

City and County of Swansea
Dinas A Sir Abertawe
and
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Castell-Nedd Port Talbot

West Glamorgan Archives Committee - 13 September 2024

Report of the County Archivist

**The purpose of this report is to
outline the work of the
Archive Service during the period
March to August 2024**

1 Use of the Service

Statistics for March to August 2024

The number of members of public using the Service on-site, March to August 2024, was **1,517** and the total number reached by the Service on and off-site was also **1,624**.

Number of on-site visits at Swansea and Neath: 1,517 (1,171) (figures in brackets represent totals for the same two quarters last year), comprising:

| | | |
|---|---------|-----------|
| Swansea | 903 | (848) |
| Neath | 378 | (74) |
| Group visits | 236 | (249) |
| Number in audiences for off-site visits | 107 | (263) |
| Number of pupils reached by the Education Service | 108 | (414) |
| Numbers reached at special events (including exhibitions) | 0 | (0) |
| Total numbers reached on and off-site | 1,624 | (1,436) |
| Number of documents issued in Swansea | 5,191 | (3,036) |
| Number of documents issued in Neath | 240 | (155) |
| Number of post and email enquiries dealt with | 1,054 | (1,204) |
| Number of hits to the Archive Service website | 2,158 | (2,833) |
| Number of hits to the online catalogue | 1,253 | (1,120) |
| Number of hits to WGAS catalogues on Archives Hub | n/a | (34,747) |
| Number of hits to NAS catalogues on Archives Hub | n/a | (1,916) |
| Number of page views on Ancestry | 133,648 | (211,574) |

2. Talks and seminars

Service to schools

Archives staff members Emma Laycock and Ffion Kidwell have delivered education sessions to the following schools during the past two quarters:

- St Helen's School
- Ffynone School (two sessions)
- Pentrehafod School (two sessions)

The Service has also continued its involvement in a collaborative group with the Teacher Education department at Swansea University, Richard Burton Archives, South Wales Miners Library and Partneriaeth to help produce archival resource packs for teachers. Meetings of the group have continued to take place during the reporting period.

Seminars for university students

Andrew Dulley delivered sessions to the following university seminar groups:
Swansea University geography undergraduate students
UWTSD Film and TV undergraduate students

Talks to groups

Talks were also delivered to the following groups during the quarter by Andrew Dulley and Emma Laycock:

- Renew Mind Group
- Pantygwydr Baptist Church men's group
- Penrice Church heritage group
- Congolese Development Partnership
- Church in Wales Ministry Area administrators
- Rich History project

The Archive Service continues to deliver a monthly session for the Glamorgan Family History Society, Swansea Branch.

On 22 July the Archive Service assisted the Royal Institution of South Wales by hosting the launch of *Swansea History Journal (Minerva)*, vol. 32 in the searchroom.

3. Other publicity and joint working

The service published its *Annual Report of the County Archivist*, which is available digitally on the Archive Service website at <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/countyarchivistannualreport>. As well as reporting on the activities of the service during the year, there are articles by members of staff on Aberafan's fourteenth century charter, the Morryston Orpheus Choir archive, records of the Neath Philosophical Society and Neath's first museum, the project to digitise glass slides (reported under item 5 below), Swansea's Isolation Hospital, and a retrospective on the 40th anniversary of the Miners' Strike. There are also articles by external writers on Ethel Street, Melincryddan and the Swansea Hebrew Congregation.

In August a flurry of media interest was generated by the delivery of a postcard, originally posted in 1903, to the Swansea Building Society in Craddock Street. The Archive Service was contacted for assistance in providing historical contextual information and as a result the County Archivist was interviewed on camera by both BBC Breakfast and BBC Wales. Serendipitous and unexpected, this gave the service a chance to demonstrate how history can bring people together.

An online exhibition is planned for the autumn, relating to the Aberafan Borough Charter of c. 1306, which is held at the Archive Service. It will incorporate a new translation and transcription of the text to enable it to be studied, and it will tell the unique story of how the charter came to be written and what happened to it subsequently.

4. The Archives online catalogue

It was reported at the last meeting that the Archive Service catalogue had stopped working and that work was ongoing to find a solution. After lengthy discussions with the supplier and Swansea Council's IT Department, it was decided to switch to another product called Epexio, which is used (amongst others) by Glamorgan Archives. From the user's point of view, there are many benefits to this product; for example, it supports multi-level searching, and a Google search will turn up results from the catalogue, neither of which the old catalogue system could do. While working with Glamorgan Archives, the system developers also created a bilingual Welsh/English interface, which was not a feature of the old system. The purchase of Epexio has some budget implications and provision has been made for this.

