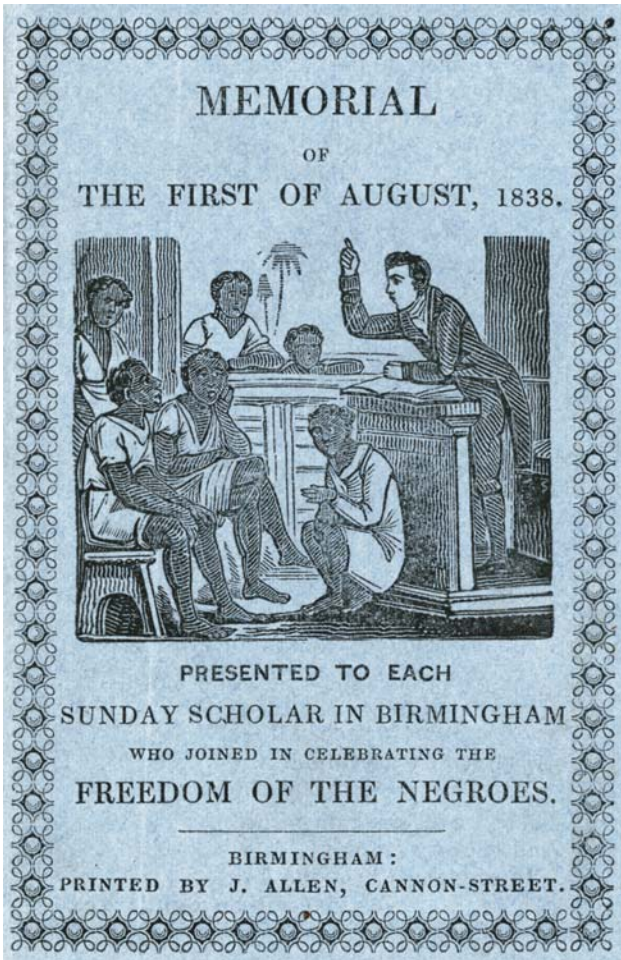


New Project: A Shared History



Memorial of 1838 [City Archives: 158748/11R62]

Slavery: A Shared History, A Shared Future is part of Birmingham Libraries and Archives' activities marking 200 years since the passing of the act to abolish the slave trade in the British Empire in 1807. Unfortunately it did not signal the end of exploitation of people for the purpose of cheap labour and this project explores the ways in which slavery and indentured labour operated, drawing comparisons across the ages, right up to present day practice and its effects. The project hopes to engage children, young people, families, community groups and individuals, highlighting cross-cultural servitude and the history of Birmingham's involvement, through a series of community-based workshops in libraries, schools and other venues across Birmingham.

As part of the project there will be a re-enactment of the march of 1st August 1838 when Joseph Sturge led a group of schoolchildren from Birmingham Town Hall to Heneage Street to lay the foundation stone for the Emancipation School, an event commemorated in the memorial document shown on the left. Later in the year there will also be a community-led performance in Birmingham, as a high profile centre-piece aimed at promoting a wider understanding of slavery, local heritage and community cohesion.

This project is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and is part of the **Breaking the Chains** programme of activities in the West Midlands. For further details please phone Marcus Belben on 0121 303 4620 or email Marcus.Belben@birmingham.gov.uk

New Publication: A Great Day

On March 16th the St Patrick's Festival group launched their new publication **A Great Day: Celebrating St. Patrick's Day in Birmingham** by Gudrun Limbrick. Supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund the book traces the history of St Patrick's Day celebrations in Birmingham from its early beginnings in the 19th century. The publication is illustrated with lots of photographs and oral histories recalling people's memories of the day. Copies are available to consult in all city libraries and the book can be bought from Minstrel Music in the Irish Club in Digbeth for £5.00. For further information phone 0121 622 3763.



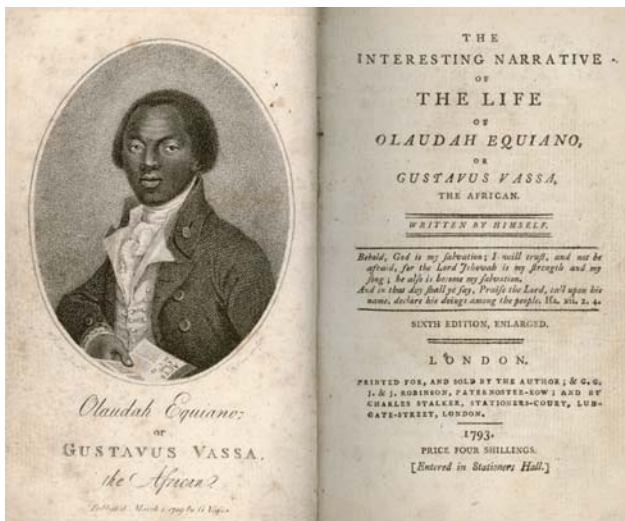
St Patricks Day, 2006, from one of our online Photographic Exhibitions
Photo: Brigitte Winsor



CONNECTING HISTORIES

Website in Focus

City Stories



Equiano's autobiography, 1793 [Local Studies: 18th Century Collection]

The **Exhibitions** section on our website includes a number of displays of photographs and documents. Here we feature two from **City Stories**. Other titles include **The Joseph Sturge Monument, Church and Community**, and **Proud History**.

