

# *Glamorgan Archives*



*DISCOVERING THE PAST*

1 March 2014- 28 February 2015



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# *Introduction*

Welcome to Glamorgan Archives' 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Report describing activities during the period from 1 March 2014 to 28 February 2015.

## Archives Accreditation

2014 was the year Glamorgan Archives achieved Archive Accreditation. In 2012, the UK archive sector began creating an Archive Service Accreditation Standard. The aim was to develop criteria which organisations in both the public and private sector could use to improve the viability and visibility of archives. Glamorgan Archives was one of 20 organisations across the UK which piloted the scheme, feedback from which informed the development of the standard, criteria and guidance.

The final scheme has been operating since March 2013, with less than two dozen services achieving full accreditation in that time. Glamorgan is now the first local authority service in Wales to have met the standard. The award letter states:

*The Panel considered this to be an outstanding application. The service has strong and clear core values, and is delivering against its aims in a holistic way with benefits for all stakeholders. The impact of a new, high performing building has been considerable, but the service is also notably strong in workforce innovation, in audience development and in coping with financial and strategic change. The Panel noted and welcomed the service's willingness to grapple with difficult issues which challenge the sector as a whole, such as digital preservation.*



The assessors noted the clear vision of our role, the state-of-the-art facilities and the range of innovative access and volunteer projects enabled through local and wider partnerships. It is rewarding to have hard won good practice acknowledged and for staff to see their efforts noted and approved.

This view is supported by our peers who continue to mine our experience for their own service development and building projects. This year assistance has been given to archive services in Carmarthenshire, Conwy, Cornwall, Dudley, Flintshire, Lincolnshire, Powys, and Suffolk, National Museum of Wales and WEC International. We have contributed to consultations on the future development of the built heritage in Wales, the National Library's proposals for a national conservation centre and national debates on the contribution of heritage and cultural sectors to improving lives in Wales.

# Skills

## Conserving Local Communities Heritage CLOCH

Part of the Heritage Lottery Fund's 'Skills for the Future' programme, CLOCH has supported yearlong paid traineeships in the heritage sector for 16 young men over a period of 3 years. The last trainees completed in January and an external evaluation of the project concluded that it had *“successfully delivered a range of positive impacts for trainees, placement organisations and the wider heritage sector in Wales.”*

CLOCH has provided individuals with a life changing opportunity. It has enabled the development of integrated partnerships between heritage organisations across south Wales and between the local authority and higher education sectors. It has skilled staff in new ways of working and provided them with the qualifications to progress and to assess work-based learning. Best of all, it has put young unemployed local men into work.



The project ended with a major event in Cardiff City Stadium at which the Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism distributed certificates and the heads of Participation and Learning at HLF, All Wales Digital Inclusion Communities 2.0, and Creative and Cultural Skills, spoke of the project's value and the potential for continued partnerships. Appropriately, given the purpose of the project, all 3 senior managers are women.

## Volunteers

Lessons learnt from CLOCH are being fed into the volunteer programme which continues to develop. In the last 12 months volunteers have contributed 7,547 hours to the work of the office, time which is the equivalent of 4.25 staff members.

The work they do is additional and complementary to staff. This year it has been largely focussed on extracting from the Collection information on life during war-time so that we can respond quickly and efficiently to requests for help with commemoration projects.

Volunteers have transcribed WW1 diaries and letters and have written articles and blog posts on their findings. One archivist has completed a volunteer management qualification and we have welcomed our first group volunteer visits through NADFAS. The NADFAS volunteers have surface cleaned all our tithe plans, many of our OS plans and are currently cleaning, reboxing and indexing, for a national on-line project, crew agreements for the port of Cardiff.





Some volunteers are retired but others come for experience in the sector or to improve their chances of finding paid employment. This year we have supported, and learned from, 3 student placements in conservation and 2 trainee conservators from Pembrokeshire and Gwent Archives while CyMAL's conservation advisor spent a week shadowing the team. . ECTARCT has placed 3 Catalanian archivists on 3-month work experience with us.

We have supported 3 students on archive distance learning courses and 2 students from ACT which arranges work based accredited ICT training in Cardiff. We have also continued our partnership with supported employment agencies Elite and Quest with 7 placements this year, mainly for people on the autistic spectrum, to manage routine and develop confidence and social skills in preparation for employment. With Elite's assistance we were able to offer a period of paid work through a DWP youth employment scheme to one young man and are working to set up another on a similar temporary scheme. Employment references have been provided for 11 former volunteers.

