



Telling Tales

Our April exhibition will celebrate the remarkable lives of ordinary women in Tower Hamlets. Based on reminiscence sessions from older female members of the Golden Time groups who meet regularly in the borough's libraries and Idea Stores, and including specially commissioned photographic portraits, the exhibition was launched at Idea Store Bow by Rushanara Ali MP in March to celebrate Women's History Month. It will be on show at the Local History Library & Archives for a month, then tour the rest of the borough's libraries and Idea Stores.

The Old Jewish East End: Journey Through a Vanished Shtetl Exhibition

A rare exhibition of photographs and archives relating to the old Jewish East End was on show at the Local History Library in our newly redecorated exhibition hall during March and April. From the collection of the Jewish East End Celebration Society, the images illustrate experiences of Jews who fled to London in the wake of the pogroms in Eastern Europe at the end of the nineteenth century, and the lives of their families as successive generations settled in the East End in conditions of extreme hardship. Comprising a diverse range of photographs, posters, publications and ephemera illustrating the Jewish presence in the East End, it was very well-received at its official opening by Professor Bill Fishman at the beginning of March. It has been our most popular exhibition to date with over 120 people visiting.

To tie in with the exhibition, we also hosted a sold-out film screening of *My Jewish London*, a new documentary by Stephen Pushkin, followed by a Q&A with the director. We hope to host a second screening later in the year for those who missed out.

Library relaunch



Mayor Lutfur Rahman and Stan Newens reopen the Local History Library & Archives, February 2011.

“450 visits have been made to the reading room since reopening”

The Local History Library & Archives was formally re-opened by Mayor Lutfur Rahman on February 14. Over 150 people turned out to celebrate the end of the first phase of building works and hear speeches by Tower Hamlets' Executive Mayor and Stan Newens, chair of the Local History Library (Bancroft Road) Steering Group. Guests went on a tour of the refreshed reading room space and viewed a small exhibition of archive material illustrating the history of the Bancroft Library building – formerly the Vestry Hall for the Hamlet of Mile End Old Town. Over 450 visits have been made to the reading room since reopening, with over 100 people viewing the exhibitions.

Walking Proud in East London

The first exhibition in the newly redecorated entrance hall was hosted by Isle of Dogs-based community arts group River Cultures. Their Heritage Lottery Funded *Walking Proud in East London* project, which collected and preserved the testimonies of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender East End residents across seven London boroughs, including Tower Hamlets was exhibited at the library for two weeks during LGBT



A tea dance in the library

History Month. The launch event for this exhibition also took place at the library, which featured a legendary East End lesbian DJ playing a selection of her vintage hits from behind the reception desk, and project participants enjoying ballroom dancing and some stand-up comedy in the entrance hall after an address from Cllr Joshua Peck. The fascinating interviews resulting from this oral history project can be seen on www.youtube.com/rivercultures

New charges from April 2011

We will be introducing a revised scale of charges for our photocopying and digitisation services.

The demand for these specialist services has increased sharply in the last few years and we can no longer afford to offer to scan images free of charge to users. Our photocopying charges are in line with those of the borough's other libraries and Idea Stores.

Photocopying (black and white only)	<i>Visitors to reading room</i>	<i>Remote users (inc. P&P)</i>
A4	10p	20p
A3	20p	40p
A4 microfilm printout	35p	70p
A3 microfilm printout	45p	90p

Digitisation (up to A4 size)	<i>Images not previously scanned</i>	<i>Copies of images previously scanned</i>
300dpi and less	£5.00 per image	£1.50 per image
Over 300dpi	£10.00 per image	£3.00 per image
Burning to CD	£1.00	
Use of personal digital camera	£5.00 per day*	
	*all self-service photography is subject to signed copyright disclaimer	

Please speak to a member of staff if you require digital photography of our collections at size A4 or larger, which may be possible subject to agreement and an appropriate charge.

“I obtained a lot more information which I had no idea existed”



Hyunsuk Park researches at the Local History Library

The reader's view

Hyunsuk Park visited the Local History Library in March 2011 to research Poplar Baths. Interview by Razia Khatun.

Name of visitor: Ms Hyunsuk Park

Travelled from: Chelsea

Is this your first visit to Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives?

Yes.

How did you heard about Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives?

I was recommended by my tutor.

What is the nature of your visit?

I am studying an MA at Chelsea College of Art and Design, and my project is on Poplar Baths.

How successful has your visit here been?

Very successful! I came here hoping to find the original plans for Poplar Baths, which I did.

How useful have you found our Collections?

