, that grades were, at times, astonishingly low.

Even now in retrospect I am unable to see the purpose of the TV programme - there had seemed to be some vague suggestion at the outset that the Project might be presented as a video or audio programme, but as this was apparently not to be so, the TV programme was an absolute waste of time and resources.

I hope that this does not sound too negative - on the whole the problems encountered did not detract from the course. I really did enjoy the course. I learned to focus more clearly on aspects of local history and I feel quite proud of my final project (*Bastardy in Ossett in the Early Nineteenth Century, c 1800-1820*, copies of

which can be consulted in Ossett Library and in Baine Lane Library, Wakefield). I would have no hesitation in recommending the course to anyone with an interest in local history, but with the caveat that the more familiar you are with source materials the less you will learn from the course.

Finally can I add a plea for all students (and not just of this course) to deposit copies of their projects in appropriate local institutions. If cost is a problem, most libraries, etc. would probably be happy to make photocopy at the expense of the library!

Miss J. Jackson, who now works in a College of Nursing library, writes:

I completed DA301 in its first year, 1994, as the final year of an honours degree. In the course description, an interest or knowledge of family and/or local history was said to be useful, but I felt it to be a distinct advantage. The course is well-constructed, but nine months is a short period in which to master brand new skills, though of course, not impossible. I myself had worked in the Walsall Local History Centre as a relief assistant and as a volunteer, helping accession deposits, research for exhibitions and publications, and answer enquiries.

Nevertheless, I found the course very interesting and enjoyable, since it was an opportunity to do original research into my own family and area. Of course, it is not just a matter of tracing your family tree, as there is a sociological aspect to the course. This means putting local events and family experiences in a wider national context. For instance, my final project report concerned household structures and lifecycles of families living in the Black Country in the nineteenth century, and how these compared to the general theories about family life at that time.

However, there is a considerable amount of travelling to do between local studies and archives, as well as additional expenditure, on copies for instance. You do meet many people, though, also enthusiastic about family and local history, and who are willing to assist you. Also, such courses as the OU course brings an increase in business to local studies libraries, which is not a bad thing.

Finally, having passed the course, on a suggestion from Walsall Local History Centre, I have deposited the course material and my own assignments and project report there, which, I hope, will be useful for other students and interested parties. In addition, recent correspondence from the course team suggests that local history journals may be interested in publishing such research.

I would encourage anyone to try this course for themselves, for learning more about the past of their family and their surroundings, for becoming aware of the wealth of primary sources which have survived, and for meeting others with whom they share their knowledge and experiences.

Janet Murphy, from a college library, writes:

It is possible to study DA301 as an Associate Student or as part of a degree. So far my degree profile includes courses on geology and history! I was attracted to the course by a personal interest in family and community history; it is not related to my job which is in a college library. One of the aims of the course is to enable you to gain experience in using a wide range of textual, oral, visual and field based sources and methods, so as to conduct effective research in selected social scientific and historical aspects of family and community history.

The first part of the course involves working through three course volumes relating to family relationships and domestic economies, population movements and their effect on the build up of communities and finally the place of the family in the working and cultural life of the community. Together with the fourth volume, which is a handbook of sources and methods, the course volumes include case studies, lists of references and further readings and numerous suggestions for project work.

The second part of the course involves work on a 3,500 word project on a subject of your own choosing.

The programme of six computer marked assignments (CMAs) and six tutor marked assignments (TMAs) appears daunting but the CMAs are not compulsory (if you complete them there is valuable feedback which is useful for revision purposes) and two of the TMAs relate to the project. Although it is not necessary to have studied family/community history before embarking on the course, it is helpful; three of the TMAs were answered using material from my own previous research - very useful if you are pushed for time. It is difficult to say how much time it is necessary to set aside for the course; to some extent it depends on the time you have available. Having a full-time job meant that my trips to record offices were strictly limited and the amount of time spent on the course each week depended upon whether or not a TMA was due!

Likewise the topic for a final project had to be one which could be completed in the time available and using sources readily accessible. An important part of the project was to relate the work done with that of other researchers and this was the most difficult. 48% of the people of the people who responded to the CMA on the project found that it was the most difficult element and unfortunately it was the aspect upon which there was least advice available. It would be a pity if someone was dissuaded from undertaking a piece of original research because of the lack of published work with which to compare it.

