

Priaulx Library

Resources at the Priaulx Library

1. GENERAL COLLECTIONS

The Priaulx Library has five primary collections of material, most of which are available for borrowing. They are as follows:

- **Ground Floor:-**

Groves Collection. Named after the first Chief Librarian, Percy Groves, this collection can be found in the South East corner of the ground floor and is primarily concerned with military history. All books are identified physically, and on the electronic catalogue as belonging to the Groves Collection. It also incorporates the Timewell and Lajoie collection of books on the merchant services.

History Collection. Situated in the South West corner of the Ground Floor, this is a general collection of books on British and European historical studies. A large majority of the collection dates from the nineteenth century, with the emphasis being on political and constitutional history. The collection is supplemented with new texts when appropriate.

Local Studies Collection. Situated to the North side of the Ground Floor and in the Family History Research Room. A wide interpretation has been taken of local studies to produce a large collection of material on all aspects of geographically local studies. It is the largest collection of local studies material on open access anywhere in Guernsey.

- **First Floor**

Newspaper Library. Situated on the South side of the first floor, the public newspaper room contains a collection of bound and microfilmed newspapers for general research purposes. The items on display represent a small part of the whole newspaper holdings. In addition are files on newspaper cuttings on various local topics which can be searched manually or electronically and a growing electronic database of many of the nineteenth century newspapers not on public display.

St. Aubyn Room. Named after the historian Giles St. Aubyn who donated many books to the library, the St. Aubyn collection has been designated for social and contextual historical studies. All the books are designated both physically and on the electronic catalogue as belonging to the St. Aubyn Collection. The collection contains subjects





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as diverse as archaeology, church architecture, costume, cartoons and glass-blowing. It also incorporates the Bob Burns collection on pottery and ceramics.

2. FINDING BOOKS

General Collections:

All books in the collection are arranged according to the *Dewey Decimal System*. This is a common form of library classification which seeks to arrange resources by SUBJECT. A numeric code of at least three digits is assigned to a subject and the books assigned one of these numbers by the librarians, they are then arranged in numerical order.

An example of how the numbers works is as follows:

900	=	History – all topics, all regions
941	=	History of Great Britain
941.08	=	History of Great Britain in the nineteenth century
941.081	=	History of Great Britain in Queen Victoria's reign

In addition to the numerical code, all books are labeled with the first three digits of the author's surname so that all books with the *same* numeric code can be filed in alphabetical order.

Local Studies Collection:

The local studies collection differs from the above example with the addition of a three letter prefix indicating the geographical or subject matter of the book. The letters used and their meanings are detailed below:

LL = General Guernsey History	LOC = Guernsey
LA = British Isles	LC = France
LD = Brittany	LE = Normandy
LF = Channel Islands	LG = Jersey
LH = Alderney	LI = Sark
LJ = Herm & Jethou	LK = Smaller C.I.
LZ = Victor Hugo	LAG = Genealogy
LOF = Biography and autobiography	

Other means of identifying and finding books are:

- Subject indexes. A subject index is available for general collections and for the local studies collection. This helps to pinpoint the location of books of specific topics by indicating their *Dewey Decimal* classification.





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- Electronic catalogue. This is available online from www.priaulxlibrary.co.uk. Books can be looked for by title, author, keyword, or classification searches.

3. NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES

In addition to books, the Priaulx Library also holds a vast collection of local newspapers and magazines. The majority of these can be viewed – either in their original condition, or as microfilm copies. Copying of articles is subject to copyright restrictions and out of copyright material can only be copied if the condition of the original is suitable.

Magazines and other serials (e.g. *The Methodist Magazine*, Parish magazines, *The Guernsey Builder* etc.) are also available, but not all are available on open access due to space considerations.

The Newspaper Archive

The Priaulx Library has the largest collection of local newspapers anywhere in the Channel Islands. More Guernsey titles are held than in the British Library Newspaper Library in Colindale, London.

It would not be appropriate to list all of the titles here, so the following list is a general guide to the most useful of the newspapers.

