



University of
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ISSUE 22: SEPTEMBER 2023

DISCOVER

The University of Nottingham's Manuscripts and Special Collections

Music and performance special edition

Exhibition news:
Living Letters.
Correspondence
then and now

**Madness and
more:** When
musical masters
did Nottingham

Discover Rag:
One hundred
years of Carnival





IN THIS ISSUE

Contents

2	Editor's letter
3	Letter from the Keeper
4	One hundred years of Carnival
6	Live on campus. The University of Nottingham Gig Guide
8	Backstage at Manuscripts and Special Collections
11	Living Letters exhibition
14	A musical souvenir of a grand tour
15	Nowt so quire as folk
16	Jenny Lind in the archives
17	New additions to the collections
19	The other Wollaton Antiphonal
20	Contact us

WELCOME

Editor's letter



Welcome to our music-themed edition of *Discover*. In September the University of Nottingham is hosting the 59th Annual Conference of the Royal Musical Association. This is the primary annual event for the discipline in the UK, and over the course of three days speakers from around the world will share their expertise across the whole spectrum of music studies.

We were thrilled at the opportunity to support this conference by devoting this issue to our vast and varied music-related collections that range some of the very earliest material we hold, to some of the most modern. Alongside the usual staff contributions, we are pleased to have three guest academic writers from the university's Department of Music, and grateful that they have taken the time to write so passionately and eloquently about the archival and printed music collections we have here.

On a different note (ahem), very shortly after this goes to print, our new exhibition *Living Letters: correspondence then and now* will open at the Weston Gallery at Lakeside Arts, jointly curated with Professor Lynda Pratt from the School of English. More information about the exhibition and the programme of events is on page 11.

Kathryn Steenson, Senior Archivist (Academic and Public Engagement)

Cover image: Cripps Hall carnival float, 1960. Photographs relating to the University of Nottingham and its predecessor University College Nottingham UMP/4/3/6

WELCOME

Letter from the Keeper

Welcome to the latest issue of *Discover*. It has been a busy three months for Manuscripts and Special Collections since the previous issue was published back in May. Firstly, I would like to welcome two new members of staff to the team – Chloe Highton joined us as Archivist: Academic and Public Engagement in June and will be heavily involved in promoting the collections to potential users both inside and outside of the university, and Jade Moore is our newly appointed library assistant, joining us from Nottingham Trent University. I am also delighted that our long-serving document production assistant, Abigail Cobley, is now in a new role as archive assistant. Chloe, Jade and Abigail will all be doing regular shifts in our reading room, welcoming visitors and helping them to access the collections, so I hope that lots of you will be meeting them soon.

As well as welcoming new staff members we have also been doing our yearly business planning, looking back at what we have achieved in the previous year and focusing on priorities for the year ahead. It's always important to take the time to reflect on the progress that has been made and our key achievements over the last twelve months include renewing our Archive Accreditation, launching our new primary schools programme based on the museum, archive and special collections and increasing the discoverability of collections – including expanding our theatre

collections, completing the cataloguing of the Loughborough Parish Library Collection and conserving and digitising the papers of architect TC Hine. Over the next year we will look to build on these achievements. Cataloguing will start on the newly conserved TC Hine collection, whilst other cataloguing efforts will focus on our theatre archives. You can read more about our development of our theatre collections later in this issue. The Museum team have also started preparations for the renewal of their Museum Accreditation status, so please keep an eye on future issues of *Discover* for more information on this. These are just a few of the areas of work planned, and as always we will keep you updated on everything that we are doing, including our exhibitions and events, schools programme, and collections work, via *Discover* and our social media channels.

If you would like to find out more about any aspect of our work then please do not hesitate to contact me. In the meantime I hope that you enjoy reading this special music-focused issue of *Discover*.

Hayley Cotterill
Keeper of Manuscripts and Special Collections

Opening times

Reading Room at King's Meadow Campus

- 9.30am–5pm Monday–Tuesday
- 9.30am–6pm Wednesday–Thursday

Weston Gallery at Lakeside Arts, University Park

- 12 noon–4pm Tuesday–Sunday



For holiday opening hours, see our website nottingham.ac.uk/mss

Living Letters
Correspondence then and now

Opens Thursday 12 October



Weston Gallery
Free exhibition

One hundred years of Carnival

A look back at the first Nottingham student charity Rag

It was on the 17 March 1923 that Robin Hood successfully captured the Sheriff of Nottingham in broad daylight. In fact, it wasn't just the Sheriff (Councillor John Farr) who was apprehended at the Nottingham Exchange in the City Centre and bundled into the back of a police van, but the Mayor of Nottingham (Alderman Edward Manning) as well. The Prince of Thieves promised to release his prisoners on the condition that they help raise £1,000 for Nottingham General Hospital.

The dramatic scenes were played out as part of the University College Nottingham's first ever 'rag' event. Rags, believed to originally be named after the idea of 'ragging' or being deliberately disorderly (though more recently given the backronym 'Raising and Giving'), involve public displays and stunts, and are a popular way for students to raise money for charity.

Even before their first rag in 1923, students in Nottingham were already supporting the local hospital, including donating funds from their Armistice Day procession. Before the formation of the National Health Service it was common for hospitals to be part-funded by charitable donations, and Nottingham General Hospital's published annual reports from the 1920s begin with pages of forms encouraging readers to donate money, or even to name the hospital in their will. The University College Nottingham students' theatrical event with Robin Hood in

“Rags, believed to originally be named after the idea of 'ragging' or being deliberately disorderly.”

