

## **Kent Libraries, Registration and Archives**

### **Quarterly Report of the Heritage Services Team to the Kent History Federation, 3 March 2017**

[All events and reports relate to the Kent History and Library Centre ('KHLC'), unless otherwise stated]

#### **Exhibitions and Events**

The Canterbury Archaeological Trust 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary exhibition completes its stay at the Kent History and Library Centre on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> March. It will be quickly followed by another touring display, by the Kent Gardens Trust, to celebrate the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Capability Brown. The Trust published a very well regarded book, *Capability Brown in Kent*, and their contribution to this display is a series of boards focusing on each of Brown's five Kent gardens: Valence, Ingress, North Cray Place, Leeds Abbey and Chilham Castle. The boards are supplemented by original archival documents and printed books from the KHLC's collections. Note that the Capability Brown exhibition will show twice: the first run is from 11 March to 3 April and the second from 1 July to 31 July.

#### **Free Monthly Tour of the Archives**

We offer a free guided tour of the history areas behind the scenes at the KHLC, including a strong room, the reprographics studio, the conservation studio and the cataloguers' workroom. The tour happens on the first Wednesday of every month, and starts at 2.00 p.m. Spaces are limited to a maximum of ten so pre-booking is essential. Our guided tours for 2017 are fully booked until wed 05 July. Please ring us on 03000 420673 to make any bookings for Summer tour dates.

#### **Kent Archives Users Satisfaction Survey**

We recently hosted a survey run by ARA (The Archives & Records Association) and CIPFA (The Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy.) Visitors to the Archives search room were offered a survey form over a period of several weeks. We now await the survey report from CIPFA. We are pleased to see a figure of 87% for customer satisfaction, a considerable improvement on the 78% figure for customer satisfaction recorded in the equivalent PSQG survey result for 2012/3, (2012 being the year that Kent Archives moved from Sessions House, County Hall to the new Kent History & Library Centre.)

#### **Community and Outreach**

##### **Celebrate Aylesham**

A consortium of local partners has been awarded a maximum grant of £10,000 by the Celebrate Lottery Fund to hold a series of events later this year marking Aylesham's 90th anniversary.

Four fun and free community events will be held at the end of June to celebrate the first mining families moving into their new homes in the village during 1927 following the expansion of the Kent coalfield.

Events will be held on the Market Square gardens, the Aylesham Community Project, Aylesham library and the welfare & leisure centre. The events are likely to include a mixture of live entertainment, information stalls and fun activities for young and old.

One confirmed "fun day" date is sat 01 July 10-2pm.

We are currently developing an online timeline covering the first 30 years of the history of Aylesham with links to catalogue entries for relevant Archive & Local History collection items held at the KHLC:

<http://www.tiki-toki.com/timeline/entry/717947/Aylesham-Colliery-Village/>

Breaking the Myths – World War One and Africa (First World War Centenary Project)

Diversity House, (the Sittingbourne-based charitable organisation,) has received £95,300 from the Heritage Lottery Fund for "Breaking The Myths: First World War and Africa"- [Key Kent project participation areas- Sittingbourne and Maidstone.]

<http://www.diversityhouse.org.uk/breaking-the-myths-first-world-war-and-africa-2/>

The launch event for the project was held at Sessions House, County Hall, on fri 20 January.

Diversity House, is looking to involve a range organisations, groups & volunteers in the project and has approached Kent Libraries, Registration & Archives.

Where we can, we are sharing information that links the project theme to Kent history. For example, the writer and intellectual Solomon Tshekisho Plaatje, first general secretary of the South African Native National Congress was resident & campaigning in Britain during the WW1 era. He was inspired by the non-denominational church Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Movement/ The Brotherhood Movement. He founded a corresponding Brotherhood Movement in Kimberley, South Africa. Excitingly, there is evidence that, during and just after the WW1 era, he attended & spoke at P.S.A./Brotherhood meetings in Dartford, Greenhithe, Swanscombe, Tonbridge & Sevenoaks.

### **Cataloguing and Accessioning**

Recently catalogued material includes U4124, a book of Christmas music published in 1878 by Professors Osborne and Motte of Bower Place, Maidstone to support their dance and music school. The book includes number of advertisements for Maidstone businesses, for example, details of Miss Upton's Academy at 92 Week

Street. This copy of the Musical Album was presented to Miss Jackson, a pupil at the Academy and granddaughter of the donor, by Miss Upton on 1 January 1878.

C/PA/MI/6/1 and C/PA/MA/6/1: Plans of Malling and Cranbrook Public Assistance Institutions (1934-1963) Public Assistance Institutions were the successors to the workhouses after the Local Government Act of 1929 abolished Poor Law Unions. These plans detail the internal layout of the main buildings, and additional blocks including nurses' homes, casual wards for elderly people, and proposed improvements including new drainage, decorations, and the installation of passenger lifts. In both cases the original buildings are no longer extant in their entirety, making these plans important records of the buildings' original layout.

Recent notable accessions include a deposit of archives by Southborough Urban District and Town Council, with a notably fine set of graveyard registers.

Rob Illingworth

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