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#### EDITORIAL

UmbrelLA 6, as most of you will know, was held in Manchester on July 5 - 7. Most of those who attended agreed that it was a success, though attendance was down on previous years. This in turn meant that less people went to hear the speakers arranged by the LA Groups who offered programmes. Unfortunately this was true of attendances at the programme offered by LSG, despite efforts to make it relevant to today's work and to attract specialist speakers. The LA would like to continue the UmbrelLA format, maybe with some changes, in two years time. By then, of course, amalgamation will have happened, but it should be pointed out that IIS took a full part in this year's proceedings and offered a full programme. Fairly soon Groups will be asked to decide whether they will be taking part in 2003, and the LSG Committee would like to know your views. If you attended, did you benefit from it? If you did not go were there particular reasons - timing, funding, place, leave problems, for instance? The Committee will have to make a decision and would like at least some kind of feedback. Would it be better to offer fewer papers and concentrate them on one day, for example? Please let us know. There is also the point that there are plenary sessions addressed by high profile speakers, timed to be available to all delegates, which were highly successful, and of course UmbrelLA offers the chance of networking with colleagues as well as being able to see a major trade exhibition.

There have been changes within the Committee this year following the elections. Two long serving officers, Chairman Elizabeth Melrose and Secretary Patrick Baird, are both taking well earned retirement, though we shall continue to benefit from Elizabeth's experience as she will remain on the Committee. This is the place to record the Group's tribute to their hard work in keeping the Group's activities in the public eye. Their successors are Ian Maxted and Diana Dixon respectively. A full list of the new Committee appears elsewhere in this issue.

As far as Committee activity goes, our annual report and accounts appear in this issue. Work on the Guidelines for local studies librarians is almost complete and we hope for publication before too long. Publication of the *Bibliography of local studies librarianship* is also on the way. We continue to be consulted and/or make representations on behalf of the Group about matters which concern or may affect local studies. If you have any matters which you would like us to take up, do please get in touch.

Finally, don't forget that LSG has its own website. Consult it at http://www.la-hq.org.uk/lsg.htm

# OLD WINE IN NEW BOTTLES: local history in the digital age

Nigel Rudyard

This article is based on a paper presented to the North West Branch of the Local Studies Group in November 2000. It is intended to offer a few pointers as well as drawing attention to the underlying opportunities and problems likely to arise as a consequence of digitisation projects.

# The value of local history

Local history celebrates the unique nature of our cities, towns and villages in an age when global forces are eroding their individuality and homogenising their appearance. Local history places communities and individuals at the very core of our heritage. The voice of the individual is not lost in the tumult of great numbers, events and political leaders as is often the case with national history. Local history concentrates on the building blocks of society – families, individuals and organisations which shape people's lives in a very real way. Local history is inclusive in that everybody has a history which intertwines with that of their community, and it is also participative in that people are encouraged to discover historical information for themselves, beginning with family papers and photographs and later working outwards to local primary and secondary sources.

Local history services are very important to those interested in local history because: they provide unique materials and resources to the area they serve (and beyond); they encourage people to actively explore their own heritage; they reinforce a sense of community identity and encourage social inclusion; they act as a 'hub' for local groups, schools, colleges and other cultural organisations; and they preserve and promote the local collective memory.

# Unlocking the cellar: the pros and cons of digitisation

The digitisation of local history materials is in its infancy, but already the potential for developing new services (eg remote delivery, virtual collections, electronic texts, networking local studies researchers, online finding aids) as well as strengthening 'traditional' services is enormous. Digitisation is the conversion of a physical document or image into an electronic equivalent which can be stored and accessed on a local PC or server, or made available to a wider audience via an Intranet or on the World Wide Web. It is arguably the greatest revolution in the dissemination of information since the Gutenberg press, in that potentially it instantly makes available unique materials to anybody with access to a personal computer and the Internet. There are no marginal costs: a web site is no more expensive to produce whether read by a hundred or a hundred million people. Digitised copies may also help to preserve valuable originals by encouraging the use of electronic surrogates.

Digitisation offers opportunities for:

- almost limitless distribution: 370 million people can access the Internet (1999 est.)
- provision for a "24/7 global resource": a digital library can be open 365 days a year
- · greater access within organisations, eg remote access at branch libraries
- · preservation: reduced use of fragile/overused originals

- conversion: when a source is digitised it becomes a new resource with new possibilities
- · flexible searching: it is easier for a reader to select and view images on-screen
- · savings on routine copying, physical retrieval and re-filing of materials
- marketing of quality prints as seen by users in the library or online
- · use of other formats (sound, multimedia, virtual reality)
- · cross fertilisation of ideas and content (eg text on the web can be 'hyperlinked')

# However, there are a number of potential problems:

- · digitisation requires resources, IT skills, patience and enthusiasm
- digitisation is time consuming and the actual scanning can be very boring
- · electronic content can easily be stolen and corrupted on the World Wide Web
- · collection of future primary sources which have been created electronically
- $\bullet$  accessing materials on the web can be difficult: there are 800 million web pages on the Internet with no overarching editorial standards or control
- long term stability of storage media and file formats is not assured: optical/magnetic devices are not trusted as permanent preservation media. Image formats (JPEG, GIF, PCX, BMP, TIFF, EPS) are subject to obsolescence and change
- challenge funding rather than core funding of projects could jeopardise sustainability
- copyright clearance and agreements are hard to establish or clarify. Note that
  copyright problems between the library and image database supplier may also be
  an issue and should be sorted out before images and cataloguing data are embedded
  within whichever database/search engine is employed or if materials are placed
  on a web site owned by an outside organisation.

# The big picture: agencies and projects

# a) Information sources.

There are a number of agencies which provide advice and support on the digitisation of library and other cultural materials. In the higher education sector, these include AHDS (Arts and Humanities Data Service) (http://ahds.ac.uk/), TASI (Technical Advisory Service for Images) http://www.tasi.ac.uk), HEDS (Higher Education Digitisation Service) http://heds.herts.ac.uk), and HATII (Humanities Advanced Technology and Information Institution, Glasgow) (http://www.hatii.arts.gla.ac.uk). SCRAN (Scottish Cultural Resource Access Network) (http://www.scran.ac.uk) provides content as well as technical advice on digitisation. In the library world UKOLN (The UK Office for Library Networking) (http://ukoln.bath.ac.uk/) provides technical guidance on projects such as the People's Network and NOF-Digitise.