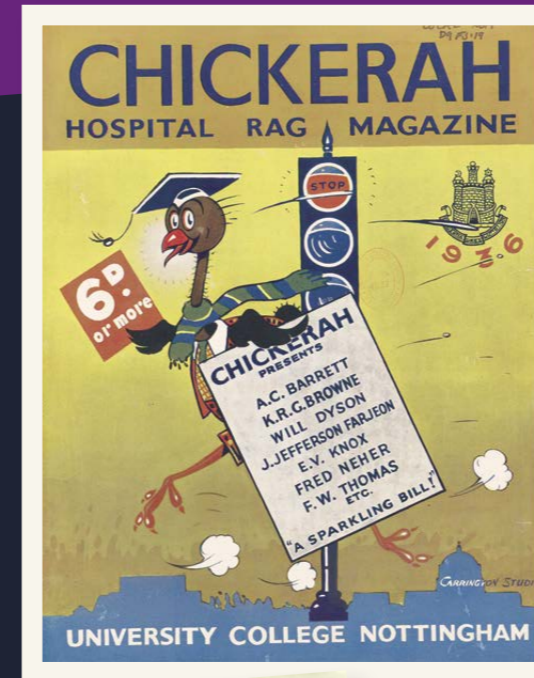


Above: Cripps Hall carnival float, 1960. Photographs relating to the University of Nottingham, UMP/4/3/6
Right from top: Cover of *Chickerah*, 1936. University of Nottingham Collection Periodicals Not 5.14.41.F32
Gongster, 11 May 1951. University of Nottingham Collection Periodicals
Photograph of Councillor John Farr, the Sheriff of Nottingham, 1923.

the spring of 1923, however, was on a whole other level.

Thankfully, the requested hostage release fee was raised, and £1,018. 7s. 9d. was donated to Nottingham General Hospital to fund a 'University College' inscribed bed. The captees, along with the Chairman of the Monthly Board of the General Hospital (Frederick Acton) later attended an event held at University College Nottingham to thank the students. Acton was said to be delighted by the alliance between the University College and the General Hospital, and encouraged the students to raise enough money to build a 'University College ward' (*Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 14 June 1923, Uhg Ne 1).

The editor of the University College magazine, *The Gong*, also paid tribute to his fellow students, describing the originality of 'Hospital Day' as "unparalleled in the history



of rags" and an event that "might well be regarded as one to be observed annually" (Midsummer Term issue, 1923).

The success meant that a sequel was inevitable, and *Nottinghamshire Guardian* reported that the follow up on the 22 March 1924 was themed as the French Revolution, with students in costume and mock executions being carried out on a mobile guillotine. Though this rag was not quite as successful as the original,



Florence Boot Hall carnival float, 1950. ACC 876/4

raising £669 in total, the students promised Nottingham General Hospital that they would contribute the balance for a £1,000 bed the following year.

The University College Nottingham rag event quickly grew into a yearly extravaganza for both the students and the people of Nottingham, officially known as *Carnival*. Regular features over the week of festivities included sports events, sketch and music revues, dances at the Astoria Ballroom (now Ocean nightclub), and elaborate student-constructed floats traversing the streets from Beeston through to the City Centre, a motorised parade consisting of costumed students enacting themed tableaux and papier maché animals such as pink elephants, cows, and giant hens which laid eggs as they drove through Dunkirk. A humorous magazine called *Chickerah* (named after the Carnival mascot, a strange spindly bird) was produced each year and sold to the public, occasionally eliciting the necessity for apologies to be issued by the university to advertisers shocked by some of the more risqué content they had inadvertently funded. By the 1950s the proceeds raised would go to various local causes, not just Nottingham General Hospital.

“According to @NottsKarni it is the largest Students' Union run charity organisation outside of the USA and continues to raise – sometimes multi-millions of pounds – each year.”

One hundred years since Robin Hood kidnapped the Sheriff of Nottingham, *Karnival* still exists at the University of Nottingham (now with a more distinctive spelling). According to its Twitter page (@NottsKarni) it is the largest Students' Union run charity organisation outside of the USA and continues to raise money – sometimes multi-millions of pounds – each year.