Looking back, the course was stimulating and enjoyable and opened up endless ideas for further research - if only I had the time!

BOLTON ARCHIVES AND LOCAL STUDIES: A CUSTOMER SURVEY

Kevin Campbell and Barry Mills

Bolton is a single-tier authority within Greater Manchester, with a population of about 260,000 people. Situated about ten miles north west of Manchester city centre, Bolton has good rail, trunk road and motorway links with the rest of north west England and further afield. Historically, Bolton was a typical Lancashire cotton town, specialising in fine spinning, bleaching and finishing. Other important industries in the area were engineering, coal-mining, paper manufacture and tanning. Although the long involvement in heavy industry created many social and environmental problems, the wealth and prosperity which it brought have left us with a legacy of many fine and impressive public buildings and a busy and attractive town centre.

The Archive and Local Studies Unit is accommodated within the Central Library, which is part of a complex of civic buildings within easy reach of shops, markets, bus and railway stations. The Archive Service was founded in 1974, following local government reorganisation; the Library Service, however, has collected material of local interest almost since its inception in 1853. The Archive Service and the Local Collection, formerly administered by the Reference Library, were amalgamated in August 1990, and a new combined public searchroom was provided on the ground floor of the Central Library. Since then, the service has operated with five full time staff, including an archivist and a local studies librarian. We are open to the public for a total of 37.5 hours a week.

Our archival holdings are typical of a small local authority repository in an urban area. They include the usual range of local government records and also archives of local businesses, families, estates, trade unions, societies and nonconformist churches. Although we are not a diocesan record office, we do hold microform and other copies of many local parish registers. The Local Studies Collection is extensive

and includes books, pamphlets, articles and other printed material, photographs, newspapers and newspaper cuttings, ordnance survey maps, sound recordings and microform copies of census returns. In the year to March 1993 we had just over 10,000 visitors.

During 1993, the Greater Manchester Archivists' Group decided that it would be desirable to conduct a county-wide customer survey in order to assess current usage by the public and to serve as a basis for determining future needs and priorities. The Group chose the month of February 1994 for the survey. In Bolton, we decided that we would include all our customers, not merely those who consulted archive material. A questionnaire was drawn up chiefly by Mr Kevin Mulley, the Archivist of Bury, with input from other members of the Group. It consisted of four sides of A4 paper, and comprised three main sections, namely, 'About yourself', 'Your Visit Today' and 'Other Services'. At Bolton we decided that staff would approach each customer personally, explaining the purpose of the survey and apologising for the time and trouble involved. Each questionnaire was numbered in sequence, in order to facilitate the assessment of the level of response. Customers who paid us more than one visit during the course of February would only be asked to complete one form. Visitors with very brief, easily answered enquiries would not be asked to fill in questionnaires.

By the end of February we had handed out 308 questionnaires. Of these, a total of 260 were returned either partially or fully completed (84%). This was an excellent response, which we have attributed to the 'personal' approach. Most people, indeed, completed forms during the course of their visit; a few took them away and brought them in at a later date, and one or two even mailed them back to us at their own expense. Our overall impression was that people nowadays expect to be asked to participate in surveys, more or less wherever they go, and accept them as part of the normal round of everyday life. This was a pleasant surprise to staff, who had expected a certain degree of reluctance from members of the public asked to tear themselves away from their research.

Although space prevents us from publishing a complete analysis of the results of the survey, some of them may be of particular interest to readers. One surprise came with the answers to our very first question, namely, 'Are you male or female?'. We expected this to produce a more or less 50/50 response, with, perhaps, a slight majority of females. In fact, 156 (60%) of respondents were male. We have no idea as to why this was the case and it will be interesting to see if a similar result is obtained from future surveys. We were also interested to discover that 50% of respondents consisted of retired people and full time students:

Employed	38%
Retired	25%
Full time students	25%
Unemployed	6.92%
Others	4.62%

People with disabilities were asked if they found the service difficult to use; 14 respondents answered in the affirmative (5% of all customers). This appeared to be related to use of microform readers, height and comfort of chairs and tables in the searchroom, rather than to access to the building - we are fortunate in being on the ground floor of the Central Library, which has a ramp from the front door down to pavement level.