There are also many articles and guides available on the World Wide Web. The Digital Librarian, The Librarian's Guide to the Best on the Web can be found at http://www.digital-librarian.com/ and provides a guide to the resources available on the Internet and elsewhere. See also TASI's "Existing Digital Image Archives" at http://www.tasi.ac.uk/resources/img-resources.html . HATII has "Links to Digitisation Resources and Sites", which also lists articles, readings and journals on digitisation at http://www.hatii./arts.gla.ac.uk/DigiSS01/urls.html . HEDS has mounted several presentations from a seminar held in June 2000, "Planning and Implementing a Digitisation Project" - papers can be downloaded from http://heds.herts.ac.uk/conf/conf2000.html . New Library: the People's Network

(esp 1.36-1.40) contains much on the future of local studies and digitisation: http://www.ukoln.ac.uk/services/lic/newlibrary. There is also a NOF Digitise Mailing List web page: http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/nof-digi.html. as well as the History-Digitisation Mailing List at http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/history-digitisation.html

## b) Projects

There are a number of national library digital projects, for example the British Library Digital Library Programme (http://www.bl.uk/diglib). See for example BL's Evanion Collection at http://www.bl.uk/collections/epc/digipro/evanion.html . Gabriel: gateway to Europe's National libraries (www.bl.uk/gabriel) contains digitised treasures from 26 of the 41 major European libraries. Other outstanding overseas resources include the Library of Congress' American Memory (http://memory.loc.gov) which provides access to key national documents as well as related learning support materials, and the PRO's LearningCurve (http://learningcurve.pro.gov.uk/localhistory/intro.htm) is one good example of how digitised content has been used in a thematic way in a series of educational exhibitions and virtual galleries. The English Heritage web site, Images of England (http://212.125.77.51/), contains digital images of England's listed buildings

Regional and local history sources include the Collage database, which contains 20,000 works drawn from the collections of the Guildhall Library and Art Gallery in London (http://collage.nhil.com) and Leeds Library and Information Service's photographic archive, the Leodis database (www.leodis.org), which contains over 10,000 old and new images of Leeds. Gateways such as Tomorrow's History: images of the North (http://www.the northeast.com/northlib/default.asp) provides an illustrated narrative of the North East region. (See p10 of this issue for more information on Tomorrow's World). Local web sites produced by local studies societies and other community organisations and individuals should not be overlooked. Many of these web sites provide good quality images and also much useful historical information.

# Requirements for successful digitisation projects.

Virtually New - creating the digital collection (http://ukoln.bath.ac.uk/services/lic/digitisation/intro.html) advises that actual 'data capture is but a small part of the project, and often the easiest and quickest part' and cites the main elements as:

- · selection of material
- · copyright identification of owners and clearance
- selection and installation of hardware and software (data capture and retrieval systems)
- Data capture (the actual scanning etc.)
- Cataloguing and indexing
- · document and file management

HEDS'Information Paper The digitisation process (http://www.ukoln.ac.uk/nof/support/help/papers/ digitisation.htm) offers the following technical advice:

- · know your originals: their format, condition, size, colour and content
- · identify the costs (noting that objects will require intermediary photography)
- create a digital master (ie a high quality file which will become an archive version)

- · think about resolution and bit-depth (see www.tasi.ac.uk)
- · choose the right scanning equipment (especially a good quality flatbed scanner)
- · decide whether to scan in-house or use a bureau
- · If choosing an external scanning bureau:
- check whether they conform to NOF-Digitise standards (see below)
  - Ensure that they have safe storage facilities away from the production area
  - check if work will be subcontracted and if originals may be 'farmed out' to other sites

The NOF-Digitise Technical Standards and Guidelines (http://www.peoplesnetwork.gov.uk/nof/technical standards/introduction.html) cite four broad areas for consideration:

- 1) preservation: the importance of securing the long-term future of originals
- 2) interoperability: the ability to share content seamlessly between projects
- 3) security: protecting intellectual property rights, privacy and authenticity of the images
- 4) Accessibility, so that materials are as accessible as possible and easily searched

# Survey of digitisation at North West local history libraries

I undertook a brief survey in November 2000 and this revealed that approximately 133,000 of the estimated 1.1 million images available at North West local history libraries had been digitised, though the latter figure is probably a very conservative estimate: over half of the digitised images had been made by Manchester Archives and Local Studies from their collections. Most local history libraries were making them available within the library, including branches etc, but had not mounted their image databases on to the Internet, though this was an aim for most. Most local studies libraries were using some form of commercial supplier, such as iBase or House of Images, rather than devising their own image database. Libraries were digitising both photographic/image collections and finding aids.

Libraries found that they encountered various problems, including funding, in particular sustaining funding beyond the original project: copyright, including clearance, ownership, 'embedding issues'; technical problems such as handling original materials, scanning, indexing and printing; and logistical problems, in particular finding the time required to select and identify images, to catalogue and to maintain databases. Identifying and selecting images can cause real problems. Partnerships with local studies groups and other parties is one solution: in the North West, for instance, Oldham Local Studies Service has worked with volunteers from the local historical society to identify and select appropriate images.

An important point to make is that with image databases where users search for images by criteria such as place names, personal names or events, it is not always wise to leave the choice of keywords to a contractor, who may not be familiar with the local area - and its place names in particular. The appointment of an individual from within the library or someone with a knowledge of the area able to select appropriate keywords is therefore an important consideration.

Most archivists and librarians I spoke to during the survey felt that they and their colleagues were investing their efforts in something worthwhile which would benefit their users in the future. For example Manchester Archives and Local Studies have undertaken a major digitisation project which has seen the number of people using their images leap from 700 to over 10.000 in just over a year.

To conclude, these are thoughts from some of those engaged in, or contemplating, local studies digitisation projects:

"It took us a long time to identify the photographs."

"The bidding culture prevents us from creating a sustainable digital resource. Finding matched funding is a problem."

"Our concerns are specifically lack of funding and shortage of staff/expertise..."

"We are fearful that if we digitise our materials now, we'll find that the format we used will become obsolete in a few years."

"I know of one organisation which had to completely re-scan their collection because they used the wrong file format to store their images."

"There are many practical problems to consider: many projects start off as content conversion and end up as content creation projects."

"Copyright clearance is a worry. I am also concerned that archival images and documents may be tampered with or altered in some way."

"Are we digitising for access or preservation?"

"Digitisation is not an aid to preservation."

"Our approach so far has been concerned with the digitisation of finding aids rather than with digitising original material. We feel that it is more important to give people an overview of what we have got rather than supplying images of an arbitrary selection, with the danger of giving the impression that this is all we have."

#### Conclusion

There is no doubt that digitisation and the creation of digital libraries is one area where local history practitioners can get ahead of the game. The role of the local history librarian/archivist as creator as well as custodian will inevitably increase. Digital content will be - and indeed is being now - created by those who had not previously produced historical material (eg personal, family and community web sites): this will greatly democratise the process of publication, but it will also cause problems such as variable editorial quality, access and archiving, Local history will probably become more placeless - ironically, the location of the local history scholar will become less important as more materials are made available online. The prospect of local history libraries becoming the virtual as well as physical hub of local culture

and web activities is very real, and if the opportunity is taken will ensure the relevance and importance of our services long into the future. The production of future histories in electronic formats means that the local history practitioner will have to be cognisant of the fact that tomorrow's primary source is just as vulnerable as paper in that it can be deleted, altered or lost, and is not at all easy to preserve in its original form. This will make acquiring, storing and organising future primary source materials a challenging and exciting prospect.

