

The Hackney Terrier

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The Friends of Hackney Archives Newsletter

Spring 2009



What we did in our stocktaking closure



The Archives was closed for two weeks in November and December last year for our annual stocktaking. This was delayed from February, when the stocktaking closure always used to take place, largely as a result of the Archives' move into expanded premises on the ground floor of the former Rose Lipman library in March 2008.

Following the expansion of our facilities, including much-increased storage, our main objective for our 2008 stocktaking closure was the consolidation of all the archives on the Rose Lipman site in De Beauvoir Road.

There were records stored in a room on the first floor of the Rose Lipman building and in commercial storage at London Metropolitan Archives, which were moved into the basement storage area in the Rose Lipman building with the rest of the archives between June and August 2008, so by the time of the November closure, the main task left was to move the records which had been stored in Stoke Newington Town Hall back to join the rest of the archives. Unfortunately, there were two rather unwelcome complications to this process.



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Firstly, by the time we were able to close and undertake the transfer of these records, Stoke Newington Town Hall had become a building site, due to refurbishment which is currently taking place. In addition, the room in which the archives were being stored had become rather damp in recent times. The boxes in which everything was stored had done their job well: the records were largely dry and preserved, although they needed to be transferred into new boxes before being transferred to the main archives storage area in De Beauvoir.

The result of all of this was that the archives staff, together with Jacqueline Bradshaw-Price, who brought a conservator's perspective to the process, spent two days dressed up in overalls, dust masks, gloves, high-visibility jackets and hard hats, in order to undertake the transfer of records from 600 slightly damp boxes into dry boxes, into a van, from Stoke Newington to De Beauvoir, and then into the storage facilities at Rose Lipman.

I think I can speak for the whole archives team when I say that this was a unique experience, and one which none of us is anxious to repeat very soon. The sense of joy and relief when the last box was moved into its rightful place among the rest of the Borough's archives in De Beauvoir Road are understood more fully when you see, here, the photographs of the team at work.

Libby Adams
Principal Archivist



Banjos in Hackney

The most interesting accession we've had in the last few months turned up by post in January. It consisted of two photographs and a certificate,



and was passed to us by a solicitor in Rochester, who had found them while doing a clear-out of office papers. He had no idea where they came from, or to whom they had belonged, but he noticed the Hackney connection and kindly sent them on to us.

We got rather a surprise when we opened the envelope and found these two great photos of banjo bands.

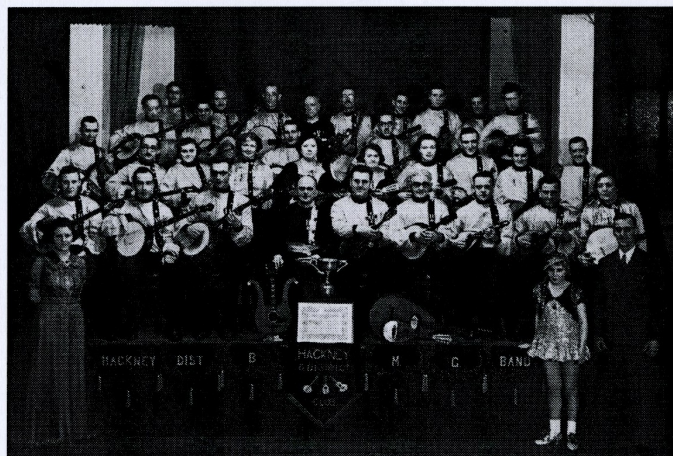
We did not have a date for either of the photos, although our guess is that the one taken outdoors is probably the earlier of the two. The only Hackney link with this first photo is the photographer's address – 185-7 High Street, Homerton. This rather suggests that the band was local. The local connection with the second photo is easier, since the words "Hackney Dist. B.M.G. Band" can be seen on the banners across the front of the stage. The certificate is a 'highly commended' award for an H. Ashford at the Leigh-on-Sea Musical Festival

in 1939. It doesn't mention Hackney at all, but since it came alongside the photographs it is probably related.

