

SHCG NEWS

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Post Its in the Post issue

A MODEST PROPOSAL FOR PREVENTING ELDERLY KEEPERS FROM BEING A BURDEN TO THEIR TRUSTEES ; AND FOR MAKING THEM BENEFICIAL TO THE PUBLICK

It is a melancholy Object to those who visit our great Institutions of Learning to find the Corridors, Galleries and Libraries crowded with elderly Scholars, or Keepers, importuning the Publick for Alms to supplement their pitifull Pensions. It is surely agreed by all Parties, that the prodigious Number of Keepers, on the Back, or at the Heels, of a great Director of a Publick Cabinet of Curiosities is a terrible grievance ; yet, when the wise and learned Bibliophile, Mistress Esteve Coll, with the contrivance of my most noble Lord Armstrong, did attempt to lessen the number of whingers, with whom the Institutions of Learning are over-run, her noble efforts to resolve this intractable problem were repaid with all manner of vulgar and canting abuse from Certain Quarters. Some Persons of a desponding Spirit make a great show of Concern for those poor Wretches who are Aged, Diseased or Maimed Scholars ; yet, all Persons of Intelligent Refinement must recognise that these Unfortunates are but a grievous Incumbrance to the Commonwealth, their Pensions a severe Drain upon the Publick's Purse. Having turned my own Thoughts upon the subject, I humbly propose a scheme that will dispose of these poor scholars in such a manner that, instead of becoming a heavy charge upon the Trustees of the Publick Purse, they shall, on the contrary, contribute to the Generation of Income and the Feeding of many Thousands.

As a scholar, a Keeper of Curiosities is no great saleable commodity ; as the source of many and varied delicious, nourishing and wholesome dishes of excellent nutritive meat, they may bring Pleasure and Profit for the Publick Good. A life of scholarship, with its attendant Indolence, has left these Keepers Plump and Fat, fit indeed for the finest of tables. Whether boiled, baked, stewed, roasted or fried, or even served in the fashion favoured in the American Colonies, they are a fine dainty, to be savoured by all Gentlemen and Ladies of Taste. Their bodies kept on ice, they will remain in season throughout the year, bringing great Custom to the tables of the Victoria and Albert Tavern (or "Ace Kaff", as it is known amongst those who scurry among the subterranean passage-ways of the City). If, as has been stated by various Philosophers, we are what we eat, then these delicacies will nourish not only the bodies of those who partake of them, but their minds.

Conscious of the need for Thrift (which we acknowledge the Forces of the Market necessarily require), we may also make use of the carcasses, to provide Socks for Gentlemen of Quality and Gloves for Ladies of Refinement in Taste, to be sold for the Greater Profit of the Institution and to promote the enjoyment of Good Design among the Many.



POPULAR CULTURE SHCG ANNUAL STUDY WEEKEND 1989

Acid house, soaps, football, the leisure industry, coca-cola, the media, Levis - those are just a few of the subjects that will come under the scrutiny of the speakers at this year's Annual Study Weekend. The theme of the Study Weekend, which will be held in Glasgow on 6 - 9 July, is Popular Culture. It will cover a wide range of topics, including folk arts, rites of passage, ritual and superstition, entertainment and leisure activities. The general purpose of the weekend is to examine how these difficult subject areas can be represented in museums, using social history collections. There will be visits to the People's Palace and Springburn, among other activities, including various opportunities to experience aspects of popular culture at first hand. It's an event you cannot afford to miss.

Further details are included in the booking form, which is enclosed in this issue of SHCG NEWS.

A summary of the Scotland Today and Tomorrow meeting held at The Smith Gallery, Stirling, 26 October 1988.

Gentle Reader, if phrases like contemporary documentation and SAMDOK leave you cold, I ask for your patience. The purpose of the Scotland Today and Tomorrow meeting in Stirling last October was to test support for a co-operative exhibition reflecting some aspect of our communities today. The meeting was a success and an exhibition, entitled Working Lives, will be on tour from late 1989. What follows is a report of the meeting, plus details of the exhibition. (For anyone with a squeamish disposition, the third and fourth paragraphs contain some items of a theoretical nature).

Deborah Haase, Curator of the Smith and our host, opened the first session by welcoming those present. Some twenty of us, from a dozen museums, introduced ourselves. Not surprisingly the central belt was well represented, though curators from further afield had asked to be informed of the meeting's outcome.

John Shaw, National Museums of Scotland, gave a robust and amusing description of the state of contemporary collecting and recording so far. He asked first why documenting present-day society was often regarded as a worthy ideal, but difficult to put into practice. The pioneering work done by SAMDOK in Sweden for instance, had not persuaded the profession in the UK that systematic contemporary documentation was feasible here. This was partly because we had overestimated the resources and centralised co-ordination that SAMDOK commanded. He referred to Lars Anderson's unpublished contribution to the Recording Society Today seminar in Edinburgh back in October 1986. Andersson, then of Bohuslans Museum, Uddevalla, and a SAMDOK Council member, had described projects undertaken by his own museum as part of the SAMDOK scheme. These projects featured in sharing of the workload among the participating museums and involved the collection of photographs, video and audio tapes, printed ephemera and a relatively small proportion of objects. Local museums had not only fulfilled their part of the SAMDOK programme, but had also managed to add in contemporary projects of their own.

Turning to philosophical objections John dealt with doubts about the value of contemporary collecting and recording. One commonly voiced worry was how could the curator be objective about contemporary collecting. But it was not possible to be objective about historical collecting either, and the approach should be the same - to make informed choices on the basis of knowledge about the local community. The museums with the best track-records in the contemporary collecting were those that had the clearest vision of what they stood for. Two outstanding cases were the People's Palace, Glasgow 1 and The People's Story, Edinburgh. Contemporary collecting in Scotland was practised by other museums too. Some curators were recording the buildings, processes and people in local industries; others were acquiring samples of products manufactured locally. In the Western Isles Richard Langhorne had reconstructed a 1986 croft interior as part of an exhibition on the Crofter's Act; while at Clydebank Veronica Hartwich was employing a photographer to record the work of the Women's Royal Voluntary Service, a project which stemmed from an exhibition. And for a recent photographic survey in Ross and Cromarty, the museum service employed a professional photographer with grant-aid from SMC to take two hundred images of life in the area. This last turned out to be a learning experience for all involved. The photographer, left without guidance while the museum officer's post was

vacant, produced a series of art images rather than a social record. An alternative method would have been to involve the community by asking them to take the photographs, through a school or college project for example.

John concluded with three recommendations. Each museum should define its own role carefully and include contemporary collecting and recording guidelines in its detailed collecting policy. Registration would provide an opportunity to spend time on this planning. Co-operation between museums was a definite way forward. It would allow us to spread the labour and to focus on selected themes more effectively. Last and most important we must not just collect and record for the archive, but should use our contemporary projects in displays and publications to uphold their relevance.