# Access

While individual use of the searchroom has held steady at around the 3,500 mark for the last few years visits from groups has increased. This year we have welcomed 22 groups as visitors to the Archives as well as 19 classes from 10 primary and 2 secondary schools, 561 students in all, while group visits from 6 courses at Cardiff University and the University of South Wales have introduced 82 students to the Archives. Just under 4,500 remote enquiries have been answered and 11,500 items produced from the Collection for use in the building, figures on a par with recent years.

Staff have attended and contributed to heritage events in our each of our funding authorities. Our summer events programme delivered talks by Catrin Collier on her new Hughesovka novel series and by staff of National Museum of Wales on summer holidays and collecting memories of the Miners' Strike. We had a talk on bathing costumes, films of Barry and Penarth from the Welsh Screen and Sound Archive and a walking tour of Barry Island supported, back at base, by a display of related documents. We took part in Open Doors both at the Archives and in partnership with Gwent Archives colleagues at the Winding House museum. A high point was being run by year 5 pupils of Ysgol Nant y Parc in Senghennydd on Kids in Museums Taking Over Day. The day was attended by one of the national directors of Kids in Museums and a volunteer from the organisation and captured by a photographer from Media Wales. The class teacher commented *"In terms of an educational visit it was one of the best ones I have been on...The children... got a really hands on feel for running the archive"*





As might be expected, much of our community engagement work has been connected to the WW1 centenary commemorations. We are partners in a number of initiatives including Cardiff Remembers and Rhondda Remembers. Staff attended events at Cwmaman, Grangetown and Albany Primary school in Cardiff, as well as the launch of the Wales@War project (on a battleship!) and the Gwent and the Great War exhibition (at Gwent Archives). The work of our volunteers was celebrated with the launch of our blog and web resource dedicated to the war period, *Summoned from the Hillsides*. The blog originated in January as *75 75ths* with posts based on the 75<sup>th</sup> accession received each year of our existence interspersed with brief histories of accommodation, governance and county archivists. Since August the blog has commemorated the war, beginning with the diary of Captain Mervyn Crawshay. An exhibition on J.M Staniforth's WW1 cartoons was hosted in the summer with an accompanying talk.



Existing partnerships have been continued and new partnerships developed. This year we have been pleased to start working on projects with NoFit State Circus, the Women's Workshop in Butetown, Cardiff, Mencap, Cowbridge Harvest group and Rhiwbina Civic Trust. We are assisting the all Wales tithe plan project, Cynefin, and supporting local volunteers who are transcribing the tithe apportionments. Staff attend the Cardiff and Vale LGBT forum and to celebrate LGBT History Month we hosted a talk on researching sexuality.



