

# **Glamorgan** Archives

### **DISCOVERING THE PAST**

















### Welcome from Susan Edwards

The long launch year of the Glamorgan Archives' new building ended in March 2011. In celebration of the achievements of that first year a new style annual report has been introduced to present the year's highlights and indicate trends in service development. The immediacy possible with newly available communication methods such as Twitter, Facebook and Flickr produces a constant cascade of information about the documents we are offered, the people who come to see them and the way we promote the service but the narrative arc can be lost in the detail. This report records activity in a longer time frame so that our successes can be more clearly articulated. The intention is to promote our work to a wider audience and encourage increased participation from our local communities.

Staff moved into the new building on 5 January 2010 bringing to an end 70 years of occupation of the Glamorgan Building. The site was convenient and the building impressive but the accommodation had long ceased to be appropriate for staff, users or document storage.









Off-site storage had been necessary for 40 years before the move, groups were difficult to accommodate, staff and volunteers shared desks and computers, space for cataloguing, sorting and conservation was severely limited and the strong room conditions were a constant concern. The process of acquiring new accommodation was long drawn out, leaving plenty of preparation and planning time. That, together with existing systems and procedures for offsite retrieval and an established culture of working through emergencies, meant that it was possible to maintain services in the existing building while the Collection was moving into the new building. The last day in the old searchroom was Christmas Eve 2009. Delayed delivery of searchroom furniture meant that individual visitors were not encouraged until fit-out had been completed in mid February but some were accommodated and group visits and tours were arranged successfully throughout January 2010. This first year has seen a lot of changes for staff and regular users. We have piloted new ways of working, improved our existing practices and planned future developments.



The key to the success of the building is its flexibility both in terms of room use and in the furnishing. Foldable tables with castors can be easily moved between spaces and reconfigured for use by groups, researchers or staff. Even the chairs are flexible; one batch converts into individual desks, a feature which never fails to impress. The aspirations for the service in its new accommodation are already being met and extended, a credit to all the staff who worked on the preparation and planning for the eventual move and those who have continued to develop services from the new site.



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Comment from users has been favourable and professional colleagues are complimentary.

Dr. Christopher Kitching, an authority on archive buildings, visited in the course of updating his book on British archive facilities. He said: *it is one of the biggest (and best) local authority archives in the UK, and I was most impressed by the degree of flexibility you have been able to build into the spaces, with careful planning.* 

## The Launch Year

Tours for depositors and regular users had been arranged in 2009 with invitations included in Christmas cards sent to 3,000 individuals. Despite the severe weather, 220 people took up our offer. Feedback was enthusiastic and we also received many requests for visits later in the year when the weather improved; these have since been accommodated. Once the searchroom furniture arrived the building was opened up to individual users from mid February, with the first week by invitation to allow for systems testing. A new structure for out of hours opening was trialled during 2010 and users asked for feed-back on their preference and needs. In response the trial was made permanent in 2011. The searchroom is now open on the second Saturday morning of every month, from 9 to 12, and until 8pm on the following Monday. The service is exactly the same as during regular hours, with no need for advance notice and documents are produced on demand. The extension is intended to help people who have commitments during working hours and especially to help those who live at a distance, particularly people living or working in our contributing authorities. The new searchroom with adjustable task chairs for all and increased computer access has been welcomed by staff and users alike. With plenty of space available it is finally possible to run group events without impacting on individual users or cataloguing staff. Figures for use reflect the increasing trend for use by groups and show the continuing high level, compared with some neighbouring offices, of remote enquiries, currently running at the same level as on-site visits. Figures are for number of visits not individual visitors.



- •Researchers using the Searchroom: 2351
- Documents consulted: 10748
- •Enquiries received: 4826
- •People visiting the building as part of a group: 2328

Groups welcomed have included several family history courses, history societies from throughout our funding authorities, special interest societies and educational institutions and support agencies. Group visits are free during opening hours. National and regional organisations have made use of the improved facilities for their meetings. Professional colleagues planning new buildings have come to tour the building and discuss the project from all over the UK. One local MP, one Australian MP, three Assembly ministers and a Lord were among the VIPs received over the year.

Launch events focussed on different parts of the service.

The opening event for the Cardiff conference of the Institute of Conservation (ICON) was a tour of the building with emphasis on conservation facilities. Sixty international conservators attended.

