



Above View of Donnington Castle, a sugar plantation in Jamaica which was owned by the Dalling family of Earsham and run on slave labour. NRO, MEA 6/9

Norfolk Records Committee

Annual Report, 2006-2007

Overview

The Norfolk Record Office was awarded three-star status by The National Archives in a pilot assessment programme in 2006. An outstanding archive, that of Revd William Gunn, was saved from export and added to the NRO's Designated collection. The start of the year of national commemoration of the bicentenary of the parliamentary abolition of the slave trade saw the launch of a new NRO website teaching resource on Norfolk's connexions with slavery, and a major project on Norfolk's Hidden Heritage.

Assessment by The National Archives

In a pilot self-assessment programme for local authority archive services, run by The National Archives' National Advisory Service, the NRO was judged overall to be a three-star service, the

highest rating available. With its overall score of 79%, it was the second highest performing archive service in the country, just 1% behind the top score of 80%. The inclusion of scores for King's Lynn Borough Archives, for which a separate questionnaire was submitted, did not affect the NRO's overall star rating, though they did reduce the overall score.

Accessions

In all, 415 deposits, gifts or purchases of documents were made during the year, compared with 426 the previous year. They include twenty-two accessions to the Norfolk Sound Archive.

The earliest records received were deeds relating to lands in Southburgh and Wood Rising, 1363, and to town lands at Ellingham from 1393 onwards, while the most recent were recordings of podcasts made in the early months of 2007.

Outstanding among the new accessions is the archive of Revd William Gunn (1750-1841) of Irstead and Smallburgh. This collection, previously in private hands, was sold at auction earlier this year and purchased by an American University. A temporary export bar allowed the Record Office time to raise the substantial funds needed to secure its retention in this country as part of the NRO's Designated collection.

During the year, 241 books and journals were added to the searchroom library. Thirty-three of these were donated by authors or their publishers in recognition of the facilities provided to them.

Cataloguing

Of accessions received during the year, 100 were fully catalogued by the end of March 2007. Other cataloguing completed included several series of County Council records, among them Civil Defence war diaries recording communications to and from the Central Control at Norwich, 1940-1945.

At the end of March 2007, the total number of catalogue entries in CALM was 535,324 (428,374 in March 2006), of which 454,040 (403,945) have 'catalogued' status and are accessible to the public via the internet on <<http://nrocat.norfolk.gov.uk>>.

Public Services

Visits to the Record Office were made by 20,371 people, compared with 19,794 in 2005-6. 19,948 original documents (14,062 in 2005-6) were produced in the searchroom, to visiting groups, for copying or to answer enquiries.

13,050 postal, telephone and e-mail enquiries were answered during the year, compared with 13,889 in 2005-6.

Conservation

Much of the work carried out was on items being prepared for display in the Long Gallery. Other documents treated in the conservation studio included two of the Norwich city charters, which were given new protective enclosures, and two massive files of nearly one hundred deeds and family settlements in the Le Strange collection. The individual documents, which range in date from 1309 to 1671, have now been separated, their seals given individual protective sleeves of inert foam, and the documents repacked in lightweight enclosures.



Norfolk Sound Archive

The oral history programme has continued to develop steadily in partnership with a number of outside groups, and has resulted in several new accessions to the Sound Archive. One major project in 2006 was the Costume and Textile Association's Norwich shoe industry oral history project, for which the NRO provided training and has taken in the resulting recordings.

The NRO took the lead in a survey of sound recordings in Norfolk, as part of a regional initiative by the East of England Sound Archive.

King's Lynn Borough Archives

279 visits were made to King's Lynn Borough Archives, compared with 246 in 2005-6, and 625 (587 in 2005-6) original documents were produced in the searchroom or used to answer enquiries. Seventy (seventy-one) telephone enquiries were answered.

A programme of monthly lunchtime talks by NRO staff at Lynn Museum attracted a total of 225 people.

Education and Outreach

4,266 people (2,051 in 2005-6) attended NRO events at The Archive Centre and elsewhere. They included workshops for schools on the Second World War and local history, and new half-term activities enabling children to create fantasy maps, make Hallowe'en decorations and create illuminated manuscripts.

At the end of March, the Norfolk Record Office launched a web resource entitled *Norfolk and the Abolition of Slavery*, to coincide with the bicentenary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade.

