

Derbyshire Record Office

Issue 3

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Summer
2011

'Picture the Past' joins the team at the record office

The 'Picture the Past' project, previously based at Heanor Library, has relocated to Derbyshire Record Office. This is a not-for-profit project working to scan and preserve historic images from library and museum collections across the whole of Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. The images are made freely available for everyone to enjoy via their website which already contains more than 82,000 fully searchable photographs, postcards, engravings and paintings showing how life has changed across the region over the last few hundred years.



www.picturethepast.org.uk

The project manager, Nick Tomlinson, and two assistants, Donna and Anna, along with all their digitisation equipment, completed the move at the beginning of June.

The move is part of plans to integrate services. Robert Gent, Assistant Director of Cultural and Community services, said:

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By centralising services we will be able to improve the way we operate and provide a more integrated service. As well as making more efficient use of space, the move centralises expertise in one place.

Have a look on the 'Picture the Past' website for images of your local area, there may even be some of your street in times gone by. It's very easy to search and guaranteed to make you nostalgic.

The Picture the Past website can be found at :

www.picturethepast.org.uk

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Are you connected?

We are pleased to announce that wireless internet access has been installed in our Search Room. This 'wi fi' access will enable users to access the internet from their own laptops or internet enabled mobile phones. We hope this will help improve the experiences of researchers. Accessing the 'wi fi' is very simple and free to use. Please ask a member of staff on your next visit and they will be happy to help.

An overview of the recent news

Derbyshire Record Office has been as busy as ever during the last few months. As well as keeping our public Search Room open we have also held a number of our special events.

Recent Exhibitions

Enthusiastic feedback has been received from visitors to exhibitions held by the record office at local events in Sutton-on-the-Hill and Long Eaton. In April, we joined locals at Sutton-on-the-Hill parish church to celebrate village history, with original archive material available to consult. In May we helped Community House Adult Education Centre in Long Eaton "Meet the Victorians", as part of the nationwide Adult Learners' Week. The centre's staff (in Victorian costume) and students were fascinated by the Victorian archives on display from the record office, including a Heanor policeman's report book, a ledger from Long Eaton's iconic former sweet shop Austin's, and original recipe books of Derbyshire's Victorian housewives.



25 years of Council Service

Many of our regular users will know Anne Lawley, our Search Room Supervisor, who is a constant source of friendly advice in the Search Room. Anne recently received an award for 25 years of working for the Council. Anne initially began her Council career as a Supernumerary in Social Services before moving to the record office in 1993. We are very pleased to congratulate Anne on this milestone and hope to continue to benefit from her great experience for many more years to come.

A bigger and better service!

Plans for the merger of Derbyshire Record Office and Local

Studies Library went on show as part of two information sessions, held at the record office in March. Local residents had the chance to view the proposed plans, speak to staff about the merger and comment on the scheme.

The project, likely to take 18 months to complete, will see the refurbishment of Wyvern House, the new home of the local studies service, and the building of a two-storey extension which will provide additional storage in which to house collections relating to Derbyshire's heritage. The merger of the two services will create a much improved service for users by bringing the expertise of record office and local studies staff together at one site.

The Local Studies Library will remain at its current location at County Hall, Matlock, until the refurbishment is complete.

The current record office building on New Street will be closed to the public from 12 September 2011 (subject to planning permissions), but the service will continue in a slightly reduced capacity at a new site on the County Hall complex in Matlock. You can telephone us if you are planning a visit and we will update you on the latest developments on 01629 538347.



Results are In! At the beginning of March the record office participated in an annual national user survey of archives.

At the record office we pride ourselves on our friendly and professional service and we were very pleased to see that 91% of our respondents listed us as 'very good' in terms of the helpfulness and friendliness of our staff.

Our overall service was rated by 51% of our users as 'very good' with a further 40% rating us as 'good'.

The results of the survey help us to identify areas where we could improve our services and this year's results showed visitor facilities were one area which could be improved. Despite limitations due to the nature of the building our merger with the Local Studies Library will see our visitor facilities substantially improved. Another area that users felt we could improve was our website. During the last few months we have been working on ideas for updating the content of our website to make it more user-friendly. Hopefully these changes will go live on the website very soon.

