

Chairman's Message

You will read inside about the progress on the long-awaited extension of the County's Record Office facilities which has been taken forward by Amy Rushton as Heritage Programme Manager. Your Committee is not a great fan of the temporary name of the project 'The Hold', but we realise that it's snappy and only a working title. We are very excited by the prospect of this new facility and we take off our hats to Amy for the work that she has put into the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid. Work is going on with the other four Suffolk heritage organisations to ensure we all are focussed on the need to raise some funding; this shows the HLF that the community, and especially the users, are firmly behind the bid for funding. And we are.

Since I have been chairman the Record Office has faced all sorts of challenges about its governance, relevance and funding, diverting the Record Office Management from its core work, but this project is perhaps the most important distraction as it ensures a service fit for the 21st century. There are many friends in the county and beyond who believe in this and you as Friends are central to our aspirations.

I'm particularly pleased that Tracy Hickey has agreed to put together this and future newsletters in between all the other things that she manages to do in her daylight hours. Thank you!

Paul Simmons, Chairman

The Hold – Heritage Centre Project

Background

As many of you are aware, Suffolk Record Office and University Campus Suffolk are working in partnership on an exciting new heritage facility for Suffolk, to be located by the vibrant Ipswich Waterfront.

It will combine a much-needed new Record Office for Suffolk (replacing existing facilities at Gatacre Road) with state-of-the-art teaching facilities for Suffolk's growing university, University Campus Suffolk. These facilities will support the already extensive outreach activity which UCS leads on behalf of the higher education sector in Suffolk and Norfolk. Working alongside Suffolk County Council's 'Raising the Bar' initiative it will use heritage and the history of place to work with schools, in particular in areas of low achievement, to encourage improved aspiration, attainment and staying on rates.

The project will transform the delivery of Suffolk Record Office's services across the county, by developing a new approach to working with communities and volunteers, including an innovative, collections-based programme; "Mapping Suffolk's Stories". Meanwhile, the new "flagship" building will give the bulk of Suffolk's records a new, fit-for-purpose home and provide a unique heritage attraction and research facility for residents and visitors alike.

The working title for the new building is (for the time being) "The Hold"; a title reflecting both the maritime nature of the location and the fact that archives are referred to as "holdings". There will be further marketing and brand exploration in 2016, which will generate alternative titles to consider - thus "The Hold" is only a "holding" (no pun intended!) name.



The Hold – Heritage Centre Project

Funding

The project has ambitious targets for external funding to ensure its delivery. A Round One bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund was submitted on 30 November 2015, the culmination of an enormous piece of work. The Record Office would like to extend thanks to everyone who participated in a workshop or focus group in 2015 and completed our online survey (440 responses), which really helped to shape the bid. Sincere thanks must also go to all individuals and organisations who took the time to write a letter in support of the application, which will have strengthened the case significantly.

The Heritage Lottery Fund decision on funding is anticipated in April 2016. As part of the assessment, a site visit will be conducted; an opportunity to show why the project is so badly needed!

The “funding gap” for the project (after the partners’ contributions and the Heritage Lottery Fund funding applied for has been counted) is £2.88 million. The vast majority of this will come through applications to other grant making bodies, but around £140,000 will need to be raised through private donations, corporate donations, and community fundraising.

For this reason, the project requires a group of dedicated individuals to form a Fundraising Committee/Volunteer Fundraising Group to solicit private and corporate donations, organise fundraising events, and help apply to other trusts and foundations. If you have any experience in fundraising, any innovative ideas, or a good network of connections, and would like to find out more about joining the VFG, please get in touch with the Heritage Programme Manager, Amy Rushton (amy.rushton@suffolk.gov.uk). She would love to hear from you!

University Campus Suffolk Student Projects

Whilst the Heritage Lottery Fund bid has been proceeding two “live projects” have been running with UCS’s students; one in relation to interior architecture and design, and one in relation to marketing and communications. The design project asked the students to come up with a hypothetical proposal for the “welcome” spaces of the new building (i.e. the reception, shop, café and exhibition space); the results were stunning. The marketing students came up with proposals to raise the profile of the new Heritage Centre, including “push and pull” marketing techniques, how to use social media, straplines, and raising the profile of our online presence. We were thrilled at the talent of the students involved in both projects and the proposals were all of a very high calibre. A “winning design” and marketing proposal are being considered early in the New Year and those students will be offered work placements on the project (contingent on the HLF funding bid being successful) as a reward.



