Archive and Higher Education Collaboration Guidance 2018
Case Studies
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Undergraduate First Year History Students Explore the Trial of Charles I

Archives: Canterbury Cathedral Archives, The National Archives  
HEI: Canterbury Christ Church University  
Source: Dr Sara Wolfson SFHEA  
Theme: Teaching; Using archives for alternative teaching formats

Canterbury Christ Church University has experimented with workshops rather than traditional lectures across all levels of undergraduate study using archival material from The National Archives and Canterbury Cathedral Archives and Library. This differed from the way history has conventionally been taught, with third year special subjects primarily adopting the workshop approach.

Students in their historiographical first year course recreated Charles I’s trial of 1649 with the help of an external scholar, Dr Simon Healy from History of Parliament. The core reading for the task was split up amongst the students, who then separated into prosecution and defence teams. Role-play, historical investigation, teamwork and interaction presented the course in a creative way to highlight the historical debates that are still very much alive today. Students were tasked with listening to an audio extract on The National Archives website from a report of the trial of Charles I, January 1649, (Catalogue ref: TNA SP 16/517).

On reflecting upon the experience of workshops, a first year student emphasised the holistic benefits of this form of teaching: ‘This approach has inspired me, and certainly others I have noticed, with confidence to articulate and develop my thinking on a given topic’.

By working directly with archival material in an interactive manner helped to shape the individual student experience, while maintaining the academic rigour of historical study.
Our Criminal Ancestors

Archives: Hull History Centre and East Riding Archives
HEI: University of Hull, Leeds Beckett University
Source: Dr. Helen Johnston (Hull), Professor Heather Shore (Leeds Beckett), Victoria Dawson (Project Researcher)
Theme: History, Criminology and Family History

This collaborative Arts and Humanities Research Council funded project emerged as a follow-on from the AHRC funded research network, ‘Our Criminal Past’ (2013-14).

The project aimed to stimulate and facilitate creative public engagement with crime history through knowledge exchange, interactive workshops and website dissemination.

The objectives of the project were to:

- Establish and maintain an interactive and open access website which guides, assists and directs members of the public in tracing their criminal ancestors
- Create and produce an accessible source guide on the use of criminal records
- Identify the national and most important local criminal record collections held at the Hull History Centre and the East Riding Archives
- Run three interactive workshops

Three projects were held at the Hull History Centre, focused on crime, policing and punishment. Talks from expert speakers were combined with document handling session and workshops. The participants (members of the public) developed their skills as family and community historians by gaining an introduction to and familiarity with criminal justice and related records. By focusing particularly on local records, the events were specifically designed to encourage participants to explore and use the rich local archive collections. The expert talks were orientated towards
gaining skills and proficiency in interpreting records. Speakers included established academics alongside PhD students, who were able to gain experience in public engagement. At the third event the project website was launched along with the hardcopy booklet, which was prepared in collaboration with the Hull History Centre and East Riding Archives. The booklet provides historical context on crime, policing and punishment along with information on the related documents that are held in the archives. It is available as a free hard-copy resource at the archives and as an electronic download on the website.

The website (https://ourcriminalancestors.org) aims to provide free expert advice for those interested in tracing their criminal ancestry. It also allows individuals to ‘pin’ details of their ancestry or crime history research on to the History Pin map. This draws on crowd-sourced methods to develop public participation in historical research.

Image: East Riding Archive
HALS and UH: A Mutually Beneficial Partnership

**Archive:** Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies (HALS)

**HEI:** University of Hertfordshire (UH)

**Source:** Marion Hill, Learning and Access Officer (HALS)

**Theme:** A collaborative and community-focused approach to history and heritage

HALS and UH have been working together for many years and have developed a strong and mutually beneficial relationship. Our principal partner is the History Department, which is home to the [Heritage Hub](#) - a gateway for community history projects in the country. The department is also one of the AHRC’s five [First World War Engagement Centres](#), focussing on [Everyday Lives in the First World War](#). This combination of roles means that the department has a particularly outward-looking and collaborative approach which makes them an excellent partner for HALS, where there is also great emphasis on community history and engagement – and also a commemorative focus on the First World War. HALS also works with other UH departments on joint projects and ventures.

