

**Friends
of the**

*Suffolk
Record
Office*

Registered Charity
No 288042

Newsletter of the Friends of the Suffolk Record Office

March 2008

'O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing'



Alan Road chapel choir, 1895-1900

IRO/FK1/8/8626/53

The hymnathon to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the birth of Charles Wesley was a great success. Around 100 people came along to St Mary le Tower church in Ipswich to sing their way through some of his 6000 hymns. The singers, led by members of the Tower choirs and their conductor Dr Michael Nicholas, managed to sing 47 of Charles Wesley's most popular hymns, including *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*, *Love Divine All Loves Excelling* and *O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing*. The organ was played by William Saunders from St Mary le Tower Church, Ian Woods from Alan Road Methodist Church and John Wearne from Museum Street Methodist Church. There was also an opportunity to see the record office exhibition celebrating the various Methodist anniversaries in 2007.

The event raised £360 in total, meaning that the three charities, Friends of the Suffolk Record Office, Friends of St Mary le Tower Church and the Methodist Homes for the Aged, all received a cheque for £120. The record office would like to thank all who helped to make the day a success.

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Suffolk Record Office News

Starters and Leavers

Leavers

Jayne Austin left the record office at the end of October to take up the position of Collections Manager at the Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service. Jayne joined the record office in 2003 as the Heritage Information Manager. Alison West, the research officer at the Ipswich branch, retired at the end of December after some twenty years. Gudrun Reinke also retired from the Lowestoft branch in February after working for the record office since 1999. All of our leavers will be missed and we are grateful to them for their hard work and support of the record office.

Starters

Louise Clarke joined the Ipswich record office team as Archivist, starting full time from the beginning of January. People from the Waveney area may remember her as she previously worked at the Lowestoft record office from 1989 until February 2005. From February 2005 until April 2007 Louise worked within Suffolk libraries as Assistant Area Manager and then in April 2007 moved to work at Endeavour House as Information Compliance Officer dealing with the County Council's Freedom of Information and Data Protection enquiries. During this period Louise also undertook further post graduate study thus enabling her to return to Archives, her first love. She looks forward to meeting up with old acquaintances and also getting to know newer members.

Stuart Tyler started as the new Archivist at Bury record office in December, having graduated from the MA Archives and Records Management course at Liverpool University in September. He is slowly coming to terms with the loss of the morning lie-ins that student life allowed! Stuart was first introduced to archives during his undergraduate History degree, where he used Durham University's Sudan Archive during the research for his dissertation. After graduating from Durham, Stuart initially found himself working as a data entry clerk at the Inland Revenue – which sadly presented few opportunities for working with historical documents! Thankfully then, he managed to find a job at the Dorset History Centre (the county record office) as an 'Archive Graduate Trainee', a one-year placement that led on to the MA course at Liverpool. Stuart enjoys the variety of the enquiries and archival subject material that can be found in a county record office, and looks forward to getting to grips with the collections, history and place-names of Suffolk!

The AGM will be held at the Ipswich branch of the Suffolk Record Office on Friday 26 September 2008. We look forward to seeing you there.



Suffolk Voices Restored

Suffolk County Council has been awarded £35,700 by the Heritage Lottery Fund for an innovative project to preserve the authentic voices and experiences of Suffolk residents for future generations. The Friends of the Suffolk Record Office have kindly contributed £500 towards the project. Suffolk County Councillor Lisa Chambers, portfolio holder for Economic and Cultural Development, said: "This is a wonderful opportunity to both keep and make available for ever some local people's fascinating accounts of their lives. It is so easy to lose our understanding of what everyday life in a particular area or industry felt like for local people in the recent past. Voices of those who lived and worked, perhaps very near where we live can bring history alive, and I'm sure the projects in schools will be a great success with children and young people. It's one thing to learn about world events and the effects of technology, it's much more meaningful when we see how it affected local people's everyday lives."

The grant will be spent on digitising over 800 tape-recorded oral history interviews from the collections of Suffolk Record Office and making them accessible to new audiences through digital re-recordings and selected extracts, with a full online catalogue. These oral history recordings were made between 1966 and 2004 and cover many aspects of life in Suffolk. Particularly well represented are experiences of the farming industry, domestic service, fishing, of living through both World Wars and the experiences of first-generation immigrants from the Caribbean.

Preservation is the heart of this project, to prevent these original Suffolk voice recordings deteriorating and so to keep alive the stories they tell. Many of the tapes made in the 1960s are beginning to degrade: digitising these will create electronic master files that can be used to produce CDs and other new formats as technology develops. A number of tapes do not have transcripts, so volunteers from the Suffolk Local History Council will use their expertise, personal knowledge and understanding of the Suffolk dialect to transcribe and summarise these recordings.



*Tibbenham's factory, Ipswich, 1914-1918
IRO/HC403/1/4*

Once the project is completed, CDs of the whole collection will be available for free loan through all Suffolk libraries. Trial projects in three Suffolk schools will develop their use as a learning resource. The county council's website will have catalogue information and extracted highlights making this high quality oral history record available to a global audience via the internet.

**Suffolk Record Office Contact Details**

For any queries or comments about the Friends please contact the secretary or treasurer.

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Recently purchased manuscripts

The Friends have not bought any documents since the publication of the last newsletter in August 2007. Bids were placed on two documents that were put up for sale in December 2007. The first item was a grant by Sir William Phelipp, John Barney and others of the manor of "Cokefeldhalle", Yoxford to John Manning, 21st July 1428, which had an estimate of £200-£300 but was sold for £650. The second was a grant by Robert Mekilfeld of a message and land called Burghard in Blythburgh to John Hopton, William Loveford and others, 4th November 1462/3, which had an estimate of £150-£200 but realised £360. On both occasions the Friends were outbid. The committee hopes that the increase in the subscription rate from £5 to £12 will result in a larger purchase fund to ensure that such material can be successfully bid for at auction.

The Waveney Revels — Get Ready to Revel—explore something different, go somewhere unusual, do something new.....

Find out about Your Old Inn—A 2 hour session about how to research the history of property.
Thursday 3 April 2008 2.00pm £10

Herrings and Oatcakes Dr Pat Murrell
Saturday 12 April 2008 2.00pm £5.50

Pubs Past and Present, a guided walk by Ivan Bunn
Sunday 20 April 2008 11.00am £5.50

Please contact the Lowestoft Record Office for bookings and further information about record office events— see above for contact details. Further information about Waveney Revels can be found at http://www.waveney.gov.uk/Leisure/waveney_revels.htm