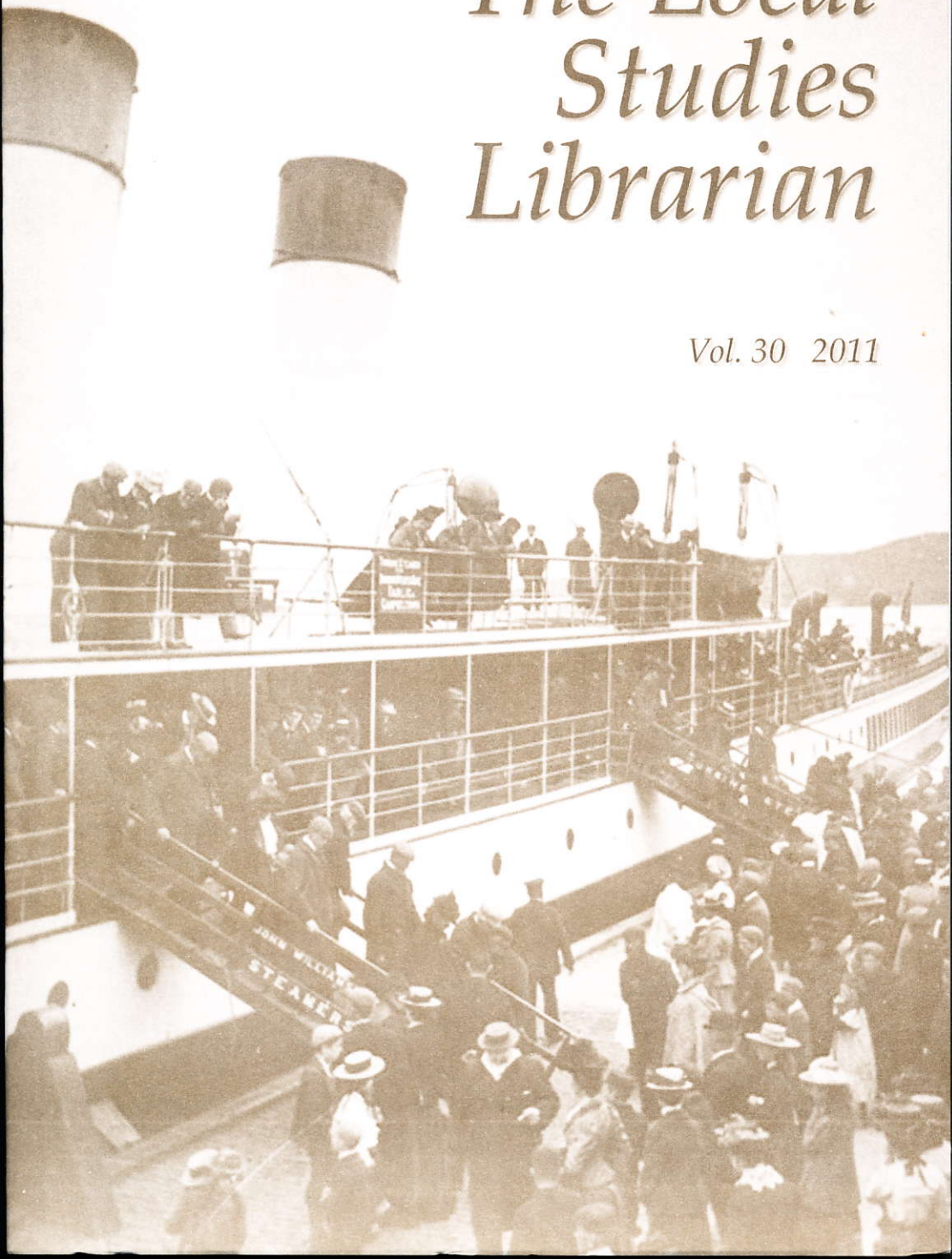


# *The Local Studies Librarian*

Vol. 30 2011



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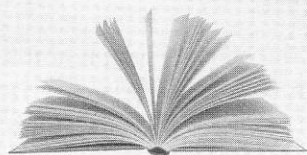
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## EDITORIAL

Thirty years is a long time, and, having been editor from the beginning, now is a good time to retire – among other things, before one gets too seriously out of date with the new technology and all the things which librarians can now do to improve their stock and services. While the Committee wished to keep the printed format, increasing costs forced a compromise and from this year there is one printed issue and two electronically published newsletters. We hope that improved frequency and up-to-dateness will please everyone, though there seems to have been a hiccup or two along the way. Remember, however, that you need to register your membership with CILIP to receive this and other electronic services. It is somewhat concerning that many of you have not yet registered. It is straightforward to do through the CILIP website. Don't forget, too, to look at the Local Studies Group blog, which contains a wide range of interesting information and reports from members. Meanwhile, this issue contains a varied selection of articles. Stefan Dickers of the Bishopsgate Library, one of London's major local history collections, describes the library's history, collections and its recent redevelopment to provide major improvements in services, while Jennifer Scherr looks at researching family history in the Paris Archives, Lesley Kirkwood deals in detail with one of Warwickshire Studies' recent initiatives, the Working Lives Project, and publisher Alan Godfrey describes the history of his maps series, and his relationship over the years with the library profession, particularly with local studies libraries and librarians.

The main matter of concern to librarians at the moment is the question of cuts, with stories of closure and/or redundancies among local studies librarians. Apart from reducing levels of service, this also seems to be having an impact on training. This is not only a question of money: increasingly we are hearing librarians say that they would like to come to a course or day school but are unable to take off time to attend. This can only reduce the dissemination of new ideas and practices. However here we must make reference again to the LSG website and its case studies of initiatives appearing in the 'Initiative' section: this is an excellent way of disseminating information about initiatives in various libraries, and Tracey would welcome more. Despite these problems, however, local studies staff and their collections are playing their part in promoting community awareness and cohesion, and librarians should be lobbying local councillors on this basis.

Finally, I shall be maintaining my membership of the Group, so I will be able to keep in touch. I wish good luck to the Group and to the new Editor, and hope that they will get as much enjoyment and satisfaction as I have over the years.



## **LOCAL STUDIES: Current Context and Key Issues**

*Terry Bracher*

### **The Local Studies Group Mission Statement**

**The Local Studies Group of CILIP believes that Local Studies collections, and those engaged with the management and delivery of services associated with them, make a significant contribution to fostering and promoting community identity and cohesion, and improving the quality of people's lives, by preserving and providing equality of access to our diverse local and national written and pictorial heritage. It is a core element of public library provision and, as such, it is fundamental to a thriving economy, democracy, culture and civilisation.....**

There are three key points to draw out from our mission statement:

1. Fostering and promoting community identity and cohesion;
2. Providing equality of access to our diverse local and national written and pictorial heritage;
3. A core element of public library provision

These have always been the principles and elements of Local Studies services throughout the UK and are still relevant today.

Sadly, like other areas of library services, some Local Studies are under threat either through closure or the removal of professional and experienced library staff. But there is a mixed picture. While some library managers and council members struggle to see the value of Local Studies services, others continue to view the importance of the collections and services to their future plans and organisational goals.

So, while some libraries have reduced investment in staff and facilities, and consequently their ability to exploit collections, others are expanding theirs. Maidenhead, for example is investing in improved facilities. While Camden is looking to close its facilities, nearby Hackney is creating a new one. Where Local Studies services are under threat of closure, their value to the community has been underlined by local campaigns to save them, as they are doing for example in Croydon, Fulham & Hammersmith and Camden.

The conference today is about showcasing the continued, and indeed the increased relevance of local studies to our communities, as highlighted by our mission statement, and the value of investment in Local Studies services. But we know times are going to get tougher, so it is also about how we sustain services and especially how we meet that challenge in a digital age.

## **History**

Local Studies services have always been at the forefront of innovative digital services. I started my career in local studies in the early 1980s and one of my first jobs was to transcribe the 1881 census for Shropshire on to a searchable database.

In a recent LSG blog Tracey Williams noted that in a past copy of our journal a LSG Weekend School in 1983 was entitled 'Local Studies and the new technology' and featured speakers discussing: the use of computers to analyse dialect patterns; a 20-year project to transcribe and computerise parish registers in Cheshire; computerised mapping techniques at the Ordnance Survey; the archivist and the computer, describing how they were being used at the Public Record Office.

We have seen early heritage databases including the Hackney 2000 project and the Durham Record; through to the Public Libraries challenge fund and NOF digitisation projects, such as the Knowsley Local History website and the Port Cities portal; and more recent online services, for example the Nottingham /Notts, Derby and Derbyshire *Picture the Past* photographic project, *Picture Sheffield* and *Picture Cheshire*.

## **Current digital projects**

At present, as we will discover later today, Local Studies librarians are exploiting web 2.0 technologies, social media and digital community archives. Many of us now have videos on Youtube; we blog, while some services and, indeed the LSG, is also using Twitter; Solihull Libraries have pioneered work using QR codes and Swindon Libraries has posted historic photographs on Flickr. Community history websites are using wikis and blogs to make them interactive.

We have also reinvigorated earlier projects that were pioneering during their time, such as extracts from oral history collections being made available and enhanced on websites and the revamped Durham Record, which is also linked to the more recent 'Keys to the Past' project.

There are countless other examples of online services and if your service has not been mentioned then please go on to the LSG section of the CILIP website and submit a case study for our 'inspiration' area.

## **Current issues**

We need to continue to show how Local Studies uses cutting-edge technology in delivering services to the widest and most diverse audiences, especially in a climate of reduced funding and physical access to collections. Increasingly customers want more online access and make more use of remote enquiry services such as email, with the growth of online Family History services especially raising customer expectations.

But always we need to be mindful that this cannot be achieved without the basics, which are investment in preservation and storage, cataloguing and indexing and, of course, knowledgeable and professional staff. Getting this balance right is going to be a key issue for us in the future. It also follows that this will require an increasing use of volunteers to assist the ever decreasing staff numbers, which in turn requires attention to the details of good volunteer recruitment, management and retention.

## **The Big Society**

The Big Society is one of a number of themes the Local Studies community will need to be engaged with over the next few years: the others include the government's Localism agenda; the strategy for archives led by TNA (Archives for the 21st Century); re-focusing our plans for cross-sector work within the heritage industry as a consequence of the demise of the MLA; and funding.