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#### PLANNING FOR BEST VALUE IN LOCAL STUDIES

Anita Thomas

You will either have been through it, are going through it now or will be going through it shortly - certainly within the next four years as legislation now requires that you must do so. So, should Best Value (BV) be seen as just another government initiative that is a paper exercise, taking up our already over-stretched time? Or is it a 'once in a lifetime' (or once in five year) opportunity to highlight the needs of/for Local Studies within our communities, authorities and profession?

#### What is Best Value?

"A duty which requires local authorities to deliver the quality of service that local people expect, at a price they are willing to pay". The purpose of BV is to secure **continuous improvement** and to "make a real and positive difference to the services local people receive". It is "an opportunity to take a fresh look at how we deliver our services with a view to making them better, more effective and more in line with what our customers want".

A simple analogy is that BV is like having your car engine serviced. In the process you dismantle your service into the component parts, then change, add or delete elements that need adjustment or are not working and reassemble it. Like a car engine, it should then run smoother, more efficiently and effectively. It should also be more in tune with what your customers want.

The Iramework for BV Service Reviews (also known as Fundamental Performance Reviews) is based on what is known as **the 4 C's:** not Chaos, Coercion, Confusion and Cost Cutting (according to Cynical staff before they have been Converted!), but Challenge, Consultation, Comparison and Competition. These 4 C's are NOT linear or sequential but should be run in parallel.

# Challenge

This is possibly the most uncomfortable bit! A lot of very searching questions need to be asked starting with: What do we do now? Why do we do it? **What would happen if we stopped doing it tomorrow?** 

This challenge needs to be robust. Ask yourself various questions: when did you last review the systems you use? Are the systems user friendly - or were they really set up to make life easier for the staff involved? Does the Collection Policy suit local circumstance - if there isn't one, then why not? Does the collection have to be housed where it is? Are we the best people to be managing it - might the collection be better with the Archive or Museum Services? Do we make our collections as available as they could be - or are only a select few allowed to see/use some things? What are our service Objectives - what are we trying to achieve?

There will be howls of protest at some of these questions which challenge our fundamental existence, but we ARE going to have to justify ourselves. Staff will naturally be concerned with the internal processes involved (the who/what/how/when we do things), whilst our customers will want what is most convenient to them, at the right price. Any changes in working practices could have a 'knock on' effect on service delivery and obviously implications for resourcing.

It is also vital that **external** challenge occurs. Whilst there is no one alternative service provider for the library service as a whole, do not be lulled into a false sense of security - could a well run local history society run the Local Studies Library Service, for instance? They are after all customer focused (being customers themselves) and there are only a very small number of specialist/dedicated local studies staff available.

#### Consultation

WHO should we consult? Everyone! Obviously current service users who physically visit the library, but also local history societies, independent museums, all manner of groups who have visited the library (schools, adult education, inset, and so on) and individuals who have participated on local history courses run by the Library Service.

Especially important are the Lapsed Users and Non Users. These present an extra challenge as they do not usually physically enter our buildings. Are they not using our services because they don't have time? Or because they do not know what we have or do?

There is a tendency for qualified staff to adopt "professional arrogance", the assumption that "we know best". BV fundamentally questions this assumption, but reinforces the philosophy that whilst consultation should focus on what people want in their communities, it should involve the guidance of a qualified librarians judgement. (Most consultation exercises will confirm that staff expertise is highly valued by the public anyway).

Think carefully about what **methodologies** you use to consult the above categories. Establish what exactly it is you need to find out - is it factual information, opinion, perception or a combination? It is important to consult on the objectives of the service, rather than just what services are being offered: it is reassuring to be able to justify/validate where you are now, but this will not help you plan services or meet customer needs of the future. Take professional advice on the use of 'leading questions', questionnaire layout, data analysis options (for speed), and so on. Such

things as surveys (telephone, postal, or electronic), focus groups, user panels, mystery customers, complaint/compliment forms, etc. all have differing advantages and disadvantages and critical success factors and may be more or less suitable to elicit certain types of information. They require different levels of staffing, training and finance. Does the consultation need to be resource specific? Site specific? Or part of a wider, more general exercise?

Are all opportunities to 'piggy back' with other departments or organisations who are consulting the same customers being investigated and taken up? Joint or cross sector working with Archive, Museum, Leisure and/or Education departments shares workloads and financial costs and helps to avoid 'questionnaire fatigue'. Remember that your own organisation provides a ready made opportunity for consultation whether council employees use the service or not large numbers of people can usually be communicated with via your Intranet.

# Comparison

Prepare a **Baseline Position Statement** (an audit of where you are now) from which to measure improvements. This should outline the historical background, purpose of the service, budget, staff resources, service delivery, physical assets and user group(s) profile, and identify such things as service strategy, major trends, and unit costs. How does the local studies service 'fit in' with corporate objectives?

What statistics are available for BV comparison? Neither the Audit Commission Performance Indicators nor DCMS currently have any data relating to the field of Local Studies, but the Library Association Local Studies Group is working on a series of guidelines (currently in draft form), which are a good starting point. How does your service compare with them?

In Wales, the Local Studies Group is taking on a coordinating role in setting up a **Benchmarking** Club to address this issue. We need clear definitions so that we know exactly what to measure and how, to ensure that we are comparing like with like. Statistics must be accurate and valid to be meaningful and we cannot hide behind the argument that public services can not be quantified because, unlike a business, they do not have a profit motive. BV is about ensuring **value for money** for our customers and at the very least, we must compare ourselves with local studies library provision in other local authorities.

# Competition

Who are our competitors? They may be local historians, local history societies, independent museums, volunteers, or other council departments such as Archives or Education. They may also be other local authorities if they are geographically close and organisations such as colleges. Our strengths need to be identified: staff knowledge and expertise, the uniqueness of our collections, the wide range of materials we hold, our synergy with the Archive and Museum professions and the fact that libraries are currently top of the political agenda through initiatives such as the People's Network, digitisation projects, and lifelong learning. Our weaknesses need to be highlighted. A basic question we must ask is 'How do we position ourselves in the marketplace?'

#### Is there value in Best Value?

BV is undoubtedly a lot of extra work that has to be absorbed into our existing workload without any extra resources. However, at a time when insufficient time and resources -both service and corporate - are available, perhaps Best Value **is** the best use of our time. At the end of the day, it is about the **reallocation** of existing resources and should be seen as an opportunity to highlight the continuing growth in local studies generally, the need to maintain specialist staff in our profession and to raise the profile of local studies in our individual authorities.

