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# Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives



### **Unite & Resist! Protests in the East End 1970-2000 Launches**

Our new exhibition which showcases original archives from our collections illustrating the prolific activism of the people of Tower Hamlets launched last month. We were pleased to welcome a busy entrance hall of friends, readers and colleagues on Thursday 5 September.

The exhibition which focuses on the latter decades of the twentieth century covers a wide range of protests, from the Stepney School Strike to the Battle of

Brick Lane, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and Stop Clause 28. The exhibition shines a light on these and other important moments in the borough's recent history including several lesser known struggles.

Exhibition Curator and Archives Manager Emma Harrold commented, "For us, this exhibition is quite different from many that have come before it. It allowed us to display a huge amount of archive material and you'll see more than 70 items from our rich, varied and interesting collections on display. Some of these collections are new to our archives, many have only just been catalogued, and all of the material here is being exhibited for the first time."

The display features banners, badges, garments, posters, photographs, pamphlets and other archives which provide important evidence of these sometimes short-lived campaigns.

As usual we have programmed an extensive range of free talks and events which is still being added to - see below for the first few dates for your diary. The exhibition is on until **February 15 2020**.

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### **Upcoming Events: Unite and Resist Programme**



#### **Disarming Tower Hamlets Thursday 17 October 6.00-8.00pm**

Tower Hamlets Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (THCND) started off as the 'Stepney & Poplar Against The Bomb' in 1959. There was a resurgence in its popularity in the 1980s due to the introduction of cruise missiles. THCND member Paul Barlow reflects on the CND campaigns and his role in organising the Youth CND in Tower Hamlets.

Doors open at 6.00pm, talk begins at 6.30pm. Drop in, no booking required

#### **Unite and Resist! Exhibition Tour Saturday 19 October, 12.30pm-1.30pm**

Join Local History library staff for a tour of the **Unite and Resist! Protest in the East End** Exhibition. The exhibition explores protest in Tower Hamlets 1970-2000. Protest movements include Tower Hamlets Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, campaigns against Section 28, and the Anti-Racism campaigns following the death of Altab Ali.

Booking required: please email [localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

**East End History Club: Protest and Activism Special  
Saturday 19 October, 2.00pm-4.00pm**

Collections-based drop in session looking at material relating to 'troublemakers', activists and instances of protest in the Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archive collections.

FREE No booking required

**Remembering the Stepney School Strike  
Thursday 14 November 6.00-7.45pm**

Join us for an evening of remembrance including poet and activist **Chris Searle** and his former students **Ramona Harris** and **Tony Harcup**. We will explore the inspiration, purpose and legacy of the Stepney School Strike in 1971 when 800 pupils went on strike to demand that their teacher, Chris Searle, be reinstated after the school fired him for publishing a book of their poetry. The event will be chaired by BBC Radio 4 broadcaster **Alan Dein**. There will be an opportunity to look at collections materials relating to the strike. Booking required. Please email [localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

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**Black History Month begins**



**Somali History Lab: Somali Protest in the East End  
Thursday 10 October, 6.00-7.45pm**

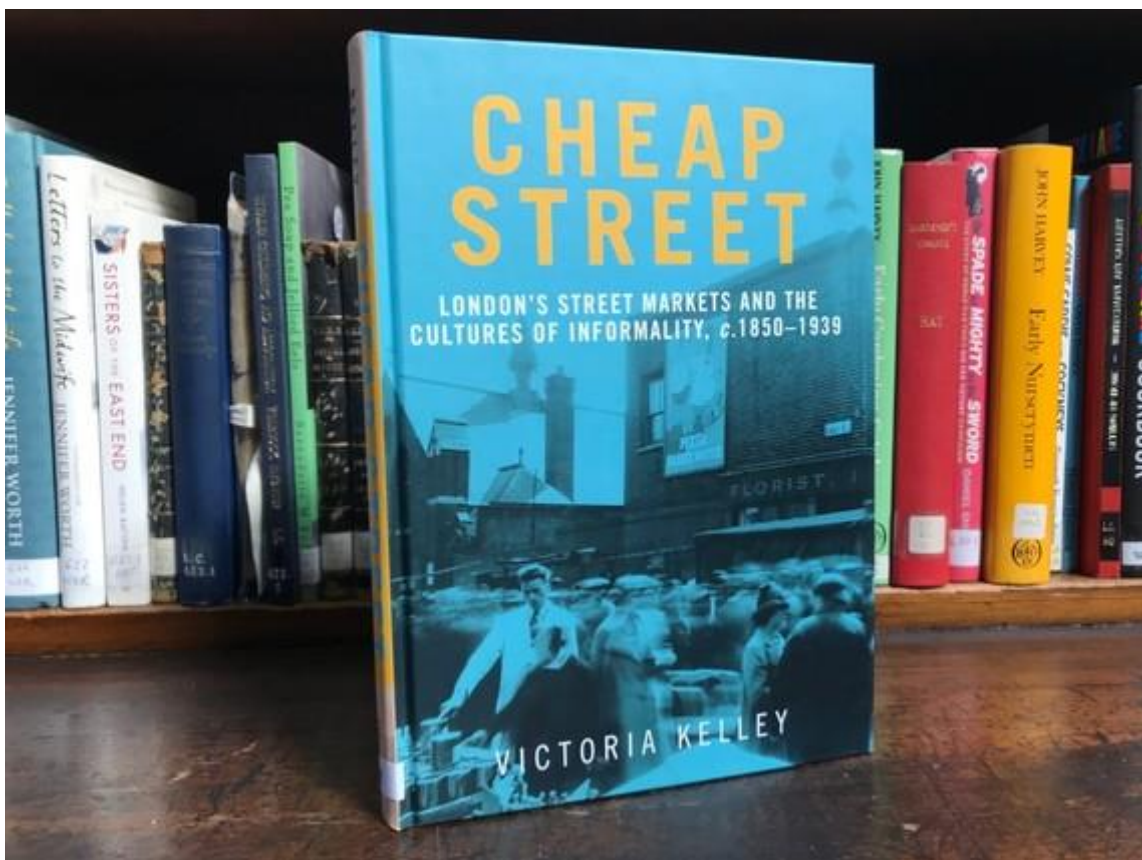
Join **Salma Bihi** of NUMBI Arts to explore the unique library and archive materials chronicling the history of Somali protest in the East End.  
FREE *No booking required*