The Open University chose the venue to launch its new local history MA with an evening event attended by 35 academics, including the Head of the Open University in Wales. The public space on the ground floor accommodated a lecture by Professor Chris Williams of Swansea University, a display of documents and a splendid buffet, all



carefully zoned. More academics followed with a meeting of History Research Wales attended by 32 academics from universities all over Wales. The theme of the day was how to enhance the profile and maximise the impact of historical research.

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In a new venture, Colin Thomas, author and documentary film-maker, gave an evening lecture on 'Whatever Happened to Hughesovka?' at Glamorgan Archives in November. The audience included several descendants of those whose families went out to work in Hughesovka, students of Russian history and the Lithuanian consul. Colin Thomas has been involved in the Hughesovka story for many years and showed extracts from his television series and radio plays on the subject. The success of this evening has prompted us to develop a lecture series for future years.



Professional bodies have been encouraged to use the building. Those choosing to do so have included the National Council on Archives, Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments Wales, CyMAL Advisory Council (in this case the first time the body had met outside CyMAL offices in Aberystwyth since its inception), and the Life Long Learning UK Library Archives and Information Services Panel. The Advisory Council met on a day when South Wales Police were practicing riot control at the football stadium and adjacent approach road; the minister was most impressed with the extra security! The Society of Archivists held its Wales Digital Records Roadshow here and the Wales and South West regions of the society held a joint meeting on site. For all events tours of the building are on offer. Demand was such that they are now a regular monthly feature, bookable in advance. Again, no charge is made.

#### TOP MARKS FOR GLAMORGAN ARCHIVES

The National Archives Self-Assessment questionnaire is an annual survey of local authority record offices in England and Wales. Answers are analysed and results used to rank services according to their performance in 5 categories, governance, documentation, access and outreach, preservation and conservation, and buildings, security and environment. Results of what will be the final Assessment were released in January 2011 with Glamorgan Archives designated a 4\* service, the highest rank, the best in Wales and 5<sup>th</sup> overall. The office has improved in every section of the assessment since the move to our new premises. We were assessed as the best in conservation and preservation, scoring 92.5% (previous score, 71%) and equal first in buildings, security and environment, with 97.5% (previous score 43%).



### **The Collection**



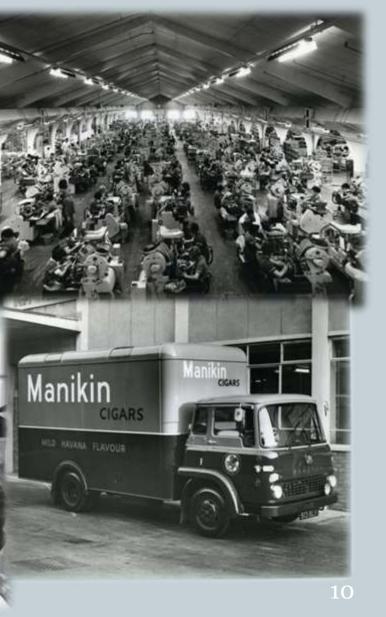
A total of 386 new accessions was received during the period covered by this report. Some of these had been offered earlier but depositors were asked to delay until the new repositories were available as there was no room left in the former accommodation to receive additions to the Collection. The 4 new strongrooms contain 18,689 shelves or 17 kilometres of shelving. The environment is controlled to meet the required British Standard for temperature and relative humidity. Almost all the shelving, and the map cabinets, are on mobile racks to maximise storage space and the building has been planned with 25 years of expansion space. Full details of accessions received are listed in the Quarterly Reports of the Glamorgan Archivist available on Cardiff County Council's website.

A few examples are illustrated below.

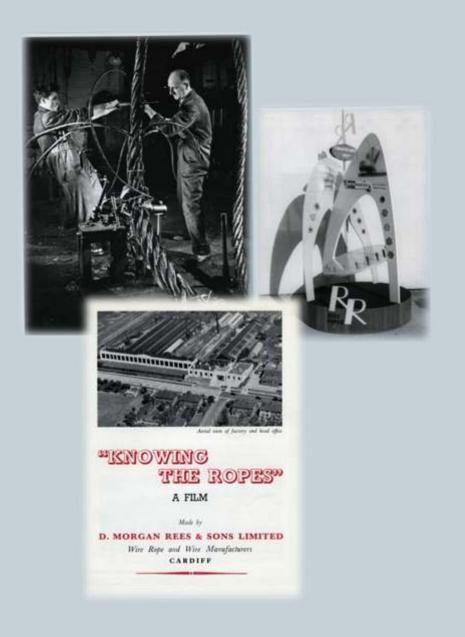
#### J R Freeman & Son of Cardiff Records, 1900-2009 (D662)

The J R Freeman company was founded by James Reykers Freeman in London, his son George acquiring a factory in Cardiff during the 1890s. With tobacco leaf arriving at the port from around the world, the factory was ideally positioned to turn the raw material into cigars for the growing British market. Records deposited include photographs of cigar making processes and individuals, brochures, material relating to social events and printed history of the company.





