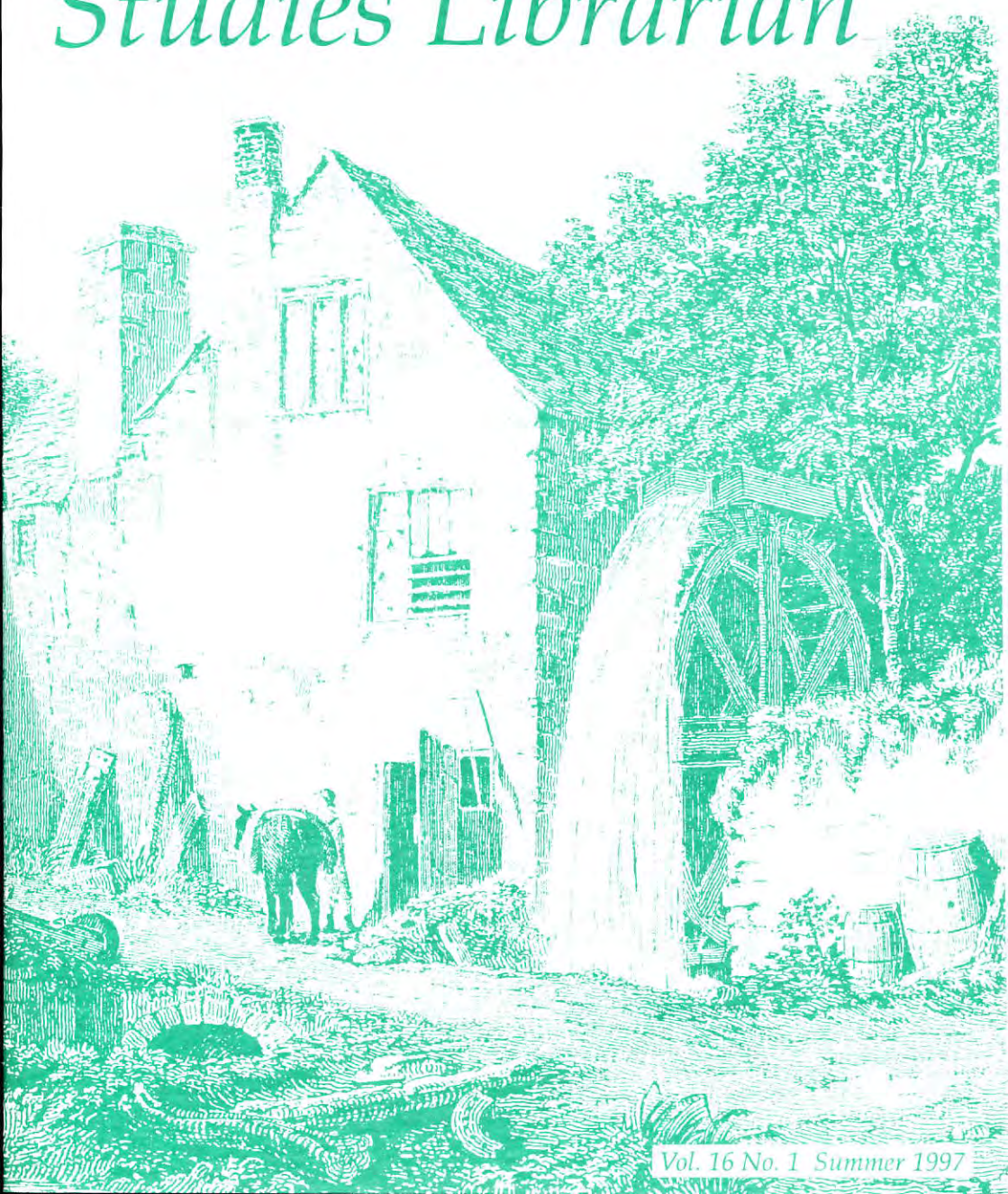


The Local Studies Librarian



Vol. 16 No. 1 Summer 1997

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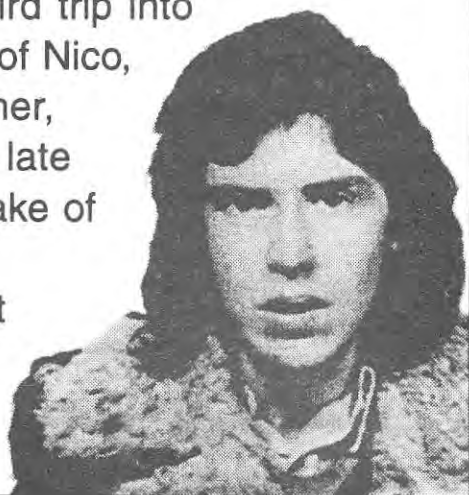
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Editorial

A column like this is sometimes the place to take stock and, as the Group reaches its twentieth anniversary, this seems a suitable time to do so.

The Local Studies Group was founded in 1977 at a time when local government reorganisation had recently taken place and there was concern about changes in service provision. Twenty years later we are again seeing local government being reorganised, and again wondering about the future. Then, with the new larger authorities, the hope was for expansion of local studies services: now, with the move in many cases to smaller authorities, the worry is that some will not be able to afford a dedicated local studies department with specialist staff. And yet local history is more popular than ever with the public. Where does LSG come in?

During the last two decades the Group has expanded to about 2000 members, has five branches, and is geared to make informed comment on matters of concern: recently we have dealt with such matters as legal deposit, copyright in Ordnance Survey maps and the Smethurst Report, have produced a Mission Statement of our aims and objectives and have issued a Statement on local government reorganisation and local studies collections to local authorities. In line with LA policy, we maintain various international connections, including an Accord with local studies librarians in Hungary. Our most prestigious service to members, however, has been the publication of our *Guidelines* for local studies collections, which have been influential at home and abroad: a revised edition will hopefully be issued by the end of this year. Our other main activity at the moment is the preparation of a bibliography of local studies librarianship.

None of this work, however, can be carried out without the support of members - either to bring forward ideas or to serve on the Committee. We also have a voice at LA Council through our Group Councillor, Neil Bruce, who has been very active in keeping an eye on our interests and in keeping us informed about Council activities. His term of office ends in December and, sadly, he will not be seeking re-election, so we will need a replacement for 1998-2000, as recently advertised in the *LA Record*: details can be found in the June issue, p 334. You might also like to contact the Group's Secretary or Chairman.

When LSG was set up it was because there was a perceived need for a special interest group for librarians interested in local studies, either in designated posts or as people looking after the collection in smaller libraries, to enable them to keep in touch and discuss matters of current interest. That need is at least as great today.

STOP PRESS.

It has just been announced that the Group has been awarded a grant by the Library Association's Branch and Group Development Fund to assist with the expenses of compilation of our bibliography of local studies librarianship. This is a considerable feather in our cap.

SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY:

Co-operation between archivists and librarians in West Sussex

Martin Hayes

Do we really need close co-operation between archivists and librarians? After all aren't archivists highly trained experts looking after original sources, using specialised accessioning and indexing practices, working in a carefully-controlled environment? And don't librarians simply look after books, organised by a classification scheme in buildings where environmental control means opening and closing windows? Aren't archivists fearsome intellectuals with a disdain for the public and aren't librarians timid time servers over-eager to pander to the public's every demand?!