In engaging with the promotion of the Big Society, it would be easy to focus on simply increasing the number of volunteers we work with or to continue to engage with our recognised local history groups as we have always done. There is value in this and, as I have already noted, we are already under pressure to use more volunteers to help deliver core services. However, increasingly Local studies services will be required to work in and with local communities to help them actively participate in researching and recording their community's history; helping and encouraging them to write funding applications and signpost training to help them run and manage projects. In short, we are helping communities to help themselves, which in turn will help create greater community identity and cohesion, and more resilient communities. It also has the potential to create a wider and more diverse audience for Local Studies collections. Of course, this is not a new idea and many Local Studies services have always been aware of the value in this approach and the growth of digital Community Archives is a major expression of this, as shown for example in Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire. We will, however, be required to focus more of our resources on a greater enabling role. Currently the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre (WSHC) acts as a bridge between HLF South West and local community groups, helping them to create projects and write their funding bids and overcoming the barriers that prevent them from applying to the HLF for funding, especially the 'Your Heritage' grants. Some of our team have received training from the HLF in writing applications, explaining the processes and explaining the grants available.

## **Localism**

In many respects the focus on local communities suits Local Studies services as we have always done this and we have an opportunity to demonstrate how we can help our organisations deliver the government's Localism agenda.

The Localism Bill intends to significantly devolve decision making to a local level, where communities make decisions on areas such as neighbourhood planning, run local amenities, improve local services and voice opinions; where local representatives and agencies come together to create a plan for their community. It will require us to continue to make greater use of digital technology to provide local access to our resources and it will encourage us to promote our role in local agendas, such as health and well-being, education and community learning. As an example, my own local authority of Wiltshire, having recently become a unitary authority, has introduced 18 Community Area Boards, which are not only a focus for discussion and planning around local issues, such as library reviews, but also a provider for small amounts of grant funding and a doorway to engaging local communities with services and projects.

But how will Localism affect our future regional and national partnerships and our relationships with the big players, such as the British Library?

For example, on the one hand we might fear for the future of Newsplan, using a regional and national structure to create a uniformed approach to the preservation and access to local newspapers, especially since the BL's unilateral decision to stop microfilming to the detriment of local collections and national decisions on priorities for the digitisation of local and regional newspapers. Yet its innovative 'Campaign! Make an Impact' education project, using regional champions to help deliver local projects, using a combination of online national resources and local archive collections, has been very effective and well received.

#### The National Archives – Archives for the 21st Century

While we are becoming attuned to think local, there is a potential dilemma in the drive to save money and become more efficient by creating bigger, more sustainable services. This is one of the key strands within the national strategy for the future of archives as stated in the TNA / MLA's 'Archives for the 21st Century.' The key strands are:

- Bigger, better, more sustainable services
- Digital curatorship
- Comprehensive online access for archive discovery
- Active participation in cultural and learning partnerships

Why does this matter to Local Studies Services? This will encourage archives to work more closely with each other across county boundaries, forming consortia to provide some aspects of the service, such as digitisation, and foster cross-sector working and perhaps the merging of services in the heritage sector.

Again, some of this is old news, many Archives and Local Studies services have long-since merged, and some have included other heritage services, as it has often been an obvious way to provide a more joined-up service and become more sustainable. We should expect more services to merge in the future. Joined-up or co-operating services can result in improved investment and facilities and opens up far greater potential for the delivery of services in the digital age in terms of content and of ensuring better deals from suppliers and subscription based services; it can provide an economic case for establishing much new needed services such as a heritage education service; and widen opportunities to apply for strategic funding. But it has also sometimes resulted in the dilution of Local Studies expertise within a shared service and we need to be mindful of this.

What is perhaps different is that some strategic managers are now looking at new ways of delivering this, such as moving towards trust status or contracting services out to other providers. Both provide threats and opportunities to Local Studies services. We may have increased freedom to raise income from wider sources and find new ways of working, but can trusts survive and will we have to charge for services currently provided for free and focus on pay-per view and commercial deals and so on.

### **Replacing MLA?**

The demise of MLA, with its function of helping us to work across the heritage sector, especially in the dissemination of knowledge and training; and indeed the strategic commissioning funding many of us have benefited from to produce innovative projects; may hinder our progress in the digital age, especially at the regional level and at a time when we need to work together more than ever. It is likely that professional associations within the heritage sector with shared interests will have to work more closely together, especially at regional level, to help fill the potential gap, especially in training and the dissemination of ideas. No doubt we will be revisiting this at future conferences as we will then know how the government's new strategic approach for museums, libraries and archives will work.

### **Funding**

Funding, of course, is probably the biggest issue for all of us in the current economic climate. The HLF estimate a £700 million decrease in overall investment in heritage overall in the UK and reduced commercial investment, while more of us than ever will now be applying for funding. We have seen our core funding reduced which has already threatened the survival of some services and have already noted the tempting quick-win road to trust status.

The consortium approach to developing online digital content will be vital, especially to ensure better deals from online subscription services we purchase and obtaining better deals for the supply of content through online subscription companies.



This is currently happening through a regional - national consortium approach with the forthcoming digitisation of school admission registers. Local Studies online historic photographic services have for a while now employed online purchasing.

Some archives have created pay-per view, such as Wiltshire wills online, but it is perhaps the national archives and national libraries in the UK that have the greater role to play and, of course have already pioneered pay-per view of family history resources and national and regional newspapers. But as I have commented earlier, will they buy into a co-operative approach with local authority services or continue down a more unilateral pathway?

To finish on some good news, the HLF budget has increased from £250 million in 2011/12 to £300 million 2012/13 and for grants over £50,000 matched funding in cash is no longer required, with 5% in-kind contributions being the minimum contribution required.

The HLF has also consulted on a new approach to their grant funding schemes; outcomes are likely to include a provision for digital-only projects for digital innovation, without the requirement to fulfil other HLF criteria, such as conservation, learning and participation; though of course the Local Studies philosophy is that these activities are always essential components of a successful project. It may also include funding targeted at building capacity and skills in voluntary organisations. As always the issue will be the sustainability of projects once the funding has stopped. Our conference today will perhaps be able to help us find solutions to this issue.

And finally...to return to our mission statement and the end of my quotation:

Local Studies is "a core element of public library provision and, as such, it is fundamental to a thriving economy, democracy, culture and civilisation": we might add "especially in the digital age."

*Terry Bracher is Chairman of the Local Studies Group and Local Studies Manager, Wiltshire and Swindon Local Studies Centre.*

## **BISHOPSGATE INSTITUTE LIBRARY COLLECTIONS AND LONDON LOCAL HISTORY**

*Stefan Dickers*

We owe the foundation of Bishopsgate Institute to a Victorian priest, William Rogers (1813-1896) who confessed late in life that 'he did not much like the disguise of a clergyman.' The Rector of St Botolph's was a progressive educationalist, impatient to see schooling extended to the working classes. Exasperated by delays, he exclaimed in 1866: 'Hang economy, hang theology, let us begin.' He espoused the opening of museums and galleries on Sundays and was an indefatigable fundraiser for parish schools but his greatest achievement was undoubtedly the establishment of the Institute; a venue to provide classes, lectures and a public library for the local population.

The building and site cost £70,000 – around £4m at today's prices – financed using funds from charitable endowments made to the parish of St Botolph's, Bishopsgate over 500 years, under a scheme agreed by the Charity Commissioners in 1891. The Institute building was designed by Charles Harrison Townsend, a fledgling architect who won the commission in an anonymous competition, and would later design the Whitechapel Gallery and the Horniman Museum. He was meticulous in his specifications and the Institute's design incorporated a number of modern features including an early form of air conditioning. Fresh air was passed through radiators to heat the building and foul air was carried away by exhaust flues fitted with gas jets. The Library's reading room had space for 250 and was strictly segregated with separate entrances for men and women. It was open from 10am to 9.30pm every day except Sundays, Good Friday and Christmas Day.

In September 1897, Charles William Frederick Goss began work as the Institute librarian on a salary of £250 per annum, staying in the post for 44 years until he retired in 1941.

The development of the Library's special collections owes much to Goss who was a keen local historian and book collector. He was chiefly responsible for gathering its collection of books and pamphlets relating to the social, cultural, architectural and topographical history of London, particularly the East End, from the early nineteenth century. Goss's successors have continued his zeal and the collection now consists of more than 50,000 books, pamphlets and journal extracts; 6,000 photos; 275 prints and watercolours; around 500 maps, dating back to the 17th century; miscellaneous deeds and around 400 journals, and magazines, many of which are no longer published.

Although collections on London history exist at other national repositories, the material at Bishopsgate differs with its emphasis on the everyday history of the people of London and certain areas of the collections which exemplify

this adherence to documenting the 'bottom up' history of the capital. Primary amongst these is the Library's extensive collection of London guidebooks dating from the seventeenth century to the present day. These travel aids, often considered ephemeral and insignificant at the time, actually provide a wonderful illustration of how London presented itself to the outside world, highlighting the publisher's idea of the best and worst places that could be encountered on a visit to the capital. The Library has over 800 guidebooks, starting from 1755 and including multiple editions of *The Golden Guide*, *Baedeker*, *Langham Hotel Guide* and *Blue Guide* among many others, to the most current *Rough Guide*, *Lonely Planet* and *Time Out* guides. In addition, it holds many restaurant guides which track the city's changing culinary tastes.

The history of everyday London is also well documented in the Library's press cuttings collection and its run of London Trade Directories. The press cuttings collection, gathered by generations of librarians at the Institute and maintained by current staff, starts in 1740 and focuses on the immediate geographical area of the Institute around Bishopsgate and Spitalfields. Files of cuttings and advertisements can be found on all the major streets, restaurants, businesses, public houses and local landmarks, such as Spitalfields Market and Liverpool Street Station. Major themes are also covered, such as the historic Huguenot and Jewish communities, the silk weaving industry and the redevelopment of the local area. As many events and businesses were never recorded in books or pamphlets, these press cuttings can often help fill frustrating gaps in research. Trade directories are excellent resources for tracing individual businesses or researching the changing use of buildings and character of streets. The Library's collection starts in 1740, and we have a trade directory (by Pigot, Robson, Kelly or the Post Office) for nearly every year on open access on the Library's shelves.

The collection also includes around 6,000 photographs of London and a similar number of illustrations, alongside a huge selection of maps. Of particular interest is the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society Glass Slide Collection, containing around 4,000 images of London which are now digitised and available to browse on the Library's online catalogue. It includes numerous images of London's most famous landmarks. The collection is also particularly strong on church architecture with images of all of the City's churches, including internal and external images, photographs of chapels, tombs and specific architectural features. As a record of London's social and cultural life, the collection is also fascinating, including images of street scenes, markets, events (such as coronations, fairs and processions), recreational activities and crowds gathered at famous landmarks. Additionally, there are also aerial and night views of London, street signs, statues, windows and doorways, pubs, shops and the slightly unusual! Particular favourites amongst staff at Bishopsgate

Library include a selection of slides illustrating waste disposal in the early 1900s, several documenting the Vintner's Company swan upping ceremony on the Thames in July 1920 and a rather frightening image of the giant grasshopper weathervane on the Royal Exchange in Lombard Street. The Library has also recently started projects to digitise the collections of renowned photographers Phil Maxwell and Colin O'Brien.