Mark O'Neill duly showed us how he had used contemporary material in Springburn Museum. Their housing exhibition had come right up to the present 2 and an exhibition made with the help of young people was about teenagers today and their attitudes to Springburn. Lending out an automatic camera enabled teenagers to take photographs themselves. They were also quoted in the exhibition text. Objects included teenage clothes. The museum's latest project was a photographic survey of work in the area. Mark's talk underlined the fact that any division between past and present is totally artificial, and demonstrated that exhibitions which look at life now can be popular.

David Stockdale, Dundee Art Galleries and Museums, wound up the first session with a proposal for the 1989 co-operative exhibition. A possible subject might be working lives, comparing the 1880's with the 1980's. Rather than a geographical treatment, the project could look at aspects of work, such as training, the working day, and links between work and home. More generally, co-operation between museums offered a chance to produce exhibitions with a comparative slant.

After refreshments in the Smith's well-appointed cafe, we returned for an open discussion, chaired by Mark O'Neill. There was a lively debate about the 1989 exhibition, with notably constructive suggestions from Deborah Haase. The feeling of the meeting was that there would be more worth in an exhibition which looked at 1890's work experience alone. A thematic approach was welcomed, and more themes were identified. Helen Clark questioned whether looking at these wide themes was preferable to concentrating on real issues. It was hoped that within the chosen themes workplace issues would be highlighted. The final section of the afternoon was taken up with discussing some of the practicalities of the 1989 project.

Since the Stirling meeting the steering group - consisting of Alison Cutforth (Summerlee), Deborah Haase, Stephen Kay (Summerlee), and the three speakers - have produced and distributed a brochure outlining the 2 Working Lives exhibition and how to take part in it. There will be two identical exhibitions touring concurrently, and an accompanying publication. Both exhibitions will have a set of graphics panels with photographs and text. Producing these photographs and gathering the related information will be a relatively small-scale collecting and recording exercise for each organisation involved. It is also cheap: the cost per museum for the touring display is set at £150. The participating museums can further supplement the core display with objects and video or audio material from their own collections.

For further information about Working Lives, you can contact Mark O'Neill at Springburn or Stephen

Kay at Summerlee. Ideas and organisers for 1990 will be needed soon.

David Stockdale
(Dundee Art Galleries and Museums, City of Dundee District Council).

References

1. See Elspeth King 'The Cream of the Dross' in SHCG Journal 1985. And Elspeth King 'Case Study : People's Palace, Glasgow' in Recording Society Today (SMC 1987).
2. See Helen Clark 'A Place to Stay : Springtown Housing 1780-1987' in SHCG News Spring 1988

PRESENTING SCOTLAND'S STORY

In recent years, the Scottish Museums Council has arranged a number of conferences on what it sees as major themes. These tend to suffer from that lack of purpose of any meeting open to a much wider audience than museum professionals. Are we all on our best behaviour maximising our achievements and emphasising our professional harmony, for the benefit of our trustees, elected members, funding bodies and potential sponsors? Or do we get our teeth into the often complex and thorny issues that arise and address them in an honest if noisy and occasionally confrontational manner?

This uncertainty marked the two days of this conference, entitled "Presenting Scotland's Story". Many issues pertinent to museums of today arose in the course of the proceedings, but two main areas came to dominate the discussions, though the nature of the event allowed neither to be fully explored, or talked through to any kind of conclusion. They might be summarised as "objects versus myths" and as "museums versus the heritage industry". A third theme, perhaps more central to the concern of some museum professionals, that of the merits of restoration compared to conservation, became very much submerged.

Whilst there may be a consensus amongst SHCG members on the desirability of interpretation and historical context, there was no such unanimity amongst speakers and delegates. On the one hand, the total necessity of interpretation was urged by some and the unacceptability of letting the objects "speak for themselves" was the belief of others. Speakers on both days touched on the nature of the evidence with which anyone attempting to tell an historical tale has to deal. In the course of a slick and humorous presentation, Don Aldridge used cartoons to propose how, if a coherent story is to be told, gaps in the surviving evidence may require supplementation. Acknowledging the necessity of interpretation, Gaynor Kavanagh nevertheless felt that the material itself should tell the story and the curatorial role should be to remove the cultural clutter, and present the facts in an objective manner. Her fear of an erosion of academic skills in the rush for marketable images touched a nerve, and was echoed in discussion.

The limitations of the concept of "objectivity" were exposed by John Caughie in a talk analysing the meaning of the film version of "Brigadoon". Explaining the significance of the film and treating it as documentary, Caughie questioned both the desirability and even the possibility of stripping away the myth, proposing that myths are "as real as butter churns", which people carry with them as cultural baggage, affecting how they see and what they draw from objects. In the examination of explanation of the myth, film and other media could be drawn in as evidence.

The theme was returned to in a lively talk by Liz Lochhead on the dramatised presentation of Scotland's Story. Focussing on her work with Communicado Theatre Company and the much toured and acclaimed "Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Cut Off", Liz Lochhead explained a number of areas of myth and culture rooted in history but still very alive in Scotland today and explained how her approach to the play was informed by her background as a rural protestant female, contrasted with the play's director, an urban catholic male. Her message was that any person or institution taking on the responsibility of telling Scotland's Story should concentrate on the area best covered by them. Ghettoisation is a risk, but is best confronted by placing in context or by conscious acknowledgement of stance. Contrasted with the theatrical work, a number of speakers from some fairly serious institutions spoke about their current achievements or aspirations. Robert Anderson spoke of the National Museums' plans for telling Scotland's Story in the proposed extension to Chambers Street. Main galleries are to follow theses, whilst peripheral smaller galleries will be object led and all will be made accessible to the visitor through an information centre with computers. June 1989 will see the opening of the ambitious "Wealth of the Nation" exhibition, the aim of which will be to raise funds for the new exhibition. The comparison with "Enterprising Scot" remained the unanswered question. Timothy Clifford illustrated the results of the redecoration of the National Gallery to the original colour scheme, but regretted that the opportunity may have been lost to work more closely with the National Museum, combining collections and other resources. These two informative but matter of fact contributors failed to introduce the theoretical content expressed elsewhere in the conference, neither dealing with their professional view of the role of museums and art galleries in today's society, or how the nationals might provide a lead.