You have an incredible collection and I gained a wealth of knowledge on the Poplar Baths. In addition I obtained a lot more information which I had no idea existed. Studying the newspaper cuttings, photographs and other information available here on the Poplar Baths I gained a greater insight to how life might have been for the people who used the baths. All this material has been very beneficial for my project.

Will you visit us again?

Definitely! I shall make my friends and fellow students aware of your informative archive collection!

Social housing documentary screening at East End Film Festival

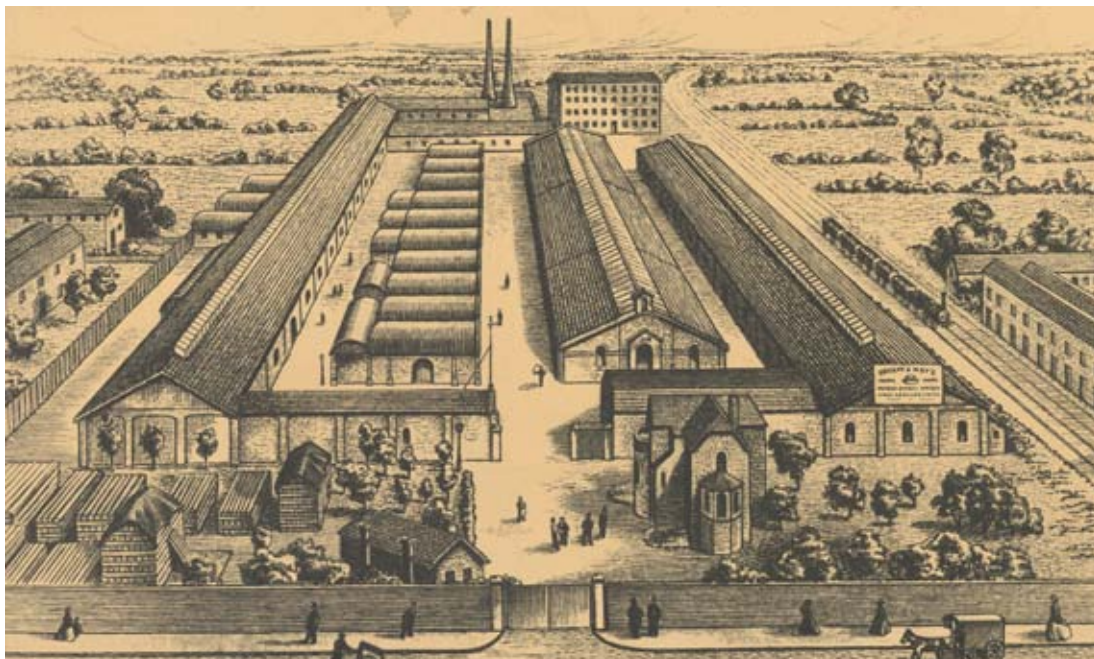
14th Floor, the documentary about the history of social housing in Tower Hamlets has been accepted as part of the 2011 East End Film Festival! Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives in partnership with Bow Arts Trust produced this film last year as part of a HLF-funded Story of London project. It tells the story of the borough's pioneering development of public housing using many images from our collections alongside interviews with local residents, historians, housing officers, architects and of course Borough Archivist Malcolm Barr-Hamilton.



John Scurr House, c1937

The film will have its first cinema screening at Genesis Mile End on Sunday 1 May at 4pm, preceded by the short film *Bonnington Square*. To book tickets and find out more, check out www.eastendfilmfestival.com

In This Year...150 years ago



An artist's impression of the factory in 1861, taken from 'The Matchmakers' by Patrick Beaver, published by Bryant and May on the occasion of the factory's centenary in 1961

In This Year... is a new series celebrating the anniversaries of historical events whose histories are documented in the collections of Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives.

This illustration shows the Bryant and May match factory, built 150 years ago in 1861 in Fairfield Road, Bow. The factory would come to notoriety in 1888 as the scene of one of the most notable industrial actions in British history when the female workers at the factory went on strike to protest against low pay and dangerous working conditions.

This illustration, made in its founding year depicts a low rise structure, though the factory was redeveloped on a much larger scale at the turn of the twentieth century and was once the largest in London.