Much of the work involved in BV can be prepared before an actual review is undertaken. Many of the questions we must ask we should be asking anyway, if we are trying to ensure that the Local Studies Library Service is being run for the benefit of our customers. The keys to success are: to involve as many staff as possible (as the outcome will affect every member of staff); to communicate as you have never communicated before (at every opportunity, with everyone, through every media!); and to create a paper trail (document absolutely everything you do for BV, as evidence is needed for detailed inspection by the BV Audit Commission teams).

BV may be the opportunity you've been waiting for! It can give you the chance to agree some SMART (specific, measurable, achieveable, realistic, timebound) objectives for your local studies service; to prepare a Baseline Position Statement; to consult with all interested parties in an appropriate way; to bring local studies to the attention of senior library managers, council officers and members, your lapsed and non users, other professions and community groups; and to mobilise regular users, local history societies and staff, making sure that the case for local studies can not be ignored in a whole service review.

The essence of BV is continuous improvement in the quality of services we provide. This can only be achieved through appropriate **change**. All manner of battles could be fought under the banner of BV. Don't let this golden opportunity pass you by. Be proactive as you will only benefit from BV if you make it your business to benefit from it.

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# TOMORROW'S HISTORY: A REGIONAL DIGITISATION PROJECT Eileen Carnaffin

Tomorrow's History is a major two-year project, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and managed by the North East Museums. Libraries and Archives Council (NEMLAC). It will produce a web-based regional heritage resource for North East England. The project works with libraries, museums, archives and record offices to digitise and improve access to local studies resources. A local heritage database covering every community in the region will be developed by the inclusion of material such as historic directories and local photograph collections. Although only part way through, the project is on such a scale that it is worth providing this progress report.

Information gathered and created will be accessible through computer networks to schools and libraries and through the Internet over the World Wide Web. This will create a major regional history database including maps, photographs and text information, with links to library and archive catalogues and to indexes of archaeological sites. The project is currently digitising over 30,000 images and pages of text. Mapping will include, for the whole region, current Ordnance Survey maps in two scales, and historic Ordnance Survey mapping in three early editions (from about 1860 onwards).

Tomorrow's History is also providing the resources and funding to create 100 individual local heritage projects between April and December 2001. These may vary from a small scale community history day in a local hall, school or library, to larger projects involving a number of partners and innovating in the areas of community history content, use of information technology, and skills development.

# History and development of the project

The original vision was to improve access to local studies information about the North East region by selection and digitisation of appropriate content, provision of links to existing indexes, data and content and stimulation of community history initiatives. The original partnership was between Information North, the twelve public library authorities and the region's universities.

The Project was always envisaged as having two levels. Level One is the creation of a website structure, creation of digital content by partners and provision of access and links to other digital resources. Level Two is the creation of 100 community based projects managed by community project leaders based at partner authorities. The project is running from April 2000 to the end of March 2002, the timescale in detail being:

Award of grant	October 1999
Appointment of project officer	March 2000
Project officer commenced	April 2000
Level 2 community project leaders appointed	March 2001
Community Project Leaders commenced work	April 2001
First community project grant awarded	April 2001
Level 2 projects completed	December 2001
Project completion	March 2002

The strengths of the partnership have been in sharing skills. sharing the workload. attracting funding, meeting corporate aims, giving opportunities for inclusion and promoting skills development.

The weaknesses of the partnership approach are a lack of common aims, differing levels of involvement, problems ensuring that partners get equal benefit from the work, and the difficulties of management and administration over a distance.

A recipe for successful partnerships would be to ensure that all partners know what is expected of them and what they will get in return - and this should be in written form. The partnership should be endorsed by someone with the power to make things happen - but should also be discussed with those who will have to do the work. As different partners may want differing things one should ensure that there is something in the project for all the partners. Regular and effective communication with all partners is required, and there should be a named contact person in each partner organisation. If there is a large number of partners, any steering group will be unable to have a representative from every partnership authority. Agreement for this needs to be in writing.

## New partnerships and further developments.

The partnership grew from the original public and university library cooperation to include county record offices and archives, archaeology services and museums. Throughout the project partners have been consulted through meetings and workshops on subjects including content selection, copyright issues, indexing for database entry and website functionality.

For content selection, all partners were asked to submit ideas. Following these submissions 152 collections were proposed, of which 126 were selected. A further two collections of digitised images of miners' banners were specially commissioned. A full list of proposed content can be seen at <a href="http://thenortheast.com/info-north/tomorrows-history/content.htm">http://thenortheast.com/info-north/tomorrows-history/content.htm</a>

Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights are very important issues for the project. Partners are required to check the copyright situation for all proposed material. Tomorrow's History will not accept material for scanning or pre-scanned material for the site without copyright clearance forms. To assist partners, they were supplied with guidelines on current legislation, a seminar with a British Library copyright adviser as tutor and free access to this adviser through e-mail.

As none of the partners wished to tender for website development, tenders were sent to a select tender list, and considered by an evaluation sub-group of the steering group. Initially all tenders were in excess of the available budget but after discussions with contractors, changes were made and reduced tenders produced. The tender from ESRI UK was accepted.

Software development to date has been:

Tender accepted	October 20
Data input software development	November 2000 - February 20
Three data input workshops held	February 20
Software distributed to partners	20 February 20
Final version of data input software	distributed 9 March 20
Data input commenced	March 20

Two collections were entered into the software as live test data. Partners have now begun the task of indexing using this data entry software. A seminar including data entry problems was held on May  $3^{\rm rd}$  2001. Partners are reimbursed by Tomorrow's History for database entries - this has meant that they have been able to employ staff to enter the data.

Most partners are to use the in-house digitisation service of Newcastle University Library for their scanning requirements, but some partners will carry out their own scanning. Partners are reimbursed by Tomorrow's History for their scanning work. Prior to May 3<sup>rd</sup>, digitisation of images of Miners' banners had been carried out, organised by Information North. Northumberland Record Office had begun scanning items for their contribution, and Darlington Railway Museum had scanned their selection of photographs.

The web interface the public will use to access the site is being designed by Artychoke. ESRI's sub-contractors. Outline designs were viewed on 22 February, a first revision on  $4^{\text{th}}$  April and a second revision on  $3^{\text{rd}}$  May. Designs are now being finalised.

# Mapping

Current Ordnance Survey mapping is to be provided under local authority Service Level Agreements. Historic Ordnance Survey Mapping for the historic County of Durham is to be provided by Durham County Council as a contribution to the project. Historic OS mapping for Northumberland and the parts of North Yorkshire now within our region is to be scanned. Four editions of the OS mapping will be available, with users able to compare any two editions at one time.