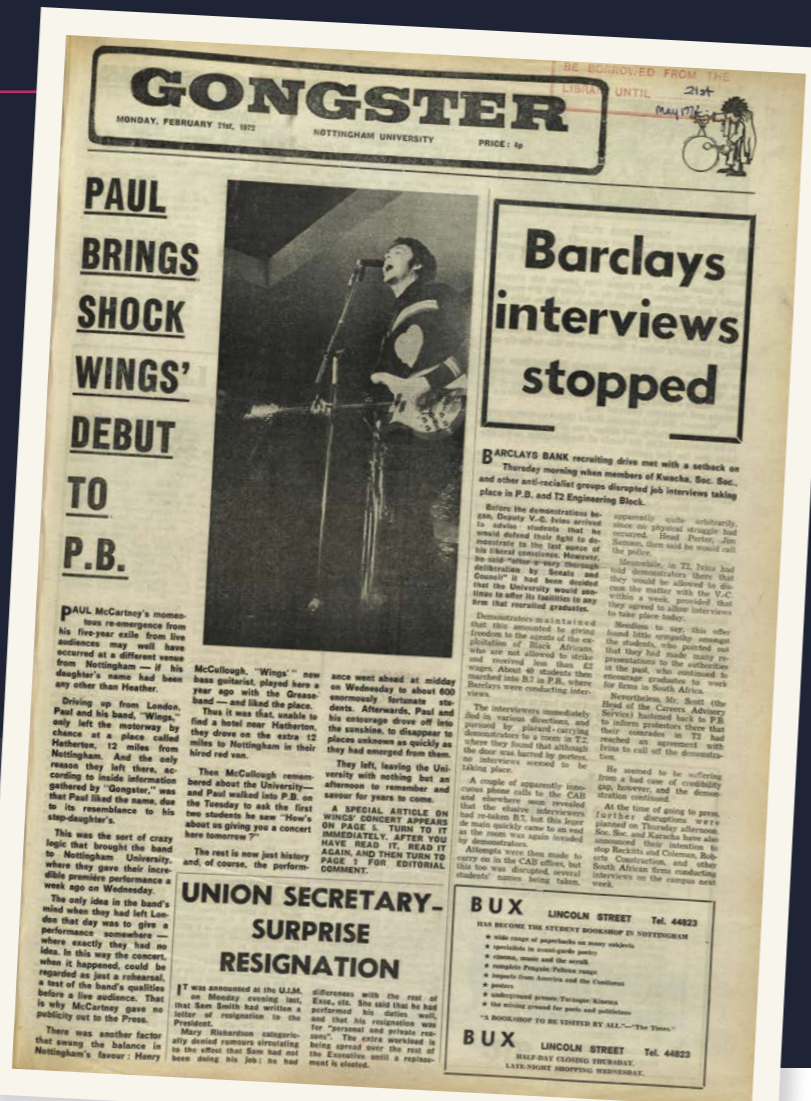
Live on campus

The University of Nottingham Gig Guide

On 8 February 1972 a van pulled up at the University of Nottingham and a roadie was dispatched to the student bar with an urgent message: "I've got Paul McCartney in the car park wondering if he can do a gig." The singer, along with his band Wings, had been driving around looking for a venue for their first ever live performance. Intrigued by signage for Ashby-de-la-Zouch, they ended up heading for the nearest university, knowing that students would be able to accommodate an impromptu performance and assemble a large, enthusiastic audience at short notice.

Gigging at universities is still common for bands and performers making a living on the circuit. Getting a big name to perform was always a coup for the Social Secretary at Nottingham's Students' Union, and although many acts were lesser known, some went on to become massive stars. Beyond the surprise appearance of Wings, some of the many other notable names to perform at the University of Nottingham include *The Who* (April 1970), *The Electric Light Orchestra* (March 1973), *Fleetwood Mac* (November 1970), *Madness* (October 1979), *Siouxsie and the Banshees* (October 1979), *Katrina and the Waves*, (October 1987), and *Jason Donovan* (September 2002).

Seeing bands perform live on their home turf was a magical experience for many students, and frequently provokes dewy-eyed reminiscences to be posted on blog posts and social media."



Bias, 28 October 1981. University of Nottingham Collection os.X.Periodicals Not 5.G14.8.F78

Gongster, 21 February 1972. University of Nottingham Periodicals Not U

Were you there?

If you attended live gigs of folk, jazz or rock performers at the University of Nottingham, we want to hear from you! We would love to collect your written memories, flyers, and photographs of events as part of our archive, as well as to feature within our Gig Guide!

Please get in touch by emailing: mss-library@nottingham.ac.uk

Seeing bands perform live on their home turf was a magical experience for many students, and frequently provokes dewy-eyed reminiscences to be posted on blog posts and social media. The University of Nottingham Gig Guide is a resource we are working on to collate a list - as definitive as we can make it - of all pop, rock, jazz and folk performances held on campus. With the help of enthusiastic student volunteers, we have been trawling through our collections looking for information to compile into our guide.

The University of Nottingham's student newspapers are a fantastic source of information. As well as promoting gigs, they regularly printed reviews, news, and interviews. Combing through all the issues from 1939 onwards has been a laborious process, but also incredibly rewarding, giving us gems about how when *The Specials* played in October 1980 the performance was marred by members of the crowd "repeatedly clambering on stage to demonstrate their well practised dancing steps" (Bias, 5 November 1980), or the time the *Soft Machine* concert in October 1975 was delayed as a hoax bomb threat led to the Portland Building being evacuated (Gongster, 14 October 1975).

The Students' Union's meeting minutes provides behind-the-scenes information on the booking of various bands, including revealing the

gigs that never were, such as the cancellation of the band *Strider* in early 1974 due to the government-imposed limitations on power consumption for commercial venues.

Gigs on campus were held at various venues. Halls of residence would sometimes host bands in their common rooms, such as prog rock band *Magna Carta* who performed multiple times at Hugh Stewart Hall throughout the late 1970s. Smaller acts played in The Buttery, the Students' Union bar, often only taking a percentage of the tab as payment, while more prestige acts performed in the Ballroom in the Portland Building, though the uncomfortably hard floor led to one reviewer declaring that "our premier concert arena is, was, and always will be - a sh*t-hole" (Gongster, 1 November 1977). In the late 1970s the newly opened sports centre provided a different location for gigs, though was not without its own issues, including acoustics "about as efficient as an enlarged aluminium biscuit tin" (Gongster, 21 February 1978). Quality of venue was likely a reason why gigs on campus are now incredibly rare, with touring bands instead playing at venues such as Rock City, Nottingham Concert Hall, or the Arena. But we hope the University of Nottingham Gig Guide will be a wonderful reminder of all the music performed live on campus.

in his honour. University students have worked on the collection, with one interviewing Lowe and writing her dissertation about the philosophy behind Meeting Ground's work.

During lockdown we were able to support a remote placement for a student to work on the digital files in the archive of musician, composer and performer, Matt Marks (1963-2019). Matt studied musical composition at the university (1996) and worked with many of the theatre companies mentioned here. His papers (MMM) show the work involved in creating the music and soundscapes which help bring the theatre experience to life.