We reported in mitigation that all the Archive Service catalogues are also available on the Archives Hub, which has enabled them to be available while the main catalogue is not working. This situation will continue after the purchase of Epexio in order to make the catalogues as widely available as possible.

5. The digitisation of glass slides

The Archive Service holds a large number of glass positive and negative slides, most of which are not listed. There are many issues connected with handling them and with making them available in their original form, so it was decided to have them sent away for professional scanning. 50% grant funding was acquired from Welsh Government to make this possible. The slides are being digitised by a commercial supplier, TownsWeb Archiving, and the first consignment of digital images was sent to us in July. These include hundreds of images of pre-improvement or demolition work in Swansea, taken in the period 1930-1948, a period of extensive dereliction, slum clearance and change to the townscape. Although previously uncatalogued, these are mostly readily identifiable and will be catalogued progressively as time permits. The intention is to make them the subject of an online exhibition once they are catalogued.

6. Staff

There have been significant changes to the staff during the past two quarters. The staff complement is currently 6.6 full time equivalent with one full-time vacancy.

Kim Collis retired as County Archivist in June, having held the post for a little under 20 years. He first joined the service back in 1992, serving first as Senior Archivist then as Principal Archivist, before succeeding Susan Beckley as County Archivist on 16 August 2004. His contribution has been immense: planning the new searchrooms for the Civic Centre Project in 2006-7, masterminding the reader's ticket system, gaining UNESCO recognition for the Neath Abbey Ironworks collection, overseeing the achievement of accredited status, guiding the move towards digital preservation and high-level planning for the removal to Y Storfa. He sought constantly to apply examples of best practice observed in record offices around the country. A man of integrity and principle, he was a moderniser who managed to advance and develop the Archive Service in the face of austerity and dwindling resources.

Kim's successor as County Archivist is Andrew Dulley, formerly Assistant County Archivist, who has been part of the service in several capacities (Archivist, Principal Archivist and Assistant County Archivist) since 1995. This leaves a corresponding vacancy, which we hope will be filled soon.

The post of Archivist, vacant since the departure of Katie Millien at the end of January, was filled in May: a fluent Welsh speaker, Lowri Jenkins came to us with many years' experience

working as an archivist at the National Museum of Wales and at the Museum of Welsh Life in St Fagans.

Bethany Amos finished her time as Archive Trainee at the end of August to take a well-deserved place on Liverpool University's archive course. Her time at the Archive Service has been very productive, in particular her work in preparing digital archives for ingest into the digital repository when the time comes.

The newly-appointed Archive Trainee is Lily Britton, a recent History graduate from Aberystwyth University, who starts in the second week of September.

7. Professional meetings and training

Archives staff have attended the following training courses in the past half-year (all online):

'Document handling and integrated pest management'

'Planning a Change of Archival Storage'

'Recruitment and Selection'

'Autism Awareness'

'Understanding effective communication and Autism'

Archives staff have attended the following working groups during the reporting period (all meetings online):

Welsh Digital Preservation Consortium

Archives and Records Council Wales Marketing Group

8. Joint working

The Archive Service has formed a co-operative partnership with staff at Swansea Museum in a project to discover, collate and promote records and artefacts relating to the LGBTQIA+ community in Swansea. The project is the subject of a funding bid led by Swansea Museum and it is intended that it will result in an oral history reminiscence project.

The Archive Service continues to work with the Rich History Project, based in Port Talbot. During the past half-year we have assisted with sources on the history of Mynydd Dinas and information relating to the Aberafan Charter.

The County Archivist has been part of discussions about the feasibility of a museum in Neath Port Talbot and has explored options with the NPT Heritage Officer regarding the keeping of documents that form part of the former Neath Museum's collections.

9. Accessions of archive collections

A comprehensive list of archives received during the period March to August 2024 is attached at Appendix 1.