#### Level Two Content

One hundred projects by community groups comprise level two of Tomorrow's History. Groups may apply for grants for projects to be carried out between April and December 2001. Four Community Project Leaders have been in post since April  $2^{\rm nd}$ , working with these groups.

# **Publicity and Promotion**

Publicity and promotion of community projects has begun, carried out by the twelve library authorities. Promotion regionally is planned to take place as soon as projects have been approved in all four areas covered by community project leaders:

- Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside
- Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland
- · County Durham and Darlington
- · Middlesbrough, Hartlepool, Stockton, Redcar and Cleveland

To the end of April, seven projects had been approved including:

- Men of Ormesby a history of local men who died in the First World War.
- · North Ormesby History booklet.

- · Porch exhibition at Escomb Church.
- · Local History publications on Seaham and East Durham.
- · Chester-le-Street in 1891.
- · Shopping past and present in Crook.
- · The History of the Thornley Coal Company

Promotion was also carried out at the Northern Children's Book Festival. The biggest event of its kind in the United Kingdom, the Festival attracts authors, schools and the public to a week-long celebration of children's books. The Festival Gala Day, which attracted 4000 visitors, was held at Durham County Hall on Saturday 18th November 2000. It was themed around 'Tomorrow's History' and access to the project progress website and the pilot website was available. Each partner authority promoted a local historic theme.

#### Conclusion

As the Tomorrow's World project is now just entering its second year it is too early to draw any conclusions, though much work has been put into it. The site is not yet online so feedback is not available: however, should anyone require further information, financial details or, later, details of the URL for the new site, please contact the author at the North East Museums Libraries and Archives Council, House of Recovery, Bath Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 5SQ: Tel 0191 222 1661. Fax 0191 261 4725, e-mail ecarnalfin@netscapeonline.co.uk, Acknowledgement and thanks go to David Parry, the Tomorrow's History project officer from April 1st 2000 - March 31st 2001. This article is based on his work.

Eileen Carnaffin is Project Officer, Tomorrow's History.

#### ROUND THE BRANCHES

LOCSCOT, our Scottish Branch, reports the success of this year's Local History Week. Together with its associated Day School, the topic this year was 'Transport History', and many libraries participated. There was some comment that ever increasing workloads made it difficult to plan events, but the Branch's feeling is that the ongoing marketing/promotion of local studies services is essential and that there is clear value in providing a focus for this once a year. To give librarians time to think, the topic for the 2002 Local History Week has already been decided. The topic will be 'Local Photography' and will link with celebrations to commemorate the bicentenary of the birth of D.O.Hill, a noted Scottish photographer. A day school on Scottish Photography will be held in October.

Presumably pressure of work was also the reason why the Midlands and Anglia Branch had to cancel its first workshop of the year, on Disaster Planning, though it is intended to offer it again later in the year, perhaps as a joint meeting in the West Midlands. There was, however, an attendance of about forty at a day school at Bingham in Nottinghamshire, where the topic was newspapers: this meeting was sponsored by Bell and Howell Micromedia. The Branch's first AGM was held during the day and its Constitution was approved.

Activities of the Welsh Branch have been disrupted by the 'foot and mouth' outbreak which has affected parts of North. Mid and South Wales and some meetings which were planned had to be postponed. However, the Branch was able to hold a successful seminar at the National Library of Wales in March, 'Heritage Lottery Fund: the opportunity's there' aimed to ensure that delegates were aware of HLF priorities and programmes, to promote good applications from the library and archive sector, and to highlight successful case studies, 44 delegates attended and feedback was extremely positive. The Branch AGM was held following the seminar and it was reported that the Branch had 81 members.

The North West Branch has recently published the first issue of its Newsletter, intended to improve communication with existing members and encourage others to join the Group. This issue includes news items, lists of recent local studies publications from some libraries, and a list of some websites, including local ones, which could be of interest. The Branch reports that a small group visited Smedley Hydro, the Office for National Statistics at Southport, on one of its open days and had a very informative tour. The scale of the operation there is enormous and it was very useful to get an idea of the range of services they provide. A successful visit to Chetham's Library and Manchester Cathedral Archives took place in June.

From Northern Ireland the LISC Local History Panel reports various activities. It is planned to run its Local History Week from May 4th-12th, to coincide with that of the Historical Association. This will include a one day seminar entitled 'Seminar for Local Publishers'. Later this year there is to be a seminar on oral history archives. There is also a note that RASCAL, a project to provide high level descriptions of Rare And Special Collections Available Locally includes at present about 100 collections, and all five Education and Library Boards have contributed. It is also reported that the Northern Ireland Publications Resource is now up and running. This is a British Library funded project aimed at addressing the problems of acquiring local history publications, and cataloguing of donated materials is under way. Further information is given in the project's website, the address of which is www.nibooks.org

# LOCAL STUDIES LIBRARIAN OF THE YEAR, 2001

Michael Marshman, the County Local Studies Librarian for Wiltshire, has been awarded the 2001 Dorothy McCulla Memorial Prize.

Mr Marshman has been the County Local Studies Librarian for twelve years and is also an LA Centenary Medallist, and the judges were very impressed with his work. They noted that he demonstrated an innovative and enrepreneurial approach to promoting local studies, finding sponsors and prizes for the many initiatives, publications, events and competitions which he has organised, and undertaking a full outreach programme of talks, lectures, radio sessions, guided walks etc. He has been invited to have a monthly hour-long local history slot on BBC Wiltshire Sound. For these and other activities such as a Millennium project, where individuals and organisations contributed accounts of life in Wiltshire at the end of the twentieth century, the judges felt that Michael was a very worthy winner of the prize.

#### LOCAL STUDIES GROUP ANNUAL REPORT 2000

This has been another busy year for the national committee and the regional branches. Midlands and Anglia. which now has a membership of 300 or so, held a day school at Hinckley library on IT and local studies, and a similar one, called 'The past is IT', dealing with new technology in local and family history, was held at Llandrindodd Wells by the Welsh Branch.

Other events have seen our Scottish Branch (LOCSCOT) coordinating the 2000 Local History Week, which was on 'Events of the 20th Century', London and Home Counties delving into lifelong learning, the North West reflecting on past progress in the field of local studies while looking forward into future developments in 'Looking forward to Looking Back', and the Northern Ireland LISC Local History Panel continuing with Local History 2000 - a project including talks, reminiscence sessions and storytimes.

Guidelines for Local Studies have been revised and will be submitted to the LA for approval and publication and the Group has completed a Manifesto for local studies.

The Dorothy McCulla Award for 2000 was presented to Alice Lock of Tameside at the Group's AGM at Crewe in November.