In recent years, we have collaborated in the following ways:

- HALS hosts placements for history students, which have led to exhibitions and content for Herts Memories. It is intended that this year’s placement project to research LGBTQ+ stories in the archive will lay the foundations for a broader, future project to map and share untold histories in Hertfordshire.
- Staff from HALS and UH have delivered talks and workshops as part each other’s public programmes.
- In addition to the history department and Heritage Hub, HALS has also collaborated with other university departments, such as [UH Arts](#) and [UH Press](#) on public programme events and community outreach events, where
the university has provided either speakers, refreshments or funding towards the events. For these and other events, we have promoted each other’s activities via social media and elsewhere.

- Funding from a variety of university sources has supported the development and delivery of exhibitions and projects, for example with printing display panels and exhibition catalogues
- HALS receives student group visits, tailored to specific areas of research and providing them with an overview of our work, and practical sessions on research skills
- HALS and UH have developed resources for Hertfordshire on the Map HistoryPin
- Staff from HALS and UH are regularly in touch via email and at local history networks
- HALS staff deliver talks on careers in the heritage sector to history students
- HALS has produced letters of support for proposed university projects and UH staff have sat on steering groups for community history projects at HALS

**The impact of these collaborations:**
As a result of these collaborations, the university has seen improved research skills and dissertation proposals from their students. Work placements and career guidance offered by HALS are contributing to greater employability and the development of graduate skills. Input from HALS staff about the skills sought by the heritage sector from history graduates has shaped the module programme at UH. Student placements at HALS receive ‘hands-on’ experience which accords with UH’s commitment to sharing expertise.

At HALS, the input of UH has broadened and enriched our public programme, joint marketing has enabled us to reach more diverse audiences and students visiting the archives and taking part in placements have created digital content for the community archive network, Herts Memories.

Heritage Hub and First World War Centre collaborations with HALS bring together resources, knowledge and expertise in order to engage local communities with the history of Hertfordshire.
Operation War Diary

Archives: The National Archives (TNA)
HEI: Goldsmiths, University of London
Source: Professor Richard Grayson
Theme: First World War History – engaging the public in crowdsourcing data

In 2012 Richard Grayson was invited by the Imperial War Museums (IWM) to convene an Academic Advisory Group for their digital First World War centenary projects. This was on the basis of the ‘military history from the street’ methods developed for his 2009 book Belfast Boys. A key project was Operation War Diary (OWD) on which the IWM were working with The National Archives and Zooniverse. OWD seeks to gather data through crowdsourcing with ‘Citizen Historians’ tagging daily activities British army units during the First World War as recorded in official unit ‘war diaries’. The academics advised on how to categorise the complex data in the diaries to enable subsequent analysis. Data gathering took place for three main purposes: to enrich TNA’s catalogue descriptions for 1.5 million pages of unit war diaries; to provide evidence about individuals in IWM’s Lives of the First World War project; and to present academics with large amounts of accurate data to help them gain a better understanding of how the war was fought.

The first research findings (in by far the largest such study ever) were published in Grayson’s article in the British Journal for Military History in February 2016, receiving extensive media coverage. Key points were that infantry battalions spent 47% of their time at the front and/or fighting, with 62% for the artillery and 20% for the cavalry.

This led to headlines about ‘Tommies’ spending less than half their time at the front. The research used data compiled to 18th June 2015 when there had been
612,962 data tags from more than 12,600 registered users and more than 14,400 anonymous users. By the end of 2017 there were just under 16,000 registered volunteers, with 871,236 tags placed on 140,995 completed diary pages.
Bath Spa University Archive Project

Archives: Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre (W&SHC)
HEI: Bath Spa University
Source: Dr Alison Hems
Theme: Planning a new university archive with contributions from students and academics.
Disciplines: History and Geography, visual arts, performing arts, and heritage management.