Gala time!

The Record Office is working with some of UCS’s final year Events Management students to organise a fundraising gala for the evening of Thursday, **17th March, 2016**.

This will feature refreshments, speakers and a unique performance of music direct from Suffolk’s archives themselves (by the talented “Eboracum Baroque” – www.eboracumbaroque.co.uk). Some of you will have already received an email asking you to “Save the Date”. Formal invitations and further details will be circulated in February.



All Change at Lowestoft

Lowestoft Railway Station was opened in 1855 and, like many other stations on our rural lines, is sadly showing its age. Now, in a scheme to restore at least some of its former glory, a substantial rejuvenation is being planned as a joint initiative between Abellio Greater Anglia, the train operator and other local interests, including the County Council. Lowestoft Record Office has been quick to take up the chance of participating and showing off its wares.

One of the first things that greets you on your arrival in the town is a long blank wall, shorn of its original platform and awning and staring blankly at you from twelve blind brick arches. The Record Office has been invited, along with other local heritage organisations, to contribute a large-scale graphic to fill one of these arches, their chosen theme being Early Tourism. So this summer, should you arrive by train, your eye will immediately be caught by a display of heavily enlarged early postcards and photos from the Office's collections, all capped with the words 'Suffolk Record Office'.

One of those who will be confronted every morning by these images is Helen Band, the recently appointed Public Services Manager at the Lowestoft Office. Helen, who arrives daily by train from her Norwich home, was promoted to the post in September on the retirement of Ruth Silburn, but she is no stranger to the office or its records, having been there as a Search-room Assistant for the past four years. Before that, she gained her doctorate from the University of East Anglia, her thesis being on 'Collective Memory and Social Identity in Early

Modern Essex', where she gained a strong knowledge of 16th- and 17th-century sources, in particular Exchequer Court records. With that background, she makes an ideal tutor to lead regular palaeography classes for the Record Office.

Other new faces will shortly be appearing to join Helen, Kerry Meal, Ivan Bunn and the team at Lowestoft. Neil Coles arrived just before Christmas as a Search-room Assistant, coming direct from Lowestoft College and armed with an interest in the history of the Unemployed Workers Movement in the early twentieth century which has opened up a wider interest in local history. And Katie Angus, currently doing her Master's at U.E.A. will join as a part-time Search-room Assistant.

While railways are very much 'in the air', in Lowestoft, it is, predictably, the sea which plays the largest part in the town's history. Among recent collections to have been catalogued are those of Brooke Marine, established by J W Brooke as a foundry in 1874 and specialising in boat-building for nearly a century, till its demise in 1992. The collection includes a large series of photos of vessels built by the company. A second collection, newly catalogued, comes from Richards Shipbuilders, a firm with a similar life-span.

A further set of business records has also become accessible through cataloguing. The Gisleham Steam Brick Company was set up in 1934 on a site south of Pakefield, eventually specialising after the War wholly in clay land drainage pipes. Today the firm is gone but the brick kilns remain visible, now listed by English Heritage. This is an unusual set of records to have been saved, including, as it does, many blue-prints drawn up as part of the production process.

The Manorial Documents Register

At last the checking of over 1500 manorial court rolls is complete. Beginning in 2012 Claire Barker and Gemma Field prepared an updated catalogue of Suffolk manorial documents which could be digitised and added to the national Manorial Documents Register. The register allows anyone to look up a particular manor, see what documents exist and find out which repository holds them rather than travelling to Kew to consult a paper catalogue.

Quite quickly it was decided to concentrate on court rolls and omit the court books. As a general rule the books are of a later date, easier to read and often in better condition. From a list collated by Gemma, Claire looked at every single roll, counted the membranes and recorded the dates of each court. Gaps in sequence, condition and fitness for production were recorded. Finally, the reference and description were compared against any printed catalogue entry.

In total Claire checked about 750 rolls by November 2014 whose details were uploaded onto the National Archives Discovery catalogue (<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk>). A celebration and launch was held at Otley Hall where talks were given, backs were patted and tea was drunk. In January 2015 Claire, joined by Kevin



Pulford, continued checking the remaining rolls and updating the authority files. The authority files are intended to complement the National Archives Discovery catalogue when searching for manorial records. They provide the course of descent of the lords of the relevant manors. Both Claire and Kevin continue to work on filling in gaps and improving the files using resources at Suffolk Record Office for eventual submission to the National Archives to complete the Suffolk section.

