Friends News

The Friends’ AGM took place on the 17th July and was probably our most lively meeting yet. In addition to the usual AGM business there was a presentation and discussion around the Library’s Official Publications, including our work in recent years to secure the preservation of electronic Official Publications using our Digital Education Resource Archive (DERA).

Our new Friends Committee was also present. For those of you who weren’t able to join us, our new members are: Penny Bloore (Membership); Sean Curran (Events); Karen Jacobs (Newsletter Editor); Mala Samuels (Treasurer); and Jessica Womack (Design & Online Content). You will see we have been working on our newsletter. It’s been redesigned and now has more articles on a range of the Library and Archives’ activities. In this issue we focus on how we are engaging with researchers and students online. We hope you enjoy it and would be keen to hear your feedback.

February Study Day

Building on the success of past study days, we will be hosting a study day about Historical Textbooks on the 6th February 2013. There will be a number of speakers addressing various themes, including Toby Simpson from the Wiener Library talking about textbooks as propaganda during the Nazi reign, there will be discussions about the Geography textbooks held here at the IOE Library and about our current projects to do with technology, history and science textbooks.

Guests will also have the chance to handle a range of exciting materials from our archive and special collections. Once the programme for the day is finalised we will circulate more information to our Friends and via the Newsam News blog.

Sean Curran

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I’m happy to report the completion of the project ‘A New Perspective on Education in the 20th Century: Cataloguing the Papers of the National Union of Women Teachers’. The project was funded by the National Cataloguing Grants Programme with seed funding from the Friends and the History of Education Society UK. The aim of the project was to catalogue approximately 370 boxes of subject files produced by the National Union of Women Teachers (NUWT). The end result will be online access to the catalogue.

The NUWT was set up in 1904 as the Equal Pay League with the aim of achieving equal pay for women teachers. Initially part of the National Union of Teachers (NUT), they changed their name to the Federation of Women Teachers in 1906, and in 1920 broke away to form an independent union, the NUWT. Their primary aim was the establishment of equal pay and equal working conditions for women teachers but they also involved themselves in a range of educational, social and professional issues. In the early days they were involved in the campaign for equal franchise. We have some wonderful photos illustrating this.

The union campaigned on many issues, including cuts in educational budgets, raising of the school leaving age, the marriage bar and the employment of unqualified and supplementary teachers. They campaigned for equal educational opportunities for girls, equal opportunities in employment, and created links with many other organisations, including the Women’s Engineering Society. I was surprised to find a keen interest in promotion of sex education in schools as early as 1917 with NUWT members arranging talks and writing leaflets on the subject. The increase in cinema-going by children and beginnings of the use of film in education in the 1920s led to NUWT participation in studies in these areas.

There is material on peace and disarmament, post-war educational reconstruction, juvenile delinquency, and the rights and status of women in other countries. Individual members of the NUWT sat on committees and attended meetings of various bodies including the Education Sub-Committee of the League of Nations Union, National Peace Council, National Council for Women, Open Door Council, and the Nationality of Married Women – Pass the Bill Committee.

The collection contains minutes and reports from these organisations. Recently I’ve found volumes of minutes of around 140 NUWT branch and County Associations along with other administrative information. We didn’t know this material was here, so it’s great to fill gaps in the operation of the union.

The collection includes: correspondence, minutes and papers from meetings (NUWT meetings and meetings of other organisations), press cuttings, photographs, circulars, memoranda and press releases, NUWT publications, and publications from organisations worldwide.

[Equal suffrage demonstration Lowestoft, 1914 ©Institute of Education Archive]
I’ve also been carrying out promotional and outreach activity relating to the project. This has been a useful way of promoting the collection prior to online access. The project blog and Twitter feed provided instant ways for me to share my finds and build contacts. They’ve also led to enquiries and visits from researchers with interests including post-war educational reconstruction, Winifred Holtby (journalist and author), and NUWT member, Giovanna Guzzeloni, who left her teaching job to go and work for Save the Children in Italy in 1946.

Receiving enquiries before the catalogue is available has been exciting as it shows interest in the collection and is a positive indicator of its potential use.

