



## Schools and colleges

Promoting the value of the public records as a national education resource is one of our key functions.

The services we offer to schools and colleges are rapidly expanding both on-site and online.

By making use of new technologies and methods, we are reaching an ever-wider audience, through:

- E-learning
- Educational workshops.

*A display at the PRO about our String of Pearls Golden Jubilee project on the Royal Seals – which involved secondary school students from Westminster, Camberwell and Southwark*

## E-learning

Now in its fifth year and firmly established as a valuable resource for teachers and students, **The National Archives' Learning Curve** website has added more new content, forged new partnerships and yet again substantially increased its audience. It has also become a registered provider for the government's Curriculum Online service.

The page impressions for the year were just over 5 million, an impressive increase of 69% on last year.



New content on the Learning Curve for 2002/03 includes an exhibition on *Britain 1906-18*, designed to support the teaching of this new area of study in GCSE syllabuses.

Our biggest single piece of content, this uses an exciting range of original source material including documents, photographs, posters and film to investigate the varied life of the British people in 1906-18. The content includes the Liberal Welfare Reforms 1906-11, Early 1900s Women's Suffrage and Civilians and War 1914-18. The site has been endorsed by the OCR examining board for their GCSE courses.

Other new content included three new Snapshots and Focus on How to Read a Document, the latter featuring a new approach to working with documents online. The new software takes the user through the analysis of original source material in a truly



the South East network and across the country.

Positive feedback continues to arrive and in an independent survey conducted by the Fischer Trust we came second only to the BBC in the list of ICT (information and communications technology) resources rated by teachers for impact on learning.

Helping teachers to use the Learning Curve is a new teacher's booklet which can be downloaded from the website for free. We have sent out a printed version to over 200 teachers who were unable to download a copy.

interactive way. Answers, entered in response to questions, receive tailored feedback from the application, encouraging progression through the document. The sources focus on the period of mounting tension during the winter of 1937-38. They show how the central characters, Eden and Chamberlain, reacted to the threats posed by Germany, Italy and Japan.

Partnerships with a variety of organisations have proved very

*"Finding this site (National Archives Learning Curve) has made my night. I have very little time now to search for additional resources and when I found such an excellent ICT lesson I was ecstatic. The students will love this as they can work through the sources at their own pace and produce some excellent revision notes, plus enhance their writing skills! Well done!"*

History teacher

fruitful for the Learning Curve. We have published a Tudor Site with Hackney Archives featuring an immersive 3D model, a jousting game with the Victoria and Albert Museum and a revised version of a film website – Onfilm – with the South East Grid for Learning.

This last partnership has led to other partnerships being formed with Broad Band Consortia Regions, in particular the West Midlands. We are also providing a "mirror copy" of the Learning Curve to be hosted on a special broadband server, which can be accessed direct from schools on



Knights from our Tudor jousting game

## Educational workshops

In 2001/02 we reported a huge 300% increase in the number of students from schools and colleges visiting the PRO. The high volume of visits has continued, with a further 32% increase during 2002/03.

A total of 195 separate groups (4309 individuals), compared to 139 groups (3275 individuals) in 2001/02, have taken part in educational workshops onsite or via videoconference. The increase has levelled out and as we start to reach capacity: during school term time, there is at least one and very often two school groups taking part in a variety of activities at Kew each day.

A regular programme of workshops for primary and secondary schools, developed to suit the requirements of the History National Curriculum, is available for booking by schools throughout the year.

*"Acting was really good because I learnt more how the people felt, what ways they used to come up with so the officials would not find out certain things like how many pigs they had and more. Because it's hard for me to think a thousand years ago so acting a scene out helped me even more. I felt like I was a real person in that time facing those problems ... When we went after the play to see the Domesday Book, I was really excited because I'd never ever seen it before. I was amazed when I saw it!"*

Feedback from a pupil at one of our Domesday Book, Day of Judgement workshops

*"It felt like I was really there, I was really talking to the commissioners...I really loved the bit when we went to see the Domesday Book. I never knew it really had survived for nearly 1000 years."*

Feedback from a pupil at one of our Domesday Book, Day of Judgement workshops

*"The girls were so involved in the action, and it brought history alive in a way which would have been impossible in the classroom...the workshop was one of the most interesting and successful I have attended."*

Feedback from a class teacher at one of our Domesday Book, Day of Judgement workshops



Role-playing with the "Reeve of the Manor of Mortlake, Surrey" in our "Day of Judgement" workshop – based on Domesday Book, which is on display in our Museum

As reported last year, we continue to attract a wide range of state and independent schools both from London and the South East, as well as across the country – pleasingly, from as far afield as Sheffield and Newcastle.