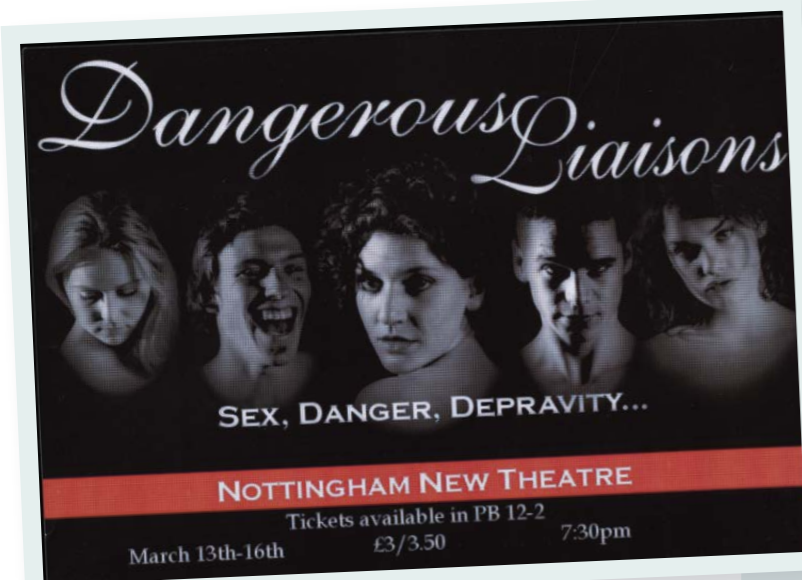
We have been collecting materials relating to student theatre for many decades (known as Theatre Production Group/Nottingham Theatre Group/Dramatic Society/Drama Society/Dram-Soc/New Theatre). We have recently published the catalogue for some of this material (UU 15) but continue to welcome donations. Papers from alumni who were involved in drama at university also contain relevant photos and ephemera. During Haydon Luke's time at the university (1961-64), he was taking photographs for the student newspaper *Gongster*, as well as theatre productions. In 1962 he was photographing the Nottingham University Theatre Group's staging of *St Joan* in Cornwall.

Our theatre collections document the Nottingham/East Midlands scene and the work of the talented individuals and hard-working theatre companies creating and championing stories that resonate with local audiences. All of this makes them a rich resource for researching contemporary social themes.



Photo by Haydon Luke and poster for *St Joan* by Bernard Shaw at the Minack Theatre, 1962. Photographs relating to the University of Nottingham and the earlier University College Nottingham, NUP/53/2/3/2 and /9

Actress Ruth Wilson MBE (History, 2003) in the Nottingham New Theatre production of *Dangerous Liaisons*, 2000-2001. Archives of the University of Nottingham: Student, Staff and Alumni Societies, UU/15/12/1/1



Living Letters exhibition at Lakeside Arts

For centuries letters have been key vehicles of human communication. *Living Letters: correspondence then and now* uses examples from the medieval period to the present to excavate and celebrate the enduring importance of correspondence.

Living Letters is both inspired by and departs from the biographical tradition, dominant in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, of chronicling an eminent individual's life and achievements by publishing often highly selective and censored texts of their correspondence.

This exhibition draws on Manuscripts and Special Collections' holdings of manuscript and printed letters by men and women, both famous and forgotten. It uses these to examine letters' capacity to chronicle all stages and aspects of human life - from birth to death - and to capture both the personal and the professional. It reveals how correspondence is powerful in its ability to connect with and impact on the lives of others. It illuminates how letters are also deeply vulnerable, fragile objects whose preservation is liable to the vicissitudes of time, fashion, and chance.

This exhibition has been jointly curated by University of Nottingham Libraries, Manuscripts and Special Collections, and Professor Lynda Pratt, University of Nottingham School of English.



From top: *The Letter*, from Mrs [Elizabeth] Turner, *The cowslip, or, More cautionary stories in verse; with thirty engravings by Samuel Williams* (1885). Briggs Collection, PZ6.7.T8

Frontispiece illustration from John Carroll Wilson, *The Gentleman's new fashionable letter-writer, or, Art of familiar and polite correspondence* (1837). Briggs Collection Pamphlet LT210.BJ/G4

Cyclostyled letter from Dr Edward Wrench to his children, March 1880. Wrench Collection, Wr C 3040/10/2

Left: Letter from Charles Cheyne to his brother-in-law Charles Cavendish, Viscount Mansfield, at Welbeck, 20 May 1656. Portland (Welbeck) Collection, Pw 1/84



Living Letters

Correspondence then and now



Free exhibition

Thursday 12 October 2023 – Sunday 3 March 2024

Opening times: Tuesday–Sunday 12 noon–4pm. Closed Mondays.

Weston Gallery
Lakeside Arts
University Park
Nottingham NG7 2RD

☎ Box Office: +44 (0)115 846 7777
🌐 lakesidearts.org.uk
🌐 nottingham.ac.uk/mss



EXHIBITION NEWS

Join our events

A series of special events will be held to accompany the exhibition. Places are limited so please book in advance on + 44 (0)115 846 7777 or online at www.lakesidearts.org.uk

► Lunchtime talks at the Djanogly Theatre

1-2pm, £3 (free concessions)

19 October 2023

Confessions of a romantic letter hunter

The controversial Poet Laureate Robert Southey (1774–1843) was a contemporary of Jane Austen and an antagonist of Lord Byron. Professor Lynda Pratt shares her experiences of working on the first-ever edition of Southey's *Collected Letters*, including the challenges of: editing 7,500 letters, identifying 'lost' correspondents, and writing footnotes covering a vast range of subjects, from everyday Lake District life to the history of Brazil.

22 November 2023

Ten years of The Letters Page

The Letters Page is a literary journal in letters, with all submissions sent in as handwritten letters by post. Join its editor, Professor Jon McGregor, for a look at some of the letters received from across the world since launching in 2013, and for a reflection on the place of letter writing as a part of literary culture in the twenty-first century.

16 January 2024

Creativity, craft and correspondence: letters as art

Dr Charlotte May will draw on correspondence held in the university's Department of Manuscript and Special Collections to demonstrate how letters have long provided a space for artistic expression. She will explore examples of creativity that include marginal sketches and original poems.

29 February 2024

Letters and laughs: humour in literary correspondence

Amy Wilcockson will draw on letters by Edward Lear, Jane Austen, and Thomas Campbell to discuss how – and why – they use comedy, nonsense, and the absurd. She will explore how such attempts to create camaraderie, advance social status, and deal with difficult situations including illness and grief, provide a valuable and intimate insight into the lives of all three authors.

► Weston Gallery tours

Join us for a guided walk through the exhibition and learn about the stories behind the items on display.

