It feels like only a couple of months have passed since our last newsletter, but it was, in fact, back in November that we were last in touch. Since then, we’ve been very busy on a number of different projects working to broaden and increase access to our historical collections.

In March we held our Annual Study Day. As many Friends were unable to join us this year, we’ve provided a full report on the day’s presentations here. With 2014 being the centenary of the beginning of the First World War, this year’s event, ‘Anthem for Doomed Youth’?, focused on education, war and peace. In addition to the usual external speakers, we also talked about how we are using our collections to teach young children today about the personal stories of those who experienced both World Wars, and the inter-war peace movement, firsthand.

At our last AGM, the Friends kindly donated funds to two projects. The first helped secure the money to employ two Assistants to help provide better access to our Archives and Special Collections. The second contributed to creating an exhibition for the 2014 International Standing Conference on the History of Education (ISCHE) to be held at the IOE in July. This year’s AGM, on Thursday August 14th from 2-4pm, will include a full report on these projects. In the meantime, enjoy catching up on what’s been happening in the Library & Archives.

Hello from Sally Perry, our new Curriculum Resources Librarian

It seems a bit backwards, but as the academic year draws to an end, and many of the Institute’s students are saying goodbye – I would like to say hello.

I joined the Library last month, taking up the post of Curriculum Resources Librarian. My previous job was as a school librarian working with 13-19 year olds, and I have experience in public libraries too. Although I’m not a life-long librarian – I had a first career in publishing – books have always been at the heart of my working day, for which I am very grateful. The attraction of libraries goes back to my teenage years, when I was a library helper in an American high school library. If I were to attribute my career path to anyone it would be the marvellous team of English teacher and school librarian who made the library feel like a privileged place to be.

Joining the Institute has been an exciting and challenging experience. There is lots to learn but one of my favourite things about libraries is that there will always be something familiar – from the beep of a self-issue machine to the comforting knowledge that Shakespeare will be at 822.33 wherever Dewey is to be found. Curriculum Resources is a remarkable collection of material intended to show what is available for use in the classroom. Even at this early stage I have had great pleasure from speaking to staff and students about how the collection is used and can be developed to cover the changing needs of new generations of teachers. I’m looking forward very much to contributing to the work of the Library and Archives Service.

By Sally
At the end of last year, a major new programme, the Centenary First World War Battlefields Project, was established at the IOE. Running from 2014-2019, it will enable one teacher and two pupils from all 4055 state-funded secondary schools in England to visit the First World War battlefields in Northern France and Belgium. Professor Stuart Foster joined us to explain how the project will be delivered.

The ‘big idea’ is that these field trips are more than just a school trip. Historical enquiry is the main aim and schools have to commit to doing this before (what will the enquiry be?), during (when they have to answer that question) and after the trip (continuing the enquiry with the rest of their class).

Another key feature is the continued professional development provided to teachers to help them teach about the First World War in a more meaningful way. Feedback shows 94% of teachers want some form of development on how to teach the First World War effectively. In response, both onsite and online support will be developed to enable teachers to redevelop children’s learning — including the fact that 88% of soldiers returned from the war, experiences which are often overlooked.

One aspect of the field trips I hadn’t considered prior to Stuart’s talk was the difference in the group dynamic. Instead of a small number of teachers with a large group of students these trips will have a 2:1 ratio, enabling both teachers and students to work together more closely, hopefully providing a more powerful learning experience for everyone.

Stuart had just returned from a pilot field trip and gave us a fascinating account of what they learned. Two serving soldiers accompanied them and reflected on their own tours of duty in Afghanistan bringing alive the personal stories of what it means to fight for your country. He concluded by saying that ultimately what they want to achieve is for pupils to ‘develop a personal connection, empathy and respect for those affected by war’ which can be exampled by the scene below, where a pupil is seen laying a wreath at the grave of his great uncle who died at the age of just 19 years.

You can find out more about the project at http://www.centenarybattlefieldtours.org/

By Becky

Teachers and the First World War — Speaker Dr Barry Blades

Barry started by explaining that his presentation was a “story about archives”.