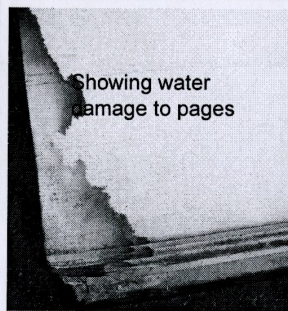
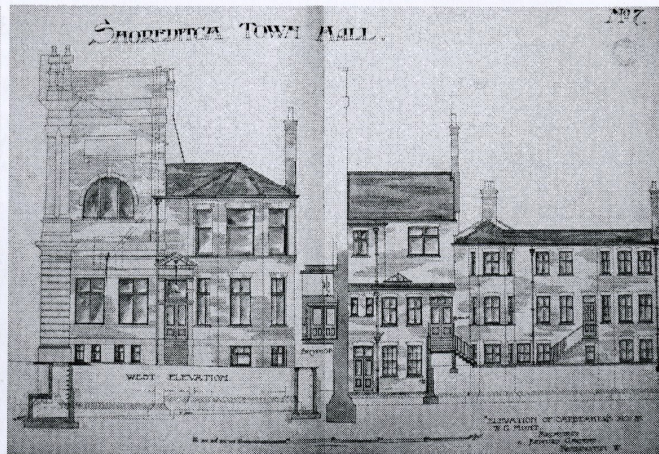
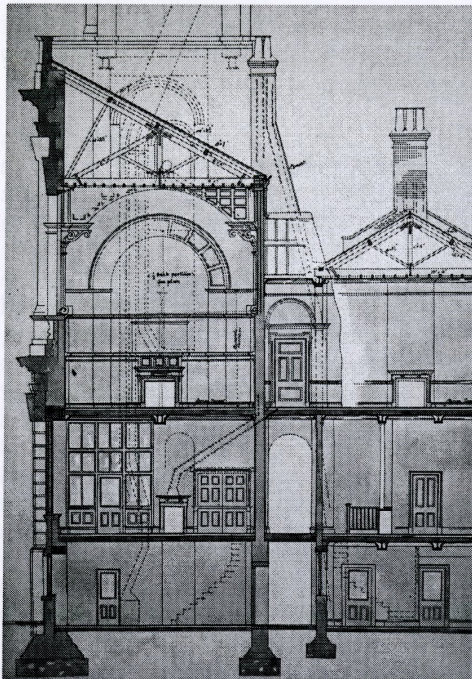
We were very curious about the two photos and wrote about them in our regular article in *Hackney Today* (the Council's newspaper). We got rather a good response from members of the public. There may not be many BMG (banjo, mandolin and guitar) bands in the country now, but they used to be a lot more popular. We were actually lucky enough to hear from someone who knows one of the band members shown in the second photograph. From him we have found out that the picture dates from 1938 – he can be quite definite about this as the band won the cup in that year (if you look closely, you can just see the cup at the front of the stage). He was able to give us the names of some of the people in the photo, including a Mr. Ashford (perhaps the owner of the certificate?). He also kindly sent us another photo

of the band, from about 1948.

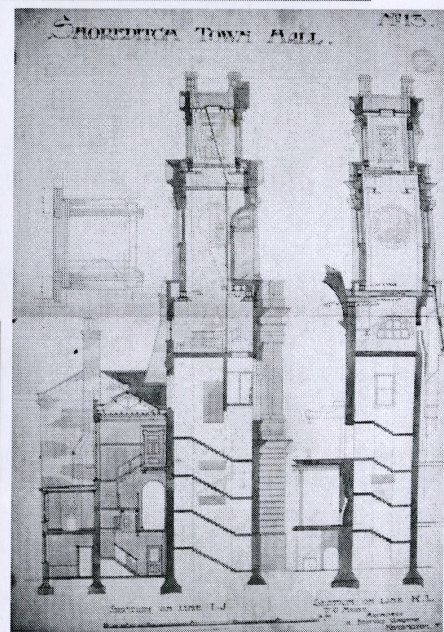
We're going to be putting a short article in a national BMG magazine, in the hope that we can find more people with information on one or other of these photos. In the meantime if any Friend knows anything about them, please do let us know!



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Showing water damage to pages



Shoreditch Town Hall Extension S/EP/3.