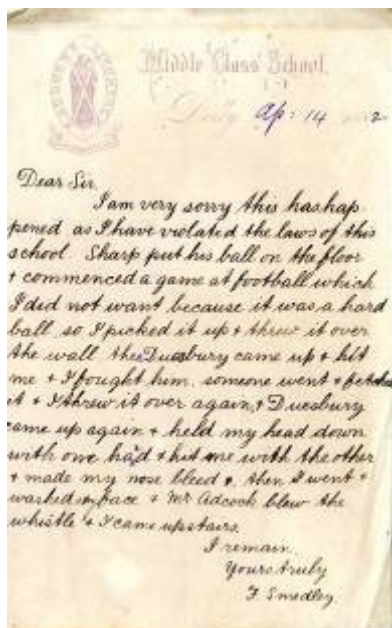
The results of the survey confirmed that most of our users are interested in family history with a total of 81% of our users stating this as their reason for using the record office. We were also pleased to see that 27% of the respondents were using the record office for the first time, showing that a steady stream of new users are visiting us.

David Jenkins, who coordinated the survey, said: "I would like to particularly thank the members of staff who handed out the survey forms, and our service users who completed them. Without you this invaluable information wouldn't be available."

Thank you for your letter!

As we advertised in our last issue, Buxton Museum and Derbyshire Record Office teamed up in March for an event to show off some of the letters from our collections.

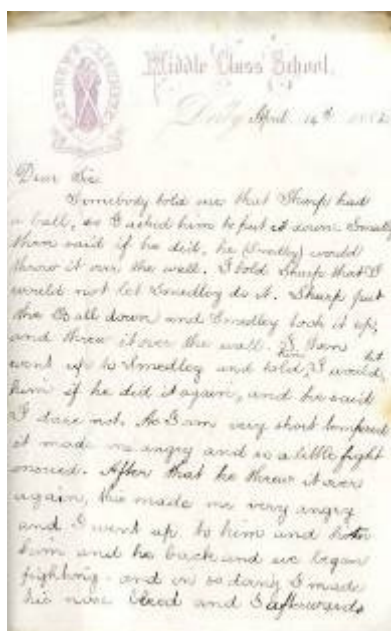
Documents used in the event have now been transcribed and can be seen on our blog. They include letters from Lord Byron, Florence Nightingale and George Bernard Shaw; letters from a convict in Australia, a PoW in 1918, and two lovers in the 1650s.



D6808/3/1

“ I am very sorry this has happened as I have violated the laws of this school. Sharp put his ball on the floor.....so I picked it up & threw it over the wall

”



D6808/3/1

“ Sharp put the ball down and Smedley took it up, and threw it over the wall. I then went up to Smedley and told him I would hit him if he did it again, and he said I dare not. As I am very short tempered it made me angry and so a little fight ensued

”

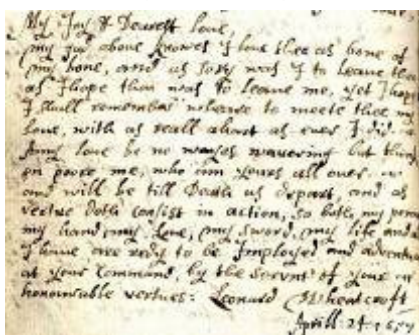
We also hold many examples of letters sent home from soldiers on active service during the First and Second World Wars including Henry Doughty (1882-1971) who enlisted in the Royal Army Medical Corps in 1914. The following is an excerpt from a letter Arnold wrote to his parents while a prisoner of war in Germany. It does paint a rather upbeat picture of life in a prisoner of war camp, perhaps to spare his parents from learning the truth about life as a PoW during the Great War:



D4769/3/13

I have had just a touch of home sickness the last day or two....Generally I manage to keep in quite good spirits. The frenchmen with whom we live keep us alive – they are very gay & lively although the homes of some of them are in “occupied country” which in itself would act as a dampen on the spirits of most people....I wish you could have a peep at us for a moment! Four are playing bridge, three are asleep on their beds & the other two are writing letters, while the kettle is boiling away merrily on our excellent stove ready for tea!

The record office is also privileged to hold some 17th-century examples of love letters, copied into the manuscript book of Leonard Wheatcroft (1627-1706) parish clerk of Ashover and one of Derbyshire’s best-documented local men of letters. Within the volume are examples of his work including a poem entitled ‘Love Lessons’ which provides advice on how to win the heart of the coyest damsel in the world! Here is a short example of one of his letters to his beloved, Elizabeth Hawley of Winster, who he was courting in the spring of 1657 (D5433/1)



D5433/1

My God above knows I love thee as bone of my bone, and as sorry was I to leave thee as I hope thou was to leave me...Anmy love be no wayes wavering but think on poore me, who am yours all over. and will be till Death us depart, and as vertue doth consist in action, so both my penne, my hand, my love, my sword, my life and all I have are redy to be Imployed and adventured at your command...

