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SAVING SUTHERLAND



County Archivist Thea Randall launches the appeal to save the Sutherland Collection

Since the last issue of From Time 2 Time, there has been real progress in our efforts to secure the future of the Sutherland Papers at the Staffordshire Record Office.

We have received a major boost towards the acquisition of the collection through a Stage One award of £1.35 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund. We now need bring together the remaining partnership funding and finalise some minor details of our project. Once this has been done, the Heritage Lottery Fund will finally decide whether the

earmarked funding can be awarded to us. The total costs to the Archive Service of the Sutherland project are just over £2 million. This includes the final purchase price agreed with the owners, together with new enhancements in public access to the collection, which we have developed as part of our Heritage Lottery funding application.

The Archive Service has already secured partnership funding of £382,000. This has come from a variety of sources including: Staffordshire County Council, Stoke on Trent City Council, Newcastle Borough Council and Stafford

Borough Council; local parish councils; the Staffordshire Environmental Fund; the Friends of the National Libraries; the National Art Collections Fund; and the Friends of the Archive Service. Efforts to secure further grants and donations are continuing. The remaining total to be raised is now only £252,000, a huge step forward on the original daunting sum.

Once we have acquired the collection, there will be a range of enhancements in public access. These will include: researching and developing new online interpretation of the collection through a dedicated Sutherland website; digitising

a large number of images from the collection and providing transcripts; creating new online personal name indexes to selected documents in the collection, such as rentals and employment records, to support family history research in Staffordshire, Shropshire and the West Midlands; producing a number of travelling exhibitions to focus on local communities; and leading a series of highly participatory study days at various venues, to enable and encourage people to explore aspects of the collection. In this way the wealth of information contained in this collection will become much better known.

A public appeal is now underway through the Friends of the Archive Service and our target is to raise £65,000 in this appeal. You might not have used the Sutherland Papers personally but if you value the importance of securing our archival heritage, then please consider making a donation. Every amount will help and your contribution will be fully acknowledged.

Please make any cheque payable to FOSSA and send to Malcolm Price, Hon Treasurer, FOSSA, c/o Staffordshire Record Office, Eastgate Street, Stafford ST1 6 2LZ. Alternatively you may make a cash donation in any of our Record Office reading rooms. Please ask the staff for details.

Charter Mark across the Archive Service

In December 2004 Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive Service was assessed under the rigorous criteria of the Charter Mark Standard for Customer Service Excellence. We were delighted to hear formally in January that the Service was found to meet the Standard in all criteria. This represents a real achievement as it is the first time that the Archive Service as a whole has been assessed to this standard. Previously the Charter Mark Award had been held just at Staffordshire Record Office.

What this means is that our Service has been assessed on how well we meet six criteria covering areas such as standards and performance, engaging with our customers, and being fair and accessible. Some recent changes resulting from the Charter Mark assessment include the revision of our Service Charter to improve waiting times for photocopying and research services. We also introduced comment books, which have resulted in much more feedback from our customers.

Our success is down to the hard work of all the members of staff at our three offices: Staffordshire County Record Office, Lichfield Record Office, and Stoke on Trent City Archives. We would also like to thank those users who willingly gave up their time to speak to the assessor and also those of you who have given us such positive feedback about our services.



Recent Accessions

At Stafford we have received an original manuscript poll book for the Newcastle-under-Lyme parliamentary election of 1830. Elections were often disputed at this date, happening just before the major electoral reforms, and always make an interesting study. The book belonged to one of the Fenton family, a significant local family of attorneys with political interests. The poll book is an example of how documents can come to light from unlikely sources. It had been in private hands, and was part of a collection of books passed to the Library of the Lancaster Catholic Diocese.

Other interesting accession have been an admission register and log book for Ellastone School that relate specifically to evacuees from Manchester, and a visitors book for Pillaton Hall dated 1888-1904. The latter includes many names from local families and other aristocracy, many other visitors from across Britain, Ireland and the world, family members between tours of duty abroad, as well as a few sketches and "in-jokes".