This project involved setting up the University archive with the support of Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre (W&SHC). Led by the History Department, its initial aim was to safeguard the institutional memory of the University during a period of significant internal change. At the same time, the campus sits within a complex historic environment, and documentary evidence relating to its many pasts form a rich resource from which our students can draw, across a wide range of disciplines.

Preliminary work to create the archive was overseen by W&SHC and academic staff, through a series of small student projects. A student volunteer, who had already worked in the Wiltshire archive, managed these projects on a day-to-day basis.

Work on and in the archive has led to the creation of walking tours of the University estate (combining History, Heritage, and Geography); research for a History PhD on the early history of the University and its specific role in women's education, a series of small cataloguing, collections management and exhibition projects for Undergraduate students, and a performance project with our Drama students, set on campus and drawing from the archive.

The University Archive is now formally recognised as one of our teaching resources and there is part-time professional archive assistant in post.

This is just one of a number of such collaborations with W&SHC over recent years.

- The History Centre has provided a range of placement opportunities for our MA Heritage Management students
• The History Centre runs orientation and demystification sessions for our undergraduate students, who have used the archive for creative projects, in History and in other disciplines
• The University is a frequent contributor to W&SHC conferences (e.g. Artists in the Archive in 2013)
• The partnership has led to further collaborations with artists and other archives (e.g. Animating the Archive with Salisbury Cathedral Archive in 2017).
The Hull History Centre: Convergence – operating a shared service

Archive: Hull City Archives and Local Studies Library
HEI: University of Hull
Theme: Creating a shared service

The Hull History Centre provides access to material held by the City Archives & Local Studies Library, and Hull University Archives.

The idea of creating a service run jointly by the City Council and University of Hull was first mooted in 1995 when both parties found that they were running out of space for storage and engagement activities, the HLF existed as a possible funding source, both parties recognized that they would have a greater chance of success in attracting funding if they worked together, and they were able to identify high-level and long-term synergies from operating a joint service.

The parent organisations identified high-level strategic goals in common. Both organisations sought to contribute to improving the reputation of the city, increase social capital and educational attainment, and attract external investment. Working together was recognised as a means of achieving these goals.

The joint service is run as a partnership – the Hull History Centre is not a legal entity in its own right, staff are employed by either the City Council or University. Working structures and relationships were defined and established during the development phase. The new joint service was defined from scratch, with processes established for its operation, using good practice from each of the three existing services, setting boundaries and clarifying overlaps.

There is a strong single-service approach to delivery so that front-of-house operates as a single team – users interact with History Centre staff and collections. Some ‘behind the scenes’ aspects of operation remain separate, in particular custodianship and collection management. Depositor agreements and relationships are with either the City Council or University and the two organisations operate separate collection management systems (and have separate repository codes), merging data for a single on-line search interface.
What worked?

- The role of individuals during the project initiation phase was critical – to advocate, build and maintain momentum.
- During the design phase (which included an architectural competition) and build phase both the University Archivist and the City Archivist were clear about what was needed to provide a successful service and given sufficient autonomy to define requirements and specification for staff, collections and public areas.
- The partnership is based on collaboration at all levels, strategic, management and operational. It is not reliant on a separate legal entity. It means that the role of individuals remains crucial.
- All three sites closed for either a year or six months before the formal opening of the new building – this was essential for collections work and to enable knowledge exchange and team building. Staff were coming together to work on new (neutral) territory and team leaders were explicit about the need to become familiar with each other’s collections and develop mutual trust.
- The building is popular and there is a strong sense of ownership by the local community which is reflected in its use.