Patrick Baird, Hon Sec, LSG

#### TREASURERS REPORT 2000

From the attached Accounts you will see that we have had another very satisfactory financial year. but before anyone becomes too excited about our relatively large accumulated surplus, may I point out that the Branch and Group development Award (£1615), received just before Christmas - over three years since being agreed by the LA - will be expended on the forthcoming Bibliography publication or otherwise fully accounted for to the LA.Without this Award in our accounts for 2000 we should have shown a loss of about £400.

The *Guidelines* Working Group has been very costly in travelling expenses this year, and most of one Committee meeting was taken up with the Gudelines evaluation to date. That is why our Committee meetings, which totalled four this year, are shown as 'three-plus'.

The Local Studies Librarian has unavoidably run late in 2000, and the second (Winter) issue, which was not available until February 2001, will be reflected in the 2001 accounts. The cost of printing and distribution was about £1500, and this would have compounded our "loss" for 2000, if publication within that year had been possible.

Hoping the initial excitement has abated, we've had a busy useful and satisfactory year, and we still have some money left, but not too much.

Philip Thomas, Hon. Treasurer.

# INCOME & EXPENDITURE a/c for the year ended 31st December 2000

EXPENDITURE	£	INCOME	£
V.A.T. on Goods & Services	6.66	Capitation	4905.00
Committee Exes (3+ Meetings)	1698.09	1	
Officers' Expenses	69.47		
A.G.M. Expenses	184.25		
Guidelines Working Group	716.22		
LOCAL STUDIES LIBRARIAN:			
Nett Cost	1384.62	LSL Index Sales	1.00
Membership Services	0.97	LOCAL STUDIES	
McCULLA AWARD:		BIBLIOGRAPHY	
Award 100.00		Branch and Group	
Sundry Expenses 36.19	136.19	Development Award	
Stationery/Photocopying	317.09	1615.00	
Post/Phone/Fax/E-mail	219.87	Less Preliminary Expense	es
International Activities	237.80	42.83	1572,17
Nett Payments to/on behalf		Interest received:	
of sub groups	402.59	Bank Current account	4.56
COIF Transfer to Midland &		COIF Charities	
Anglia Sub Group	179.00	Deposit fund	301.37
	5552.82		6784.10

Excess of Income over

Expenditure (Nett SURPLUS for

year) c/fwd to Balance Sheet 1231.28 6784.10

# BALANCE SHEET as at 31st December 2000

#### ASSETS

Balance at Bank (Current a/e - 31-12-00)	1975.59
Balance with COIF Charities Deposit Fund	5079.42
	7621.08

#### Represented by LIABILITIES

Accumulated Surplus b/f (1-1-2000) 6264.63

Surplus for year b/f from Income and

 Expenditure Account
 1231.28
 7575.91

 Creditor: Welsh Sub-Group
 25.17

 7621.08

BALANCES (Bank plus Petty Cash held by LSG Sub-Groups as at 31-12-2000)

 London & Home Counties
 1993.22

 Midlands & Anglia
 1053.13

 North-Western
 446.18

 Scottish
 723.56

 Welsh
 1006.77

 5222.86

Philip Thomas Hon. Treasurer G. M. Underwood Hon. Auditor 9 April 2001

#### NEW TREASURER WANTED

Our present Hon. Treasurer is retiring on March 31st 2002, and we are looking for his successor. The duties do not normally occupy more than a couple of hours per week on average, but more time is needed in January and February (starting in 2003) for the preparation and submission to the LA of our audited Annual Accounts, in a form acceptable to the LA and within their timescale

During this two month period, the new Treasurer will help with and oversee the presentation of similar accounts, on a much smaller scale, for our five sub-groups.

Shortly after the end of June and December each year, VAT returns have to be made to the LA.

In essence, no previous bookkeeping or accounting experience is necessary, as basic training will be provided. Keeping accurate, up-to-date records makes the job much easier, so an understanding of figures does help. Financial records are kept manually at present, but could be computerised by anyone with the know-how.

Being our Treasurer involves being our Financial Manager. not only to report to the Group Committee on matters past but also to advise on future ventures and make modest financial forecasts. Access to e-mail, fax and photocopying is a great advantage. The Treasurer should be able to attend (travel expenses paid) at our (usually) three main Committee meetings held currently in Birmingham on either Wednesday or Thursday afternoons.

To make life easier for the incoming Treasurer, it is envisaged that the new person will work in tandem with the present Treasurer for the three months from 1st January 2002, to enable a smooth transfer of records on or very soon after 31st March that year.

Don't be nervous: have a go, you'll enjoy it!

Enquiries at this stage are welcomed the by the present Treasurer, Philip Thomas, who is Birmingham based, phone 0121 454 0935 and e-mail: PThomasPdt@aol.com Philip is prepared to travel to meet and discuss the work with anyone seriously interested.

# LOCAL HISTORY WEEK 2002 - GET YOURSELF INVOLVED!

Joan Bray

I hope that you will all by now have heard about Local History Week 2002. This is an initiative from the Historical Association to promote Local History throughout the UK. An initial meeting was held in London in early April at which things such as dates (avoiding for instance a possible clash with the FA Cup), sponsorship and Web pages were discussed. People at this meeting represented such bodies as the BBC. Phillimore, Local History Press and the British Library among others. The agreed date is 4th-12th May 2002.

Reading the minutes of this meeting, it is very London based. There is to be a family history/genealogy fair to start it off and a conference at the end of the week at the Beveridge Hall in London and the event will include support from the Victoria County History project. There is no money to support events, but the Historical Association will be hosting a website which will give details of events which are organised. The

suggestion is that applications to the Awards For All programme of the Millennium Commission is one way to finance activities.

This seems an exciting opportunity, however, to take advantage of something going on nationally and reach out to some of those people who do not normally see any relevance or value in local history. In Nottinghamshire the two major county-wide local history societies, the Thoroton Society and the Nottinghamshire Local History Association, along with the library service, are joining together to host a meeting for all interested bodies so that a coordinated effort can be made and maximum publicity can be obtained.

If you want to see more information check the Historical Association website on **www.history.org.uk** and click on Local History Week 2002. There is a contact given there - Suzanne Cawsey - who is keen that libraries do get involved. So *please* - if you haven't already done so register your interest, talk to local groups and societies and make a stand for local history and the contribution of libraries to the Week.

Joan Bray is Head of Local Studies, Nottingham Libraries

## HAVE YOU SEEN ...? some recent items of interest to local studies librarians

Hayns, D. The secular should be sacred too. Local History Magazine, 82, Nov/Dec 2000, 17.