#### D Morgan Rees & Sons Ltd Wire Rope Makers of Cardiff Records, 1931-1962 (D683)



D Morgan Rees and Sons Limited (and its two whollyowned subsidiaries D Morgan Rees & Sons Ltd and Morgan Rees Wire Ropes Ltd) was incorporated in 1947 to take over the business carried on by a company of the same name since 1931 at premises in Grove Works, Whitchurch. The business was engaged in the manufacture of a variety of steel wire ropes for engineering, and various industries. In 1962 the company was taken over by British Ropes Ltd, Doncaster.

Records include newspaper cuttings and assorted papers relating to the establishment of the company (1931) and subsequent take over by British Ropes Ltd in 1962. There is a great deal of advertising material and photographs. The collection also includes a black and white film reel entitled 'Knowing the Ropes' commissioned by the company, this will be transferred to the Screen and Sound Archive of Wales who will supply the Archives with a DVD copy.

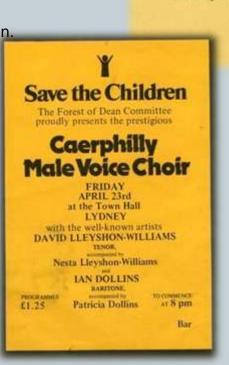
#### Caerphilly Male Voice Choir, 1939-2005 (D733)

The choir was established in 1906, however the earliest deposited record dates from c1967 and they continue to c2004. The records consist of committee minutes, concert programmes, correspondence, photographs and engagement diaries. The choir has toured the USA and in 1977 it sang in Westminster Abbey at the memorial service for the late Foreign Secretary

Anthony Crosland MP.

Minutes, programmes, diaries and correspondence make up the collection.





Caerphilly Male Voice Choir 1906 – 1986

80th Anniversary Dinner at Great Hall, Caerphilly Castle Saturday 28th March 1987

------ Mervyn Rowlins

### The Catalogue

#### CALM

To meet the higher standard set by the accommodation finding aids are being brought into the twenty-first century. Hand list binders have been taken out of the searchroom as public access computers make them available electronically. The catalogue has been converted to CALM, archival software which allows keyword searches. Users have entered the computer age with minimum difficulty. Staff guidance and some revisions to the search interface have resolved teething problems, and many people have managed to locate items that they would not previously have known existed. The catalogue is currently available only on Cardiff County Council's intranet so can be searched, via the Glamorgan Archives website, in Cardiff libraries and civic offices. Full internet access remains the goal which we hope to achieve within the next six months.



#### PLWYF

Access to parish registers has improved dramatically from the previous facsimile hard copies. The majority of the Llandaff diocese parishes allowed the Genealogical Society of Utah's volunteers to digitise their registers as part of an all Wales project. Eventually all these will be available on-line through Find my past. Meanwhile, those deposited here are available electronically in the building. The resource combines a database of the parish indexes compiled by the Glamorgan Family History Society with the digital images and can be searched in a variety of ways. The digital images are of a particularly high quality, allowing searchers to zoom in on individual entries; the electronic equivalent of a magnifying glass. Plwyf contains 140,000 images of pages comprising 462,781 baptisms, 395,969 burials and 63,142 marriage entries.





#### WALES POWERING THE WORLD

'Wales Powering the World' is an all Wales project, funded by the National Cataloguing Grants Programme, in which significant business collections from repositories across Wales have been catalogued. Detailed catalogues are now available for two collections from Glamorgan Archives which are particularly significant for researching the industrial development of the region: Cardiff Incorporated Chamber of Commerce (DCOMC) and Powell Duffryn Limited (DPD).

#### CARDIFF LIBRARY COLLECTION

Glamorgan Archives administered a CyMAL grant originally awarded to Cardiff Library to scope the manuscripts collection remaining in the library and survey its conservation needs through a Preservation Assessment Survey to be analysed by the British Library.