Labour history is also a strong element of the Library's collections, in particular the collection of Victorian labour activist and trade unionist, George Howell (1833-1910). This includes his own library of around 6,000 books and pamphlets on early labour and trade union history, archives of the Reform League and the early Trades Union Congress and, most famously, the minute book of the First International Workingmen's Association (1866-1869). After requests for a transcript of the latter item from the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow in the early 1920s, the Governors of the Institute were so terrified that this seditious tome might fall into the wrong hands that it kept it locked in the vault of the Midland Bank in Bishopsgate. It stayed there 1941 when Ivan Maisky, the Russian ambassador in London, made a personal appeal to Winston Churchill, who pulled strings to get it released. Maisky was allowed to send his wife and two secretaries to transcribe the entire volume. These days its revolutionary potential is considered less threatening and a digitised version is shortly to be made available online on the Library's website.

The collection also includes unique reports of over 30 trade unions, such as the Amalgamated Society of Engineers and the Steam Engine Makers' Society, and around 80 political and social pressure groups from the 1840s to the early 1900s, many of which include details of members, their families and subscriptions paid.

The politician Charles Bradlaugh became a public figure in the late Victorian period for two highly publicised campaigns. He was prevented from taking his seat in the House of Commons when elected Liberal MP for Northampton in 1880 because, as an atheist, he refused to swear an oath of allegiance on the Bible. His personal and political correspondence spanning most of the second half of the century, with photographs and records of the causes with which he was associated, are in the Library's Bradlaugh collection. Manuscripts, books and pamphlets by George Jacob Holyoake also adorn the Library's shelves. Holyoake was promoter of secularism – which cost him six months in gaol for blasphemy in 1843 – and pioneer of the early co-operative movement. He was also associated with Italian nationalism and he formed a militia, the British Legion, prepared to fight alongside Garibaldi in Italy. The Holyoake collection includes the muster rolls, certificates and other details of men who joined this Legion in the 1860s.

The Library also holds the extensive archive of the London Co-operative Society (LCS) detailing its activities from 1920 until the early 1990s. Amongst the 3,500 volumes in the collection are member's share registers, nomination books (including member's names, addresses and family details) and records of the Simplex Savings Bank. The collection also details early co-operative societies who merged into the LCS in the twentieth century and records cover Stratford, Edmonton, West London, Grays, Radlett, High Wycombe and other areas from the mid-1850s onwards. There are also over 17,000 photographs detailing the work of the LCS throughout its history. The LCS archive also holds material on the career of John Stonehouse, the Labour MP who faked his own death in 1974. He was a director and president of the London Co-op in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

More recent accessions to the Library include the archive of historian Raphael Samuel which included box of around 160 audio tapes containing Londoner's recollections going back to the 1880s, among them a series of interviews with Arthur Harding, who spent his childhood in one of the East End's most notorious slums, known as The Nichol, and went on to become one of the most feared gangsters in the East End at the turn of the century. The Library continues this legacy with an in-house oral history project called Bishopsgate Voices which is also looking for new people to interview who have memories of living and working in the Bishopsgate and Spitalfields area.

The Library now continues to take in new material all the time. It has recently accepted the records of the British Humanist Association, the Rationalist Association and the Stop the War Coalition, along with some fascinating oral history recordings gathered by the Swadhinata Trust, covering three generations of Bengalis around Brick Lane and further afield.

### **Refurbishment**

The Institute's motto is *Senesco non Segnesco* – I grow old, I do not grow lazy – and in keeping with this spirit the Institute has just completed a £7.95m development project. The work on the grade two listed building attracted a £1.5 million Heritage Lottery Fund grant.

The Great Hall – which has hosted concerts and recitals by Sir Edward Elgar, Dame Myra Hess, John Williams, Nigel Kennedy and Sir Paul McCartney – has been refurbished. The Hall's original features have been restored and upgraded, opening up the original glass lantern in the ceiling; adding specialist acoustic treatment; new lighting and amplification; and air conditioning and redecoration. It is used by the London Symphony Chorus and the London Philharmonic Choir as a rehearsal centre, and is also home to much of the Institute's cultural programme of concerts, historical talks and study days.



The library has benefitted from a dedicated area for researchers to view collections and a new, environmentally-controlled, archive store in the basement that will ensure that the Library's collections are stored in secure conditions for generations to come. The store provides the Library with room to expand and develop its collections, and also guarantees easier and quicker retrieval of items for researchers. The benefits are already starting to be felt and the Library has experienced a substantial increase in visitor numbers since reopening. A flexible learning space on the lower ground floor for schools and community groups has been added, along with the formation of a department dedicated to developing outreach learning programmes using the Library collections. The Lottery Fund has also created three additional posts for staff to develop a variety of heritage programmes.

Elsewhere in the Institute there is now a new café; refreshed body, exercise, and performing arts studios for the courses run by the Institute; new lifts to improve disabled access; and the cleaning, repair and illumination of the façade.

The library has also extended its previous opening hours and is now open on Saturdays from 10am to 5.30pm, alongside its regular weekday opening (Monday to Thursday, 10am-5.30pm, Friday, 10am-2pm). It is open to all and no membership or reader's ticket is required. Much of the book collection is on public display but rare volumes and archives are kept in store and produced on request, so it is worth making contact beforehand. For further information and enquiries telephone 020 7392 9270 or email [library@bishopsgate.org.uk](mailto:library@bishopsgate.org.uk). Bishopsgate Library is at 230 Bishopsgate, London EC2M 4QH.

*Stefan Dickers is Library and Archives Manager, Bishopsgate Institute*

## **2500 MAPS AND GROWING – the Alan Godfrey series of historical maps**

*Alan Godfrey*

We recently published our 2,500th map, a milestone reached so quietly that it passed without notice. So there were no great fanfares, no parties, no celebrations at all – in fact, it is difficult to identify to which map the actual honour fell – and these few words will have to serve.

More than 20 years ago I wrote an article for the Western Association of Map Libraries' *Information Bulletin* (Vol 17 No3, June 1986) in which I suggested that there were 3,000 possible titles for the series. If that were to be accurate then I have just another 500 maps to go but, as the series has progressed, it has become clear that the number of potential titles is almost infinite;

after all, at that time I didn't really consider maps for the 1930s and 40s, but these are now an integral part of the series. Perhaps, as the years pass, the simple fact of my age might eventually put a cap on its growth, at least under my steerage.

Work on the series, from the outset known as 'The Godfrey Edition', began in 1981. At the time I ran a small business dealing in secondhand Ordnance Survey maps and it was a chance remark from my then bank manager in Dunston, Tyne and Wear that led to the experimental publication of a photocopied leaflet of OS maps for *Chopwell*, near Gateshead. The choice of this old mining village was really dictated by my friendship with the composer Bill Hopkins, who had just bought a house there, and with whom the first discussion of the series took place – though sadly he would die before any further progress could be made. Photocopying meant that the print run could be small (200 if I recall correctly) most of which was quickly bought up by Gateshead's education department. That autumn I brought out the first of the individual map reprints, for *Gateshead East 1895*, a good printer having been recommended to me by the Tyneside Cinema, quickly followed by other titles for the Gateshead area. Good quantities – effectively guaranteeing my printing costs – were taken by the education department, while the library, which had helped by lending me the originals, also bought some for sale. The mailing list for my secondhand business brought me some custom, but I quickly learnt that bookshop response would be patchy. Education advisers in Newcastle, South Tyneside and Sunderland were also now asking me to bring out similar maps for their areas and the series began to grow, while requests from Scotland's Central Region for maps of Clackmannanshire and, soon, Stirlingshire took me north of the border.

An illness in early 1983 gave me an enforced pause for reflection: it was clear that my publishing business was more resilient than that for secondhand maps, so I decided to wind the latter down. From 1984, therefore, I was concentrating entirely on reprinting OS maps, using what had become, and has remained, a standard format: an OS 25" map, reduced in scale to about 14 inches to the mile (so that it could fit on A2 paper), with an introduction and some extracts from a contemporary directory on the back. In the early days the introductions were short, about 400 or 500 words, but over the years they have been developed and today we ask our authors for 3,000 words, space to give an informative overview of what is, after all, quite a small area (typically one and a half square miles). Maps at other scales have been introduced, including some 'Five-foot' town plans for London and some northern cities, and an 'Inch to the Mile' series which will soon cover all of England, Wales and Northern Ireland, but the 25 Inch maps remain at the heart of the series.

Support from education departments helped launch the series, but changes to the role of education advisors meant that this completely dried up within a few years and has never returned. However, by the mid-1980s a host of local studies libraries were involved. Encouragement from Guildhall Library in London and the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh had arrived almost from the outset, while 'out of the blue' requests for me to move into their area came from several librarians, one of the most productive being from John Maddison at Sandwell, leading quickly to an enduringly popular group of maps for the Black Country. At around the same time a meeting with Sally Shepard of Rotherham Library at a map conference led to the development of a group for South Yorkshire, its progress often discussed over a drink after work at Sheffield's Crucible Theatre with librarian and archivist colleagues from Rotherham, Sheffield and Doncaster libraries and Sheffield University. In Scotland Barbara Morris, from Edinburgh University, and I would travel over to Glasgow for lunch with archivists and librarians from Strathclyde Archives and the Mitchell Library. A trip down the Durham coast to Hartlepool brought me my first real bestseller, with one shop reporting a queue stretching out into the street. Again these maps were helped by the support of a librarian, in this case, Mary Hoban, and by this time it was joked that I only published maps where the library made me a coffee – though a drink outside work has always seemed rather better!

Best of all, in many ways, was the help I received from London's Local Studies librarians and archivists, many of whom, from Brent to Bexley, Hammersmith to Newham, helped not just with sourcing the maps and cover photographs but also with writing the introductions. At Brent's Grange Museum Judy Knight brought a new fluency to the historical introductions, while at Hackney David Mander, the archivist, took things a stage further by asking me to cover the borough in all three principal editions – c.1870, 1894 and 1914 – something we have since repeated (occasionally along with the 4th edition) across much of London's central core. At Barnet one of the archivists, Pamela Taylor, apart from improving the quality of the introductions still further – I think she, perhaps more than anyone, pushed them towards their current length, something welcomed by most authors – acted as my Assistant Editor on her non-Barnet days. It is very much through the help of librarians and archivists that we have developed the London series so far, now some 500 titles and still growing.