A collection of records of the Cannock & Rugeley Colliery at Hazelslade has been received. These records have not yet been catalogued, but include records of property, maps and correspondence dating back to the 1850s.

Alrewas Parish Council and Warslow and Elkstones Parish Council have both deposited their earliest minute books dating back to 1894.

As usual we have received a large number of parish deposits, including all the registers for Barton-under-Needwood 1571-1904, that were previously only available as Bishops Transcripts. Other 19th century or early 20th century registers have been received from Norton Canes, Stramshall, and Stafford Castle Church, the latter collection also including the plans for the church renovation and extension by John Oldrid Scott, 1895.

At Lichfield a notable accessions have included administrative records of the Lichfield Festival, 1982-1992 (D425) and local history notes and publications of the late Idris Bowen of Rolleston (426).

Improvements at Lichfield

The long-awaited new windows in the reading room were fitted in March. Although the public were denied the pleasure of visiting us for the three days of the installation, the benefits are obvious. Incoming rain and drafts are now things of the past, more light is being let in, and staff no longer have to perform contortions with a ten-foot pole in order to open and close the upper panes. Readers will enjoy the improved ventilation during the typically balmy Lichfield weather in the coming months. One of the reasons why we had to wait such a long time for the windows was that listed building regulations required the appearance of the new ones to be exactly the same as the old. They therefore had to be specially manufactured, since glazing companies tend not to hold stocks of windows for 1920s school assembly halls.

Volunteers

The awesome power of the press was demonstrated In February when the Lichfield Mercury published a feature article on our project to index the probate records from the period 1650-1700. This led to such a flood of eager extra volunteers that now there is scarcely a moment in the working week when someone is not working on the project. We are therefore making much quicker progress with than would otherwise have been the case. Special thanks to Shirley Newby, one of our longest serving volunteers, for her enthusiasm when the journalist visited and her patience when being photographed.

Friends of the Archive Service

The Friends of Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive Service have donated £730 for the purchase of another 10 years of the General Register Office Indexes to be available at the Staffordshire Record Office, this takes our holdings up to 1910. We are very grateful for their continued support enabling us to expand our sources.

In April Dr Pamela Sambrook gave a very interesting illustrated talk on "Restoring Shugborough's domestic past" and how the Anson collection had been used to research this work.

For details of Friends events over the summer please contact the events secretary Gay Lawrence at ron_lawrence@btinternet.com

STAFFORD

A Town and its People

We are very pleased to announce that a new catalogue is now available for a significant collection of records from Stafford Borough. The new catalogue completes the main Borough collection D1323 of which previously only the main order books, committee minutes, early accounts and various other volumes were available.

These newly catalogued records contain thousands of loose items of correspondence, legal papers and deeds. The deeds include abstracts of title, major mortgages, and hundreds of leases dating back to 1714, which give the names, occupations and dwellings of Stafford residents, also leases of Isaak Walton's charity land at Chebsey, and a Chancery order and leases relating to the ancient Coton Field, dating back to the 17th century. A series of later title deeds records the first owner-occupiers of the new estates built on Corporation land around Corporation Street, Oxford Gardens and Tithe Barn Road.

There are hundreds of contracts with local and national businesses, from minor repairs and decoration of Council property to significant public amenity and engineering projects. There are also records of Stafford charities administered by the Borough, and the local military tribunals in the First World War.

The most unusual aspect to this collection are the thousands of items of Town Clerk's correspondence, covering legal and well as general matters. The legal matters include the Stafford elections of the 1830s, negotiations over contributions to the Shire Hall, local charities, boundary changes, public amenity projects, property, markets and tolls, legal disputes and petitions. The general correspondence includes matters as diverse as complaints about bad drains to the billeting of the yeomanry in the 1860s. There is no end to the miscellaneous items to be found in the collection, which provide all sorts of insights into the life of the people of Stafford.

On 3rd March, an evening event was held to mark the launch of this new catalogue. The Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress were among the attendees as representatives of Stafford Borough as was David Kidney (MP for Stafford). The evening started with an introduction by Thea Randall the County Archivist, and this was followed by an illustrated talk given by Liz Street, the archivist who had catalogued the collection. This talk was intended as an introduction to the types of records that appeared in the collection, with a particular emphasis on the theme of "Stafford, a town and its people". Many original documents from the collection were also on display, showing the diverse range and quality of the collection.