More outreach and engagement activities are possible as a consequence of the new building.
At the Court of King George: Exploring the Royal Archives

Archive: The Royal Archives  
HEI: Kings College London  
Source: Professor Arthur Burns  
Theme: Research and student-led learning, using archives to develop students’ understanding of historical method, digitization and documentary evidence, as well as enhancing transferable skills.

The Georgian Papers Programme is a major international collaboration between the Royal Archives, King’s College London and other partners (including the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture and the Library of Congress) to digitize and make freely available online 350,000 images of the Georgian Papers held at Windsor Castle, few of which have previously been published.

The Programme’s academic director, Arthur Burns, runs a 10-week module in which final-year undergraduate students from a range of Humanities disciplines and beyond select a document or series of documents from the material captured to date and using the open-source software Xerte produce a full digital edition which could be mounted online. A distinctive feature is that students are not directly taught the relevant history, but rather equipped with the resources and skills to research it themselves; teaching instead focuses on the skills and considerations involved in producing an edition, such as palaeography and transcription, documentation, contextualization (both historical and archival) and interpretation for different audiences. Key input comes from a member of the Royal Archives team, digital technicians and interaction with academic historians themselves actively working on the archive.

The resulting editions have already produced important discoveries about the documents which, along with the students’ transcriptions, will be incorporated in the public-facing resources the project is producing. Students in turn have been excited to experience active involvement in a major international research project, and by taking ownership of documents which directly reflect their academic interests (ranging from the history of medicine, politics, the American Revolution and gender to 18th-century philosophy and mathematics) in developing key transferable skills as
they develop and design web resources accessible to a public audience yet underpinned by academic rigour.

One student wrote in their evaluation:

“It has been fantastic to feel part of an international historical project as it develops. I hope we can observe its development further after we finish as I now feel very engaged and invested in it. I have been very excited to feel I am putting my skills as a historian to new use, and it has been fantastic to engage in new methods of carrying out and presenting historical research beyond essay writing. It’s been useful to think about these new ways of offering history to different audiences, and it is definitely something I plan to take further in my career.”

A screenshot from one of the editions, by Claudia Ardevinnes Puyelo, a final-year Liberal Arts Student, in which she cracked a mysterious coding system used by Queen Charlotte, wife of George III, in her notes on Carolingian history.
From cooperation to coordination - developing collaborative working

Archive: Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire Archives and the National Records of Scotland
HEI: Aberdeen University
Theme: Developing collaborative practice

Aberdeen City Archives holds the Aberdeen Burgh Records (volumes 1-8 of which are recognised by UNESCO as of outstanding importance). A proof-of-concept project was set up involving the City Archives, the National Records of Scotland and Aberdeen University to make these records available to a wider public. As a result of this project, the collaborative activity developed into two distinct pilot projects each of which built on different aspects of the original ‘cooperation’ phase.

What happened?

In what might be described as the ‘cooperation’ phase, the National Records of Scotland provided digital camera facilities for the imaging of the earliest 25 volumes (amounting to 16,000 TIFF images) of the Burgh Records and facilitated free public access to the images online via the ScotlandsPlaces website.

Moving to the ‘coordination’ phase, the Research Institute of Irish and Scottish Studies at Aberdeen University then approached the Archives with a proposed pilot project, ‘Connecting and Projecting Aberdeen’s Burgh Records’, to employ (and fund) a research assistant for 6 months to transcribe and translate a sample of 100 consecutive pages of the digitised records and test the creation of an online, publicly accessible database linking the transcriptions and translations to corresponding images.

The work, and any potential future projects were supported by an MoU which clarifies the areas of collaboration, methods of collaboration and issues such as copyright.

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1 Connecting and Projecting Aberdeen’s Burgh Records, Accessible at: www.abdn.ac.uk/riiss/about/pilots-138.php
2 The pilot database is accessible at: www.abdn.ac.uk/aberdeen-burgh-records-database/
Subsequent to this, a distinct but related pilot project was undertaken by the Department of Computing Science at Aberdeen University (funded by dot.rural, the RCUK Digital Economy Hub) to explore the development of a text analytic tool that could be applied to the 100-page transcription. The aim was to make the resources machine-readable, enhance searchability and support the development of linked data applications.

