



Archives & Records
Association
UK & Ireland

 The National Archives



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DISCOVERING LOCAL HEROES IN SCIENCE, MEDICINE AND TECHNOLOGY

Archive Awareness archiveawareness.com launches its *Discovery* Campaign today, celebrating British ingenuity in science, technology and medicine. The Campaign uncovers the stories behind some of the most groundbreaking inventions from the nineteenth century and highlights the role of the men and women who made outstanding contributions to the field. Inventors, industrialists, engineers and mavericks all played their parts.

The campaign traces the endeavours of those who influenced the course of history in nineteenth century Britain through events exploring how their sparks of inspiration changed the way we live and see the world. Among the pioneers featured are the founder of modern nursing Florence Nightingale, Sir William Armstrong, who started the Armstrong Whitworth manufacturing empire, and the amateur scientist extraordinaire Sir David Lionel Salomons who mounted the first motor show in England.

Geoff Pick, Portfolio Holder for Engagement on the Archives & Records Association Council (ARA) says:

“This year’s campaign will help the public discover the history of our nation’s achievements in the vital fields of science, technology and medicine as well as industrial history and engineering. It will enable many more people to realise the role and contributions local heroes have played in making that history”.

Communities across the country are honouring local heroes and geniuses.

- Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums are marking the bicentenary of the birth of Tyneside engineer, inventor and industrialist Sir William Armstrong with an exhibition about his Elswick Works, which grew to be one of the largest industrial complexes in the country. It will also shed light on Armstrong's personality and signpost his legacy to the region.
- Hampshire Archives are telling the life story of the mother of modern nursing Florence Nightingale. As part of the celebrations, local people will have the opportunity to see the County Council's diverse collection of her photographs and letters, which include her correspondence with her cousin Henry Bonham Carter about the training of nurses, a letter which she wrote at the age of six to her aunt about an eclipse including a recording of her voice from 1890.

Institutions and businesses are also telling the story of people who have made an impact on society through their innovative and engineering genius.

- The Royal College of Physicians in Ireland will be exhibiting archive material and historical items relating to Dr Kathleen Lynn, the founder of Saint Ultan's Hospital for infants.
- Derbyshire Record Office is paying homage to Erasmus Darwin FRS: Physician, Natural Philosopher, Poet and Botanist and grandfather of Charles Darwin. They are also honouring Bryan Donkin (1768-1855), the engineer and inventor who founded a business dynasty which brought new skills and products such as the first commercial paper-making machine to England.

Angela Owusu, Archive Awareness Campaign Officer said:

“This campaign celebrates a huge range of achievements. Events are being held throughout the autumn and winter, including celebrations to mark the Royal

Society's 350th anniversary and UNESCO's Year of Biodiversity and scientific exhibitions, talks and open days all over the country."

Log onto www.archiveawareness.com/events and

- Learn about Britain's pioneering nineteenth century nurse at Hampshire Archives.
- Find out about Wolverhampton's Unsung Heroes of Science
- Discover the story of Sir William Armstrong, Tyneside engineer, inventor and industrialist
- Go to The British Postal Museum & Archive open day on 'Sickness and Disease' where you can delve into past records from the Post Office Medical Department
- Visit The National Archives and find out about some of the major scientific and technological advances made during the First and Second World Wars.

– Ends –

For further details, spokespeople or images on the Archive Awareness Campaign, please contact **Angela Owusu** on **0208 392 5237** or email

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Notes to Editors

- Archive Awareness is spearheaded by the Archives & Records Association (ARA) (www.archives.org.uk) and funded by The National Archives (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk) and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (www.mla.gov.uk).
- Archive Awareness Campaign www.archiveawareness.com is an ongoing celebration of all kinds of fascinating archive treasures. It celebrates and promotes local and national archives. Throughout the year archives across the country open their doors to showcase history, hold open days and present workshops to help the public discover a piece of their own history.

Examples of *Discovery-Archives in Science, Medicine and Technology* events (spokespeople from each event available)

- An exhibition around the Unsung Heroes of Science of Wolverhampton will take place at **Wolverhampton Archives & Local Studies** until the end of the summer. See www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/archives
- As part of the *Leigh For All, Heritage Weekend*, **Wigan Archives Service** will be supporting the Archives Awareness Campaign with archive tours and other activities. On **Friday 10 September 2010** the Archives will host: "Get Your Hands on the Past: Archive Tours", around Leigh Town Hall and the Archive premises.

