

Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives



Feeding the Hamlets

Our new exhibition is now open!

In production since 2019 but delayed by the pandemic, *Feeding the Hamlets* is the brand-new exhibition at Tower Hamlets Local History & Archives, using the unique collections held here as a lens through which to explore the borough's history of producing food.

For centuries, the East End's landscape and social and economic history have been influenced by the growing, trading or manufacturing of food. Before 1800 farmland and market gardens characterised the area, but rapid industrialisation saw this pastoral tradition give way to the factories and warehouses producing food for mass consumption nationwide and globally. Close proximity to the docks ensured that food businesses based in the East End had ready access to a fresh supply of raw ingredients, within many supplies imported from countries colonised by Britain.

Photographs, deeds, plans, minutes, illustrations and maps are among the many unique items selected by staff. These sources illustrate fascinating and lesser-known tales from the history of food production in the East End – from flour milling and sugar refining to cow-keeping and vegetable growing. The exhibition looks at the methods and sites where food production took place, as well as the people who were involved.

Huge thanks to all archive staff whose hard work made this exhibition possible - particularly Medha Chotai, Sanjida Alam and Genova Messiah who really went the extra mile in getting the very complex exhibition researched, designed and installed and organising the brilliant launch event last night.

A programme of free events is taking place to explore the exhibition's themes in more detail - check them out below. More will be added later in the year.

Feeding the Hamlets will be on show until February 2023. If you would like to bring a group or class for a tour or workshop inspired by the display, please get in touch at localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk!

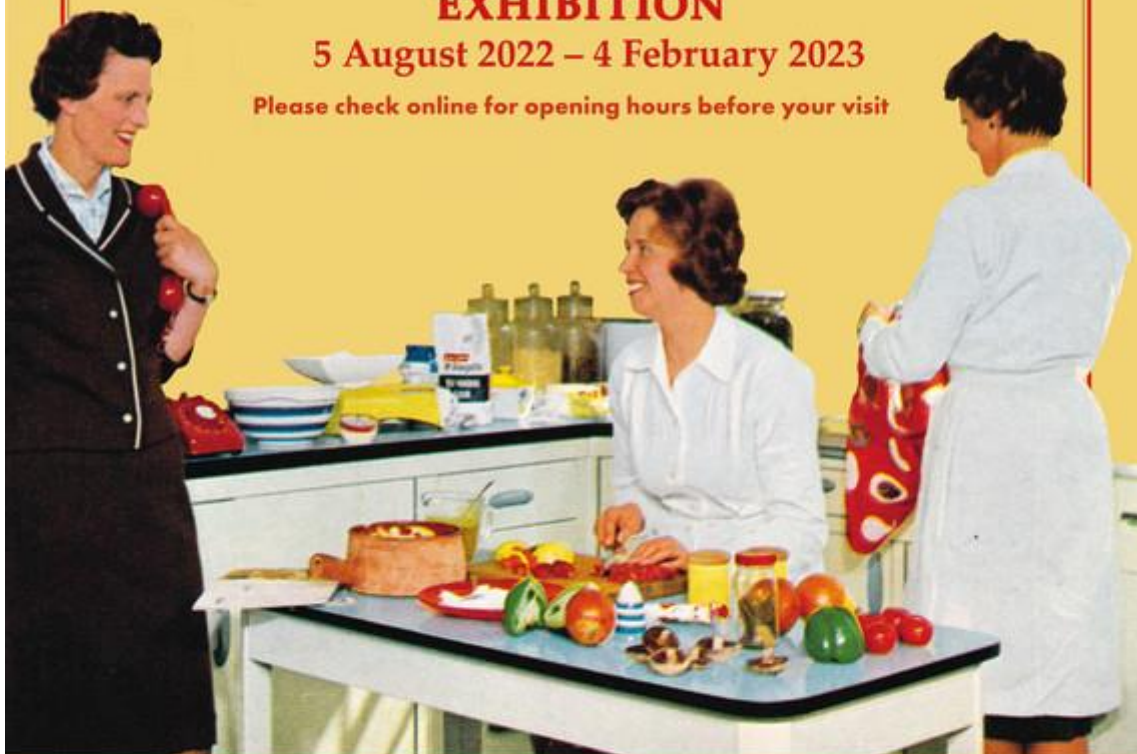
FEEDING THE HAMLETS

Exploring the history of food
production in the East End

EXHIBITION

5 August 2022 – 4 February 2023

Please check online for opening hours before your visit



Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives
277 Bancroft Road, London E1 4DQ

 Stepney Green

www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history

idea
Library Learning Information



Mini Historians

Fruit and veg printing

Thursday 11 August | 11am - 1pm | FREE | [Book your place on Eventbrite](#)

Explore the messy side to your 5 a day with your little ones. Make fun prints and collages using fruit and veg shapes and create your own food-inspired art tote bags. Inspired by

historic East End fruit and veg markets. Roll up, roll up! NB all children must be accompanied by an adult.

Jewish East End food history

A talk with Esther Rinkoff

Saturday 3 September | 2pm - 4pm | FREE | [Book your place on Eventbrite](#)

Join Esther Rinkoff talk about the history of Rinkoffs established in 1911, a family run business based in the heart of London's East End. It has been producing speciality bread cakes and rolls for over a century ranging from traditional challah breads, sourdoughs, cheesecakes, croissants, and Danish pastries to their famous Cro-doughs.