In describing the recent work of the National Trust for Scotland, David Learmont referred to the difficulties of restoration when surviving evidence is scarce. The significance of David Connelly's talk on the Historic Buildings and Monuments Council lay in counting the straws in the wind of government policy and surmising the effect on the Council's policy. Connelly drew attention to HBMC's £3 million contribution to the £6.5 million restoration of the Duke of Hamilton's hunting lodge at Chatelherault outside Hamilton, now the centre piece of a country park complete with commercial garden centre. Not mentioned was that during this ambitious and successful scheme, a grade B historical 18th century mill building barely three miles away, the only one of its kind in the area, was demolished with the consent of the Secretary of State to make way for private housing development. What was mentioned was the HMBC's new awareness of its need to exist in the "real world" of today's political climate, as evidenced by monitoring of sales, visitor numbers and awareness of commercial potential of sites and the necessity of its exploitation.

The man seen as representing the most highly developed awareness of heritage's commercial potential was Anthony Gaynor, articulately and unrepentantly arguing for Jorvik and its offspring. Dividing the museum professional's duties into conservation, research and display, the primacy of the latter was stressed as the "interface with the non specialist", (i.e. the visitor) in times of competition for public sector funding it made commercial sense to emphasise this aspect to generate funding to support the other roles.

The parameters of academic accuracy, public acceptability and commercial viability determined

which projects were developed. Specific suggestions, including tobacco or slavery, were rejected. Professional response to this centred on the fear that commercial projects focusing on the publicly acceptable and financially viable historical narrative, leave museums to confront the full spectrum of human experience, including its less pleasant corners.

In describing the background to Jorvik, Oxford and Canterbury, and with particular reference to the Edinburgh Whiskey Heritage Centre, Gaynor was commendably honest about the financial challenges and the stories of delays, discoveries of structural problems, cost overruns and other nightmares familiar to many of us.

He was less forthcoming in discussing the widely reported problems not only with the time-car systems used at Edinburgh and Oxford but more particularly over the failure of the Edinburgh Whiskey Centre to break even.

The response to his talk in discussion raised familiar fears, particularly concerning centralisation, with the provinces and smaller museums being starved of resources as funds were concentrated on the cities and mega projects such as the Glasgow Garden Festival. The fiction of Jorvik type operations as commercial ventures was exposed by the many substantial public sector inputs, raising fears that with grants available from SDA or STB, there exists no incentive for local authorities to renovate its elderly and underfunded museum when it can have a shining new heritage centre provided for half the price.

The ambiguity about the word "heritage" remains, one school of thought seeing it as a blanket description of any institution of recent origin lacking a visible academic base and all too often with a semi-commercial background. The other school of thought sees it as a useful shorthand to reach a public steeped in non-museum historic images, from Hovis advertisements on the television to the proclaiming of slices of the UK as Burns Country, Catherine Cookson Country or whatever. Sales of very important items by museums with "National" in their title, or closure and disposal of collections by a former "museum of the year" can mean that the name "museum" is no longer any guarantee of propriety. These arguments may be neither constructive nor edifying, but reveal a deep strain of insecurity and some very real concerns in professional circles, and are probably better rehearsed in private.

This report does not pretend to air all the views that arose, often all too briefly, in a sometimes loosely structured conference, with inadequate time to explore the issues raised by speakers of widely varying styles and content. Two final points may be worthy of thought. Gaynor Kavanagh echoed a suggestion made by Gordon Adams of the STB at last year's conference. Contrary to the conventional wisdom, and contradicting what was said at the MA conference in Bournemouth, discretionary leisure time is seen as decreasing, rather than increasing. Overseas tourists, in particular Americans or Japanese, have less time to spend, and the competition to attract them will obviously become fiercer. Finally, the question of facility fees and charge for research for organisations other than bona fide students or other museums was raised, a question already undergoing discussion in Central Scotland as a result of the activities of the organisation researching the "Word and the Stones" project planned for 1990 in Glasgow. Should we freely help those competing for our funds and our visitors by giving unlimited access to our archives and reserve collections?

These were two days of talks that were informative and stimulating if of variable quality. Responses from delegates ranged from predictable rehearsals of well known positions to challenging assertions. As usual with non residential conferences. There was no opportunity to explore the issue "after hours", but plenty of raw material for discussion back at our home museums.

Mary Clark, Alison Cutforth and Sue Wingrove.

Summerlee Heritage Trust



VIDEO HISTORY PROJECT FOR YORKSHIRE AND LINCOLNSHIRE

Oral history is already well established in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, and many local groups already have experience of encouraging the elderly to share their stories of the past. Now, light and easy to operate video cameras open new opportunities for local community groups to produce archive material. The Video History Project aims to make this new technology available to people living within the Yorkshire Television area to record recent history in sound and vision. The material recorded will be stored in the West Yorkshire Archives in Bradford and will be available to historians, researchers and broadcasters. In this way records of the daily lives and experiences of local people will be preserved for future generations.

The project is open to any group which has identified some piece of local history worth recording. The groups can be formal or informal; local history groups, trades unions, womens institutes, school or college groups or just a group of people who are keen to record some aspect of their community's recent past. Groups will apply to the Project and outline the subject they wish to video. Once their application has been approved, the project co-ordinator will meet with them to discuss filming. Cameras will be provided by the Project and the co-ordinator will give the group training in handling the equipment. The historian using the archive will not be looking for professional filming but will expect details of our way of life which might otherwise have been lost.

Interested parties are advised to decide exactly what aspect of local history they wish to record and then to obtain an application form from the project co-ordinator, Frank Harris, Yorkshire Television Ltd., The Television Centre, Leeds, LS3 1JS.

THE GRANADA STUDIO TOUR - AN EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW?

I visited the Granada Studios in Manchester with no preconceptions; I expected the experience to be something unusual with an emphasis on entertainment. I hoped that I might learn from their presentation techniques and I wondered if museums could learn anything from their approach to the paying public.

The studio tour was carefully structured - a guided tour throughout it relied on the jollity of the guide to provoke responses from the group. What surprised me more than anything was how little Granada had learnt from the excellent gallery at the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television in Bradford where in a very compact space visitors are brought into contact with the technology of television and are invited to operate a range of interactive exhibits, from "blue-screen" flying carpet trickery to reading from an autocue or operating a camera. At Granada most of the same equipment was on view but with the exception of a ride on a raft using a "blue screen" the visitor remained a passive observer throughout. Even with the "blue screen" the background image was of gentle waves which was rather tame considering they could have taken the tour down some white water rapids! There was not one operational television camera on view, the T.V. control room could not be operated by the visitors and there was no attempt to explain the technology.

One of the most disturbing aspects of the tour was the layer upon layer of fakery involved. Almost everything was a reconstruction twice removed from reality; a copy of a set used by the Beatles a "tram" on a bus chassis with no track on the road or cable overhead, a copy of the interior of the Rovers Return. The supposed T.V. sets of 10 Downing Street and Sherlock Holmes' living room were patently not built for filming in but for the visitor, they were far too cramped. It was in no sense a "behind the scenes" tour. There was a preoccupation with costs; the House of Commons set costs £90,000, make up for one character in Sherlock Holmes cost £5,000, a model of the Los Angeles skyline cost £10,000 (surely it would cost less to send a film crew there? I thought).