On observing the “rebranding” of a school where he previously taught, Barry began to think about the rich and extensive history of the school. Through a series of informal enquiries, he discovered that the caretaker took on the role of custodian of much of the archival material designated for destruction. The documents he found led him to a student named Albert Herbert, who was killed in 1915 at the Battle of Loos. Barry began to question what life was like in a school during the First World War; his fascinating and engaging presentation covered his research into this subject.

While researching, Barry has been conscious that people react and respond to situations, such as war, in a different way. He talked us through some of the roles taken on by schools and their staff during the First World War. He also provided mini biographies of people’s differing reactions to the War, within the setting of those who worked, or had worked in schools. My favourite was the story of James Maxton, a school-master in Glasgow, and conscientious objector who was imprisoned for standing by his convictions. He went on to become an MP.

In a “story about archives”, Barry, a truly engaging speaker, demonstrated the importance of considering the individual stories, rather than just the grand narrative. You can find Barry’s website here: http://www ww1schools.com/

By Jessica
Over the past year or so we have spent a great deal of time delving into the IOE archive collections looking for material relating to the First World War. As well as the upcoming ISCHE2014 conference, which has a theme of Education, War and Peace, the next 4 years will see a series of events and activities relating to the anniversary.

As well as the IOE's own archive, dating from 1902, the IOE Archives holds some 150 deposited collections. These are archive collections given to us over the past 60 years by individuals, organisations, trade unions, pressure groups and many more. They range from the 1750s to the present day and from small (1 box) to extensive (500 boxes or more). Their one commonality is that they all relate to education in some form or other, whether that is pre-school or adult, formal or informal.

When I began to search using our on-line catalogue, the most striking thing was how little material we hold directly relating to war, especially for a 20th century archive. This caused slight panic initially – could we cover a four-year anniversary period with 1 evacuation diary, some student records that mention war service, one or two diary entries and letters commenting on the war and a few photographs?

Then I realised that actually, the archives we hold create a much more interesting picture than that. We’re not a war archive (leave that to the Imperial War Museum and the Liddell Hart Archive). Our strength, and that of education in general, is that education is a regenerative action, at least as displayed in the IOE Archives. So, I did a search on terms such as ‘post-war’, ‘rebuild’, ‘peace’ and ‘reconciliation’ and found that it encompassed the larger part of our holdings! As an example, let’s look at 2 of our archives: the National Union of Women Teachers (NUWT) and German Educational Reconstruction (GER).

Between 1924 and 1956, the NUWT were in contact with (and many of their members were also members of) the following organisations: Education for Peace; Women's Peace Movement; National Peace Council; Campaign for World Government; British Peace Committee; Teachers for Peace; International Peace Campaign; London Peace Council; Fellowship of Reconciliation; British Association for International Understanding; National Council for Prevention of War; Peace Pledge Union; UNESCO; League of Nations; UNICEF; and the Genocide Convention.

The GER (German Educational Reconstruction) was established in 1943 to help German refugee educationists prepare for their post-war return to Germany. After the war it promoted Anglo-German relations. Members organised conferences, lectures, study groups, and visits; and published memoranda, pamphlets and textbooks.

It’s an amazing example of a group of people working together to try and form links and with a genuine belief in the power of education to rebuild relationships between people and countries. It contains materials at a policy level – how to rebuild schools, fill them with teachers and rewrite the curriculum; but also at the very personal level – letters from individual teachers begging to go back to Germany and, later, correspondence and photographs of youth exchanges describing visits to each other’s countries.

So you can see that the archives here at the IOE offer a different view of war and peace; a fairly optimistic one with the belief that education is at heart a regenerative exercise.

We’ve recently put together a guide to all of our collections that relate in some way to education, war and peace, which can be found at: http://libguides.ioe.ac.uk/WarPeace.

By Sarah
Educating Service Children in the 20th Century — Speaker Walter Lewis
Walter is the Honorary Archivist of the BFES/SCE Association whose archives are held at the IOE

Walter kicked off the afternoon session with a very entertaining and informative presentation on the work of the BFES/SCE in Europe and the Far East, focussing particularly on his own personal experiences teaching in Hong Kong and Germany: a subject which I imagine was unfamiliar to many, if not most of the attendees, and all the more interesting for it.

