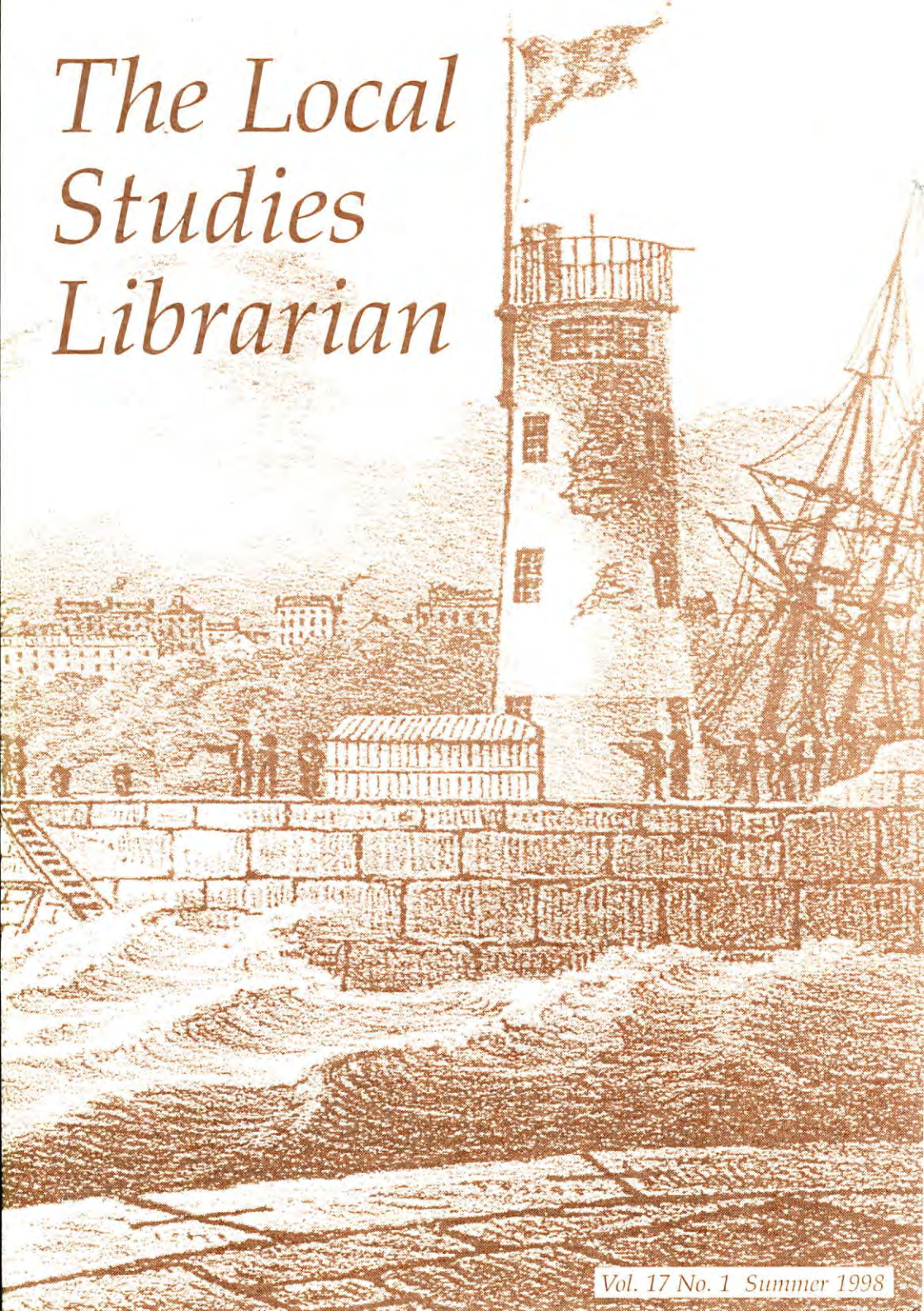


The Local Studies Librarian



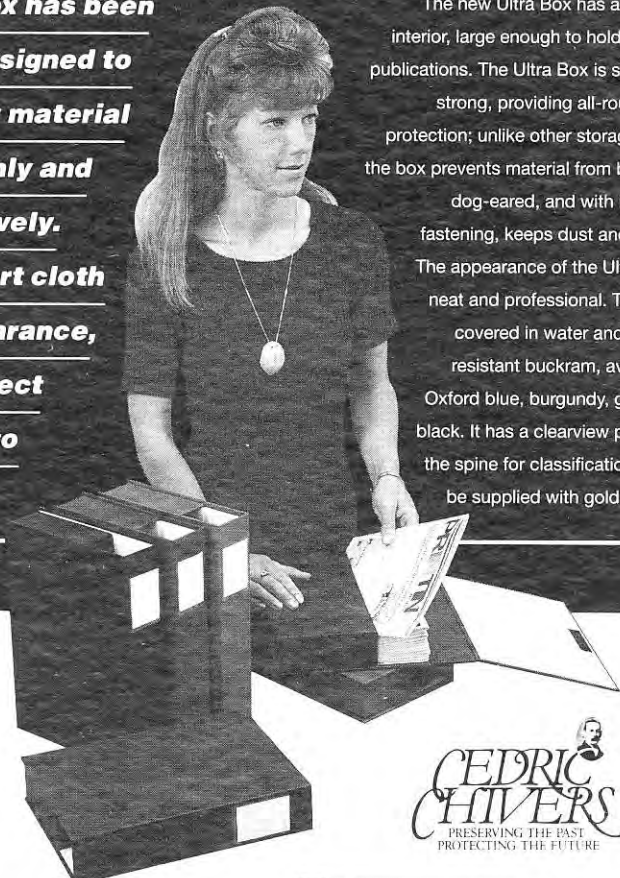
Vol. 17 No. 1 Summer 1998

BOXING CLEVER

with

**The Ultra Box has been
specially designed to
store library material
safely, cleanly and
cost-effectively.
With its smart cloth
bound appearance,
it is the perfect
alternative to
binding.**

The new Ultra Box has a spacious interior, large enough to hold A4-sized publications. The Ultra Box is sturdy and strong, providing all-round, solid protection; unlike other storage media, the box prevents material from becoming dog-eared, and with its secure fastening, keeps dust and dirt out. The appearance of the Ultra Box is neat and professional. The box is covered in water and scratch-resistant buckram, available in Oxford blue, burgundy, green and black. It has a clearview pocket on the spine for classification, or can be supplied with gold lettering.



For further information or an order form, call Cedric Chivers, the binding and conservation specialists, on 0117 935 2617


PRESERVING THE PAST
PROTECTING THE FUTURE

ultrabox
the ultimate library storage system

The Local Studies Librarian, the official journal of the Local Studies Group of the Library Association, is published twice per year - Summer and Winter. It is issued free to members of the group. Annual subscription to nonmembers is £6.00 U.K. and £7.50 plus £1.00 service charge overseas. Post free in both cases. Overseas service charge does not apply if payment is made in Sterling.

Editorial Matters; Advertising; Distribution:

Ian Jamieson, FLA
12 Grenville Drive,
NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE,
NE3 5PA

Subscriptions and remittances:

Mr. Philip Thomas
Hon. Treasurer, LSG
25 Bromford Gardens,
Westfield Road,
Edgbaston,
BIRMINGHAM, B15 3XD

Cheques to be made payable to the Library Association, Local Studies Group.

CONTENTS:

Editorial	1
Local Studies Libraries as rare book collections	2
Dorothy McCulla Memorial Award	7
LSL Index	7
Preserving the National Collection of Rare Local Materials: Towards a Coalition	8
Local Studies Group Annual Report	18
Treasurers Report and Accounts	18
Round the Branches	20
Allan Ball Local History Award	21
Local Studies Group Councillor 1999 - 2000	21
Hungarian local Studies librarians visit London	22
Help Wanted	23
Have You Seen?	24
Life Membership Award	25

Cover Illustration

Scarborough Lighthouse, c 1840. Courtesy North Yorkshire County Library



There are many
good reasons
for attending
Umbrella ∇



The UK's premier
meeting for
Information
Professionals



Umist, Manchester
1 - 3 July 1999



Enquiries: Library Association Conferences,
The Library Association, 7 Ridgmount Street, London WC1E 7AE
0171 636 7543; direct fax 0171 323 1842
e-mail events@la-hq.org.uk



EDITORIAL

This issue includes two major and complementary papers on local studies materials and policies. These were presented originally to Local Studies Group and Rare Books Group members at UmbrellA 4, but they are certainly worth a much wider audience. As Ian Maxted points out, much of our local studies stock is rare or unique, a fact which most users (and many librarians) do not sufficiently appreciate - while not so valuable in cash terms, many are much rarer than the 42 line Bible. Linked with this is the undeniable fact that a good deal of this material is not in the British Library. At last the British Library seems disposed to take this seriously, and Andrew Phillips sets out ideas for cooperation between the BL and local studies collections. This is very welcome, but it is likely to cost money - and where is this to come from?: both local authorities and the BL are facing cuts in their finances.