Contact Officer: Andrew Dulley, County Archivist

Tel: 01792 636589

Email: andrew.dulley@swansea.gov.uk

ACCESSIONS OF ARCHIVES
March-August 2024

| <i>Creator/originator</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Dates</i> | <i>Extent</i> | <i>Reference number</i> |
|----------------------------------|--|---------------------|----------------------|---|
| Swansea Valley History Society | Diary and training notes of a Pontardawe policeman (unidentified); school project work book of Mervyn Williams | 1944-1950s | 2 items | |
| Private Donation | Books, ledgers and papers relating to chapels in the Swansea and Neath area, including Bethlehem Green, Neath; Bethel, Melincryddan; Tabor, Grovesend; Bethel, Penyrheol, Gorseinon; Tabernacl, Landore, and Nazareth, Morriston; also for three outside the West Glamorgan area | 1893-1968 | 1 carload (4 crates) | D/D CM 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37; D/D CM GM. |
| Welsh Baptist Union | Records of the following chapels: Adulam, Bonymaen; Seion Noddfa, Gorseinon; Nantylffin, Penycae; Ebeneser, Cwmtwrch Uchaf; Addoldy, Glynneath | 19th-20th cent. | 1 crate | D/D W/Bap 46/5/1-46/7/2; D/D W/Bap 47; D/D W/Bap 48/1/1-2 |
| Private Donation | Illuminated address to Howard Corbett upon his leaving his position as Managing Editor of the Cambria Daily Leader, Sporting News and Herald of Wales, signed by staff members. | 1913 | 1 item | D/D Z 1188 |
| The Derek Gabriel Collection | Photographs, slides, publications and ephemera relating to the Swansea area. Includes material from Swansea bus museum, photographs from Derek's National Service in Aden and Nairobi and general photographs of Swansea. 1940s-2010s | 20th Century | 3 archive boxes | D/D DG |
| Private Donation | Documents relating to the history of Belle Vue House West Cross, including transfer deed and photograph of house | c. 1953-2000 | 1 bundle | |
| Private Donation | Legal document regarding a bond (loan) between Nicholls Company and the Provident Association. The Solicitors dealing with the case were John Leeder Viner of 102, Oxford Street Swansea | 11th June 1894 | 1 item | D/D Z 1189/1 |

| Creator/originator | Description | Dates | Extent | Reference number |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Private donation | Papers and ephemera of Bob Cotterrill relating to his life as a DVLA employee and CPSA trade union branch secretary and committee member. | 1970s-2000s | 10 boxes | |
| Private donation | Photograph of the War Damage Commission, Swansea Technical Staff, including names and some signatures | 1 Dec. 1945 | 1 photograph | |
| Private donation | Collection of printed material relating to Neath, Pontardawe and the Dulais Valley | 20th century | 1 bundle | |
| High Sheriff of West Glamorgan | Declaration and warrant of Mrs. Melanie James JP as High Sheriff of West Glamorgan | March 2024 | 4 papers | H/S W 51/1-4 |
| Private donation | The Transactions of the Aberafan and Margam District Historical Society vol. 1 part 1 | 1924 | 1 vol. | Searchroom library |
| Private donation | Illuminated address to Jesse Lake from the Swansea Lodge of the Institute of the Order of Oddfellows. | 1913 | 1 item | |
| Private donation | Records relating to Griffith John and links with China, publications relating to the West Glamorgan area and postcards of Neath and Gower | 20th cent. | 1 box | Searchroom library; |
| Llangyfelach Parish | Records relating to church premises and property; paperwork concerning proposed Mynyddbach Common burial ground, 1893; Terrier and Inventory for the parish of Llangyfelach, 1900-1901; tithes, 1887-1926; charities. | | 3 volumes and 1 bundle | |
| Clydach Parish | St. Marys' Church baptisms, 1982-2014 and St. John the Baptist Church inventory, 2003. | 1982-2014 | 1 volume and 1 file | P/302/CW/98, 100 |
| Private donation | Photograph of John John of Swansea with his motorbike, and background information about him | c. 1920 | 1 photo, 1 paper | D/D Z 922 |
| Llanrhidian Higher Community Council | Minutes | April 2024 | 1 file | |
| Swansea Reference Library | Various published and bound volumes removed from the Reference Library | 1935-2006 | 7 vols | SL PC 13/1-14/4 |