In 1961 women teachers were granted equal pay, and the NUWT decided to disband their union. Their primary aim had been achieved. In April 1960, having seen press reports of the disbanding, the Librarian of the Institute of Education, Mr Foskett, wrote to the NUWT General Secretary, Miss Pierotti, to enquire about the possible acquisition of the collection. An agreement was made for the deposit of the NUWT records, with the condition of a 20-year closure period ending in 1981. I feel very lucky to have catalogued this collection. Making this cataloguing available online, sharing enthusiasm about the content of the collection and responding to enquiries are what makes being an archivist so rewarding!

The research into the history of the NUWT and history of the transfer of the collection to the IOE Library and Archive was carried out by our volunteer Noreen Nicholson. I would like to thank her for her invaluable research work, and for the use of it in this article. I would also like to thank our other volunteer James Peters for his assistance in listing and cataloguing publications.

Kathryn Hannan
The start of the 2012-2013 academic year sees the official launch of IOE LibGuides - a guide to the Newsam Library and Archives. IOE LibGuides (http://libguides.ioe.ac.uk) will replace the static guides that are currently on the Library and Archives website.

IOE LibGuides are organised in three groups: guides to the various Collections, guides on Services available, and How to... instructional guides on how to research and use technology to keep current or manage information. Each guide provides relevant information and promotes quality resources to support students and researchers at the Institute and globally. The guides link directly to an online enquiry service called LibAnswers (http://libanswers.ioe.ac.uk).

(People can use LibAnswers to browse frequently asked questions or send enquiries directly to an expert member of the team from the site, by SMS (+44 (0)20 3322 1810) or via Twitter @IOELibrary.

Work on the site began at the start of the year and was initially presented at the IOE Annual Learning and Teaching Conference at the end of March. The theme of the conference was ‘Improving the Student Experience’ and it seemed appropriate to demonstrate the benefits of using both LibGuides and LibAnswers.

“The whole library service is wonderful and always relevant and practical and the staff have both technical expertise and good inter-personal skills, not to mention the ability to look ahead and implement new developments in the most helpful ways. Thanks” Feedback from a pilot launch tested with a group of MPhil/PhD students in May 2012.

LibGuides and LibAnswers use new technologies and social media and encourages users to interact with us in whatever medium they find comfortable. It also allows for information to be displayed on mobile devices such as smart phones (a phone with access to the Internet) and tablets (e.g. iPads) in a user-friendly way.
In addition, the information on LibGuides can be presented in an attractive way, allowing the Library and Archives to promote the various collections and aggregate information from different collections held at the IOE and from external sites. The potential of the software to embed new technologies such as digital video, images, bookmarks, and RSS feeds also provides the opportunity to develop user information and digital literacies. This is particularly appropriate at this time, given that we are working with the Academic Writing Centre at the IOE on the ‘Digital Literacies as a Postgraduate Attribute’ project funded by JISC.

Since June 2012, a Working Group made up of staff from Archives, Collection Development Services, User Services and Technical Services have fine-tuned the site and created additional guides highlighting various collections, including the Archive and Special Collections. The site was launched at the beginning of the 2012/13 academic year and Library and Archive staff have been demonstrating the software during students’ induction. We hope that this new development in service will enable the Newsam Library and Archive collections to become more widely known and will inform researchers worldwide of the collections and services available at the IOE.

Nazlin Bhimani

New collections in Archives and Special Collections

The Archives now has 130 collections and in recent months we’ve received a range of new collections. In our last newsletter we mentioned the work we have been doing on our electronic collections. We’ve recently received some external funding to help us look at this new area of work and hope to give you a full update in the next newsletter. In the meantime here is an overview of the collections we’ve received since the beginning of the year:

Lesley Longley (Ref LL): handwritten accounts of women’s experiences in education in the 1920s and 1930s, original course texts and exercise books collected by Longley whilst writing her PhD in the 1990s.

History in Education Project (Ref HEP): a major research project on teaching history in English state schools from 1900 to the present day. The project team gathered primary and secondary sources and interviewed pupils, teachers, school inspectors, educationalists and secretaries of state for education.

Marina Foster (Ref MA): was an activist, teacher and ILEA Advisory Teacher who played an important role in the development of ILEA’s policy on multi-ethnic education.

Gabriel Goldstein (Ref GG): collection of materials relating to the development of Information Technology in English Schools.

Bernard Barker (Ref BAR): comprises biographical material and teaching resources developed by Barker, who has been credited with being the first comprehensive student to become a comprehensive Head.


