

53
Mile End Charity School

Present Sept. 30. 1700

Rev. D. Haddon
M^r. Marsh, Treasurer
M^r. Nixon
M^r. M^{rs}. Smith
Capt. Kitchen
M^r. Connop Jun.
M^r. Haymer
Capt. Richardson

Order'd. That the Master do wait upon M^r. Henley, to acquaint him, that Daniel Hatch, appear'd before this Committee, to be Admitted agreeable to his recommendations, But was refused, on Account of his Minority. — Also that the behaviour of his Mother, was very rude to this Committee.

Resolv'd, Ja^s. Smith, recommended by M^r. Tho^s. Smith. — And Ja^s. Mines, by M^r. Andrews, be Admitted into the School.

Also, That the following Notice, be published in the Church (forenoon & Afternoon) on any Sunday when necessary. — *viz.* Notice is hereby given, That there are now several Vacancies,

Extract from the minute book of the Mile End Old Town Charity School, 1771-1795 [I/MEO/2]

Introduction

Progress has been made on a number of fronts during the year in spite of a number of difficulties. The biggest handicap has been staffing levels (see below) which resulted in the Archivist spending most of his time on enquiry work either directly with the public or by e-mail and telephone. On a more positive note the provision of a succession of temporary agency assistants has enabled progress with simple cataloguing, digitisation and conservation projects.

Difficulties with IT, particularly during September and October resulted in periods when it was impossible to do any cataloguing and the build up of backlogs of e-mail enquiries. This was resolved in November by the replacement of the services' old PCs with new models.

The future of the Local History Library and Archive services has been under consideration during the year. To this end, a Consultation Meeting was held at the Rich Mix Centre, Bethnal Green, on the morning of Saturday 2nd June 2007. This was addressed by Dr Melinda Haunton of The National Archives Advisory Services and the Borough Archivist gave a short presentation on the current state of the Local History Library and Archives. The meeting was well attended and the level of public support for the Service was encouraging. Proposals continued to be investigated but without the involvement of the service's staff.

In December the scores for the self-assessment of local authority archive services in England and Wales, 2007 were released. In the pilot exercise in 2006 Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives was designated a "no star" service (three stars are available). This year a "one star" service was achieved by making modest improvements in a number of areas such as producing annual reports and newsletters published on the web site, publishing a guide to the collections on the web site, improving environmental monitoring of the storage area, etc. The total score for the service was 48.06%, the average for London borough archive services being 53.75%.

In October/November Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives took part in the National Council on Archives' Public Services Quality Group survey of visitors to Archives in the UK. 144 completed questionnaires were obtained, larger than any other participating authority in London. 94.4% rated the helpfulness and friendliness of staff as very good (2nd highest in London) and 90.4% rated the quality and appropriateness of staff's advice very good (highest score in London). Ninety five percent rated the archive service overall as good or very good.

Staffing

For over half the year the service operated on just 2.5 permanent members of staff while maintaining the usual opening hours of 39 hours per week. The basic combined staffing level of the Local History Library and Archives has remained at three FTE, with just the Borough Archivist dedicated to the Archive Service. The additional Saturday assistant post became reduced at the start of the year from every Saturday to alternate Saturdays. However for the second half of the year, the Assistant Local Studies Officer changed to job share but with no appointment made to fill the

remaining hours which coupled with the long-term sickness of the Saturday assistant put extreme pressure on the service resulting in occasional lunch time closures or staff foregoing lunch breaks to maintain opening hours. The provision, from October, of a succession of temporary agency staff was of some benefit, particularly in terms of “back room” work, but has not helped with frontline work with the public.

The Service has benefited from voluntary assistance by two professional archivists, Gary Haines and Leonard Riley and a prospective archivist, Zoe Ellesmore. They have accomplished a significant amount of cataloguing and indexing work.

Collection

Fifty three new accessions were received during the year (see appendix for full details). These included groups of title deeds forwarded by the British Records Association, additional records of the Cambridge and Bethnal Green Boys’ Club and the Highway Clubs, records transferred from the Council’s Building Control Section, and a minute book of the Mile End Old Town Charity School, 1771-1795. Of particular note was the acquisition of a final concord relating to four acres of meadow in Old Ford dated 1384 which is now the oldest document in our collection by some two hundred years. This was purchased at auction with money from public donations and was publicised in *East End Life*.

