

## West Yorkshire Archive Service

### This is Our History

This is a one-year project, starting in August 2004, to assist diverse groups within Bradford in areas of social exclusion to produce their own digital community archives and in the process, discover successful mechanisms for accessing and developing relationships with groups. The involvement of voluntary organisations such as Bradford Trident, a regeneration agency, is seen as vital to community liaison and mediation. The outreach staff working on the project will assist community partners to make their digital archives available via CD-ROM and / or the internet and contribute to the development of an action plan for WYAS engagement with communities. The project will be assessed for its response to particular user needs alongside the development of relationships with hard-to-reach groups.

Contact: [tdownham@wyjs.org.uk](mailto:tdownham@wyjs.org.uk)

### Archive Ambassadors

A one-year project, starting in July 2004, that focuses on establishing approachable access points with local communities and building relationships with voluntary groups in the community. This project will set up an outlet for the archive service in East Leeds run by volunteers, provide training opportunities, material, equipment and support. An outreach worker will encourage volunteers to produce oral history, exhibitions and publications; assist with the identification and provision of surrogate materials for local reference and use; negotiate potential deposits and, source possible funding for future project development. The project will be assessed for the development and success of the online database; tailoring services to local need; lifelong learning and skills development and, its ability to offer preservation advice.

Contact: [tdownham@wyjs.org.uk](mailto:tdownham@wyjs.org.uk)

### Closing the Gap

This is a proposed one-year project that will support and encourage community archive development in the Wakefield District, both in individual groups and through collective activity. It is hoped that the issues faced by groups with regard to content development, access to technical support, funding and dissemination of their work to the widest possible audience will be addressed. Collaborative activities will identify ways in which community archive groups and 'official' archive services can work more closely together. The appointment of a link officer will ensure that sustainability is a key objective, with the training of volunteers to continue the work.

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### Now Then Dewsbury

Extending from a school project, WYAS has been working with primary and secondary school students to produce their personal history and to build on the existing Now Then Dewsbury website by reinterpreting sources held by WYAS, filling gaps and becoming a focus for heritage recording. The current phase of

the project, which started in September 2004, is involved in developing links with local organisations and community groups; creating thematic content for the website using both existing and newly contributed materials; adding an interactive element and devising procedures to ensure proper editorial control of material submitted. The project

will be assessed for the extent and benefits of wider community involvement and the efficacy of children as a link to this.

Website: [www.nowthen.org](http://www.nowthen.org)

### From History to Her Story

The From History to Her Story website has provided a significant source of archival material celebrating



A local child makes his contribution to Now Then Dewsbury, courtesy of photographer Porl Medlock and West Yorkshire Archive Service



Gallons shopfront and staff, 1929, courtesy of Batley Community Archive

Yorkshire women past and present. As an online resource it offers an extensive learning environment to interpret archive materials from around 85,000 images. Future assessment of the site will focus on the identification and evaluation of different types of learners, and evaluation of the website as it stands and as it develops. A bid is in development for a further phase of the project, which is planning an expansion that will have a broader community access remit and is in the

process of a drafting a bid to HLF for a project Living Her Story: Votes for Women, the Yorkshire Campaign, which will focus on the suffrage movement in five key areas of Yorkshire.

Inspired by the Suffrage Caravan, which toured

North Yorkshire in the Summers of 1908 and 1909, a travelling exhibition will be created, depicting Yorkshire's votes for Women campaign. Visitors will be encouraged to contribute.

Website: [www.historytoherstory.org.uk](http://www.historytoherstory.org.uk)

## Community Archive Projects in Hackney

### Kingsmead Community History Project

Hackney Marsh Partnership Community Development in conjunction with the Department of Community Research at the University of Hertfordshire is undertaking an extensive community history project on the Kingsmead Estate. This will create a community archive telling the story of the estate via residents' testimonies of life from the opening in 1939 to today. As well as the oral histories there will be a book published summarising the stories, and these will also be available through the HMP website along with digitised photographs and memorabilia.

Website: [www.hmp.org.uk/community/kingsmeadhistory](http://www.hmp.org.uk/community/kingsmeadhistory)

### Stories from the Tower

Slowfall Projects (a Hackney-based artist group) are creating a website that will explore the history of St Augustine's Tower – the oldest building in Hackney – and the people living around it. Through special community art events and open days the project hopes to encourage people to record their stories of life in the area or about the monument itself. Slowfall is seeking to

secure funding to produce a publication of these stories. Website: [www.slowfall.org](http://www.slowfall.org) / [www.storiesfromthetower.com](http://www.storiesfromthetower.com)

### Bansonga Sport Sponsorship Association

Hackney Archive Department have been approached by a member of the Association, who was referred to them by the reference library, and is putting together an oral history project involving Congolese immigrants to Hackney for the purposes of educating both their own children and the wider public. The results may be made available as a publication and/or via the web. Hackney Archive Department discussed issues relating to oral history and the Heritage Lottery Fund bid with him. The bid has now been submitted.

### Hoxton Story, based at the Red Room

An oral history project looking at collecting memories of Shoreditch and the changes it has seen since the Second World War. It is hoped to produce a website and some form of publication with the results of this project. Hackney Archive Department have offered to provide images, maps etc. to illustrate the website. Heritage Lottery Funding has been secured.

## Community Forum

It is proposed that The Friends of Hackney Archives Department will form an umbrella group for the forum, with a representative from Hackney Council agreeing to Chair it in the first instance. It is hoped the first meeting will be

able to take place in November and act as a channel for community consultation and the development of archive-community relationships. Hackney Community Survey contacts will be key candidates for attendance, along with other Hackney Archive Department contacts.

## Commanet

Commanet is a not for profit organisation that promotes, supports and develops community archives, facilitating self-sufficiency and community ownership. It grew out of a regeneration project in Batley in 1994, which invited residents to bring their family photographs to be photocopied to produce an educational resource for local schools. It became evident that participants appreciated this chance to share

memories, and this inspired the development of the Comma software, a simple database that allows people with relatively little technical ability to store digitised images, documents, and sound and video clips. The archive can be made available on CD-Rom or via the Commanet website. There are currently over 250 Comma groups across the country.  
*Website: [www.commanet.org](http://www.commanet.org)*

## Other relevant initiatives

### ICDC / Liverpool 2007

The International Centre for Digital Content is a university-based but externally focused centre which aims to position Liverpool and the North-West at the forefront of new media agendas and digital content development. ICDC is a partnership between Liverpool John Moores University and Mersey Television, and explores the relationship of

technology to society. The Centre's activity spans teaching, research and production, all of which are carried out in partnership with industry, education and the wider community. Liverpool 2007 is a collection of histories and stories focussing on the people of Liverpool that will form a database of heritage content.  
*Website: [www.liverpool2007.org.uk](http://www.liverpool2007.org.uk)*

## A partnership between



# Case Studies

## Community Access to Archives Project