There are certainly clear differences between the two professions in qualifications, training and approach to organising sources. However, increasingly, both libraries and record offices hold the same sort of popular source: books, periodicals, newspapers, directories, IGI, sale catalogues, ephemera, photographs and pictures, censuses and other archival material in microform. Moreover from the researcher's point of view, the distinction between record office and library, archivists and librarians, is becoming increasingly blurred. Most researchers, and their numbers seem to increase year by year, seek accurate information regardless of its source or provider. It is, therefore, for this fundamental reason - the demands of our enquirers - that we must make greater efforts to present a "seamless" local history service in each of our authorities.

Of course in some authorities, the process of "convergence" has already resulted in previously separate library and archive departments becoming one, such as in Kent, Oxford and Suffolk, and local government re-organisation may hasten this process. However, many of us remain in separate departments and need to make resolute efforts to achieve this "seamless" ideal. In West Sussex, although sharing a Committee (Library and Archives), Libraries and Record office are separate departments within the County Council, and therefore I feel that readers may be interested in our experience.

In 1991, five years after I had been appointed Principal Librarian Local Studies, I still had not met all the archivists, let alone archive assistants, at West Sussex Record Office (WSRO). Formal and informal contact was minimal - just enough to solve the occasional query or problem. By contrast, in 1995 we held twelve interdepartmental meetings, four staff training sessions at which there was an element of co-operation, eighteen joint public events, were involved in two co-operative microfilming projects and produced three joint publications.

How was this remarkable transformation to the current state of bliss achieved ?

It all began in 1792 with the birth of someone who was to become a world-famous, Romantic poet - Percy Bysshe Shelley. On 4th August he was born at a house called Field Place in the parish of Warnham, about two miles west of Horsham. In 1990 Horsham District Council and other interested local parties formed a group

to organise events for the forthcoming bicentenary. At the invitation of John Godfrey, one of the Assistant County Secretaries, West Sussex County Council departments sent representatives to a meeting to discuss our possible involvement. Thus the Special Events Group was born. It met several times during 1991 and refined a few ideas.

One of the earliest initiatives in 1992 was the publication of 'Trumpet of Prophecy'. Primarily a booklist, it also has an account of Shelley's life and a summary of his local links. At the back is a list of events organised by WSCC during the year. Three thousand copies were printed.

Kim Leslie, Education Officer at WSRO, researched a Shelley trail leaflet, organised a plaque on the site of the printers of the poet's earliest works (in Worthing) and two moonlight walks following a route originally taken by the poet.

Apart from the booklet, Library Service events included the publication of Pastime Postcards, displays of material, the production of a Local Studies Information Pack, and four evenings of talks and recitals. Some twenty events were presented by four County Council departments and of these thirteen were organised by either the Library Service or WSRO.

The original intention had been that the Group would be a one-off for this important anniversary. However, the project proved very successful in terms of the way the Group gelled together, the variety of events organised and the publicity generated. Archive and library departments, together with the Information Office, have been the key departments. Some 88 articles covering the Bicentenary appeared in local newspapers, and radio and television coverage was achieved.

1993 saw the Group organising events related to the 40th anniversary of Hilaire Belloc's death, in 1994 anniversaries included those associated with D-Day, Oscar Wilde, William Penn & Tickner Edwardes; 1995 commemorated VE & VJ Days, John Keats and Ralph Ellis; in 1996, the principal themes were the centenary of the cinema and 50th anniversary of H.G. Wells' death.

So the Group became and has remained an important symbol of "corporate" activity within the County Council, the effective pooling of resources and expertise to benefit the consumers of Council services. Further information on the Group is available in an article in *Local Studies Librarian* Vol. 14, (2). Winter 1995 pp.5-9.

However, perhaps the crucial factors in the move towards close co-operation were staff changes. Within 12 months from Summer 1992 both County Librarian and County Archivist retired and the new post-holders quickly established a good relationship. Both were aware of the considerable benefits of closer co-operation. They issued a joint report to WSCC's Library and Archives Committee on 2nd June 1994 outlining likely areas of co-operation and a few specific proposals. A working group of several key staff from each department was established to take forward projects, initiate new ones and swap information. It meets twice a year.

Developments have taken place in five key areas: family history, training, stock, outreach and publications. Firstly, we are all aware of the astonishing growth in Family History enquiries in recent years. To present to researchers the idea of a seamless service Alan Readman (Assistant County Archivist) and I adapted our existing talks to create a joint presentation on WSRO and public library sources. A co-ordinated approach to enquiry-solving has also been developed. Letters received by the Library Service requesting substantial research (i.e. more than the half an hour offered free by library staff) are routinely passed to WSRO to be tackled by their fee-based research service.

Secondly, as regards training, the Library Service holds an annual training day for reference librarians on a Local Studies theme. Archivists often contribute directly or indirectly. For example, for the family history day Alan Readman gave a presentation on WSRO sources, and for that on maps WSRO allowed us to make slides of manuscript maps and provided background information. WSRO usually sends archive assistants to these courses. Around three times a year I present a training day introducing new library assistants to the Local Studies service. A programme was begun to send existing archive assistants on this course, which has now been completed, and new archive assistants are sent on the course routinely now. Reciprocally, WSRO organises regular, normally annual, tours of its facilities plus introductory slide presentation, aimed at recently appointed librarians.

Thirdly, joint stock initiatives have involved maps, directories, parish registers, and potentially photographs and pictures. In 1994 all 1st edition O.S. County Series 25" sheets (1860's/1880's) held by WSRO, libraries and some museums were copied onto microfiche and sets placed at WSRO and Worthing Library. A comprehensive set of Sussex trade directories 1792-1938 have been acquired by both organisations, and there have been joint projects to film street directories covering Bognor, Chichester, East Grinstead and Worthing. Plans are in place to extend coverage to Crawley, Horsham, Littlehampton, the Mid-Sussex towns and the Shoreham/Southwick parts of the Brighton directories by the end of the century. Libraries have begun to acquire microfilm copies of archival material, particularly those some distance from Chichester. For example, Bognor Regis, Burgess Hill, Crawley, East Grinstead, Horsham, Littlehampton and Shoreham libraries now have 19th century census returns on their own catchment areas. Horsham has microfilm of the local parish registers and tithe survey. Photographs and pictures will be the subject of a future report.

Fourthly, outreach activities at WSRO have increased at a phenomenal rate since Caroline Adams' appointment as Senior Archivist (Outreach) in 1994. I have already mentioned initiatives such as the Special Events Group and family history talk, but Caroline has made a further significant impact in publicising WSRO. Projects which the Library Service have attended or contributed to include West Sussex Local History Fairs in 1994 and 1995, a family history course, various WSRO displays (especially one celebrating its 50th anniversary) and latterly Local and Family History Open Days. These Open Days involve displays of material and services, an advice panel with staff from WSRO, libraries and museums and sometimes talks on sources. There are of course many other minor projects that Caroline and I have helped each other with.

Finally, publications: the most important advance in this field has been the production of *Local History Mini Guides to Sources*. The first, on *Crawley*, appeared in February 1995, no.2 covers *West Sussex At War 1939-1945*, no.3 *East Grinstead*, no.4 *Railways in West Sussex* and No. 5 *Bognor*. Mini-Guide no. 6 *Family History Research in West Sussex* will be published in Summer 1997. These biannual booklets list sources held on a particular place or subject, principally those available at WSRO public libraries but also at other institutions, such as local museums, colleges and universities, the Public Record Office and specialised institutions. A comprehensive bibliography has now been established as an important element of each *Mini-Guide*. Standard topics are covered for the *Mini-Guides* to places, including family history, house history, archaeology, churches, education, pictorial sources, public services, shops and trade and industry.