Customers were asked to provide details of their place of residence. Did they live in Bolton, one of the other nine Greater Manchester districts (Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, Wigan), Lancashire, Cheshire, elsewhere in the United Kingdom, or overseas? As expected, the vast majority (163 or 62.69%) lived in Bolton; of the remainder, 35 came from other parts of Greater Manchester and 39 from Lancashire, 15 from other parts of the United Kingdom and only 1 from overseas. We have more visitors 'from afar' in the Summer,

and it will be interesting to contrast these results with those of our next survey, which we plan to conduct in August 1995. With regard to transport arrangements, we discovered that a very high proportion of visitors drove in their own cars (121 or 46.5%). Of the remainder, 68 travelled by bus, 24 were car passengers, 10 came by train, 3 by bicycle or motorbike and 34 came on foot. Although we expected a large number of car users, these very high figures came as a surprise, since parking is far from easy in the town centre. At the time of the survey, we had limited free parking outside the Central Library. This situation has now changed and may be reflected in future surveys.

One of the most important questions asked in the survey concerned purpose of visit. Customers were asked to categorise themselves into six main 'types', and also to describe the sort of material used.

The results were as follows:

Family history/genealogy	103(39.61%)
School project/teaching preparation	33 (12.69%)
Research for first or higher degree	47 (18.08%)
Other local history research	45 (17.31%)
Planning/legal enquiry	12 (4.62%)
Other purposes	20 (7.69%)

This response not only demonstrates the continuing popularity of family history research, but also confirms our impression of increasing educational use resulting from such developments as the National Curriculum and the growing emphasis on project work. Many legal and planning enquiries on the other hand are fairly brief and so the actual response should probably be higher (customers with brief, specific enquiries were not usually requested to complete survey forms).

As far as use of different types of material was concerned, most respondents (108 or 41.54%) consulted printed sources and 103 (39.61%) were microform users. A significant number (90 or 34.64%) used archive material, a higher proportion than expected. This confirmed our impression of an increase in archive use since the amalgamated service was instituted in 1990. A question relating to the frequency of visit showed that 78 respondents (30%) were 'first timers'. Our pleasure in discovering this was tempered by the fact that 40 visitors (15.38%) only learned that the service existed 'by accident'.

Respondents were asked to comment on the adequacies and inadequacies of the service. Most complaints related to opening hours (too short, wrong times), microfilm readers (too old and difficult to use) and, of course, parking problems. On the positive side, helpfulness of staff came out on top (225 or 86.54% thought we were very good). This may be a positive result of carrying out surveys - we try harder to impress at such times. Other complaints related to draughty windows, uncomfortable chairs and the height of tables. Overall, however, 229 customers (88%) thought that the service was either 'good' or 'very good'.

A detailed report on the survey, which was the first of its kind to be conducted within the Bolton Library Service, was submitted to our 'parent' Arts Sub-Committee in March 1994. This in itself was a useful exercise, in that it helped to inform elected members about the service and its various activities. The survey also coincided with the Council's own customer care initiative and was favourably received. The actual results did not tell us very much more than we knew or suspected already. There were no really startling findings, but the existence of the survey and the subsequent committee report has enabled us to provide 'chapter and verse' when compiling lists of priorities, aims, objectives, targets and management strategies. A programme of updating and replacing equipment has begun and will continue over the next few years. On the whole the survey was a very useful exercise and we have plans to carry out others at regular intervals in the future.

Kevin Campbell is Archivist and Barry Mills Local Studies Librarian, Bolton Libraries,

Geoff Smith

It was reported in the Autumn 1994 issue of *The Local Studies Librarian* that the British Library Newspaper Library (BLNL) had produced a policy statement on the collection and preservation of British and Irish free local newspapers¹. This article describes the background to that policy statement and gives a fuller summary of its main proposals.

In 1991 BLNL commissioned a report from Selwyn Eagle on the problems relating to the collection and preservation of free local newspapers; the report included proposals for a national strategy arising from its findings².

