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Research outputs

Special Collections is keen to collaborate on research proposals based on our collections and we are able to provide support and guidance in developing such proposals. We have recently worked on a number of highly successful research projects.

The Virtual Manuscript Room

The **Virtual Manuscript Room (http://vmr.bham.ac.uk/)** , a project which received funding from **JISC (http://www.jisc.ac.uk/)** (Joint Information Systems Committee), has been led by the University's **Institute of Textual Scholarship and Electronic Editing (http://www.itsee.bham.ac.uk/)** (ITSEE) in collaboration with Special Collections and **Library Services (https://intranet.bham.ac.uk/library)** at the University of Birmingham.

The project focused on The **Mingana Collection (/facilities/cadbury/archives/mingana/index.aspx)** of Middle Eastern Manuscripts held at Special Collections. This collection, previously unavailable on the web, has been designated as of national and international importance. As well as high-resolution images of each page, the VMR provides descriptions from the printed catalogue and from Special Collections' own records.

Suburban Birmingham: Spaces and Place, 1880-1960

An **AHRC (http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/Pages/default.aspx)** -funded (£282,000) collaborative research project, *Suburban Birmingham: Spaces and Place, 1880-1960* (budget £380,000). The project collaborators are University of Birmingham, University of Birmingham Special Collections (UBSC), **Birmingham Libraries and Archives (http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/archives)** (BLA), and **Birmingham Museums and Art Galleries (http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/museums)** (BM&AG).

Having started in October 2008, the grant was being used to buy out librarians, archivists, and curators from UBSC, BLA, and BM&AG for one week per month. Two such teams, working together for 12 months alongside Dr Richard Clay and his co-Investigators (Professor Ian Grosvenor and Dr Francesca Berry), used the collaborating institutions' collections to conduct research into the history of Birmingham's suburbs. The teams selected hundreds of objects from the collections for conservation and digitisation, and the resulting scans, along with catalogue entries and essays, were used to build **a major new website (http://www.suburbanbirmingham.org.uk/)** that will be launched in 2010. In the same year, the partner institutions also installed new displays designed by the research team, focusing on the city's suburbs.

New ideas

In the first instance please **contact the Director of Special Collections, Sue Worrall (mailto:s.j.worrall@bham.ac.uk)** to discuss suggestions and ideas for proposals.

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