**What worked?**

- Each partner brought specific skills to the collaboration to create something which no one partner could have achieved on their own.

- The pilot projects have enabled the testing of key elements of the work and provide evidence to support future, larger grant applications.

- The involvement of the University in the collaboration gave access to a wide range of research skills, from historical to information technology.

- Pilot project meetings, academic symposia, and less formal workshops and discussion meetings, fostered regular and constructive dialogue between partners, and other collaborators.

- In relation to these collaborations, opportunities have been (and continue to be) developed to engage undergraduate and postgraduate teaching with the pilot project outputs.

- The realisation of substantive academic outputs, including a collection of essays for a prospective special section of the journal *Urban History*
Making: Archives

Archives: The Archive and Special Collections: Falmouth University and the University of Exeter (Penryn Campus), Cornwall Record Office

HEI: Falmouth University, University of Exeter (Penryn Campus)

Source: Hannah Maughan MA (RCA), Senior Lecturer, BA (Hons) Textile Design

Theme: Archives as creative sources, textile design, print, weave, mixed media

The Textile Design course at Falmouth University runs a 7 week External Engagement module for 2nd year students, which includes the Making: Archives option. The project encourages students to consider the potential of non-textile based archives as conceptual and creative sources for textile and design development. The Archive and Special Collections service at the Penryn Campus manages collections for both Falmouth University and University of Exeter.

The project is a co-created collaboration between the course academics and archive team on the Penryn campus. The purpose of the project was to challenge students to work off-line with primary object based resources and to challenge perceived notion of archives. It also aimed to showcase and promote the Universities archival resources as a conceptual and creative resource to inform contemporary design.

Because of the project, students’ engagement with the archives has transformed their perception of archives, their use and creative potential; they no longer viewed the archives as a theoretical/essay writing resource only. Pedagogical development and methodologies developed over the course of the project have provided academic research for published papers, including the innovative/collaborative working relationship between the archive team and academics. Other outputs include:

- spin off practical stitch workshops working directly from the archival materials
- student exhibitions
- commissions and competition wins
• work placements with the archive team

• deposits of selected student work back into the archive, building on the resource.

The project has been in running for 4 years, and in 2018 it was extended to include Cornwall Record Office (CRO) who hold the county’s vast archives. CRO are currently being rehoused into a new multi-million-pound building, Kresen Kernow, and students were invited to design fabrics and artefacts for the interior space.

Making: Archives continues to evolve, seeking opportunities for further collaborations, to upscale the project across the University and beyond.

Not another database: digital humanities in action

Archives: Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire Archives
HEI: University of Aberdeen, Research Institute of Irish and Scottish Studies
Source: Dr Jackson Armstrong, Deputy Head of School of Divinity, History & Philosophy
Theme: Interdisciplinary collaboration: Archives, History and Computing Science

The first eight volumes of the Aberdeen Council Registers, covering the period 1398-1511 are Scotland’s oldest and most complete run of civic records. The registers have been inscribed on the UNESCO UK Memory of the World Register, in recognition of their historical significance.

Funded by a three-year grant (2016-19) from the Leverhulme Trust, the project ‘Law in the Aberdeen Council Registers 1398-1511’ (LACR) is creating a Text Encoding Initiative (TEI) compliant transcription from these volumes, amounting to some 1.75 million words of Middle Scots and Latin.

This is not a conventional digitisation project. High-quality images already exist and the aim of this project is not to produce a database. Instead, the goal is to create a digital textual resource from the registers, which is as open as possible to future analysis.

LACR involved a team of third-year Computing Science students to develop, as part of their degree study, a prototype web-based platform to present and search the LACR resource. LACR co-investigator Dr Adam Wyner supervised the students.