- *La Gazette de Guernesey* – 1791-1936. In French.
- *The Star* – 1813-1954. In English. Bought by *The Guernsey Press*
- *The Guernsey Evening Press and Star* – 1897 to present day

For a more complete list of newspapers and a history of the development of the newspapers in the nineteenth century, the following thesis is a good general guide:

A history of the French newspapers and nineteenth century English newspapers of Guernsey. Amanda Bennett, 1995. LOC 070.9 BEN

Magazines

There are a bewildering number of magazines, journals and serials associated with local studies. These range from eighteenth century religious pamphlets to nineteenth century French Circuit Methodist Magazines and twentieth century parish and school magazines. This collection is currently in the early stages of being catalogued. Some useful examples of local periodicals include:

- *The Guernsey Magazine* – This began in 1876 and contains a number of articles on local history, poems and stories in French, obituaries and local genealogies.





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- *The Elizabethan* – Elizabeth College school magazine which has run since 1889. It contains general information, obituaries and some ex-pupil biographies.
- *The Channel Islands Family History Journal* – The publication of the Channel Islands Family History Society and has run since 1979. It contains articles of interest and members names

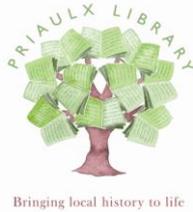
4. PHOTOGRAPHS, PICTURES AND MAPS

General Information

The Priaulx Library holds a large collection of local photographs, pictures and prints. Although the majority are not on general public access, they are generally organized into subject categories and the staff are happy to pull out relevant items. Most can be copied, subject to the usual copyright restrictions. The collection includes the following:

- **The Carel Toms Photograph collection.** A large archive of photographs taken or collected by the eminent local journalist and photographer Carel Toms. Some of the pictures are well known from publication in the Press, or in his own books, but many have never been published. They are organized by subject and must be asked for.
- **The Priaulx Library photograph collection.** A smaller archive organized by parish and by subject. Mainly of landscapes and houses.
- **The Priaulx Library portrait collection.** Photographic portraits, or photographs of portraits organized by family name. Many of these have been donated.
- **Historical Map Collection.** The library has a large and valuable collection of maps of the Channel Islands. The earliest dates from 1495. These are all available to view on request and most can be photocopied in sections if required. The most useful maps for historical research remain the 1787 Duke of Richmond map and the 1843 and 1874 detailed maps of St. Peter Port
- **The original prints and drawings collection.** These are stored in the library's Strong Room and must be requested. A list of them is available at the enquiry desk. They include a sketch by Paul Naftel and some valuable original prints of landmarks.
- **All other pictures.** A large collection of pictures, print, portraits and posters that do not fit into the above categories! They are stored in a map chest in the Council Room and therefore are not easily accessible unless requested. However, a list of them, organized by subject, can be found at the enquiry desk.





5. ALMANACS, ARTICLES AND OTHER EPHEMERA

General Information

The types of material available at the Priaulx Library are too numerous to list. The limited interest of local material outside the islands has meant that some publications are very small and inexpensive and have been damaged or lost over the years. Some material has never been published and facts on certain topics must be collected together by the staff.

It is, unfortunately, a mistake to assume that all information can be found in a book!

Below is a list of examples of 'ephemera'. It mainly consists of primary source material, which is a great bonus to researchers, but there is also no guarantee that searching through it will pay off!

- **The *Transactions of La Société Guernesiaise*.** Extremely useful local scholarly publication which includes much of the research undertaken on the island. There is a very limited subject index and some of the articles have been published separately. The staff have a broad knowledge of the material available in these.
- **Guernsey and Channel Island Almanacs.** Almanacs were basically forerunners to the Press Directories and Telephone Directories of the twentieth century. The earliest C.I. almanacs (about 1790) are fairly limited in their use, but nineteenth century ones tend to be extremely useful, containing lists of government and military personnel, trade directories and ship directories.
- **'Information' folders.** Over the years, the staff have collected together a vast wealth of material on various topics. These include subjects such as the theatre, militia, agriculture, flags and badges, royalty etc. Some of the material is original and some has been donated.
- **Manuscripts and documents.** The Strong Room contains a unique collection of original manuscripts. These include *rentes* and other legal documents from the 12th century onwards, *Livres de Perchage*, Commonplace books, poetry, letters and indentures. The usefulness of these documents in historical research generally depends on their authorship. The staff are quite happy to show these documents to those who are interested, although white gloves may have to be worn! There is a limited list of Strong Room contents available at the enquiry desk.

