

## CHARTER AT LAST

### EDICATION SERVICE

As the Lord Lieutenant of Somerset, Lord Hylton, walked down the aisle of the Abbey carrying the Royal Charter, the long untold wait was nearly over. A few short minutes the Charter would be given to the Chancellor-designate and Vice-Chancellor, constituting and founding the Bath University of Technology. Previously a 275 yards long procession of University and Civic representatives had walked through the city, to the cheers of the

populace. The acclaim of the citizens seemed to indicate that the recent 'Sul Minerva' business was forgiven and forgotten.

The service in the Abbey was simple and effective, contrasting suitably with the pomp and ceremony of the occasion. The sermon preached by the Rev. David Jenkins, Chaplain of Queen's College, Oxford, centred on the question "Why a Technological University." Unfortunately, the amplification system distorted the natural acoustics of the Abbey and

### INSTALLATION OF THE CHANCELLOR

On the Thursday morning, the Investiture of Lord Hinton as Chancellor took place in the Assembly Rooms. As the procession entered the hall, a fanfare was played by trumpeters of the Somerset and Cornwall Light Infantry.

### Confusion

There was some confusion as the procession mounted a flower-decorated tiered platform, specially constructed for the occasion. A little humour was in evidence amongst the pageantry as be-robed figures scrambled over

secure themselves a seat.

The Pro-Chancellor, Sir James Pitman, declared the Congregation open and the Registrar then read portions of the Charter, relating to the objectives of the University.

A splendid Silver Mace was presented to the University on behalf of the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths by Sir Owen Wansborough-Jones. He remarked that the Mace, representing Goldsmiths interest in Craft and Education, confirmed the practice of the Company in making a gift of modern silver to new

### Lord Hinton's Speech

After being installed as Chancellor of the University by Mr. G. Moore, the Vice-Chancellor, Lord Hinton delivered a particularly lucid speech on what a Technological University should be. He concluded by stressing that "There is an old and cruel truth that nothing succeeds like success. We have all the ingredients of success and we are determined not only to deserve success, but to achieve it."

The Chancellor's first duty for the morning was to confer a number of honorary degrees.

## Archives & Research Collections

### REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2025-2026

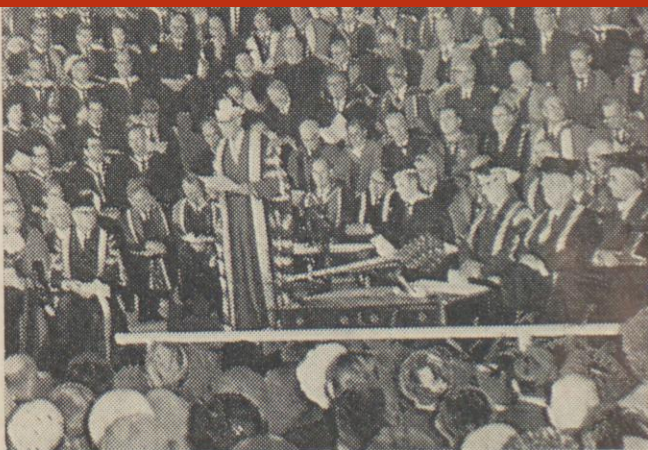
The Mace donated to Bath University at the Installation Ceremony

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and all  
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much of the logic of the sermon was lost.

### Charter Presented

The climax of the afternoon came with the presentation of the Charter, with its great Royal Seal, to Lord Hinton, the Chancellor-designate. In return a gift was presented from the University to be given to the Cathedral of Mbale in Uganda, on behalf of the



LORD HINTON addressing the assembly during the

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*The Library aims to build, maintain and make accessible unique and distinctive collections in support of institutional research and teaching activities, and to preserve a lasting historical record of the University.*