The decade and a half from about 1983-98 was perhaps the halcyon period of Local Studies support. Many libraries bought the maps for resale, in handsome 3-figure quantities at good discounts. They welcomed the maps, not just because of their value as historical tools, nor as a useful 'money-earner', but because they saved wear and tear on the originals. Several hosted launching parties for new titles. At one stage I calculated that I visited some

70 libraries a year, becoming something of an expert on library staff-rooms in the process. So many librarians contributed to the series that it would be impossible, and inappropriate, to name them all. One memory, which must serve for all, is of Marianna Maguire, of Fermanagh Library, giving me a walking tour of Enniskillen, seemingly impervious to the rain, turning to sleet, which constantly stung our ears.

I am a member of the British Cartographic Society, and of its Map Curators Group, and through this I inaugurated a prize, The Godfrey Award, "for a librarian or archivist who has furthered the use, appreciation and understanding of maps". The prize consisted of a specially commissioned wood carving of a bird (signifying the great travellers) by the sculptor Ralph Williams, plus a cheque for £300, enough, I thought, for a weekend break! It seemed to me a nice way of giving something back to a profession which had given me so much. It was awarded annually (latterly biennially) at the BCS Symposium, and five deserving winners are possessors of various carved birds. I hope it also reflected some prestige on their institutions. Sadly the award died a natural death when it proved impossible to get enough nominations. I have never understood why.

Perhaps this simply reflected the change coming over libraries, which certainly affected us from the late 1990s. Increasingly librarians would tell me that they "were looking for early retirement" – and with depressing regularity they found it. A few of those who had helped me took retirement at the normal age, but sometimes it came shockingly early and local studies departments lost some marvellous talent. In universities the situation would become even worse, as many map libraries were simply closed down; in one major northern city a map collection is believed to have been thrown in the skip. Questions also began to be raised about the merits of paper maps when so much could be digitized on CD, or put on-line. Many a librarian proudly showed me the latest project to scan information and make it available to 'a wider readership' – and then, before I left, would ask me to sign the visitors' book because footfall into the reading room was falling so much. Others looked sadly at me, suggesting that a publisher of paper maps had no future in the modern world.

In 2000 I was asked to write a chapter for R B Parry & C R Perkins' *The map library in the new millennium* (Library Association Publishing, 2001) and I waxed lyrical on my hours let loose in library stacks: "What treasures I have found here, and what dross; maps stacked five foot high on pallets; plan chests that tear your fingernails to shreds; maps whose only reader these last 40 years has been a squashed spider; maps (horror of horrors) rolled so tight they spring shut the moment you unravel them, bashful to the light; maps covered with the dust of ages, or fading beyond recall; maps

so grossly misfiled they must have been given up for lost a lifetime ago. Into such catacombs librarians have shut (even locked) me away, with a rueful comment of 'you know where to find me'....and a pitying shake of the head. And here, so often, I have done my most rewarding work". I suspect that many (most?) librarians would today scoff at such romantic nostalgia, but I still maintain that maps are best seen on paper, rather than in the restricting view-space of a computer screen, and I stand by my closing sentences to that article a decade ago, that "for most of us, paper maps will continue to be our core cartographic resource, and for them we will still, of necessity, visit libraries. Map librarians who ignore this simple fact are in danger of consigning their profession to oblivion".

This change in our libraries affected me in various ways. Until the mid-1990s most of my authors were archivists or librarians, but increasing numbers were retiring, or had less time available for writing; and, of course, I was also moving into areas where I had fewer contacts. Amateur local historians were seldom the answer as many would only be willing to write for the one map, that on which their interest lay, and to find and edit 100 authors for 100 maps each year would be a logistical nightmare. As I grow older, so time becomes more precious. So we began to build up a nucleus of two dozen or so regular authors, who would undertake the notes for several maps, and write them quickly. Some have written large numbers of introductions - Derrick Pratt, Barrie Trinder and Pamela Taylor more than a hundred each - and have added greatly to the series. I hope, too, that I have learnt from my work and that my own contributions are no longer the embarrassment that perhaps they were back in the early days.

We were also forced to become self-reliant in other ways. We source most of our cover illustrations from fairs or ebay today, as obtaining photos from libraries is a more bureaucratic, slow and often expensive business than it used to be in the 1980s, when I often just borrowed a postcard. We have also built up a good collection of directories, for these entries remain a popular feature. Library photocopiers are seldom in perfect condition and we can obtain better copies in-house - and, perhaps, be a little more cavalier with the spine than we could with a library copy!

The changing, if not declining, footfall into libraries was also having an adverse effect on our sales there. I now visited reference rooms filled by young people gaining free internet access; fine in its way, but scarcely the readership for my maps. In the mid-1990s around 40% of our sales were to libraries, archives or (to a lesser extent) museums but today that figure is probably less than 10%. Interestingly the former figure was almost entirely made up of maps being bought for resale. It has always been a mystery to me that so few libraries actually buy our reprints for their own collections. Apart from



the copyright libraries and a handful of specialist collections, I don't know of a single public library today that subscribes to the maps of their area. The few that did buy them generally stopped when a local studies librarian retired. Hopefully they are being bought quietly from other suppliers, but I hope it isn't arrogant of me to be surprised at how many local studies staff have never heard of our maps, even when we have published several for their town. (Few, I trust, rival those in one local studies library who knew nothing of our maps, even though the information desk downstairs was selling them!) Perhaps the reason is summed up by a Birmingham librarian who told me, several years ago, that they wouldn't buy my maps "because they had the originals", oblivious to the fact that his colleague, who was standing beside us, had written several of the introductions. Yet where our maps have been acquired as a collection and placed on the open shelf they are well used – and retrieval is a great deal easier than hoiking an original from the depths of an overfull plan chest.

With these changes the balance of our readership has changed. If our first market was the school, and our second the local historian, so from the 1990s the importance of the family historian began to grow. In 2002 we started to take orders on-line, and this has proved our saviour. Today about 40% of our sales are made directly on-line, while another 10% or so is made on-line with various traders via ebay or Amazon. Genealogists have been keen users of the internet from the outset, and so are perfectly attuned to buying on-line, while family history fairs provide the ideal shop window, especially where the redoubtable Chris Makepeace – sometime Manchester librarian – has taken a stall, selling the complete range of our maps. Family historians also spread their tentacles wide. A Northampton local historian, for instance, might buy our map for *Northampton*, and perhaps, even, *Northampton (North)* – but that will be it. Orders from family historians, by contrast, cover the country, and a typical one might request Andover, Ballymena, Chelsea or whatever, perhaps with one of the D-Day maps thrown in, for the Uncle Arthur who landed there. They are helped, of course, by our modest prices, £2.50 for most maps.

I no longer visit 70 libraries a year, but retain close working relationships with several larger ones, and often visit smaller branches when I am out 'on the road' researching the notes for a map. These can be the most enjoyable to visit, examples over the last few months being Ballyclare and Westhoughton, with a good shelf or two of local material eagerly presented, and a relaxing atmosphere in which to work; while trips to Edinburgh's NLS Map Library or Newcastle's Mining Institute Library remain as enjoyable, and rewarding, as ever. The really bad news comes in a library where computers have completely taken over, and I have to sit on a chair in the corner, with books balanced on my knee.

I was asked to confine these notes to my British experience, but a visit to Gelsenkirchen, in the Ruhr, is so crucial that it must be mentioned. It came in 2008, just after my 65th birthday when I was wearily considering retirement. A chance meeting there, at an opera dinner, led to a series for the Ruhr – based on War Office maps from 1944 – that completely rekindled my enthusiasm. Researching, with my schoolboy German, is another experience again! Far from being an indulgence, the maps have covered themselves. Many might think them irrelevant to British readers, apart from a handful of industrial archaeologists or railway buffs, but consider my next map, for *Duisburg (South)*, where a large barracks is shown near Wedau. An anti-aircraft regiment was based here, but after the war it became our Glamorgan Barracks; just imagine how many thousands of British servicemen will have served there over the years 1945-93.

A similar spur has been given by the development of a series for Northern Ireland, where we are now reprinting the 1" maps. These will cover all the Ulster counties. As yet I cannot say that sales are as encouraging as in Germany, but the research is enjoyable and rewarding. These 1" maps, as in England, give us the chance to put a village or small town on the reverse, enabling coverage of places like Ardglass or Carlingford which could not be justified otherwise.

The article mentioned earlier from the *Information Bulletin* in 1986 suggested the project would take me some 30 years, so perhaps I can take retirement in 2016, maybe on my 73rd birthday. Let's hope my creaking knees will take me that far, for I would be lost if I could not go out and research some of the maps, alighting from the train ready to pound the streets of Accrington, Bochum, Chingford, Dewsbury or wherever. I do not visit local studies libraries as often as in the past - partly because we have built up a worthwhile reference collection of our own - but they still play a major role. So do librarians and archivists. It was a librarian - in Scotland - who suggested the maps of the Ruhr, an archivist who accompanied me to Buckingham Palace when I went to receive my MBE, a librarian who brought out the picnic hamper as we explored the shores of Carlingford Lough, a pair of archivists who joined me for dinner at the Buxton Festival – and I could go on! They have contributed to the series and helped me, but above all they have made it enjoyable, made it fun, and that is why I continue to develop the series and - God willing! – will continue to do so for many years to come.

*Alan Godfrey is the proprietor of Alan Godfrey Maps. He can be contacted at Prospect Business Park, Leadgate, Consett, Co. Durham DH8 7PW, email [www.alangodfreymaps.co.uk](http://www.alangodfreymaps.co.uk)*

## LOCAL STUDIES GROUP ANNUAL REPORT 2010

The Committee met twice during the period covered, at Birmingham Central Library, and held the 2009 Annual General Meeting in November also at Birmingham Central Library.

There were no changes to the Committee this year. The members are: Richard Abbott, BRICMICS rep; Jill Barber; Terry Bracher, Chair; Tony Pilmer, LSG South rep; Biff Carmichael, LocScot rep; Diana Dixon, British Association of Local Historians rep; Ian Jamieson, Local Studies Librarian Editor; Alice Lock, Vice Chair and North West sub-group rep; Elizabeth Melrose; Helen Pye-Smith, Hon. Secretary; Anne Sharp, Hon. Treasurer. Tracey Williams, Web Editor and Midlands and Anglia sub-group rep.