Also pointed out is the fact that while the British Library is the library of last resort, local collections are the *first* resort for local communities, and the material risks being worn out. This brings in the question of conservation, another costly item. Digitisation is seen as one answer, and various projects are in progress or preparation - David Parry's report "Virtually New" shows how many there are. Conservation and heavy usage of original works cannot go hand in hand, so this way of providing copies reasonably economically is to be welcomed. But cooperation, or 'coalition' as Andrew Phillips calls it, must be seen to be working.

As you will note from the advertisement in this issue, UmbrellA 5 is on the way: the dates are Thursday 1 July to Saturday 3 July 1999. Having decided to move from a weekend slot, this allows you to keep your Sunday free, offers better public transport services and, with two full days programmes, gives you the chance of one- day attendance at a reasonable rate. Don't forget, however, that if you only come for a day, you will miss many of the chances to meet new colleagues during the evenings and at the social events. LSG is intending to present a full programme, as we have at all the previous UmbrellA Schools. We are taking as our theme 'Aspects of Popular Culture' and have already started planning our programme. If any of our readers have ideas about speakers and/or topics, please get in touch with Ian Jamieson as soon as possible at the Editorial address. But the main thing is for YOU to decide to come to UmbrellA 5. Start making your plans now!

LOCAL STUDIES LIBRARIES AS RARE BOOK COLLECTIONS

Ian Maxted

The public library is not always thought of as a place to look for rare book collections. In general such collections are the result of development over a long period or else of single-minded collecting. The resulting collections are either broadly based ones with a high proportion of early and scarce items or they are closely focused on a single subject area. Public libraries in general have not had the time for their general collections to mature over time like wine in vats from a mustiness of aging dregs to developing a bouquet of antiquity. Nor in general have public libraries been able to indulge in the single-minded pursuit of exhaustiveness in a particular field. Of course there are exceptions, such as the Shakespeare collection in Birmingham or the horological collections in Guildhall Library, but in general rare book collections are to be found in centuries-old institutions such as cathedrals, Oxbridge colleges, national libraries or parochial libraries. For the special collection one has to look in university libraries or libraries of professional or learned bodies such as the Royal College of Physicians or the Society of Antiquaries.

Yet there is one field in which almost all public library systems can boast a rare book collection and that is in the field of local studies. Here the public library can lay claim to both the prerequisites for the development of rare book collections, time and single-mindedness.

While the public library system cannot rival the millennium or more that some cathedral libraries have been in existence, it is almost 120 years since W.H.K. Wright of Plymouth Public Library laid down the earliest manifesto for local studies at the first conference of the Library Association in 1878. Already at that date a number of library authorities apart from Plymouth had begun to build up collections of local material. The collections that have been built up since the nineteenth century have not been continuously renewed like the general stock of the public library; they have been cumulated over the years into substantial research collections.

With regard to single-mindedness, the fact that the library is on the spot when it comes to collecting material relating to its community means that it can gather the wealth of material with all the selectivity of a vacuum cleaner. Over the years, too, local collections have been able to benefit from the single-mindedness of others who have built up collections of local material. In Exeter for example many of the manuscripts of the Victorian bibliographer and antiquary James Davidson, compiler of the *Bibliotheca devoniensis*, came to the public library as part of the collection of the historian J. Brooking Rowe in 1908.

If we are speaking in terms of absolute rarity, the local studies collection can rival the finest of rare book collections. Around the world there are 47 copies of Gutenberg's 42-line Bible securely locked away in safes or glass cases, 21 of them complete. Other cultural milestones also survive in considerable numbers of copies. To take some STC items not entirely at random: the first edition of William Turner's *New herbal* of 1551 has at least five locations in the UK and five in America and the first edition of Sir Walter Raleigh's *History of the world* and the first folio of Shakespeare also have at least five locations on each side of the Atlantic - the Folger Library, of

course boasts an extravagant number of first folios used for the purposes of textual collation.

Table 1. Eighteenth century Exeter imprints

Years	BL	Both	Exeter
1701-09	16	12	6
1711-19	47	13	11
1720-29	9	6	4
1730-39	7	3	1
1740-49	7	3	7
1750-59	11	3	2
1760-69	16	12	15
1770-79	11	4	12
1780-89	50	13	44
1790-99	43	17	35
1700-99	227	86	137
1760-99	120	46	106

The situation is somewhat different in local studies collections. In the early 1980s I reported a total of 1233 pre-1800 imprints in the Westcountry Studies Library to the ESTC project at the British Library. Of these 369 were pre-1701 and there were very few editions that were not represented either in STC or Wing. The same was not true with the 864 items recorded for the eighteenth century, although the figures that follow are based on an analysis of the holdings of the BL only. If the Exeter imprints are examined, there were 223 items reported from the West country Studies Library, compared with 303 listed in the microfiche of the BL's holdings at that time. Of these only 86 (about 20 per cent) were common to both collections and the reports from Exeter increased the Exeter imprints on ESTC from 303 to 440 titles, including some of the earliest recorded provincial execution broadsheets. It was apparent that as the eighteenth century progressed and the amount of local printing grew, so the proportion of unique material in the Exeter local collection increased. The lack of unique STC and Wing titles can be accounted for by the fact that provincial printing was only permitted after the lapse of the Licensing Act in 1695. But many of these early items, such as sermons or early election literature, are esoteric, and are not regularly used by enquirers.

Let us look at some of our more regularly used stock in trade. Provincial newspapers start during the eighteenth century and many of the files held before about 1830, when the BLNL's own files began to be more regularly received are extremely rare, if not unique, items. The virtually complete files of *Trewman's Exeter flying-post* from 1763 to 1807, when the BLNL's file starts, are for the most part unique, with only a few stray issues or volumes held elsewhere. Other local studies libraries could doubtless parallel this for a resource which is one of the backbones of local history research, especially where Manpower Services Commission projects have compiled indexes to the contents. There are few newspapers that survive in more than three files, one with the BLNL, one with the local library and one with the publisher; most survive only in one file, if at all. This is particularly true of free distribution newspapers which are notoriously difficult to track down.

Table 2. Exeter trade directories: census years

	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891
Westcountry Studies	x	x	x	x	x	
Devon and Exeter Instn			x	x	x	x
British Library					x	x
Bodleian Library					x	
University of Cambridge					x	

Another source regularly used by local historians is the trade directory. Fortunately many county directories are now being reissued on microfiche by commercial publishers, where local studies collections have not been able to undertake filming themselves, but work on town directories is not so far advanced in many parts of the country. Let us take the case of Exeter directories and particularly those for the census years. For 1841 and 1851 only the copies in the Westcountry Studies Library are recorded in Shaw and Tipper's bibliography of British directories. For 1861 and 1871 two copies are recorded, in the Westcountry Studies Library and the Devon and Exeter Institution, for 1881 there are also copies in the Bodleian, Cambridge University Library and the British Library, for 1891 there is no copy in the Westcountry Studies Library though there are copies in the Devon and Exeter Institution and the British Library. All of these items are rarer than the 42-line Bible and the first folio of Shakespeare, and are more heavily used and more important to the local communities.

More recent items which are increasingly used, with the growing interest in public rights of way and contaminated land and AACS grants, are the large-scale national grid sheets of the Ordnance Survey. These sheets were typically produced by the Ordnance Survey in editions of about 20 copies, making them immediately rarer than Saxton or Speed maps.