We learned that the earliest example of a school for the children of British Forces stationed abroad dates back to 1675 in Tangiers, but it wasn’t until the days of the British Empire that military personnel really began to expect to take their families with them on postings abroad. These colonies, many of which later became Commonwealth territories, became the first to have relatively large numbers of Forces schools attached to individual regiments.

The end of the Second World War was the next key period for the growth of the education service. A large number of British Forces were stationed in post-war West Germany resulting in the BFES being set up by the Foreign Office in 1946. The 1944 Education Act had given Forces personnel expectations that teaching standards for their children should be as good as at home, but Germany had been so decimated by the War that, despite relatively generous military resourcing, teaching staff had to start from a very low base both in terms of accommodation and teaching resources, and rely, to a large extent, on their own ingenuity.

Walter himself began working for the BFES in Hong Kong in the early 1970s where he and his family had to adapt to a colonial lifestyle to which they were not accustomed. At this point we saw the first of several film clips which aptly illustrated the talk at various points - this one from a BFES teachers’ briefing.

Walter’s first school, St Andrew’s, Kowloon, taught the children of Army, RAF and Navy personnel during a school day running from 8am-1pm, and it was the handover of Hong Kong to China in 1992 which prompted Walter to begin collecting archives from schools closing as a result and donate them to the IOE.

In 1976 Walter moved to RAF Bruggen in Germany where the realities of the Cold War hit home. He went on to hold posts in various locations culminating in a period as Headteacher at Osnabruck Middle School which is obviously fondly remembered. Film clips from the early 1980s, included a school trip to Moscow in June 1989 just before the fall of the Berlin Wall. Another, a ‘World in Action’ television programme from 1991 documenting the transfer of British troops stationed in Germany to active service in the Gulf and the resulting effect on their families, helped build a picture of the unique opportunities and challenges which arose from the circumstances surrounding Forces schools at particular moments in time.

In Walter’s experience both teaching staff and pupils learned to capitalise on the varied experiences they had as a result of moving around from base to base, something which Forces schools at home failed to do. Staff also learned to respond quickly to changing circumstances, as exemplified by the processes they developed to help pupils deal with the stresses surrounding their parents’ departure for active duty at a time when advice on such matters was thin on the ground.

By Kathryn

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Email us at arch.enquiries@ioe.ac.uk
Notice of the Friends’ AGM Thursday 14th August 2pm-4pm
Library Teaching Room, Institute of Education

For the 2014 AGM, we will focus on the exhibition we’ve been putting together for the ISCHE2014 conference. In addition to the biggest exhibition we’ve ever created we have also been writing online guides relating to the conference’s theme of Education, War and Peace. The full agenda for the afternoon will be:

2.00 pm  —  Tea & coffee
2.30pm  —  Annual General Meeting
3.00 pm  —  Presentation by the Archivists on the ISCHE2014 exhibition. Followed by a viewing of the exhibition, which was kindly part-funded by the Friends.

If you would like to attend, please contact Becky: rebecca.webster@ioe.ac.uk / 020 7612 6983 or by post at: Archives (L404), Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AL.

Update on our Archives and Collections Assistants

At the last AGM the Friends kindly donated £3000 to help employ two part-time assistants to help us provide better access to the Archive and Special Collections. In January Qian Xu (Tracey) and Sun Inn, two students here at the IOE, joined us. We thought you would be interested to hear about their experiences. First up is Tracey...

It is a wonderful journey working with the archives and special collections. To me, it is an exciting experience when getting in touch with books printed in 1840, minutes and correspondence written in the 1900s, reports produced in the 1930s, photographs taken in 1950. I have a sense of being truly connected with the years that I have never had a chance to live in. I can take a glance at what people read and wrote at those times. I feel like witnessing the changes taken place over a long period, and am fascinated by the power of time.

Presently, I am working on a series of filmstrips, which could also be considered as art in my eyes. They are drawn by Marian Ray, who ran her own business making educational film strips between the 1940s and early 1980s. Most of the film strips were designed and drawn by Marian Ray herself. They cover a wide range of topics such as chemistry, health, music, physics, plants and animals; and besides that, they show the details of each topic beautifully. I used to learn painting when I was small and I know how long it would take to make one picture lifelike and delicate. The pictures I took here are related to a topic about fossils.

