



The Scrapbook History Podcast

Episode 6

Exploring scrapbooks of everyday life

Cherish Watton

Hi there and welcome to the latest episode of The Scrapbook History Podcast. Sorry you haven't heard from me for a while, but I've had a busy few months traveling around the UK visiting various archives. As I'm now a third year student (where has the time gone), I've also started the 'writing up' of my PhD thesis, the final 80,000 document that all my research culminates in. Because of this, I'm not able to release episodes on a regular basis. However, I am committed to sharing with you some of the most exciting finds from my research. Just think of it as quality over quantity - and a nice new surprise when an episode pops up in your feed.

Today's episode takes me back to the early days of my PhD. Beginning my PhD in October 2020, meant I was uncertain about which archives would open and when I would get the opportunity to visit them. It wasn't imperative to visit them in my first year, but my supervisor had wisely advised on earlier research projects to visit the archives as soon as possible. While I spent most of my first year reading secondary literature, and immersed in the catalogues of various archives, there's nothing like seeing archival material, and in my case, reading and touching actual scrapbooks.

Fairly early on in my research, I sent a speculative e-mail to Bishopsgate Institute and Special Collections in East London, who I knew collected on the history of everyday life and people, as well as individuals and communities who had brought about important social, cultural and political change. After a very vague e-mail, I quickly received a reply from the Special Collections and Archives Manager Stef Dickers, who I'm sure will be familiar to many of you in the archives and history world. Luckily, it wasn't long before I spent a few days in their Reading Room housed within a beautiful Victorian red-brick building, not far from Liverpool Street Station in London. It's in that room that my early thoughts on how I'd tell the history of scrapbooking began to evolve. I came to realise how so many different communities had all turned to scrapbooks to record something about their lives - and my challenge was, and still is, how to show this diversity through my research.

Please note this is an approximate transcript of the episode.

For today's episode, I wanted you to experience that same joy that I had when talking to Stef Dickers for the first time about the extraordinarily rich scrapbook collections that he and his team of archivists look after at Bishopsgate. Just to flag from the outset, there is some discussion of the scrapbooking of explicit, adult material - a topic which we'll be exploring in a future episode as there's quite a lot to unpack with this evolution in scrapbooking. In the meantime though, do sit back and enjoy our conversations!

Cherish Watton

Hi Stef, thanks so much for joining me today for The Scrapbook History Podcast. Could you tell listeners a bit about yourself and your role at Bishopsgate Institute?

Stef Dickers

I certainly can. So yes, I'm Stef. I've been at the Bishopsgate Institute in London for 16 years. Oh my God. Yeah, 2005. I started and it's a wonderful place at a Victorian, beautiful, Grade Two listed building that runs lots of our education courses and events. But we also have this amazing library full of incredible archives about London history, about radical protest and activist history. And more recently, since 2011, probably the largest collection about LGBTQ+ history in the country. And it's all very accessible for people to come in and look. And yeah, we get lots of people coming in and exploring it all the time.

Cherish Watton

Sounds wonderful. I mean, Bishopsgate is one of the, I think, unusual archives in that you can come along and you don't have to bring ID, you can just turn up and decide to look at the collections, which I think is brilliant for bringing lots of different people together to engage with history and archives more generally.

Stef Dickers

Definitely. And I think the kind of collecting we do, which is very much about, I don't know what historians would call history from below, about people's history, it really goes hand in hand with that that Anyone should be able to come in and access history that's about themselves, really. And particularly, I think with some of the collection areas we have the LGBTQ+ history is very important to have collections that can be accessible to people from the communities that are reflected in it. To be able to come in and not be having to bring letters from tutors and academic references. Yeah, we get all sorts of researchers, which is great.

Cherish Watton

Can you tell us a bit then about the history at Bishopsgate Institute and why it was set up and how it's evolved to be this really inclusive space today?

Stef Dickers

Yeah, definitely. It was set up in 1895 by the church just across the road from Bishopsgate, St. Botolph's Bishopsgate, which at the end of the Victorian period, got told to do

something with the money had been given by rich people over about 500 years. People would die and leave charitable gifts to the church. Wonderful stories of things getting left behind like in 1590 someone leaves half an acre of swamp land in Aldgate to the church, which obviously by 1850, the church are rubbing their hands with glee. Lots of these gifts were given and then there was a big Royal commission at the end of the Victorian period, which told all the City of London parishes to do something more active with their charitable funds. And lucky for us at St Botolph's Bishopsgate, there was quite a social reform in educationist vicar called William Rogers, who decided to set the Institute up as a sort of working people's institute cultural centre. He was very much one of those social missionaries, to the extent, very much wanting to improve the lot of the people that lived here. So when he got told to do something, yeah, he went to town. He bought the land on which the Institute stands, £70,000. I don't think you can get a garage in London for that.

