

The Hackney Terrier

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The Friends of Hackney Archives Newsletter

Winter 2005



Happy 20th anniversary

The Friends of Hackney Archives were founded in November 1985. The organisation was – like so many initiatives which emerged from Hackney Archives Department from the early 1980s onwards – David Mander's idea. One spur was the knowledge that grateful users often a donation to the Department, but that if they did so the swallowed up into the Council's coffers and not benefit the all. (This would not be the case now: but that was then.)

David got together a group of likely suspects to found committee, and under the aegis of the Hackney Society in November agreed to launch subscriptions from January 1986 (and to establish a donations box). For my own part (though I was about to move out of Hackney) I saw the principal benefit as creating the opportunity for users to keep in touch with the development of the collection, especially finding out about new acquisitions.

David's principal assistant, the late Jean Wait, cheerfully took on the key task of producing the Terrier, sometimes with the assistance of Andrew Thorp, always through the medium of the Department's trusty Amstrad PCW – technology which seems clunky in retrospect, but which we were very glad to have on hand at the time.

It wasn't long before the Committee found themselves having to make representations to the council, and ultimately to councillors, about unfilled posts in the Department. The spring of 1990, when senior officers reached close the Department down. This was swiftly would in practice have been much harder than saved very little cash and created all sorts of that time we had found out who our true friends of swathes of supporters from the genealogy amateur, and other users, across the whole beyond. (And we had done something I had never envisaged – mounted a demonstration on the steps of the Town Hall.)

THE TERRIER

THE NEWSLETTER OF HACKNEY ARCHIVES DEPARTMENT

November 1985



steering an open meeting

THE TERRIER

THE FRIENDS OF HACKNEY ARCHIVES NEWSLETTER

No. 20

FILMS AND FILM FOOTAGE IN LOCAL AUTHORITY ARCHIVES: an experience

For those who have only seen the title of this article, it may seem a little odd. It is not a film, but a collection of articles, photographs and other material, which has been put together for the purpose of this newsletter. It is a collection of material which has been gathered together from various sources, and which is intended to provide a record of the work done in this field during the last few years.

The first article, by David Mander, is a review of the work done in this field during the last few years. It is a very interesting and informative article, which is well worth reading. It is followed by a collection of photographs, which show the work done in this field during the last few years. These photographs are very interesting and informative, and are well worth looking at. They show the work done in this field during the last few years, and are a very good record of the work done in this field during the last few years.

lowest point came in the a sudden decision to reversed by councillors (it was realised, would have other difficulties), but by were, and they consisted sector, professional and of southern England and

The first major fund-raising effort was to buy an important set of early posters from the Grecian Saloon theatre. The Victoria and Albert Museum were prepared to grant half the purchase money to the Department if they could find the rest; and collectively we did. This was followed by another effort when a set of Edwardian posters for the Britannia theatre came on the market. Year after year, either when the whole of the council would find itself hamstrung by a spending moratorium sometime between the autumn budget and the new financial year, or when the Department's budget was itself overstretched in other ways, the donations fund has been invoked to grasp the chance of worthwhile acquisitions in great variety, such as the business records of Jacquin's, button makers of Shoreditch; various deeds and diaries; materials related to Joseph Priestley; and programmes from the Hackney Empire. It was in this way that we evolved the useful technique of spending some of the Friends' donations money to acquire and deposit material, sometimes also paying for conservation, but transferring ownership to the Council only when the Department's funds were freed up and could reimburse us. In this way we are at present selling the Norris letter books (see Hackney History 11) to the Department in instalments, and maintaining the liquidity of the fund itself.

The November 1985 meeting decided to commemorate the borough's first archivist, Stanley Tongue, who had died in harness in 1982, in two ways. A frame to display one of the borough's watercolour collection was made and a commemorative brass inscription made to fix below it. And an annual commemorative lecture was held, initially as part of a programme of local history talks.