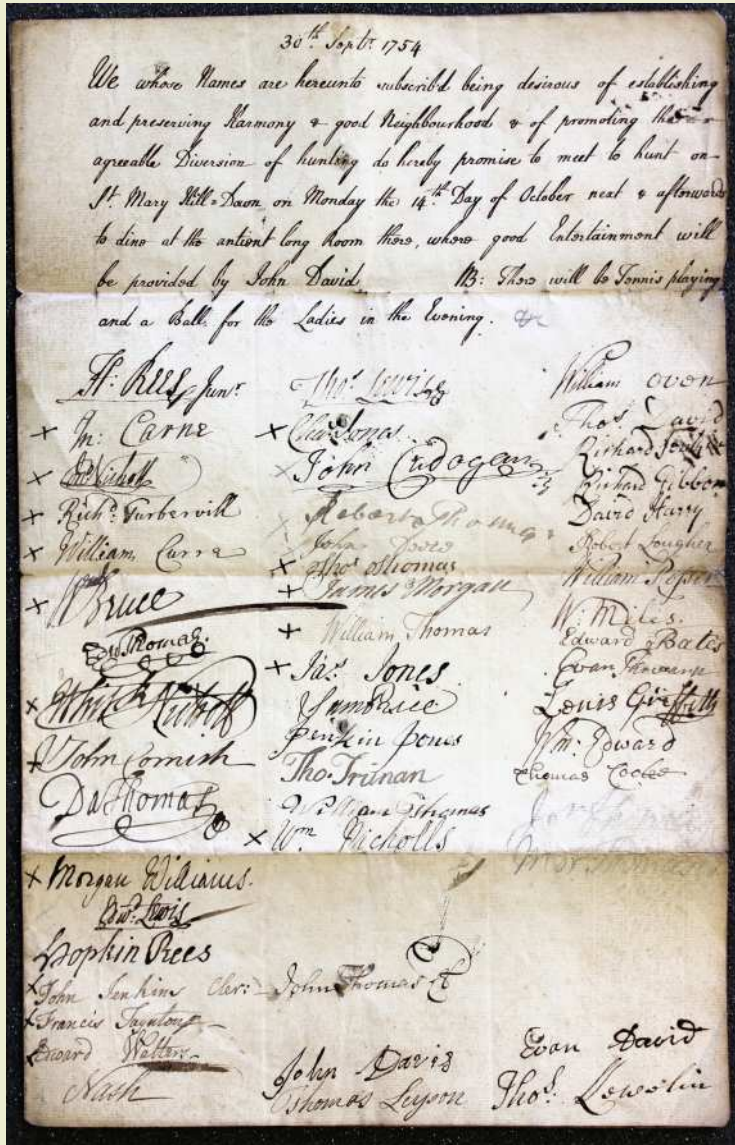
The large room intended for group meetings is increasingly booked by training providers who make a valuable contribution to our income target. With the approval of the Joint Committee a portion of the underspend from last year’s budget was used to divide the existing search room and provide a space for school and other groups which have a shorter planning cycle. The new room, Llynfi, is also a useful space for temporary exhibitions. As well as the cartooning exhibition mentioned above a Welsh Government exhibition on taxation was shown to publicise new legislative powers. Jane Hutt, Minister for Finance, was welcomed to the building to see both the exhibition and a selection of documents from the Collection showing historical local taxation in action.

<b>Total Visits</b>	<b>8425</b>
Searchroom users	3468
Groups & meetings	1237
Educational	643
Training (non-Archive)	3077

Our social media presence continues to develop with local and national press, television and radio picking up on stories. Staff have spoken on BBC Radio Wales and Radio Cymru and Made in Cardiff, while television companies have made 6 visits to film on site. The search room has featured on the One Show and X-Ray this year, the Senior Archivist is becoming a regular on Newyddion while the Glamorgan Archivist discussed topical features alongside Leanne Wood on Sunday Supplement. It is a pleasure to record that the responsibility for our increased public profile lies with Rhian Phillips and that her work was recognised this year with the Marketing Champion of the Year - Archives award, one of the Marketing Excellence Awards 2015. The awards are part of the Welsh Government's Attracting the Audience programme for museums, archives and libraries and recognise the work being done by staff across Wales.