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***Find out more at:***

**<https://www.bath.ac.uk/topics/library-archives-and-research-collections/>**

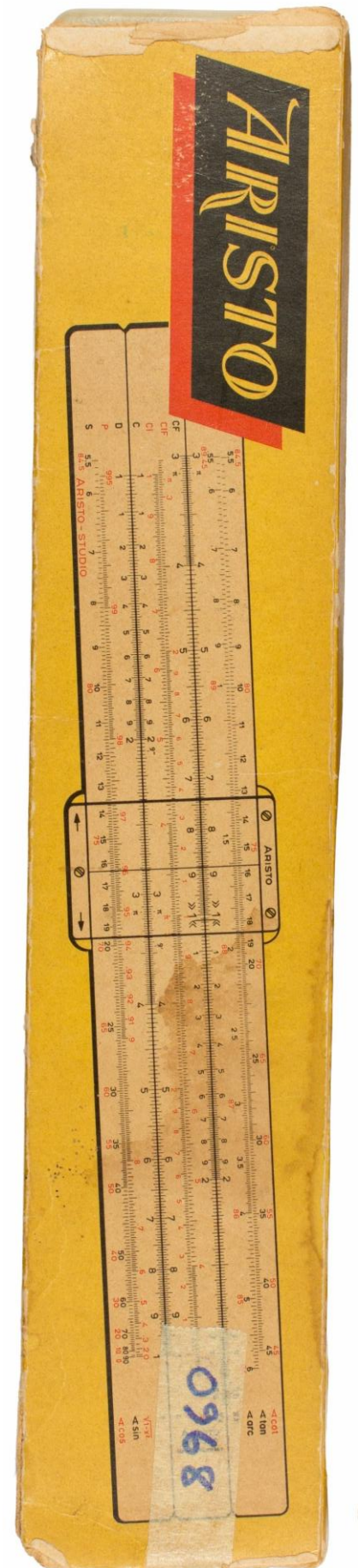
# Slide Rule Collection

Before the arrival of electronic calculators, hand-operated mechanical slide rules were indispensable to scientific and engineering computation. Based on the ground-breaking work of John Napier (1550-1617) in developing logarithms, English mathematician William Oughtred created the first slide rule around 1622. His basic design was improved and extended over many years before finally being popularised during the mid-1800s.

Making calculations quicker and more reliable, the slide rule was easy to operate, portable, inexpensive and readily available. Its use became widespread amongst engineers, surveyors, chemists, astronomers and scientists across Europe and, after World War I, was adopted in the USA where it was also known as a slipstick.

Slide rules played a crucial part in the construction of iconic 20th century buildings, such as the Empire State Building, and the development of transistor radios, automobile transmissions and commercial jet airliners. Soviet engineers used a slide rule to design the Sputnik space vessel and slide rules accompanied NASA astronauts on several Apollo missions.

By the 1960s instruction on using a slide rule was a key component of any engineering education. University of Bath students required to become proficient in the operation of slide rules were able to take up employment in science and engineering based industries with a solid practical understanding of their application.



With the introduction of inexpensive pocket calculators slide rules were overshadowed and from the mid-1970s became obsolete.

The collection was donated to the Library by Mr Denis Ripley in March 2025. It comprises 50 slide rules in a diverse range of styles, sizes and material dating from the 1930s through to the 1970s. They include examples manufactured in the UK, Europe, Japan and the USA. A small amount of additional material, comprising two instruction manuals, two linear slide rules and a 'spirule', was donated by the family of the late Dr John A. Jefferis (1935-2024) in July 2025.

***View contents of the Slide Rule Collection at:***  
<https://www.bath.ac.uk/corporate-information/slide-rule-collection/>