A good number of the early membership are still with us. A pattern developed where only a minority – though a substantial minority – of the Friends live in the borough itself. Dr Melvyn Brooks in Israel became first of a contingent of loyal overseas members. Over time, the membership roll has built to about 200, and from year to year is pretty steady around that figure. The wide dispersal of the Friends is one reason why the early programme of local history talks did not become an established feature, despite much hard work by our then Secretary, Zoë Croad. Instead, energies have focused on fund-raising (including maintaining a presence with a bookstall at local and regional events) and publications. Hackney History grew out of a series of articles which proved too lengthy for

the Terrier format. Our former Vice-Chair, Michèle Guimarin, introduced us to the potential of the grant-giving world for funding one-off works such as Under Hackney. We have been pleased to make available Bill Hall's excellent series of local history videos. I would like the Friends to stimulate more volunteers to work at the Department, though the physical capacity of the present premises limits what is possible. We have of course taken regular opportunities to invite Friends to more social occasions – which we now do again, hoping to see as many of you as possible to mark our 20th anniversary at the Department on 8th December.

Though the Friends have always been independently constituted (and eventually became registered as a charity), here is the place to mark the fact that they have always required a substantial input from the Department to function, and we are grateful that Ted Rogers – and his predecessors – have always given us generous practical and moral support, and that Elizabeth Green is continuing the editorial role which Jean Wait created. In this issue plans are announced for the continuing development of the Department – arguably the most exciting initiative of the last 20 years, certainly the best possible foundation for the next. I want to thank past and present Committee members – like departed members of staff, too many to list here, but you know who you are – for their reliability, loyalty and wisdom; especially our Secretary since 1992, Katharine Owen, who like me has found that we may leave Hackney but somehow, insidiously, Hackney won't leave us.

Isobel Watson
Chair

PARTY

To celebrate 20 years of supporting Hackney Archives the Friends committee and the staff of Hackney Archives would like to invite you to join them on Thursday 8 December 2005 at 6.00pm for wine and buffet refreshments. Please RSVP on the enclosed form.

More staff, more hours

Past, present and future at Hackney Archives

They say that a week is a long time in politics, but my first six months as Archives and Information Manager has seemed like a lifetime. Not only have we had to cope with the concept of the Manderless office following David's retirement, but the period has been a time for planning new projects and structures.

Soon the fruits of these endeavours are to be harvested. Hackney Archives Department's permanent staffing is to rise to its highest ever level in the new year, and Friends will soon be reaping the benefits in terms of longer opening hours and improved access to documents.

As many of you will be aware, the Council's Culture and Leisure Division, of which Hackney Archives is a part, has been undergoing a restructure during the last year. This restructure has led to the merger of the archive service with its library counterpart to form the new Libraries, Archives and Information Service. This has proved to be a happy alliance, thanks largely to the support and interest of Nicola Baker and other senior managers.

As we reported in the last issue I have taken on the new role of Archives and Information Services Manager which has responsibilities not only for archives but also for libraries IT and reference services. As a consequence, there was a temporary shortage of staff at the Department and we had to cut the Friday morning opening.

Over the summer, the department consisted of Elizabeth Green, Sally England (originally the Webcat Librarian but now covering more frontline duties) and our temporary and part-time administrator, Fran Prah, with me covering the gaps. That the service functioned so well during this period is a credit to Elizabeth, Sally and Fran. Sally's recent illness, which you will have read about elsewhere in the Terrier has of course exacerbated these problems.

With Libby Adams's arrival on 19th September we welcomed not only an extra pair of hands but also a very capable archivist and manager. Libby's role as Principal Archivist covers the day to day management of the department and the development of projects

and policies. For those of you who have visited the archives in the last couple of months, Libby's value to the department will be evident.

