

U3A Shared Learning Project with Spalding Gentleman's Society

The Spalding Gentleman's Society holds some 30 boxes of documents relating to Sir Joseph Banks and the Stanhope family who inherited his estate. This exciting new Shared Learning Project will work on these Banks-Stanhope papers with the support of Dustin Frazier Wood, the society's archivist.

Background to the Project

The renowned naturalist, Sir Joseph Banks lived at Revesby Abbey in Lincolnshire. Lady Banks survived him, but they had no children, so the estate passed to a distant relative James Hamilton Stanhope and then James Banks Stanhope who became the MP for North Lincolnshire. Eventually the papers relating to the house and estate during these various occupancies were deposited with the Spalding Gentleman's Society.

The Project

The project team would work with the Banks-Stanhope papers to

- Catalogue and check box contents
- Add fuller descriptions of document content
- Code documents, for example sewers, enclosure, poll books, place names, people – this coding would then be used to develop a cross-referencing system either on index cards or an electronic database to aid identification

Structure of project

The plan is not yet finalised. We hope to hold an initial meeting in June to fully decide the scope and timing for the work. The outline plan is as follows:

- Venue: Of necessity the work will have to take place at the Society's building in Spalding. They usually only open on Monday mornings but we may be able to have access at other times over the summer.
- Group size: 6
- Duration: To be confirmed once scope and timings are decided. The work will probably require about 12 sessions, depending on the duration of each session.
- Outcome: To develop a comprehensive catalogue and cross-referencing system to enable researchers to identify and locate material easily
- When: Starting in June 2018

What you will learn

Participants will be trained in how to handle, catalogue and describe documents. The SLP members will then catalogue, describe and code the documents and develop a cross-reference system to aid researchers. This is a great opportunity to explore original historic documents.

Previous experience

You do not need any previous experience; all training will be provided. We are however looking for someone with database knowledge help us set up the means to cross-reference the material.

If you are interested in finding out more or joining this project, please contact the East Midlands Shared Learning Project Coordinator on emslpcood@gmail.com or 01526 833197