The historical value of the Cardiff Manuscripts (in the custody of both Cardiff Central Library and Glamorgan Archives) cannot be doubted. They include a very large number of individual items of extraordinary historical value - of national and international importance - of considerable variety more usually associated with national repositories and university archives. Taken as a whole, the Cardiff Manuscripts held in Cardiff Central Library provide a priceless resource for the study of religious, literary,

philological, topographical and social history unmatched in Wales outside the National Library. Collection Level Descriptions were written for the overall collection as well as for 33 collections already transferred to Glamorgan Archives. In addition, item level descriptions have been complied for three of the smaller collections: Cardiff Society of Sailmakers' records, Orielton estate records and National Union of Journalists, South Wales branch records.

#### SAVED FOR THE NATION

Thanks to the Government's Acceptance in Lieu scheme Glamorgan Archives has been approved as the permanent home for the Aberdare and Lyndhurst papers, which have been held on deposit since the late 1960s. The scheme is one of the primary ways of ensuring that important cultural treasures pass into the UK's public collections. Both the Aberdare and Lyndhurst papers have been deemed to be of significant historical importance to be given in place of inheritance tax.

The papers of the Bruce family, Barons Aberdare (DBR) are wide-ranging, shedding light not only on the history of south Wales through the family estate papers, but also on some of the foremost politicians, artists and authors of the mid-nineteenth century through the correspondence of Henry Austin Bruce (1815-1895). He was created first Baron Aberdare in 1873 and served as Liberal MP for Merthyr Tydfil, as well as holding a number of political offices, including Home Secretary.

Elparqued I Gais. 12 Septer. 1864. Pisipo Moros, Na galas sogais insport. : l'écue Ligar in ligos and his Jugeapiant làs owoic Wygoois Eine viertet Aquilles in Argy nai this 1 100000 1 Corazas

Among his correspondents are such prominent figures as Robert Browning, Thomas Carlyle, Benjamin Disraeli, William Gladstone, Edward Lear, William Holman Hunt, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Anthony Trollope and Queen Victoria. The topics range from Gladstone's anxiety over troubles in Ireland, Queen Victoria's concern for Bruce's sick child to light-hearted banter from poet and artist Edward Lear, complete with doodles on some of his letters. Other members of the Bruce household were also in correspondence with other 'celebrities' of the day, including J.M. Barrie, and Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, later Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother. Lord Lyndhurst, John Singleton Copley (1772-1863), son of the famous painter of the same name, was linked to the Bruce family and his papers have also been given to the nation (DLY). John Singleton Copley junior was born in Boston, Massachusetts and later moved to England where he became a barrister, rising through the ranks to become Lord Chancellor. He also moved in interesting circles and corresponded with leading politicians, artists and authors of his day.

### Conservation

During the period covered by this report conservation staff have dealt with over 33,000 documents, volumes, maps and plans, photographs and glass negatives, and made 2,300 boxes. A system is in place to check accessions for conservation requirements new including cleaning and packaging. Accessioning and cataloguing staff work closely with the conservation team to ensure that all items receive appropriate treatment before reaching their final location, and in particular to identify contaminated material which must be isolated until the contaminants can be removed before reaching the repositories. The new building has rooms at the rear entrance for just such an eventuality and they have been well used during the year.







#### TURNING BACK TIME

A grant of over £6,500 for a project entitled 'Turning Back Time' was received from CyMAL. Glamorgan Archives holds tithe plans for about 50 parishes in the diocese of Llandaff, roughly half the ancient parishes in the diocese. The project has funded restorative conservation on four tithe plans identified through a conservation assessment as being particularly fragile. The series has always been heavily used and many plans were repaired in the 1950s and 60s at the Public Record Office and in-house using treatments and materials which it is now necessary to reverse. The project thus has an interest for the history of conservation in the UK. As the maps are physically large the 3 metre by 4 metre wallboard in the conservation studio has been in regular use for the first time.

Various linked projects using volunteers are planned including partnerships with local history societies to index the tithe apportionments for these parishes by both personal and place/field name. The index would link into the plans and make them much easier to use and to understand. It is intended that aspects of this project will inform the methodology of 'Cynefin: Mapping Wales' Sense of Place', an Archives and Records Council Wales project to digitise all of Wales' tithe maps for which a grant application has been submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

### **Community Engagement**

#### PROMOTING EQUALITY

As historical resources are increasingly provided online Glamorgan Archives supports campaigns offering basic training and confidence building to demystify computing for older people. These have included Age UK's country-wide ITea and Biscuits campaign and the BBC's First Click.



#### INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

2011 is the centenary of International Women's Day and so generated extra media interest, and Archive involvement. The Glamorgan Archivist was filmed for a news item on BBC Wales Today talking about records relating to women. NIACE Dysgu Cymru held a conference in the Archives on the theme Women and Education to celebrate the centenary. Speakers included Jane Hutt AM, Minister for Business and Budget. Records relating to women and education were displayed. The Glamorgan Archivist attended a series of events organised by the feminist group, Breaking the Waves at which oral history projects were discussed and a blog, now published as a book, by a former archivist from the National Archives, presented. The exhibition on Greenham Common prepared for the 20th anniversary of the march, was given to a Soroptimists group working on a display for the Waterfront Museum in Swansea.



#### VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers make an enormous contribution to the work of the Archives. Experience has shown that volunteering benefits both volunteers and those with whom they work. The volunteer programme attracts a range of people. Some are interested in a career in archives or conservation and want a taster of the work. Others are retired or currently unemployed and want a meaningful and challenging task which keeps them motivated and gives a structure to their week.

In a fairly new venture we have been accepting placements from employment agencies giving people who have been long-term unemployed an opportunity to try out their skills in a non-challenging environment which is still a work place. Through this scheme we have been able to offer casual employment to two individuals and assisted others into full-time work elsewhere. These are not people interested in archives but seeking employment through IT and clerical skills.

Employment agencies for whose clients work placements at the Archives have been arranged include charities helping people with disabilities to find work; some are on the autism spectrum. These placements have contributed a great deal to staff awareness and suggested ways to help visitors to the Archives. The work volunteers do reflects their differing agendas but is always carried out under staff supervision and is work which would not otherwise be done.

Statistics for the year are:

Total number of volunteers: 34

•Hours contributed: 2230

Secondary school work placements: 9

#### 'Wedding Day of George and Tom Hurrah!

The Wedding Day Thursday showery and cold. Crowds of people about and lots of flags flying, triumphal arches etc. We drove over after an early breakfast to the Forest interaction of the found Uncle Roland arrived. We all started soon after for Llantwit Church about a mile and a half off amid immense cheering, Six carriages altogether ... six bridesmaids in one, including Helen Crawshay she looked a perfect little angel so beautiful and fair in her white dress. Everything passed off well at the Church. I shook hands with Laura and gave Isabel a kiss of congratulations then all back to the Forest amid tremendous cheering. Splendid breakfast and two magnificent wedding cakes. '

and John W So Wednesday Rout 15 12 Chnal Honos thech nunto with Van In Viten Val with little Helen Came on in the evening they returned to Shal about to a clock then annaches Cash of China Hor all lais out the various Amount on along Sall " the Gracingroom then Olynes the bellementre: after warny as weat 9. d. S. to Wordlant. 19 4 Colo M. Wedding 20 plabort flat of

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Volunteers have contributed to:

Cleaning and cataloguing of building plans from Maesteg (UDM), Porthcawl (UDPC) and Penybont (UDBR)

councils.

•Inputting and editing catalogues on the CALM electronic catalogue.

Sorting, listing and packaging new accessions.

•Transcribing letters in the Bruce family papers written to H. A. Bruce (the first Lord Aberdare) from figures such

as Gladstone, Queen Victoria and Edward Lear (DBR).

•Cleaning and repackaging the records of the Cardiff Chamber of Commerce (DCOMC) and crew agreements.

•Transcribing the diaries of Henry Fothergill, 1860-1914(D553).

#### EDUCATION

A measurable tribute to the continuing success of our programme to raise the profile of the service with educational users and to increase accessibility for young people is the high number of school visits we have attracted.

#### Caerphilly

•Hengoed Primary, 30 students and staff Cardiff:

- •Ninian Park School, 46
- •Creigiau School, 25
- •Ton-yr-ywen School History Club, 23
- Rhondda Cynon Taf
  - •Maesycoed Primary, 30
  - •Cwmclydach School, 25
  - •Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic Comprehensive, 9





Topics studied have ranged from World War 2, through the Tynewydd Pit disaster and the Bute Dowry Fund to the 1984 Miners' Strike and the Cwmclydach floods of 1910. Students enjoy seeing their own localities in the records and tracing changes from old maps and photographs. All visits include a tour of the building and younger children enjoy completing quizzes on their way round and receive souvenir boxes made on the Kasemake machine to take home.



Regular educational events have continued in the new premises with Digital Storytelling led by the National Museum of Wales, teacher familiarisation days co-ordinated with Careers Wales and EBP, monthly meetings of post-graduate users.