Ancestry.com

Staffordshire Record Office has taken out a subscription to Ancestry.com. The subscription means that readers can book one of two Internet terminals available to gain free access to the site. From the site users can search UK census returns from 1871-1901 and view images of the returns without charge. Other records, particularly from the USA, are also available. We hope people will make use of this excellent service.

To book a computer please telephone 01785 278373.

Staffing

We said farewell to Paul Ford, Archive Assistant, in January who left to take up a post as archivist at Birmingham City Archives. In Feb Liz Newman (Archive Assistant, Research) left to take up a new job as archivist for the Black Country archives project: Documenting the Workshop of the World. We wish Paul and Liz every success in their new jobs. To replace them we welcome Ben Cunliffe as our new archive assistant in the reading room and Malinda Law who will take over as Archive Assistant (Research) in May.

Archive Service gets a WOW!

The staff of the Joint Archive Service (Staffordshire Record Office, Lichfield Record Office & Stoke on Trent City Archives) were very pleased to be nominated for a WOW Award. The award was given for demonstrating excellence in Ways Of Working within the Children and Lifelong Learning Directorate in the Staffordshire County Council. This particular nomination was in recognition of all the hard work demonstrated in achieving compliance with the Charter Mark Standard in January 2005. The WOW Award was presented to the staff by Councillor John Brookes (Cabinet Member Children and Lifelong Learning) and Peter Traves (Corporate Director, Children and Lifelong Learning) at a Directorate ceremony in County Buildings, Stafford on the 20th of April. The staff who were able to attend received their award and, after an official photograph, enjoyed a tea party with excellent cake!

Collecting Capper Rataud

The large collection of lithographic patterns has now been gathered in by Stoke Archives with the help of five students on a work placement from Keele. Visitors to the archives who imagine our work to be rather quiet comfortable and uneventful might have been surprised to see us work all day in unheated factory premises fishing material out of large bags while the floor periodically flooded with water. Mr. Alan Swale, (who is researching a Ph.D. on the subject of the introduction of screenprinting and its impact on the pottery industry) has informed us that the archive of Capper Rataud has enhanced importance because the records of its chief competitor for lithographic sales, Johnson Matthey have not been preserved. The Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive Service would like to place on record its gratitude to Mr. Richard Evans of Castle Colours Ltd., the present owner of the Capper Rataud premises for providing us with the time and facilities we need to process such a large body of records.

Archive Service Preservation Microfilming Programme Update

We are continuing our three-year programme of microfilming the Staffordshire electoral registers up to 1889, with the assistance of a grant from the National Manuscripts Conservation Trust. This year the registers for 1870-1881 are being filmed, and the originals will therefore be unavailable for the next few months. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause. Microfiches for the registers from 1832-1869 are already available at Staffordshire Record Office, and also at Stoke City Archives and Lichfield Record Office for their respective areas.

We will also be continuing our annual filming of parish registers starting before 1926. The following will be among those being filmed this year. Any additions to this list will be advertised later.

PARISH	BAPTISMS	MARRIAGES	BURIALS
Barlaston St John the Baptist	1915-1965	-	1894-1946
Barton-u-Needwood St James	1796-1812	-	1796-1812
Checkley St Mary & All Saints	-	-	1855-2002
Marchington Woodlands St John	-	1860-1985	-
Norton Canes St James	1903-1926	1901-1935	1907-1928
Seighford St Chad	1880-1985	-	-
Stafford Castle Church St Mary	1887-1932	1883-1947	1882-1930
Stramshall St Michael & All Angels	-	-	1854-1987
West Bromwich St Andrew	1879-1910	1879-1919	-

Why not take a fresh look at “Gateway to the Past”?

www.archives.staffordshire.gov.uk

The new-look online catalogue is now “live”. Catalogues of archives across the Archive Service, books at the William Salt Library, and objects and artworks held by the Arts and Museum Service are all searchable using a variety of customised search forms.