Within the last fortnight, the restructure of staffing of the service, on which I have been working over the summer has been agreed by the Council. This will see the introduction of permanent posts of Archivist, Local Studies Librarian and Administration & Finance Officer in addition to the existing posts of Principal Archivist and IT & Searchroom Officer. The Local Studies Librarian will work four days a week and the Administration & Finance Officer two and a half, giving the service in local government parlance a staff of 4.3 full time equivalents. On top of this there will be the assistance, managerial and otherwise, that I shall be able to give.

With such a staff, we are intending, after a period of familiarisation, to increase the number of days we open per week to four and to reintroduce some evening openings. Nor will these be the only benefits. We will see more archives and books catalogued and therefore available to the public. To increase our clientele we will be working with local schools and those parts of the community which have not traditionally used our service. Subject to solving the perennial problem of lack of space, we hope to acquire more material, especially Council records. With a permanent administrator we can continue to reach the high standard of accountability now required of all Hackney services, and to offer a greater range of publications for sale (get your chequebooks out!).

Finally of course we will not be forgetting our Friends. Elizabeth will continue to edit the Terrier, a task which she has performed for the last three issues despite the ever increasing demands of the rest of her job. The Friends, too, have helped us in our hour of need with sterling support especially from Joan Potter, our 'fifth member of staff'.

So the rigours of the last six months have been worth it and the future of Hackney Archives looks bright indeed.

Ted Rogers
Archives and Information Service Manager

News/events

Staff and volunteers

New principal archivist appointed



Libby Adams was appointed Principal Archivist this summer and started work on 19 September. Libby talks about her background:

I completed a history degree at Leeds University and then worked for a year as an Archives Assistant at Oxford University Archives before embarking on the Archives and Records Management course at University College London. I qualified in 1999 and worked at London Metropolitan Archives before becoming the Archivist for UCL Hospitals NHS Trust in 2001. I was at UCLH for just over 3 years, establishing improved storage facilities for the archives of the various hospitals in the Trust and beginning the cataloguing programme. In May 2004 I decided to move back to local authority archives as the Archivist for Haringey Council, at Bruce Castle Museum in Tottenham. As a Hackney resident, I'm delighted now to have moved to Hackney Archives, a service with an excellent reputation and many exciting projects either planned or underway.

Best wishes to Sally

We would like to express our best wishes to Sally England who has been ill since the beginning of September. She has been suffering from symptoms associated with her Multiple Sclerosis. We hope to welcome Sally back to the department in the near future.

New volunteer

The Department would like to welcome Joan Merton, a new volunteer. Joan is helping the other Joan with amending records and identifying missing images on the HA 2000 image database.

Community partnership programme

Hackney Archives has been selected as one of eight organisations across London's Archives, Libraries and Museums sector to participate in a pilot project in developing a pathfinder community partnership programme. The programme is run by ALM London, the new strategic development agency for archives, libraries and museums in London and will seek to test which models work best to encourage community participation.

Between now and March 2006, Hackney Archives will receive training, advice and mentoring from WSA Community Consultants, one of the leaders within the field on its community outreach programme. Crucially, the programme will investigate what is meant by community participation, to arrive at an understanding of how archive, library and museum services must develop robust and equal partnerships with their communities in order to embed developments that are shaped by communities' own definitions of their needs.

Hackney's partners are the Enfield Museum Service, The Post Office Heritage Trust, Brent Archives, The Laban Centre for Dance, Haringey Libraries, Redbridge Museum Service and the Women's Library.