A secondary school teachers' familiarisation day was held as a joint venture between Careers Wales organisations for Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan and our neighbours in Gwent, with some of the teachers coming from Gwent schools. Following a previously successful format the morning session was a tour of the new building and a display of documents which could be used for classroom work with participants researching their own topics in the afternoon.

Areas of interest ranged from Charles I letters for the Stuart period to police records showing patterns of crime. On this occasion the teachers were not only teaching history, but also geography and politics so staff were able to showcase a wide range of documents. Subsequently three school visits were arranged as a result of the day.

#### **UNIVERSITIES**

Each month the *First Friday* group of postgraduate students meets at the Archives. The aim of the group is to discuss issues relating to their research and in particular the use of original sources and visits to Archives.

Staff are actively involved in career events at local universities and colleges. This year the Senior Archivist attended a careers fair for history students at the University of Glamorgan's Treforest campus, where he was part of a panel of graduates of history and related disciplines answering questions about their careers. The event was intended to encourage students to think about potential career paths to pursue after graduation. It was also a useful vehicle for publicising the Glamorgan Archives as a centre for academic research.

A member of staff attended the Business Archives Council 'Meet the Archivists' day in London in November. The event was designed to explore ways in which new research students can identify and use business records in a surprising variety of different research fields. Most of the other archive services represented at this event were specialised business archives, and Glamorgan was the only archive service from outside London. An offer has been made to host a future event in Glamorgan Archives to attract academics from Wales and the west of England.

Groups from higher education establishments across Glamorgan have had introductory sessions at the Archives. Students included first year undergraduates taking modules in family and local history at UWIC; humanities postgraduates from Cardiff University; and MA students in Medieval History at Cardiff University who requested a display of medieval manuscripts from the Cardiff Library collection.

In January a talk was given to second year students at the Welsh School of Architecture. Their current research project 'Urban Conditions' focuses on the potential redevelopment of Pontypridd. In addition to details of records held relating to their subject more general information regarding local authority archives was provided which may prove useful for the students later in their careers.

A new venture, a workshop for artists, was held in March and attended by students from UWIC. Documents chosen for their visual impact were displayed to help spark the students' imaginations and to be used as possible starting points for future art projects. Following the success of this workshop a UWIC lecturer and novelist approached the Access team to discuss the potential for a similar event this time aimed at creative writing students.

#### MEDIA AND PUBLICITY

Links with media and film have continued into the new building with news and documentary programmes being filmed on site.



•To commemorate the centenary of Scott's exhibition letters from Wilfred Bruce, his brother-in-law, who sailed with the Terra Nova from Cardiff (ref. DSS) were filmed for the ITV news.

•BBC Wales' genealogical programme, Coming Home, used documents from the Collection in the programmes on Michael Sheen and Michael Ball while Sarah Green was filmed in the searchroom.

• Local television company Green Bay TV filmed Eddie Butler, former Welsh rugby international and television commentator, consulting documents and photographs relating to the Tonypandy Riots for a documentary marking their centenary.

•The acceptance of the Bruce and Lyndhurst papers by the Government in lieu of inheritance tax attracted widespread publicity in the press, radio and television. The Glamorgan Archivist was interviewed for the BBC Radio Wales Drive Time programme and Richard Morgan, Archivist, appeared on S4C's Newyddion which ran an extensive piece on the collection, largely filmed in the Archives.

S4C's Wedi 7 used Glamorgan Archives' photographs for a feature on the historic shopping arcades in Cardiff, including images showing Howells and David Morgan department stores.

The Archives' proximity to the BBC studios in Llandaff and the willingness of staff to appear at short notice has led to regular requests; all good publicity for the office and its services. The Deputy Glamorgan Archivist featured on BBC Radio Wales' Jamie and Louise programme on 29 March speaking about house history. The site of the BBC Studios in Llandaff, previously 'a gentleman's residence' and the turnpike tollhouse was used to illustrate points. She also spoke on 'Good Evening Wales' on a feature about the 2011 census.



A press release 'Living Over the Shop 1911 Style' featured images from the 1911 census of Howells and David Morgan's department stores in Cardiff where 140 and 99 people respectively were registered as living 'over the shop' on census night. The article appeared in Wales Online. Articles are added to the website newsfeed where possible.



This brief account of the initial period of occupation describes our achievements and sets the scene for the future. I look forward to welcoming readers to Glamorgan Archives in the hope that you will enjoy it as much as we do.

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