

MY TIME AT THE ARCHIVES

By Adam LeBon, DFN Project SEARCH Intern

In September 2022 Adam LeBon, joined the Archives Service for ten weeks as an intern on the DFN Project SEARCH Programme run in partnership with DFN Project SEARCH, Bedford Borough Council, Bedford College, and Mencap.

DFN Project SEARCH is a charity which supports young people with learning disabilities and autism. The aim of the programme is to help young people access work experience through supported internships.

The project was about giving those who are soon getting out into the work world a chance to add some skills and experience into their CV when later on they get a paid job.

What I've done here at the Archives has been making folders from scratch using rulers, tape and scissors, catalogued Harlington Heritage Trust Newsletters, catalogued election material for Leighton Buzzard, put boxes away on the basement floor, catalogued photographs from the Highways department of Luton Borough Council which ran from 27th July 2006 to 29th May 2009, catalogued Kempston All Saints Church parish magazines from 1987 to 2012, helped Jean with tying up bundles in the stack room and helped Helen with finding some things on the list that she needs.

One of my proudest moments of my time here at the Archives would be knowing that some things are out of place because on the boxes they say different reference codes while one of them had a code that wasn't on the box. Another moment I'm proud of was showing Chloe around the Archives because it was like

from one intern to another when it came to experience in the Archives.

What I liked about it was that the more I came here the more

I've learnt and there was so much to do to keep me occupied for some time.

My time here at the Archives has been amazing because the more I came in the more I've learned while working here, I've learnt more about myself and I feel like I've definitely grown as a human being because I feel more confident than I was when I started I would love to thank the Archives for giving me this chance to add experience and skills into my CV and help me grow as a human being.

[Adam has been a real benefit to the service. In addition to the work Adam was a great person to work with—always willing to try something new and with an excellent work ethic. It has been good to see the growth in confidence and we have all enjoyed Adam's sense of humour. We will miss Adam and send our best wishes for the next two placements with Bedford Borough Council and for the world of work beyond.]

Pamela Birch



Taking boxes of files to Records Management

SO GOOD TO MEET...

Since last September the service has seen an increase in demand for school and history group visits to the archives.

In early October members of the Renhold Women's Institute visited for a tour of the archive. This included a display of documents relating to the Women's Institute and the wider village of Renhold. Later we were visited by school pupils belonging to the newly formed Bedford Free School History Society. They came to learn about: what an archive looks like, how it works, what it contains and what being an archivist involves. The Mayor of Bedford visited us in the same week. Then, as part of the October half term, the service collaborated with The Higgins Bedford to put on an activity day for children. The activity encouraged the children to get 'hands on' and create their own treasure maps.

Speaking of maps, following a successful visit in 2021, we welcomed back Year 5 pupils from the Bedford Girls' School in November. As part of their curriculum, the students were looking at explorers and exploration. We spent the day introducing the students to the wide variety of maps held in our collections, both printed and hand drawn. They enjoyed having the opportunity to roll and unroll a map safely and the trip inspired the girls to find out more about how maps are made after they visited.

Externally, County Archivist Pamela gave a talk on Bedfordshire landed estates to the Luton and Dunstable Hospital Fellowship, and Archivist Helen gave a talk to members of the Bedford U3A Local History Group.

We rounded off the year with a visit from GCSE pupils from Samuel Whitbread Upper School. Part of their coursework focused on doing independent research into chosen subjects relating to Black History. The visit started with a general introduction to the service, how to use our online catalogue and the difficulties that pupils may come across when trying to research Black History. The



Renhold WI and guests during their recent evening visit

pupils were then split into groups to examine and discuss some original documents in the hopes that they could apply some of the discussion points raised to their own work. With topics as varied as the abolition of the slave trade to the contribution of black music in the 20th century, there was plenty to discuss. Some of our oral history collections proved particularly useful for those considering the legacy of the Windrush migration.

If you would like to arrange a talk or visit to or from the Archives it is worth noting that due to a recent review of VAT there has been a price drop in our fees. This will hopefully make it more affordable for groups to learn about the wonderful range of material we hold and how to use it.

Updated Ethnic Sources List

As part of the preparation for Samuel Whitbread School, we thought it was important to review our Ethnic Sources List. The aim of this list is to highlight references to ethnic minority communities who might otherwise be overlooked in records.

The updated ethnic sources list includes a longer introduction giving a background into how the resource was created and arranged. Document references have also been checked and updated where necessary.

