

The Bulletin

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Cambridgeshire
Association for
Local
History



The Bulletin is your chance to catch-up on all the latest news and events relating to Local & Social History world in Cambridgeshire

Dear All

Autumn 2009

Welcome to the latest edition of **The Bulletin**, the Newsletter of the **Cambridgeshire Association for Local History**. If there is a person out there, who would like to be editor of this newsletter, so that it can be published on a more frequent basis, we would love to hear from you.

CONDUIT 2009:

You will find enclosed a copy of this year's Conduit. In 2009, the initial collection of the data to complete this began in the usual way. With as far as we knew our secretary due to edit and produce the revitalised Conduit as normal. Suddenly, completely out of the blue in August, we were told in no uncertain terms that the Conduit was a Cambridge Antiquarian Society document and that the CALH would no longer have any editorial input. Therefore, the CALH accepts no responsibility for the numerous group name and content errors that you have all been reporting.

This is such a pity as for over 47 issues in various guises the Conduit has been published each autumn at the start of the new lecture season, jointly by the Cambridgeshire Association for Local History and the Cambridge Antiquarian Society. This is a sad end to a very successful partnership. Everyone at the Cambridgeshire Association for Local History wishes CAS well for the future.

However, it does allow the Cambridgeshire Association for Local History to develop its own comprehensive Gazetteer of the lecture programmes, up to date contact details and aims and objectives of the vast majority of the History based organisations in Cambridgeshire, plus for the first time a comprehensive Cambridgeshire Speakers List.

PREVIEW 2010:

Since its foundation in 1951 CALH has published a regular journal with articles on a wide range of Cambridgeshire topics, people, buildings, and village histories contributed by members and others. In 1992 the name was changed from the Bulletin to the **REVIEW**. The Review is published annually in the autumn.



What could be more natural than our new annual look forward to the future should be called the **PREVIEW**. In the new logo, the crest on the side comes from the county arms and represents the many rivers and manmade waterways in the county. For this year, as we were committed to purchasing the Conduit for our membership the Preview is available online with each history based group having its own

downloadable programme and details.

The Preview will be an invaluable publication for all those interested in Archaeology, Community Archives, Local, Social, and Family History.

Also on the same webpage we are experimenting with our new speakers list and the best way to publish this as a document is still to be decided. This will also become a great boon to all the hard pressed society secretaries trying to find a speaker for their society and it will allow the speakers more exposure to the societies to be hired. www.calh.org.uk/preview.htm

If your society or group is not listed or featured in this edition of the Preview, please contact the CALH Secretary, so that you can be registered for the next edition's mailing list.

For more info: info@calh.org.uk or 01223 892430

CAMBRIDGESHIRE COLLECTION:

At long last the Cambridgeshire Collection and the Cambridge Central Library will reopen on September 29th. Everyone at CALH & CCAN wishes them well.

AEROFILMS COLLECTION:

At the end of the First World War, Francis Lewis Wills was demobbed from his wartime role as an observer in the RN air service. During the war he had gained a lot of experience of taking aerial photographs and could equally see a huge developing need for such aerial photographs during peace time. He met up with a great wartime pal called Claude Friese-Greene, he is the first British pilot to have a licence to fly, although for technical reasons the number on his British licence is 6 and his French one is 30. After gaining his licence he went out and bought a Bleriot monoplane and raced in air races such as the Gordon Bennett Cup and the Statue of Liberty air race in the USA.

In July 1919, they set up the Aerofilms Ltd and over the years the company went from strength to strength. However, by 2006 the company was in trouble it had over a million images in various states of preservation, some on glass plates, many just as negatives (80%) and the actual 300,000 prints stuck in photo albums, with very little cataloguing at all.

English Heritage, in partnership with the Royal Commissions on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland and Wales, acquired the Aerofilms Collection of historical air photographs from Blom ASA in June 2007 for £246,750. The purchase was made possible by generous financial support from English Heritage's donors and supporters, the National Heritage Memorial Fund and the Friends of National Libraries.

The collection of over 1,000,000 images is the best and most significant body of oblique aerial photographs of the UK that remained in private hands. Dating from 1919 to 2006, it presents an unparalleled picture of the changing face of Britain in the twentieth-century. Almost every British settlement, industry, and environment is included. It is also the only major source of air photographs pre-dating World War II.

The prints, negatives, and associated documentation have been transferred to specialist archival storage but we have a lot of work to do before we can provide full access to the collection. Around 80% of the images are negatives with no photographic prints for researchers to view. We need to conserve these fragile negatives before we can scan them to make an image that people can look at. The collection is also un-catalogued which makes it very hard to find images for researchers.

The collection covers the countryside, industrial and urban landscapes, archaeological sites, and historic buildings and charts the growth of new towns and the spread of motorways across the landscape. Almost every community is represented, many with a series of views taken over the decades showing how cities, towns and villages have changed and grown.

English Heritage and its partners have begun planning for the comprehensive cataloguing, conservation and digitisation of the collection. The transfer and initial sorting of the archive will take some months, and as soon as access to the photographs can be provided details will be placed on the EH website.

It has been decided through English Heritage and its partners including very close liaison work with the Cambridgeshire Association for Local History and its associate member group Cambridgeshire Community Archive Network (www.ccan.co.uk) to hold a phase 2 Heritage Lottery Fund series of meetings. Our area meeting was held in Huntingdon on 24th September, this was attended by over 30 local experts from all disciplines such as archaeology, local, social, & family historians, architecture and landscape experts. It was a hugely successful meeting with many new ideas discussed to drive the project forward

It has been decided that if the HLF bid is successful that a good proportion of the collection should be made accessible to the general public online. The bid specifies around 95k images. Before this can be easily accessible the images will need to be catalogued and have a great deal of local information added. The exact mechanics of how this will be done have not fully been worked out yet.

However, the Cambridgeshire Association for Local History and the Cambridgeshire Community Archive Network will continue to work closely with English Heritage on the way forward and we all hope when the appropriate moment comes that all local groups will become involved in the cataloguing work.

EMAIL HISTORY NEWS NETWORK:

If you would like to be sent these history news emails, please send a short message to info@calh.org.uk

For more info: info@calh.org.uk or 01223 892430