There are also the items in local studies collections which are by definition unique. These include the extra-illustrated copies of county histories and other works that are to be found in many local studies collections, and which in some cases form a centrepiece of the collections. An example is the magnificent thirteen volume set of John Hutchins's *History and antiquities of the county of Dorset* to be found in the library at Dorchester. This was originally issued in four volumes between 1796 and 1815 and was extra-illustrated by the historian A. M. Broadley. There are also the collections of cuttings and information files built up over many decades by a succession of local studies staff which could never be repeated were they to be destroyed. Some files in Exeter, such as those on World War 2 have suffered so much from school projects that they have had to be rephotocopied.

Most local studies libraries have special collections which have become attached to the local collection through bequest by a local person or institution. An example is the Buxton Collection of about 200 Civil War pamphlets at Bath. At times the local subject content may be tenuous but it normally reflects the interests of local individuals and sometimes the spirit of the community as a whole. Examples of the latter are the naval history collections in Portsmouth and Plymouth or the Hamilton Jenkin collection on mining in Redruth. Less obvious is an extensive collection of

early photographs of Iceland in the Westcountry Studies Library. This had become scattered over the years as the local link had become obscured but when the albums and other books were gathered together and examined it was evident that it had been bequeathed by a local ship owner named Pike Ward who was active in the north Atlantic trade and it included illustrations of the premises of the Exeter Fish Company at Isafjorour and elsewhere. Similar associated special collections are those relating to a local worthy. Examples from the south west include the collection of early Walter Raleigh items in Exeter, based on the collection of the bibliographer T. N. Brushfield, the Thomas Hardy, William Barnes and Powys Collections at Dorchester, the Chatterton collection at Bristol and the Dickens collection in Portsmouth.

Many of my examples have been taken from Devon but ours is not an unusual collection; similar examples can be found in most parts of the country. The fact that so many of these items are regularly used research tools and not always glamorous in nature has obscured their immense rarity. In fact local studies collections act at a local level in the way that the British library and other national collections do in collecting and conserving the nation's printed heritage. Being on the spot they are able to acquire much material that is missed by the national collections. This is particularly true for more ephemeral material such as local guides and publicity.

But the nation's local studies collections are a fragile inheritance. Unlike most rare book collections which are held remotely as a place of last resort for scholars, the local studies collections are immediately accessible in the locality where their contents are of greatest interest and put to the most intensive use by all sections of the community from Key Stage 2 pupils to postgraduate researchers. They are a first resort and not a last resort.

Added to this heavy demand is their presence in the public library environment, an institution that has rightly encouraged freedom of access to the collections held in trust for the whole community. But, when they contain materials that are frequently many times rarer than the treasures in rare book collections, are we treating our collections with the respect that they deserve? Let us ask a few questions of ourselves and see how we measure up as custodians of rare books:

- Do we register readers and ask for proof of identity before issuing material?
- Do we insist on the use of pencils - and of gloves for vulnerable material?
- Do we use request or issue slips for material fetched from stack areas?
- Do we weigh boxed or loose collections of material before and after issue?
- Are all items of which the library has only one copy kept on closed access?
- Do we have a cut off date before which photocopying is not permitted?
- Do we have environmental monitoring of the areas where local studies material is stored?
- Do we insist on proper conservation binding with hand sewing for local materials?
- Do we have a programme of microfilming or digitisation of categories of material such as directories, illustrations and cutting files?
- Do we report our early material to the English Short Title Catalogue project?

Many of these points are addressed in *Local studies libraries: Library Association guidelines for local studies provision in public libraries* but there can be few local studies librarians who feel that they can answer yes to all these questions. The key question that must be asked is:

- Can we claim that our material has not deteriorated significantly over the past twenty years despite increased use and that there is no need to rethink procedures to ensure that future generations can continue to get access to the information in our collections?

With diminishing funding in the public library sector and the ever increasing use of the collections there is a risk that we will not win the race to convert all the material which is at risk into some surrogate form, whether microform or digitised. Even projects such as Newsplan have many years of work to do before the microfilming of provincial newspapers is completed, and the National Lottery has had little impact in the public library sector for anything other than prestige projects although Mark Fisher has indicated that this could change.

The important role of local studies collections within the network of libraries which safeguards the nation's printed heritage has recently been recognised by the Department of National Heritage and the British Library in their reports on the future of legal deposit. The proposal in the British Library's Smethurst report, echoed by the Department of National Heritage report that responsibility for the coverage of "local and regional material", however that is defined, might transfer from national libraries to "well managed local collections" could well place additional burdens on the shoulders of local studies collections. Another series of questions must be asked here:

- Would this reallocation of responsibility be achieved by local legal deposit.?
- What would be the basis of designation of legal deposit collections: regional, county, unitary - would smaller authorities be able to cope?
- Would record offices or university libraries form a better back-up than public libraries?
- Would such a system be organised locally or through the Copyright agent?
- What would be the definition of "local and regional material" (subject content, authorship, publication) and who would apply this definition (the Copyright Libraries Agent, local libraries)?
- Where would the copies come from - would there be a seventh copy requested or would English local material be reallocated from the Irish, Scottish or Welsh libraries? A reciprocal arrangement could be reached for Scottish, Welsh and Irish local collections using the Oxbridge legal deposit copies. In view of the fact that such local material would be deposited at the point of greatest use, would two copies of local material reach local collections - one for use and one for conservation?
- What would be the added bibliographical responsibilities of local studies collections in view of the fact that less material might be collected by the British Library and thus included in BNB? Not all areas have a regional bibliography at present.
- What support would there be for the added storage and administrative costs for this material?

- How can hard-pressed local authorities be persuaded that the receipt of material on legal deposit is not an excuse for withdrawing funding from resource budgets?

Local studies collections will have to work with the legal deposit libraries to seek ways to:

- Retain public access to the wealth of local information held across the country.
- Conserve this material for the long term.
- Shoulder any added responsibilities involved in conserving the nation's printed archives.

It is vital that the British Library and the other legal deposit libraries respond to these concerns so that local studies material is safeguarded for the future and local studies collections supported in a role which is as important to their communities as the activities of copyright libraries and rare book collections are for the written heritage of the nation as a whole.

Ian Maxted is County Local Studies Librarian, Devon Library Services.

THE DOROTHY McCULLA MEMORIAL AWARD

The Dorothy McCulla Memorial Award for 1998 has been won by Martin Hayes, Principal Librarian - Local Studies, West Sussex County Library Service. The Committee was very pleased with the high standard of the nominees, which they feel reflects the high standard of local studies librarianship today in what are often increasingly difficult circumstances of decreasing resources and increasing demand: all met the judges criteria of good overall service provision, excellent promotional activities, and innovation, and the final decision was a difficult one. Martin's nominator drew attention to the range of his work since he was appointed in 1986 to what was a new post, and the way in which he has developed the service. Mention was made of his development of a network of Local Studies Coordinators in each Group of libraries and his development of special collections of maps, including cooperation with the Record Office to microfilm early O. S. maps and directories. A large amount of promotional work, including talks and publications was reported, as was, among other activities, his work with Project EARL.

LSL INDEX

An index to Vols I - 15 of *The Local Studies Librarian* is now available. Compiled by Alice Lock, it covers all items published in the journal during this period. It is available on demand on disk or as a paper copy: there is a charge of £1.00 to cover handling costs. To obtain your copy contact Alice Lock, Local History Librarian, Tameside Local Studies Library, Stalybridge Library, Trinity Street, Stalybridge, Cheshire, SK15 2BN, stating whether you want disk or hard copy.

PRESERVING THE NATION'S COLLECTION OF RARE LOCAL MATERIALS: TOWARDS A COALITION

Andrew Phillips

It is twenty five years since I taught a historical bibliography course with Ian Maxted and it is a great pleasure to share a platform with him once again and to listen to his excellent paper. I admired Ian's knowledge in 1972 and I do so now a generation later.

Legal deposit in the United Kingdom

Robert Southey wrote in the *Quarterly Review* of 1819

"..... it may be desirable that there should be one library which should receive everything : one general receptacle, in which even the rubbish of the press should be deposited, for the chance that something may be gained by raking in it hereafter. The British Museum should be the place, as being a national and metropolitan library... "

The reality of such central comprehensiveness has never been possible and increasingly a distributed network of legal deposit collections has to deal with the proliferating publishing of today. Further opportunity for cooperation and coordination is being encouraged by the prospect of new legislation for the legal deposit of non-print materials. The Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) consultation paper on *Legal deposit of publications*¹ states:

"The Government looks to the legal deposit libraries to take forward as a matter of urgency their work on increased cooperation in collection policies and management of printed material received under legal deposit and on increased selectivity." (These six libraries comprise the British Library, the National Libraries of Scotland and Wales, and the University Libraries of Oxford, Cambridge and Trinity College Dublin).