The National Archives has also continued to provide introductions for undergraduate history students and teacher training students. A total of 39 groups visited the PRO for such a workshop this year.

In addition to the standard onsite programme, we have commissioned and delivered more special events using actors and interpreters in new and innovative ways to help us bring the past and our documents back to life.

Domesday Book, one of the most famous and important documents in our collection, was the subject of a new onsite role-playing workshop, "Day of Judgement", based on the videoconference workshop in last year's report, developed in conjunction with the Museum

of the Moving Image Actors' Consultancy.

The actors played the roles of the reeve of the manor of Mortlake, Surrey and one the Domesday Commissioners, while the pupils were each allotted a role as either a commissioner or one of the villagers of Mortlake.

Together they acted out the story behind the making of Domesday Book. This enabled the pupils to gain a greater understanding of life nearly 1000 years ago when the survey was made, as well as helping them to appreciate what an incredible historical source Domesday Book itself is. They also had an opportunity to see Domesday itself, in the National Archives' Museum.

### **Videoconferencing**

Videoconference workshops, which involve making a live video link to a school in order to deliver a workshop to them in their classroom wherever they are in the country, have undergone the greatest expansion – from 5 workshops

in 2001/02 to 39 in 2002/03.

Videoconferencing is very new technology not just within the heritage education sector, but also for schools, and the increase in the number of workshops delivered reflects this. The National Archives works closely with Global Leap, a DfES-funded body which promotes videoconferencing in schools, and has also contributed to training days in order to help raise awareness and encourage use of this technology both within schools and within other institutions such as Imperial War Museum, Tower of London and the Women's Library.

The videoconference workshops we offer replicate as closely as possible the experience of visiting The National Archives for a workshop onsite. Pupils still get to see and work closely with original documents, which they can read very easily over the camera on screen and National Archives education staff take them through an enquiry or activities related to the documents.

A number of special events have been delivered this way. Captain Bligh's Log Book, with his account of the Mutiny on the Bounty, was used in a joint event involving two schools, the National Maritime Museum and the PRO videoconferencing with each other simultaneously. A workshop on slavery was delivered to pupils at a City Learning Centre in Hammersmith and Fulham.

Two special workshops using actors have been developed for videoconferencing. In one, a Victorian detective takes pupils

through the Jack the Ripper case. In the other, a soldier from a First World War Pal's Battalion takes pupils through his experiences of the trenches and his thoughts as he prepares to go over the top. Both workshops make use of original documents in our collection.

*"The actor brought many emotions to the role...our History Department were highly impressed by the session and the 'empathy' that was required of the students ...thank you for your efforts in setting up the event... we cannot praise it enough"*

Feedback from one of our First World War videoconference workshops

Videoconferencing has also proved to be an ideal way to develop partnerships with new institutions and reach out to new audiences. The Tower of London Local Schools week is one such event: the Tower of London invites schools from the London Borough of Tower Hamlets to take part in free workshops for one week each year.

This year we ran a joint workshop via videoconferencing in which pupils working at the Tower were able to see and research our Tudor documents, under the guidance of the Yeoman of the Revels based at Kew, in order to get a life-size model of Henry VIII and his jousting horse ready for a tournament. This event proved extremely popular with the schools, who commented that the technology used as well as the activities provided really engaged and motivated pupils to learn.

## New audiences

Reaching out to new audiences is something we are developing through special projects. The Tower of London event has been one way in which we have been able to work with schools in an area of London with pupils from a wide range of social, economic and ethnic backgrounds.

The String of Pearls Golden Jubilee project on the Royal Seals, reported in last year's annual report, has led to more partnerships in this area. One school that took part in this has already booked to run the same workshop for a new group of students this year.

This project also led to a member of our education team being invited to sit on the Southwark Education Business Alliance Management Board. This has proved to be an invaluable source for making contacts with schools and developing new projects in a borough where pupils and their families would be unlikely to come across The National Archives without this link.

## Special needs

A class of autistic pupils from a special school in Surrey came to research wax seals in our collection as part of a project on heraldry.

A group of deaf and hard of hearing adult learners from the City Lit adult learning institute had a general introduction to the PRO and a tour of the Kew building, enabling them to feel confident to make full use of the resources at Kew in the future.