Continued overleaf

Left Dr Richard Maguire, Project Researcher for *Norfolk's Hidden Heritage* (a joint project with the Norwich and Norfolk Racial Equality Council), in the Record Office searchroom, studying a plan of the Donnington Castle estate in Jamaica, 1788. **Below left** A detail from the plan. NRO, MEA 6/26

Below The launch of the *Norfolk's Hidden Heritage* project at The Archive Centre, March 2007.



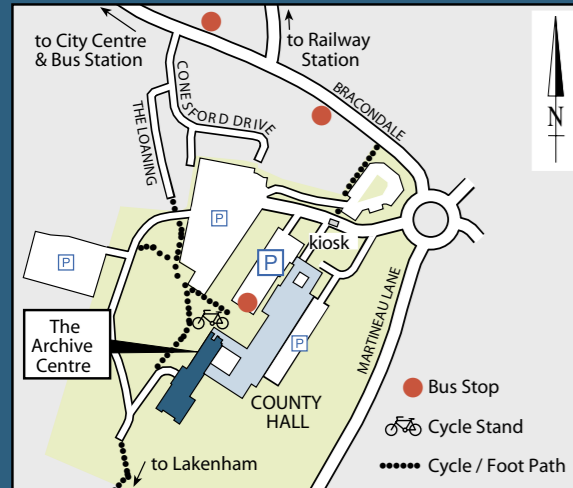
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Website: <http://archives.norfolk.gov.uk>

County Archivist: Dr John Alban

Searchroom opening hours

Monday, Wednesday to Friday:
9 am - 5 pm
Tuesday: 9.30 am - 5 pm
Saturday: 9 am - 12 noon



The Archive Centre, opened in 2003, is the home of the Norfolk Record Office and the East Anglian Film Archive.

IN TRAN communication for all
If you need this Annual Report in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact the County Archivist on 01603 222599, fax 01603 761885, or e-mail norfrec@norfolk.gov.uk and we will do our best to help.

Front cover
'Creating illuminated manuscripts': a half-term activity for children at The Archive Centre.



Above County Archivist, Dr John Alban, in the NRO repository, examining Henry VIII's foundation charter for the dean and chapter of Norwich Cathedral, 1538, in preparation for an exhibition in the summer of 2007.
NRO, DCN 41/102



Exhibitions and events

Four major exhibitions have been staged in The Archive Centre's Long Gallery. The first of these was *Royal Norfolk*, an exhibition to celebrate the Queen's eightieth birthday, on display from April to July. A smaller facsimile version, *Royal Norfolk and the Sandringham Connexion* was displayed in Lynn Museum for four months and then at Dersingham Library for three weeks.

The next exhibition in the long gallery, *Archives: the Appliance of Science*, was opened in September as part of the *Science in the City* programme, organized in parallel with the BA Festival of Science in Norwich.

Below Nick Sellwood, Senior Conservator, fitting protective sleeves to seals on seventeenth-century deeds from the Le Strange of Hunstanton collection, as part of a repackaging project.
NRO, LEST AA 10 and 15-16

Buried history revealed



The Salthouse Parish Register, 1538-1713

During the Second World War, the rector and churchwarden of Salthouse churchyard, fearing that the book might be destroyed by enemy action. When it was unearthed again, it was so badly damaged by damp that the information within it was totally inaccessible.

In 2005, Record Office staff began the task of conserving the volume. Now inside the register for the first time in over sixty years.

The register contains a unique record of the baptisms, marriages and burials which took place at Salthouse Church between 1538 and 1713.

This exhibition explains how the volume was conserved and reveals the stories of some of the people mentioned in the register. Also on public display, for the first time ever, are some of the newly conserved pages from the register.

The Salthouse Parish Register, 1538-1713, an exhibition in the Long Gallery at The Archive Centre in spring 2007. The register was hidden underground during the Second World War, and emerged so badly damaged that it seemed beyond repair. However, new conservation techniques, developed at the Record Office, have enabled it to be read for the first time in more than sixty years.

The Archive of Revd William Gunn ran from January to March and was followed by *The Salthouse Parish Register, 1538-1713*, which opened on 27 March. A facsimile version of *The Salthouse Parish Register* was been provided for display at Salthouse Church.

Norfolk's Hidden Heritage, a partnership project between the Norwich and Norfolk

Racial Equality Council, the Norfolk Record Office, and Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, was launched in The Archive Centre in March.