You can see the original documents and transcripts by visiting www.recordoffice.wordpress.com and clicking on the “Thank You For Your Letter” tag. Or, if something else grabs your fancy, click another tag altogether. If you want to offer comments, explanations or your own insights, feel free to use the “Leave a Reply” box at the bottom of the page.

News from the Local Studies Library

Are you interested in Derbyshire's past, present or future?

Do you want to find out more about your community, research the history of your house or family? If so the Local Studies Library in Matlock can help.

Local History Coffee Morning

Local Studies Library staff took part in a very successful local history coffee morning, held at Creswell Library, to commemorate the unveiling of an important World War Two memorial in the village.

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On 4 August 1944 five Canadian airmen were killed when their Wellington bomber crashed during a routine training flight over Creswell. Local resident Gerald Plant, at the time a 15 year-old schoolboy, witnessed the crash.

Gerald's older brother Joseph left money in his will for a memorial, which was unveiled on 21st May at Creswell Craggs with the Canadian High Commissioner and family members of the crew in attendance.

Creswell Library were keen to commemorate the event and held a Local and Family History Morning on Thursday 19th May.

Gerald Plant, who still lives in the area, made contact with all the families of the airmen in Canada and provided folders of information on the crash and the memorial.

Local resident Terry Foye brought along reminiscences of the air crash and correspondence with the families in Canada, while Sarah and Selina Widowson provided family histories of the airmen.

Nick Tomlinson of Derbyshire County Council's 'Picture the Past' provided a glimpse of former life in Creswell, and Local Studies Librarian Sue Peach offered advice to those researching their family history, including sessions on how to use the Ancestry.com website (which is free to access in Derbyshire Record Office and Derbyshire libraries).

Creswell library staff Christine, Zena and Jackie put together fantastic library displays, which were enhanced by artefacts loaned from Buxton Museum collections. Julie Potton, Emma Scholey and Jayne Fletcher provided refreshments and support with the event.

Local Studies Staff	Local Studies Librarians	Support Assistants	Library Assistants
	Lisa Langley Fogg Sue Peach	Sue Hulse Norma Rickards	Sue Band Barbara Owen Julie Welch

Services Offered by Derbyshire Record Office

The record office offers a number of different services for members of the public

Public Search Room

We have a public Search Room open from 9.30-4.45 Monday-Friday and 10.00-4.00 one Saturday per month (more information on page 11). In the Search Room members of the public can consult popular records on microfilm and original manuscript documents. Search Room staff are always available to offer advice or assistance.

Reprographics

We have a very popular reprographics service which allows many documents at the record office to be photocopied. Other larger items (or items which you want colour copies of) can be scanned. Because of the delicate nature and size of some of the documents it is not always possible to have documents scanned or photocopied, in these instances using our digital photography service might be the most appropriate option.

Search Service

If you can't come into the record office to do your research in person then you might like to use our popular search service. This paid service involves one of the record office's professionally qualified archivists conducting research on your behalf. You can pay for up to 3 hours of archivists' time and once the archivist has completed the allocated amount of work they write a formal research report summarising their findings and usually enclosing copies of any relevant records.

Also available from Derbyshire Record Office

Derbyshire Record Office also sells a number of items which you might be interested in. These include CDs of digitised tithe maps of certain Derbyshire parishes; CDs of the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Map; postcards of the caricaturist George Woodward. For further details of any of these products please telephone 01629539202 or email record.office@derbyshire.gov.uk



Record Office Staff

Archivists

Paul Beattie
Karen Millhouse
Becky Sheldon
Mark Smith

Conservation

Lien Gyles
Clare Mosley

Record Assistants

James Davis
Helen Ellis
Simon Johnson
Jasmin Ponsford
Vicky Wade

Stack Room

Matthew Allen
Alan Doxey

Records Management

David Jenkins

Search Room Supervisor

Anne Lawley

Secretary

June Hambleton

General Assistant

Stewart Sandars

Volunteering at the record office

In April 2011 we welcomed two work experience students who were keen to learn more about the work of the record office.

Robert Young and Ben Webster, both history graduates, were eager to gain a greater understanding of the day to day work carried out at a busy county record office. During a one week placement they experienced working in the conservation department, listing documents and working in the public Search Room.

On his experience Robert said:

The week long placement is aimed at providing an insight in to the different roles at the record office and to get a real feel of how archivists work. We were both assisted and mentored by archivist Mark Smith. It was a brilliant opportunity to be able to discuss and debate the content of the material with Ben. The process was a challenging and stimulating exercise as it forced both of us to make decisions on exactly how material related to each other, and how relevant it could be for researchers.

