

MODERN RECORDS CENTRE INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Introduction

The BBC television programme *Who do you think you are?*, broadcast on 26 October 2004, featured Sue Johnston researching her family tree, using the Modern Records Centre and some of its railway union records. This resulted in 70 email, telephone and written enquiries between 27 October and 26 November 2004. Since then the rate of enquiries has slowed down but the programme seems to have generated a continuing interest in rail union records. Nonetheless, most of our user statistics are up for the six months beginning in August (12 month totals for 2003/04 in brackets), including reader visits 455 (706), enquiries 672 (962), and documents produced 20,662 (27,804). It has been a busy period in the Centre.

Research Awards

The Centre has set aside funding to assist University of Warwick postgraduate students finance their research. To qualify for an award, their research has to be primarily based on archives held in the Centre but the research awards assist them to finance travel and other costs of research in other archive repositories and libraries. Two more recipients have been awarded funding for 2005. Christopher Moran has been given an award to support his PhD research into British spy fiction and the Cold War, using the papers of Maurice Edelman. Daniel Golding has been given an award to support his MA research on British responses to the Holocaust, using the papers of Victor Gollancz and Lady Allen of Hurtwood. We would be grateful if University of Warwick readers of this newsletter could advise their students of the existence of these awards.

Pay and Power

The Modern Records Centre is benefiting from a Heritage Lottery Fund grant awarded to 'Pay & Power', a West Midlands archive services project. One of the aims of the project is to make inroads into the backlog of cataloguing from which most archive services suffer. Four project assistants are spending up to six months in 14 offices, cataloguing material previously not available for research. Andrew MacLeod is to catalogue material from the Centre,

Herefordshire Record Office, and the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust Records Office. While he is at the Centre he will be cataloguing the papers of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union and those of its predecessors. For further information about the project contact Judith Karena at Judith.Karena@mlawestmidlands.org.uk or 0121 631 5827.

Cataloguing

The BASW Archive (MSS.378)

Our previous newsletter reported the arrival of a large archive from the British Association of Social Workers. The sorting and ordering of the minutes and papers of the committees, working parties, project groups and advisory panels of the archive continues to make good progress: A volunteer wishing to take up archives as a career has been sorting out the series of printed material in the archive, in particular the journal *Social Work Today*. The catalogue of the archives of BASW's predecessors has been converted to electronic format. It is now included in the A2A database (<http://www.a2a.org.uk/>), which is available via the internet, and will be available on our site soon. Work on the re-numbering and re-packaging of the boxes and volumes of this archive, which hitherto had been very difficult to produce for researchers, has now been completed.

TUC archive, 1970-1990 (MSS.292D)

The three-year project, financed by the Arts and Humanities Research Board, to catalogue the Trades Union Congress archive, 1970-1990, is nearing conclusion. Since January 2004 Andrew Morrison, John Symington and other MRC staff have catalogued approximately 1750 boxes of files. The files cover a wide range of subjects from the Tolpuddle Martyrs to trade unions in the Falkland Islands! Editing is in progress so that the cataloguing files can be moved to the Centre's website in March.

The National Cycle Archive (MSS.328)

A new finding aid for the most lengthy series of two of the cycling journals, *The Bicycle* and *Cycling* has been completed, allowing us to see at a glance exactly which issues we have.

4. New deposits

Archives continue to be deposited in large quantities. They are described briefly in the following list. Some of them have yet to be processed, so that their entry here is simply a 'marker'. As usual, a complete list will be included in the Centre's Annual Report. Some of the collections are subject to access restrictions; please contact us for further details.

- A. P. Young: a large box of additional papers. (MSS.242)

- AMICUS: a large collection of additional papers, mainly relating to predecessors of the National Union of Insurance Workers. They include papers from the Royal London Staff Association, the Liverpool Victoria Insurance Workers, and the Prudential Staff Union. (MSS.411)
- Campaign for the Advancement of State Education (CASE): papers of Mrs Judith Parris, an early campaigner and Northern Regional Secretary. Includes papers from Southampton District Group and Cambridge. (MSS.236)
- Confederation of British Industry: includes files from several directorates, including Business Environment (environment health & safety, company & commercial law), Company Affairs, Communications, Director General's Office, Economics (taxation) Human Resources (education & training, employee relations), International Competitiveness, Economics (taxation), European Affairs Group, Executive, Company Affairs, Government Relations. (MSS.200/C)
- Electrical Trades Union: mainly printed material transferred from Tyne and Wear Archives. (MSS.387)
- Engineering Employers' Federation-West Midlands: microfilms of negotiating conferences. (MSS.265)
- International Transport Workers' Federation: in addition to routine additions of documents and circulars, photographs, Executive Board minutes, 1977-78 and Management Committee papers, 1966-67, 1976, 1978. (MSS.159)
- Les Gurl: 4 albums, thought to be from a house clearance of a member of his family. They include an album from a tour of Russia and China (mainly the latter), 1956 (LG led a delegation of trade unionists); scrap book, 1970s includes itinerary for delegation to Gorki, 1958); scrap book re HMS *Indefatigable*, 1945-6, 1960s holiday in Hastings, family photos, 1939-1960s, and naval service, 1944-6, in Australia and the Pacific; presentation volume, a souvenir of a visit to a factory, VEB Schwermaschinenbau Ernst Thalmann, in Magdeburg, 1960. (MSS.228X)
- National Cycle Archive: mainly additions to the library holdings and including additional material from the late Harry Aspden's collection. (MSS.328)
- Meg Stacey: additional papers. (MSS.186)
- UNISON: a large addition of papers, including some of the papers of Rodney Bickerstaffe, the former General Secretary, and additional NALGO and NUPE papers. (MSS.389)

5. Staff

John Symington joined the staff in September 2004 to work on the project financed by the Arts and Humanities Research Board, to catalogue the Trades Union Congress archive 1970-1990 and then to work on other archives. He has recently completed the archives administration course at Aberystwyth, before which he was an archives assistant at the University of Hull.

Andrew MacLeod joined the staff in February 2005. He is working on the Pay and Power project (see above) and will be based here for a year. He previously worked for the Highland Council Archive, so the records he will be working on here are very different from the ones to which he is accustomed. Private estate papers form the bulk of the holdings in Inverness, but in the Centre he will be working on the papers of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union, 1820s to 1998.

Joanne Burman leaves the Centre at the end of February after more than fourteen years. Researchers will be familiar with her friendly and cheery manner, which quickly made them feel comfortable while working in the Centre. Her colleagues will miss her energy and willingness to get stuck in, be it unloading archives or dealing with a word-processing problem. The tasks she has done are too many to list, but perhaps her most lasting contribution will be the finding aids she has compiled for the papers of Amnesty International and the Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals. Fortunately for us she is only moving down the corridor to the BP Archive, so we will still see her friendly face. We wish her well in her new post.

For further information about the Centre, its holdings and publications, contact

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