The report identified the growth in publication of free newspapers during the 1980's, the difficulties experienced by libraries (including BLNL) in acquiring them systematically, the high level of advertising content in relation to editorial material, the duplication of content in multiple variant editions and the problems of bibliographical control because of title changes and variant editions. Its main recommendations were that certain responsibilities in relation to Scottish and Welsh newspapers should be delegated to the National Libraries of Scotland and Wales, that surveys and regular reviews of the collecting of free newspapers by public libraries should be carried out within the framework of NEWSPLAN³, that there should be liaison on microfilming arrangements, including the purchase by BLNL of locally produced microfilm where this was of suitable quality, that the possibility of the deposit of sets for microfilming of main edition and changed pages only be explored, and that further efforts should be made by BLNL to develop contacts and co-operation with the newspaper industry.

BLNL accepted the main recommendations of the report and subsequently produced for discussion a draft statement of a proposed national policy for the collection and preservation of free newspapers. This statement was discussed at meetings of each of the NEWSPLAN regional committees, at the national LINC NEWSPLAN Panel and by the British Library's Consultative Group on Newspapers. The draft was revised in the light of these discussions and a final version was produced which was approved by each of the above committees.

The main proposals in the policy statement are as follows:

Each free newspaper which regularly contains news and editorial features, and is not merely a local variant edition, will be permanently retained by a library which has national archival responsibilities (the British Library, the National Libraries of Ireland, Scotland and Wales). Changed pages in local variant editions also should be permanently retained.

The British Library will not collect or preserve free newspapers which contain advertising matter only. Such titles should be held locally, and the British Library may be able to help local libraries with their acquisition. However, the National Libraries of Ireland, Scotland and Wales aim to collect **all** free newspapers published in their respective countries.

The British Library will negotiate with the National Libraries of Scotland, Wales and Ireland arrangements which recognise their responsibility for maintaining the national archive of free newspapers published or circulating in their respective countries. The aim of each national library should be to acquire all free newspapers required for the national printed archive through enforcement of legal deposit. The Newspaper Library will continue to retain Irish, Scottish and Welsh free newspapers selectively and with local advice. There will be co-ordination of preservation microfilming between the national libraries.

The British Library will encourage local libraries to formulate and implement their own policies for collecting and preserving free newspapers and to do so with regional needs and interests in mind.

Legal deposit items, not required for the national printed archive, may be disposed of. The Newspaper Library will not dispose of free newspapers already in its collections, other than any which consist solely of advertising. Any items which are to be disposed of will first be offered to a local library.

The Newspaper Library's preservation treatment for free newspapers will be the same as for paid-for titles. Each title will be microfilmed, and a master negative will be produced which meets standards required for the Register of Preservation Microforms. Original copies of filmed newspapers will be wrapped in acid-free paper and stored at Colindale or elsewhere.

Where there are variant editions the aim should be to produce composite microfilm of the main edition and front and changed pages only from variant editions. However this can only be done by BLNL if the publishers can provide the necessary information or composite sets for microfilming. In other cases BLNL will microfilm each edition in full unless changes are confined to the masthead or front and back pages only. For these the main edition in full plus front and back pages only of the variant editions will be filmed.

Work on implementing the proposals is in progress. BLNL will implement the policy in co-operation with local libraries via regional NEWSPLAN committees. The Newspaper Library will look to local libraries to provide both an advisory input to decisions on main editions and categorisation and information about new and discontinued titles. Each regional NEWSPLAN Committee has been asked to survey the region's free newspapers and to report what is being done locally to collect and preserve them. Thereafter, changes and progress should be regularly reported via the NEWSPLAN committees.

1. Free newspapers: a national policy for their collection and preservation. The British Library Newspaper Library, March 1994. (Available from the British Library Newspaper Library, Colindale Avenue, London NW9)

2. The collection and preservation of free local newspapers: a report on the problems with proposals for a national strategy. Selwyn Eagle. The British Library, London, 1991. (Available from BLNL - address above)

3. NEWSPLAN is the programme for the microfilming and preservation of UK and Irish local newspapers. It involves co-operation between the British Library, local libraries, other national libraries and the newspaper industry. It is co-ordinated through a framework of 11 regional committees covering the whole of the British Isles. The national NEWSPLAN Panel brings together representatives from each of the regional committees and is a Panel of LINC, the Library and Information Co-operation Council.