Discussion of the problems of tracing the whereabouts of *civil* parish records following the establishment of civil parish councils following the 1894 Local Government Act. The author feels that too many of these public records have quietly disappeared since they were first generated - many, for example having been kept by officers at home and then forgotten. He calls for County Record Offices to undertake a systematic survey of all local council and meeting records, with a view to enforcing deposit of those at risk: surely such records should receive protection at least equivalent to that afforded parish church records by the Parochial Registers and records measure. *Jordan*, S. History and information technology: some implications for the local historian. *Local Historian*, 31(2), May 2001, 97-105.

A short history of the development of IT, followed by a discussion of the use of computers by historians, including recent developments such as online research tools and problems of how digital documents should be preserved and by who. Obsolescence of equipment and subsequent loss of data are mentioned here, and problems of emulation and migration. The question of charging and costs is raised - could there be an excluded group because of these? With more charging the relationship between researcher, resource and archivist will change, and BALH and other groups must monitor the situation. This thoughtful article is worth reading.

Dixon, D. Recycling our newspapers. LA Record, 103(5), May 2001, 298-9. Historians have found to their cost that historical evidence in newspapers is crumbling away before their eyes, and the greatly increased use of newspapers has thrust issues of preservation and access into the limelight. This article is a report on a seminar organised by Laser and the Greater London Archives Network. A range of topics was

covered by a group of specialists, including the importance of newspapers as a historical source, and the importance of local collections of newspapers. Preservation on microfilm was dealt with, including the bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund to enable the preservation of 3.5 million crumbling British local newspapers on microfilm. Newspapers on the web were also dicussed, and among other topics there were two reports on reader surveys, both concluding that newspapers are vital to historical researchers. This is a useful overview of the seminar.

Poverty in Victorian London, LA Record, 103(4), April 2001, 226-7.

Description of a new digitisation project from the London School of Economics. The launch of the Charles Booth online archive provides free access to to an online catalogue of materials relating to Booth's well known survey into life and labour in London during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The catalogue is linked to digitised images of survey notebooks and an interactive digitised image of 12 poverty' maps produced by the survey. Long used by scholars, the digitised material will make it much easier for researchers working with the material. A brief description of Booth's survey is given, together with details of the site.

Camden past and present: a quide to the Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre, Ed. by M. Aston, M. Holmes and R.G. Knight. 2nd ed, London Borough of Camden, Leisure and Community Services Dept. 2000. 43pp. £2.95 + £0.65 p&p. ISBN 0 901389 99 4. This work will guide researchers to over 150,000 items about the history of the Borough held in the Centre. Beginning with a short history of local government in London, important because there are separate catalogues and indexes for the three previous authorities which became Camden. There are then 39 sections summarising holdings by types of record. It should be emphasised that this is a guide to material, not a catalogue: in some cases, for instance, incomplete runs are simply listed as having 'gaps'. Special Collections are listed with a brief description of their contents and important related collections held elsewhere are given. There is a detailed index. This is an excellent example of its kind and should be a goldmine for researchers.

#### ALAN BALL LOCAL HISTORY AWARDS 2001

The Alan Ball Awards were established to encourage local history publishing by Public Libraries and Local Authorities. They are organised by the Library Services Trust: this is the seventeenth year that the awards have been made and they have become an established part of the library awards scene. This year the judges made three awards, the maximum permitted, and commended two other publications.

They were:

Kingston upon Hull City Council for Wilberforce and Hull by Liz Deverell and Gareth Watkins. This is a very professionally produced book, the contents and design of which impressed the judges:

Warwickshire County Council for Warwickshire Women by Rosalyn Foster and Christine Cluley. This is a very practical guide to relevant sources in the County Record Office:

Carmarthenshire County Council for The Secret History of Lianelli Co-operative 1895 - 2000 by Keith J Evans. This is a monumental and well illustrated history of the subject.

The two entries that the judges particularly commended were:

The London Borough of Southwark for Southwark in Archives by Stephen Humphrey. This was commended in particular for its design by Carol Enright; Southampton City Council for SHOWcase: Southampton History on the Web. This is a searchable database of over 4000 photographs and other illustrations of the Southampton area, available via the Web - and note the clever acronym! The judges felt that, particularly in order to conserve the original works and to increase accessibility, this is the sort of initiative that should become more widespread and Southampton is setting a good example.

Congratulations to these authorities. An awards ceremony was held at the UmbrelLA conference.

 $\underline{\text{NOTE}}$ : Was your authority one of those who entered this year? If not, why not think about it for next year? For more information contact Eric Winter at the Trust's Office at 7 Ridgmount Street, London WC1E 7AE, tel 020 7255 0648. Email eric.winter@la-hq.org.uk

## SCOTLAND'S LOCAL HISTORY WEEK, 2001

Sybil Cavanagh

Local History Week is organised every year as a national event in Scotland, to provide local libraries with an opportunity to mount exhibitions and organise lectures and other activities relating to the local history of their area. This year's Week, which ran from 21st -28th April, was the thirteenth since the event started in 1988. The benefit of the Week is that each individual local authority benefits from the national publicity; and the concentration of events in one week achieves far greater impact than could one isolated event.



Each year a special theme is adopted: in 2001 it was Transport. Local studies librarians showed their usual imaginative flair in coming up with events to tie in with the transport theme. In West Lothian, for example, there were four displays - early cycling, the Union Canal, one of the local turnpike roads, and a general display in the Local History Library, all of these displays being available for circulation to other libraries after the end of Local History Week. In addition there was a talk on old railways round Bathgate which reached an audience who are not regular library users. A planned walk along an old road had to be cancelled because of foot and mouth restrictions.

Other events across the country included exhibitions, an archival film evening, the launch of a canal website, publication of a booklet, illustrated talks, a transport history quiz, a model railway display, guided walks and a demonstration of how to ride a penny farthing - 56 events in total, all designed to raise awareness of local studies libraries and their services, and to promote interest in local history.

Local History Week is coordinated by LOCSCOT, the Scottish Branch of the Local Studies Group.

Sybil Cavanagh is Local History Librarian, West Lothian Libraries.

#### NOTES AND NEWS

As mentioned elsewhere, a series of interesting and useful papers were presented to LSG members at UmbrelLA and it is hoped that some at least of these papers will be published in LSL. Meanwhile lan Maxted, our Chairman, has produced a detailed report on U6 which includes a summary of each of the papers given to the Group. This has been published in the Devon County Council local studies newsletter for July (how has he managed it so quickly?) which is published both in hard copy and on the web (Annales occidentales or, Westcountry Studies: a bibliographical newsletter. Issue 358, July 2001, pp [3-6]: http://www.devon.gov.uk/library/locstudy/list358.html).