For those undertaking searches for archives there are three new features that will be of particular interest.

1. The Archive Collections search form allows a search for specific types of collection.
2. The Help Page has been divided into more easily digestible chunks, so you will find links to useful tips about the search process and other information wherever it is most appropriate.
3. The third new feature is to provide access to what archivists call “name authority records”. In effect these are mini-biographies which identify people referred to in the archives.

The largest catalogue recently made available on “Gateway to the Past” is that of the Staffordshire Quarter Sessions, which was the forerunner of the County Council. Other catalogues added include those of companies such as Lotus Shoes and Dorman Diesels of Stafford, Richardsons of Uttoxeter, coach builders, and John Joule and Sons, brewers of Stone, and landed families such as the Wolseleys of Wolseley, the Antrobuses of Eaton Hall, Cheshire, and the Mynors of Uttoxeter.

Comments or Suggestions...

Any comments or suggestions on the contents of Time 2 Time please send them to: Matthew Blake, Staffordshire Record Office, Eastgate Street, Stafford. ST16 2LZ
E-mail: matthew.blake@staffordshire.gov.uk

Events

Apart from “Stafford Borough-A Town and it’s people” (see separate article) we also held in April a very successful archaeological study day, entitled “The World War I Camps on Cannock Chase. The morning was spent at the Record Office in Stafford and the afternoon on the Chase looking at the evidence on the ground. The day was led by Ian Wykes, County Archaeologist for Staffordshire.

Forthcoming events (If you are interested in attending please contact the relevant office)

My Family History, a voyage of discovery,

Sat 21st May 10-30am–12-30pm

Ruth Hanslow

At Lichfield Records Office No charge

Music in the Archives,

Sat 8th Oct 10-30am–4-00pm

Dr Nigel Tringham, Sally Drage

Staffordshire Record Office £7

Ancestral Trails in the Archives,

Thursdays 7-30pm–9-00pm

22nd & 29th Sep, 6th, 13th, 20th & 27th Oct

A series of six introductory talks for beginners in Family History

Staffordshire Record Office £20

If you would like to be included on our mailing list for forthcoming events please write to: Helen Legge, Staffordshire Record Office, Eastgate Street, Stafford, ST16 2LZ

Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Archive Service
website: <http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/archives/>

STAFFORDSHIRE RECORD OFFICE

Eastgate Street, Stafford ST16 2LZ

Mon, Tues, Thurs 9-5, Wed 9-8, Fri 9.30-4.30, Sat 9-4

Tel. (01785) 278373

E-mail: staffordshire.record.office@staffordshire.gov.uk

Appointments essential

WILLIAM SALT LIBRARY

19 Eastgate Street, Stafford ST16 2LZ

Tues-Thurs 9-1 and 2-5, Fri 9.30-1 and 2-4.30

1st Saturday in each calendar month 9-1

Tel. (01785) 278372

E-mail: william.salt.library@staffordshire.gov.uk

LICHFIELD RECORD OFFICE

The Friary, Lichfield WS13 6QG

Mon, Tues, Wed and Fri 9.30-5 Thurs 11.30-7

2nd Saturday in each calendar month 9.30-12.30

Tel. (01543) 510720

E-mail: lichfield.record.office@staffordshire.gov.uk

Appointments essential

STOKE ON TRENT CITY ARCHIVES

Hanley Library, Bethesda Street, Hanley,

Stoke on Trent ST1 3RS

Tues, Wed, Thurs 9-7.30 Fri 9-5 Sat 9-4

Tel. (01782) 238420

E-mail: stoke.archives@stoke.gov.uk

Appointment essential

BURTON UPON TRENT FAMILY & LOCAL HISTORY CENTRE

Burton Library, Riverside, High Street

Burton upon Trent DE14 1AH

Mon, Wed, Fri 9-6 Tues 10-6 Thurs 9-8 Sat 9-4.30

Tel. (01283) 239556

E-mail: burton.library@staffordshire.gov.uk

Appointments essential