Cherish Watton

Definitely not.

Stef Dickers

No, no. And the building was designed by a gentleman called Charles Harrison Townsend, who also went on to do the Horniman Museum and the Whitechapel Gallery as well. And we've done pretty much the same thing since then. So there's always been courses here that people could come to and I'd like to think they're slightly less, the early courses were "a social and industrial history of England", you know, they were quite in detail and lots of events as well, but quite wonderfully, I think, where it ties into what we do now, it, even though it was set up by a church, a Church of England church, it was always open to anyone who wanted to come into the building. So the area at the time the Institute was opened was a very diverse area, so a big Jewish population here, a big Irish population, but there were no stipulations about who could use the Institute. So it's always been a wonderfully open place where knowledge and education and learning has been celebrated. So I think that tradition has carried on through to the current day. And particularly it was in my mind when I took over as the archivist here, that the collection should be accessible and open to everyone.

Cherish Watton

Definitely. And it sounds really interesting that it started out with that wider educational impetus. And how did that then shift in terms of being an archive of lots of different people's histories?

Stef Dickers

Well, it's quite interesting because I think they've given librarians too much freedom, really, in the Institute, which is quite fun. So I am one of a series of librarians who has been given access to probably too much money and too much power. The second librarian here was a gentleman called Charles Goss who started here in 1897 as the librarian and stayed until 1941, so literally refused to go. He was very much the powerhouse at the Institute at the time. And started as a lot of librarians do, to collect things that were of particular interest to

them. And his real passion was London history and would go out and you look at the oldest accession books, "I've just popped to the auction and bought 16 English Civil War pamphlets about the Moorgate area". And so he started to change it a bit to a special collection as well and his real thing was London history. And then subsequent librarians after him brought in an archive or two.

But I think very much it did when I came to the Institute, it stopped collecting and was a bit unsure about the direction. So it's very much Stef "think of how the Institute could move forward" and through a series of happy accidents and I think strategic planning on my part. I'm very against this thing that archives reflect the archivists that run them, whatever they say, or the body that runs the archive. You know, we've moved now to being very much focused on the archive, and the archive being the thing, rather than at certain points, the Institute tried to be a reference library and a lending library, but now it's solely with the archive collections. And it's obviously as an archive would run, reference only, come in and look at the material here. And so we've got there eventually, and it's, you know, it's done well and we're getting the highest figures we've ever got, so there's a real thirst of knowledge that we're collecting here, which is very exciting to see.

Cherish Watton

Absolutely. You're not only collecting that knowledge, but then making it really accessible. I think, yeah, some of the courses that you're doing as well, things around photography and zine-making, it's very creative and hands-on and I think getting people to think about how they record their lives in really interesting ways.

Stef Dickers

It's definitely moved now that the Institute collections to the heart of what the Institute does. So a lot of the courses stem from subjects and themes that are covered in the collections. And we now have a lot of concerts that take inspiration from the archive. So we've got concerts going on shortly using stuff around some of the sex work collections we've got here, which is very interesting. And so yeah, no it's lovely to see that, to see the archive used not only as archives tend traditionally to be used by academics or researchers, but also by artists and rappers and all sorts of different people who maybe wouldn't engage with archives.

Cherish Watton

And I think it's bringing it to such a large audience and a lot of archives struggle to do that. So yeah, something very special you have going on at Bishopsgate with that kind of close connection you have with the cultural industries and people. Do you find that you're still acquiring material?

Stef Dickers

Yeah, it's coming in a lot. And my colleagues will say, Stef, please say stop at some point, but just get offered such wonderful things here and, and we're sort of delighted, and we've still got space at the moment to accept the material. So very passionate about the

collections developing, and the Institute is very supportive of that as well, about new material coming in to add to the collections. So, yeah, we're still coming in, more and more, yeh. 42 boxes have literally just arrived at the door that I should be going and seeing too after this.