Leeds University School of Continuing Education is introducing a new Postgraduate Certificate in Public History, intended as a career development programme designed for people who work in libraries, museums and archives. Public history is defined as the study of how we acquire our sense of the past - through memory and archives, images and landscape; and the presentation of those pasts to a range of audiences - for instance through museums or film or television. Teaching will be in 24 one-day sessions in Leeds over one year (September to June), and the certificate carries 40 credits at Level 5 (ie postgraduate level). It can count towards your CPD portfolio for chartering. The course starts on September 11th, so you may be too late for this year, but if you are interested you could try ringing the Course Coordinator, Jill Liddington, on 0113 233 3222.

The Edinburgh Data and Information Archive (EDINA) has launched a free online version of the two Statistical Accounts of Scotland. The idea of Sir John Sinclair, the aim was to provide a picture of every parish in Scotland. The first Statistical Account. in 21 volumes, was published between 1791 and 1799 and the second series (the New Statistical Account) in 1845. They were compiled by local people - usually the parish ministers - and apart from being given a list of 166 questions to impose some uniformity, the compilers were asked for an account of the history and antiquities of the place. The Statistical Accounts are major source of information about life during the agricultural and industrial revolutions and are therefore immensely important to social and political historians. The site has 28,000 digital images of the pages, and the text can be searched by keyword or phrase; further search facilities are planned. The address is edina.ac.uk/StatAcc

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Oldham Local Studies and Archives has recently published the seventh (Spring 2001) issue of its Newsletter. It details various current activities and includes a section on work by volunteers, both individuals and organisations - members of Oldham Historical Society have for instance been helping with a pilot project looking at the digitisation of collections. There is also a list of recent archive accessions.

Camden Local Studies and Archives centre has recently completed the archive microfilming of Camden Council (and pre-Camden) Rating Valuation Lists from 1963-1990. Heavy public use had made some of the originals deteriorate badly, but all are now available again. The Valuation lists hemselves are a useful source of legal information for property transactions and in building disputes and are also a resource for researchers studying the history of a particular address. Camden also reports that work on last year's project to photograph every street in Camden has now been completed and the results - nearly 5000 photographs - will soon be available to the public.

Over the years there has been a continuing demand for the 'classic' county histories, and various publishers, local and national, have produced reprints: most, however, have confined themselves to the text as it was not economic to reproduce the illustrations. However, the advent of the CD has made it possible to reproduce these works economically in full. Cheshire Family History Society, in conjunction with the Cheshire Local History Association and Cheshire Record Office, has taken advantage of this facility to reproduce Ormerod's History of Cheshire with all the original illustrations at a cost of only £17.50 + £1.50 p&p. Also available is the set of Ordnance Survey 2nd edition 25 in. Maps of Cheshire - all 800 of them - on 2 CDs for £30 + p&p.

# SOURCES FOR TRANSPORT HISTORY: report on a LOCSCOT day school Andrew Bethune and Ann Nix

This was held at the Mitchell Library, Glasgow on March 28th 2001. There were five speakers: Guthrie Hutton on resources for canal history; Don Martin on railway sources in the period 1808-1850; Alastair Durie on the legacy of Mr Toad (i.e.the social history of motoring in the early 20th century); Grant Newman on aviation sources, and Brian Skillen on researching bus and tram history from a social history angle.

Guthrie Hutton's talk gave insight into the large range of sources relevant to canal history. Among the sources discussed were Acts of Parliament and railway archives (many of the early canals were taken over by railway companies). Newspapers were mentioned as they may give prospectuses and other commercial information as well as shipping intelligence. Also valuable are recent reports on conservation etc such as the 1979-81 report on the Union Canal. Other useful sources mentioned were maps, printed ephemera, prints and photographs. Sadly much material has been lost in the clearing out of offices over the years. Other clues to canal history can be found in place names and pub names. Many groups of canal enthusiasts publish newsletters which can be very informative, as can items such as reports and minutes

produced by local authorities. In some cases there will be archaeological reports. The current restoration programmes are a new chapter in the history of our canals and often involve new construction techniques and materials and interesting engineering solutions.

Don Martin's work has concentrated on the 'public' railways of Scotland. Sources highlighted included Ottley's bibliography (with supplements), Robertson's *Origins of the Scottish railway system*, and the histories of small railways published by the Oakwood Press. The Railway and Canal Historical Society publishes an annual bibliography in its journal, which updates Ottley. Again, many railway companies such as the Caledonian and the North British have their bands of enthusiasts who publish very informative newsletters. Many of the same sources mentioned for canals (Acts, maps, photographs, newspapers and ephemera) are also useful for railways, and in particular Don recommended looking out for the Railway clearing house maps. Major archives are held by the National Archives of Scotland and Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities.

Alastair Durie's talk was very entertaining. He enabled us to enter into the mind-set of the early motorist and those whose lives were affected by the arrival of the internal combustion engine. Many of the issues such as drink driving, rowdy tourists, and the vulnerability of local businesses, are still with us today. Promising sources for the early history of motoring are minutes and reports of local authorities - paricularly disputes over such things as paying for improvements to roads, speed limits etc-and also reports of such controversies in the local press. The press is also a good source of advertisements for companies offering services to motorists, sales of vehicles and recruitment of chauffeurs. Reports of accidents will also be found in the local papers, and sometimes can be followed up in court cases. Old road signs and street furniture can still be found which can also illuminate the early history of motoring. Diaries of early motorists can also be fascinating if you can find them.

Grant Newman, of the Museum of Flight, took us on a guided tour of the history of aviation but using Scottish examples starting with Tytler whose fame has definitely been eclipsed by Lunardi and les freres Montgolfier. Amongst the many archives he mentioned, the resources of the Airship Heritage Trust and the RAF archive at the PRO in Kew sounded particularly interesting.

Brian Skillen works for Glasgow Libraries, but his main interest is researching the history of trams and buses. He is a collector of ephemera and reminiscences connected with buses and trams. He demonstrated examples of how to research the social aspects of transport, showing that there is definitely more to it than simply reeling off lists of bus route variations. There is a Scottish Bus Museum in Fife which is an obvious place to pursue the subject. Brian highlighted a serious problem with many publications on bus and tram history, which is their lack of references. He also pointed out that lack of retrospective cataloguing in many large institutions hides valuable items from potential users and causes difficulties for researchers. Local newspapers and local authority reports and minutes were again mentioned as good sources, as were official enquiries into accidents. Business archives of bus companies, printed ephemera, photographs and prints, Acts of Parliament and the internet can all prove useful areas for research.

During discussions at the end of the course, all speakers were at pains to point out that the internet should be used with caution as the content of many transport sites is of suspect reliability.

Andrew Bethune and Ann Nix are both from Edinburgh City Libraries

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Services Council (Northern Ireland) Local History

Panel

The Group also has a Liaison Officer at LA headquarters to keep us in touch with issues of concern. At present this is Jill Martin, 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 or day schools 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 at 11 Cautley Road Southwold, Suffolk IP18 6DD, email uczddi@ucl.ac.uk