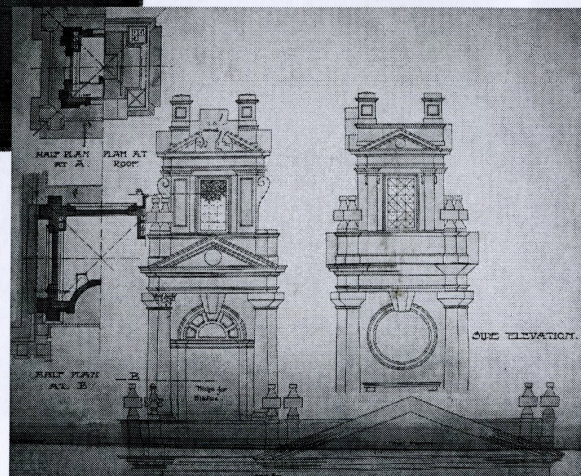
I had been aware of a large brown volume stored in the conservation room for some years. However only recently was I able to give it the time and dedication it deserved. Measuring 70 cms x 55 cms, it contains the plans, elevations and sections for Shoreditch Town Hall's extension.

Designed and executed in 1901 by W G Hunt, architect, of Bedford Gardens, Kensington, the drawings are beautifully detailed and coloured by hand.

The cloth bound volume itself had clearly suffered quite a lot of water damage prior to arriving at Hackney Archives, and although there was some discolouration of the pages inside there was no mould. However the spine had disintegrated together with large sections of the corners and the cloth was badly discoloured.

After some loving attention and care, the plans can now be consulted without fear of causing any further damage.

Jacqueline Bradshaw-Price
Conservator



New Accessions

Aerial views of Homerton Hospital

These are colour negatives taken in 1998 by an aerial photography company. After his retirement, the company's manager offered to sell them to us and we were able to get them for a reasonable price, along with the copyright. They should prove a useful future resource for the history of the hospital. It is particularly useful to have the copyright as well since this means that we are free to use the images as we like, and makes it a lot easier for us to provide copies for other people.

The Outlook – The School Magazine of North Hackney Central School

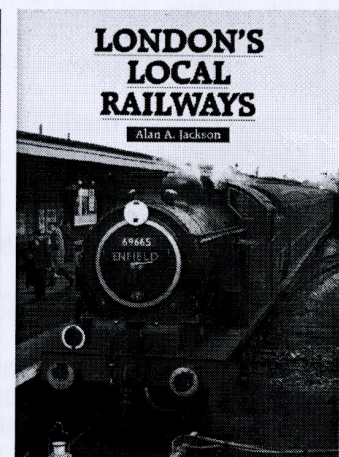
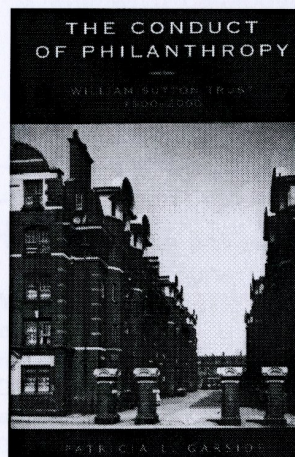
North Hackney Central School was a secondary school for girls on Oswald Street, Clapton. It was housed in buildings later occupied by Mandeville Primary School. This hand-bound volume of magazines contains a number of issues, mostly from the 1930s. It was kindly given to us by the daughter of a former pupil. The articles in the magazines are written by both staff and pupils and as well as giving the usual information on sporting activities and drama productions, they also give some wonderful accounts of school trips and holidays.

Papers of Izaak Walton

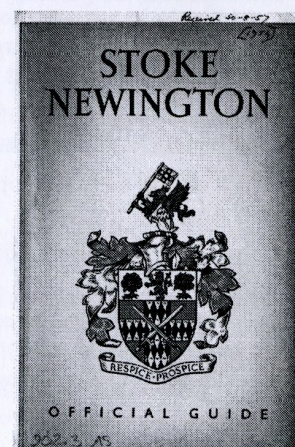
The Walton family lived in Homerton, at Brooksby Hall. For many years Izaak Walton was an accountant at the Imperial Continental Gas Company and this group of letters, mostly written to him, rather than by him, come from both family and colleagues. They mostly date from the 1840s to the 1860s and help to give a picture of his life and the lives of the people he corresponded with.

Additions to the Local Studies Library

Three items have recently been purchased by the Friends for addition to the Local Studies Library. Patricia L. Garside's *The conduct of philanthropy* (Athlone Press, ISBN 9780485115314; shelved at 380 AS) tells the story of the William Sutton housing trust from 1900 to 2000 and includes references to Shoreditch and to housing in City Road.