Cherish Watton

So one of the first times I came to Bishopsgate was because I was wanting to find out a bit more about some of the scrapbooks in your collection. I remember sending you a very open-ended email, dear archivist, do you by any chance have many scrapbooks and your collections that might be of interest and have now come back many times to look at a real range of scrapbooks in your collection. So can you give our listeners a flavour of some of those scrapbooks that you look after?

Stef Dickers

Yeah, there's quite a wide array of different kinds of scrapbooks we've got. I mean, depending on what collection you look in at the Institute. So I mean, definitely the London collection there's quite a few scrapbooks of people's topographical interest in London, so people have compiled stuff, either about certain areas of London. We've got a couple of Coronation scrapbooks you might have looked at before, where people have got very inspired, which I think is quite a common thing, I think people recorded that. But also some quite interesting personal scrapbooks as well. One came in not so long ago of a woman who was the real-life Venus, was a beauty model who had kept her own scrapbook about her life at that time, but very much she was a London character, so it was kept there. And then on to more, some political scrapbooks in the collection of political ephemeral but very much the LGBT collections have been another collection where a lot of scrapbooks have come in. And it's been quite interesting to see how that was quite a theme of gay men, particularly keeping scrapbooks, particularly in the 60s, 70s and 80s. Some really wonderful stuff here, I know previously, you've talked in one of your episodes about the Wensley scrapbooks, which are really brilliant. There's some real gems here and then some more frivolous ones. We have a person's Spice Girls scrapbook. I think we have a David Bowie scrapbook as well that someone kept. And probably my favourite recent edition was the Danny LaRue fan scrapbooks, which I bought off eBay I'm sorry Cherish, I did want to nick those before you got hold of them. They came up for about £5.99 on eBay and I just couldn't resist he purchased those. And it was all the tickets where the person had gone to see Danny LaRue in Blackpool in 82 and stuff like that.

Cherish Watton

So how fantastic. And you get such an insight into fan cultures and how people engage with lots of different kind of fan cultures.

Stef Dickers

Definitely, definitely, definitely.

Cherish Watton

That's interesting, in terms of where you're acquiring these scrapbooks, then. eBay is one

source and that's something that I've also been looking at for some of my research because despite being really important sources, as you say, they can just be on eBay for less than £20, despite offering a window into the lives of their compilers. So can you tell us a bit about how you acquire scrapbooks, who's giving them to you or how are you finding them?

Stef Dickers

I think people are sometimes quite surprised. And I know you might have found this, you want their scrapbooks. They're like, 'do you want this', depending on what's in it. And we get donated quite a few. People say, "Oh I've got scrapbooks I kept about this" or stuff like that. So a lot of donations come in, quite often as parts of wider collections. Someone will give a collection of letters and diaries, and then there'll be scrapbooks in there as well.

But also, yeah, I do do things that go on. Of I see these come up, and a couple have come up, some of the more ornate ones, particularly the one I talked about of the model that came up through an auction dealer who said, this has come up, would this be of interest to you? So I think where we're known to collect this kind of material and be interested in this ephemeral material, that might not be maybe as hot on the list to a lot of other archives. Other archives might go for the letters from Charles Darwin, and we'll go for, you know, some bloke's scrapbooks from the 1950s. We occasionally get notified if they're for sale, but predominantly, I would say, through donations. And I like that, really, I like stuff that comes into the archive here to be donated as well, because it not only leaves us with wonderful documents, but empowers the person who donates them to think they actually, they did something that was quite important.

Cherish Watton

It's really important then that people can do, perceive the value in in these documents. Because I think, especially scrapbooks, they are seen as, perhaps sources or as documents which perhaps are not worthy of preserving because they are quite scrappy, they can be in really poor condition. But I think you should say, the fact that people themselves, who made the scrapbooks, or their family members, then give that to an archive such as yourself, is, you say, quite a powerful act.

Stef Dickers

Well, it is isn't it? I mean, you look at a lot of scrapbooks, and it's stuff that it exists elsewhere, so whether it's press cuttings or photos cut from papers or but the important thing is, and the interesting thing is, the way the person arranged that and ordered the information themselves, to access it, and what they've kept and what they've not kept in the scrapbook. And where we're very interested in that everybody's history being important, and how people relate to the history they're seeing around them. I think scrapbooks are wonderful examples of how people have interpreting the world around them, whether it be band they like, or some of the more exotic ones we have, what people find sexually attractive, I think they are very important in that reason. So we would accept here very much anyone's scrapbooks about the topic areas that we collect.