# The Collection

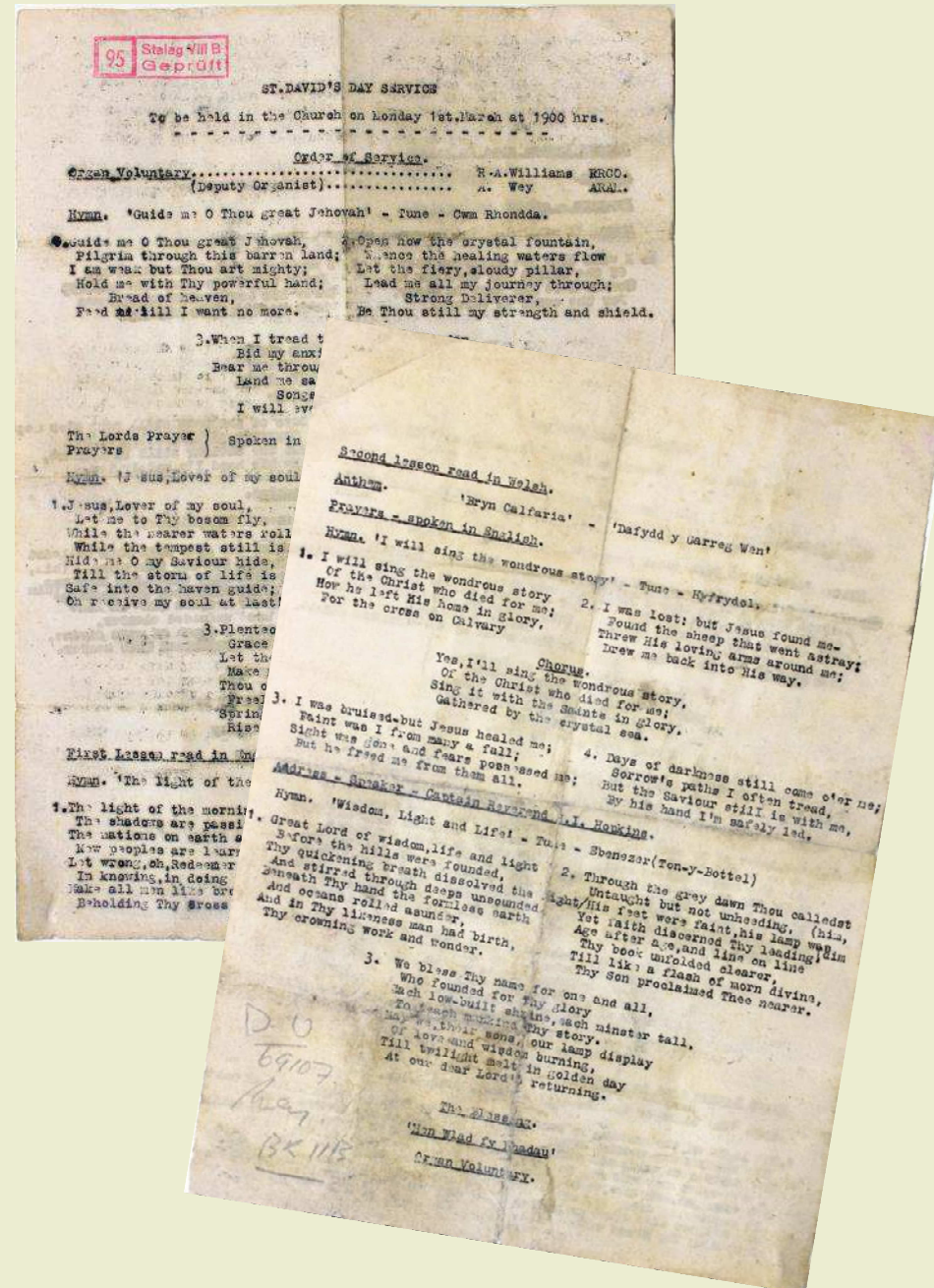


Increased publicity and increasing numbers using the building (almost 8500, an increase of 2,000 from the previous 2 years) have contributed to maintaining the flow of accessions to the Collection. In the 12 months of this report we have received 244 accessions (1 a day) from a wide variety of sources. Increasing quantities of material are being received from local authorities, schools and hospitals as institutions are closed and building estates rationalised. Lists of accessions can be found in the quarterly reports to the Glamorgan Archives Joint Committee on Cardiff Council's website and descriptions are uploaded to our on-line catalogue on completion.

An intriguing item relating to the St Mary Hill hunt was donated anonymously. The single sheet of paper is an agreement for local hunt supporters to meet and hunt on St Mary Hill down in October 1754. A meal was to be provided by John David and there was also to be tennis playing and a ball 'for the Ladies' in the evening. The agreement is signed by over fifty people, many of whom belong to local landed families.

Another anonymous deposit was an order of service for St David's Day 1943 at Stalag VIIIB, the German prisoner of war camp in Lamsdorf, Poland. The service included hymns, readings in Welsh and English, and Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau. It is believed the 'A. Wey', who is named as Deputy Organist, was a soldier from Canton, Cardiff. Further research will be carried out on the local connection

A more substantial donation came from the former owner of Circle Cinemas, a company owning several cinemas in south Wales from the 1970s onwards, including the Monico in Rhiwbina, Cardiff, the Cameo, Bargoed, the Theatre Royal, Barry and venues in Swansea. Popular culture was also represented by the records of Caerphilly Male Voice Choir, formed in 1906 by 20 members of the Caerphilly Cricket Club to raise funds for improving the club facilities. The deposit includes programmes, photographs, diaries and correspondence.