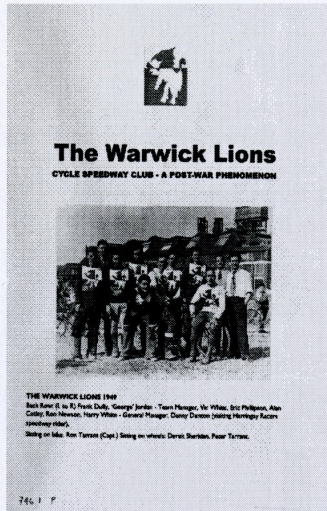
London's local railways by Alan L. Jackson (Capital Transport, ISBN 9781854142092; shelved at 335.2 AS) contains much information relating to stations past and present in the Hackney area along with some fascinating photographs. And thanks to Isobel Watson for spotting a 1954 edition of the Stoke Newington Borough Guide offered for sale in a book dealer's catalogue. This has now been added to the library and is shelved at 902.3 AS.



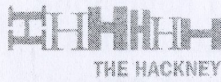
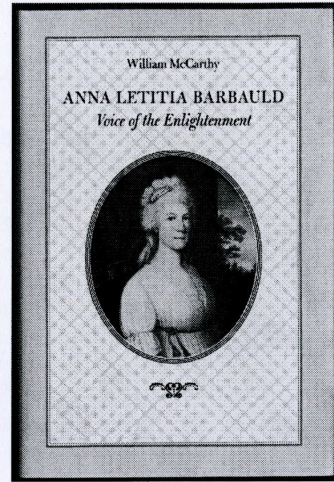
Donations to the library have included a copy of the 46th anniversary report of the Hackney Methodist Mission dating from 1971. Donated by Sheffield Libraries, this is a useful addition to our holdings on local Methodist churches (shelved at 234 HAC P).

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We have very little information about Hackney's speedway heritage, so John Goldsmith's gift of a copy of the illustrated pamphlet *Warwick Lions Cycle Speedway Club* is most welcome (shelved at 746.1 P).



William McCarthy, Professor Emeritus at Iowa State University, has sent us a copy of his *Anna Laetitia Barbauld: voice of the Enlightenment* (Johns Hopkins University, ISBN 9780801890161; shelved at 902 BAR SR) in return for permission to quote in the book from some of Mrs Barbauld's letters to family and friends held at Hackney Archives.



THE HACKNEY SOCIETY

At the Heart of Hackney since 1967

We are also looking for volunteers to interview people and to research the history of these hospitals.



FROM FEVER TO CONSUMPTION: the story of healthcare in Hackney

DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL?

We would like to hear from patients and staff who can remember the Mothers', St Leonard's, and Hackney Hospital; and the John Scott Health Centre during the 1940s, 50s, 60s and 70s. We would like to hear your story of what these places were like to work and be treated in for a publication on the story of healthcare in Hackney.

- Would you like to contribute an oral history?
- Can you help us find people with stories to share?
- Do you have old photos of these buildings?

Toby Butler, Community Historian, would like to hear from you. Please email info@hackneysociety.org, or phone 020 8806 4003 to find out more.

- Were you one of the first male nurses to be trained at Hackney Hospital?
- Do you remember the campaign to admit fathers to the Mothers'?
- Do you remember NHS staff recruitment drives in the 1950s?

We are interested in these types of themes and other memories and stories you may have.



A Home of One's Own: Rebuilding Hackney Post World War Two

In July 2008, as part of the Museums Libraries and Archives Council's 'Their Past Your Future' programme, a grant of £10,000 was awarded for a joint project relating to how bombing during World War 2 affected post-War housing in Hackney. The partners are RIBA British Architectural Library (lead partner), the Building Exploratory, and Hackney Archives.

The project so far has focussed on the Mapledene estate, looking at pre-war housing, the bomb damage inflicted on the area and the estate that was built after the war. Students from the Bridge Academy and from the Building Exploratory's Senior Bees group have visited both Hackney Archives and RIBA Architectural Library to look at original documents, photographs, plans and official records relating both to the Mapledene estate and generally to post-war housing in Hackney. They have also interviewed architects from RIBA's Doric Club and members of the Mapledene Tenants Association. The students' thoughts and reflections on their experiences have been recorded on the Radiowaves Schools website (www.radiowaves.co.uk).

A visit to the Archives by 20 Year 8 students from the Bridge Academy was a great success. Besides looking at original sources relating to the Mapledene estate and post-war housing, the students were given a general introduction to the Archives and a tour of the strongroom and conservation area.

The project has made use of Hackney Archives' important sources relating to World War 2, such as the series of bomb damage photographs as well as records such as maps, plans, electoral registers, incident files from the Official War Diary and Housing Committee minutes. These sources have been complemented by sources at RIBA Architectural Library relating to architects' visions for rebuilding London after World War 2.