Brian Hall, Vice-President of CILIP in 2010 attended the meeting in November. At May 2010 there were 1145 members of the Group.

A revised Mission Statement was produced and published on the website. Terry and Helen had represented the Group at CILIP's Branch and Group Forum, which met twice during the year. Ian had attended a meeting for Editors.

Two issues of the *Local Studies Librarian* were published. Ian will have done 30 years as editor at the end of 2011 and he is looking to retire from the role. The Group is searching for a new editor. Discussions continued into producing the journal in an electronic format and it was agreed that we can no longer sustain the cost of printing two issues a year, so will reduce to one printed journal to be published in summer and two e-newsletters published in spring and autumn. A project to scan back files of the journal was started. Elizabeth reworked the index to the *Local Studies Librarian* and had reached 2009 by the end of the year. This is available on the website.

Tracey further developed the website including adding more images and case studies submitted by members working in local studies. In addition to the website and the journal, the Group has been communicating with members via the new monthly emailing service from CILIP. During the year Tracey set up a test Blog which later was moved to CILIP's Communities website. This is proving very popular. In addition at the end of the year Tracey set up a Twitter account for the Local Studies Group.

The Dorothy McCulla Memorial Prize 2010 was won by Tracey Williams, Local Studies Librarian at Solihull Central Library. This prize is awarded to a member of the Group who has made an outstanding contribution to local studies work. Tracey was awarded the prize by Brian Hall, CILIP Vice-President, at our AGM last November.

The regional sub-groups continued to grow and develop and a number of successful events were held. Some sub-group newsletters were made available on the Local Studies Group website.

*Helen Pye-Smith, Honorary Secretary LSG*

Registered Charity No 313014

Local Studies Group of CILIP

Receipts and Payments A/c for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010

<u>Payments/Expenditure</u>		<u>Receipts/Income</u>	
VAT on goods & services	2.77	Capitation	2,209.00
Local Studies Librarian		Royalties	7.43
Vol 28/2 printing	862.00	2009 Conference Fees	770.00
Vol 28/2 distribution	<u>409.12</u>	Local Studies Librarian	30.00
Total 28/2	1,271.12		
Vol 29/1 printing	850.00	Nett VAT on Conference	134.75
Vol 29/1 distribution	<u>371.72</u>	Advertising	99.00
Total 29/1	1,221.72	Nett VAT on Advertising	17.32
	2,492.84		
Main Cttee (2 mtgs)	679.83	Reimbursement from CILIP	375.13
Outside mtgs	23.05	Interest on COIF	18.94
Postage	16.02	Repayment on VAT from CILIP	2.50
McCulla Award 2009	100.00		
VAT to CILIP	208.43		<u>3,664.07</u>
Overpayment to CILIP	375.13		
	<u>3,898.07</u>		
Closing balances 31st December 2009			4,025.96
Less deficit brought down from above			234.00
<u>Accumulated surplus for 2010</u>			<u>3,791.96</u>
<b>Creditors</b>			
McCulla Award		100.00	
VAT due to Cilip		149.50	<u>249.50</u>
<b>Debtors</b>			
Advertisers		279.00	<u>279.00</u>

Registered Charity No 313014

Local Studies Group of CILIP

Receipts and Payments A/c for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010

**Assets at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010**

Bank account	459.74	
COIF	3,332.22	<b><u>3,791.96</u></b>

**Additionally**

Balances held for Sub Groups on Charities Deposit CYMRU/WALES	859.74
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**Nett Balances held by Sub-Groups**

LSG South		1,163.41
Midlands & Anglia (current a/c)	833.20	
(MALSG) charities deposit a/c)	3,287.94	
(Old ) Eastern sub-group	262.55	
Mid & Anglia total		4,383.69
North Western A/c		989.55
Locscot		4,418.18

Hon. Treasurer Anne Sharp	Independent Examiner Phillip Lindley
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**LSG TREASURER'S REPORT 2010**

The deficit for 2010 was cushioned by income due from unpaid fees for the 2009 Day School, reducing this from £940 to £234. Our main areas of expenditure are printing and distribution costs for the journal, the Local Studies Librarian, and committee meeting costs. Committee meetings have already been reduced from three to two per annum.

It was proposed by the Committee that we reduce the printed journal from two issues to one, and to embrace the digital age by producing two newsier electronic newsletters.

We need to remain prudent, mindful that CILIP has withdrawn capitation for the year 2011.

It is hoped that income from the 2011 day school will meet the costs of running this. Fees have been kept low mindful that many delegates pay their own fees and transport costs.

*Anne Sharp, Honorary Treasurer LSG*



## **WORKING LIVES – The Warwickshire Experience**

*Lesley Kirkwood*

One day a man goes into a bar....and that is how the initial idea for our Working Lives project started. Councillor Barry Longden was in his local listening to local people talking about their time at work and he felt that these important recollections must not be lost. He approached Warwickshire Libraries and we were off.

The aim of the Working Lives Project was to record the memories of people from Nuneaton and Bedworth who had worked in the towns' numerous industries, focussing on brick and tile making, quarrying, textile production and engineering. The project would also acknowledge the unique contribution made to the life of the community by those who worked in these industries and engender a feeling of value and worth to those individuals and their families.

We decided to use an oral history approach as this type of personal and emotional information is often missing from industrial history. However, the project also had a wider importance as it captured local dialects and accents and so would be a fascinating resource for anyone interested in the study of accents and linguistics records which are not otherwise widely available.

The focus was on people who lived and/or worked in the modern borough of Nuneaton and Bedworth. However, people's lives are not restricted by a neat geographical boundary. There was a lot of commuting to and from Nuneaton and Bedworth. Many people travelled to Hinckley to work in the hosiery factories or to Coventry's large engineering works. We interviewed a cross section of people from across the four industries, representing workers at different levels as well as those who had immigrated into the UK from East Africa and were of Indian and Pakistani descent. Many found work in the area's textile and engineering factories. The interviews covered a time period from the 1930s to the start of the 21st century, a period which included a World War and its aftermath, immigration from former British colonies and rapid changes in technology.

### **Aims and outcomes**

We outlined our aims and outcomes as follows:

- To collect, preserve and make accessible to the community the vulnerable oral history of Nuneaton and Bedworth associated with its industrial heritage, focussing on brick and tile making, quarrying, engineering, hosiery and textiles. A target figure of fifty recordings was set. The proposed outcomes for the project were identified as the following:
- An archive of recordings for use for the future which would provide

a resource for the community and for researchers, an accessible user friendly book, a learning pack and a display which would be suitable for moving around to community venues.

- The creation of a sense of community and pride in the history and industry of the area for the interviewees, their families and the community at large.

### **The process**

The project officer prepared for the interviewing process by completing background research on Nuneaton and Bedworth particularly focussing on the industries covered by the project. In order to contact appropriate people to interview, appeals were placed in local newspapers and the main library web pages. Local interest groups such as the Women's Institute and the TGWU were also contacted. Talks were given to local groups, including those with a local history bias, about the project. A Steering Group and a Reference Group were set up to help guide the project team, and web pages were designed to promote, as well as host, information and material collected as part of the project. A newsletter was also produced which was also available on the web.

### **Equipment**

Advice was sought from the Oral History Society regarding the purchase of the equipment used to record the oral histories:

- Acer Aspire 3614 Laptop
- Marantz PMD660 Solid State Digital Recorder using Lexar Professional 80x Speed Compact Flash Cards
- AKG C 417 Condenser Microphone
- iomega LDHD200 External Hard Drive
- Kodak C713 digital camera

The original recordings have been digitised and stored on archive quality DVDs and CDs, while the original digital recordings are now deposited with Warwickshire County Record Office on indefinite loan.

### **Paperwork**

Relevant copyright and consent forms were created after taking advice from the Steering Group, Warwickshire County Record Office and the Oral History Society to ensure that the project followed the correct procedures in the collection and recording of the interviewees' permission to use their data. Before publication of the book, each interviewee was contacted again to ensure that this information was correct. In several cases some of the interviewees wished to remain anonymous and their wishes have been followed. Copyright of all recordings belong to Warwickshire County Council, and all the original paperwork has now been deposited with Warwickshire County Record Office.

## **Interviews**

Following best practice and taking into account the fact that many interviewees were elderly, the recordings took place in the interviewees' homes or at the Edward Street Day Centre in Nuneaton. The project officer conducted the interviews herself with the help of a volunteer who gave his time regularly throughout the project. Where possible, photographs of industrial sites where the interviewees worked were used to help with the interview process and in some cases interviewees themselves found and talked about photographs in their possession as part of the process. (Many of these were subsequently lent to the project, digitised and made accessible on the Working lives web pages) A range of material was collected intending to represent shop floor workers through to management staff.

During the interviews, other subjects were naturally talked about and these have remained unedited in the interviews since they give an insight into what life was like growing up in the area. These include; education, descriptions of homes, food, rationing, living through the Second World War, the role of women, unemployment, and retirement as well as issues such as equal pay and trade unionism. In this respect the material has a much wider appeal to those interested in the general history of the period covered by the project and those particularly interested in the Second World War. Some of the interviewees also talked in length about certain aspects of their job - for example, how the clay was collected and made into a brick.

## **After the interview**

On completion of each interview each recording was digitised and a copy of it made and given to the interviewee on a compact disc. This enabled the interviewee to listen to the recording to ensure that they were happy with what they had said and also so that they had a record for themselves to share with family members. 98% of the recordings remain unedited. A photograph of the interviewee at home was also taken and if permission was given this was then added to the website.

The interviews were then summarised in 5 minute tracks and transferred to the web at a later date. In some cases information mentioned in the recordings was checked with other sources since accents made it difficult to ascertain the correct pronunciation or spelling. On these occasions; trade directories and the libraries local studies catalogue were consulted to ensure accuracy in the summaries.

## **Branding**

A professionally designed branding was created for the book design. This has been continued through to the web pages, display, Learning Pack and all publicity.

## **Sharing with the community**

### **• Working Lives web pages**

In order for the material to be as accessible as possible and to ensure sustainability, all the material collected as part of the project was digitised and hosted on the Warwickshire County Council website, the address being [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/workinglives](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/workinglives). Early on in the project, web pages were designed specifically for Working Lives enabling information on the progress of the project in the form of newsletters to be shared. Public events were also promoted via the site. As the project developed, a flavour of the recordings in the form of quotations and short edited sound files were included.