On **Saturday 11 September 2010**, the archives will have an exciting display and family friendly handling activities in the foyer of Leigh Town Hall, entitled, "Tomorrow's World: Science in the Archives". During the weekend there will also be tours of Leigh Parish Church, Town Centre Heritage Walks, local music, food and a vintage car display in the Civic Square. www.wlct.org/culture/heritage/archives.htm

- **Wigan Archives** will be holding an exhibition during the Heritage Open Weekend in **September**. As well as a talk around Science, Technology and Medicine and their collection, they will also be doing some schools/families education work with their outreach team. Look for information on their website at www.wlct.org/Culture/Heritage/archives.htm
- **Science Museum Library and Archives** (in Wroughton, Swindon) will be holding a series of events to promote awareness of their collections in the local community. There will be open mornings and afternoons once a month from **now to December 2010**. These will be based around the general theme of "Discovery: Looking at Scientific Archives in a Different Way". Each month will focus on a particular way of looking at scientific archives. The first one will be a general overview of their holdings, followed by family history; social history; military history and local history. Each morning or afternoon event will include a display of material depicting the relevant sub-theme of science and technology, a behind the scenes tour and a short talk.
- **East Riding Archives and Local Studies Service** will be holding an open day in September which will include an exhibition of local documents and books on the themes of science, technology and medicine. There will also be children's activities and the chance to try writing with a quill pen. The day will also include conservation demonstrations, behind the scenes tours and screenings of material from their newly opened film and sound archive. www.eastriding.gov.uk
- A one day conference on the history of nutrition will be held at the **London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine** on **15 September**. See website for further details www.lshtm.ac.uk/library/archives/
- Ireland is delighted to announce a public talk by Dr. Catherine Cox, BA MA PhD entitled 'A valuable and vulnerable resource: medical records and the historian'. The talk will take place on **Wednesday 15 September at 6.00pm at the Maxwell theatre**, in the **Hamilton Conference Centre, Trinity College**. **All are welcome to attend, no booking required.**
Dr. Catherine Cox, UCD Director, Centre for the History of Medicine in Ireland specialises in eighteenth and nineteenth century medical history with a particular emphasis on Ireland. Special interests are the history of mental illness and the spread of 'medical knowledge' in eighteenth and nineteenth century society. Other areas of interest are the history of the great famine; social and cultural history, women's history and the history of urban development in eighteenth and nineteenth century Ireland. For further information on Archive Awareness Campaign please log on to www.learnaboutarchives.ie or contact Publicity Officer for Archives & Records Association, Ireland, email deirdre.mcparland@diageo.com
- If you are you interested in the history of engineering and invention, or you are you researching a family member who was an engineer, three major engineering institutions are holding an open day for family historians at the **Institution of Mechanical Engineers, Westminster, 23 September from 1pm – 4:30pm**. It will be an opportunity

to talk with the professional custodians of the archives and see the stunning Elizabethan-style library, designed by Basil Slade in 1899.

This event is of interest for those researching the history of civil, mechanical or electrical engineers and the engineering industry, and who would like to take a closer look at the historical records available. It offers a chance to see some of the archives of the Institution of Civil Engineers, the Institution of Mechanical Engineers and the Institution of Engineering and Technology. The archivists will also be giving short talks on researching your engineering ancestors, the international history of engineering, technical education and engineering in wartime.

The event is **free but pre-booking** is essential: please email the IMechE Archives at archive@imeche.org