Were visitors really entertained by the experience? At £5.50 per head expectations were surely high. The tour guide tried hard to jolly things up, encouraging photographs and questions. The built in "tricks" - talk of a haunting, followed by the appearance of the "ghost" were excruciating in their predictability. Actors playing the characters of Sherlock Holmes' housekeeper, a policeman and an East German border guard stayed in character but were little more than adequate. Without undertaking "vox pop" interviews with fellow travellers it was difficult to gauge the impact of the tour but I noticed that few seemed to enjoy the tour guide's scripted banter.

Granada is obviously pretending to be something that it is not i.e. major film studio. It can offer none of the visual effects of a Hollywood studio and it trying to squeeze a great deal out of its Coronation Street connection. At no point was the studio's far more mundane role in local broadcasting and news coverage mentioned. Interestingly it was at the "Coronation Street Experience" that visitors were allowed to browse, with essay length captions of text explaining the history of the series and even a small "museum" of Bet Lynch's earrings and other props. The devotees were clearly delighted and they were even given the chance to "appear" in the episode, an interesting idea, but at a cost of £9.99 per video.

A fundamental flaw lies in the forced guided tour; with schedules and a specified quota of visitors to process they clearly do not want to allow visitors to linger. The whole enterprise cost £8 million and no doubt the visitor figures will be impressive. Its "success" will be held up to the museums community as an example to follow, yet as far as quality of visitor experience and visitor participation are concerned I would rate it very poorly. As an education officer I would be horrified to think that school groups might be taken to Granada as an educational experience. For me it was neither entertaining nor educational.

There is plenty of interest in Manchester, but for the £5.50 entrance fee to Granada you could visit all of the city's museums and galleries and still have change left over for a meal in Chinatown. I think that would be money better spent.

Catherine Hall
Harris Museum and Art Gallery, Preston.



JUST FANCY THAT

Ilkeston has a new museum curator, despite the unprecedented amount of bad publicity which surrounded the vacancy. Let's hope it doesn't all end in tears.

HERITAGE FOR PROFIT?

Museums of London, 16 January 1989

It's a sign of the times I suppose that the last four issues of SHCG News have carried commentaries on the heritage industry. Seminars on the subject are getting pretty thick on the ground, too, these days. Unlike the 'Heritage Interpretation' conference (see News 18), at 'Heritage for Profit?' museum professionals formed the overwhelming majority of the audience (although there were none on the panel of speakers). The seminar was organised by the MA and the Society of Museum Archaeologists and its aim was to examine some of the issues raised by the assumption that museums are tourist facilities and are capable of being run at a profit, without support from local or central government funding. The programme was designed to stimulate what the chairperson, Tim Schadla Hall, said he had once heard described as a 'hands on debate'. Well, surely few curators would be reluctant to get their hands on more of the filthy lucre but are the implications and risks involved in the profit-making approach so great that we should keep our hands off it?

The first speaker, Robert Hewison (Who he? Ed!), certainly thought so. He examined the dramatic changes which have taken place in the museum world in the 1980s, trends which could enable Roy Strong to envisage the future V & A as 'The Laura Ashley of the 1990s' (as he once described it at a press conference). According to Hewison the severe cuts in public sector funding in recent years were the spearhead of the government's deliberate policy of forcing national and local authority museums into the market place and to be consumer-orientated. They had to compete for alternative sources of funding with the so-called independent museums and heritage centres, which paid lip service to the traditional educational and social welfare roles of museums and, worse, presented not the past but 'heritage', a pre-packaged pastiche of the past for passive consumption. He insisted that the past required an act of imagination and museums should continue to foster it and assert the primacy of moral values over commodity values.

It was a witty and eloquent contribution, full of telling statistics ('independent museums get 53% of their funding from the public sector'), and catchy phrases ('heritage' is 'history bought off the shelf'). But in the ensuing discussion period it soon became apparent that we cannot look to Hewison for ideas on how to halt the forward march of 'heritage'. He confessed he had no solutions and his efforts were aimed at sounding the alarm and adding moral force to the argument. Still, to add a personal note, it was encouraging that his attitude to museums seemed far more positive than the one implied in The Heritage Industry

If Hewison put principles first then the next speaker, Anthony Gaynor OBE, Managing Director of Heritage Projects (of Jorvik and Oxford Story fame), undoubtedly regarded resources as the key issue. Describing himself as a capitalist Philistine who has a great deal of respect for museum professionals, he condemned what he saw as Hewison's negativism and insisted that museums were in the heritage industry whether they liked it or not. He urged them to be realistic about their scarcity of funds since it was unlikely that their predicament would be eased in the near future, whatever the complexion of the next government. They should stop whinging (no more moaning museum minnies, perhaps?), recognise the market they were in and fend for themselves. One of his suggestions was that the educational and display function of museums should be used to fund their other activities, as at Jorvik, and that they should follow the example of the new heritage centres by presenting the exciting, enjoyable displays which the public expects.

Not surprisingly, perhaps, Gaynor's forthright espousal of, as it were, display side economics triggered off heated discussion and open disapproval. Some felt that the museum's display function could not be divorced from collecting, conservation and research, nor could the one finance the other since, as Gaynor himself acknowledged, most heritage centres do not in fact yield the returns expected of them. But what caused the greatest concern was his assertion that Heritage Projects deliberately steered clear of projects which involve controversial subjects (he mentioned slavery as one example). To many this was unmistakable proof of Hewison's criticisms.

After lunch, Dr. Martin Henig, a Research Associate at the Institute of Archaeology at Oxford University, defended and emphasised the educational and didactic roles of museums which were under attack from what he termed 'cynical Philistinism'. Museums were important centres of instruction because the learning process cannot solely be classroom based and since education should be available to everyone, museum charges were a 'mean test entry'. Henig thought the introduction of profit-making would undoubtedly threaten genuine research and historical enquiry: museums could not be like shops - shopkeepers do not aim to educate! He was adamant that what we needed to be taking into the next century was more scholars not heritage managers because in order to understand the past we needed the real knowledge museums encouraged and supplied not the cocooning of heritage centres.

We were indeed a long way from the 'give the public what it wants' school but this message was soon reintroduced by the last speaker, John Brown, a marketing, management and creative consultant. He maintained it was possible to bridge the gap between the two sides of the argument and the title of the seminar should really have been heritage and profit. Personally he did not want to see museums regarding themselves as totally in the tourism market since they were user - not consumer-orientated. However, they had to bear in mind what business they were in, deliver what their clientele wanted and broaden their appeal. In his opinion they should take note of the popularity of theme parks and other tourist attractions which used new techniques in communication. The latter raised the standards of expectation of the public, who were then disappointed when they visited museums. He insisted it was difficult to accept the means test entry argument against museum charges when many people were prepared to pay much higher prices to visit the so-called downmarket attractions. Unlike Gaynor, Brown did not believe that visitor services could support other museum functions; nevertheless museums should be responsible for their own financial well being and it was vital that their management had financial and personnel as well as museum training.