In conclusion then, I believe that closer co-operation in West Sussex has led to a substantially improved service to local researchers. Researchers have access to more material in libraries and at WSRO; the staff in both places are better trained and more aware of each others holdings and expertise; there are more publications guiding local researchers to sources; and the public have (hopefully!) enjoyed a large number of events involving local history themes. Most of these initiatives have not cost either department anything in monetary terms, beyond normal spending: they have been achieved more by reviewing services, identifying areas of overlap and considering the needs of researchers and of staff.

The improvement was possible primarily through having forward-looking and flexible staff, firstly at a senior level to sanction the change and secondly at a more junior level to carry through their projects. There was also an element of good luck in that the Shelley bicentenary coincided with the changes at the top. Shelley would certainly have approved of this new spirit in his home County: "empathy" between people was one of his central philosophies of life.

The only regret I have is that the new Record Office building (1989) was planned and constructed before the new era of co-operation. There might have been scope for an even more radical approach had this been happening now - particularly the transfer of some library material such as photographs and pictures, sale catalogues and even rare books and pamphlets - to create a more comprehensive West Sussex Studies Centre.

Finally as regards the curious title of this talk "Sleeping With The Enemy", I have made the ultimate personal sacrifice in pursuit of the ideals of co-operation and convergence. Some 17 years ago I married an archivist!

*Martin Hayes is Principal Librarian - Local Studies,
West Sussex County Council Library Service*

DO MENTION THE WAR:

German Prisoners of War at Haltwhistle, Northumberland.

Mark Benjamin

Early in 1993, Hexham Library was approached by the local newspaper, the *Hexham Courant* who were clearing out their building prior to refurbishment. Amongst piles of defunct titles, formerly printed on the *Courant* presses, was a full set of *Die Zeit am Tyne*, the newsletter produced by German Prisoners of War at Featherstone Park Camp from 1946-48.

Overlooked by the imposing bulk of Featherstone Castle near Haltwhistle in Northumberland, the wartime evacuation point of Rugby School, Featherstone Park Camp had been established as a training camp first for British Commandos and then for American troops. It was the Americans who nicknamed it "Death Valley" - an unlikely name for the picturesque riverside site: perhaps they were city boys who found it too isolated! Holding up to 5,000 men, it was later used to house first Italian and then German rankers before its post-war incarnation as a re-education and assessment camp for German officers, many of whom had spent most of their captivity in North America.

As *Die Zeit* might well prove of interest to the local historian but, apart from one Special Issue, was in German, I decided to see whether we could get it translated. An appeal through the *Courant* produced several offers and we eventually accepted that of Edith Hüttenlocher, a German resident in Hexham. Edith set to work and produced a regular stream of instalments - at no cost to the County, apart from the occasional typewriter ribbon!

Towards the end of 1995, with the translation of issues 1 - 4 nearing completion, Edith and I felt that an official launch of some sort might be warranted. We decided to arrange the launch for June 1996 - the 50th anniversary of the first issue. This *should* have taken the usual form of a simple photo-call with Cllr Reid of the County's Amenities Committee and Edith Hüttenlocher proudly clutching the translation. However, following a co-incidental approach by a free-lance TV producer, it was decided to attempt to combine our intended launch of the translation with his projected film. The Camp has often been the subject of enquiries, but little information has been available to date. We felt that the results of such a project might prove a useful resource.

I undertook to put out feelers in the local community and it soon became apparent that there was a wealth of information out there: it also became obvious that we were going to have enough material to enable us to mount an exhibition. One line of enquiry led to another and the Imperial War Museum, various regimental museums and the British Consulate in Düsseldorf (among others) all proved very helpful. A visit to the Public Record Office (in my own time) produced several relevant items, while one of our more startling discoveries was that Newcastle's university bookshop had, for the past 30 years, been run by an ex-inmate of the camp, as had Hexham's caravan site!

Through local contacts and the British Consulate, we made contact with other ex-prisoners, since returned to Germany. Now in their eighties, several of these were happy to send photographs and memories for inclusion in the exhibition, as did many local inhabitants. It soon emerged that the camp had held a special place not only in the local community but also in the history of British PoW camps, having had a particularly constructive and liberal regime in the post-war period. Notably, it had been the first camp to take down the barbed wire and dismiss the guards. Being officers, the prisoners could not be forced to work, but many volunteered to work in the community and the camp had even boasted touring

theatre groups and orchestras - not the sort of thing I had associated with POW camps!

It does seem that the particular atmosphere at Featherstone Park had the desired effect on many of the 25,000 German officers who passed through the camp. The re-education programme was so successful that, on their return to Germany, several of the prisoners set up the Arbeitskreis Featherstone Park (The Featherstone Park Workers Circle), an early Anglo-German friendship force. This atmosphere was due largely to the efforts of two of the British commandants, Colonels Vickers and McBain, and their Interpreter Officer, Herbert Sulzbach. There is some dispute about whether it was Vickers or McBain who actually ordered the wire to be taken down and the guards dismissed: most sources credit Vickers but, in notes written some years later, McBain claims he did it. Only one prisoner subsequently broke his parole - and even he left a note of apology.

Sulzbach emerged as a fascinating figure. A German Jew who was awarded the Iron Cross in the First World War, he had escaped to England in the 1930s. Interned on the Isle of Man as an Enemy Alien, he later joined the British Army Pioneer Corps, serving throughout the war and rising to the rank of Captain. He then transferred to the Intelligence Corps, acting as Interpreter Officer first at Comrie Camp in Scotland and then at Featherstone Park. Awarded the OBE, he died in 1985, having served as Cultural Attaché at the West German Embassy. When, during the course of the research, I found myself talking to various elderly German officers about their life at Featherstone - and, as a Jew, carefully not asking them about exactly what they did in the war itself - it was Sulzbach's example that I bore in mind; if he could bring himself to reason with avowed Nazis in 1946, I could certainly manage it 50 years later.

When we finally called a halt to the research, I found myself in the fortunate position of being able to choose what I wanted to include in the exhibition. One particularly rich haul of artefacts came from the camp's former Ration Sergeant - traded for extra rations! My one disappointment was the failure to track down the scale model of the camp, made by a prisoner, reputedly sold at auction "somewhere in Cumbria" within the previous two years.

The exhibition was launched at Haltwhistle Library in June, where it swiftly became a focus for yet further memories: everybody seemed to have had some connection with the camp. The wine for the launch was specially imported by Edith who mistrusted English opinion of German wine, despite my assurances that I knew that there is more to it than "Blue Nun". Fortunately, the Hexham Courant agreed to sponsor the launch which was attended by, amongst others, Henry Faulk, the officer responsible for all de-Nazification programmes in British camps, Col. McBain's son and several ex-prisoners.

Later, the exhibition moved to Hexham library where it continued to attract considerable attention - and a few more exhibits. Following a subsequent approach by a member of the public, I found myself addressing a large and interested audience of Germans at the German-speaking Martin Luther Church in Newcastle, prior to a further month's exhibition in the church itself. This proved so successful that I have now been asked whether the exhibition could be displayed in a fellow church in Bonn.

Sadly, personal circumstances forced Edith to abandon the translation after completing six issues but we hope to rope in further volunteers to complete the work. The TV programme never did materialise although we did get very good press coverage and an invaluable resource for future historians.

Mark Benjamin is an Assistant Librarian, Northumberland County Libraries.

LOCAL BIBLIOGRAPHIES:

Mirrors of a County's life

Maria Fülöp

This article describes recent developments in the production of bibliographies in Maros (or Mures) County Library in Romania. The historical background to this multicultural, multilingual area is described in the article by Elizabeth Melrose in *The Local Studies Librarian*, Vol 14 no 2, Winter 1995.

