

Press Release: 5 September 2005

Archives prepare for UK's biggest archive promotion that is only the beginning...

Archives across the UK and Ireland are gearing up for a fantastic archive promotion – the annual Archive Awareness Campaign. This autumn the theme of the campaign is **Beginnings** and hundreds of organisations from Cornwall to County Clare will be unveiling the treasures of the archives and inviting the public in.

Members of the public will have the chance to get hot tips on family and local history at venues across the UK and Ireland from September until December. This is also an opportunity to discover just how much of our country's history lies in the archives:

- Discover pioneering events and inventions at the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester
- Step into the shoes of an Elizabethan lady at Surrey History Centre
- Transport yourself through the history of trams, buses and trains at Lincolnshire Archives.
- Watch Bhangra dancing at Bristol Record Office
- See a collection of first drafts of plays on display at the National Library of Wales
- Bring your kids to the Woolly Workshop at Surrey History Centre
- Drop into Bristol Record Office for a comprehensive workshop about Caribbean Heritage.

For more details about these events and many more across the UK and Ireland log on to www.archiveawareness.com

Edward Stourton, journalist and archive enthusiast, said: *“I think the past is a very precious resource, both as a spur to imagination and as a way of understanding who we are. As a journalist I am constantly amazed by the way we distort the past through memory because of our prejudices and agendas. There is no substitute for primary sources, which tell you how people lived and what they actually saw, felt, said and thought”.*

Schools wanting to find out more about archives can get involved in Victorian Voices, a short story competition organised by Archive Awareness Campaign and taking place this winter. A resource pack which teachers will be able to use to inspire their class will shortly be available online at www.victorianvoices.com along with a teaching pack with ideas on how to use the

sources in Literacy, Citizenship and ICT lessons. Best of all, schools and individual winners will be able to get their hands on computer software and books provided by Adobe and Usborne children books.

*** Ends ***

Notes to Editors

- To find out about events taking place near you throughout the autumn visit www.archiveawareness.com
- To find out more about Victorian Voices please visit www.victorianvoices.com
- Archive Awareness Campaign is an ongoing campaign aiming to reveal the treasures of the 2000 archives across the UK and Ireland. It is supported by the National Council on Archives, the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council and The National Archives. For more information about Archive Awareness Campaign please contact Lucy Fulton on 020 8392 5237 or email lucy.fulton@nationalarchives.gov.uk
- The National Archives at Kew www.nationalarchives.gov.uk has one of the largest archival collections in the world, spanning 1000 years of British history, from Domesday Book to newly released government papers. The free museum and research rooms are open to the public 6 days a week.