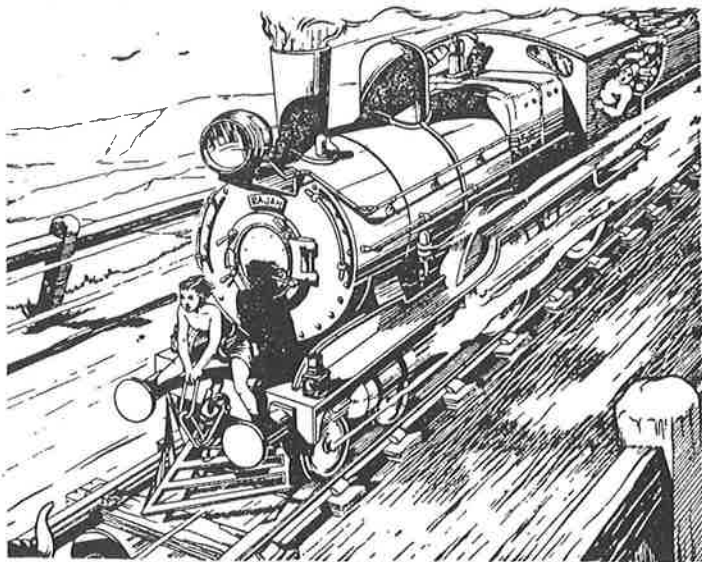
Four good speakers with four different approaches as well as a fair amount of debate meant a lot of words and ideas. It was perhaps too much to expect, then, that the final discussion could avoid going over ground already covered, introduce new perspectives or - a tall order - reach conclusions. Some expressed disappointment that important issues had not been touched on, among them whether at present museums are using their collections and services to the full to provide income and how could they achieve this. There was relatively little discussion, too, on whether profit-making was actually a feasible proposition. But it was not a day for the nitty-gritty; for most of the proceedings practicalities took a back seat behind by now well-rehearsed joustings over the pros and cons of the heritage industry and, more specifically, heritage centres. They may indeed be a fad and museums may be worrying unduly about them, as some suggested. Surely, however, the threat is a real one when museums are being judged by

commercial criteria and when local authorities can be led astray by Jorvik's phenomenal, but unlikely-to-be-equalled, financial success.

Nevertheless it was a lively session, with a fair amount of verbal Wimbledon which clearly demonstrated that the museum profession is not only divided over the heritage/profit issue but also confused about what its own future holds. Many positively (and laudably) championed the good work some museums were accomplishing in various communities - even with the much-maligned 'traditional' display techniques. Others were not so sure. One commentator insisted that museums' institutional inertia had resulted in displays which could only be endured not enjoyed and that the rise of the heritage centre was proof that museums had failed. O tempora, O mores.....did someone say 1989 was Museums Year?

Bill Jones
Welsh Industrial and Maritime Museum.

'RAJAH' ROUTS the RAILROAD WRECKERS



TRADE UNIONISM AND RAILWAY MUSEUMS

Rev. R. Paten of Railworld, Peterborough is seeking information on material relating to the railway unions held in museum collections. Anyone with objects and ephemera relating to railway workers and their unions should contact Rev. Paten at Railworld, Oundle Road, Peterborough. PR2 9NR.

T.U.C. PAPER MOUNTAIN FINDS NEW HOME

During the past eighty years the T.U.C. has accumulated a vast store of paper records, which has developed into a major archive of considerable historic interest. These records provide a unique insight into the work of the first national trade union centre to be established and which became the model for many others in Europe and elsewhere. The papers chart the history of the T.U.C.'s contribution to the development of British trade unionism and to the creation of today's society.

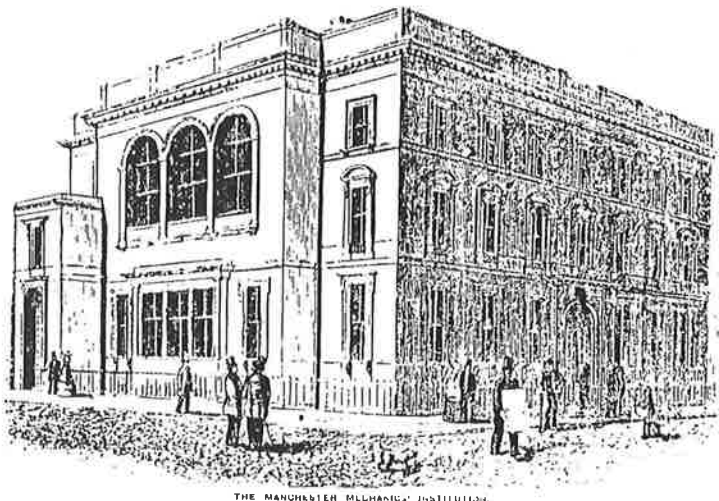
The records, which include minutes, reports and other internal documents, together with material from other institutions, including central government, have now been placed on permanent loan in Warwick University's Modern Record Centre. A number of trade unions, including NUPE, NUR and TGWU, already house their archives at the Centre, which is widely recognised as a major repository for labour and industrial relations archives. The centre also houses the archives of the confederation of British Industry.

"The T.U.C. has played a major part in winning many of the social and economic advances for working people throughout this century", commented Norman Willis, as the archives were handed over. "Now, at last, the serious student of history will be able to see the detailed work undertaken by the T.U.C. in this and many other aspects of our national life. We owe it to our predecessors to ensure the record of their work is available for all to see".

LABOUR HERITAGE

Congratulations to Nick Mansfield, who has been appointed Director of the revamped National Museum of Labour History, which is to open in the Mechanics Institute in Manchester's Princess Street, the building where the T.U.C. was founded in 1868. In the autumn The Labour Party's archives will be transferred to the Museum from the basements of Walworth Road, London. These include chartist papers, letters from William Morris, Eleanor Marx and Prince Kropotkin, and the Labour Party's National Executive Committee minutes from the first meeting on 28 February 1900 onwards.

Stephen Bird, the Party Archivist, will be moving to Manchester along with the documents. He hopes that the collection will be constantly enriched by further deposits. "We now have the premises and funds for our own historical centre which will match anything in the world", he said. A new historical society, Labour Heritage, has also been established. Further details can be obtained from Stephen Bird at the Labour Party's Headquarters in Walworth Road, London.