Cherish Watton

That's really good to hear. And I think if listeners do have scrapbooks that might be tucked away in their attics or in those keepsake cupboards, then you're looking for a home, then do get in touch with Stef. You've touched a couple of times then on your LGBTQ+ collections of scrapbooks, could you tell listeners a little bit more about the scrapbooks you have in your collections? Because I think that potentially is quite an unusual or quite unknown use of the scrapbook genre that would perhaps surprise some listeners.

Stef Dickers

Yeah, there's definitely like there's a few different sort of trends I've noticed with it particularly, and it's definitely a phenomenon I've noticed in a few different ways, Really. One very much way is obviously with the collections coming in and there being the partial decriminalization in 1967 of homosexuality, you do notice a lot of gay men kept stuff that they saw reflecting themselves from newspapers, whether it'd be cuttings that were not at all friendly to homosexuality, had been kept and scrapbooked or kept in one way or another. And we have quite a few scrapbooks on that. But I must, I have to say, Cherish, I don't want to upset your ears, but a slightly more exotic in some of them as well, so we have a lot of scrapbooks where people have kept things that they've noticed, you know, that sexually attractive to them and kept scrapbooks.

But I find that very interesting that early scrapbooking, particularly of where homosexuality was obviously not as really acceptable visible in society as it was now, a lot of gay men would keep scrapbooks as a kind of reassurance, comfort to themselves that there were other gay men out there that they might not have been meeting at the time. So we have a few scrapbooks, like full of cuttings and where people have cut out stuff and even, you know, heartthrobs they had at the time in there as well. So that's quite powerful. Some of the more exotics ones are just wonderful fun where people have gone to town on those. But it definitely, yeah, there seems to be quite a lot of scrapbooks coming in in this area of our collection, which is great.

Cherish Watton

Thank you for that nice flavour of those collections. You told me about a year or so ago about the Vicar's collection of scrapbooks

Stef Dickers

We're going to go there, Cherish? Are we really going to go there?

Cherish Watton

If you're happy to go there we can go there

Stef Dickers

Remember to read a listener's warning.

Cherish Watton

But yeah, if you want to give a sense of the really interesting kind of history behind that series of scrapbooks, because I think it deals with some of those themes that you've discussed, in quite interesting ways.

Stef Dickers

I mean, it's very much become an urban legend when we collected a big collection of press cuttings called the Lesbian, Gay and Newsmedia Archive back in 2011. And I say a big collection is 350,000 press cuttings, so quite a big collection. In one of the drawers was this series of scrapbooks from the 1970s, you could tell by the covers, they were very, very 1970s. And I've inquired about who these scrapbooks were from. Well, they were from a vicar, I was told, and they were found in his house after he died, by a slightly more liberal side of his family, maybe because the vicar apparently was very closeted, very not out, and I was told was slightly homophobic in his public persona, but had kept these scrapbook to one side, and they've been donated to the collection as something that's quite important. And this is quite interesting. And they basically were, there must have been about 15, 17 scrapbooks, Oh, quite weirdly, with very childish covers, with bunnies and stuff on. But you opened up, and it definitely was rather more in exotic because when you opened up, and there lots of cuttings from gay adult magazines of particularly asute men with moustaches, seemed to be the particular taste of this vicar stuck in, but also rearranged in various ways to indicate they were up to some kind of sexual act. I should leave this to the listener's imagination, but they were obviously, someone spent quite a lot of time on and just very interesting to see. And like really quite, I've now seen this kind of thing done in art shows, what this vicar was obviously doing in the 70s, where he was cracking stuff out and collaging it and these scrapbooks, but with just a very interesting record of one person's obviously taste and what they were doing, so very secretively, I think is very interesting and people just love them when they come in. They're like, "these must be exhibited in art shows". You never know what the vicar's name was. But so we're definitely not outing him without this permission, but they are wonderful items to have from that time.

Cherish Watton

And I think, as you say, that the juxtaposition between the front covers, I've since then done a bit of research in the archive and found this, this scrapbook was advertised as a children's scrapbook, so a very interesting playfulness with the scrapbooking genre, and obviously the content then that is stored within its pages. Why do you think archiving these types of scrapbooks are particularly important for you to do at Bishopsgate?

Stef Dickers

These more exotic-y scrapbooks?

Cherish Watton

Yeah, the more erotic collections of scrapbooks.