Wednesday 22 November, 11am–12 noon

Tuesday 16 January, 11am–12 noon

FREE Advanced booking required

► Letter handling sessions

Bentinck Room, King's Meadow Campus

Tuesday 7 November, 10–11.30am

Thursday 8 February, 1.30–3pm

Join us to explore and engage with a selection of manuscript letters not on display in the Living Letters exhibition. Places are limited so please book in advance:

Email: mss-library@nottingham.ac.uk

Telephone: 0115 951 4565

FREE Advanced booking required

A musical souvenir of a grand tour

Professor Nicholas Baragwanath,
Professor of Music

Have you ever wondered why musical terms are always in Italian? Why we say *forte* for loud and *tempo* for speed? The answer rests upon one of the greatest rags to riches stories never told. For two centuries, until the time of Rossini and Paganini in the early 1800s, Italian musicians ruled the musical world. They produced the greatest singers and players in Europe and occupied all the top jobs.

The secret to their success was the orphanage (It. *conservatorio*), from which we get the English word *conservatoire*. Poor children taken into these institutions were expected to pay for their keep by learning a trade. In Venice, boys learned to build gondolas while girls studied music. In Naples, four orphanages became famous music schools, producing countless maestros and virtuosos.

Two factors conspired to achieve such success. First, teachers at the conservatoires sought out talented street kids to train because, mafia-style, they could claim 10% of their lifelong earnings. Second, by retaining the best students as teachers, the orphanages developed a remarkable system of music education, perhaps the most effective method ever devised.

When rich Europeans travelled to Italy on the Grand Tour, therefore, they did not go just to see ancient architecture and Renaissance art. They went to hear

“..teachers at the conservatoires sought out talented street kids to train because, mafia-style, they could claim 10% of their lifelong earnings.”

famous music. Coronelli's tourist guide (1700), for instance, boasts that music in Venice is 'more popular than in any other city in Europe'. Not to be missed on Wednesdays is the 'Mass in music performed by the girls and women of the Pietà orphanage'. As an added incentive, these musical events coincided with ball games, opera, and – a guaranteed crowd-pleaser – anatomical theatre.

To cash in on this lucrative tourist industry, musicians produced all manner of souvenirs. When Charles De Brosses visited Venice in 1738, for instance, he complained that a Priest called Vivaldi had pressured him to buy souvenir lessons at inflated prices.

Nottingham's MS 1042: Music manuscripts comprising Solfeggi by Fedele Fenaroli and unrecorded works by Luigi Confidati, c.1780s-c.1820, is a superb example of such a musical souvenir. It binds together five manuscripts containing music lessons from the orphanages, presumably to enable the British tourist's wife or daughter to practice the renowned Italian method at home. The condition of the manuscript suggests that the lady of the house never did get round to practising these lessons!

A lesson in playing the piano: one simply counts the numbers from the bass to find the harmony c.1697, MS 1042



Nowt so quire as folk

When Percy Grainger (1882-1961) started recording traditional folk songs on his Edison-Bell phonograph in 1906, he was doing something no other folk song collector had done before: using mechanical recording apparatus.

Grainger was a professional concert pianist and composer, and a private eccentric. From 1905-1908, he embarked upon an incredibly detailed study of folk songs, making precise notes about dialect, rhythm, and accentuation. For Grainger, the musical notation and the lyrics were not enough. He wanted to capture the nuances of the performance.

We hold copies of those phonograph recordings made by Grainger, and later recordings from other collectors, plus recordings of various radio broadcasts and interviews by and about Grainger. These are held alongside paper records relating to Grainger's performances, photographs, book reviews, monographs, pamphlets, and also a series of 30 LPs of folk songs.

The material formed the basis of the Lincolnshire Folk Song Collection, established at Pilgrim College in Boston, Lincolnshire, in the early 1960s. Tutor Patrick O'Shaughnessy was crucial to the collection's development and publicity. He had used the material extensively when researching his books on Lincolnshire folk music, *Late leaves from Lincolnshire* and *Yellowbelly ballads* – yellowbelly being a nickname for people from Lincolnshire. His interest in local folk music, plays, and poetry was sparked after hearing the song *Brigg Fair*. Brigg Fair is an annual horse fair held in the Lincolnshire market town of the same name. Grainger recorded farm steward Joseph Taylor singing it in 1906. As the 74-year-old Taylor only remembered the opening two stanzas, Grainger added additional verses, taken from other ballads, and arranged the song for a five-part chorus.

For many years Pilgrim College was an outpost of the Adult Education Department of the University of Nottingham, and in the early 1990s the Lincolnshire Folk Song Collection was transferred to Manuscripts and Special Collections. Several



Percy Grainger's *Room-Music Tit-Bits & Other Tone Stuffs*, *The Gipsy's Wedding Day*, and *Songs of Animals and other Marvels*.

“Grainger was a professional concert pianist and composer, and a private eccentric. From 1905-1908, he embarked upon an incredibly detailed study of folk songs, making precise notes about dialect, rhythm, and accentuation.”

years ago Music undergraduate Lydia May accepted a placement arranging and listing the collection. Her knowledge of music gave us a much better understanding of the significance and purpose of some parts of the collection. She also realised it was far broader in scope than initially thought. Lincolnshire and South Humberside are well represented, but it is a collection of research material relating to English folk music in general. Thanks in part to her work, the Lincolnshire Folk Song Collection is catalogued online and most of it (apart from some recordings in obsolete formats we've yet to digitise) is accessible in the Reading Rooms.