Over the next few months we are continuing to work with the project partners and the Bridge Academy to produce resources aimed at Keystage 3 students relating to how the bombing

during World War 2 affected the built environment in Hackney. Further updates on the project will be reported on in future issues of the *Terrier*.

Elizabeth Green

Access and Outreach Officer

Outreach Events

The following workshops all take place at Hackney Archives, 43 De Beauvoir Road, London N1 5SQ. If you would like to attend, please telephone 020 72412886 or email archives@hackney.gov.uk to book a place.

Exploring Hackney's Past: a Step-by-Step Guide to Hackney Archives

The staff at Hackney Archives are offering a beginner's guide to the sources available for finding out about Hackney's past, and how to access them. The workshop will help you to learn about what collections we hold and what catalogues and other guides are available. This free workshop is being offered on the following days:

Wednesday 13 May 10.00am – 12.00 noon
Wednesday 03 June 10.00am – 12.00 noon

The Lives of Hackney's Buildings

Friday 26 June
2.00pm – 4.00pm

Have you ever wondered who designed your house, when it was built, or who may have lived there? At this free workshop, staff at Hackney Archives will guide you through the sources available for finding out about the history of buildings in Hackney, Shoreditch and Stoke Newington. As well as finding out about the buildings themselves, and how the built environment in Hackney has developed, you will have the opportunity to learn about the people who have lived and worked in those buildings. This workshop ties in with the Greater London Assembly's Story of London festival being held throughout the month of June, as well as the Hackney Heritage and Built Environment Partnership's annual programme of activities.

FRIENDS OF HACKNEY ARCHIVES ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM will elect a committee for the forthcoming year and hear from Ted Rogers, Head of Libraries, about the latest proposals for the Archives' future premises in the new building now taking shape on Dalston Lane next to Dalston Junction station.

Join us on Monday 8th June at 6 p.m. at Hackney Archives Department. All are welcome.

'Local local history'

www.locallocalhistory.co.uk is a new website about *really* local history, which started in Stoke Newington and is now being copied by people all over the world. Jack Whitehead wrote *The Growth of Stoke Newington* in the 1980s, and recently created this free website. This and his other books, including *The Growth of Muswell Hill*, and the *Glacial Drifts of Muswell Hill and Finchley* are all there, for anyone to read and copy down, but he had other fish to fry. The site also looks at the nine schools in Stoke Newington in detail.

Each school has a set of very small extracts from maps dating from the 17th century to today, **with the individual school in the centre**. The streets around the school - the children's stamping ground - are traced back to meadows. There are local walks to discuss the existing houses, and lots of articles about geology, building practice, the result of the explosive expansion of London in the 1860s, slum clearance, bombing, etc. It is astonishing how much general history can be seen in local streets if you know where to look and how to relate a tiny, familiar area to the wider world - this is where the bomb fell; that is the bend which traces a medieval field boundary.

Other schools outside Stoke Newington need similar resources, on the web or on CD, for children and staff to use in their lessons. Parents and grandparents could help and find hours of pleasure in it. The idea has been taken up in other countries. 490 pages **a day** were downloaded in

the last week from locallocalhistory.co.uk. How about joining in?

Jack Whitehead

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Bill Hall's DVD film *Stoke Newington*, announced in the last issue, is now available from Stoke Newington Bookshop as well as Hackney Archives. So is the booklet *Discover Stoke Newington*, which is also obtainable from The Fox Reformed in Stoke Newington Church Street. Copies of both Stoke Newington items are available free to schools in the area; please enquire for further details.

The Friends of Hackney Archives

constitute an independent charity (no. 1074493) dedicated to supporting the Borough's archives and promoting local history in the area. 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 at least three issues of the *Hackney Terrier* and a copy of the journal *Hackney History*.

The Friends can be contacted via -

Hackney Archives Department
43 De Beauvoir Road, London N1 5SQ.
Tel 020 7241 2886 - Fax 020 7241 6688

e-mail: archives@hackney.gov.uk

The HAD searchroom is open to the public on

Tuesday (9.30 - 13.00, 14.00-20.00)
Wednesday and Thursday (9.30 - 13.00,
14.00-17.30)
Friday (9.30-13.00)

Contributions to future issues of the *Hackney Terrier* should be sent to Sally England at the above address.