Missing Abney Chapel minute book discovered

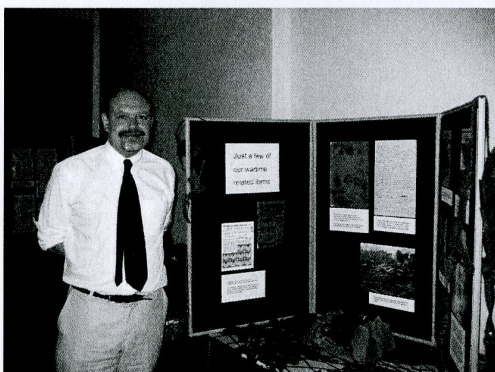
Hassan Ibrahim, manager of Booths restaurant and bar in Stoke Newington, hands over the missing Abney Chapel Minute Book to Edward Rogers, Archives and Information Manager (see *photograph at the top of page 5*). The handover was arranged by Camilla Loewe, publisher and editor of TimeLine magazine and took place at the Timeline party on 10 July 2005. The minute book had been found during building works at the Abney Public Hall.



**60th anniversary of end of WW 2
- civic event at Hackney Town Hall**



Edward Rogers, with Councillor Linda Kelly, Speaker of Hackney Council (centre) and Meg Hillier, MP for Hackney South and Shoreditch (right) at the 60th Anniversary of the End of World War 2 Civic Event, held at Hackney Town Hall on 10 July 2005. Hackney Archives organised an exhibition for display at this event - see picture below.



End of the line for No. 38 bus



Friday 28 October 2005 marked the end of an era in transport in Hackney. The No.38 routemaster bus was replaced by the single-decker "bendybus", which does not require a conductor. The No. 38 route runs from Clapton Pond in Lower Clapton to Victoria and serves some of the borough's busiest areas including central Hackney and Dalston Junction. HAD's intrepid photographer (i.e. Ted Rogers) went out and about to record the final few days of the No.38 routemaster – see photo above.

Previous forms of transport which have been replaced:



Horse-drawn tram, Upper Clapton, 1879

Local Studies Library: new acquisitions

NB: these reviews relate to books recently added to the library collection. HAD does not stock copies for sale.

Many thanks to Isobel Watson and the Friends for the very kind donation of two immensely useful (and immense!) new books.

The London County Council bomb damage maps 1939-1945
Ed. Ann Saunders (introduction by Robin Woolven)
London Topographical Society
Shelved at 940.11 OS

Only available through membership of the London Topographical Society or at London Metropolitan Archives, this beautifully produced book contains facsimiles of the extensive reports produced by the London County Council's Architect's Department and War Damage Survey staff to map the severity of bomb damage to individual buildings. The 25" maps, which were originally hand-coloured, are reduced to a scale of 11.5" to the mile and cover the whole of the LCC area. There is also an illustrated introduction giving detailed information on the work of the LCC's Architect's Department, on civil defence, and the bombing of London.

The book is of especial use to Hackney Archives as it provides much-needed information regarding bombings in the Shoreditch area as well as Stoke Newington and Hackney. It also provides a fascinating picture of the damage inflicted upon the different areas of the city. Discovering that one's own house was 'seriously damaged but repairable at cost' is, however, slightly worrying...

London: the photographic atlas
Collins
ISBN: 0007184352
£60.00
Shelved at 912 OS

A stunning photographic atlas showing London from the air in amazing detail, this book offers a new perspective on a familiar landscape. Areas which are thought to be well-known appear very different and at

first perplexing, quite different from the images offered by the usual maps of London. Opening a page at random and attempting to identify the place depicted can be quite a challenge. However, once you know what you are looking at major landmarks are easily distinguished and even individual houses can be located. It is even possible to find your car – I did!

Obviously very clear weather was required for the aerial photography to take place – if only London was always so sunny.

Image Collection: new acquisitions



Hackney Archives has recently scanned and made available on the HA 2000 image database a number of photographs relating to the Newington Green Unitarian Chapel. These were loaned for the purpose of scanning by Mr Anthony Titford, a Friend, who has been doing some research into his ancestors, many of whom were members of the Unitarian Chapel congregation. The picture above shows William Titford (1810-1882), a member of the Church Committee of the Chapel. HAD has a large collection of records relating to the Newington Green Unitarian Chapel, including chapel committee minutes, annual reports and membership records (D/E 257 NEW).