If you look at the two pictures one after another, you would probably have the same feeling as me - the creatures in the picture just fossilized in front of your eyes. The figures do not change neither the size nor the position, but from flesh to bones. As suggested in Ray’s book ‘See What I Mean’ (1953:42), when ‘[d]rawing enlarged or reduced copies’, it is better to divide ‘both the original picture and the sheet onto which it is to be copied...into equivalent sections’ and then copy the picture one at a time. I assume you would use a similar process if you want to produce two pictures the same. This is only a small part from Marian Ray's work and it would be more stunning to see the entire series.

All in all, I feel lucky to work with these arts, the documents which are old enough to attract my attention, and which I wished to have a closer look at when I was a child.

Next time... Read about Sun Inn’s experiences
Volunteer Spotlight: Victor Garcia Gabarda

As part of our HLF funded education outreach project, New Perspectives, over the past year we have been fortunate enough to work with a range of talented, dedicated volunteers, and we thought our readers may be interested in learning a bit more about these individuals.

Victor joined the Archives back in September, and has played a great role on several projects: he has digitised the National Union of Women Teacher’s journal publication, The Woman Teacher; transcribed fragile minute books; and added further details to our archive catalogue to make searching easier. His enthusiasm to tackle any project is much appreciated, and he and the other volunteers play a significant role in our Archive Team.

Victor brings a unique range of skills to the projects he’s involved on, particularly when it comes to anything related to technology—which isn’t all that surprising, since he also volunteers with AgeUK, teaching computer skills to older people. As a technological luddite, I am continuously indebted to Victor for all of his computer and design skills (and patience)!

You may have noticed our new FNLA logo on the cover, which he designed. Victor, who moved to London from Spain, recently completed his degree in Audio-Visual Communication, and is beginning his career in the field. On his volunteering role, Victor explained, ‘This has definitely helped me to get experience, which is really going to help me find a job’. We are wishing Victor all the luck in his job search... but we are hoping he’ll stick around the Archives a bit longer.

By Alix

Told & Untold Stories: Protecting London’s Children During the Second World War
Reminiscence Workshop in the Archives

We all know that archives are a necessary stop for many historical researchers and family historians looking to gather information.

At the same time, archives (with their many stories, both familiar and unfamiliar) are also catalysts for hearing, sharing, and gathering the experiences of others. With this in mind, we held a reminiscence workshop, Told & Untold Stories, here at the IOE Archives during May.

The event, offered in conjunction with the Raphael Samuel History Centre’s month-long heritage festival, London at War, explored the experiences of London’s children, along with the adults working to keep them safe. We uncovered untold stories from our own archive collections, and heard from participants’ own histories, while lecturers and PhD candidates shared their research.

Discussion often revolved around the theme of evacuation: those who stayed in London and the UK, and those who went abroad. Attendee Margaret described the ‘mutual envy between the people who stayed and the people who went... My parents were a bit smug about not sending us to America or Canada’.

Meg, who was evacuated to America, described her time abroad as a ‘huge educational experience’, having discovered other views. Margaret echoed those sentiments, recalling a friend who returned with surprise that England was a monarchy. Mary described her childhood in Wimbledon, and the amount of bombing she and her family experienced.

We had our own collections on display: from the bomb damage of schools and the implementation of air raid precautions found in the Girls Day School Trust collection, to the National Union of Women Teachers and their support of teachers sent to teach evacuated children. Teachers wrote to the NUWT, frustrated at being separated from their former pupils, others wrote to express how enjoyable the experience had been. Upon returning to a crowded London school following the war, one teacher complained of the ‘44 hooligans’ she had in her class.

These reminiscences are being made available as audio oral histories online, so keep your eyes peeled! If you know of a group that would be interested in a reminiscence workshop using the IOE archives, please send me an email at alexandra.hall@ioe.ac.uk, or call 020 7911 5483.
Teaching Multiple Perspectives on Wartime
The Interwar Peace Movement and Year 6 Workshops

When we talk about teaching history – specifically, the teaching of past wars – images of textbooks, timelines, statistics of fallen soldiers, and significant battles, may come to mind. As an alternative method for learning about the past, archives help us go beyond the grand narratives, to reveal the less told histories, while allowing students to develop historical enquiry skills.