NEW OPENING HOURS

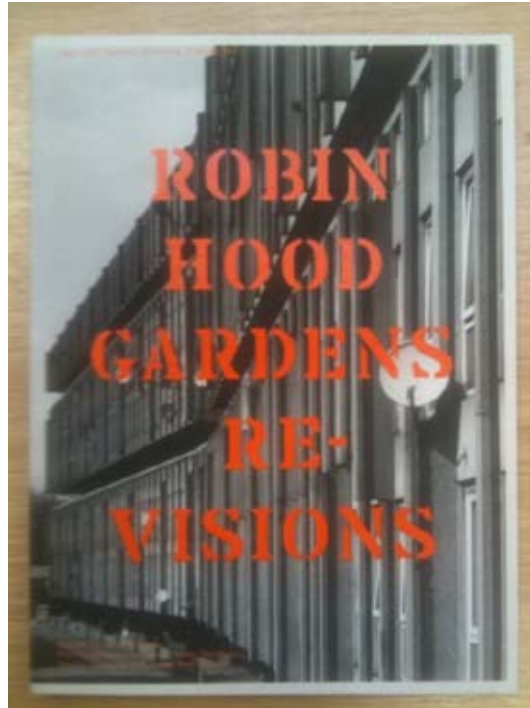
Our opening hours have changed following the reopening and the retirement and relocation of some staff. Until further notice our new opening hours are:

Monday: **Closed**
Tuesday: 10 - 5
Wednesday: 9 - 5
Thursday: 9 - 8
Friday: **Closed**
Saturday: 9 - 5
(fortnightly)
Sunday: **Closed**

We are open on alternate Saturdays as follows:

2nd, 16th, 30th April:
14th, 28th May:
11th, 25th June
and so on.

Robin Hood Gardens Re-Visions: new addition



Ms Woledge from Leytonstone made a valuable gift to our local history library collections relating to Robin Hood Gardens, the notable Brutalist housing estate in Poplar, with the recent donation of her copy of the Twentieth Century Society's new book entitled '*Robin Hood Garden Re-Visions*', edited by Alan Powers and published in 2011.

Robin Hood Gardens was designed by architects Alison + Peter Smithson and completed in 1972 as one of the largest public housing schemes in the borough. This book argues for the historical and architectural significance of the controversial estate and for its future role in local housing provision. It's lavishly illustrated with many photographs and architectural plans,

as well as essays from modernist historians and architects who campaigned to save the estate from redevelopment. Thanks to Ms Woledge whose gift will be appreciated by the many researchers at the library for whom Robin Hood Gardens is an ever-popular subject.

Terrible Tides and Deathly Docks: a Wapping and Ratcliffe walk

Readers may be interested in this upcoming free local history walk around Wapping. Our own series of walks will be announced in the next newsletter.

Surrey & Middlesex Dockside Unity Arts Outreach Project presents chat and song musical history walks. Think of them as a series of short concerts. Think of them as a walking tour. Think of them as really top days out with ace tunes and chatter from Chris Roberts and Nigel of Bermondsey (accompanied by Stuart Forrester). At every stop there are short tales about the area and also a song about the location. Walks last about two hours, are free and end at a pub. However numbers are limited so we would like you to book by contacting penny@fandmpublications.co.uk

April 29th: Ratcliffe & Wapping

Cable Street to Wapping waterfront. Start 2PM Old Town Hall Cable Street. Shadwell or Tower Bridge tube. Free of charge!

Terrible Tides and Deathly Docks: Political riots, staked murderers, escaped tigers, ghostly polar bears and the dreaded witch of Wapping all feature in this two hour amble round E1. There are also well hung pirates, hanging judges and other Thameside shocks around the old docks and back streets of one of London's spikier boroughs. What better way to spend a happy day?

Mapping the Change

We are pleased to report the recent award of £293,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund to Hackney Museum for Phase 2 of its *Mapping The Change* project. Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives is a partner in this project for the Cultural Olympiad, alongside Hackney Museum and Vestry House Museum, Waltham Forest. The project's outreach and schools programme will celebrate the

histories of the parts of East London affected by the 2012 Olympics and create new archives of the experiences of local residents at a time of great change. While most of the project activity is taking place in Hackney, our involvement will entail an oral history project in the Fish Island area and a photography competition for the whole of Tower Hamlets. Look out for more info on these two projects later in the year.

Winning Endeavours

Just launched, the new *Winning Endeavours* website is a rich digital resource for those interested in London's Olympic past. We contributed twenty images from our collections including views of the 1991 Marathon through Canary Wharf, ballooning at Poplar Recreation Ground and Victorian football at Millwall. The digital gallery also includes contributions from twenty five other repositories. Browse the images at www.winningendeavours.org



Photo of Poplar Bowling Green, c 1926

Vacancy: Heritage Officer

We are currently recruiting for a Heritage Officer with strong experience in local studies librarianship, archives or heritage-based learning and interpretation. The postholder will help deliver the public enquiry service, develop the local history collections and work on projects to bring our resources to diverse audiences.

It's an exciting time to join Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives as we continue our project to redevelop the Victorian former Bancroft Library building into a heritage centre for the East End. The closing date is 15 May. Please visit www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/careers for more details and to apply online.

Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives

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