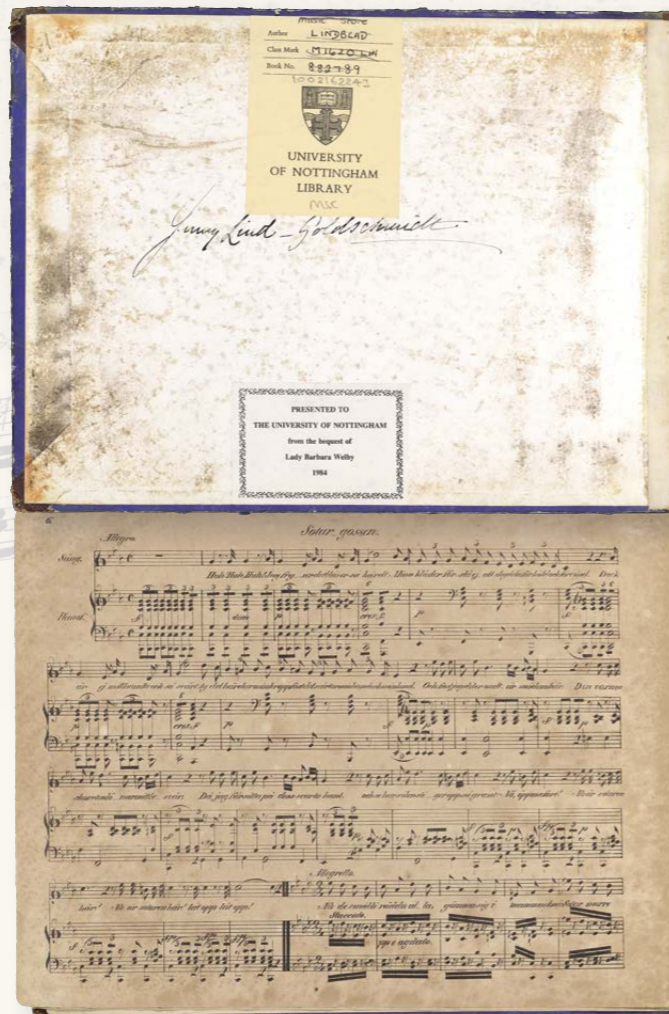
Jenny Lind in the archives

Dr Joanne Cormac, Nottingham Research Fellow, Faculty of Arts

Soprano Jenny Lind (1820-1887), known as the 'Swedish nightingale,' was celebrated for the purity of her voice and her public reputation for virtue and religious piety. The University of Nottingham's Manuscripts and Special Collections holds several books that belonged to Lind, bequeathed by her great granddaughter, Lady Barbara Welby. The collection represents a physical record of Lind's cosmopolitanism, particularly her ability to traverse Swedish, British, German, and American concert life and musical networks.

The collection includes a manuscript copy of a Swedish translation of Rossini's opera buffa *Il turco in Italia*. The text is in Swedish and Italian and is signed 'Jorssell', who was likely the translator. It was probably used by Lind during performances of the opera she gave in Stockholm. She also performed the duet *Per piacere alla Signora* with baritone Giovanni Belletti during her first concert in New York at Castle Garden on 11 September 1850. The performance was evidently popular, for they repeated the duet at every other concert in the American tour. Lind also regularly performed the aria *Squallida Vesta* from the opera in her European concerts.

Two other items attest to Lind's active role in promoting the music of her favourite composers across national borders. Firstly, there is a collection of songs by Swedish composer and poet Adolf Fredrik Lindblad. Lind and Lindblad had a successful collaborative relationship and Lind's performances were vital to the popularity the songs enjoyed at mid-century. Lindblad also introduced Lind to Mendelssohn, who Lindblad had first met during a visit to Berlin in October 1825. Mendelssohn would later write the soprano part of his oratorio *Elijah* specifically for Lind.



AF Lindblad, *Songs. Selections*, (1827).
Special Collection os M1620.L4.

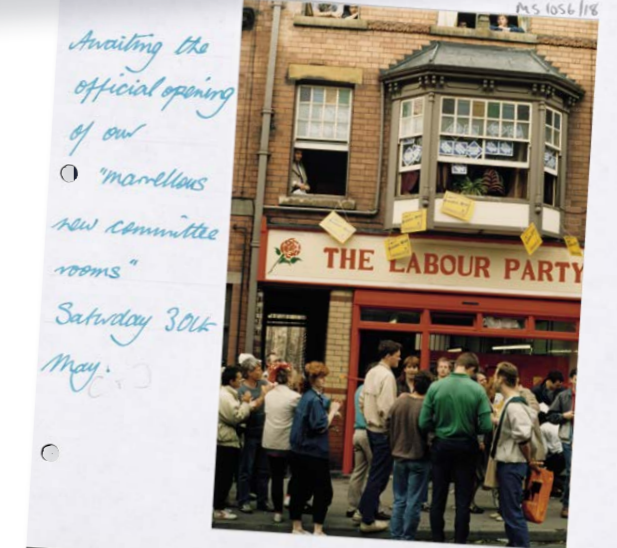
Secondly, Lind's vocal score of Schumann's cantata *Das Paradies und die Peri* represents her close friendship with Robert and Clara Schumann (she occasionally performed in Clara's concerts). The book contains a dedication in Schumann's hand reading *Der Freundlichen, Gütigen - R.Sch* (To the kind and gracious one). Lind sang the chief soprano part in the first English performance of *Das Paradies* in June 1856 with London's Philharmonic Society, conducted by William Sterndale Bennett. Unfortunately, Schumann's oratorio was not well-received in the London press, despite English affection for Lind. At the time Schumann's music was viewed with suspicion in Britain, associated with Wagner and the dangers of a progressive musical school. Queen Victoria, who attended the performance, disagreed, recalling in her 23 June diary entry that Lind "sang most beautifully, and with a feeling and fire, such as no one else has [...] The Cantata is very finely composed, and there are some beautiful parts."

New additions to the collections

We have recently received further papers of Margaret 'Madge' Wheeler (1908-2002), née Carpenter (MS 425). Margaret featured in several television documentaries which told the story of how she left Sherwood Hospital in Nottinghamshire with the wrong baby in 1936 after giving birth to her first daughter. Margaret's correspondence with writer George Bernard Shaw in the 1940s was turned into a play by Bernard Hesketh. The new material includes diaries, correspondence with Shaw, photographs and audiovisual material.