We also have two new Special Collections. The first is a collection of 1930s prospectuses for teacher training colleges across England. The second is ‘Two Years in the Infant School’ comprising 84 weekly lesson plans introducing very young children to various topics including home, day and night, toys, and the cat and her kittens. The plans were prepared under the supervision of Enid Blyton.

Two Years in the Infant School, Topic 1 pp14-15
Moodle: the whole kit and caboodle

To start at the beginning, Moodle is a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) which is specially designed computer software that can help to support teaching and learning, and which helps to facilitate online interaction between teachers and students.

Moodle is replacing Blackboard which was the Institute’s previous VLE. The choice was recommended by the Bloomsbury Learning Environment (BLE) Steering Group which comprises senior managers from the IOE, SOAS, Birkbeck, Royal Veterinary College and the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine.

I recently spoke to Sarah Sherman, BLE Service Manager, Tim Neumann, a Learning Technology Fellow at the IOE and Andrew Welshman, Digital Library Manager, about the change to Moodle.

Important factors such as additional features, reliability and user-base led to two options emerging; an upgrade to the new Blackboard 9 or moving to Moodle 2 which is open source and freely available but does incur costs to support and host. A pedagogical comparison was commissioned and was led by the IOE, Tim Neumann and Kit Logan, who is also a Learning Technology Fellow, carried out the evaluation and prepared a business case for the Bloomsbury Heads of Colleges.

Ultimately less than inspiring feedback on the use of Blackboard, costs over a five year period, Moodle being more flexible and user-friendly plus having additional functionality determined the choice. The decision to move to Moodle was agreed by the Heads in May 2011.

The ultimate aim is to build better e-learning experiences for students and Moodle has distinctive features that are more appropriate for the IOE context, especially the collaborative aspects, which are much more integrated than in Blackboard. These will offer improved structured activities, such as forums, glossaries and mini-Wikipedia where students collaborate and peer-evaluate their work.

Tim explained that this coincides with efforts to enhance student online support entitlement; a policy that has been in place at the IOE for two years, but the move to Moodle has provided the impetus to ensure it is fully implemented. Course sites will have to conform to minimum VLE standards and should contain at the very least staff information and the course handbook.

At the beginning of the IOE migration process Mary Stiasny, Pro-Director: Learning and International, sent a letter (required to be signed and returned), which was drafted by Martin Oliver, Head of the Learning Technologies Unit, to all programme leaders to inform them of the change, but also crucially to ask what requirements they have; an approach that impressed the BLE Steering Group.

It is clear that there is now a very strong focus on e-learning at the IOE as it is on the agenda at management level and there are monthly meetings with the BLE Learning Technologists Group. Tim explained that fifty percent of IOE course tutors have already completed the basic training for using Moodle and this has meant that the Learning Technologies Unit at the IOE has been able to use the migration process to promote enhanced use of the VLE.

Tim also told me about the task of relocating course sites from Blackboard to Moodle which involves a
great deal of manual work; copying across lecture slides, module handbooks and all sorts of lecture specific material. He explained that much of this work is being carried out by IOE students who have been employed and trained for the task. These students are keen and skilled and it has been such a positive experience to work with them that the Learning Technology Unit are looking at how they can continue to involve them in day-to-day work.

Andrew Welshman was nominated by the Library as a representative on the IOE Project Team and Project Board to ensure that not only was the Library fully involved and informed of developments but that our views and requirements were taken on board. Andrew said that one of the most important things he highlighted was that copyright restrictions need to be reinforced as the Library plays a key role in ensuring compliance.

The Library Digitisation team met with Tim to advise on the most effective way for us to upload files to Moodle and discovered that there are some very effective ways on keeping tabs on what is being uploaded. Moodle also has a cleaner interface and a flatter design which is much easier to navigate. The drive to engage academics may ultimately lead to more requests being submitted to the Library for course readings and it is difficult to gauge how it might impact on the workload of the Library Digitisation Team but it has been viewed as a very positive move from the Library perspective.

One of the stated aims of the BLE Steering Group regarding the change to Moodle is to re-engage with academics to encourage greater use of the VLE and when I spoke to Sarah Sherman, BLE Service Manager, about this, Sarah admitted that this will be a challenge, but she explained that Moodle is more flexible and user-friendly than Blackboard, is easier to personalise and will allow course tutors the opportunity of looking at new structures for their VLE sites and to think about how they can develop their courses.