As the project progressed the site expanded and by the end of the project the site included:

A link to the library catalogue which allows the user to listen to the full recordings;

A link to [www.picasaweb.com](http://www.picasaweb.com) to view the photographs;

A link to the learning pack which allows teachers and other interested people to view and download the resources,

A link to a page which gives details of the book to buy or borrow from Warwickshire libraries

A link to Google maps which provides a map of the location of the factories.

The site also provides information on the project, conditions of use, contact details for the project and links to other useful sites.

### **• Recordings on the web**

A specially commissioned and designed searchable database which links to the Warwickshire library and Information Service Catalogue (Vubis) hosts the original recordings, summaries, transcripts and photographs of the interviewees. The database appears on the Catalogue front page ensuring that the profile of the project is high. A link from the library catalogue to the project web pages is embedded.

### **• Book**

The book gives an overview of the project, highlighting particular memories and giving a background to the history of the industries mentioned. Edited quotations from the interviews alongside colour and black and white photographs donated or lent by the interviewees and material gathered from Local Studies Collections and the County Record Office are featured. New specially taken photographs have been included to show the present buildings on lost industrial sites: this helps the reader envisage the locations of former factories. The book also contains a list of all participants of the project, is indexed and has a useful glossary that

explains key words or terms used by interviewees. Readers are asked to visit the website for further information. Within the publication there is a specially commissioned compact disc, allowing people to listen to snippets of interviews thereby getting a flavour of the project.

A print run of 1000 was produced. Each of the interviewees or their representatives were presented with a copy and additional copies were given to the Library Service, to residential homes in the area, to members of the Warwickshire CC Nuneaton and Bedworth Local Area Committee which provided the funding, and a number of review copies to the media. Books have been deposited with the Schools Library Service which will be available for any school in Warwickshire to borrow or to use alongside the learning package. The books are also being sold at £7.99 and revenue from this will be used to support work to continue to promote the project.

### • **Learning package**

On the website a learning package has been produced for use with Key Stage 2 children. This is available for downloading from the website and contains lesson plans, historical maps, photographs and other resources that can be printed off to use in the classroom. The pack covers the National Curriculum areas of Literacy and History. The learning package is being used in local schools in the area by Heritage Education and will appear on their publicity as a resource that can be delivered by them.

### • **The exhibition**

Two sets of A6 exhibition panels have been produced to promote the project; included with these panels are MP3 players which have extracts of the recordings. Interested members of the public listen to highlights whilst looking at the exhibition. The exhibition toured libraries, community centres, churches, schools and other local venues.

## **Publicity**

### • **Newspapers**

Articles about the project have appeared in many local newspapers. Features have also appeared in 'In Touch' (local newsletter distributed to every house in the borough of Nuneaton and Bedworth), NBBC Council tenant's participation scheme newsletter and local parish newsletters.

### • **Radio**

The project was supported by BBC local radio. Regular interviews on BBC Coventry and Warwickshire Radio promoted Working Lives throughout the project, the latest taking place in January 2009 to mark the launch of the book and website. A live broadcast from Nuneaton library with Bob Brolley, was part of a public event in 2007 which marked a 'thank you' tea with all the interviewees. Many of the interviewees were happy to chat

to Bob live on air and were delighted that their stories were appreciated by the general public and specifically a younger generation. Anker radio also interviewed the project officer, helping to attract interviewees at the beginning of the project.

#### • Talks

Talks promoting the Working Lives Project and the ethos behind it have been delivered to over 15 local groups and the project has also been represented at various local events including Family History Fairs and Whittleford Park Project celebrations.

#### • Promotional material

At the beginning of the project a banner was produced to be used at all Working Lives events, and posters, postcards and business cards were used regularly throughout the project to highlight different aspects of the project. These have been sent to community venues and other libraries and council departments for display.

#### • Events

The first event took place in May 2006 with Councillor Barry Longden and Cynthia Brown from the Oral History Society as guest speakers. A year later in 2007 the tea party was organised to celebrate meeting the target of gathering 50 recordings (see above). To launch the completed project, two events were held in November 2008. The first was at Nuneaton Library for invited guests; including interviewees, local dignitaries and other interested parties. At this event interviewees were presented with a signed copy of the book and had an opportunity to see the material on the Working Lives web pages with support from members of staff. The second event at Bedworth Library was to promote the project to members of the public. Both events were very successful and staff had many positive verbal comments from people attending the events.

These 2008 events took place during the National Year of Reading. In order to gain extra publicity these events were publicised via the Library National year of Reading web pages as well as the usual publicity channels.

#### **Staffing**

The project employed a project officer for the period of December 2005 until March 2009. The Project lead was supplied from Warwickshire Library and Information Service management. A trained and enthusiastic volunteer supported the project, helping with recording the interviews and taking photographs. Additional library staff supported the project by maintaining and creating the website, distributing and selling the books, helping with public events and distributing publicity.



## **The legacy of the project**

A key outcome of the project was to ensure that a lasting ongoing resource would be made available to not only the people of Nuneaton and Bedworth but also to a far wider audience of researchers and people worldwide who are interested in social history and the history of Nuneaton and Bedworth. To support this outcome, the project created a sustainable internet platform which can be used to host further recordings related to this core area of interest.

The interest generated in the project with older people and schools has been developed and the opportunity to develop this interest by using drama and art to widen the audience to this resource has been achieved. Children's activities have included as part of 'Fantastic Fun With Words' at Camp Hill (2009) and Stockingford (2010), a day of creative learning with Campbell Perry who created a song and drama experience based on the recollections. Comments from participants included 'Fantastic day', 'The children achieved so much' and 'My Gran told me about this too'.

The interviewees and their families have developed a real pride in not only their contribution to the project but also to the development of the industrial and community heritage of Nuneaton and Bedworth. This has focussed local interest in the companies which still continue to operate in the area.

The raised profile of the project has resulted in an increase in the number of donations given to the Libraries' Local studies collections includes: a Slingsby ribbon brought in to be photographed after the owner saw the Working Lives Display; a collection of photographs donated by Mr Dean Dewis who worked at Sterling Metals before it closed. This donation was made after viewing the material on the website.

Skills and experience acquired by the project team in developing the project have been kept in-house. This will facilitate the delivery of other projects as well as giving the Library Service the opportunity to further expand the project.

As of December 2010 we have delivered talks to over 150 people, paid for by the revenue generated by the sale of the books: we have distributed nearly 800 copies of which approximately a third have been sold. In addition the audio links have been visited by nearly 2000 people. As part of our outreach we also used the Working Lives resource as a tool to help in reminiscence therapy with the Nuneaton Resource Centre for Mental Health clients.

In 2009 we were the proud recipient of the Alan Ball Award for library publications, which provided another morale boost for the staff involved as

well as an excellent opportunity for the promotion of the project and the Library Service within the County Council.

Please contact me if you would like any further information about this project at [lesleykirkwood@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:lesleykirkwood@warwickshire.gov.uk)

*Lesley Kirkwood is Senior Librarian, Local Studies, Warwickshire County Libraries*

## THE DOROTHY MCCULLA AWARD 2011

This Award was established in 1981 in memory of Dorothy McCulla, then Local Studies Librarian of Birmingham, one of the prime movers in the establishment of the Local Studies Group. It is intended to celebrate the achievements of local studies librarians in providing excellent services to their communities, either as a whole, or through development and exploitation, for example, of new techniques or services. The award is for an outstanding contribution to local studies librarianship and the recipient is often referred to as the Local Studies Librarian of the Year. There must be many librarians who have been carrying out work in their own areas in developing their services to a high standard for the benefit of the local community, but receive very little recognition from the profession or outside. There are others who have encouraged their colleagues to develop techniques or services through their teaching or writing. But people must be nominated and this where our membership in general comes in. Many of you must know someone who has helped you or influenced you, or impressed you by the work they are doing. If you do know someone who is worthy of the Award, nominate them – don't wait for someone else to do it. Recipients must be members of LSG. For more information look at the LSG website or contact our Hon Secretary, Helen Pye-Smith, at [helen.pye-smith@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto:helen.pye-smith@nationalarchives.gov.uk)

Because the closing date is rapidly approaching, if you have any ideas for nominations **please contact Helen urgently.**

## FROM OUR SUBGROUPS

Our **Midlands and Anglia** subgroup has announced that their AGM will be on 11th October at Nottingham Central Library; this is the same date as their next committee meeting and full details will be on the website and published in CILIP Update. At recent meetings the committee has discussed various issues of mutual concern: they have looked into what they can do about newspapers now that the British Library no longer microfilms them, and they have also discussed trying to find a way of mentoring librarians who are new to local studies. It has been decided not to host a Day School this year so as not to clash with other events including the national LSG Day School. They will, however, be offering a bursary for Midlands and Anglia members to attend the LSG South Study Day on 18th October, in return for an article for their newsletter. To apply or for more details please email Paul Hudson: [hudson@castle-heritage.org.uk](mailto:hudson@castle-heritage.org.uk)

The **North West** sub branch reports that its committee seems to be recovering from the mass resignations following so many staffing changes in north west local studies libraries. In these they lost Mike Eddison, a former secretary and committee member of many years standing whose good humour always ensured an enjoyable meeting. Also gone are Mark Sargent, who has been our chair for the last few years and expertly guided the committee through some very difficult times, and Susan Halstead, a former treasurer and longstanding member whose knowledge and experience will be sorely missed. It is quite a blow to lose so many long standing members at one time, though, of course, we wish them well for the future. . We have also lost Jane Metcalfe who represented Cumbria and helped us so much as a lively editor which helped show the range of local studies activities in the North West. Andrew Walmsley of Lancashire has agreed to become the new Chair, at least until Lancashire's new structure is finalised. Julie Devonald is the new treasurer and two new committee members have volunteered – Jean Bradburn of Halton and Jane Parr of Manchester, while Hannah Turner of Wigan has also expressed an interest.

The subgroup's last Day School was *Spanning the Centuries*, a visit to four important libraries/archives in Manchester. The Chetham's librarian, Michael Powell, showed the delegates round the Cathedral and gave an illuminating and entertaining introduction to its archives, and followed this by a similar introduction to the collection at Chetham's. The day continued with a visit to the newly refurbished John Rylands Library on Deansgate and to Manchester City Libraries' temporary local studies service in Elliot House. The day gave everyone a chance to see the range of treasures we are lucky to have in the Manchester area. The study day was fully booked, and an analysis of the feedback forms seemed to indicate that delegates found

it useful and enjoyable. Flyers were given out at the event asking people to consider joining the committee or joining LSG as a separate group (not as part of a CILIP subscription) and they got a good response. The subgroup's last newsletter, including articles about recent day schools and the Lancashire Criminal Past promotion by Lancashire Libraries can be read on the LSG website. There were some ideas for a day school in the autumn, but the committee wanted to make sure that it could survive before making any firm plans.