**Family Play shop: Somali Protest in the East End**  
**Thursday 24 October 4.00pm-6.00pm**

A half term special with **Salma Bihi** of NUMBI Arts creating postcard art in response to the unique library and archive materials chronicling the history of Somali protest in the East End. Families are welcome. This session is suitable for ages 8+; all children must be accompanied by an adult. Booking required. Please email [localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk) and specify number of children you will be bringing and their ages.

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**Library spotlight**



**Book spotlight: *Cheap Street: London's Street Markets and the Cultures of Informality, c. 1850-1939* by Victoria Kelley**

We've added a range of interesting new titles to our Local History Library collection since the last newsletter. These include, among others, Lara Maiklem's *Mudlarking: Lost and Found on the River Thames*, *Britain's Jews in the First World War* by Paula Kitching, and this month's Book Spotlight *Cheap Street: London's Street Markets and the Cultures of Informality, c. 1850-1939* by Victoria Kelley.

The book, our copy of which was kindly donated by the author, tells the story of London's iconic street markets and the people who traded and shopped there from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century. In particular it focuses on their unregulated, informal, and highly performative characters, and their impact

on the development of London's working class culture and identity. Partially researched using our own library and archive material, Kelley's book contains a wealth of material for those interested in the street markets of Tower Hamlets, including Columbia Road Flower Market, Spitalfields, Chrisp Street, Whitechapel Road and Petticoat Lane.

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## Announcements

### East London Print Industry Workshop with the Lightboxes and Lettering Project

Friday 15 November 1.30–4.30pm

If you are interested in the history of the local print industry and want to develop your creative writing come to this afternoon workshop at the Local History Library & Archive and write about it! Personal stories, first impressions, flash fictions – writing in any and all your favourite forms but inspired by our collections.

To book a place or find out more, please email Rosa at [eastlondonprint@gmail.com](mailto:eastlondonprint@gmail.com)

### About the Project

Lightboxes + Lettering by Rendezvous Projects, made possible by Heritage Lottery Fund, focuses on the pre-digital era of printing in Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest and the experiences of people involved in all aspects of the industry. Looking at how the printing industry changed with the arrival of digital technologies, and how newer processes transformed the lives of print workers.

Volunteers have been engaging in oral history interviews with current and former employees, and in digitising archive material collected from existing and private collections. This is one of a number of workshops, using some of the processes and exploring archive material, towards a series of leaflets for our final exhibition in January 2020 when the project ends, along with a publication. Read more at <http://www.lightboxeslettering.com>

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## Welcome to our new Heritage Trainee



### New member of staff: Genova Messiah

Hello, I'm Genova Messiah the new Heritage Trainee. I have been here just over a month and I am pleased to be settling in nicely.

I am enjoying all the various projects I'm involved in my new post across the Library, Archive and Outreach. I feel particularly at home here in my new role as I was previously a volunteer for two years up until my appointment as a trainee. Going from volunteer to employee is a huge step, and I'm thankful to the Heritage Manager and Archives Manager for all the support they have given me in this new venture.

As a Tower Hamlets resident I am

excited to fully involve myself in the Local History outreach and preservation projects, and gain all the practical work experience I can. It is an amazing opportunity as I pursue a career in the sector. I am working towards completing my qualification in Information, Library and Archives, which will hopefully lead to me becoming an archivist. I am pleased to be working somewhere with a dedicated outreach programme and look forward to opening up the archives further for local residents.

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### **Opening hours and contact details**

Please do check our opening hours before visiting. They are:

**Monday:** 9am-5pm for exhibition only

**Tuesday:** 10am-5pm for exhibition and Reading Room

**Wednesday:** 9am-5pm for exhibition and Reading Room

**Thursday:** 9am-8pm for exhibition and Reading Room

**Friday:** 9am-5pm for exhibition only

**First and third Saturdays of every month:** 9am-5pm for exhibition and Reading Room

Feel free to contact us with any enquiries:

- [localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk)
- 020 7364 1290
- <http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history>