“ I am very interested in pursuing a career in archive management and this was a brilliant opportunity to gain hands-on experience handling archives ”

The placement also provided an opportunity to find out more about the conservation and preservation of archive material. We were provided with a hands on lesson on how to revitalise very worn pre-industrial paper and parchments.



Robert and Ben at work

The placement has reaffirmed my interest in archives and has opened up further work experience opportunities at Derbyshire Record Office in the near future. I would definitely recommend to anybody interested in pursuing a career in archives to consider a week placement at Derbyshire Record Office.

Ben told us:

Having graduated in History several years ago, I approached the record office as a first step in a possible change of career direction. I always drew enjoyment from the research aspect of my degree and the attention to detail it required, so was keen to get a fuller appreciation of the day-to-day running of an archive and the input of its professional staff. I can't thank the record office enough for extending me this opportunity. My task for the week was to develop a working method for cataloguing deposits from the Bryan Donkin civil engineering firm, formerly of Chesterfield. This proved to be a curious mish-mash of documents spanning two centuries of company history.

Time was also spent being introduced to the document cleaning and repairing process in the conservation department and shadowing front-line staff in the public Search Room.

“ Just a week contributing to the preservation of local industrial heritage has convinced me this is the career path I wish to pursue ”

I now volunteer two days a week at the record office with a view to taking a course in archive administration.

Derbyshire Record Office recognises the important contribution that volunteers make to the work that we do and we would like to thank Robert and Ben for all their hard work and enthusiasm during their week with us. Their work in preserving and making accessible these collections is greatly appreciated.



For information on volunteering opportunities at Derbyshire Record Office email record.office@derbyshire.gov.uk or call us on 01629 539202.

Conservation

Our Assistant Conservator Clare Mosley explains some recent conservation work on a plan which was in poor condition:

“ The plan of Ward, Sturt and Sharp, Hosiery manufacturers of Belper, was a bit of a jigsaw puzzle so it firstly needed to be ironed flat to make it easier to piece together. The pieces were then lined up carefully and the whole plan backed using a heat-set adhesive tissue paper. This heat-set paper is fixed using a heat press which gets very hot like a large iron. ”

Clare then traced out the missing pieces onto repair paper using a long needle. Clare used Japanese repair paper which was of a similar colour and weight to the original paper. The repair paper was then placed down to fill in the gaps and secured with another layer of heat-set tissue. Small pieces of heat-set tissue were then used to give extra strength to any torn or fragile areas of the plan.



Before and after



“ The repaired document was then given a final seal using the heat press and the edges were trimmed. A polyester sleeve was made to fit the document to give it extra support and protection. ”

After all of Clare's hard work the plan can now be safely handled in the Search Room.

New Accessions

Derbyshire Record Office is continuously adding to its collections; between March and June we took in over 60 accessions. Below is just a small selection of the new material which has been donated to, or deposited in, the office.

New accessions taken in between March and June include minutes of Matlock Old Students Association, 1961-1976 (D7412), letter book and cash book from Ault Pottery c1889-1914 (D7418), letters of Gerald Fowkes of Newbold, a soldier serving in the first World War (D7435), local history papers of Tom Tomlinson, historian (D7437) and five volumes of notes on cases heard by the court of Quarter Sessions, 1850-1858 (D7453).

Welcome additions to our parish collections include papers of the Longford Rural Deanery (D7436), St Peter's Parish, Littleover (D2728), Parish of Whitfield (D2247), Parish of Burbage (D2425), St James, Harpur Hill (D3954) and All Saints Parish, Matlock (D2676) to name but a few.

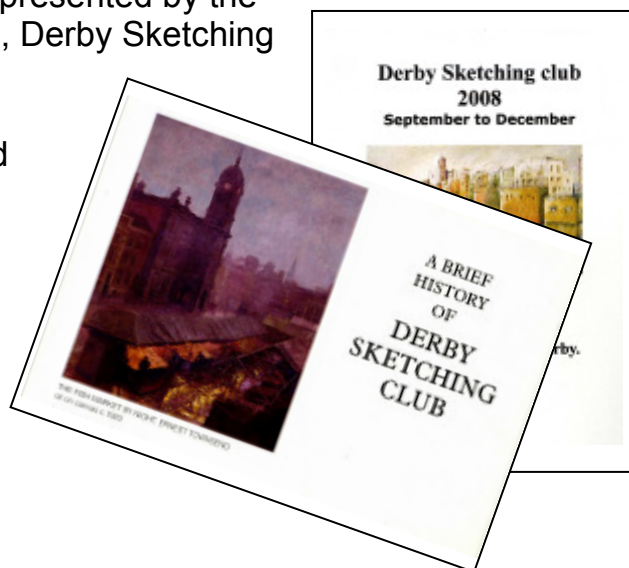
Non conformist records continue to feature largely and we accepted material from the Unitarian Chapel, Friargate, Derby (D1312), Glossop Methodist Circuit (D7452), Fitzalan Unitarian Church, Glossop (D7449), Derby East Methodist Circuit (D2961), Milltown Methodist Chapel (D7411) and Whaley Bridge Uniting Church (D7408) amongst others.