The review in 1996, by J M Smethurst, into the policy and arrangements for the legal deposit of printed publications in the British Library² has led to the implementation programme, and its objectives, which I am leading : to meet the Government's exhortation and the challenges of the volume and variety of present and future publishing.

The main directions of the review point to:

A more collaborative National Published Archive (NPA) among the legal deposit libraries including, for example, memoranda of understanding on shared coverage of publications and accompanying cataloguing and preservation responsibilities:

Support for the developing concept of a National Bibliographic Resource or different "clumps" of bibliographic data brought together by various sources nationally: a concept being advanced in the post-Follett reviews of libraries in higher education and by e-Lib (electronic library) programmes;

Recommendations on difficult or voluminous materials : all of which may be

considered rare in some contexts and circumstances (given that popular current material is often not held archivally by many libraries), The Review highlighted four categories:

a) Mass-market leisure journals: that is, many titles which you would normally expect to find in outlets such as W.H. Smith or John Menzies, e.g. *Premier Striker*, *Pet Dogs Magazine*, *Motor Caravanner*, and coverage of which may now be shared in a more coordinated way by the legal deposit libraries

b) Newspapers: the discussion of coverage here is through the NEWSPLAN structure and we are surveying especially regional and local newspapers published in England

c) Report literature : this is vital to research since it so often provides the first record of research findings and the fullest record (before some of them have been sanitised in monographs and journal articles!). This is especially true for the sciences and social sciences and, indeed, one commentator has termed report literature "the modern manuscript".

d) "Local publications" : among which are the kinds Ian has outlined in his talk.

From a British Library perspective, such local publications cover a wide spectrum of issuing bodies : local government authorities, local history, countryside and amenity groups, churches, companies, educational institutions, societies, museums, charities, hospitals, and more.

At present there is little formal cooperation in acquisition coverage of local publications between the British Library and other libraries : a major exception to this is newspapers, via NEWSPLAN. The policy of the National Libraries of Scotland and Wales and of Trinity College Dublin towards local publications of their countries seeks to attain comprehensive coverage, working where appropriate with other libraries in their countries. But the University Libraries of Oxford and Cambridge are very selective in the localities and geographic areas from and about which they acquire and retain local material. The chief problems, of course, are those presented by the sheer number of local publications in England. Since there is no prospect that the legal deposit privilege for printed publications would be extended beyond the six libraries, and if we are to assure better coverage and recording of significant locally published material, we shall have to build better bridges of cooperation and notification between, especially, national library and public libraries.

The riches of local collections

A glance at information provided within Project EARL gives some idea of the important collections held by public libraries, above and beyond the wealth of local studies collections illustrated by Ian Maxted. For example, material on Chartism in Newport and Monmouthshire; the Crystal Palace and the Great Exhibition in Bromley; Sadlers Wells and Walter Sickert material in Islington; the BSA archive, important for the history of science, in Solihull; the Dorothy Sayers Centre in Essex; the Preston collection of William Blake in Westminster; collections relating to Alexander Pope and Horace Walpole in Richmond, Surrey; William Morris, Horatio Nelson and Emma Hamilton in Merton; Thomas Paine in Norfolk; John Baskerville and Joseph Priestley

in Birmingham; Spanish Civil War material in Glasgow. The EARL pages are a map to the continuing treasures of 'the people's network'.

A glance at pages of NEWSPLAN indicates important titles which are not present, or not wholly so, in the British Library; for example, the *Western Vindicator* (a Chartist newspaper) and the *Advocate and Merthyr Free Press* of the same historical period. And regional and local newspaper titles often provide better sources than national newspapers; thus, the most vivid early accounts of the *Titanic* disaster are in the Liverpool newspapers. Local newscuttings, indexes and photographic collections are important also and usually not replicated nationally.

I sometimes say to researchers that the British Library is the best library in the world in so many respects 'but it may not be the best for you'. Indeed, many wishing to explore particular topics will find it more useful to begin with the concentrated special collections in public libraries of the types that I am citing here.

Another category where local resources complement national collections so visibly is the publications of private presses which it has not always been straightforward for the British Library to acquire. A roll call of some famous names of British publishing history illustrates their local associations: the Doves and Eragry Presses at Hammersmith; the Boar's Head Press in Devon; the Gregynog Press of Newtown, Powys; the Golden Cockerel Press's association with Berkshire; the Stanbrook Abbey Press near Worcester; the Laverock Press of Newnham in Hertfordshire; the Presses of Leicestershire in the 1960s - the Pandora, Orpheus, and Brewhouse (influenced by the Leicester College of Art); and, of special resonance for me, the Latin Press of St. Ives founded by Guido Morris who, when I knew him in his old age, was already being described as the Che Guevara of amateur printers. I suspect there may be better coverage in, say, Bristol of some printings of the Master of the Latin Press than in the British Library; but I shall make another attempt to trace the memorable *Bristol Zoo Broadsheet* in the national collections...

Another area of complementary coverage is that of reprints. Increasingly the Library, since the study led by Dr. Brian Enright ten years ago and published as *Selection for survival*,³ has reduced its intake of unaltered reprints. However, local policies often emphasise the collecting of notable local authors in as many editions, straightforward reprints and paperback issues as possible. In Leicestershire, for instance, there is special interest in works of and on Joe Orton, C. P. Snow, Colin Wilson and the Attenboroughs. Many authors span several geographic areas; L. P. Hartley is a personal favourite and has associations with both Peterborough and Bath (though the mass of his manuscripts is in the John Rylands in the University of Manchester). Again, the most fruitful avenue of research on, say, the novelist Marie Corelli would begin with the collection of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust. There are many, many examples of collections of local importance also possessing national significance and held in locations which often surprise even the dedicated scholar.

Comparisons of British Library coverage

The Library's collection of 'local' publications is a mosaic of variety and complexity. As Dr. Ann Matheson of the National Library of Scotland remarked in another context, quoting Ernest Bevin: "when we open that Pandora's Box you never know what

Trojan horses may come out". The expressive phrase is apt in view of recent snapshot studies of local coverage which the Smethurst Review's programme has been overseeing. I am frequently surprised at what the Library has succeeded in tracing and acquiring, and sometimes surprised at what it hasn't. I have been accustomed to say that perhaps 50%-60% of these kinds of local titles published in England have been acquired by the Library during the decades since the Great War.

From recent surveys, the Library holds the following percentages of titles published, and/or held by local collections and record offices, in the following areas:

47% of Surrey titles covering various years since the 1970s (sample of c. 1 00 titles);

38% of Leicestershire titles from the 1990s (sample of more than 500 titles);

45% of North Yorkshire titles from the 1980s and 1990s comprising local ISBN material (sample of c.200 titles) : the Library held 90% of North Yorkshire titles from the same years comprising mainstream or less-localised ISBNs (further sample of c.200 titles);

51 % of titles listed in the *Devon bibliography* for 1989 relating to material dealing with Devon as a whole and only 20% of titles relating to particular places in Devon (sample of c.400 titles); the Library did hold almost 80% of a separate sample of Devon County Council ISBN-prefixed publications (sample of c. 1 00 titles).

The breakdown of the *Devon bibliography* sample is cited in *Annex A*. In that table it is assumed that titles about Devon from national imprints are covered comprehensively by the Library. Many of the 40 'particular place' educational titles, for example, comprise school or similar prospectuses which the Library would not be seeking largely to acquire. It is also the case that the Library acquired many of the, *prima facie*, more significant items especially those whose bulk made them 'look more like a book'. Nevertheless the record of coverage across categories is very interesting. (Similar points may be made about the non-Devon samples).

There is no reason to suppose that substantially different patterns of coverage within the Library will emerge from further studies of other areas in England which we may undertake.

Here is further proof therefore, as if any were needed, that the distributed national published archive is already a reality which awaits closer coordination in order to benefit users, now and to come.

Towards a coalition : problems, constraints, strengths

It does not need me to rehearse the problems which public libraries continue to face: reduced resources, unsettlement from further local government reorganisation; the definition of what is a 'region', such an easy term to use from the 'centre'; inequities in organisation and in the numbers of senior and professional posts among local authorities; the reality that even desirable edicts from the Government and the DCMS are virtually unenforceable if local authorities and councillors do not wish. In sum, the financial and legal underpinning of the work of public libraries

is insufficient in so many cases to fulfil the moral responsibility for coverage of local collections which so many of those libraries would (and do) consider a prime obligation.