A second group of third-year History students led by LACR principal investigator Dr Jackson Armstrong, undertook a field trip to the City Archives, participated in a
seminar with LACR Postdocs who ran an exercise which included palaeography, Middle Scots language, and the ‘genre’ of a register entry.

Finally, the History and Computing students together conducted an evaluative exercise of the prototype platform, in which the History students performed a range of tests designed and run by the Computing students.

The Computing Science student team reported: ‘It was an extremely enlightening experience … to be part of such an interesting project. Being part of such an expansive domain - digital humanities - gave our team the chance to build something that we believe can have a big impact’.

The LACR resource in due course will be hosted by Aberdeen City Council, starting from the prototype platform built by the students.
Women in Chancery: An Analysis of Chancery as a Court of Redress for Women in Late Seventeenth Century England’.

Archives: The National Archives (TNA)  
HEI: University of Hull  
Source: Dr Amanda Capern & Dr Amanda Bevan  
Theme: Historical research (legal, social, economic, gender), cataloguing, doctoral/ECR training.

Summary: AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Partnership via The Thames Consortium (AH/M004384/1). Principal Investigators Dr Amanda Capern (Senior Lecturer in Early Modern History) and Dr Amanda Bevan (Principal Records Specialist [Legal Records] at TNA). The collaborative research was conducted 2014-2017 and made valuable first use of fully-searchable digitised metadata for Chancery pleadings in collection C 5 (Bridges). The research considerably enhanced knowledge and understanding of the bureaucratic organization of the court of Chancery and equity law and the social practices of early-modern English litigation.

Research outcomes: exciting outcomes included a bank of quantitative data on women’s property holding and litigation in late seventeenth-century England revealing some of the structural reasons for historical gender inequality; new research relationships forged between TNA and the Gender, Place and Memory research team at the University of Hull; digital tagging and checking catalogue metadata for the Equity Project at TNA, opening up academic and public access to large-scale data; public engagement work through blogs and workshops; deep levels of archivist engagement with the records providing new opportunities at TNA (now an Independent Research Organisation); multiple conference presentations by both PIs and the doctoral student; 2 book chapters and 1 peer-reviewed journal article; benefits accrued to the postgraduate student through the dual expertise in the supervision of the doctorate and training in multiple interdisciplinary and cross-professional skills (PhD submitted and full cognate employment attained in 2018).
Future plans: further publications including one methodological peer-reviewed journal article (Bevan and Capern) and a monograph on early-modern Chancery being written during a Leverhulme Fellowship awarded 2018 (Capern); two further grant applications to AHRC including a network grant to bring together at TNA researchers on early-modern law courts.
Using ‘impact’ to raise the profile of heritage collections

Archives: Durham University Library and Heritage Collections
HEI: Durham University
Theme: Supporting the demonstration of impact

Durham University was the leading partner in the project to exhibit the Lindisfarne Gospels at Palace Green Library in 2013. The project was a great success, resulting in 100,000 visits to the exhibition, over 20,000 children participating in learning sessions and workshops and 135,000 people reached through the wider engagement programme.

The Lindisfarne project received HLF funding which enabled an ambitious engagement programme, and staff in the Library and Heritage Collections team used their experience of this project to raise the profile of their work, notably around outreach, learning and engagement and how this can support academic requirements to demonstrate ‘impact’ as part of the REF.

Following the Lindisfarne project a working group with academics from Arts, Humanities and Social Science subjects was set up to advocate how the heritage collections could be used in teaching and research. The working group promoted the work of the Heritage Collections team (for example, running display classes, supporting REF case studies, using research in outreach and engagement work, training academics in outreach and engagement) and produced a leaflet to go to all academics.

A result of this is that exhibitions are now accompanied by an outreach programme. Heritage Collections staff meet with academics to establish what their research is and the key messages they want to get to their key audiences. From there they work together on a joint learning proposals which is then trialled under the supervision of the academic who gives feedback.