Books for sale

Hot off the press !

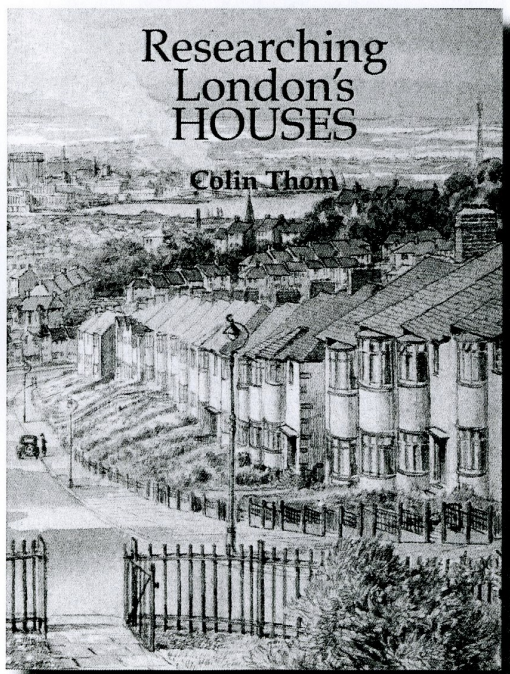
Researching London's Houses

Colin Thom

Historical Publications Ltd, 2005

Price: £13.95 (postage: £2.70)

Published by Historical Publications Ltd, in association with the London Archives Users' Forum, this is one of the first guides to focus on the special problems and complex documents that relate to the study of London's housing. It is written by Colin Thom, who has lived in South London for the past 18 years and for the past 20 has been a researcher and writer for the highly regarded Survey of London (now part of English Heritage). The book concentrates on typical or 'ordinary' buildings i.e. the smaller types of houses or flats owned or occupied at one time or another by the vast majority of Londoners. It includes a section on the history of London's houses, their evolution, methods of construction, planning, style and appearance, a section on the types of documentary sources available, explaining the nature and usefulness of each class of record and concludes with three case histories. An essential guide for anyone wishing to study their house history, this publication is not only available for consultation in the local studies library, but can also be purchased from the Archives Department.

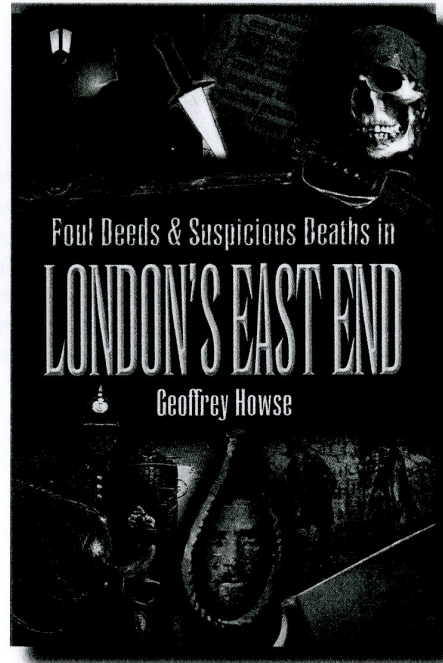


Foul Deeds and Suspicious Deaths in London's East End

Geoffrey Howse

Wharncliffe Books, 2005

Price: £10.99 (postage: £1.50)



For the purpose of this book the East End is defined as that part of London situated east of the Tower of London and north of the River Thames. This includes not only the borough of Tower Hamlets, but also Waltham Forest, Hackney and Newham. The introduction explains that the East End, for centuries the site of many of London's docks and historically one of London's poorest areas, has also been associated with some of the worst elements of human depravity, a place where foul deeds and murder were commonplace. The first chapter deals with "foul deeds through the ages", with each subsequent chapter outlining specific incidents. Covering almost a century of "foul deeds", the earliest incidents described took place in 1811, with latest ones in 1903. There is the inevitable chapter on Jack the Ripper, 1888. Other chapters include "Tragedy in Hackney on Bonfire Night, 1893", as well as "A Mad Cow's Antics Bring Memories of Foul Deeds Flooding Back, 1899".