FOSRO Donates Laptops to Bury Record Office Volunteers



Volunteers at Bury Record office are busy transcribing the Bury Gaol Registers. Each of the register books contain upwards of 500 pages, from which the contents of each page are transcribed onto paper lists, which are then entered on to computer spreadsheets. Each book requires working with a large amount of data and the spreadsheets make checking for missing information much easier.

With five busy volunteers and only one PC available at the Bury Record Office, a backlog soon accumulated. FOSRO has come to the rescue by donating two laptops for the group. This has meant that the group has the capability of allowing three volunteers to enter data at the same time, thus greatly speeding up the process. It is hoped that volunteers will also be able to transcribe direct from the books, greatly increasing speed of progress.

The Record Office is planning to put part of the data onto the Record Office Database CALM, matching it with images of the pages, which will be made available via the new Record Office website.

The picture shows two of the volunteers, Glenys Proctor and Rita Burr, using the laptops to enter and check the data. The rather large pile of forms beside Glenys is only one of the books! With luck and the determined dedication of the volunteers the backlog will soon be a thing of the past.



Cautley and Barefoot Architectural Practice

The cataloguing of the Cautley and Barefoot collection (HG400) is now complete. The collection is made up of three sections, the first of personal and business papers of the practice; the second includes the earliest drawings and are listed by subject: church alterations, war memorials, rectories, hospitals, houses, banks, schools etc. and the third list contains drawings mainly from the Peter Barefoot partnerships and date between the late 1950s to 1980s, and include new or additions to private houses, businesses, local authority housing etc.

The types and range of plans are varied, starting with alterations and additions to churches and church buildings from all over the county, as well as public buildings such as the Ipswich Central Library, the Ipswich and East Suffolk Hospital, and the Bartlett Convalescent Home in Felixstowe. The businesses include Lloyds Bank, making alterations or additions to their branches, not only in Suffolk, but also in Essex, Cambridgeshire and Norfolk, as

well as local businesses such as Mann Egerton and Tolly Cobbold.

Some of the drawings from the third section are for Debenham Modern School in the late 1970s when new classrooms and laboratories were added; development of the Haverhill Clements Lane Estate as part of the London overspill scheme for London County Council in the mid-1960s and landscaping of Brentford Dock in the 1970s by Peter Barefoot, as well as extensions to several telephone exchanges!

Over 25,000 items have been listed and catalogued onto CALM. One hundred and ten drawings have been scanned to be linked with the new online catalogue. The listed items have been put on inner rolls, wrapped and reboxed and as a result the volume of the drawings has increased, but it will be easier for researchers to use the drawings in the future.

Calling for Volunteers

The Cautley and Barefoot collection was completed through the hard work of Hillary Ritchie and a number of volunteers. Volunteering can be great fun and provides the experience of working with the wonderful archives the Record Office strives to protect. It's a chance to make new friends and contribute to archival heritage. Please contact the branch where you would like to volunteer to seek further information.

Acquisitions

During the last year FOSRO have been involved in bidding for historical documents that have come up for auction or are being sold privately so that they can be deposited in the Record Office. Most of the notifications come to FOSRO via the Suffolk Record Office which is alerted by sellers, auction houses or The National Archives. There are many ways in which a bid can be placed – either in person, by phone, over the Internet or by placing a ‘commissioned bid’. FOSRO have used both commission and personal bids, and sometimes the auction is viewed ‘live’ on the Internet. Unfortunately, we are not always successful as there are many ‘private buyers’ bidding for the same documents. This is forcing the price up and sometimes an item ‘sells’ for much higher than that agreed by the committee. FOSRO has tended to exceed the top of the estimated price but they have to bear in mind that on top of the price may be VAT and buyer’s premium, which can add up to another 40%.

During the year we have been disappointed not to acquire some important documents, many of which have been sold for two or three times greater than our bid. For example, FOSRO bid for ‘Bungay Boys School log book 1900-1939’ (price estimate £30-£40) but it was sold for £110. More recently, FOSRO bid for ‘REDGRAVE and BOTESDALE (Suffolk) Enclosure Act 1815 Surveyor's Book’ (estimate £120) but was again sadly outbid even though FOSRO bid was for £310. We will keep trying so that the documents can be deposited at the Record Office and are available to all.



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