The social changes which have taken place in Romania have had a great impact on the country's library community. There have been many ramifications, but most of all these effects have been felt in increases in library users' expectations and demands and in an increase in collections. In addition libraries have taken the first steps towards automation.

This wave of changes has reached Maros County Library. The increased number of users, the enrichment of our collections and the recent acquisition of four computers are all signs of change. There have been some British "connections" worth mentioning: the 29 volumes of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1994 edition and the TINLIB programme - which our staff are still learning to use.

The social and political changes in Romania have also had an impressive effect on the freedom of the press, with a considerable increase in the number of publications. Numerous publishers and printing offices have been set up in recent years, not only in Bucharest but also in the provinces.

In these circumstances our bibliographic activities and our interest in local studies have revived. We have had to re-evaluate these activities. In this respect the Library Association's *Guidelines for Local Studies provision in Public Libraries* served as a good example, and we also offer our sincere thanks to Elizabeth Melrose, Chairman of the Local Studies Group, for her professional advice and support.

The first important result of our efforts was the *Bibliography of periodicals in Maros County, 23 Dec 1989 - 31 Dec 1994*. It includes 135 titles - local newspapers, weekly and monthly periodicals, reviews, almanacs and year books. Comparing this with the number of periodicals before 1989, some 10 - 15 titles, one can see the huge change. Six hundred copies of the bibliography were produced and made available to libraries in Maros County and across the country, to publishers, editors and users of the library. In 1996 a supplement was issued listing 137 new titles printed in 1995.

1997 will see the publication of the *Bibliography of books published in Maros County, 1990-95*. This includes 518 titles arranged in subject order complemented by concise annotations wherever it seemed necessary to emphasise local relevance. It also contains several indexes: author, editor, geographical and chronological. About a third of the titles are literary works: the rest cover medical, social and natural sciences, geography, history, fine arts and technology.

Work on other bibliographies is in progress. At present we are compiling a bibliography of local authors books published outside Maros County, both in Romania and abroad, between 1990 and 1995. Our department, in cooperation with the other county libraries, is working on the compilation of a dictionary of Romanian authors from 1945 to 1995. We have already compiled a list of 75 local authors and have collected biographical data, as well as information about their works and about their literary activity.

We have also been working on an analytical bibliography. We have been collecting and classifying articles from local and national newspapers and periodicals concerning the local area - for instance the cultural and economic life of Maros County, and its prominent people.

Hopefully our bibliographies, taken separately, but even more when taken together, will be a mirror of our life and the public, scientific, economic, intellectual and artistic achievements of our multicultural, multilingual society.

Maria Fülöp is Local Studies Librarian, Maros County Library. The article was translated by her colleague Anna Szász.

WHAT'S NEW? WHATS' COOL? SURF DEVON AND SEE!

Ian Maxted

Devon's local studies catalogue has manifested itself on the information superhighway more rapidly than I could ever have imagined. Internet and e-mail availability in Devon's public libraries is not yet widespread and no local studies staff are connected. For me a home page is the aged retainer who irons my morning papers each day, and my eyes glaze over at the mere sight of the LAR's *Library technology* supplement.

True, the computerisation of the local studies catalogues began in the mid 1980's but, because the main library stock management system at that time did not provide adequate levels of local studies description, in particular for place and subject indexing, an interim database was established using d-Base III+. Over the years this database has grown to more than 48,000 records for books and pamphlets and the increasing power and speed of PC's has turned my home-made search programs into something almost respectable. The data has also proved to be convertible for other applications. Thus it came about that when, towards the end of 1996, the County Council's Information Devon project to mount information relating to the county on its home pages, was in search of something substantial to include, it looked with enthusiasm upon the Library's local studies database.

My first reaction was less than enthusiastic. While I had started the database single-handed and had developed my own ideas of consistency and structures of subject indexing based on a simplification of PRECIS, for some years collections across the County had been contributing disc-loads of new records and extra locations for existing records. The matching programs I had devised were not foolproof so there were duplicates and a range of ideas on what constituted a string of subject terms among staff working in collections which each had their own indexing traditions. Mounting the database as it stood would not exactly enhance our reputation. Also the prospect of increased workload from postal or e-mail enquiries was not one that I relished-after all our usage was growing without the assistance of the Internet.

On reflection, though, I saw the project as a stimulus to tackle the sisyphian task of editing the database. Over several months I checked some 45,000 subject entries for consistency and verified place codings for accuracy. I also began a purge of duplicates, though many of these remain, for example books ordered under one title and catalogued differently when they arrived.

All too soon time was called by the IT Section and in February 1997 I wrote a transfer program to convert our records with all their special codings into a format that the IT Section's programmers could use. The file I supplied was translated into HTML with the aid of a program in Visual Basic and the resulting file was supplied with a series of place indexes which could be addressed by the specially written search program. I had drafted search screens for the Section's first proposal in December which I was later able to discuss with staff in the Section. In the event, with the Information Devon project rapidly reaching its conclusion and limitations in the capabilities of the search engine, not all I had hoped for could be achieved by the time the service went live in April, although the Section achieved great things in the limited time available.

The result is not an interactive database. The user can access the local studies information through the Devon County Council home pages. There are options for seeking information on the main local studies collections, which reproduce the text of existing leaflet guides, and also an option to conduct a search of the catalogue.

The search option prompts the user to enter a place-name which can be limited by author, subject, title key-word or simplified Dewey classification. The place box has to be filled or the search will not start and to assist in selection it is possible to call up a list of all available places, which can be counties, towns, parishes or major geographical features. The place search is not hierarchical. Thus a search for Dartmoor will not locate titles on individual parishes in the Dartmoor area. It is possible to conduct author or subject searches by entering "ALL" in the place field, but this results in a sequential search of the whole file which takes about four minutes - not an eternity in Internet terms. When the search is completed a screen of authors, short titles and publication dates is given. Individual titles can be selected for a fuller entry including the shelfmark in the four main local studies collections in Exeter, Plymouth, Torquay and Barnstaple. There are various minor problems which could be addressed in later versions. For example the contacts screens, which are based on a corporate County Council database, are not always very clear.

Generally the reception has been very favourable and we have not been inundated (yet!) by enquiries, perhaps because of a statement that library staff are not available to undertake research - there is a link to the Devon Record Office's professional search service. Searchers who use the Westcountry Studies Library in Exeter have consulted the Web site in advance to save time when they visit, and antiquarian bookseller in the region is going to refer to the database in future catalogues and describes it as the fullest bibliography of Devon that has been published. There have been compliments on the design of the screens with their clear, jargon-free text. Westcountry Television featured the Westcountry Studies Library in a programme at the end of June and this resulted in several requests for the Library's URL.

The future poses problems as well as offering opportunities. The Information Devon project finished at the end of March and ways will have to be devised for updating the information. It is intended to supply the IT Section with an updated file every six months. At present the locations in Plymouth and Torquay are shown on records, but it is not clear whether this will continue when they become unitary authorities in April 1998. An additional problem is the lack of easy access to the Internet by local studies staff, both to search it and to suggest improvements. It would also be preferable for staff to maintain the database themselves rather than to rely on the IT Section but this would require both training and time as well as accessibility. Accessibility will doubtless change in time and the eventual networking of the database within as well as outside the Library should avoid many of the problems involved in the current system of exchanging discs and also ensure that the public database is instantly updated.