The new list has been published on our website in our 'Using Our Collections' section and can be found under 'Research Guides and Source lists'. It cannot be guaranteed that the listing is complete, but we hope the source list



continues to be a helpful starting point for researching ethnic minority communities in Bedfordshire.

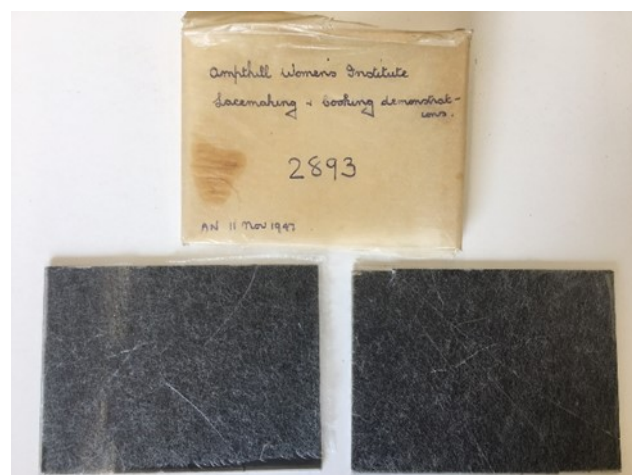
CONSERVATION CORNER

Conservator Alison Faden

Containing an estimated 250,000 glass plate negatives, The Bedfordshire Times Glass Plate Negative Collection covers mainly 1941-1966. Press photographers would go out to cover local events, weddings, elections, fairs, The County Show etc.

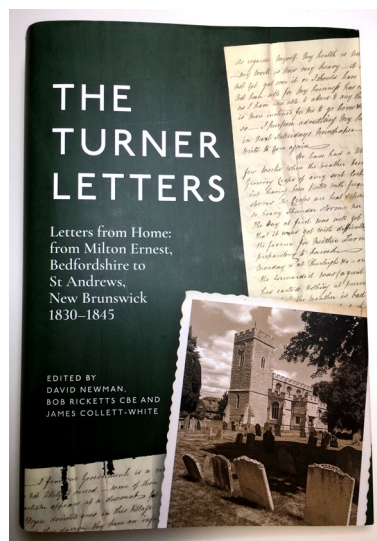
In 1969 The Bedfordshire Press offices moved from Mill Street, Bedford to Caxton Road. The decision was made by them to throw away their old glass plate negatives. Bedfordshire Archives stepped in (there is a rumour that some of the negatives were actually retrieved from a skip!) The glass negatives were moved to Bedfordshire Archives in August 1969.

Most of the collection is in good condition but, inevitably, some of the fragile glass plates have cracked. Conservation has been stabilising the broken plates to keep the pieces together and repackaging them carefully to preserve them for future use.



NEWS

Publication of The Turner Letters



Bedfordshire Historical Record Society has just published a collection of letters sent between 1830 and 1845 from Milton Ernest in North Bedfordshire to Thomas Turner of St Andrew's, New Brunswick, Canada.

Most of the letters now published have been in Bedfordshire Archives since 1989 as collection Z629 but a few have come to light more recently and were added to our

collections as Z1656/7 after being transcribed for this volume.

The BHRS volume is edited and introduced by: James Collett-White, David Newman and Bob Ricketts CBE. The letters give a lively view of life in a rural village in times of upheaval and include references to major issues of the day. They also tell human stories. The main writer of the letters, John Turner, also gives us a particularly valuable description of the villagers of Milton Ernest in 1834, bringing them to life and giving a real sense of what life was like at the time.

Members of BHRS will have received their copy of the volume but if you are not a member you can purchase a copy via <https://boydellandbrewer.com/9780851550848/the-turner-letters/>

FOR YOUR DIARY

19 Jan 2023

Caring for your family archives - Luton Central Library

2.30 - 4.00pm

Would you like to know how best to look after your family's precious books, letters, albums, photographs, newspaper cuttings and memorabilia? Alison Faden, Conservator at Bedfordshire Archives, will be offering expert help and advice on caring for your Family Archive.

- Things that cause most damage and how to avoid those hazards
- Advice on storing your family's precious memories, keeping them safe for future generations.
- Knowing when to call in a specialist and how to find one.

15 April 2023

Visit our stall at Dunstable market—Markets and History day

19 April 2023

Bedfordshire Local History Association Spring Event—join our archivist, Natasha Kikas on a walking tour of Woburn more details available from <https://www.bedfordshire-lha.org.uk/>

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