THE MANCHESTER MECHANICS INSTITUTE.

THE ACTIVE MUSEUM OF BERLIN

At 11 o'clock on Sunday 5 May 1985 an excavation began in West Berlin. It was an excavation on a site which "on account of its history differs from all others in Berlin. It is unique in Germany and in Europe" (die Tageszeitung 1984 in Schoenberner 1985, 5) and the subsequent exhibition has been interpreted as justifying the multi-million pound extravaganza of Berlin's 750th anniversary celebrations (Brockschmidt 1987). Yet this excavation was not carried out or instigated by trained archaeologists. It was the work of the Active Museum of Fascism and Resistance in Berlin, an association founded to set up a memorial at the former SS, SA and Gestapo headquarters in and around the 17th century Prinz-Albrecht Palace, "the most feared address in Berlin" (Rurup 1987, 8). It was from this complex of buildings, now adjacent to the Berlin Wall, that Himmler organised the 'cleansing' of Jews, Communists, Social Democrats, homosexuals, Gypsies, Quakers, clergy, the handicapped and the old. From here the bureaucrats, or "desk criminals" (Rurup 1987, 192), as well as interrogators, torturers and murderers of the Gestapo, SS and SA spread terror and suffering throughout Europe.

In May 1985 people excavated not for money, academic interest, fun or to comply with planning regulations. They excavated as an act of remembrance. Remembrance is essential to come to terms with the Nazi past: "Whoever closes his/her eyes to the past becomes blind to the present. Whoever does not want to remember inhumanity will be vulnerable to reinfection" (von Weizsacker 1985, 19). Remembrance is for "the resistance fighters and countless victims interrogated and tortured in the Gestapo and SS cellars", so that by uncovering the physical remains of the Prinz-Albrecht complex, "a place of remembrance should finally be created on the site of this centre of terror ... A place of reflection to impart the lessons and insights from the site's history, and so contribute to war and fascism never setting forth from German soil again" (Aktives Museum 1985).

The call to excavate ends with the appeal: "GRASS MUST NEVER BE ALLOWED TO GROW OVER IT" (Aktives Museum 1985. Original emphasis), and in similar vein, a leaflet at the excavated site proclaims: "THE WOUND MUST STAY OPEN" (Aktives Museum 1987. Original emphasis).

After a long campaign by the Active Museum (amongst others), the Senate of Berlin set up a temporary "documentation" on the site called "The Topography of the Terror" ("Topographie des Terrors", R. Ruerup 1987). This simple but highly effective presentation is sited next to the Martin-Gropius-Bau and the nearest stations are Anhalter Bahnhof (S-Bahn) or Kock Strasse (U-Bahn).

This "documentation" or exhibition has now been extended for three years, but the long term future of the site is still unknown. The Active Museum is fighting on, pressing for memorials at other forgotten sites in Berlin, like Greunewald Station, from which trains went to the concentration camps, and is currently organising an exhibition for children on "Childhood under National Socialism". The Active Museum works with other anti-fascist groups and uses the Prinz-Albrecht site to stage anti-fascist and peace rallies; particularly on 5 May, the anniversary of the end of World War Two.

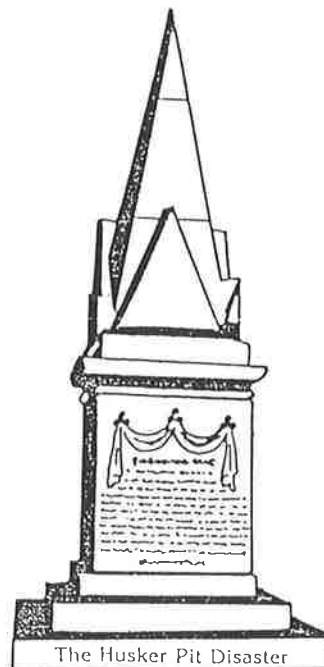
A fuller account of the Active Museum's work is available in "History that hurts: Excavating 1933-1945" by Frederick Baker in The Archaeological Review from Cambridge Volume 7.1. Spring 1988. This is available, priced £3.00, from ARC, The Department of Archaeology, Downing Street, Cambridge CB2 3DZ.

For more information and details of the Active Museum's newsletter contact: Aktives Museum Faschismus und Widerstand e.V., Koethener Str.44, D-1000 Berlin 61, West Germany.

Frederick Baker

References:

- Aktives Museum 1985: 1933-45 Nachgraben, West Berlin, Aktives Museum.
Aktives Museum 1987: Zur Eroeffnung der Ausstellung Topographie des Terrors am 4.7.87, West Berlin, Aktives Museum.
Brockschmidt, R. 1987: Manchmal versteht man nur noch Bahnhof, West Berlin, Der Tagesspiegel, 16 August.
Ruerup, R. 1987: Topographie des Terrors. Gestapo, SS und Reichssicherheitsamt auf dem Prinz-Albrecht Gelaende: eine Dokumentation, West Berlin, Willmuth Arenhovel Verlag.
Schoenberner, G. 1985: Zur Sache. In Schilling, H.P. (ed), Zum Umgang mit der Erbe, West Berlin Aktives Museum, 5-10.
von Weizsacker, R. 1985: Von Deutschland aus: Reden des Bundespraesidenten, DTV 10639, Munchen, Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag.



STONE WORDS

Contributions are invited for a nationwide local history exhibition, **Stoney Words**, which is being organised by Thalia Campbell. Does your museum, art gallery or local library have a dedication stone expressing the beliefs and ideals of the founders? Is there an interesting war memorial near you? Does it include women's names? Is there a memorial in your town or village to a fire, flood, industrial accident or disaster? Thalia Campbell would like to hear from you. Black and white and colour photographs, drawings, paintings, wax rubbings and other material would be welcomed. Stories of uncommemorated events may also be relevant and may be included in the catalogue.

Contact Thalia Campbell, Glan Gors, Ynys Las, Borth, Dyfed SY4 5JU.

THE EPHEMERA SOCIETY

The Ephemera Society is concerned with the preservation, study and educational uses of printed and handwritten ephemera - the minor documents of everyday life. The Society exists both to further the interests of collectors of ephemera and to encourage interest in the subject among a wider public. It sees that the survival and conservation of ephemera depends as much on informed public opinion as on the efforts of individual specialists.

The Society forms a link between collectors, offering a means of contact, information and mutual assistance. Study meetings, lectures and visits are organised and there are numerous sales and exchange sessions. The Society also offers guidance on all matters of ephemera including dating, storage, conservation and cataloguing.

A further function of the Society is to act as a formal clearing house and repository for items of ephemera which might otherwise be destroyed. A number of collections have been deposited with the Society for this purpose. Government departments, commercial concerns and private individuals are all invited to make use of this service.