The main challenge ahead is about how best to raise awareness within our academic community about the ways that Moodle can enhance and support pedagogy. A combination of video interviews of early Moodle adopters (https://sites.google.com/site/blemoodlemigration/videos), training materials (https://sites.google.com/site/blemoodlemigration/training-materials) and events (e.g. https://sites.google.com/site/blemoodlemigration/events/moodle_launch) have been organised for the consortium. Careful marketing and appropriate timing of these activities have been vital to their success.

Sarah is currently organising November’s Library Technology Conference, an annual event for Bloomsbury which will feature Moodle for Libraries as the theme for this year. She is the moderator of the Moodle User Group for Greater London (MUGGL) for VLE support staff based in Universities across London, which meets once a term to share good practice in the use and development of Moodle. Both Sarah and Tim are also members of the M25 Learning Technology Group, which is similar to the M25 Consortium of Academic Libraries, which also meets termly to share practice and provide staff development to learning technologists about ways to support innovative learning and teaching.

Of course, there will always be those reluctant to engage with technology and who think that it is erroneous that new teaching methods are being driven by technological developments, but it is also true that new technology can inspire people to consider and improve their approach to pedagogy.

Karen Jacobs

Not yet a Friend?

The Friends support the future development of the Newsam Library and Archives as a unique resource for research in education, and especially its role in preserving the UK’s educational heritage by acting as a national centre for archives and special collections.

Subscription rates:
annual individual £25
annual current student £10
annual corporate £50
life £300

To join the Friends, contact our Secretary, Rebecca Webster.

Tel: 020 7612 6983
Email: Rebecca.Webster@ioe.ac.uk
If fiction reflected reality, then no-one would be a pupil or a teacher; it is far too dangerous! The amount of crime, mainly murder, which takes place in academia on the printed page is amazing. I reached this conclusion whilst trying to choose new stock for the Literature Collection. The Literature Collection consists of novels, short stories, plays and DVDs which reflect the educational experience from the viewpoint of both pupil and teacher.

What makes an academic setting so attractive to writers of crime, mystery and thriller fiction? Perhaps it is because academic campuses at all levels are communities within themselves. There are a limited number of characters and clearly defined codes of behaviour. The desire to reach high standards can be stressful for both pupils and teachers. Passions and rivalries can lead to extremes. In some cases, especially in Universities, there is striving to reach, retain and improve one’s position within the organisation. Disappointed people can be dangerous.

Authors may be following that useful advice to the novice writer – ‘write about what you know’ (hopefully the setting and characters and not the crimes!). Sometimes the act of writing is a cathartic experience or it could be an intellectual exercise.

It is not solely a British phenomenon because there are numerous examples from the USA and even from India, France and Kenya.

Happily the genre also features academics who are not the perpetrators or victims of crime. Instead they may be called upon to use their expert knowledge and skills to help the police. In others, though this is now rarer, they may act as amateur detectives and attempt to solve the crime themselves.

The background of the stories can provide interesting insights into different types of academic institutions and also reflect important educational debates of the day as well as social mores.

**Selected examples from the Literature Collection:**

- **Gaudy Night** by Dorothy L. Sayers (1935)
  No murder but plenty of suspense. Interesting points about women’s education and intellectual honesty.

- **Miss Pym Disposes** by Josephine Tey (1948)
  Set in a physical training college. Is a fatal accident really a clever murder?

- **Cat Among the Pigeons** by Agatha Christie (1959)
  Poirot investigates a murder in a girls’ school.

- **Petals of Blood** by Ngugi wa Thiong’O (1997)
  A Headmaster and Teacher are amongst the suspects when a murder takes place in a Kenyan town.

- **School’s Out** by Christophe Dufosse (2007)
  A teacher’s predecessor committed suicide. How will it affect the class?

- **Maxwell’s Chain** by M. J. Trow (2008)
  One of a series of novels about a comprehensive teacher of the old school who cannot seem to avoid getting involved in murder.

- **Secrets and Lies** by Jaishree Misra (2009)
  Four friends are still haunted by the death of another pupil at a private girls’ school in Delhi.