But to set against these, there are; the importance of local history and local studies collections perceived by so many people (which Ian's paper has highlighted) and which are still seen as a core role for public libraries; the significant collections present across the country on which this paper tries to provide a small window; the continuing strength of many reference libraries and the great knowledge generally within public libraries (and, importantly, record offices too) of what is published locally; and the enduring professionalism and commitment of those who work in the public library sector.

The national press also ensures that the British Library is perceived to have its problems... Among these we can cite the squeeze of reduced resources; the need to come to terms with, and help shape, the future of digital collections and services nationally; the wide range of its commitments, as well as continued concentration on the bricks and mortar of the St. Pancras building to ensure that the new building will be a successful affirmation of the whole world of libraries.

However, to set against these pressures: the British Library is committed to the concept of the National Published Archive; possesses considerable professionalism; and, seeks to augment cooperation and collaboration for a network of archival coverage.

Nor can the British Library Board throw its weight around, even if it wished to, among local authorities and their councillors for whom in so many instances "all politics is local" in the noted words of Speaker Tip O'Neill of Congress. The Library must work with its partners and its cousins.

Towards a coalition; convergence

To help keep in perspective ever present worries about resources and scale of commitments there are convergences of concept and initiatives which, despite our organisational difficulties and in Auden's words, "... show an affirming flame".

Among these are: Professor Michael Anderson's task group and its work on a strategy for library provision in support of research, which recognises the important role public libraries fulfil for research and study (it would be intriguing to track, for example, how much writing on the Reformation or the Civil War in England has been stimulated by access to local studies collections); the Smethurst Review implementation programme itself; the e-Lib programmes and the cross sectoral interest in a National Agency for Resource Discovery which could help specify and coordinate the work of bringing great databases together; the Library and Information Commission's support for raising the profile of public libraries, for networking (particularly manifest in the important report *New library: the people's network*³ published since the Umbrella conference) and the sponsorship of studies into the digitisation of important collections; Project EARL's display of the strength of collections and services across libraries (for example, the *Familia* gateway for family history research); and, strategic statements on the retrospective conversion of UK

library catalogues and need to improve access and research resources in this country (cited in the recent important report *Making the most of our libraries*⁵). All these initiatives push in the direction of our working together to benefit wider communities of users.

Towards a coalition; the prospects for the way ahead on local publications

An ideal goal would be that, within agreed collection scope and criteria, local authority libraries would undertake to maintain a collection of the printed output relating to the locality, cataloguing it to agreed standards and providing records to national databases, conserving and retaining that material, and making it accessible. This is a most challenging goal to meet given the pressures on finance and people but how may we begin to move towards parts of this objective and with the support of the national library network? I hope to explore this further in meetings across the coming months with an eye to a seminar, convened by the Library in 1998 and desirably with the backing of the Library and Information Commission, to discuss national issues relating to cooperative coverage of locally published material. We should recognise at the outset that the length of steps different partners make towards elements of this goal will vary, both in geography and chronology, and that in making real progress the best is sometimes the enemy of the good.

But a start can be made to share knowledge and understanding of coverage at present. The British Library should now promulgate its own internal guidelines on its acquisition by legal deposit of local and local government publications, so that we can commence discussion in more detail of the categories which are not well covered nationally and how a more coordinated coverage may be introduced. (*Annex B* summarises the guidelines currently used within the Library. I should stress that these are being reviewed at present and an important part of continuing review will involve discussion with local authority libraries). One prospect might be to establish a formal contact in each local authority to help the national library's development of its coverage of local publications. Guidelines on local studies provision issued by the Library Association's Local Studies Group will help this form of two-way discussion.

I hope my programme, too, can assist the assembly of the national bibliographic resource by pointing up the benefits which the citation of special collections in public libraries can bring to the overall national bibliographic system, providing a further circle around the great databases of the national and university libraries. The British Library's consultation paper on the future of the national bibliography presents an opportunity for libraries of all kinds to comment on the pattern and shape which are desired for the future.

I think that emphasis on these areas of coverage and coordination can help public libraries, and others, to augment their role both within authorities and nationally. Understandings and expectations might be built into the annual library plans prefigured by the DCMS's *Reading the future*⁶ and such involvement in the extension of national coverage be understood and further support, and protection, for the importance of local libraries and collections of local publications within them. In some cases this might evolve into a form of national accreditation, long term, with the help and support of national agencies. We are looking at the beginnings of a map and a matrix.

In its turn the British Library should further define its last resort role and its expectations concerning local publications and collections. With, for example, the other legal deposit libraries and the National Preservation Office it should give more advice and help on issues of conservation and storage, digitising strategies, collection development, and specification of selection criteria relating to the coverage of the legal deposit network and the needs of national resource discovery. A cross sectoral group to keep arrangements for local publications within the national published archive under review, as they build up, is an attractive possibility.

There is a closeness of purpose between the British Library and local authority libraries which is sometimes overlooked amid the understandable perception that the Library is more closely allied with the world of universities. The British Library is, after all, a public research library: "this library has been my university" a long standing reader said to me, echoing George Bernard Shaw.

These are concerns and possibilities to explore, and, for my part, to signal to the British Library Board. It may be that more funding will be realisable in due course as a result of the Commission's recent report and other initiatives especially as academic and public libraries begin to view their needs in a more concerted way. Certainly emphasis on local collections seems to me an important part of the 'content' of a 'people's network' as well as providing an academic resource.

Cooperation has always been difficult and the past is strewn with aspirations which were disappointed. But "the past is a foreign country, they do things differently there" as L. P. Hartley's masterpiece reminds, and where is the librarian from any sector who shuns the pivotal role of go-between? Understanding of and cooperation on coverage of British local publications in a complementary relationship; making knowledge of local resources more transparent; cooperation on standards, practices, and digitisation strategy; perhaps a standing group: all to help the national library and public libraries fulfil their mission regarding local collections. Do we have the beginnings of a coalition? I think we do.

Andrew Phillips is the Head of the Review of Legal Deposit of Printed Material, The British Library

References to specific reports cited in the text

1. Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS). *Legal deposit of publications: a consultation paper*. DCMS, 1997.
2. British Library. *A review of the policy and arrangements for the legal deposit of printed material in the British Library*. (A review conducted by J.M. Smethurst CBE). British Library, 1997.
3. Enright, Brian (and others). *Selection for survival...* British Library, 1989.
4. Library and Information Commission. *New library: the people's network*. LIC, 1997.
5. Bryant, Philip. *Making the most of our libraries: the report of two studies on retrospective conversion of library catalogues in the United Kingdom...* British Library Research and Innovation Centre, 1997.
6. DCMS. *Reading the future...* DCMS, 1997

Annex A

<i>Publisher location</i>	Devon in general		Particular places		Total
	<i>National</i>	<i>Local</i>	<i>National</i>	<i>Local</i>	
1. Government	10	91	34	64	199
		49		16	
2. Newspaper	0	1	0	9	10
		0		0	
3. Societies	0	9	6	38	53
		3		6	
4. Political bodies	0	5	0	0	5
		0		0	
5. Educational	2	8	0	40	50
		5		2	
6. Companies	0	4	6	12	22
		0		0	
7. Trade publishers	85	22	106	35	248
		16		18	
8. Individuals	0	10	0	28	38
		3		6	
9. Charities	0	0	1	7	8
		0		0	
10. Churches	0	0	0	10	10
		0		1	
TOTALS	97	150	153	243	643
		76 (50.7%)		49 (20.2%)	

Definitions:

Total titles listed in the 1989 *Devon bibliography* in roman font, British Library holdings in **bold**

Government Local offices of national government bodies are included as local publishers

Societies Includes local chambers of commerce and publicity associations. National Trust local offices are included as local societies

Educational Includes universities, colleges and schools

Companies Includes privatised utilities

Trade publishers Overseas publishers, local publishers in other counties and David and Charles are included as national publishers

BRITISH LIBRARY

LOCAL PUBLICATIONS: INTERNAL GUIDELINES

1. Definition

Publications made available exclusively in the locality of the region described, or of the building, monument, collection, landscape, firm, society or family described. Normally these will be written and published or circulated in the locality, but some may be published by larger firms which undertake local commissions.