A non-profit body, founded in 1975, the Society quickly gained recognition as the authority in its field and as a source of information and advice on ephemera. It now counts among its members libraries, schools, colleges, universities, museums and private individuals in half a dozen countries. The Society's journal *The Ephemera* carries news, articles and announcements and is published quarterly. The Society's long-term plans include the establishment of a permanent archive and the initiating of research and educational projects.

Further details are available from The Ephemera Society, 12 Fitzroy Square, London W1P 5HQ.



THE FOLKLORE SOCIETY

The Folklore Society has organised a number of meetings and conferences for the coming year that may be of interest to many social history curators. The Society's annual lecture will be held on 19 April at University College, London. Dr Hilda Ellis Davidson, winner of the 1988 Katherine Briggs Folklore Award, will talk on "Some Pagan Myths and Symbols".

The Society will be celebrating its 111th birthday on 14 June with an informal meeting at University College on the theme of 'foodways'. This will be followed on 9 September by a day meeting, 'Cornwall in Folklore', which is being held at the Institute of Cornish Studies, Camborne College, Poole. This event is being jointly promoted by the Society, the Institute and the Cornish Bureau for European Relations. The third annual Childrens Folklore Conference will be held on 30 September at the Mary Ward Centre, 42 Queens Square, London WC1N 3AJ. This is organised jointly by the Childrens Folklore Group and the London History Workshop. A conference on "Language and Traditions of Crafts" is also being organised in association with the Welsh Folk Museum for 24-26 November.

Further details about Folklore Society events are available from Cindy Sughruie, 126 Houle Street, Sheffield S6 2WR.

GEM

A new leaflet outlining the work of the Group for Education in Museums is now available. The Group is the national association for all people who are concerned, professionally or otherwise, with the educational use of museums, galleries, nature reserves and heritage sites.

GEM publishes a quarterly newsletter which acts as an information exchange amongst members. It includes reviews of recent publications, comment on curriculum change and news of events at sites. The *Journal of Education in Museums* appears annually. Recent themes have been multi-cultural education, the new exams and drama and role play. A variety of informal events are held throughout the year and a residential course is held each August.

Membership is £9 for individuals and £18 for institutions. Copies of the new leaflet and further information are available from Gail Durbin, c/o English Heritage, Room 115, 25 Savile Row, London W1X 2BT.



MIDLANDS DIPLOMA GROUP

This group has been founded by Diploma students in the Midlands who felt that they ought to be visiting more museums to aid their studies. A students' group established in London had proved successful, and it was decided to organise the new group on similar lines.

Study visits are planned by group members themselves. The initial meeting took place at a Social History Identification Day at Hednesford, followed by a visit to the Black Country Museum. Members toured the site with a guide and were shown the museums stores by John Compton. A question and answer session with museum staff followed during the afternoon. It was also agreed that the next visit would be to the Walsall Leather Centre and to Walsall Museum and Art Gallery.

The group is fairly informally structured. There are no charges either for membership or any of the visits. All museum workers are welcome, not merely Diploma Students. As there is no system of formal lectures each visit will be more or less what that particular group makes it. The group aims to see a member of staff at each museum visited in order to ask questions and elicit background information. Further information is available from Su Jeanes at the Valley Heritage Centre, Valley Road, Hednesford, WS12 5QX.

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

During the autumn BBC Education will be broadcasting a series of programmes looking at the way in which fashions in the U.K. have changed since the 1850s. The emphasis of the series, **Through the Looking Glass**, will be on the ways in which changing fashions reflect social change.

Many families have easy access to personal memorabilia, such as family photograph albums and old clothes, and they will also have good access to local museums. BBC Education intends to produce resource packs to support the programmes, which it is hoped will give the viewers the skills and knowledge to interpret material for themselves. The idea is that the packs will enable viewers to become amateur historians of their own family lives and their own locality, drawing their own conclusions from individual observation of objects and materials close at hand.

Steve Pollock, Education Officer with the BBC, invites members of SHCG to associate their own museums with the series. This could be achieved by staging a related display or event, no matter how small, at the time the programmes are broadcast. After each programme viewers will be invited to send for the series pack and an information sheet listing the various participating museums. Further details are available from Steve Pollock at Villiers House, The Broadway, London W5 2PA.



MUSEUMS ALIVE!

The Yorkshire and Humberside marketing initiative, **MUSEUMS ALIVE!** aims to raise the public's awareness of the area's many museums and galleries during Museums Year. Their latest publication provides detailed information on events and special features at museums from April to June. Among the exhibitions covered are Treasures at the Yorkshire Museum, and Of Curiosities and Rare Things at the Leeds City Museum. Both look at the objects and collections that make up museums - how they got there, and how they illustrate and explain a changing world. New developments in the area include the Kodak Museum, opening in the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television in Bradford, a new Crafts Museum in Barton-on-Humber, and the recommissioning of a water-powered stone-crushing mill at Thwaite Mills, Leeds.

Further information is available from Delma Tomlin, 65 Rawcliffe lane, York YO3 6SJ.



HOP ALONG TO BASS

A new brewing gallery has been opened at the Bass Museum, Burton-on-Trent. The new display has been constructed in the former Blacksmith's Shop, which is housed in a large 19th century building, itself a typical example of Burton brewery architecture. The open span roof of the building, with its massive roof timbers and brick facade, provide a sympathetic background for the large pieces of brewing equipment which are the backbone of the new display.

The gallery is designed to give visitors an in-depth look at the development of brewing and malting techniques over the years. One area is devoted to hop growing, another to materials handling and another section to pre-industrial brewing practice. The story is animated by video and audio tapes and the noises of everyday working life at the Bass brewery, together with an extensive selection of old photographs.

The gallery has two aims. It provides an introduction to the brewing process, which is then developed into the distribution and retailing of beer in the existing displays. It also gives visitors an impression of what it was like to actually work in a brewery, a maltings or a hop field in the not too distant past. For further information, contact Sarah Elsom, Curator, The Bass Museum, Horninglow Street, Burton-upon-Trent, Staffordshire.

NORTH-WEST FEDERATION STUDY GRANTS

The North-West Federation of Museums and Art Galleries has always made available a sum of money to help younger members of the profession attend the annual Museums Association Conference. There is still a small sum available for this, but the Federation is now making a further grant available in order to promote study amongst young curators. Research projects, for which application is made, should be individually generated and should relate in some way to the applicant's museum work. Applicants should be established in a museum post below the level of curator, members of the Federation, and, normally, under 30 years of age at the time of the application.

Further details are available from Janice Carpenter, University of Liverpool Art Gallery, 6 Abercromby Square, PO Box 147, Liverpool L69 3BX.