Collection management

In spite of staff shortages and IT problems, a large volume of cataloguing has been achieved during the year. This was due, in no small part, to the use of volunteers and the availability, in the second half of the year, of a series of temporary agency staff some of whom were capable of basic data entry.

In total, descriptions of 2,243 items were added to the database during the year. Of these 83 were for new accessions received during the year, 1049 were of material from the cataloguing backlog (including the records of Trinity United Reform Church, Poplar; the Spitalfields Festival; the Borough Photographer; and the papers of Edith Ramsay) and 1,100 represented the “retroconversion” of manual (typescript) catalogues. The latter included the very substantial catalogue of the records of St George’s German Lutheran Church, Whitechapel (over 450 items). Some editing of the entries remains to be undertaken. With well over 16,000 records of archival material now on the CALM database it is becoming increasingly important to make this publicly available both in the reading room and remotely.

During the year the Archivist undertook a major review of the cataloguing backlog. All uncatalogued accessions were identified, measured and assessed as low, medium or high priority. This proved of immediate benefit in finding suitable projects for volunteers and temporary staff and identifying collections for possible external grant funding.

Preservation

The programme of repacking documents in archival-quality folders has been continued by Jenny Brown, Saturday Assistant and by various temporary assistants. Just over 500 documents were repackaged.

Forty one volumes of council minutes were painstakingly prepared for binding. This work was carried out by Riley, Dunn and Wilson. The conservation of two eighteenth century diaries and the sixteenth-century Norton Folgate manorial court rolls was undertaken by Graham Bignell, a private paper conservator.

Usage

The public reading room continued to be open for 39 hours a week. These hours include two evenings until 8pm, one till 6pm and every Saturday.

The total number of personal visits made to the reading room was 2,703 compared with 2,613 in 2006-7.

171 enquiries by letter (222 in 2006-7) and 1,131 by e-mail (1,047) were received. The Archivist answered 690 of the combined total of 1,302. The total number of telephone enquiries received was 2,800 (2,805 in 2006-7)

1,133 archives (1,118 in 2006-7) were produced for public inspection in the Reading Room. A further 111 (127 in 2006-7) were produced in connection with remote (mainly e-mail) enquiries. 86 archives (61 in 2006-7) were produced for display/group visits.

Outreach and promotion

Even allowing for the Service's limited resources, a significant amount of outreach and promotional work was achieved during the year.

The Archivist has again supported the work of the Lifelong Learning Local History class based at IDEA Store Whitechapel. On the evening of 30th April he played host to a group of enthusiastic members, giving a short talk about the Archives Service and more specifically about a varied display of over 40 documents produced for the event. On 19th June he conducted a guided walk around the Poplar High Street area for members of the class.

The activities of family history societies have also been supported. On Monday 24th September the Archivist played host to a group of fifteen enthusiastic members of the East of London Family History Society (Newham and Redbridge Branch). He gave a short talk about the Local History Library and Archives and more specifically about a varied display of about 30 documents as sources for family history. Participants then had an opportunity to examine the documents or pursue their own research interests. I am grateful to Gary Haines, archives volunteer, for his help at this event. On the afternoon of Saturday 13th October the Archivist gave a talk at a very well attended

meeting of the Anglo-German Family History Society at Kings Cross on sources for family history in Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives. This was very well received.

Talks have also been given to a variety of local groups. On 17th May the Archivist gave a talk on The History of Tower Hamlets at a Link Age Plus event at Sonali Gardens day centre. On 22nd June the Archivist gave a talk on “Tracing Your East End Roots” to a small group at the Local History Fun day at the Whitechapel IDEA Store. On 23rd October the Archivist, as part of the Link Age Plus initiative, gave a talk to the Geezers’ Club in Bow on the History of Tower Hamlets. All were very well received.

The Archivist has also conducted outreach work with young people. On 11th October he participated in a “Humanities Day” at Hermitage Primary School, Wapping. He spent the whole day at the school conducting local history sessions with all four year groups using maps and photographs to enable the pupils to make discoveries about the local area. On Saturday 17th November the Local History Library and Archives played host to a group of schoolchildren working on “The Trace Project”, an intergenerational history project based at Toynbee Hall. The Archivist got material ready in advance and assisted the group with their research. Subsequent feedback from the children was very positive.