**Locscot**, our **Scottish** subgroup, also reports numerous changes in the committee. With the retirement of Elizabeth Carmichael as Chair after many years dedicated service to the committee and to the local studies field in general, the new Chair is Eleanor McKay, and the resultant vacancy for the secretary's post has been taken by David Catto. Pat Malcolm also retired as Treasurer, his successor being Jo Sherington.

There have been two very informative day schools, both giving inspiration and advice on developing and showcasing information. In November we looked at projects for local studies librarians to *Navigate the Digital Maze* and heard from five speakers about projects making the most of current technology to highlight information in various collections. These ranged from a national project to digitise historical Post Office directories to a reminiscence project involving a Library Club in a local studies centre, and the innovative use of a blog to serialise a nineteenth century diary which generated a large number of online followers. The spring day school, *Our sporting heroes: tracking the down*, was designed to give inspiration for Scottish Local History Week in 2012, when sport will be the theme. At first we thought this might be an obscure topic for Local Studies, but it turned out to be one of our most informative and engaging day schools, covering aspects of many sports: the amount of material available in local clubs and held by local enthusiasts is quite staggering! Unfortunately numbers attending this event were down and, as we suspected, the main reason cited by would-be delegates was difficulty in getting staff cover to allow librarians to attend such things as seminars. It would appear that, along with cuts to services, staff in the posts that remain are potentially losing out on opportunities for professional development.

Locscot is still pursuing the issue of the 1911 Census and the failure of the General Register Office of Scotland to make this available to libraries, and we have enlisted the help of the Scottish Local History Forum as well as local history societies to make a case for the raw data to be released.

**LSG South**, our subgroup for the South of England, is looking forward to its next Study Day & AGM on Tuesday 18 October 2011 in Winchester. Called

'Mapping the past, present and future' delegates will be finding out more about how to utilise maps inside and out of local studies collections. Ifan Shepherd and Steve Chilton from Middlesex University will be talking about the surveying of the 1800s 6-inch Ordnance Survey maps and Humphrey Southall about how to get the best out of the maps on the *Vision of Britain through time* website. Delegates will also be hearing about how Reading Museum is working with *HistoryPin* to get their images linked with google mapping and how the Surrey History Centre is getting their Tithe maps out to the public. Places for the study day cost £35+VAT for members and £45+VAT for non-members. Bookings close on 30 September. For more details visit [cilip.org.uk/lsg-events](http://cilip.org.uk/lsg-events) or email [LSGSouth@ntlworld.com](mailto:LSGSouth@ntlworld.com)

In June the subgroup hosted the first London & South East Local Studies Forum at the Surrey History Centre. Representatives from eighteen authorities at the eastern end of our region came along. We heard from Tracey Williams on her amazing work in Solihull and then found out more about what has been going on in London and the South East's Local Studies collections. The afternoon was a success and it is hoped to make it an annual event. The forum was also eager to keep in touch so we have set up an email list. To subscribe email [lselocalstudies-subscribe@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lselocalstudies-subscribe@yahoo.co.uk) A full report on the forum will appear in the next issue of *Local Studies Librarian*.

## **LOCAL STUDIES GROUP – Volunteers needed**

The Group is in urgent need of two volunteers:

1. Ian Jamieson is retiring as Hon. Editor of the *Local Studies Librarian* this year and the Group needs someone for the next issue. As announced earlier, there is now only one printed issue per year and the next one will be in Summer 2012. However, we wish to appoint someone as soon as possible so that he/she can liaise with the present editor. Note that there are also two electronic Newsletters a year, edited by Sarah Tongue, with whom you will also be liaising. For more details contact the LSG's Hon. Secretary, Helen Pye-Smith ([helen.pye-smith@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto:helen.pye-smith@nationalarchives.gov.uk)). If you would like an informal chat about the editor's role and responsibilities, please get in touch with the present Hon. Editor, Ian Jamieson, on 0191 236 2349, or email [imjamieson@c-pac.net](mailto:imjamieson@c-pac.net)
2. Our Hon Treasurer, Anne Sharp, is also looking for a successor. The idea is that the person appointed should work with Anne for a while to get used to the system. Anyone interested should contact her direct at South Shields Library for more details ([anne.sharp@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:anne.sharp@southtyneside.gov.uk))

## STUDYING FAMILY HISTORY IN THE PARIS ARCHIVES

Jennifer Scherr

In March 2009, I visited Paris with a friend, in order to try to track down some intriguing relatives by marriage living there in the 1920s and 30s, who had been brought to my attention by one of the family. These included in particular Dr Semion (Senya) Aisinman. Senya was a director of the Romanian oil company Petrol-Block. His story ended sometime after 1928, when "he committed felo-de-se with a revolver at his sumptuous apartment in the fashionable Parc de Monceau area".

By 2009, I had a lot of experience in English family history: but I had no idea what resources might be available for Paris in the early years of the last century. Online searches in early 2009 for the Aisinman family produced only a few hits, but one was an address in Paris for Senya's son Felix in 1932: 72, avenue de Suffren, near the Eiffel Tower (the source being a patent application for a coffee percolator!).

However, I still needed original evidence to support the story. So, with suggestions on archives and resources gathered via my colleague Damien McManus, a Subject Librarian at the University of Bristol, and his contacts: and, in France, by my sister Susan Préfol, we set off. With the limited time available to us, we concentrated on trying to find earlier evidence for Felix's address; and/or his parents' address; and his father's death certificate.

We started at the *Archives de Paris*, easily reached by *Métro* to the north-eastern outskirts of Paris. We also found it easy to sign up for a reader's ticket (no photo or advance notice required, just passport ID), and the indexes and reading room layout seemed reassuringly familiar to us English record office users. Thanks to their website we'd been able to pre-select some possible resources.

We decided to concentrate on telephone directories, *Annuaire des abonnés au téléphone* (published along with the French "Yellow pages", or *Bottins du Commerce*, and known as *Bottins* for short), choosing the volumes for 1932 and 1934 (none earlier were available in print at the *Archives*); and the voting records: *Fichiers des électeurs de Paris* (1921-1939). These latter were on original slips, which had to be consulted in a supervised reading room. We also looked at various printed indexes and reference works in the main reading room. But we had little luck, beyond confirming Felix's address in the telephone directory for 1932 (same street, slightly different number). We realised afterwards that we could have consulted more telephone directories on microfilm if we'd had time, but we urgently wanted to pin down Senya's death. As it took place after 1925, we needed to consult the original registers in the relevant town hall (*mairie d'arrondissement*).



So our next stop was a visit to the Parc Monceau in the spring sunshine. Well worth visiting in its own right, it was indeed surrounded by sumptuous-looking buildings. But, still having no address, we had no idea which mairie to visit in search of Senya's death certificate. We found we were nearest to that for the 8th, so in we went. I had read, back in England, that as I was not a direct descendant, I might not be allowed access to the records. However, I filled in an application form for a certificate, saying that I was a "cousin" and that the death was in 1928 or 1929, possibly in the 8th arrondissement... Within ten minutes, the smiling official returned asking "C'est bon?" – and indeed it was!

The details gave Senya's date and place of birth, his occupation (Président de la Société Petrol-Block Français), full names of both his parents, his wife's full name, his home address and the address, date and time of death, the name and address of the employee who reported his death: all completely new information, and all free! The only thing missing was the cause of death. (We have since been told that this type of information is held elsewhere and is only given to direct descendants).

Because he died at 8, rue Alfred-de-Vigny, which was just round the corner, we set off at once. This was a striking neo-gothic, medieval and Renaissance-style house built round a courtyard, and backing on to the park: amongst other things, it was the home of the Club Alfred-de-Vigny, and the Conservatoire Internationale de Musique. Checking later, we saw that it is known as the Hôtel Menier, and was built in 1880 by Henri, the son of a famous chocolate manufacturer, Émile Menier. In the 1950s it was taken over by the fashion house, Givenchy.

The address of the 'employee' reporting Senya's death was also close by (perhaps this was the head office of the French Petrol-Block – still to be confirmed). Senya's home address was overlooking the park, in the *boulevard de Courcelles*, and part of a long, impressive terrace, which we had earlier been admiring ignorantly through the park railings!

We are now planning possible destinations for our next archival trip. We will need to arrange advance permission to go to the *Bibliothèque Nationale de France* in order to consult a copy of Senya's earliest recorded work, which is probably his thesis (Karlsruhe, 1892); and perhaps investigate newspapers there in case his death was noted in any way. Back at the *Archives de Paris*, we could look at more *Bottins*; at another directory, *Le Tout Paris: Annuaire de la société parisienne...*; and, now that we have addresses, at the *Dénombrements de la population* for 1926 and 1931, the five-yearly census returns which give individual dates of birth and

occupations. Unfortunately, we cannot check where Senya was buried, as the records of the *Pompes funèbres* for the relevant year do not appear to survive. But we might have more luck in the *Registre de déclaration de la succession*, if this applies to non-French nationals, and always assuming that family members were allowed to inherit in the case of a suicide (if indeed it was a suicide).

We could return to the same *mairie* to check for the two marriages of Felix's sister Nellie (Cornelia), one of which definitely took place in Paris in 1928. I also need to write to the present occupiers of 8 rue Alfred-de-Vigny, to see whether any of them hold archives back to 1929, or have any memory of a death of a Romanian oil magnate at the height of the Wall Street Crash. And somewhere, the records of the Petrol-Block company, possibly containing background information about the directors and their movements, may survive.

Acknowledgements. Many thanks to Dr Gwyneth Nair for her company, research and advice over the years; also to Mélanie David, Simone David, Isabelle Didier, Monique Didier and Susan Préfol, for local guidance and hospitality; and to Damien McManus and his e-mail contacts gathered by Diana Dixon, Ian Maxted, and Elizabeth Melrose.

*Jennifer Scherr is Head of Membership Services, University of Bristol Library*

## **LOCAL STUDIES: SUSTAINABILITY IN THE DIGITAL AGE.**

### **Report on the LSG National Conference, Kew, June 2011**

*Diana Dixon*

Terry Bracher, Chair of LSG and Archives and Local Studies Manager, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, set the ball rolling with a reflective overview of the challenges facing local studies today in 'Local Studies: Current Context and Key Issues' in which he explored many of the issues facing current local studies provision. He identified two core elements from our mission statement: fostering and promoting community identity and fostering access to our diverse local and national written and pictorial heritage. These are a fundamental part of public library provision and Terry painted a mixed picture of successful outcomes and threats to the service by reminding us that although some services are facing closures and redundancies, the overall picture is positive. Local studies provision is a front runner in meeting targets for the Big Society and Localism agendas.