Geoff Smith is Newspaper Librarian, British Library Newspaper Library.

PLANNING FOR DISASTERS IN ARCHIVES, LIBRARIES AND MUSEUMS

Philippa Stevens

Where were you on 1st August last year? That was the day when Norwich Central Library burnt down, destroying the Local Studies Collection and damaging the County Archives stored in the basement.

Meanwhile in Hampshire plans were well advanced to hold a conference on 'Planning for Disasters' on 4th November, organised by Hampshire County Council, the Hamp-

shire Archives Trust and the Library Association. The conference aimed to share expertise by examining the different disasters that can occur, the lessons to be learnt from them and the practical steps which can be taken to avoid or cope with them. About 130 people were present on the day; many represented libraries and record offices, but it was particularly significant that many delegates were not library or archive professionals but attended as private individuals or represented commercial firms of government departments. While not all the papers presented were directly applicable to local studies collections, all gave much food for thought.

The venue for the conference was Portsmouth Central Library where exhibitions were displayed by Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service, Hampshire Archives Trust and Hampshire County Library. The National Preservation Office's video *If disaster strikes* was shown at break times, and a range of free literature was available on disasters and emergency planning.

The keynote speech was given by Stewart Kidd, Director of the Fire Protection Association, who focused on the Bailey Report resulting from the fire at Windsor Castle, *Management of fire safety in historic buildings: a plan for action*. Recommendations included the appointment of a fire safety manager, control of contractors, and undertaking a fire risk assessment.

Edward Diestelkamp, Assistant to the Historic Buildings Secretary of the National Trust, spoke about the National Trust's experience of disasters such as that at Uppark in Sussex. The Hampton Court fire led to the setting up of fire support teams with regular training and the compilation of location cards for individual rooms. The fire at Uppark had taught three lessons: the need to liaise with the Fire Brigade and to tell them what to move; the need for people to have proper training in handling objects to avoid damage; and the importance of security regarding objects removed from the building.

A series of short talks was given before lunch. Cerina Nichamin, a conservator from the Public Record Office, spoke on the treatment of salvaged archives, while Valerie Ferris of the National Preservation Office focused on security and prioritisation of material for possible replacement after a disaster. Alan Johnston of Hampshire Museums Service spoke on insect pests and other infestations suffered by museums, and Tim Craven of Southampton Art Gallery dealt with the storage and handling of paintings.

The afternoon session began with Edmund King from the British Library on the subject of compiling an emergency plan: aspects to be considered included staff awareness, the importance of the caretaker, 24 hour call out arrangements for staff, the use of volunteers, equipment, the contents of the disaster control manual, in-house resources and external arrangements, and staff training.

P.C. Peter Rann of Portsmouth Police Station then showed a police training video on how to respond to the threat of bombs, and made available the Home Office booklet *Bombs: protecting people and property*. Two more short talks followed: Alan Johnston dealt with Hampshire Museums Service's mobile Emergency Conservation Unit which can be towed to the site of a disaster, and Caroline Humphries of the Hampshire Archives Trust spoke on drawing up an emergency plan for Hampshire Record Office which could be extended to embrace the library and the museums services.

The final speaker was Jean Kennedy, Norfolk County Archivist, who described the fire at Norwich Library which burnt the local studies and other library collections. The archives located in the basement survived but suffered water damage as a result of the firefighting. The chief lessons learnt were the need for flexibility in reacting to rapidly changing situations, the need for pre-arranged access to alternative accommodation and mobile telephones, the possibility of misleading reporting by the media, and the protection afforded by metal cabinets.

The images of devastation shown by Jean Kennedy and others spoke more eloquently than words: don't wait until a disaster strikes! Prepare a proper Emergency Plan and train staff in awareness and precautions so that a disaster can be avoided if possible, but if not the swift and well-rehearsed reactions of trained staff should limit the damage.

Philippa Stevens is Local Studies Librarian, Hampshire County Library.

LOCAL STUDIES GROUP ANNUAL REPORT 1994

Patrick Baird

The Group retains its steady membership of just under 1800 and its five branches throughout the United Kingdom have continued to be active by organising seminars, courses and conferences. Perhaps the most important course this year was a day's seminar *Planning for Disasters in Archives, Libraries and Museums* organised by Hampshire Archives Trust in conjunction with Hampshire County Council's Library and Museums Service and the Local Studies Group. This took place at Portsmouth Central Library and attracted over 120 delegates from as far afield as Sheffield and Zurich and even included representatives from the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and the Royal Air Force.

