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MODERN TIMES

THE INFLUENCE OF TECHNOLOGY ON THE HISTORY OF FAMILY AND PLACE

The National Archives
26 September 2015
10:00am – 4:00pm

Co-hosted by:

Friends of The National Archives
East Surrey Family History Society
London Historians
Richmond Local History Society

PROGRAMME

09:30am – 10:00am

Registration and Tea/Coffee

10:00am – 10:10am

Welcome and Introduction

Dr Tony Wakeford, Friends of The National Archives

10:10am – 10:25am

From Rat to Robot: an introduction to The National Archives

Caroline Ottaway-Searle - Director of Public Engagement, TNA

10:25am – 11:25

Stagecoaches

David Thomas- Visiting Professor at Northumbria University

11:25am – 11:35am

Comfort break

11:35am – 12:35pm

Board of Trade Registers

Julie Halls - records specialist for registered designs, Advice and Records Knowledge Department, TNA

12:35pm – 1:35pm

Lunch

1:35pm – 1:40pm

Afternoon session Introduction

1:40pm – 2:40pm

Bat Boat to Red Arrows

David Hassard – Kingston Aviation Heritage Project

2:40pm – 3:00pm Tea/Coffee

3:00pm – 4:00pm

Making History Online

Tim Hitchcock - Professor Of Digital History, University of Sussex

4:00pm

Conclusion

Dr Tony Wakeford

SYNOPSIS OF TALKS

Stagecoaches - David Thomas

For over 150 years, stage coaches thundered through High Wycombe carrying passengers, mail and sometimes more exotic goods, such as live turtles and fresh mussels from London to Oxford, Birmingham, Shrewsbury and into Wales.

We all have a picture in our heads of what the old stage coaches were like – a picture we have perhaps made up from a combination of Mr Pickwick, Tom Brown's Schooldays and Jane Austen. To this we have added our images of Dick Turpin, post horns and old prints showing blazing fires and buxom serving wenches in comfortable and quaint old coaching inns.

But what were the coaches and the coaching inns really like? Were they the romantic carriages of our dreams or were they noisy, verminous and uncomfortable? Were the inns the epitome of English hospitality or were they the motorway service areas of their day?

Board of Trade Registers - Julie Halls

In an era when Britain led the world in technological innovation – steam trains, the telegraph and electricity changed society for ever – a host of lesser inventors were also hard at work. Registering designs for copyright was quicker and cheaper than using the convoluted patent process, and anyone with what they thought was a good idea could register a design. Ingenious minds came up with all manner of bizarre curiosities, careful drawings of which were lodged with the Designs Registry. These are now held by The National Archives, and include such gems as a ventilating top hat; artificial leeches; an aerial flying machine for exploring the Arctic regions; a tennis racket with ball-picker; and a hair-brushing machine. The talk will look at the world of lesser-known Victorian inventions and the historical context which gave rise to them.

Bat Boat to Red Arrows - David Hassard

Focussed on the history of the aviation industry in Kingston upon Thames from 1912 to 1992 and the people who made it all possible, this heavily illustrated talk follows the technological developments of military combat aircraft from the earliest Sopwith float-planes and fighting scouts to the Hawker Harrier Jump Jet and the Hawk combat trainers still used by the Red Arrows display team.

Making History Online - Tim Hitchcock

In the last fifteen years the availability of online resources has transformed how we research and write history. Eighteenth and nineteenth-century Britain are now the most 'digitised' where and when in the world. This talk explores how recent innovations in search, analysis and in the crowdsourcing and the co-creation of research materials, have effectively reconfigured the relationship between academic history writing and the wider world of interested readers, and independent writers of history.