| Creator/originator | Description | Dates | Extent | Reference number |
|-------------------------------|--|------------------|--|---|
| Items relating to Port Talbot | Various brochures, programmes and pictures relating mainly to Port Talbot | 24/04/2024 | 1 bundle | |
| Parish of Clydach | St Michael's, Trebannos, banns and service registers | 1936-2020 | 2 vols | P/302/CW/96-97 |
| Cwmafan Infant School | Log books, admission registers, cookery log books and other records | 1909-2012 | 1 crate | E/PT 7/1/7-8, 7/2/14-17, 7/3/1-8; 7/4/1-4 |
| Private donation | Various brochures, programmes and pictures, mainly relating to Port Talbot | Mid-20th century | 1 bundle | |
| Private donation | Crew agreement for the ship <i>Mary Ann Mandall</i> for a voyage ending in Swansea | 1873 | 1 paper | |
| Clive Reed Collection | Research notes on Tareni Colliery; slides of the Pontardawe area, Swansea Canal, Morrision Pottery and RAFA parade at Neath; sketches of Swansea Canal by D. R. Davies; other publications, leaflets and slides relating to the history of the Pontardawe area and Swansea Canal | 1960s-2024 | 1 crate | |
| Oral history collection | Recording by Andrew Dulley with Cllr. Richard Lewis regarding memories of American GIs in the build-up to D-Day at his childhood home at Horton | 23 Apr. 2024 | 1 DVD-ROM containing files in WAV and MP3 format (1.16 GB) | T 35/2 |
| Parish of Clydach | St Mary's, Clydach, service register | 1997-2008 | 1 vol. | P/302/CW/99 |
| Parish of Llangiwg | Marriages | 2008-2019 | 1 vol. | P/59/CW/120 |
| British Home Stores | Photographs and archive relating to British Home Stores, Swansea and the Cavalier Club covering the period 1950's to 2010. | 1950 - 2010 | 1 bag | |
| Private donation | Heritage impact assessments in relation to work done to the fountains at Singleton Abbey | 2024 | 3 booklets | |
| Collection of Letters | Collection of Letters and telegrams sent to Michael Roland Godfrey Llewlyn to his parents while fighting in Italy during the Second World War | 1942 | 2 boxes | |
| Lease Documents | Lease and Mortgage documents relating to Bryngurnos Street, Bryn, Port Talbot. | 1902 - 1915 | 4 documents | |

| Creator/originator | Description | Dates | Extent | Reference number |
|--|--|----------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| Pre-registration Title Deeds | Pre-registration title deeds of properties in Swansea and Pontyclun, believed to be past clients of Messrs Strick & Bellingham Solicitors and now registered at H.M. Land Registry | 1920 - 1990 | 1 bag | |
| Collection of Programmes and Photographs | Collection of programmes and photographs relating to music in Swansea during the 19th and 20th centuries. | 1912 - 1969 | 1 Folder | D/D Z 1203 |
| Powys Archives | Various programmes and pamphlets: Mother Goose at Swansea Grand Theatre, c1960s; King's Rhapsody and Cinderella at the Empire Theatre, Swansea, c1960s; Swansea City Football Club matchday programmes versus Stoke City, 1962 and Cardiff City, 1970; and Tywysydd y Plant, 1961 and c. 1962. | 1960s-1970 | 7 booklets | D/D Z 12/7-11 |
| Private donation | Photograph of ministers and elders of Argyle Calvinistic Methodist Church, Swansea (named) | c. 1973 | 1 photograph | D/D MOC 15/10/6 |
| Glan Afan Grammar School, Port Talbot | Photographs of the junior school choir and staff hockey team (facsimiles), with names | 1960-1961 | 2 photographs | |
| Godre'rgraig School | Log books, admission registers, stock book, teachers' registers and photographs | c. 1900s-2000s | 1 box | |
| Morrison Orpheus Choir | Hard bound copy of Andrew Keith Roberts MA essay entitled "Music, Place and Identity: The Morrison Orpheus Choir, 1935-1985" submitted 14/09/2020 | 2020 | 1 volume | |

| Creator/originator | Description | Dates | Extent | Reference number |
|---|--|---------------------|---------------------|--|
| Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council | Electoral register, 2023; Council diaries 1996-2012; minutes of annual meetings of the council 1995-2011 (including programmes for inaugurations of mayors 1996-2012); declarations of acceptance of office of Port Talbot Borough Council 1927-1974, Afan (later Port Talbot) District Council 1974-1995, Glyncoerwg Urban District Council 1941-1973 and Glyncoerwg Community Council 1974-1992; public access to information and committee reports, May 1997; residents' guides to councillors, 1995-1999 and 2002-2005 | 1927-2023 | 2 boxes | P/72/12/1; CB/NPT CC 22/1-18; CB/NPT CE 3/8-16; DC/PT 61/1-3; B/PT 351-356; UD/GI 96-97. |
| Private donation | Swansea Grammar School magazines | 1943-1948 | 1 bundle | |
| Attendance Records | Attendance records of Tregŵyr Infants School, 1993 and Tregŵyr Junior School, 1996 (possibly class 4) | 19/01/2024 | 1 register | |
| Private donation | Further records relating to the Thomas estate and attempts to recover it | 19th-20th century | 1 folder | |
| Private donation | Various theatre programmes for performances held at Swansea Grand Theatre and Dylan Thomas Theatre. Includes performances by the Welsh National Opera and Swansea Little Theatre. Includes programme for "Brenda A Star is Torn" with Ceri Dupree and The Gobstoppers. | 1980s-1990s | 1 bundle | |
| Ledgers and Deeds | Ledgers and Deeds relating to the Eaglesbush Estate | 19th - 20th century | 3 boxes | |
| Collections of Photographs relating to Ystalyfera | Collections of Photographs relating to Ystalyfera | 1930 - 1980 | 3 collections | |
| Private deposit | Account book of the Soroptimist International Port Talbot Branch. | 1977-2023 | 4 volumes | D/D SIPT 2 |
| Private donation | Theatre programmes from the Empire Theatre, Swansea Grand Theatre, Brangwyn Hall and some Swansea churches | 1948-2011 | Half a standard box | D/D Z 1197 |
| Private donation | Deeds of indenture relating to Llangiwg parish. | 1598, 1640 | 2 items | |