Equiano and Birmingham

In the recent activities to mark the Bicentenary of the Parliamentary abolition of the Slave Trade the name of Olaudah Equiano has received a good deal of attention. Equiano visited Birmingham in 1790 to promote his recently published autobiography and in this online exhibition you will find sources which throw light on his visit and the people he met here, many of whom subscribed to his book. Equiano will be the subject of a large exhibition at Birmingham Museum in the autumn. Information about other black abolitionists in Birmingham can be found in **Campaigning for Social Justice** in the website's **Learning** pages.



Flyer, Birmingham coach to Grunwick Picket, 1977 [City Archives: MS 1591]

Birmingham and the Grunwick Dispute

'Grunwick' was an industrial dispute centred on Cricklewood, north London in 1976-78 but which had national significance. Political and campaign groups from around Britain rallied to the support of the London strikers and this exhibition focuses on the reaction of the labour movement in Birmingham. Explore the documents from the archive to see some of the groups that were active in Birmingham at the time and the part that they played in supporting the Grunwick workers.

Web News: New Learning Packages

Two new online learning resources **Archives as Social Knowledge** and **Migration and Settlement** have gone live in the last couple of weeks.



Photograph from one of Helen Caddick's travel diaries (Cuba, 1901) used in 'Archives as Social Knowledge' [City Archives: MS 908]

Archives as Social Knowledge

Written by Dr Bob Carter of the Department of Sociology at the University of Warwick this package provides an introduction for social science researchers and sociology students to the use of archives. This learning resource is structured in three parts:

Sources introduces users to a diverse range of archival materials from Central Library's collections (from flyers and play bills to photographs and burial registers) and considers some of the issues facing researchers using them as sources of knowledge about the social world.

A Case Study of Civil Dissent in Birmingham uses archive materials about events in Handsworth in 1985 and the Priestley Riots of 1791 to explore contemporary concerns about social order. As with the first part of the resource, the emphasis is on using archives as a tool for social research, rather than on recounting a history of the events.

Resources includes a bibliography of key texts and a list of useful websites.

CONNECTING HISTORIES

Website in Focus



Unknown family studio portrait, 1970s [Local Studies: Dyche Collection]

Migration and Settlement

This learning resource is aimed at a wide range of users and is arranged into two case studies - **Jewish History in Birmingham** and **Late 20th Century Birmingham**. There is also a list of useful books, sources and websites to get you started on your own research.



Birmingham Jewish Arts Society cast, 1929 [City Archives: MS 2520]

In **Jewish History in Birmingham** Dr Andy Green explores the establishment of the Jewish community in Birmingham from the 18th century to the present day.

Establishing A Jewish Community reveals early evidence of a Jewish presence in Birmingham, social conditions and the development of synagogues in the city.

Integration and Conflicts traces aspects of the community's history in education, political and civic participation, and involvement in the arts and charitable causes.

Fighting Prejudice focuses on the 1930s and 1940s and Birmingham's connections to the Holocaust and refugee relief in that period.



'Handsworth through Southern Eyes', 1971. Photo: George Hallett [City Archives: MS 2449]

In **Late 20th Century Birmingham** Sarah Dar discusses the history of migration to the city by people from the Commonwealth, Ireland and other parts of the world after the Second World War.

The Enigma of Arrival looks at the journey to Birmingham, the reception migrants received and campaigns against discriminatory practices such as the colour bar.

Laying the Foundations considers the role of religion and support networks and self-help organisations that were established by various communities in the city.

Migration as a Way of Life explores the history of homelessness in Birmingham and the city's travelling communities for whom migration is a fundamental part of their identity.



'Sundays are bloody awful', 1980s. Photo: Vanley Burke [City Archives: MS 2192]

CONNECTINGHISTORIES

Featured Collection



Banner Theatre multi-media production [MS 1611]

Banner Theatre

Formed in 1974 **Banner Theatre** is a Birmingham based radical, campaigning theatre company. Charles Parker was one of its founders and his philosophy of 'actuality' has been a major inspiration for Banner's creative and campaigning approach. (The **Charles Parker Archive** is also featured on www.connectinghistories.org.uk).

'Actuality' based productions are multi-media in format, where photographic slides and taped extracts of interviews underline dramatic points within the scripted performances. These images and recordings are selected from the fruits of extensive research into the chosen subject and frequently give a voice to otherwise dispossessed and marginalised individuals and communities.



One of Banner Theatre's many slides used for performance backdrops



Banner protest in support of the Chile Solidarity Campaign, 1970s

Banner Theatre campaigns on a host of social justice issues, including refugee rights and industrial relations matters. The records reflect this broad interest and also the multi-media approach to performances. Research notes include transcripts of recorded interviews with a range of people, dealing with many issues that have faced communities across Britain and beyond over the past thirty years. Yorkshire miners, Indonesian shoemakers, Chilean political refugees, and Birmingham environmental campaigners are just some of the many groups given a voice in this collection.

This collection also charts the creative processes involved in turning research notes and recordings into performances that meet Banner's slogan of 'Entertainment for a Change'. It is a rich resource for anyone interested in artistic, social and political concerns in late 20th century Birmingham and Britain. Banner Theatre is still an active theatre company and regularly performs across the UK.



Flyer for Banner Benefit Social held during the 1984-85 miners' strike

The collection [MS 1611] is available at Birmingham City Archives on Floor 7 of Central Library [0121 303 4217] and a catalogue of the archive will soon be available on www.connectinghistories.org.uk