On behalf of its members the Group has responded to the Department of National Heritage *Review of the Public Library Service in England and Wales* issued by the ASLIB Consultancy Team and to the *Department of National Heritage, Steering Group on Contracting Out in Public Libraries* with reference to donations of materials. The Group continued to build on its international policy with an invitation to the Vice Chairman, Elizabeth Melrose, to give two papers at the 26th Conference of the Association of Hungarian Librarians at Komend last August.

The year was tinged with sadness because of the resignations of our Treasurer, Paul Drew, who also acted as the Welsh Group representative, and of Paul Sturges, our LA Council representative, though the latter remains as a Committee member: Sheila Cooke did not seek re-election to the Committee. To all of these we send our thanks for their services to the Group over the years. During the year we welcomed Phil Thomas as our new Treasurer and Malcolm Ranson as the representative of the Welsh Group. We welcome, too, Neil Bruce, who was recently elected as our member on LA Council for the next three years.

The Local Studies Librarian continues to be published twice a year as does its Scottish counterpart *Locscot*, each of which never fail to include a varied collection of most interesting and useful articles.

The Dorothy McCulla Prize for 1994 was awarded to Don Martin of the William Patrick Library, Kirkintilloch, Glasgow who has been the mainstay of the Scottish Branch since it was formed.

Finally, great thanks to our retiring Chairman, Ian Jamieson, who has steadfastly controlled the Committee over the past few years as well as editing the *Local Studies Librarian*.

From 1995 Elizabeth Melrose will be taking over the role of Chairman. During her term of office the Committee will be issuing a Mission Statement and Aims and Objectives of the Local Studies Group.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT for the year ended 31st December 1994

EXPENDITURE	£	INCOME	£
Nett V.A.T. on Goods and Services	2.07	Capitation	4460.00
Postages and phone calls	13.29	LESS Overpaid in 1993	<u>1271.00</u>
Stationery and Photocopying	2.19		3189.00
Committee Expenses:		LOCAL STUDIES LIBRARIAN,	
Main Committee Meetings (2)	743.17	Advertising & Subscriptions:	
Executive Committee Meeting (1)	52.58	1991 -	3.00
Officers' Expenses	<u>22.12</u>	1992 -	7.00
		1993 -	615.50
		1994 -	<u>162.00</u>
			787.50
	817.87	Affiliated Members' Fees	31.00
LOCAL STUDIES LIBRARIAN:		MAPPING DIRECTIONS Course:	
Vol. 12(2) -Distribution	633.68	Share of Proceeds from ISG (SW)	64.32
Vol. 13(1) -do	617.82	COIF Charities Deposit A/c Interest	254.39
-printing	1197.50	Bank Interest (since August 12th)	1.20
Vol.13(2) -do	997.87		
-Distribution	419.12		
Invoicing and Mailing to Subscribers	<u>17.68</u>		
	3883.67		
International Relations	199.53	Excess of Expenditure over Income	£4327.41
McCulla Award Expenses:		for year (LOSS), c/f to balance sheet	839.42
Award	50.00		
Certificate	30.00		
Postages	<u>0.44</u>		£ 5166.83
	80.44		=====
LA Mailing for Sub-Groups:			
Scottish	89.52		
Welsh	15.59		
North-Western	<u>29.06</u>		
	134.17		
Bank Charges (to August 11th)	33.60		
do (since August 12th)	NIL		

BALANCE SHEET as at 31st December 1994

LIABILITIES

CREDITORS: The L.A. (Nett V.A.T. due)	50.00	
do (Distribution to Members of Local		
Studies Librarian, Volume 13, no. 2)	419.12	
do (Scottish Sub-Group-December mailing)	18.77	
Imprint Services (Printing LSL, Vol. 13, no. 2)	<u>997.87</u>	
		1485.76

ACCUMULATED SURPLUS as at 31st December 1993	5787.23	
LESS Surplus of Expenditure over Income		
for 1994 (LOSS).....	<u>839.42</u>	
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS as at 31st December 1994	<u>4497.81</u>
		£ 6433.57
		=====

ASSETS

		£
Sundry DEBTORS for Advertising in and Subscriptions to LSL		383.32
Cash at Bank and Invested:	£	
Bank Current Account	271.44	
COIF Charities Deposit Account	<u>5778.81</u>	
		<u>6050.25</u>
		6433.57

P.D. Thomas,
Hon. Treasurer.