2. Criteria for the collections

2.1 The acquisition of these categories of material should be actively pursued:

- a) research reports and transactions of English local historical, conservation, archaeological and natural history societies (and their annual reports if not available elsewhere) at all levels (but exclude newsletters)
- b) research reports and transactions of Scottish, Welsh and Irish historical, conservation, archaeological and natural history societies, (and their annual reports if not available elsewhere) at county and city level only
- c) guides to and historical accounts of areas, buildings, monuments, countryside, archives, libraries, societies, institutions, churches, firms in England. Similar publications from Scotland, Wales and Ireland if judged to be of significance in a wider context.
- d) histories of social activities in localities of England, e.g. education, sport, military, police, fire services, transport
- e) hardbacks, and any similar material identified as of research interest
- f) art exhibition catalogues and catalogues of collections of art, archives, manuscripts or books of more than local significance
- g) census and family history publications (excluding newsletters)
- h) publications from general local history publishers e.g. Phillimore, Sutton

2.2 However, do not accept

- a) committee papers, lists of officers and members of societies
- b) routine information leaflets and circulars
- c) serials not taken by the British Library as part of the cooperative acquisitions policy pursued by the legal deposit libraries
- d) catalogues of library collections of only local significance
- e) newsletters of local societies, etc
- 0 house journals of firms and journals of local branches of trade unions, employers or professional organisations which are not requested by, e.g., the Library's Business Information Service

BRITISH LIBRARY

LOCAL (GOVERNMENT) PUBLICATIONS: INTERNAL GUIDELINES

1. Definition

Material emanating from the following is regarded as local government publications:

- 1.1 Local government authorities
Some parish (in England) and community (in Scotland and Wales) councils also publish : distinguish these from parish councils related to churches and informal community councils in England which are not local government bodies.
- 1.2 Transport and port undertakings (unless nationalised or privatised)
- 1.3 Development corporations
- 1.4 Residuary bodies

2. Criteria for the collections

- 2.1 The acquisition of these categories of material should be actively pursued
 - a) annual reports, statistics and financial statements (or budgets) of English local authorities
 - b) structure plans and updates of English local authorities
 - c) transport plans and updates of English local authorities
 - d) guides to art collections, archives, buildings and monuments in English local authorities (similar guides will also be sought from Scottish, Welsh or Irish local authorities if judged to be of wider significance)
 - e) official guide books
 - f) historical publications
- 2.2 However do not accept
 - a) minutes and agendas of meetings
 - b) committee papers
 - c) lists of officers, committee members, etc
 - d) routine information leaflets and handbooks
 - e) administrative reports from departments
 - f) internal documents of local government
 - g) new serials from Scottish, Welsh and Irish Republic local authorities
 - h) guides to art and library collections, etc. from Scottish, Welsh or Irish Republic local authorities : if of only local significance

THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION LOCAL STUDIES GROUP ANNUAL REPORT 1997

This Year the Group celebrated its twentieth birthday and currently has a membership of some 2,000, four branches and a representative from Northern Ireland.

Our AGM was held at Preston where we invited members to comment on the draft of the revised version of "Guidelines for Local Studies Libraries", which formed the main project for the year. These received a setback when aspects were referred back to the Group.

A feather in our cap has been the grant awarded by the Library Association's Branch and Group Development Fund to assist with the expenses of the compilation of a bibliography of local studies librarianship.

The Group has continued to maintain international connections with local studies librarians in Eastern Europe. One of our Romanian colleagues completed an article on local bibliographies published in our national journal *The Local Studies Librarian* which continues to flourish under the editorship of Ian Jamieson.

The Group undertook a full part in Umbrella 4 and hopes to continue this tradition in 1999.

The Dorothy McCulla Memorial Award for 1997 was presented to Ian Maxted, Local Studies Librarian, Devon County.

Our thanks must go to all members of the Committee for their hard work but particularly to our Chair and other officers.

Patrick Baird

TREASURER'S REPORT 1997

We are pleased to report a small surplus on the year's activities, and that our finances remain in an overall healthy position. I draw your attention to the following:

Our extensive contribution to UmbrelLA Four gave a small surplus (£231) and now that the final figures are available from the L.A. , a further £1254 is due to us, and will appear in our 1998 Accounts,

Our Committee expenses are high, but we have nationwide representation, including now attendance from Northern Ireland, and we met four times in 1997, instead of the usual three,

Our Eastern Sub-Group/Branch has transferred their bank balance to us, accruing interest, until the Branch becomes operative again in its current or possibly expanded form.

We hope that you find these Accounts satisfactory.

Philip Thomas, Hon. Treasurer,

Martin Underwood, Hon. Auditor,

BALANCE SHEET as at 31st December 1997

Assets

Sundry Debtors:	LOCAL STUDIES LIBRARIAN Advertising The L.A. (Surplus on Umbrella Four Speakers).... Estimated	£542.75 <u>£600.00</u>
		£1142.75
Balance at Bank		£472.71
Balance with COIF Charity Deposit Fund		
Main Group	£5582.91	
Eastern Counties Sub Group	<u>£154.65</u>	<u>£5737.56</u>
		<u>£6210.27</u>
		<u>£7353.02</u>

Liabilities

Sundry Creditors: Imprint Services (LSL Winter 1997 printing)		£1111.00
The L.A. (Balance of V.A.T. due)		£350.07
Eastern Counties Sub-Group: Balance Held	£152.01	
Accrued Interest	£2.64	<u>£154.65</u>
		£1615.72
Accumulated Surplus as at 1st January 1997	£5450.24	
Add Nett Surplus for year, c/f from profit & Loss Account	<u>£287.06</u>	<u>£5737.30</u>
		<u>£7353.02</u>

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT for year ending 31st December 1997

Expenditure

Local Studies Librarian (Nett Cost)	2313.40
Nett V.A.T. on goods and services	9.09
Post/Phone/Fax/E-Mail	228.85
Stationery/Photocopying/Printing	351.09
Committee Expenses (4 meetings)	1523.50
Officers Expenses	161.50
International Relations	57.43
Membership Services	1.61
McCulla Award: Prize 100.00	
Sundry Expenses <u>115.97</u>	215.79
GUIDELINES: Sub-Committee	46.72
Members Discussion	16.70
Sub-Group a/cs paid to L.A.	<u>45.75</u>
	<u>4971.43</u>
Surplus for year, carried down to Profit & Loss a/c	 303.06 <u>£5274.49</u>

Income

Capitation	4629.00
Book Sale	3.00
LIBTECH '97 (Surplus)	143.12
Umbrella Four (Surplus)	231.13
Bank Current a/c interest	16.91
COIF Charities Deposit Fund Interest	<u>251.33</u>
	<u>£5274.49</u>

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT for year ending 31st December 1997

SURPLUS for year, brought down as above	£303.06
LESS Old Debts (Journal Subscription written off)	<u>£16.00</u>
NETT SURPLUS for year, Carried forward to the Balance Sheet	<u>£287.06</u>

ROUND THE BRANCHES

Pride of place must go this time to our Scottish Branch, **LOCSCOT**, which this year took over the organisation of Local Studies Week from the Scottish Library Association. A very full programme was organised during the week of 18th -25th April with most local authorities in Scotland taking part, most of them basing events on the general theme of 'Scotland at Leisure'. A national Programme of events was issued and this showed a total of almost one hundred events. These ranged widely from talks and exhibitions to town walks and film shows and even, at Blackburn in West Lothian, a demonstration quoits match. Activities for children included sessions of children's games, 'Make a Local History Card', and a Punch and Judy show. Following the success of this years Week, LOCSCOT is already planning for next year, when the theme will be 'Health and Welfare'.

The **North West Branch** continues to flourish and organise meetings and day schools: about thirty people attended a day school on religious records and a visit to Chetham's Library in Manchester, newly refurbished with the aid of lottery money, was oversubscribed. A small group visited Hereford Cathedral to see the Mappa Mundi and the Chained Library. A new leaflet advertising the Branch is being issued to attract new members, and the Branch has also added information about itself to the Group's Internet page.

The **Welsh Branch** held a successful day school, 'The past is there before you', in conjunction with the Youth Libraries Group, on promoting the use of local studies by children and young people. Over 50 people attended. A visit was also arranged to Tretower Court, Cardiff: a talk on the development of the medieval garden was included.