Stef Dickers

As I've mentioned to you previously, we now have a lot of stuff about fetish sexuality in the history of that as well, and sexualities that have had to be hidden away for various reasons, whether it be being illegal to be gay prior to 1967. So sexualities that have been hidden, and therefore your scrapbooks become quite a good way of having a sexuality, particularly when you've not got something visibly there on the top shelf, for example, that you can go and access. And they're important, I think, as a record of sexual tastes, when sexual tastes were maybe not permitted or were not as socially acceptable as they are now. We have a set of amazing, amazing scrapbooks about rubber macintoshes that were kept by a person and donated anonymously to us. And they're 28 volumes of pictures of Rubber Macintoshes and ladies wearing rubber macintoshes. All seems wonderfully innocent to us now, but obviously to this person, that this was their real thing. And they kept these scrapbooks from the 1940s right through to the 2000s and it was literally every single clipping from any magazine, whether it be very, very innocent magazines like Sunday supplements, through to much naughtier magazines. They saw someone with a rubber macintosh, it was cut out and arranged in these scrapbooks. And it's like the person is making their own pornography. I think, particularly interesting in this sense, because it's something that's so you would see this all the time, but to this person, this was their real thing, and they're sexuality. So they were literally cutting this out and arranging their sexual interests, to which there was nothing that catered for that, when this person was growing up in the 1950s.

So I think they're quite powerful things. And you think that this is something that has got that person through and a source of strength to them, but also really important in terms of understanding how tastes change, how people express their sexuality prior to things like the internet, which no one needs to do anything anymore, but you can find out anything you want. And they really are quite beautifully done in a weird way, because they're all arranged with real love and care. This is quite interesting to see.

Cherish Watton

I think that definitely comes true, especially with a number of volumes that people are putting together in the series. I think most of those collections are at Bishopsgate, there's not just one scrapbook, it's part of this multilevel series. And, particularly in relation to the rubber macintosh scrapbooks, I think the 1st scrapbook in the series, I think it's evident that somebody's actually cut the items out from another scrapbook and then kind of repositioned them again. But everything is done so precisely and neatly. And as you say, collecting over decades, it does show the immense amount of care and, and, and even a level of obsessiveness, potentially in kind of totally going everywhere to make sure it's in that collection and in that homemade archive.

Stef Dickers

And you think of the amount of time that takes, because these are full up of stuff, cut from magazines, newspapers, cards picked up, fashion catalogues. This person was on the go all times, looking for things and cutting things out and folding them neatly in the pocket and taking a man to be scrapbook at a later date. So I find that also a bit sweet as well, that

much care went into it, but also so fascinating that, that kind of, because I'm so lazy, I wouldn't be able to do that myself.

Cherish Watton

Yeah, that is a sense that these scrapbooks are a product of a huge amount of time, especially when you are collecting over that duration. You've got to have a real loyalty and perseverance to be able to, to put altogether.

Stef Dickers

And I love that way, almost in a way, they're sort of artistic in many ways as well, because, you know, you have a lot of photo album here as well, which like, know, you stick the photos in this way next to that one, next that one, you're almost prepared for you to wear it. But where you get the blank page of a scrapbook and how people arrange stuff in the scrapbooks as well, is also very telling. And may you've had a look at some of the rubber macintosh ones, and there's one point in it where they've literally done this sort of sea of rubber boots all next to each other and in different directions. And you think someone's taken a lot of time over that. And it's an artistic expression as well. I think this is quite interesting. Rather than just right next, next one, next one, next one.

Cherish Watton

Yeah. There's a lot of care on the aesthetic values.

Stef Dickers

Yeah, yeah, yeah. And people who've come in to look at that scrapbook "these are incredible, you know, need to be published." But, I love a scrapbook, they're so good. I think you agree.

Cherish Watton

Absolutely. Yeah. I was so glad that I obviously found out about Bishopsgate's collections quite early on, actually, in my research journey, because it has very much shaped how I've understood scrapbooks and, and obviously the importance of your role as an archivist in actually giving a home and recognizing the value of these collections.

Stef Dickers

It's definitely, part and parcel as I said, previously, of the collecting we do, and how much stuff is easily lost, like scrapbooks, the ephemeral kind of stuff that is easily lost because it's maybe not considered historically significant, but does tell us so much. And the other aspect of starting to get more scrapbooks in is another project we run, which is the Great Diary Project here.

Cherish Watton

Yes, yes, yes.