- **East Riding Archives and Local Studies Service** will be holding open days starting on **25 September** which will include an exhibition of local documents and books on the themes of science, technology and medicine. The four broad themes will be “Medicine and Health”, “Building the past” (building of bridges, railways, ships, houses etc), “Communication through the ages” (Communications technology i.e. semaphore, telegrams etc) and “Natural History” (plants, animals, geology, archaeology). There will also be children’s activities and the chance to try writing with a quill pen. The day will also include conservation demonstrations, behind the scenes tours and screenings of material from their newly opened film and sound archive. For more details, see <http://www.eastriding.gov.uk/cs/culture-and-information/archives/archivesloc/>
- **Hampshire Archives** will be holding a series of events until the autumn to celebrate the centenary of Florence Nightingale’s death. Highlights of the centenary celebrations include a play about her life and work which will be performed by Chester House Productions at Hampshire Record Office in Winchester on **28 September** and at Hampshire Collegiate School, on **21 October**; the school will also host an event for visually impaired reading groups. For more information on Florence Nightingale and events in Hampshire visit: www3.hants.gov.uk/florence-nightingale.htm
- **The British Library** in association with the **Science Museum** is opening a new project *An Oral History of British Science*. The project which is being undertaken by National Life Stories is creating an archive for the study and public understanding of contemporary science in Britain through oral history fieldwork programme involving 200 in depth interviews with British Scientists. See www.bl.uk/historyofscience for further info.
- **The Kent Archive & Local History service** have a number of activities & events until the autumn. There is a display on the life & scientific achievements of William Harvey at Herne Bay Library. Sessions to highlight local medical & hospital history are planned for **November 2010** at **Dartford**. In **Shepway**, Science, Technology & Medicine are themes that will be explored as part of exhibits for the new History Resource Centre at **Folkestone Library**. During late September/October 2010 there will be a **Sittingbourne Library** display on historic local businesses. This will include the production techniques behind brickmaking & barge building. At **Tonbridge**, Mallika Bhaduri has booked a talk from Historian and former newspaper editor Frank Chapman on **October 28** at **2.30pm**. He will focus on the history of railway & printing technology in Tonbridge. At **Tunbridge Wells**, Susan Rogers plans to work with **Maidstone Museum & the Salomons Mansion Library** to highlight the story of amateur scientist extraordinaire, Sir David Lionel Salomons: www.canterbury.ac.uk/salomons-museum/tree/d-lionel-salomons.asp He started a series of popular scientific lectures in Tunbridge Wells & organised the 1st motor show in England at Showfields. In September, to tie in with Faversham Hop

Festival there will be a **Faversham Library** display about local beer/ale production. See www.kent.gov.uk/leisure_and_culture/archives_and_local_history/archive_and_local_history/library_and_history_centre.aspx for all details.

- **The National Archives** will be hosting a series of 'Talks' on Science. Stephen Twigge, Principal Record Specialist, Modern Domestic Records Talk on **11 November** will focus on 'Science at War'. This will largely be based on the 20th century and cover the major scientific and technological advances made during the First and Second World Wars. Dan Gilfoyle, Resource Discovery Officer's, Talk on **18 November** will focus on ADM 101 and Research in the History of Medicine and Science. **Free** booking not essential.
- **The British Postal Museum & Archive** will be hosting an Archive Open Day on **13 November** themed around 'Sickness and Disease'. This will draw on records of the Post Office Medical Department. Behind the Scenes tour will be on offer, along with Archivist led introductions to the records. See www.postalheritage.org.uk

Many more archives will be holding events to tie in with this year's theme and other general activities. To find out what is on in an area near you, see the AAC website - www.archiveawareness.com/events/

- **Archive Facts:**

- There are over 2000 archives in the UK
- Local archives in England and Wales had around 907,000 reader visits in total and 11.7m websites visits (2006 - 07).
- Between April 1994 and 31 March 2010 the Heritage Lottery Funding awarded £284m to archives
- The National Archives was awarded £580,900 from the Heritage Lottery Fund as part of their *Skills for Future* programme. The project *Opening Up Archives for the 21st Century* will create 26 new traineeships which will work across England to tackle skills shortages in archives and strengthen and broaden the appeal of the archive sector.
- According to the MLA report Taking Part (http://www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets/T/Taking_Part_11721.pdf), 6% of the population visited an archive in a given year (2005/6, the most recent report). 13% have accessed an archive online or in person.
- In 2007, over 99% of visitors to archives surveyed agreed that archives play an important role in "preserving our culture and heritage". Over 97% also agreed archives have an important role in providing opportunities for learning. (PSQG Survey 2007: http://www.nca.org.uk/materials/psgg_national_report_2007.pdf)
- Programmes such as *Who Do You Think You Are?* have helped to boost audience interest in archives and family history.

- There are about 69,500 cubic metres of archival holdings (not including record management holdings) in local authority archives in England and Wales (CIPFA stats 2006 - 07).
- The National Archives annual survey of archive collecting noted over 3400 significant additions to UK archive holdings in 2008 alone. [Accessions to Repositories 2008]
- The commercial digital sites Findmypast.com and Ancestry.co.uk alone have 650million and 820million individual records online. [from their websites] This is estimated to be less than 1% of archives in England and Wales.