I confirm that the above Balance Sheet and attached Income and Expenditure Account are in accordance with the Cash Book and other records of the Local Studies Group of the Library Association and that I have examined a sample of these records to check their accuracy.

G.M. Underwood,
Hon. Auditor, 8th March 1995.

THE DOROTHY McCULLA MEMORIAL AWARD, 1995

The Dorothy McCulla Memorial Prize for 1995 has been awarded to Ken Hinshalwood, who recently retired from the post of Local History Librarian for Renfrew District Library Service. Over the years, Ken has been responsible for setting up and organising the large and well-regarded collection available today, including the development of a classification scheme and the active promotion of the service. He is also well known for his support to researchers and local authors, from providing guidance on sources to seeing the project through to the final completion as a publication.

Ken's other activities have included active involvement in the Old Paisley Society, of which he was a member of the founding committee and acted as liaison officer between the society and the library service. At a national level he was a member of the steering committee which led to establishment of LOCSCOT in 1980, and was the editor of LOCSCOT magazine from then until 1987.

In making this award the Group is very pleased to recognise Ken's contribution to local studies librarianship over a long period of time. It will be presented at the Scottish Library Association Conference at Peebles.

The Committee was delighted to receive a record number of nominations for the McCulla Award this year, and their high quality made it difficult to come to a decision. That so many were made augurs well for the future of local studies services throughout the country, and we hope for a substantial number of entries for the 1996 award. A notice about nominations will appear later in the year, but the closing date will be January 31st 1996, for consideration by the Committee at its March meeting.

NOTES AND NEWS

Cambridgeshire's Local Studies Librarian, Mike Petty, has been awarded an Honorary Fellowship by Anglia Polytechnic University, in recognition of his help and support to staff and students of the University. Mike has been involved with the development of the Cambridgeshire Collection over the last thirty years, and has developed it into one of the country's leading local studies collections. As a local author and broadcaster he has done much to awaken public and academic interest in local studies.

The British Library and the National Library of Ireland have jointly published guidelines for the preservation microfilming of newspapers. The Guidelines cover preparation of material, microfilming procedures and quality control, bibliographic targets, boxing and labelling, transportation and security. Copies cost £5.00 from either the British Library Newspaper Library or the National Library of Ireland.

Chester City Record Office has announced a series of courses on personal development for heritage professionals, designed specifically for archivists, museum staff and others working in the heritage professions. The one day courses are: Building self esteem; Dealing with difficult people; and Managing the stress of change. The dates are November 6, 7 and 8, and the courses may be booked separately or as a group. Early booking secures a discount. Further details from Marilyn Lewis or Aaron Wilkes at Chester City Record Office, Town Hall, Chester, CH1 2HJ.

For its 1995 Family History Award, Tameside Local Studies Library is asking entrants to provide an oral history interview which gives an insight into the experiences of an immigrant to Tameside from another country. The tape recording can be in any language as long as it is accompanied by a transcript in English. The judges are looking for interviews in the life story format which fully describe life where the interviewees were born, their childhood, schooling, perhaps early life, their decisions to move, the journey, their reactions to the new country and their new way of life. The local studies librarian comments that the local studies library is anxious to serve all elements in the community, but is hampered by a lack of information about the various groups of people who have come to Tameside from other countries, and it was felt that this year's Award could help to fill the gap. The interviewer and interviewee must consent to the interview and transcript being permanently deposited at the Local Studies Library and made available to researchers. The first prize is of £100, and there is a second prize of £50, to be shared between the interviewer and interviewee.