But the real moral of this tale is that it is possible for local studies information to get onto the Internet without you having to be a computer nerd, provided that you have a cooperative IT Section in your authority and that you have something substantial to offer. Try us on <http://www.devon-cc.gov.uk/library/locstudy.html> and then see if you can't do better.

Ian Maxted is County Local Studies Librarian, Devon County, and this years winner of the Dorothy McCulla Memorial Award.

IT UPDATE

Since the article about the Internet in our last issue, various developments in this and other IT-based programmes have been announced. **The British Library** has announced **OPAC 97**, which gives free access on the World Wide Web to the whole of its catalogues. This extends simple on line access to Internet users worldwide and is seen by BL as a further move towards its strategic objective of providing simple access to its collections via electronic networks. Among other things it makes it possible for users of the reading rooms to find out what is in stock before visiting: for humanities material orders can at present be telephoned in advance. This is particularly useful for students of local history, where it is known that the library's collections are by no means complete.

Local History Magazine is now on World Wide Web at <http://www.local-history.co.uk>. The first part of the site is based on the current issue of the magazine, and will let people read the editorial and a summary of news items, to look at a list of articles with abstracts and to see a list of items reviewed. The second part includes a list of the contents of back issues back to 1984. Countyfile, the address list, is also on the site and is updated regularly. There is also a link to other relevant organisations such as BALH, the RCHME and family history and archaeology sites.

The British Association for Local History is also now on the Internet. **Resources in British Local History** includes information about the Association, abstracts of articles in *The Local Historian* and news of other publications. Still growing, it is claimed that this site promises to become a very important electronic local history library for the next century.

The **National Preservation Office** has embarked on a major new initiative to develop a national strategy for preservation digitisation and digital archiving on behalf of libraries and record offices in the UK and Ireland. A Digital Archiving Working Party has been set up from among a wide range of organisations including legal deposit libraries, higher education institutions and funding bodies, record offices, data archives and publishers. An aim is to coordinate the development of a national digital preservation policy and guidelines, identify training needs and provide 'best practice' instruction, and to act as a clearing house for information. The NPO's ultimate aim is to provide an independent focus for ensuring the preservation and continued accessibility of libraries and archive material held in the UK and Ireland.

Related to this a letter from **Bob Duckett** in the **Library Association Record**, **99(4), April 1997, p207**, draws attention to the problems of information retrieval from sources in obsolete formats and the way in which much material of value is locked up in old technology and therefore lost - not everything can be digitised. The need for conservation of equipment, perhaps with the establishment of national and regional registers of such equipment, is essential. There is a response from the LA Multimedia Group in the May **LAR**, p253, pointing out that at least some steps are already being taken.

THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION LOCAL STUDIES GROUP

Annual report 1996

People and events, of which we have an abundance, make a group successful. Our membership is nearly 2000, and the Group and its five Branches are active, organising meetings and other activities. Our AGM was held at Newtown, mid-Wales, at the invitation of our Welsh Branch and, among others, Day Schools were organised in Scotland and the North West. Our Scottish Branch, LOCSCOT, was prominent as always: long serving Chairman Joe Fisher retired and was succeeded by Janet Klak, and its vibrant journal *Locscot* continued to appear.

The Dorothy McCulla Memorial Award for 1996 attracted a high quality of entries, and was awarded to Carolyn Jacob of Merthyr Tydfil Library. It was presented to her at a ceremony at Dowlais library which was attended, inter alia, by Janos Kappel from Hungary.

The Group's international contracts continued. Chairman Elizabeth Melrose spoke at a Library Association of Latvia local studies conference and Penny Ward, from our London and Home Counties Branch, represented us by presenting a paper at a conference in Hungary.

In the light of boundary changes caused by local government reorganisation the Group issued a statement which was published in the *Library Association Record* as well as in *LSL*. We have also represented the interests of local studies librarians by responding to documents and reports from such bodies as the British Library and the Ordnance Survey. Neil Bruce, our able Councillor, and Jane Dansie, our observer at the Public Libraries Committee, keep a watchful eye on our interests at the LA and have made their mark at LAHQ.

Our Working Party on updated Local Studies Guidelines for libraries has virtually completed its work for consideration in higher places and hopefully publication will take place in 1997. Preliminary work on the proposed bibliography of local studies librarianship continued.

The committee decided that the Group should take full part in Umbrella 4 in 1997 and by the end of the year organisation of the programme was well under way.

Our national journal *The Local Studies Librarian* continues to flourish under Ian Jamieson's able editorship and our thanks must go to Elizabeth Melrose, who chaired firmly but cheerfully our very good year.

Philip Thomas

THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION LOCAL STUDIES GROUP

Treasurers report 1996

We have again had a busy and satisfactory year, despite a small DEFICIT of £165.

In 1995, we achieved a SURPLUS of £668, so adding the 1996 DEFICIT of £165, I have £833 to account for.

In 1996, we spent, over and above normal expenses.:

£250	for the Guidelines Sub-Committee to meet three times,
£406	for the L.A. distribution to members of the LSL (14/2), too late for last year's Accounts,
£508	for the similar distribution of the LSL (15/2), which IS included in this year's Accounts,
£200	to assist the London and Home Counties Sub-Group with a large mailing to their local members,
£1124	Surplus from our participation in the Umbrella Conference, as it is held every two years.

£2488 is the total of all this, which set against the £833 above, is not bad.

=====

I hope you will find the Balance Sheet and my submissions satisfactory.

Philip Thomas, Hon. Treasurer, LSG

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 1996

Liabilities

CREDITORS:	Imprint Services (Printing LSL, Volume 15(2))	£1099.00	£
	The L.A. distribution do	<u>507.78</u>	1606.78
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS as at 31st December 1995		5615.42	
	LESS Excess of Expenditure over Income for 1996 (DEFICIT)	<u>165.18</u>	5450.24
			<u>£7057.02</u>
			=====

Assets

DEBTORS:	The L.A. (Nett V.A.T. due)	3.51	
	Subscriptions and Advertising	<u>1524.00</u>	1527.51
Cash in hand:		45.00	
Cash at Bank:		152.93	
Cash Invested with COIF Charities Deposit		<u>5331.58</u>	5529.51
			<u>£7057.02</u>
			=====

*P. D. Thomas,
Hon. Treasurer.*

*G. M. Underwood,
Hon. Auditor.*

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE:

Account for the year ending 31st December 1996

EXPENDITURE:

	£
Nett V.A.T. on Goods & Services	68.67
Post/Phone/Fax/E-Mail	229.99
Stationery/Photocopying & Printing	343.91
McCulla Award	50.00
do Expenses	66.45
Group Publicity	2.54
International Relations	225.73
Payments to/for Sub-Groups:	
Grant to London & Home Counties	200.00
Bills paid for Sub-Groups	127.94
Committee Meetings	1262.11
Other Committee Expenses	64.80
Guidelines Working Party	250.89
LOCAL STUDIES LIBRARIAN:	
Printing & Distribution	£3621.16
<u>LESS Advertising & Subscriptions</u>	<u>1542.00</u>
	2079.16
Sundry Expenditure	0.33
	<u>£4972.52</u>
	=====

INCOME:

L.A. Capitation		4488.00
Interest Received:		
Bank Current a/c	7.92	
COIF (Deposit)	<u>275.92</u>	283.84
Affiliates Subscriptions		35.50
		<u>4807.34</u>
Excess Of Expenditure over Income during year.	(DEFICIT)	165.18
		<u>£4972.52</u>
		=====

AWARDS FOR LOCAL HISTORY PUBLICATIONS

The **Alan Ball Local History Awards** for 1997 have recently been announced. Established to encourage local history publishing by public libraries and local authorities, this is the thirteenth year they have been awarded. This year there were 30 entries from 22 local authorities.