Business records are always of interest and we are happy to add to our collections material relating to Finlay McKinlay (and predecessors), chemists of Glossop 1904-1959 (D7445), patent specifications and machinery plans of Robinson's of Chesterfield (D7417), iron ore analyses and financial papers of the Sheepbridge Coal and Iron Co, late 19th century (D7422).

We were very happy to receive a copy of Henry Fletcher's 1598 map of the manor of Ilkeston (D7431) and papers relating to the Stancliffe Estate, Darley Hall which includes papers of the relief fund set up to assist the unemployed in the parish of Darley, 1887-1900 (D7454).

Clubs, societies and organisations were represented by the records of Scarsdale Probus Club (D7432), Derby Sketching Club (D5943), records of Hathersage Memorial Hall (D7438), membership records of Glossop Conservative Club (D7450) and papers of the Derbyshire Footpaths Preservation Society (D1903).

We are grateful to everyone who has added material to our collections for their public-spiritedness in ensuring the safe preservation of these unique records.



How to transfer archives to Derbyshire Record Office

Derbyshire Record Office is the only place in the county and city of Derby which meets national standards for archives.

If you have archives for transfer, first contact us either by email (record.office@derbyshire.gov.uk), by post (Derbyshire Record Office, County Hall, Matlock, DE4 3AG), by telephone (01629 538347) or in person by visiting the office. Records can be transferred to the record office by *gift*, where records are donated to Derbyshire County Council to be held at the record office; by *transfer*, where records are those of a local authority or similar institution, including schools; or by *deposit*, especially for institutions and organisations who wish to retain ownership of their records but wish to transfer custody to Derbyshire Record Office.

Thinking of visiting the record office?

Opening Hours:

Monday-Friday
9.30-4.45

Saturday
(one per month)
10.00-1.00,
1.30-4.00
(closed during the lunch break)



The first time that you visit Derbyshire Record Office you will be asked to register or, if appropriate, re-register as a user of the record office. A CARN ticket and/or other suitable proof of identity is required. To book a microfilm/microfiche reader, please telephone 01629 538347.

Records Management

Over the last few months our Corporate Records Manager has been busy with ongoing work to help the Council effectively manage its records and information. In April and May, as part of work with the Council's Children and Younger Adults Department, work has been done on making sure that records which have reached the end of their useful lifespan are being disposed of. This has included some site visits as well as regular meetings to make sure best practice is being followed within individual offices and services. Also, in May some training was delivered to staff across the Cultural and Community Services Department on how to best manage information including some useful tips on how to decide what emails to retain, and some of the procedures to put in place to make sure the personal information we hold is secure.



Upcoming Events & News

Derbyshire Record Office holds a number of outreach events each year. Some of our forthcoming events can be found below.

Introduction to the Search Room

Each month the record office holds its popular introductory session which covers how to make the best use out of the Search Room. These sessions involve explaining some of the facilities available on site which the public can use. Forthcoming dates include: 13th July, 3rd August.



Car Park Closure



Due to ongoing building work at the record office it is possible that our car park may close for extended periods at short notice. We recommend contacting us prior to any visit so that we may provide you with the most up to date information. You can email us at record.office@derbyshire.gov.uk or telephone us on 01629 538347.

And not forgetting...

Our new online exhibition 'The life and work of Eleanor Anne Franklin nee Porden 1797-1825 – a poet and writer' (coming August). And look out for us at the Matlock Hall Leys Park centenary celebrations over the August Bank Holiday weekend, with an exhibition looking at the history of the park and 100 years of local photography.

Contact Details

Should you have any queries you would like the record office to answer, either about our services, or about this newsletter there are a number of ways to contact us.



By post:
Derbyshire Record Office
County Hall
Matlock
DE4 3AG



By email:
Record.office@derbyshire.gov.uk

By fax: 01629 57611

Our website:

www.derbyshire.gov.uk/recordoffice

The current edition of this newsletter and past editions can be found on our website

By telephone:



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01629 538347

Duty Archivist:
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General Office:
01629 539202

Conservation:
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Records Management:
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