The collaboration between the Heritage Collection and academics means that academics are increasing use the heritage collections support and demonstrate their research, and this is used to support REF.
Discovering Archives and Collections: undergraduate third year history module

Archives: Berkshire Records Office, University of Reading Special Collections and others
HEI: University of Reading
Source: Dr Jacqui Turner
Theme: Placement module

An undergraduate third year history module at the University of Reading is preparing students for careers in the archives and records management sector. A 10-day placement based in a participating repository is enabling students to test and develop their interest. Students taking part have the opportunity to gain and reflect on the type of practical work experience required for successful applications for postgraduate training in archives and records management.

Through the placements students develop skills in research, oral and written communication and technology. They also develop their attention to detail, professionalism and adaptability which are readily transferable to, and highly valued in other areas of postgraduate employment.

Post-graduation, there is a very good record of students gaining associated careers. In addition this module is an invaluable experience reflected in applications for postgraduate research. Students have also made an individual contribution to the management and/or publicising of records held by the placement provider developing a wide range of interpersonal, organisational and research skills.

One of our alumni, Lisa Berry-Waite reflects on her experience: "I worked in an archive one day a week on the "Discovering archives and collections" module, and curated a pop-up exhibition at Cliveden House, gaining hands-on experience in the heritage sector. Curating the pop-up exhibition was one of the best experiences I've
had at University. This was a fantastic experience and is great to talk about at interviews as it improved my teamwork and communication skills."
Media and Mass Observation: a collaborative journey

Archives: The Keep (Sussex Archives)
HEI: University of Sussex
Source: Kirsty Patrrick, Mass Observation Projects Officer
Theme: Introducing to archives as an additional resource for their studies and to develop basic knowledge of archive research skills required.

This project raised awareness and knowledge of what archives are, what The Keep holds and a deeper understanding of the Mass Observation Archive through a hands-on session. It contributed knowledge of what to expect when returning as a researcher (through viewing short film extracts) and how to search the catalogue. Overall students reported feeling confident about approaching the use of archives, enjoyed their visit and felt inspired.

Second Year Media and Cultural Studies students have been visiting Special Collections for over five years. In 2016 feedback highlighted that students would have benefited further if they had been introduced to The Keep (home of Special Collections) earlier in their Sussex experience.

So, across one week in February 2018 we welcomed over 80 students studying BA Media and Cultural Studies to The Keep (an off campus site) through a series of six group visits during their usual seminar times. This was labor intensive with two staff members (part-time) delivering all sessions.

The students were learning about different research methods so the purpose of this visit was to introduce them to what archives are and basic skills in how to approach their use as a resource for their essays and dissertations. We chose media related items to generate interest and spark ideas.

The majority of students had never visited an archive before, so within this short session our aim was to introduce the basics and make them feel comfortable to return as individual researchers. The format included a powerpoint, hands-on time with material, group discussion, short film clips (made in-house on the journey of a
researcher and behind-the-scenes) and demonstration of the catalogue. A Padlet site was also produced, where the powerpoint and links to useful websites were uploaded.

For the students their feedback included, “I’ve never seen archives before. Today I learned why archives exist.” “Learning about archives and why we should use them; I will definitely consider them for my dissertation” “It was very informative. I learnt a lot about The Keep and what archives are.”“How to come and visit as a Reader in the future.”

Useful recommendations for future groups were shared such as “I would like to have a tour of different sections of the archive.” “Include examples of people who have used the MOA for their dissertations/essays.”

The Course Convenor received a positive response from the student cohort. For many the group visit was a highlight of the module. “Best bit” Came up repeatedly on their feedback forms.

“Ultimately coming, seeing and handling had a great impact on the students”

Many noted within their essays particular documents they viewed “They listened!”