The judges were impressed by the high standard of the entries, but they also made some general comments which might be helpful for potential future entrants. It was felt that some of the entries were not in the most suitable format. On the production side, it was pleasing to see an increase in thread-sewn publications but disappointing that some entries had too many illustrations that were poorly reproduced. On content, the judges would have liked to have seen more publications include a list of illustrations, more maps where it would be helpful, and greater use of bibliographical references. Some entries suffered from the lack of an index, while others had too many preliminaries. In some cases 'notes' were not positioned helpfully - while accepting that this might be a matter of personal preference, the judges would have liked to have seen more use of footnotes, or alternatively endnotes at the end of the book rather than at chapter endings.

It was decided to make three Awards, the maximum number permitted, and in addition two entries were Commended.

The Award winners for 1997 are:

City of Sunderland for *All about Bede: the life and times of the Venerable Bede, 672 - 735 AD*, by Terry Deary. This is a most attractive publication for young people, and is the result of excellent teamwork. Children's author Terry Deary worked with pupils from Castletown Primary School to research the subject and produce the text; while the colour illustrations were produced by pupils from Bishop Harland Primary School, working with Sue Woolhouse, glass artist in residence for Sunderland's City Challenge Area;

Croxley Green Parish Council for *A history of Croxley Green through its street names*, by Shirley Greenman. This was the first entry ever received from a Parish Council, and the judges were impressed by its overall content, its striking cover featuring an aerial view, and its delightful line drawings by John C Kirkham;

Lancashire County Council for *The Lancashire cotton industry; a history since 1700*, by Mary B Rose. This large collection of essays was produced in both hardback and sewn paperback, and the judges were impressed both by its scholarship and its copious illustrations.

The following were Commended:

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets for *The Tower Hamlets Connection: a biographical guide*, by Harold Finch;

Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council for *Buildings of Tameside*, by Tom Burke and Michael Nevell.

All about Bede also won the PPRG award for Sunderland in the 'publications for sale' category of the **Library Association/Tom Farries Public Relations and Publicity Awards**.

Both the Alan Ball and LA/Farries awards are prestigious awards. With local government reorganisation, it may be that some of the new authorities are not fully aware of the importance of local history publications and the publicity - and sales - value of achieving high standards in these publications. This year there were entries from 22 local authorities: there must be far more than this number who are publishing to a high standard and who could enter at least for the Alan Ball Awards. If your library or authority publishes good local history material, why not think about entering next time? The Library Services Trust, which administers the Awards, will be glad to give you further information.

COPYRIGHT AND OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

Copyright in non-book material always seems to create problems for librarians, and this is particularly so where official publications are concerned. To help librarians guidance on maps and photographs have recently been issued:

Duration of copyright: Crown Copyright photographs. HMSO Copyright Unit, 1996.

Updating a 1994 circular letter, this is a brief statement giving details on the position of published photographs under various Acts, in the light of further advice from the Treasury Solicitor. The situation regarding unpublished photographs is also covered. It is pointed out that fees charged for the use of Copyright photographs include an element to cover access to and provision of the photographs and that for out-of-copyright photographs, Departments are still entitled to charge access and provision fees. Copies of this two page leaflet may be obtained from the Copyright Unit, St. Clements House, Norwich NR3 1BQ, tel (01603) 621000.

Copyright and Ordnance Survey: Local Authority Service Level Agreement. Library Association, 1997.

This leaflet has been compiled by Sandy Norman and issued by the LA because of confusion over the new rules arising from the Agreement, and is intended to clarify the situation. It deals with the 'fair dealing' provisions, the restrictions on copying for planning applications and the LA/Joint Consultative Committee/BRICMICS agreement which allows librarians to copy OS maps for their users subject to certain conditions. The fact that holders of Business Licences from the OS are not allowed to copy from public library material is pointed out and the conditions for educational copying are dealt with. The need for 'fair dealing' material to be stamped accordingly is also pointed out. Copies of this useful leaflet may be obtained from the LA's information Services Department.

LOCAL STUDIES GUIDELINES

Work on the *Guidelines* has been progressing steadily. The Working Party has received and considered a wide variety of comments and there was a wide-ranging discussion at the special consultation meeting at Preston in April. The final document, taking into account all of these responses, is now being prepared: the next step is to present it for consideration by the Public Libraries Committee of the Library Association in July. If it is then approved by the LA itself, it is hoped that it can be published by the end of the year. This would be a fitting way to mark our twentieth year - but if it doesn't happen it will certainly mark our twenty first! Our thanks go to all those who took part in the consultation process, and the Committee would particularly like to thank the Working Party for its efforts, under its chairman Don Martin, over the last two years.

THE DOROTHY McCULLA MEMORIAL AWARD

The Dorothy McCulla Memorial Award for 1997 has been won by Ian Maxted, the County Local Studies Librarian for Devon. There were seven nominees this year, all of whom met the judges' criteria of good overall service provision, excellent promotional activities, and innovation. The Committee was delighted with the high standard of the entrants, which they feel reflects the high standard of local studies librarianship today in what are often increasingly difficult circumstances: the fact that the nominations came from within their own authorities suggests also the high regard in which local studies collections and their librarians are held within library systems. Ian's nominator mentioned the range of his work since he was appointed County Local Studies Librarian in 1977, including his excellent reader service, his successful organisation of the collection, publications, both from the department and as an author, and his development of a database on the Internet to cover the stocks held in the main libraries, as well as his links with other local history organisations.

SCOTTISH LOCAL HISTORY WEEK 1997

Don Martin

Because of local government reorganisation there was no Local History Week in Scotland during 1996, but the event has made a confident re-entry into the library calendar in 1997. During the period 18th - 26th April libraries all over Scotland organised exhibitions, displays, lectures and other events on the theme of 'Working Lives'. This topic was chosen to link with the centenary this year of the Scottish Trades Union Congress.

As always, national coordination of Local History Week was handled jointly by the Scottish Branch of LSG (LOCSCOT) and the Scottish Library Association. The SLA also forged links with the Scottish Trades Union Congress organisers so that there could be mutual support between library events and the STUC's own commemorative events. The SLA published a book of photographs on the 'Working Lives' theme. It was launched at the Centenary Congress on April 21st by Campbell Christie, General Secretary of the STUC (and who is also a very well-known media personality in Scotland). At the same time Local History Week was declared officially open.

The SLA also published a decorative poster on the 'Working Lives' topic: funding for this was provided by UNISON, so that copies of the poster could be provided free of charge to all Scottish libraries taking part in Local History Week. UNISON also provided financial support at local level for some of the library events during the week.

Much of the picture research for *Working Lives* was carried out by LOCSCOT members. LOCSCOT also organised a Day School on Working Lives at Greenock on 19th March, with the aim of supporting local studies librarians in their task of organising Local History Week events on the theme in their own areas. Speakers included Ian MacDougall, the author of *Working Lives*.

Don Martin is Secretary of LOCSCOT

I. MacDougall, I. *Working Lives: photographs of workers and their work in Scotland 1897-1997*. SLA, 1997. A brief review appears later in this issue.

HAVE YOU SEEN ... ?

Some recent items of interest to local studies librarians

Higgs, E. *A clearer sense of the Census: the Victorian censuses and historical research.* HMSO, 1996. 226pp. £11.95. ISBN 0 11 440257 4. [PRO Handbooks no 28].