For the twelfth successive year the Archivist planned, publicised and led a series of three Local History Walks. The walks received good publicity, particularly in East End Life and all were over-subscribed. The first, on 19th June was along Mile End Road, the second on 17th July was around Bromley-by-Bow. The Archivist led the third and final walk of the series on Saturday 8th September around the Hamlet of Ratcliff. This was a new walk, involving considerable research and preparation. It was very favourably received and the walk was oversubscribed. Thanks are due to Gary Haines, archives volunteer for help with production and collation of handouts for these events.

The Local History Library and Archives is a resource used by many institutions in the Borough including local schools, museums, and heritage-based projects of many kinds. The Archivist freely gives advice and support. This year, for example, he has advised Hamzah Foreman archivist at the East London Mosque regarding the storage and cataloguing of the Mosque’s archives. He also showed round Arike Oke, Archivist at the Barnett Research Centre at Toynbee Hall

The Archivist has continued to submit material for the *Archives on line* section of the IDEA store web site. He has also overseen the work of temporary staff in digitising large numbers of images for the site’s Digital Picture Gallery. Two newsletters were produced during the year, both made available on the web site. An interesting display of recent additions to the archive collections was arranged in the display cases outside the Local History Library.

Malcolm Barr-Hamilton
Borough Archivist
July 2008

Appendix: Accessions to the Archives Collections, April 2007 – March 2008

Where a catalogue reference number is shown, the accession is fully catalogued and available for consultation

Accession number	Description	Dates	Method of acquisition	Catalogue ref no	Extent
TH/9199	Evidences of title re 3, 5, 7 and 9, Ronald Street, Ratcliff	1903 and 1916	Gift	P/MIS/265	4 items
TH/9200	Scrap book of Richard J Littman of the Stepney Borough Council Town Clerk's Office	1920-1936	Purchase	P/MIS/266	1 volume
TH/9201	Photograph album of the Upperton family of Bow?	c 1930s - c 1950s	Gift	P/MIS/267	1 volume
TH/9202	Cambridge and Bethnal Green Boys Club records (additional)	1936-1960	Gift		3 volumes
TH/9203	Watney Market Library records	1902-1905	Transfer		6 volumes
TH/9204	File of Carden and Godfrey, architects, re 9, 11 and 11a Folgate Street	1990	Gift	B/MIS/29	1 file
TH/9205	Evidences of title re the estate of the Reverend Newton Ebenezer Howe in Plummers Row and Yalford Street, Whitechapel	1847-1889	Indefinite loan	P/MIS/268	5 items
TH/9206	Draft agreement for a lease or leases for premises at Bow	1812	Indefinite loan	P/MIS/269	1 item
TH/9207	Stepney manorial document	1718	Indefinite loan		1 item
TH/9208	Probate of the will of Susana Squire of 17 Queen Street, Mile End Old Town	1852	Indefinite loan	P/MIS/270	1 item
TH/9209	Mortgages of property in Bethnal Green Road, Bethnal Green	1881 and 1883	Indefinite loan	P/MIS/271	2 items
TH/9210	Counterpart lease of 19 Victoria Park Square, Bethnal Green	1903	Indefinite loan	P/MIS/272	1 item
TH/9211	Records relating to the marriage settlement of Mr and Mrs William Pemberton Barnes	1853-1939	Indefinite loan		3 volumes