The Scottish Newspapers Microfilming Unit in Edinburgh opened in 1994. It was established with funding of almost half a million pounds from the Mellon Microfilming Project, and was set up to produce archival standard microfilm and thereby preserve Scotland's rich newspaper heritage - there are more recorded newspaper titles per head of population in Scotland than in any other country. The SNMU films newspapers held by Scottish public libraries, newspaper publishers and universities, including both old collections and current titles. The Unit is a joint initiative by the

Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) and the National Library of Scotland. The Mellon grant provides funding for three years, after which the Unit will be expected to operate independently on a non-profitmaking basis. Future plans include the marketing of historical and contemporary collections throughout the world where demand is high from people of Scottish descent.

LSG Committee 1995-6

Chairman:	Elizabeth A Melrose, North Yorkshire County Library
Vice Chairman:	(to be elected)
Hon. Secretary:	Patrick Baird, Birmingham Public Libraries
Hon. Treasurer:	Philip Thomas, Birmingham
Minutes Secretary:	Diana Dixon, Dept of Information and Library studies, Loughborough University

Membership Secretary:	Douglas Hindmarch, Sheffield Public Libraries
Hon. Editor, LSL:	Ian Jamieson, Newcastle Upon Tyne
Library Assoc.	
Councillor (1995-7):	Neil Bruce, Highland Region Library Services
Members:	Jane Dansie, Essex County Library. Ian Maxted, Devon County Libraries. Philippa Stevens, Hampshire County Library Paul Sturges, Dept of Information and Library Studies, Loughborough University.

Branch representatives

Eastern Counties:	Mike Petty, Cambridgeshire Libraries
London & Home Counties:	Penny Ward, Kent County Library
North Western:	Alice Lock, Tameside Libraries
Scottish:	Don Martin, Strathkelvin District Libraries
Welsh:	Malcolm Ranson, Cardiff

As the number of candidates did not exceed the number of vacancies, no elections were held this year.

As can be seen from the foregoing list, the Group has committee members in most parts of the country. If you have any ideas or suggestions for meetings etc. - or indeed anything that you wish to bring to the attention of the Committee - please do not hesitate to contact your nearest committee member or the Hon. Secretary.

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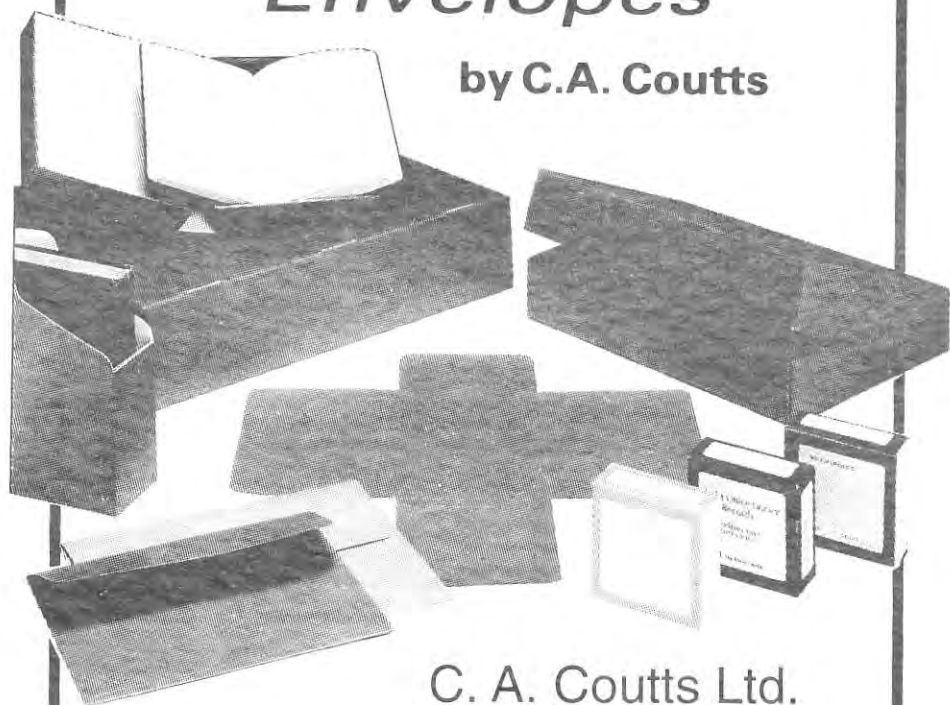
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