Family papers included an interesting collection from the Youngs of Ogmore Vale. Haydn Charles (Jack) Young, a collier's son, was born in Blaengarw in 1914, and joined the merchant navy at 14, later returning to Ogmore Vale where he played rugby for Ogmore Vale Rugby Club and in 1964 became district representative on the Welsh Rugby Union. He was a selector for the national team, 1969-1976, and president-elect of the Union at the time of his death in 1986. His wife, Winifred Hopkins from Pontycymer trained as a teacher at Bangor Normal College. Before her marriage she taught at Tondu Infants and Blaengarw Junior Schools and in 1941 she returned to work as head of the Ogmore wartime nursery. She continued after the war until her retirement in 1971. The deposit includes family papers and recollections by both Mr and Mrs Young and a photograph album from Ogmore Vale Nursery School.



We were pleased to receive from Mary Traynor, an architectural artist, sketches of buildings in Cardiff and the surrounding area highlighting the changing face of the region since the 1960s. This record of the built heritage is supported by another accession of over 100 photographs from E. Turner & Sons Limited, Builders and Contractors. The company was responsible for the construction of a series of notable buildings in the Cathays Park area of Cardiff as well as Cardiff Royal Infirmary, General Post Office, Central Free Library and National Provincial Bank.

Both accessions provided popular *Document of the Month* posts on the website. As many of the Turner photographs are unidentified an appeal to the public was launched through local press resulting in considerable publicity and many suggestions.



Christopher Taylor was an historian and writer who had an extensive interest in motor transport. Over the years Mr Taylor made numerous deposits of transport related records. Sadly he recently passed away and Glamorgan Archives have received additional records from his family including a Glamorgan Hackney carriages licences register, records of United Transport, vehicle registration files and research files on railway companies.

The largest series of records received was a set of vehicle files which would have originally been kept by the local registration office. The survival of such detailed vehicle files is quite unusual with most local authorities having vehicle licensing registers only, containing very little detail, or index cards which typically contain more information than the registers. At Glamorgan Archives only licensing registers are held, many of which are previous deposits from Chris Taylor. This series of vehicle files, therefore, would provide a great deal of information not currently available. As they arrived in poor condition funding has been granted for preservation work to be carried out before additional sorting and possible selection is carried out.

## The Future

It has been a successful and challenging year on all fronts as we continue to prove our worth to our funding authorities and to Welsh Government, satisfying our traditional users, extending access and supporting agendas for education and training. Nevertheless austerity continues to bite. Not only is the budget being reduced but costs have risen. The building has been reassessed resulting in a much increased rateable value and consequent annual business rate bill which we will struggle to meet. A number of options are being considered.

Many of the access activities reported here were funded through grants from CyMAL administered by Archives and Records Council Wales. Detailed cataloguing of the Theatre Royal playbills and National Coal Board records has been possible through similar grants enabling the temporary employment of additional staff. In conservation, major projects on the playbills were funded by the National Manuscripts Conservation Trust while papers connected with the development of the Bessemer process were conserved as part of an all Wales project on the steel industry, Forging Ahead, and funded from the same source. Grant aid will increasingly need to be sought to continue detailed listing, conservation and to broaden access.





Income generation is developing with all under-used space in office areas offered for rent. The accrual space in the repositories is rented to cultural heritage institutions seeking temporary secure accommodation.

Conservation services are being marketed and fees charged or increased for other additional services. Publications are more robustly promoted on our refreshed website which has a *Shop* section advertising all our saleable items and additional services



Staff have been affected. Although it has been possible to recruit an extra conservator the archivist who retired has not been replaced. Cardiff Council reduced staff hours this year with a consequent reduction in pay. The searchroom now opens at 10am so that access team staff do not accrue too much time. To meet the increase in business rates a further 2 professional posts, including the Deputy Glamorgan Archivist have been sacrificed, as well as 1 operational post. We will continue to provide the best service possible, to raise as much revenue as we can without detriment to the Collection or to our users, and we will explore options for survival.

In the bicentenary year of the Battle of Waterloo General Blucher's comment to his troops seems apposite, *"It looks pretty hopeless but we mustn't give in."* It certainly worked for him.



Susan Edwards  
Glamorgan Archivist





Best wishes to colleagues who have left us on voluntary severance

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