Stef Dickers

So this is a project we started in 2012 to rescue every people's diaries, diaries that can't find

a home elsewhere. So diaries are people, you know, if you're famous, if you're rich, if you're a soldier, or if you're a big person in that local area, there's a home for the diaries. But those people who just get on with life day to day, keep a diary of what they do, and quite often they get lost when the person passes away, the family throw away, etc. So the opposite idea is set up by Dr Irving Finkel and Dr Polly North. And it's been here since 2012 and 15,000 diaries later, they're still going strong. But it's quite interesting, because we very quickly came to the observation that not all diaries were written in Lett's diaries, but also some people's scrapbooks of their life. Quite interesting. And there's one particular set, I don't know if you've actually looked at Cherish, I think you have, of the guy who obviously went back at the end of his life and scrapbooked every year of his life, from obviously boxes and boxes of ephemera and documents, coins, school reports, everything, he kept, all in these scrapbooks. But also how a lot of people do this as well like on holidays, they create these holiday diaries, but they are scrapbooks, really with a little bit writing in them, and the mementos of what they were seeing and what they did, and train tickets and bus tickets, and definitely a feature of this collection as well. And whether it counts in the same way, I think it probably does.

Cherish Watton

Absolutely.

Stef Dickers

But yeah, very much a lot more coming in through this collection now, but in a very telling personal life stories through scrapbooking as well which is quite interesting. And how people do it, and what they choose to scrapbook in a way, and what they choose not to scrapbook, so, yeah, they're just coming in more and more, so there'll be plenty more for you to look at, I'm sure, in a few months.

Cherish Watton

Well, that's what, that's wonderful. Thank you. I think the challenge is that there are just so many scrapbooks in your collection and it's deciding which ones to really explore. But I think, as you say, the way in which scrapbooks can kind of be stimulated by certain events in your life, whether it's holidays. And I talked to people that like, Oh yeah, when I went on the school trip, or when I went on holidays, I made a scrapbook. And it might just be a one off or it might have kickstarted then a wider practice, but it is really interesting to see what moments are recorded. And as you say, what also isn't archived in the scrapbook is just a telling.

Stef Dickers

Yeah, definitely. And I mean, my favorites are, the holiday ones are really fabulous. I think when we see, I bought one market stall in Spitalfields market of a woman who went on holiday. I think her name was Pamela in the 70s to the Algarve. And she kept this amazing, I mean, it's like 70s gold, fashions in it. Like, oh my God, it's definitely like, "are you being served", you know, but it's quite interesting to see her meeting people there. And she's scrapbooking the label of the wine bottle that she got drunk on. And this is where the

restaurant, this mysterious Spanish guy took her out for a meal you know, stories come out, but the way she'd kept this and is obviously quite a really amazing holiday. Yeah. It's just, it's just magical in a way to see that kind of thing. And because you're seeing almost artefacts from there as well, in terms of these labels and these documents and tickets that people sticking in, which brings it more, I think, to me personally, to life to see these things as well as just reading the text about these events.

Cherish Watton

And I think that's one of the lovely qualities of scrapbooks is the fact that you can touch them and you can feel the things that the scrapbookers did all those years ago. And, and think about what that then says about how they want to, to reflect on or say something about their own lives.

Stef Dickers

Yeah, no, I love them to bits.

Cherish Watton

On that note, then if we have listeners who are thinking about throwing away their scrapbooks, what advice would you give to them Stef?

Stef Dickers

Well, you might be surprised to say no, definitely don't. Definitely keep them because they are amazing records of interests, of lives, do get them into an archive one way or another and if an archive says no to them, ask them why. And if they say no, just get in contact with me. And it's quite likely I will say yes, because I very rarely say no to anything that comes in the archive, though, if it's completely off kilter to our collecting policy, I might have to. But yeah, if it's in, you know, we would love to provide them with a home, but no, they need to be kept. I know I did some when I was young. I wish I'd kept them, full of gig tickets and stuff, which I God knows what happened to them. Keep them because they are important things.

Cherish Watton

Thank you. And just finally, how can people actually get in touch with you if they want to talk to you more about Bishopsgate's collections or to give to them?.

Stef Dickers

Literally just drop us a line. We're very welcoming and smiley. You can either drop us an email at library@bishopsgate.org.uk. Or give us a phone call on 020 7392 9290 and, or just come in, come and visit us, which is lovely if you live nearby. Our website's got lots of details about the stuff we have here and the events that are taking place. And, you know, the Institute is the Institute because people come in and engage with it. So do come to a concert, come to a lecture, come use the library and, and come and enjoy the Institute.