London and Home Counties Branch report the setting up by her friends of a memorial fund for Penny Ward of Margate library, who was so well known in the area both as a librarian and as a local historian. The new Chairman of the Branch is Mick Scott.

In **Northern Ireland** local studies activities are coordinated by the Local Studies Panel of LISC (Northern Ireland), which is represented on the LSG committee by Lynne Buick. The Panel has published its Guidelines for indexing newspapers, which are intended to encourage good working practice, and these have been widely distributed. The Panel has also planned a Local History Week from 14-20 September in conjunction with the Federation for Ulster Local Studies, on the lines of the one in Scotland. Workshops, history days, exhibitions, lectures and seminars will be held throughout Northern Ireland, and to coincide with the week the Panel will publish a holdings checklist of Belfast maps, and a booklet on genealogical research and resources available in libraries in Northern Ireland

The potential for a Branch in the **Midlands** was shown by the attendance of about 65 at a Day School arranged by Joan Bray in Nottingham in association with LSG. This was on digitisation and attracted delegates from a wide area. Steps to set up a new Branch will be taken in the near future.

ALAN BALL LOCAL HISTORY AWARDS 1998

The winners of the Alan Ball Awards for 1998 have recently been announced. Established to encourage local history publishing by public libraries and local authorities, this is the fourteenth year they have been awarded. This year there were 31 entries from 18 authorities.

The judges were impressed by the high quality of many of the entries, but they also made some general comments: these might be helpful to future entrants. It was felt that some of the publications were not in the most suitable format, with too many unnecessarily in 'landscape' format. It was pleasing to see an increase in sewn bindings. Many publications have pleasing and professionally designed covers, but are let down by the design and layout of the inside pages. Some entries suffered from lack of an index, or lacked maps which would have been helpful. The judges were pleased to see entries arriving in non-traditional formats, for instance a CD ROM and a local history website, though neither were given awards on this occasion.

It was decided to make three Awards, the maximum permitted. These are:

Stockport MBC for *Stockport: a history*, by Peter Arrowsmith. This is a thoroughly researched, comprehensive, well produced and appropriately illustrated work:

City of Newcastle upon Tyne for *Basil Bunting: a Northern Life*, by Richard Caddel and Anthony Flowers. This admirably produced book, showing the way in which the north-east influenced the life of one of Britain's foremost twentieth century poets, was published in conjunction with the Basil Bunting Poetry Centre, Durham:

Nottinghamshire County Council for *Guardian of the Trent: the story of Newark Castle*, by Pamela Marshall and John Samuels. Well researched, well designed and copiously illustrated, this work was published in association with the Newark and Sherwood District Council, Newark Town Council and the Newark Castle Trust.

As mentioned above, this year entries were received from 18 local authorities. This must be only a small proportion of authorities publishing local history material. Does your library or authority produce publications to a good standard? If so, why not think about entering next year? Get in touch with Eric Winter, Library Services Trust, 7 Ridgmount Street London WC 1 E 7AE for more information about the Awards.

LOCAL STUDIES GROUP COUNCILLOR, 1999-2000

As recently advertised in the *Library Association Record*, the Group needs a member for the LA Council, to serve in 1999 and 2000. If you are interested in this, which in each year is likely to involve about ten days attendance at Council, a Standing Committee, and LSG committee meetings, and would like to know more, please contact our Chairman, Elizabeth Melrose.

Advance notice is also given that the term of office of the present LSG committee expires on 31 December. Nominations will therefore be invited later in the year for officers and committee members of the Group to serve from January 1999 to December 2000. A notice will appear in the LAR later this year, so please look out for it.

HUNGARIAN LOCAL STUDIES LIBRARIANS VISIT LONDON

Elizabeth Melrose

As part of the international co-operation between LSG and the Local Studies Group of the Hungarian Library Association, a party of ten Hungarian librarians came to London for a six-day study tour at the end of March 1998. The visit was organised by Erzsebet Gancs and Judit Mennyei from the Hungarian Group and Elizabeth Melrose on behalf of the UK Local Studies Group, which subsidised some of the expenses incurred.

The Hungarian librarians had varied backgrounds, from university, school, town and county libraries. For some it was a first visit to England and all were interested in ideas and practice with local studies librarians in this country. The party attended the Local Studies Group AGM at Library Association Headquarters and heard Martin Hayes give a comprehensive overview of *Familia*, the EARL initiative that has put listings of UK libraries' family history resources on the Internet. At this event the Hungarians presented the Local Studies Group with a special Magyar hunting horn as a token of their continuing friendship.

Throughout the study tour the group experienced the diversity of British librarianship. There was a morning at the International Book Fair at Olympia and a session in the new British Library at St. Pancras. The members were especially impressed with the wide range of material that was stocked by both the City of Westminster archives Centre and Kensington Public Library and the way in which staff ensured that their organisations had an important role within the community. In contrast the editor of a children's newspaper spoke about her work and the importance of promoting reading to young people. Sightseeing in London was not neglected, as the group saw an astonishing number of tourist haunts considering the short time at their disposal.

On returning to Hungary the group agreed to disseminate their experiences to their colleagues at their fifth Local Studies Summer Conference and to publicise a joint project, similar to the *Familia* programme, aimed at compiling national databases of local materials held by Hungarian libraries and record offices.

Meanwhile the UK-Hungarian association continues. Following in the footsteps of Ian Maxted and Penny Ward, the Hungarian Local Studies Group have invited Diana Dixon to be a guest speaker at their Kiskunhalas Conference as the UK nominee. While there she will discuss the possibility of future local studies exchanges and collaboration between the two Groups.

Elizabeth Melrose is Chairman, LSG

HELP WANTED

EARL Family History Task Group

Martin Hayes, Chairman of the Task Group (address below) writes:

Having successfully launched the FAMILIA (Family History Resources in Public Libraries) electronic directory on the World Wide Web, the Group is now looking to enlarge its area of interest, and hopefully its membership! Towards the end of the year we shall start choosing which other Local Studies sources and fields of activity to focus on: perhaps educational resources, special book collections, photographs and pictures, and others.

If you would like to influence these decisions, find out more about the exciting possibilities of computer technology in promoting Local Studies and get something different to put on your CV, join us! The Task Group is an informal group of librarians, archivists and a couple of computer specialists which meets only 3 or 4 times a year and has clear aims. We are not particularly looking for technophiles but for practising local studies librarians with fresh ideas and enthusiasm. The only condition is that your authority must be a member of (Project) EARL.

For an informal chat without obligation, please contact Martin Hayes (Chairman of the Group) c/o Worthing Library, Richmond Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 1HD (01903 212414); email; mhayes@westsussex.gov.uk or Helen Copeman (EARL Manager) c/o EARL, 4th Floor, Gun Court, 70 Wapping Lane, London E1 9RL (0171) 702 2020; email; helen@earl.org.uk

Don't forget to have a look at FAMILIA at <http://www.earl.org.uk/familia>

Editor's note: a brief article on FAMILIA by Martin Hayes appears in *Local History Magazine*, 66, March - April 1988, p.25.

Sermon tasting

C.J. Spittal, Hon. Librarian, John Wesley's Chapel, Bristol, of 'The Shieling', 162 Church Road, Frampton Cotterell, Bristol BS36 2ND, writes:

During the nineteenth century it was a custom for curious laymen to visit churches and chapels on selected Sundays sermon-tasting and writing on the places of worship concerned, often piquantly on the behaviour of the congregation. Perhaps the best known product of such visits was C.M. Davies (himself ordained) on *Unorthodox London*, a series of articles contributed to the *Daily Telegraph* and subsequently published in book form (Tinsley Bros, 1873), but there were certainly others in provincial papers. I know already of a series which appeared in the *Bath Herald* probably during the 1870s, of a series in the *Bristol Times* between 1843 and 1847 by Joseph Leech, a newspaper editor, and a series by "Criticus" in the *Nottingham and Midland Counties Daily Express* in 1877 and 1878. 'The Suffolk Pulpit' was the title given to such a series in the *Suffolk Chronicle* during the period 1857-61.

I should be most obliged if anyone working with local newspapers or in local studies departments of a library could send me details of any others they may know about. They will most probably be Anglican but reference to chapel visiting giving details of denominations would be especially welcome.

HAVE YOU SEEN ... ?