With the 2014 First World War centenary, exhibitions, programmes and lectures are offered around the globe in recognition of the 100 years that have passed since the outbreak of War.

As the IOE’s archives predominantly date from the twentieth century, many of the collections illustrate the impact of war on education, children and teachers in the UK and Europe. The National Union of Women Teachers (NUWT) collection spans the decades before, after, and between both World Wars. Within that interwar period, the NUWT collection holds a wealth of material relating to the peace movements which emerged in the wake of the First World War. The collection holds papers from organisations including the NUWT, The League of Nations, and the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), revealing a unique perspective of peace campaigners, often led by women activists.

We wanted to put this material to use, so back in the winter, and as part of our Heritage Lottery Funded outreach project, we delivered workshops focusing on this interwar peace movement to Year 6 classes in Islington. The pupils had been learning about bias in the news and other sources, and were looking to expand their knowledge of historiography and accurate research. So, we combined archives and the peace movement, with the skills and responsibilities of both historians and reporters.

We looked at the peace movement through a specific event – a disarmament demonstration at Royal Albert Hall on 11 July 1931 that students had to write an article on, as Junior Reporters. The class explored the organisations involved in the peace movement; debated the reliability of sources and potential biases; and thoroughly investigated archive documents, including leaflets, postcards, memos, letters and petitions.

The students had extensive prior knowledge about the World Wars: the causes, trench warfare, munitions production, the actions of Hitler, the Holocaust. Their responses also reinforced how history curriculum (and history in general) favours the grand narratives of the past. That is not to say these histories don’t have their place... but it is worthwhile for students to investigate multiple perspectives – and experiences – when it comes to the past.

Through this workshop, students still indirectly learn about the World Wars and political and social climate, but do so through a perspective of a group of individuals – predominantly women, whose voices and stories are still too seldom shared – focused on promoting global peace, which echoes the regenerative potential of education, as Sarah previously mentioned in her article.

By Alix
Learning about War: Empathy and Understanding through Children’s Literature

Well written children’s literature can inform and educate whilst still managing to tell a great story. The impact of war allows the author to explore important questions surrounding loyalty, bravery, trust, endurance and loss. Children can also learn how conflict impacted on aspects of everyday life such as food, clothes, transport and schooling.

The First and Second World Wars affected the civilian populations of many countries in hitherto unimagined ways. There are a wide range of picture books, novels and non-fiction which, used judiciously, can provide a starting point for discussions on the impact of war and its aftermath.

The current centenary of the start of the First World War has been reflected in an increase in the number of new titles suitable for all ages. I have been perusing details of books with a view to making recommendations for additions to the Institute of Education’s Curriculum Collection. There are, of course, also many books set during the Second World War, quite a number of which cover aspects of the Holocaust.

There have been other major conflicts since the end of the Second World War. The names of some of these theatres of war are unfortunately all too familiar: Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and Darfur. I did find that there were books set in these areas. There were also books about the harrowing experiences of child soldiers across the world. The impact of numerous civil wars and the terrible events in Rwanda have also been written about. These may be powerful topics but, handled in a sensitive way, they can help children to understand them. Such literature can also help children understand the background of fellow pupils who may have arrived here as refugees.

There are some conflicts which I have struggled to find as having been used as settings for children’s fiction. These were the Korean War, the Vietnam War and the Falklands War. The Korean War is often called ‘the forgotten war’ which is reflected in the fact that a memorial is only being erected in London this year. Although there are a few books about the impact the warfare had on the lives of Korean and Vietnamese children. Children of Vietnamese mothers and American fathers and how they adapt to living in the United States also feature in children’s books. One of the few fiction books about the Falklands War is ‘The Tin-Pot Foreign General and the Old Iron Woman’ (1984) written and illustrated by Raymond Briggs. It satirises the Falklands War and is not particularly suitable for younger children.

At least with the quality of authors writing in this field today children will not be expected to read ‘The Cruel Sea’ by Nicholas Montserrat, as I was as a young pupil. Whilst this is untouchably a well written account of life on a Second World War naval frigate, the vivid picture it painted of the brutality of war, made it a slightly unusual choice for pupils of an all-girls school in a landlocked African country.

By Beverley

Beverley has created a bibliography on ‘Conflict in Children’s Literature’. If you would like a copy please contact us.

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.

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