TH/9212	Extract of the will of William Homan of Shadwell	1813	Indefinite loan	P/MIS/273	1 item
TH/9213	Evidences of title of 23 Lacey Street, Poplar	1933 and 1951	Gift	P/MIS/274	2 items
TH/9214	Office copy of the will of Samuel Haines of Spitalfields	[1772]	Purchase	P/MIS/275	1 item
TH/9215	Building control records re the Teviot Estate	1951	Transfer	L/THL/D/2/9/2	1 folder
TH/9216	Lease for a year of property in Victoria Place, Bethnal Green	1833	Gift	P/MIS/276	1 item
TH/9217	Building control records re Wellclose Square	1904-1973	Transfer	L/THL/D/2/14/4-7	4 files
TH/9218	Cambridge and Bethnal Green Boys Club album of photographs of reunion dinners	1970s	Gift		1 item
TH/9219	Records of T & W Ide, glass merchants and manufacturers, Ratcliff Glassworks (additional)	19th cent - 20th cent	Purchase		4 boxes
TH/9220	Records of Trinity Methodist Church, Poplar (additional)	20th cent	Gift		4 boxes
TH/9221	Letters Patent creating the London Borough of Tower Hamlets	1964	Transfer		1 item
TH/9222	Records of the Highway Clubs (additional)	1941-1943 1951-1969	Gift	S/HWC	3 items
TH/9223	Register of reports to the LBTH Finance and Accommodation Committee	1996-1999	Transfer		2 items
TH/9224	Head of Libraries subject files	1990s	Transfer		4 files
TH/9225	Papers of Sarah Peak relating to 62 Auckland (later Zealand) Road	1878-1936	Gift	P/MIS/277	11 items
TH/9226	Building Control files	1904-1985	Transfer	L/THL/D/2/8	13 files
TH/9227	Part of evidence of title to property in Whitechapel?	1827	Gift	P/MIS/278	1 item
TH/9228	Records of Latimer Congregational Church and Atkinson Family Papers (additional)	19th cent - 20th cent	Gift		2 boxes

TH/9229	Building Control file re Cumberland Mills, Saundersness Road	1902-1972	Transfer	L/THL/D/2/5/5	1 file
TH/9230	Building Control file re St. Paul's House, Timothy Road E3	1951-1969	Transfer	L/THL/D/2/7/3	1 file
TH/9231	LBTH Committee papers	c 2005-2007	Transfer		42 boxes
TH/9232	Building Control files	1938-1997	Transfer	L/THL/D/2/8	6 files
TH/9233	Minute book "A" of the Mile End Old Town Charity School	1771-1795	Gift	I/MEO/2	1 volume
TH/9234	Records of Spitalfields Festival Ltd (additional)	2006-2007	Indefinite loan	I/SPF	1 box
TH/9235	Records (printed) of Spitalfields Festival Ltd (additional)	2006-2007	Gift	I/SPF	6 items
TH/9236	Evidences of title re Alton Street School site, Bromley-by-Bow	1881-1987	Transfer		1 bundle
TH/9237	Final concord re land in Old Ford	1384	Purchase	P/MIS/299	1 item
TH/9238	Records of Verde & Co, fruit wholesalers of Spitalfields Market, 40 Brushfield St and Borough Market, Southwark.	1903 - 1962	Gift	B/MIS/30	1 packet
TH/9239	Sales particulars of property in Bethnal Green	1825	Gift	B/MIS/31	3 items
TH/9240	Sales particulars of property in Old Ford, Hackney Wick and Stepney	1896-1901	Gift	B/MIS/32	3 items
TH/9241	Sale particulars of freehold ground rents of property in Islington and Bethnal	1927	Gift	B/MIS/33	1 item
TH/9242	Records of the Prospect Walk Allotment Association	c 1980- c 2004	Gift		2 boxes
TH/9243	Papers of the Reverend Doctor Kenneth Leech	undated	Gift	P/LEE	5 items
TH/9244	Building Control Records	1965-1986	Transfer	L/THL/D/2/4/9-12	4 files
TH/9245	File re inquiry into Street Markets in Tower Hamlets (Bethnal Green	1992	Transfer		1 file

	Neighbourhood)				
TH/9246	File re Cable Street Mural	1973-1994	Transfer		1 file
TH/9247	Papers of Gordon Hutcheon (1934-1998?), mainly relating to Scouting at St Thomas, Arbour Square	early twentieth century	Gift		1 folder
TH/9248	Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives desk diary 1997	1997	Transfer		1 volume
TH/9249	Plans of Blocks 1 and 2 , Tetley Street, Brownfield Estate	1956 and undated	Transfer		20 plans
TH/9250	Borough Librarian's files	1965-1985	Transfer		5 files
TH/9251	Reminiscences of Tom Estall of Bromley-by-Bow in the 1930s	1998	Gift	P/MIS/304	1 folder



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Opening hours: Mon Closed ; Tues 9-8 ; Wed Closed ; Thurs 9-8 ; Fri 9-6 ; Sat 9-5 ; Sun Closed