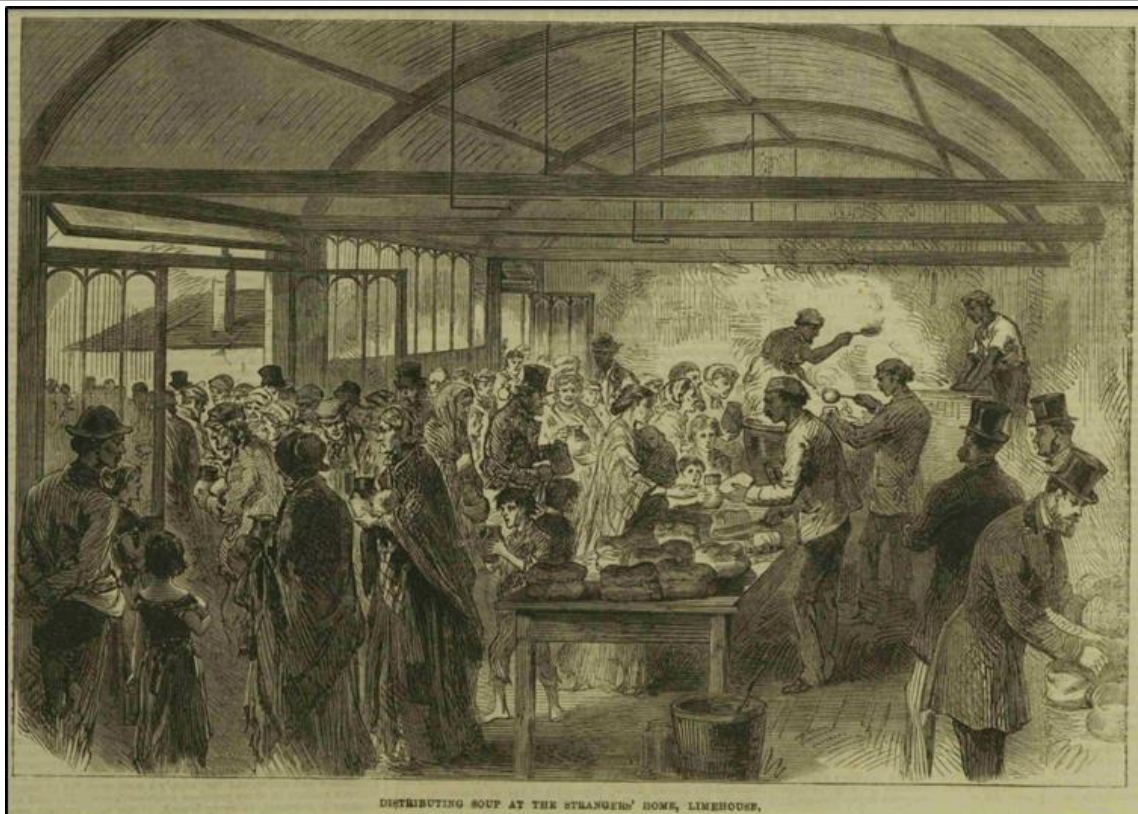
If that doesn't tantalise your taste buds, the talk will be accompanied by historical materials on the Jewish East End from the Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives collections.

200 years of Regent's Canal industries

A talk by Carolyn Clark

Thursday 8 September | 6pm-7.30pm | FREE | [Book your place on Eventbrite](#)

Many East End food businesses and factories were located next to waterways. Local historian Carolyn Clark joins us to explore the rich industrial history of Regents Canal over the two centuries of its existence. She will describe working lives along the canalside, referencing its many different sounds, smells and tastes. Carolyn's new book 'The East End Canal Tales' has just been published by the London Canal Museum.



The soup kitchen at the Stranger's Home in Limehouse, 1868, pictured in the Illustrated London News.

Soup kitchens and Spitalfields

A talk by Phil Carstairs

Thursday 29 September | 6pm-7.30pm | FREE | [Book your place on Eventbrite](#)

Spitalfields and Poplar have always been a place for London's new arrivals to set up home - Huguenot refugees in the early eighteenth century followed by Irish, Jewish and Asian immigrants in the nineteenth. During hard times, many of these new arrivals relied on soup kitchens that became famous, run by the local community or even celebrity chefs, reported on by national newspapers and even discussed in Parliament.

We are delighted to welcome Philip Carstairs from the University of Leicester who will be giving this talk on feeding the migrant poor in the 18th-19th century East End, with a focus on Jewish soup kitchens. There will be a selection of relevant materials on display from Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives collections.

Morton's and McDougall's

A talk on Island Food Histories

Saturday 3 December | 2pm-4pm | FREE | [Book your place on Eventbrite](#)

Join [Friends of Island History Trust](#) to learn more about the wonderful history of the food industries on the Isle of Dogs. Reminisce and explore the origins and legacies of household names such as McDougall's flour and Morton's jam and sweet factory.

Contact us

We are waiting to hear from you!

- Email us: localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk
- Visit our website: <http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history>
- Phone (during opening hours only): 020 7364 1290

Reading Room - Regular opening hours

- Tuesday 10.30am-4pm
- Wednesday 10.30am-4pm
- Thursday 10.30am-7pm

First and third Saturdays of every month:

- Saturday 10am-5pm

That's the following Saturdays coming up:

- Saturday 6 August
- Saturday 20 August
- Saturday 3 September
- Saturday 17 September

Additionally our **Exhibition Hall** is open 10am-5pm Monday-Friday, plus the Saturdays and Thursday evenings as above.