This visit was evaluated as part of a wider study undertaken by Kirsty Pat特rick in 2018 on The Group Visit Story; Evaluation and Impact of University of Sussex Student Visits to The Keep.
Don’t let the cardigans put you off

Archives: College and University
HEI: St. John’s College, Churchill College, Jesus College, Cambridge University
Source: Tracy Deakin, Archivist, St John’s College, Cambridge
Theme: Teaching; an introduction to archives

Four College archivists in Cambridge joined forces with two archivists from the University Library to run a series of workshops for new postgraduate students in 2017-2018. The aim of the workshops was to give students an idea of the quantity and variety of archival materials available to them in Cambridge. Through the sessions students could:

• explore how they could potentially use those records in their research
• establish an introduction to archives and the archive ‘experience’.

A typical session began with a description of the types of material typically found in Cambridge colleges and special collections. This was followed by a brief introduction to external search tools like the National Archives’ Discovery catalogue to provide a basic background to online search engines. Alongside this the pros and cons of undertaking archival research were adeptly recalled by current and recently qualified PhD students who we asked to speak at the event.

This was a fitting way to engage students directly with what was being promoted, the archive. Rather than just delivering a talk from Archivists saying how wonderful Archives are (which of course we are bound to do!).

Following the talks an audience Q&A session featured live searches on JANUS (Cambridge Archive/Special Collections online catalogue) and iDiscover (the Cambridge libraries catalogue). This proved to be quite popular — if a little disconcerting when a search turned up nothing!

The final part of the workshop offered students the chance to interpret some documents from the St John’s College Archive collections. Once divided into small groups the participants were given scans of original material dating from the 15th to
19th centuries. They were asked to answer four questions on each of the documents. The groups were looking to determine the age of the document, its language and what it was (a letter, an invoice etc.).

For some students this was the first time that they had encountered original documents, so it was an ideal opportunity to inform them that documents are here to be used, but that they are not always the easiest of items to interpret, particularly when there were palaeographical barriers.

Feedback from the students via Moodle (Cambridge VLE) for the event has also helped to shape future sessions and has clearly shown that a gap is being filled in research advice available to students.

The sessions proved to be extremely popular with postgraduates and have been expanded to undergraduate sessions. A session is planned for the autumn term 2018 along with the introduction of a Thesis Fair to be held at St John’s College in early November.
Shakespeare Connected!

Archives: Shakespeare Birthplace Trust
HEI: Nottingham Trent University, University of Birmingham, Birmingham City University, University of Leicester, Oxford University, Open University, University of York, Cambridge University, Staffordshire University
Source: Paul Taylor
Theme: Encouraging academics to engage with the organisation’s holdings and the public

The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust (SBT) is tasked by Act of Parliament with ‘promoting in every part of the work the appreciation and study of…William Shakespeare’. Shakespeare Connected! is the latest in a series of partnership activities between SBT and HEIs aimed at connecting the latest Shakespearian research with the holdings of SBT, disseminating both to a general audience.

The project began at a Museums and University Partnerships Initiative event in June 2017 but quickly evolved to include the entire museum, library and archive collections of SBT. It was led by Dr Paul Edmondson, SBT Head of Research and our Collections team.

Academics from a wide range of institutions participated in facilitated visit to the collection and each created an online exhibition explaining the connection between their research and the collection. These were launched at a one-day conference about the project attended by 60 people in April 2018.

One of the academics involved remarked “The amount of support and access you gave us was fundamental to make this a success. It was a brilliant launching event and I believe the on-line exhibitions will be equally well-received. Your openness to our ideas was also fundamental to make this a really enjoyable research experience.” Dr Christina Lima, SFHEA, University of Leicester
To date the project has achieved 14 on-line exhibitions (http://collections.shakespeare.org.uk/exhibition/online-exhibitions), promoted through social media and the partner institutions. It has established a new network of universities for the SBT, enabling academics to think creatively about the links between research and collections and how to disseminate this to a non-academic audience.

The SBT itself is looking at ways of funding the next edition of Shakespeare Connected.