| Creator/originator | Description | Dates | Extent | Reference number |
|---|--|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Private donation | Photocopies of papers relating to the restoration of Llansamlet Church, 1877; hymn sheets from St. Thomas Church Independent Order of Rechabites, Swansea Juvenile District, 1928-1934 along with notes on the Swansea Juvenile Branch, written c2024; and booklet of newspaper cuttings on William Talbot Rice. | 1877-2024 | 1 envelope | |
| Collection of items relating to Tony Small | Programmes, Posters and paperwork relating to Penclawdd Youth Band and West Glamorgan Youth Orchestra and their conductor Tony Small. | 1970s - 2020s | 3 boxes | |
| Staff magazine | Staff magazine produced for the company ICI | 1951 | 1 magazine | |
| Digital archives of the Llansamlet Historical Society | Photographs, graveyard surveys and family history records collected by the Llansamlet Historical Society | 19th - 20th century | 1 USB | |
| Clive Reed Collection | Collection of papers and photographs relating to the Ynyscedwyn Iron Works | 19th - 20th century | 1 file | |
| Private donation | Pre-registration title deeds of no. 907 Llangyfelach Road, Tirdeunaw, Swansea | 1873-1993 | 1 folder | |
| Lord Mayor of Swansea | Visitors' books for the Lord Mayor's Parlour | 1993-2011 | 3 vols | |
| Private donation | Two deeds of a house in Treboeth, 1911, and Clyne and Parc le Breos Estate sales catalogue 1950 | 1911-1950 | 2 deeds, 1 vol. | D/D Z 1199/1-3 |
| Parish of Clydach | Annual reports, parish magazines, PCC minutes and fabric reports | 2008-2016 | 1 bundle | P/302/CW/ |
| Morrison Methodist Church | Marriage and baptism registers | 1963-2016 | 6 vols | |
| Bethel Calvinistic Methodist Church, Llangyfelach | Annual reports and Sunday School accounts and minute book; also burial registers loaned for copying. | 1913-2022 | 1 bundle | |
| Images of Tabor Baptist Chapel and Vestry, Cwmafan | Photographs and paintings of Tabor Baptist Chapel, Cwmafan. The chapel was used in the film <i>How Green Was My Valley</i> and has now been demolished. | 20th Century | 5 images | |

| Creator/originator | Description | Dates | Extent | Reference number |
|---|---|--------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| John Evan Muxworthy collection | Collection of photographs of Swansea illustrating changes to the cityscape | 1980s-2010s | 1 box | |
| Royal Institution of South Wales | Minutes of the Council, newsletters, programmes and annual reports | 2015-2024 | 1 bagful | |
| Parish of Sketty | File relating to 'Threads of Eternity' exhibition put on in the church by St Paul's Sewing Group | 2007 | 1 file | |
| Collection of items relating to GIs stationed at Swansea during World War 2 | Photographs and letters relating to GIs in Swansea during World War 2 | 1940s | 1 bundle | |
| Tabernacl Welsh Independent Church, Cwmgors | Photograph of John Griffiths, Brynsiriol, church secretary | 1930 | 1 photograph | D/D Ind 52/2/1a-b |
| The Old Dy'vorians Association | The Dy'vorian, no. 45 | Summer 2024 | 1 booklet | |
| Swansea Reference Library | Various planning reports: Census of Woodlands and Trees, 1979-1982; Hedgerow Survey, 1994; Lowland Heathland in Wales, 1993-2002; draft Felindre Conservation Envelope Management Plan, 2000 and Lougher and North Gower Action Plan, 1997. | 1979-2000 | 5 volumes | |
| Postcard | Postcard sent by Ewart Davies to Lydia Davies of 11 Cradock Street, Swansea, and subsequently redelivered to Swansea Building Society in 2024 | 1903 | 1 card | D/D Z 1205/1 |
| Minute Book and attendance book | Minute Book and attendance book of Gwaun Cae Gurwen Labour Party, 1975 - 2023 | 1975-2023 | 2 books | |