This is a considerably revised and expanded version of a work first published in 1989. It is confined to England and Wales as the Scottish censuses were administratively separate and diverged in content and form. Clearly written and laid out it is divided into three parts - the history and structure of the records; the interpretation of census data; and making use of the census. The third part in particular is of great value to the beginning researcher in the way in which it shows what the data can actually be used for. Throughout the work the author deals with problems which might arise - for instance in the way definitions of terms or instructions to enumerators changed over the years: an example here might be the way in which occupations were recorded.

In his introduction the author states that this book is intended as a first port of call for all historians using the census as a source, and indeed this is an extremely valuable work both for local and family historians struggling to use the material and for librarians who need to give them assistance. Its value is enhanced by bibliographic references at the end of each chapter and a ten page bibliography of books and periodical articles which comes right up to 1996.

MacDougall, I. *Working lives: photographs of workers and their work in Scotland, 1897-1997.* Scottish Library Association, 1997. 48pp. £4.99. ISBN 0 900649 97 6.

This collection of nearly 150 photographs ranging from the 1890s to the 1980s gives a fascinating picture of people at work in Scotland over the past century. Covering a very wide range of employment from agricultural work and domestic service to office work and shipbuilding, the arrangement is by subject, with brief captions. Alongside these photographs is an essay on the changing face of work over the century with a slant towards working conditions: this is to be expected as the book supports the Scottish Local History Week (dealt with elsewhere in this issue) which this year reflects the centenary of the Scottish TUC. The essay surrounds the photographs but is not directly related to them: this can be confusing, and it might have been better to use it as an Introduction. This however does not detract from the value of either the essay or the photographs and while the examples are Scottish, the industries are not unique and the work will be of interest to social and industrial historians elsewhere. The acknowledgements include a pointer to the photographic collections in Scottish public libraries, collections "that deserve to be more widely known and used".

Devon Bibliography, 1995. *Devon Library Services*, 1996. 88pp. £2.95 + p&p from County Local Studies Librarian, Barley House, Isleworth Road, Exeter EX4 1RQ.

This is the latest in a series of annual bibliographies which go back to 1980. It covers books and pamphlets on Devon, together with a selection of ephemeral leaflets to give an idea of the wide range of material about the county which is being published. Omissions include maps, periodicals and periodical articles, cassettes, videos, works by local authors without local context, and local material published on the Internet. Even with these exclusions 736 titles are recorded. Arrangement is by place, with indexes of authors, proper names and subjects making the bibliography easy to use. The production quality is basic, but the information it contains makes it a very valuable tool, disseminating this information efficiently and cheaply.

Williams, MA. Researching local history: the human journey. Longman, 1996. 276pp. £14.99 pbk. ISBN 0 582 04288 7.

The number of books on how to do local history is a measure of how much work is being done on the subject, and this work is a substantial addition to that number. Like many, it discusses what local history is and why it is worth studying, and then goes on to deal with how we can set about our studies. The author's interest is in the relatively recent past and with the lives of ordinary people as part of history. Interestingly, the first section on sources deals with oral evidence and then goes on to deal with documentary sources. The book makes its points by a series of case studies, using various sources and pointing out problems. Examples include Caerleon in the First World War, population studies and surnames: these come from the author's personal researches. There is also a long and useful chapter on making notes and keeping records, including a substantial section of practical advice on the use of computers for collecting and handling data. The final chapter deals with outcomes and also discusses briefly the question of confidentiality of some kinds of evidence which might be gathered, for instance, in interviews. This is a very useful book for those who wish to start on the detailed study of people in their communities.

Frith's Photographic Directory, Vol 1. Great Britain and Ireland. The Francis Frith Collection, 1997. 232pp and CD Rom. £135.00. ISBN 1 85937 030 6.

For many years Frith and Company was a major publisher of topographical views and postcards. Founded by Francis Frith in 1859, it finally closed down in 1971. The present successor company was formed in 1977, and is engaged in making the huge Frith archive available. The present volume is a selection of some 3500 photographs of towns and villages in Britain, arranged alphabetically by county, then place: dates range from the 1880s to the 1960s. The illustrations in the volume are small though clear, and in effect they act as a key to the accompanying CD Rom. The latter allows for access by place and keyword and photographs may be expanded to full screen size: good quality reference prints up to 7 ins by 5 may be printed out for private study or research, but not for commercial sale. Any PC is suitable, and the system is easy to operate. With its print facility this seems an excellent way of providing information, though for most local collections it may be

too general - presumably county or regional CDs would not be viable. It will, however, be useful in general reference libraries. The company intends to produce further volumes each year.

Bibliography of Scotland on CD-Rom, 1996. National Library of Scotland, 1997. £95.00
Network licence available. ISSN 1365 1781.

This is the successor to the printed volumes of this work, the last one of which was for 1987. It includes publications, including non-book materials, related to Scotland and the Scots, with analyticals for articles and collections. This first CD-Rom covers 40,000 items published from 1988-1996, thus bringing the set up to date: it will now be updated annually. There are two versions on the disc - a 'walk up and use' public access version, and one for more advanced use.

A tribute to Horace Walpole and Strawberry Hill House. Borough of Twickenham Local History Society, 1997. 29pp. £2.50, ISBN 0 903341 64 6.

Published to mark the bicentenary of Walpole's death, this pamphlet consists of a chronology and four papers by different authors. The papers cover Walpole as a person; as a builder and designer; as a writer and printer; and a paper on his collection. The acknowledgements include a tribute to the staff of Twickenham local history collection who provide much of the information and background that the Society's many publications require. A publication of this kind is an inexpensive way of acknowledging a local personage.

Notes and News

The local studies section of Newcastle City Library has been given a collection of 8000 slides and 2000 photographs by photographer and local historian Steve Wood. This provides a unique record of the changing face of Newcastle and the region over the last sixty years. Steve's first camera was won as a prize in a 1929 fancy dress competition and since then he has pursued his interest in recording places, people and events in and around Newcastle. Recognising the importance of this material to the region's heritage he has decided to make it accessible to the public and it makes a major addition to what is already the largest collection in the North East.

Anne Escott, Librarian of the History and Glasgow Room at the Mitchell Library, Glasgow has retired, along with colleagues Hazel Wright and Ian Gordon. At Edinburgh, Sheena McDougal has taken early retirement and her successor as Librarian of the Edinburgh Room is Anne Landers, formerly local studies librarian at Plymouth. Further south, Elvira Willmott, the long serving local studies librarian at Bradford, has also retired: her successor is Carol Greenhead.

Many people will remember Bill Shercliff who, before he retired, was Local History Librarian in Manchester and then Tutor Librarian at Didsbury College of Education. Since then he has been busy with local history writing and editing. His most recent work is *Poynton, a Thriving Community, 1946-1983*. There appear to be few books which cover such recent history and in the words of the *Local Historian's* reviews editor this work is 'the most impressive twentieth-century history I have yet seen'. Mr. Shercliff can be contacted at 2 Hazel Drive, Poynton, Stockport, Cheshire SK12 1PX, and he will be delighted to sell copies of the book which is priced at £7.00 (£8.75 including postage). 950 copies were sold in the first three months.

Most local studies librarians aim to collect information comprehensively about their communities. How far does that in fact go? A recent survey showed that, of the 44 football clubs in the Premiership and First Division, only 19 have their programmes collected on a regular basis by their local library service. Yet here we have part of community history for the future - not only in terms of the history of the club, but also the economic and social history of the community as a whole, via advertisements from local firms etc. It is also widely held that successful teams boost the overall image of the area. And how many libraries collect fanzines?