An important new collection is MS 1055, Papers of Pushkar Singh Lail (1935-2021). Lail came to England from India in 1962, working for Raleigh and then as a bus conductor for Nottingham City Transport. In the 1970s and 1980s he was Shop Steward for his branch of the Transport and General Workers' Union, going on to serve on the executive of both the Nottingham and District Trades Council and the Community Relations Council (later the Race Relation Council). He was a founder-member of the Nottingham Anti-Nazi League and campaigned in favour of women bus drivers (women in Nottingham were only employed as conductors, despite the Sex Discrimination Act of 1975). He was also involved in drafting the Equal Opportunities policy which the City Council was asked to adopt. As General Secretary of the Nottingham branch of the Indian Workers Association, Lail successfully applied for funding to create Nottingham's Indian Community Centre (ICC). After retiring, he gave his time to Welfare Rights sessions at the ICC and volunteered with Victim Support.

We have also been gifted a photograph album compiled by Christopher Richardson (1947-2020), socialist, historian, LGBTQ+ activist and author of *A City of Light: Socialism, Chartism and Co-operation, Nottingham 1844*. The album relates to the 1987 General Election campaign in which Alan Simpson stood as the Labour candidate in Nottingham's Park Ward.



Photograph of Pushkar Singh Lail taken at Freckleton Studio, Nottingham, post 1962. MS 1055/1/19/7

Nottingham Trades Council delegation to Minsk, November 1975 (Pushkar Singh Lail wearing glasses). On their return, the Immigration Officer refused to accept his settled status, stamping his passport with only three months' permission to stay. Lail brought the matter to the press, Parliament and the Ombudsman. MS 1055/1/19/3

Photograph taken before the official opening of the committee rooms on Lenton Boulevard for Alan Simpson, 1987. MS 1056/18

University

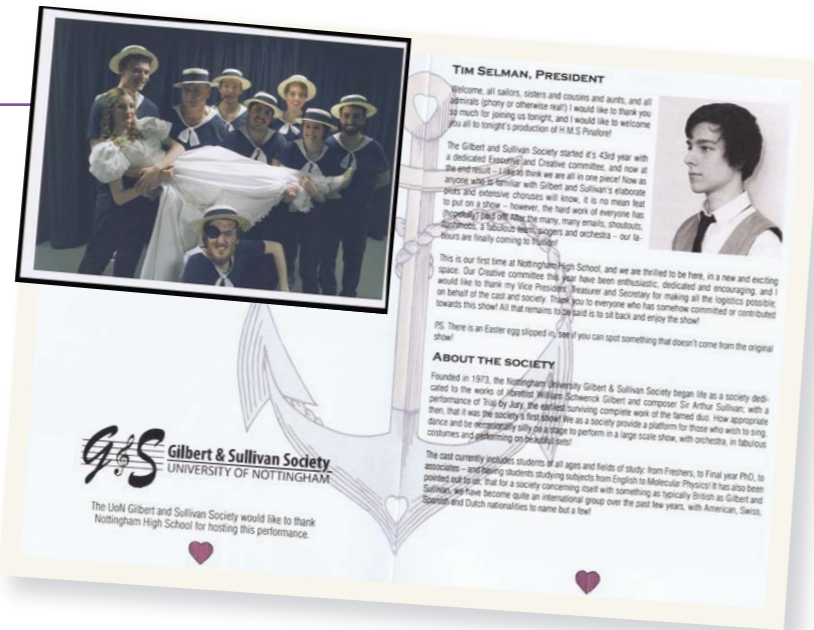
It always feels like Christmas when we receive a new delivery of items from the collecting box in the Portland Building, which is used by student societies to transfer materials they have collected to the University archives. This terms' treasure trove included CDs and DVDs of performances by the Revival Gospel Choir, and photographs, programmes etc, from the Gilbert and Sullivan Society. The society has existed since 1973 and their first show was *Trial by Jury*. We're also delighted to receive some digital transfers via our upload folders from Phab Soc, Soup Runners Society and Musicality.

We have also received lots of new additions for our new East Midlands Feminist Archive (FME) and Feminist Publications Collection (FPC), but you'll have to wait until our next issue to find out more!

Special Collections

Important additions were made to the East Midlands Special Collection. We have acquired Joseph Paxton's and John Lindley's 3-volume first edition of *Paxton's Flower Garden*, published between 1850-53. The publication was informed by discoveries made on plant-collecting expeditions, which feature in the book's 108 hand-coloured lithograph plates and over 500 woodcut illustrations. Joseph Paxton (1803-1865) became the Duke of Devonshire's head gardener at Chatsworth aged just twenty-three, in 1826, and remained in that post until he retired from Chatsworth, following the Duke's death in 1858. Prestige projects such as designing the Crystal Palace for the Great Exhibition of 1851 took Paxton away from Chatsworth temporarily but he remained in post and completed ambitious projects. He is celebrated for his garden designs and for succeeding to grow fruits like pineapples and bananas in glass houses at Chatsworth. The volumes we acquired have boards covered with colourful marbled paper, and vivid marbled paper endpapers inside.

The second noteworthy addition to the East Midlands Special Collection takes us to the 17th century in Leicestershire: *Mr. William Lilly's history of his life and times: from the year 1602, to 1681, written by himself in the 66th year of his age to his worthy friend Elias Ashmole*. William Lilly (1602-1681) was the son of a yeoman but completed the Grammar School in Ashby-de-la-Zouch. He went on to have a career in London as a published author of prophetic literature based on astrology, taking on the title of master astrologer. From his



Photograph and programme for a Gilbert and Sullivan Society production of H.M.S. Pinafore at the Nottingham High School, 2016. Archives of the University of Nottingham: Student, Staff and Alumni Societies, UU/42/4/9

autobiography we glimpse the inner workings of a grammar school which at the time employed one of the country's best educationalists, John Brinsley. He too went on to London, where he published the definitive book on teaching Latin in grammar schools: *Ludus Literarius*. Elias Ashmole, who is credited in the title of Lilly's autobiography, was Lilly's patron and owned the portrait of Lilly which is now in the Ashmolean Museum.