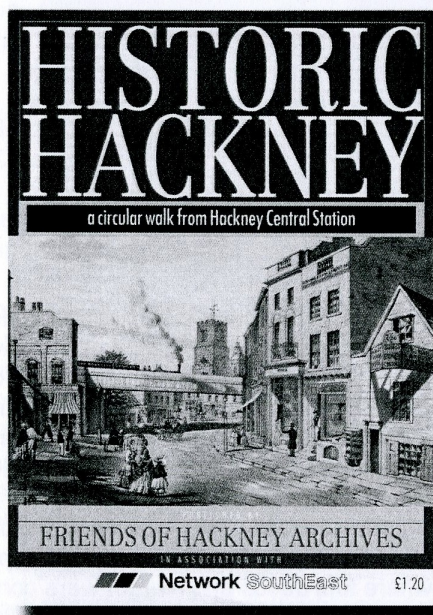
Books for sale (cont.)

Old favourites

The booklets described below, both published by the Friends of Hackney Archives are a bargain at £1.00 each. Both describe an historic walk around Hackney and include a wealth of historical detail.

Historic Hackney
Friends of Hackney Archives
Price: £1.00 (postage: 0.85)

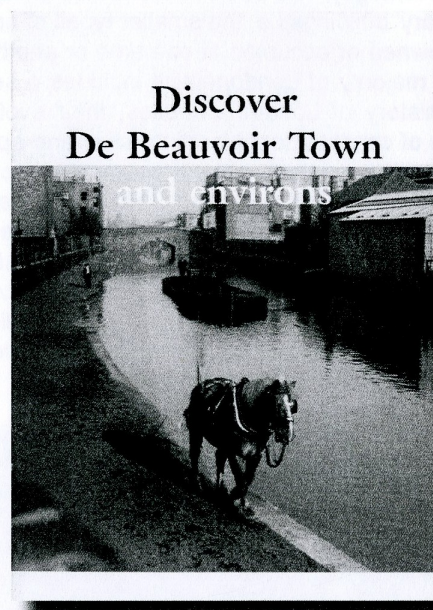
Starting at Hackney Central Station, this walk features both buildings of historical interest which have been demolished, and those that still exist. It should take about 3 hours, but can easily be shortened. It includes historical notes on St. Augustine's Old Church Tower, the Hackney Electric Theatre, the London Orphan Asylum, Hackney House and Clapton Park Theatre.



If you would like to purchase either of these leaflets or the books on the previous page, please send a cheque made payable to London Borough of Hackney, for the full amount including postage to Hackney Archives Department, 43 De Beauvoir Road, London N1 5SQ or email archives@hackney.gov.uk or telephone 020 72412886 to order. A full publications list is available on the website at www.hackney.org.uk/archives

Discover De Beauvoir Town and Environs
Friends of Hackney Archives, 2003
Price: £1.00 (postage: 0.85)

This walk around De Beauvoir Town and its environs takes in two delightful town squares, a canal towpath, plenty of interesting architecture and history plus a rich cosmopolitan street scene. It is a walk of contrasts, from the vigorous bustle of Kingsland Road to the leafy tranquillity of Albion Square, towering edifices to bijou villas. Written by Mike Gray and Isobel Watson with David Mander, this booklet was published by the Friends in 2003.



Credits & Contacts

The Hackney Terrier, which appears at least three times a year, is published by the Friends of Hackney Archives and produced by Elizabeth Green. The Friends constitute an independent charity (no. 1074493) and membership is open to all: the subscription is £10 in the UK (plus £2 for each additional member at the same address) and £20 sterling overseas. The subscription runs for a calendar year and includes a copy of the journal Hackney History.

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