Following the success of the Devon Local History Week held in February 1996, Devon County Library is now organising Devon Heritage Week, which will take place from 29th September to 4th October this year. During the week there will be talks, exhibitions and other events celebrating all aspects of Devon's heritage. The main programme in Exeter Central Library will start and end with conferences, and in between there will be displays and a bookstall as well as talks and workshops by the National Trust, Devon Family History Society, Exeter Civic Society, TSW Film and Television Archive, the Wren Trust and a range of other bodies. Across the county events such as talks, displays and village trails will take place in at least a dozen towns and villages run by, among others, libraries, museums, record offices and local history societies. If you are on holiday in the West Country at this time there should be plenty for you to visit! For further details contact Ian Maxted, County Local Studies Librarian, Exeter Central Library, Castle Street, Exeter EX4 3PQ, tel (01392) 384224.

After he retired from his long service as Librarian of the Glasgow Room in the Mitchell Library in 1990 Joe Fisher continued his interest in local studies librarianship by remaining Chairman of LOCSCOT, the Scottish branch of LSG. He recently decided to retire from LOCSCOT, and to mark his long and distinguished service to the cause of local history and local studies librarianship in Scotland, the LSG committee has elected Joe to Honorary Life Membership of the Group.

Local history publisher Phillimore celebrates its centenary this year. It was founded in 1897 by WPW Phillimore, a successful London lawyer who was also a lifelong campaigner for records preservation and who also founded the British Record Society to help fulfil his view that to complement conservation of original documents, source material should be made more accessible by the printing of transcripts. Alongside other works, he published hundreds of volumes of transcriptions of parish registers before his death in 1913. The firm continued to operate in London both as publishers and specialist booksellers until the 1960s when it was acquired by Dr. Marc Fitch and moved to Chichester. Since then it has considerably expanded its range of publications and its catalogue includes publications relating to most areas of Britain, as well as major reference works such as John West's *Village Records*, a new edition of which is being published this year.

The Society of Archivists also celebrates an anniversary this year - its 50th. In 1947 there were only a handful of Record Offices in Britain, whereas there is now a countrywide network of local offices, and with local government reorganisation, there are growing numbers of joint local studies centres incorporating record offices and libraries, and also increasing cooperation between libraries and record offices in many areas - see for instance the article by Martin Hayes in this issue. There are also numerous specialist archive repositories. One of the aims of the Society in its anniversary year is not only to celebrate Britain's unique archival heritage but also to highlight the need to protect it for future generations. To mark its 50th birthday an official reception was held at the House of Lords, and various local anniversary events are planned. For further details contact the Society of Archivists, Information House, 20-24 Old Street, London EC1V 9AP.

NIDS (National Inventory of Documentary Sources) has issued the latest of its occasional newsletters. NIDS is a long-term project to publish on microfiche all types of finding aids to archives and manuscript collections in repositories throughout the UK and Ireland. As a few public local collections, including Cambridge and Tameside, are now included, it is worth noting its existences. Most of the contributors are national and local record offices and university libraries, together with specialist institutions. The Finding Aids are mainly unpublished guides to the contents of collections and are indispensable to researchers. Making them available in collected form means that researchers can be directed to special material in your own institution. Well over a hundred repositories now have their finding aids on NIDS. For any contributing institution, the publishers take a microfilm of the relevant catalogues or indexes and publish them on microfiche. The library gets a copy of its own record and royalties (though these are likely to be small as the NIDS subscription rate is expensive and a limited number of sets are sold). The Newsletter, which could be of interest to libraries, is issued free. For further information contact NIDS, Chadwyck-Healey Ltd, The Quorum, Barnwell Road, Cambridge CB5 8SW.

LOCAL STUDIES GROUP COMMITTEE 1997-8

Chairman:	Elizabeth A. Melrose, North Yorkshire County Library
Vice Chairman:	Alice Lock, Tameside Libraries
Hon Secretary (Acting):	Philip Thomas, Birmingham
Hon Treasurer:	Philip Thomas, Birmingham
Minutes Secretary:	Diana Dixon, Dept of Information and Library Studies, Loughborough University
Membership Secretary:	Douglas Hindmarch, Sheffield Libraries
Hon Editor, LSL:	Ian Jamieson, Newcastle upon Tyne
Lib Ass Councillor: (1995-7)	Neil Bruce, Highland Region Library Services

Members:	Patrick Baird, Birmingham Public Libraries
	Jane Dansie, Essex County Library
	Michael Dewe, Aberystwyth
	Ian Maxted, Devon County Library
	Richard Pears, Middlesbrough Borough Libraries
	Mike Petty, Cambridge
	Philippa Stevens, Hampshire County Library

Branch Representatives:

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London and Home Counties:	Penny Ward, Kent County Library
North Western:	Alice Lock, Tameside Libraries
Scottish:	Don Martin, East Dunbartonshire Libraries
Welsh:	Malcolm Ranson, Cardiff
Northern Ireland:	Lynn Buick, Representing the Lib and Inf Services Council (Northern Ireland), Local History Panel

The Group also has a Liaison Officer at LA headquarters to keep us in touch with items of concern. At present this is Sandy Norman, who is therefore an ex-officio member of the Committee.

As the number of candidates did not exceed the number of vacancies, no election was necessary 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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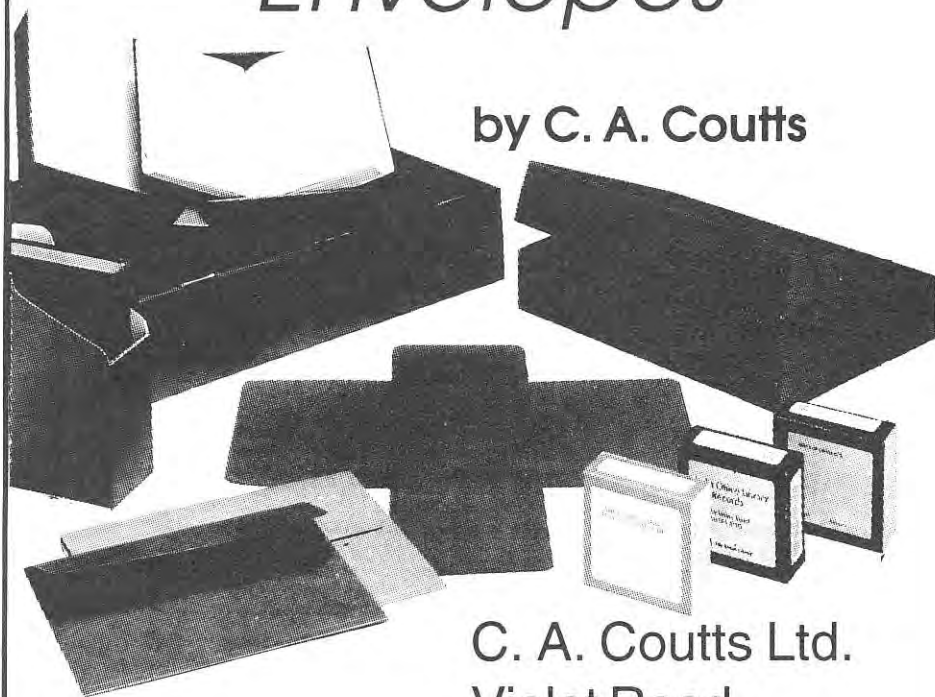
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