The Azorean Forget-Me-Not. Hand-coloured lithograph plate from *Paxton's Flower Garden* (1850-53) Volume 3. East Midlands Special Collection os Der 142.P30 LIN

The other Wollaton Antiphonal

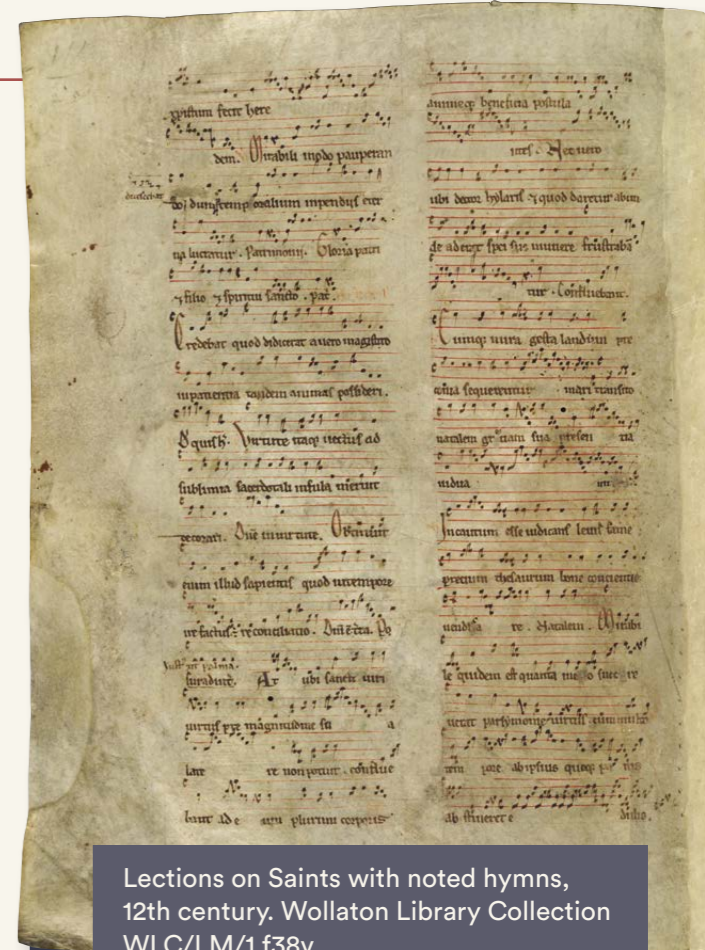
Dr Henry Parkes,
Associate Professor of Music

A trip to Nottingham is not complete without a visit to Wollaton Hall, the extraordinary Elizabethan mansion that was once home to the Willoughby family, later the Barons Middleton. Manuscripts and Special Collections houses much of what remains of the Wollaton library, including two undisputed musical treasures: Francis Willoughby's *lute book*, an important source of Elizabethan dance tunes and song arrangements, and the Wollaton Antiphonal, a deluxe late-medieval chant book of vast dimensions that spent most of its 'working' life in Wollaton Parish Church.

The latter book gained a great deal of attention in the 2000s, when it was the subject of a major AHRC-funded project at the university, and was concurrently digitised and conserved. Visitors to the website can now turn the pages of this very rare survival, whose pages include a unique set of chants probably composed in fifteenth-century Yorkshire.

Yet in the midst of this activity another musical treasure in the Wollaton library has gone almost unnoticed. WLC/LM/1 is the surviving portion of a twelfth-century chant book, and stands among the oldest items in the entire collection. Like the Wollaton Antiphonal, it is important not only as an attractive (if slightly battered) musical specimen, but also for the simple fact that so few chant books in English collections survived the Reformation. Those made before 1200 are vanishingly rare. Also like its Wollaton sibling, it is not strictly an antiphonal (or antiphoner), but rather a breviary, combining chants with prayers and several other kinds of localisable liturgical text. Thus it has a great deal to tell us about medieval worship practices at large, including those of the night, which are the subject of a forthcoming AHRC project at Nottingham (*Music in the Shadows: Staging the Medieval Night Office 800-1300*).

Many mysteries remain to be solved. Where was it made and used? Whose practices does it



Lectons on Saints with noted hymns, 12th century, Wollaton Library Collection WLC/LM/1 f38v

► Scan to turn the pages of the Wollaton Antiphonal



turningthepages.nottingham.ac.uk

record? How did it end up in the orbit of the Willoughby family in the fifteenth century? In the picture we can see monophonic chants for St Giles. Although the saint's cult was widely known across medieval Europe, these compositions were not. Indeed, WLC/LM/1 is the earliest of but a few known sources. Just like the special Yorkshire pieces in the Wollaton Antiphonal, items such as these hold important clues for the researcher. Answers can be expected soon, too, courtesy of a collaborative PhD award we are developing in partnership with another major UK research library. Future visitors to Nottingham can hope to gain an even deeper sense of Wollaton's cultural legacy.



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Talks and tours

from Manuscripts and Special Collections
at the University of Nottingham

Our talks (last for approximately 45 minutes)

Our expert staff offer talks on a range of topics including:

- Introduction to Manuscripts & Special Collections
- Sex and scandal in Nottingham Church Court
- Supernatural stories from the East Midlands
- An unheroic history of Robin Hood
- Murder most horrid

Our tours (last for approximately 60 minutes)

- Private behind-the-scenes tour at Manuscripts and Special Collections, display of archives and rare books.
- Private curator's tour of the exhibition gallery at Lakeside Arts.

For group size, fees and refreshments, see online.

For a full list of talks available and
details on how to book, visit

nott.ac/mss-tours-talks

or email:

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We can travel to venues in
and around Nottingham or
deliver talks online.



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