The Local History Archives Unit at Humberside College of Higher Education in Hull has produced an attractive and useful series of archive folder publications, designed for use by schools, local history groups, adult education classes and anyone else interested in local studies. Topics covered include the New Poor Law, Seaside Resorts, Fishing, and Housing in Humberside. Each publication includes an introduction to the subject, a collection of facsimile documents, a list of sources, bibliography and suggestions for further study. Documents reproduced in the archive folders include maps, plans, photographs, extracts from minute books, posters, advertisements and ephemera. It is hoped that these will act as an introduction to the wide range of original archive material available for similar local studies projects.

The Unit also publishes a series of resource guides, including Christopher Ketchell's "I remember ... : A Recall and Reminiscence Bibliography, reprints and a local history newsletter, "The Local". Further details are available from LHAU, Kennedy House KS17, Inglemire Avenue, Hull HU6 7LU.

Dear Ian

As a Social History curator by trade, I now find myself in the position of being a museum director without a social history collection.

This Victorian museum (opened in 1868) has collections along very traditional curatorial lines (fine art, decorative art, natural history, archaeology, and ethnography). Decorative art, which includes costume, and technology, which includes lots of unprovenanced items no-one else wants, are the only two areas where social history objects could fit. It is impractical to try and establish a completely new department of social history, with the necessary staffing, storage, budget and technical support, though this of course would be the ideal solution.

The public are increasingly interested in local and social history which we have very little in the way of objects to illustrate. We display our costume in period room settings at Rougemont House and therefore collect furniture, ornaments and general domestic items as 'props' for these displays, accessioning them into the collection. Should we be constrained by the rooms we currently use, which do not include a kitchen and are very upper-middle class, or should we collect with the idea of doing more than just the rooms at Rougemont House in future? When does a piece of pottery become social history rather than decorative art, especially if there is no social history collection in which to put it?

How can I justify opening new collecting areas when we cannot adequately care for our existing collection? How can I afford to ignore the public's interest in social history when I need to increase my visitor figures and the 'popular' in order to ensure a future for the collections?

Is it only my own interest in social history which makes me aware of this dilemma? Should I fight to reassert the traditional museum collecting areas which we already cover? Is heritage nostalgia taking over? Your readers' reactions would be appreciated.

Hilary McGowan
Director of Exeter Museums



KYLIE EAT YOUR HEART OUT

The museum world was rocked to its foundations today by the revelation that Barbie, posing as a pouting teenager in many social history collections, is in fact thirty years old. Yes, Barbie - real name Barbara Roberts (no relation) - has notched up one extra vital statistic on her scoreboard. Born in New York on March 9 1959, Barbie has become an icon for our age, a madonna for the MacDonalds generation, a role model for material girls throughout our brave new world. She has secured eternal youth with an effortless ease Joan Collins would kill for. Curvaceous, silk-skinned, buried in a cascade of pink frills guaranteed to thrill Barbara Cartland, her glossy lips fixed in a permanently shining smile, Barbie is a radiant vision of opulence. She is a blonde bombshell every ready to explode. There is only one Barbie (give or take a few remoulds) and she merits a place in your heart (or at least your collection).

Barbie's boyfriend Ken, believed to be staying somewhere in Walsall, was unavailable for comment.



IN PRINT : RECENT PUBLICATIONS

- Art Deco Source Book by Patricia Bayer,
Phaidon, £19.95
- At the Going Down of the Sun by Derek Boorman,
William Sessions, £5.95
- Wave Me Goddbye: Stories of the Second World
War,
edited by Anne Boston
Virago £12.95
- Grand Luxe: The Transatlantic Style
by J.M. Brinnin and K. Gaulin
Bloomsbury, £40.00
- Twentieth Century Decoration: The Domestic
Interior from 1900 to the Present Day
by Stephen Calloway
Weidenfeld and Nicholson, £50.00
- When the Music's Over by Robin Denselow
Faber, £14.99
- Midwives and Medical Men by Jean Donnison
Historical Publications, £9.95
- English Children and their Magazines, 1751-1445
by Kirsten Drotne
Yale University Press, £16.95
- Wet Nursing: A history from Antiquity to the
Present
by Valerie Fildes
Blackwell, £19.50
- East End 1888: A year in a London Borough among
the Labouring Poor
by W.J. Fishman
Duckworth, £18.95
- English Football and Society, 1910-1950
by Nicholas Fishwick
Manchester University Press £25.00
- Comics at War by Derek Gifford
Hawk Books, £12.95
- Communities: Essays in the Social History of
Victorian Wales
by Ieuan Gwynedd Jones
Gomer, £14.95
- Sport, Politics and the Working Class
by Stephen Jones
Manchester, £25.00
- 1914-1918: Voices and images of the Great War
by Lynn MacDonald, Michael Joseph, £15.95
- Heaven: A History
by Collen MacDannell and Bernhard Lang
Yale, £16.95
- Beauty in History by Arthur Marwick
Thames and Hudson, £18.95
- Body Styles by Ted Polhemus
Lennard, £14.94
- England's Pleasant Land by Anthony Rosen
Quiller, £14.95
- Singer, Song and Scholar, ed. Ian Russell
Sheffield Academic Press £8.95
- Rebel Rock: The Politics of Popular Music
by John Street
Blackwell, £6.95

Viz: The Big Pink Stiff One
John Brown Publishing, £5.95

Entertaining Eric: Letters from the Home Front,
1941-1944 by Maureen Wells
£12.95

No Time to Wave Goodbye: True stories of
Britain's evacuees by Ben Wicks
£13.95

The experience of World War I by J.M. Winter
MacMillan, £17.95

Paradise Lost by Christopher Wood
Barrie and Jenkins, £19.95



COMING EVENTS

27 APRIL 1989
WORKING IN THE POTTERY INDUSTRY
Study day led by Dr Jacqueline Sarsby at the City
Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent.

16 MAY 1989
LEATHER
SHCG Seminar at Walsall's Leather Centre.

19 JUNE 1989
EDUCATION IN MUSEUMS : THE WAY FORWARD
North West Federation of Museums and Galleries
Seminar at Lyme Park, Stockport.

6 - 9 JULY 1989
POPULAR CULTURE
SHCG's Annual Study Weekend, Glasgow (see
enclosed booking form).

EXHIBITIONS

BRAVE ARCHITECTURE
22 April - 25 June 1989
Birmingham City Museum
An exhibition celebrating Birmingham's Victorian
architecture. Includes architectural and
topographical drawings, photographs and
architectural medals.

A CELEBRATION OF BRITISH FOOD AND FARMING
6 May - 24 July 1989
Bass Museum of Brewing, Burton-upon-Trent

100 STEPS FORWARD
12 May - 31 December 1989
Birmingham City Museum
A centenary exhibition in the Local History
Gallery, which aims to capture the spirit of the
city's first century with objects and displays
highlighting the significant events of each
year.