Digital initiatives are at the forefront of local studies provision and it is encouraging that older projects such as the Durham Record are now being revitalised by Web2. Local studies librarians are exploiting web 2.0

technologies and digital community archives. Solihull libraries pioneered the use of QR codes and historic photographs of the Swindon collection are now available on Flickr. Besides this, basic cataloguing and classification skills and knowledgeable staff are still essential. Close working with the community is vital and he illustrated this with a number of projects including assisting local societies and museums with HLF bids and engaging all members of the community. Much of this work involves partnerships, especially cross sector work within the heritage arena. There is a trend for mergers and the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre is a good example, as is the Hull History Centre. Sustainable archives, digital curatorship and online access are all key elements of local studies provision. Funding remains the biggest challenge and consortium approaches to gaining funding for developing digital content was highlighted. He illustrated his talk with a video clip which showed a project of teenagers examining attitudes of older people to them.

Tracey Williams, Local Studies Librarian, Solihull Heritage and Local Studies gave an inspirational and enthusiastic account entitled 'Social Networking-Group Therapy!' She began by affirming that social media is really group therapy and is becoming increasingly important in the current economic climate as a support mechanism. Defining twitter as a very personalised news feed she demonstrated how the Local Studies Group committee is finding it increasingly useful as a communication tool and also as a means to keep abreast of what is happening. Its benefits are speed, extending networks, and personalisation. The LSG website and blogs can provide instant feedback on matters of concern and interest. With engaging modesty Tracey revealed how the local studies group twitter account had almost been set up by accident. Once her own misgivings had been overcome she rapidly recognised its value as a tool to promote the local studies service in Solihull both within the authority and externally.

Anne Sharp brought us firmly down to hard economic reality with 'What's worth? Income Generation, Evaluation and Advocacy' which was a refreshingly realistic assessment of how South Tyneside is meeting the Localism agenda. Using the theme of Smart Swots in Shifting Sands she looked at funding issues and outlined the major sources. Her emphasis was on evaluation of costs and ensuring that outcomes met the priorities of funding bodies, especially from private trusts and companies. She stressed the importance of reliable statistics to quantify footfalls and income to demonstrate customer benefits to prove delivery of social inclusion and the big society agendas. Quality was also extremely important for demonstrating value and could be assessed via questionnaires, interviews, case studies, and diaries. Advocacy is paramount and can be achieved through media campaigns, public speaking, commissioning research and events. Pictures illustrated some of these events. Turning to income generation, Anne explored

various ways of achieving this in a feasible and sustainable manner. A case study to digitise and repackage a collection of glass negatives showed how service development went hand in hand with SMART objectives and this was achieved by using volunteers and also through partnerships with NEMLAC, the U3A and even involved setting up a local history society in South Shields.

Gill Barber's paper 'Making Memories: Community Archives and the Big Society' depicted the work of Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies but complemented much of the experience of preceding speakers and showed just how all local studies librarians are facing the same issues. Making memories is a community archive project which engages with volunteers to capture the memories of local residents. Although its underlying motive is to demonstrate the service is meeting corporate agendas, the project was intended to capture memories before it is too late, to fill gaps in published histories, to raise morale in areas of deprivation and engage with diverse groups. It also was intended to increase access to collections and to reach new audiences. Primed with a grant from the HLF Your Heritage, the project involved partnerships with libraries, museums, the University of Hertfordshire and local history societies. Recruiting and training volunteers was an essential component and this was achieved using community websites. The result was a number of endearing clips of websites depicting afternoon discovery events such as the Our Oxhey Tea Party and Retro Herts. Outcomes have included contemporary collecting, born digital material, audio and video clips and talking archives. The project has successfully included teenagers, the homeless and young travellers engaging with a much wider community than hitherto. As such it has given local people a voice and is a sustainable resource full of potential.

Besides the formal presentations, delegates were also given the chance to exchange views in breakout sessions which looked at the main achievements and challenges facing local studies librarians and how services are changing in the current economic climate and training needs. Themed discussion groups in the afternoon covered funding sources, access to local newspapers, social networking and use of volunteers. The venue was ideal, the organisation flawless and the day rounded off with a tour of the National Archives.

Local studies librarians are facing challenging times, but the overall impression of the day was very positive. All the speakers were promoting Localism and the Big Society agendas through imaginative projects involving partnerships and using volunteers to engage with members of the community and to increase access to their collections.

*Diana Dixon is Honorary Curator of Southwold Museum and a member of the LSG committee*

## **A SENSE OF PLACE: local studies in Australia and New Zealand**

*Diana Dixon*

This is a brief report on this conference for Australian and New Zealand librarians, which was held in Sydney in May 2011. The impressive Mitchell Library of the State Library of New South Wales was the venue for this well attended event. The Local Studies Group had been invited to provide a speaker to outline developments in British local studies librarianship and I was honoured to be your representative and to present a paper entitled *From Manuscripts to Metadata: the changing face of local studies*.

A tightly packed programme pinpointed some of the exciting initiatives taking place in Australia. Topics included a wide spectrum of subjects ranging from working with local history groups to blogs and augmented reality. Community archive projects featured prominently, as did partnerships working with volunteers. There is a much stronger of using volunteers in Australia and New Zealand and volunteer activities included accessioning and indexing documents as well as giving talks and guided history tours.

What emerged strongly from the conference was the enthusiasm and commitment of so many of our colleagues down under. Some of their work is extremely innovative: such as running photographic competitions using material in the collection to stimulate new pictorial work, mounting exhibitions using works of art and museum objects as well as teatime talks all demonstrate the eagerness to engage with the local community and to attract new audiences. It was also encouraging to see so many parallels with the work that is being undertaken here and to draw comparisons with members of the Local Studies Group. Nonetheless, lessons can be learnt from our Antipodean colleagues. This was a highly stimulating and informative conference. Each day concluded with a panel discussion and a series of recommendations was tabled for submission to government.

*Diana Dixon is Honorary Curator of Southwold Museum and a member of the LSG committee. If you would like any further information about the conference, you can contact her at [diana.dixon@cilip.org.uk](mailto:diana.dixon@cilip.org.uk)*

## **ALAN BALL AWARDS 2010**

The Alan Ball local history awards were established over twenty five years ago and have become a well established part of the local history scene. They were established to encourage quality local history publishing by public libraries and local authorities. They are organised by the Library Services Trust and provide excellent publicity for local studies both nationally and

locally, particularly in the winners' home areas. While originally all entries were of printed items, the range is now much wider and 'publication' is now deemed to include books, maps, manuscripts, prints, drawings, exhibition catalogues, bibliographies, CDs, websites or any other audiovisual or electronic format.

The six judges, including Alan Ball himself, were chaired by Melvyn Barnes, former Guildhall Librarian: they decided to make three Awards, the maximum number permitted. Two entries were also Commended.

The Alan Ball Awards 2010 are:

East Lothian Council for *East Lothian 1945-2000* edited by Sonia Baker, which saw the culmination of a seven volume series by many hands resulting in a monumental work of scholarship with its detailed content matched by excellent standards of physical production;

Epping Forest District Council for *The Life and Art of Octavius Dixie Deacon* by Chris Pond and Richard Morris. This well-produced book, a collaboration between the Council and Loughton and District Historical Society, is an excellent (and well illustrated) example of a publication which puts a local collection into the public domain by making available a modestly priced book that reflects various aspects of the local scene;

Nottinghamshire County Council for *These Uncertain Times: Newark and the Civilian Experience of the Civil Wars 1640-1660* by Stuart Jennings. This very detailed study of a specific period, well researched and well produced, has all the hallmarks of an excellent local history publication.

The following titles are Commended:

East Renfrewshire Council for [www.portaltothepast.co.uk](http://www.portaltothepast.co.uk), the website of a large local history collection that remains open for additions, which the judges found easy to access and navigate and which enables users to trace documents and view a vast number of images;

Stevenage Borough for *Stevenage: a History from Roman Times to the Present Day* by Margaret Ashby and Don Hills, a well written and well researched history of a town that has resulted in a really attractive book.

Any library or local authority, large or small, is encouraged to enter. Recent examples of winners range from parish councils to large public libraries with large publishing programmes and their own imprint. For more details and an application form contact: Eric Winter, The Library Services Trust, CILIP, 7 Ridgmount Street, London WC1E 7AE. Tel 020 7255 0648. Email: [eric.winter@cilip.org.uk](mailto:eric.winter@cilip.org.uk) There is also information and a form in this issue. Do think about encouraging your authority to enter.

**The closing date for the 2011 Awards is 31 October 2011.**



# ALAN BALL LOCAL HISTORY AWARDS

**The object** of the Awards is to encourage Local Authorities to produce local history publications to a high standard. Publications will be deemed to include books, maps, manuscripts, prints, drawings, exhibition catalogues, bibliographies, CDs, websites or any other audio-visual or electronic format.

**Library Services Trust** is a registered charity. The Trust has a range of awards, one of which is the Alan Ball Local History Award.

**Alan Ball** is now retired but was formerly Chief Librarian of the London Borough of Harrow. He was for many years an officer and member of the London and Home Counties Branch Committee of the Library Association, which has published a number of books written by him on local history topics. This Award is named after him in recognition of his service to the branch.

# ALAN BALL LOCAL HISTORY AWARDS ENTRY FORM

AUTHOR Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr ..... (Forename)

..... (Surname)

TITLE OF WORK .....

DATE OF PUBLICATION .....

LOCAL AUTHORITY .....

NAME OF CONTACT .....

CONTACT ADDRESS.....

.....

.....postcode .....

TELEPHONE .....

EMAIL.....

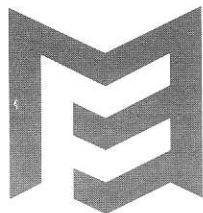
FURTHER DETAILS      On a separate sheet, please give any available details about the publication which you would like the judges to consider.

DESPATCH              Please enclose works in a padded book bag with an entry form for each work and addressed to:

Eric Winter  
Library Services Trust (Alan Ball Awards)  
7 Ridgmount Street, London, WC1E 7AE

ENQUIRIES            Queries about the Awards may be addressed to:  
Eric Winter tel: 020 7255 0648  
email: [eric.winter@cilip.org.uk](mailto:eric.winter@cilip.org.uk)

CLOSING DATE        31 October 2011



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