Some recent items of interest to local studies librarians

Ansell, R. Henry Stiby: his life and times. South Somerset District Council, 1997. 18pp. £2.50. ISBN 1 899983 40 6 (Museum of South Somerset Historical Monographs no. 11).

Compiled to accompany an exhibition on Henry Stiby, amateur photographer, ironmonger and civic leader, this well-produced pamphlet deals with the multi-faceted life of this local worthy. Written by a librarian, it includes numerous illustrations, and is a good example of the way various local organisations can cooperate to provide useful local historical information.

Learning about the Victorians: a guide for parents, teachers and children. The Victorian Society, 1998. 27pp. £2.50. Available from the Society, 1 Priory Gardens, Bedford Park, London W4 1TT.

While not specifically a local history publication, this simply produced booklet does include various examples of local places to visit and recommends readers to go to their Local Studies Library for assistance. It has been produced to help respond to increasing numbers of enquiries from parents and teachers and includes a brief note about the National Curriculum Key Stages 2 and 3 as it relates to the Victorians, a section on background reading giving KS level or reading level, and an "Out and About" section dealing with specific topics such as cities, towns and villages, churches, houses and gardens, and industrial sites. The final section gives ideas for things to do related to the topic, including reading Victorian books and dressing up. Despite the title, it largely seems to be addressed to parents.

Lancaster, Brian. Croydon Church Townscape. Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society, 1997. 45pp. £4.50 + £0.50 p&p from the Society, 96A Brighton Road, South Croydon CR2 6AD. ISBN 0 906047 12 9.

This guide is intended to show the identity, location and diversity of Croydon's places of worship, past and present. It is a descriptive guide to the buildings rather than to congregations. Arranged in a series of 22 walks, with suggested times ranging between 1 and 2½ hours, the guide ranges widely, including the various Christian denominations as well as non-Christian religions, and including mention of those which have disappeared - there are comments such as "a garage now occupies the site of the chapel" or "since 1957 it has been a private house". However existing places of worship are shown in bold type and former sites in italics. The index is arranged by denomination and refers to walks, not the page number. Overall, this is a useful guide for church historians and others in that it brings together information which otherwise would need to be sought in numerous places.

Nix, Anne. SCRAN. LOCSCOT, 3(8), Winter 1997-8, pp 5-7.

The aim of the SCRAN (Scottish Cultural Resources Network) project is to create a database of 1½ million records describing historical monuments and artefacts held in museums, galleries and archives, and this article briefly describes how this millennium-funded project is being used by the Edinburgh Room of Edinburgh City Libraries to identify and digitise approximately 2000 images evocative of the Royal Mile.

The McEwen Collection of Transport History. Catalogue, compiled by Don Martin. East Dunbartonshire Education and Leisure Services, 1998. 136pp £5.00. ISBN 0 904966 47X

James F. McEwen was one of the foremost authorities on Scottish railway history, and was a prolific author and collector. Following his death in 1991 his large collection of material was deposited with the then Strathkelvin District Council by his Trustees: at local government reorganisation in 1996 it passed to East Dunbartonshire Council. A grant from the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) has allowed the material to be catalogued and conserved, and this substantial volume has now been issued. Prepared by Don Martin, the Council's Reference and Information Librarian, it is a straightforward listing of the collection, divided by category, e.g. historical papers arranged by individual railway company, timetables, photographs (well over 4000 of the latter). A brief description of each item is given. This is a very useful catalogue of a special collection which would not otherwise be easily traced, but is of great interest to railway historians. Don Martin and East Dunbartonshire Council are to be congratulated on making the information available.

In connection with their international programme the Local studies Group has conferred Honorary Life Membership on the Chairman and International Officer of its sister organisation, the Local Studies Group of the Hungarian Library Association. Gyula Mandli and Erszebet Gancs have worked constantly over the past five years to contribute to the Accord between our two Groups and this has resulted in reciprocal study visits and exchanges of publications and local studies practice.

Erszebet Gancs was presented with a commemorative certificate at the Local Studies Group Annual General Meeting at London in March. As Gyula Mandli, the Chairman of the Hungarian Local Studies Group, was unable to be present at that meeting to receive the first award of its kind, there will be a separate ceremony at the Fifth Hungarian Local Studies Conference in July. The certificate and the thanks of the UK Group will be presented to Mr. Mandli by Diana Dixon, the British delegate to the Conference.

LATE NEWS

A Day School on digitisation of local studies material in libraries, museums and archives will be held on October 15th at County Hall, Durham. Full details will be announced shortly - look out for the notices or contact Richard Pears at the Reference Library, Dunning Street, Middlesbrough, TSI 2AY (01642 263358).

TOM VALENTINE

"Carronvale Bindery"

A QUALITY SERVICE FROM COVER TO COVER

CONSERVATION

- Deacidification
- Paper and Document Repair
- Vellum Documents Conserved
- Encapsulation Service
- Map and Plans Restored
- Albums
- Only Archival Quality Materials Used

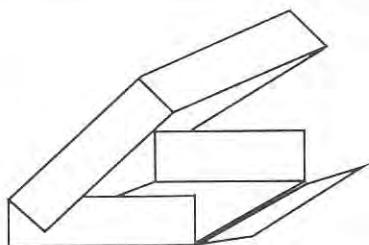
BOOKBINDING

- Restoration
- Fine Bindings
- Periodicals and Journals
- Thesis Binding
- Newspapers
- Archive Boxes and Portfolios
- Disasted Planning and Service
- Surveys

Contact us now to discuss your conservation or binding requirements

Carronvale Bindery, 18 Main St., Larbert, FALKIRK, FK5 3AW

☎ (01324) 552247 or Fax (01324) 563737



RYDER BOXES

ACID FREE STORAGE BOXES

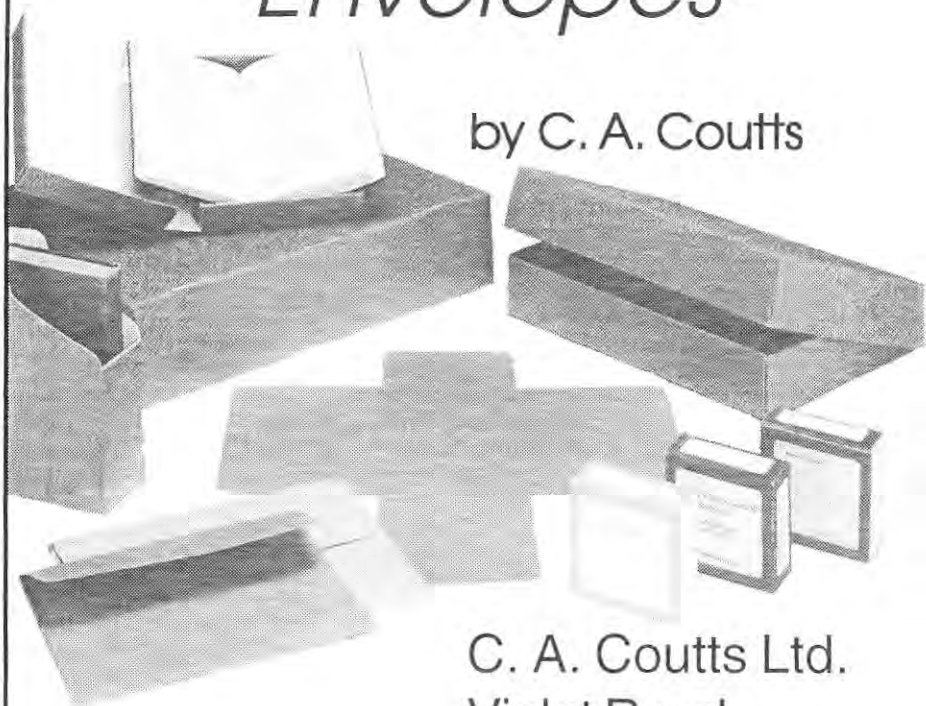
Hand made to order or we are now able to offer our standard range of 'KEEPSAFE' boxes.

G. RYDER & CO. LTD.

DENBIGH ROAD, BLETCHLEY, MILTON KEYNES, MK1 1DG
telephone: 01908 375524 facsimile: 01908 373658

*Acid-free
Archive Boxes and
Envelopes*

by C. A. Cou tts



C. A. Cou tts Ltd.
Violet Road
London E3 3QL
Tel: 0171-5156171
Telex No.: 916298
Fax: 0171-9876839