

July 2011 – Closure Week Report

Cataloguing the Collections

The cataloguing of the following collections was completed during July's closed week:

Reference	Accession Number	Description
899:859	11181	Stanley Rigden deposit re Fownes Glovers
b004.301	14770	Kempsey Baptist Church marriage registers
899:1366	13550	Beoley deeds purchased from Dominic Winter
b 004.301	15334	Broadway United Reform Church registers

Work continued with the cataloguing of numerous large collections that will be ongoing for some while yet, including the Croome collection. This week a run of servants wage books, dating from 1797 to 1874, was completed. Whilst dates of the accounts are sparse in their coverage, suggesting that large numbers of the original accounts have not survived, these documents are fantastic resources for researchers. Most of the volumes detail the names, job titles and wages of the employees. It can be seen in the accounts that they relate to both servants at Croome Court, Worcestershire and to the Coventry family's properties in London, particularly Piccadilly. Additional snippets of information can be found in some of the volumes; for example, towards the rear of the 1772 to 1783 volume is a list of the servants' names, job titles, along with the date which they came to work for the family. This provides information that would be difficult to find elsewhere.

A further 17 boxes of Education Department records were catalogued and the project to catalogue Worcester City archives continued as usual with a further 6 boxes being completed.

Strongroom work - Mould

Staff continue the work to identify material in need of the specialised cleaning provided by Harwell, focussing this month on a badly affected area of the lower strongroom with a large pocket of mould. In some cases every item on a shelf had to be crated up to be sent away. 20 volumes however were cleaned on site and it is hoped, once staff get through this section, that progress will quicken again.

Work was also begun to check all the maps and plans that are also stored in this strongroom; painstaking work as every one of the hundreds of map and plans that we have has to be unrolled, checked and re-rolled.

Indexes

During the July closure week work continued to make more indexes available online. Records available online are available for people to use whenever and wherever they want, unrestricted by opening hours or location, which is why it is important for us to continue developing our resources in this area.

This month work continued on our Parish Register finding aid, adding details of Bishop's Transcripts held and checking dates of microfilms held. Work will now begin to check all the original copies of registers, ensuring that our finding aid provides the most up-to-date information.

Work on the Royal Albert Orphanage nomination papers also continued this month. These documents are being numbered and details of the name, date of birth of child and names of parents and maiden name of mother onto a database. So far, 30 years worth of entries have been completed.

Staff also spent time checking the index to inventory slips of a large deposit of records relating to Sir Hal Miller, who was at one time the MP for Bromsgrove.

Self-service resources – Introductions

When we move into The Hive and our finding aids are available during self-service hours, it is important that users are able to pick them up and easily understand what each one is and how it can be used. To achieve our target of having clear and easy to use finding aids, we are currently writing introductions to each one in a standardised format. This month we completed an introduction to the Croome Court records held on microfilm; an introduction for the Index to Divorce records and an introduction to the Electoral Registers handlist. Work also continued this month on the Draft Guide, with another four boxes repackaged and renumbered.

Box weighing and shelf locations checking

This closure week we spent more time box-weighing and checking shelves against our locations database. As explained in previous closure week reports, this is vital work to ensure our movement of materials is as smooth and as accurate as possible. This month we weighed and labelled approximately 330 boxes or parcels and updated our locations database accordingly.

Library work

A lot of work has been undertaken already to prepare our branch libraries ready for merging during the move to The Hive. In future, closed week time will be spent dealing with duplicate books that are held at both of our public branches in order to check which copies are in the best condition for public use. This closed week preparation work relating to the library and the assessment of duplicates took place.

As well as telephone enquiries received, a total of 37 written and email enquiries were responded to during the July closure week.