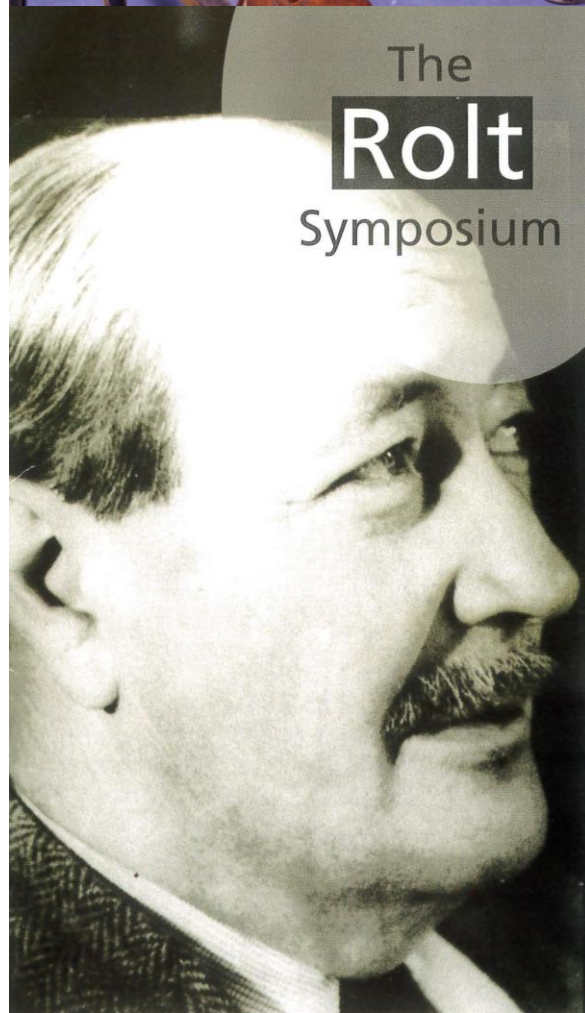
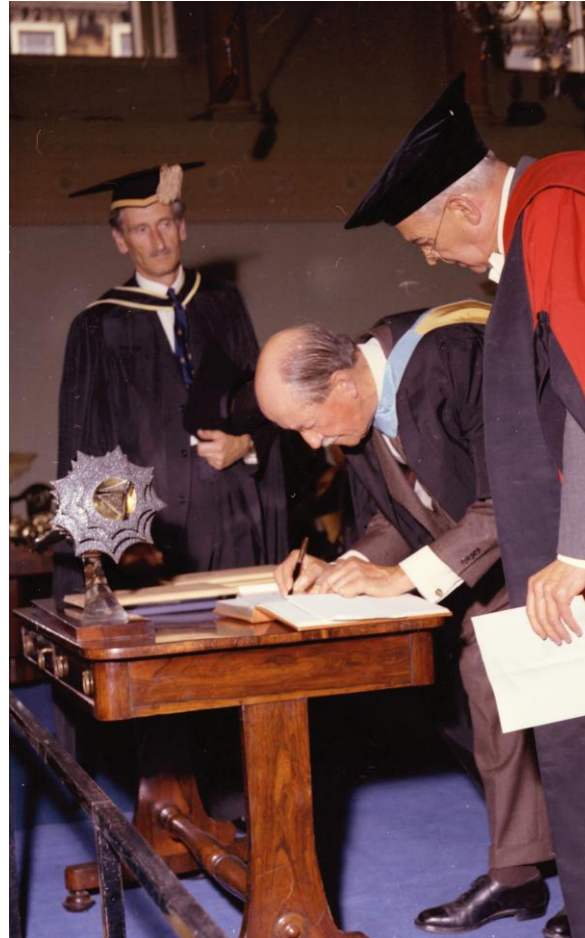
# L. T. C. Rolt Collection

Lionel Thomas Caswell (Tom) Rolt was born in Chester in 1910. After serving engineering apprenticeships, setting up a garage business, and helping to establish the Vintage Sports Car Club, he became a full-time writer in 1939. As an author his publications cover canals, railways, motor cars, and many other aspects of engineering history. His biographies of great engineers, such as Isambard Kingdom Brunel (1806-1859), are still highly regarded. As a campaigner, activist and champion of industrial heritage Rolt is best known for his involvement with the Inland Waterways Association, the Talylllyn Railway Preservation Society, the Newcomen Society, and the Association for Industrial Archaeology. His regular collaboration with Professor Angus Buchanan, School of Humanities & Social Sciences, led to the establishment of the University of Bath Rolt Fellowship. He was awarded an honorary degree by the University in 1973.

The collection, a comprehensive library of Rolt's works, was painstakingly assembled over a number of years and donated to the University of Bath by Mr. Peter Roberts.

***View contents of the L.T.C. Rolt Collection at:***

**<https://www.bath.ac.uk/corporate-information/l-t-c-rolt-collection/>**



The  
**Rolt**  
Symposium

Cornwall

5 September 2010

# Microfinance Collection

From the mid-1990s until the 2020s microfinance - financial services made available to relatively poor people often excluded from traditional banking - was an important focus of public policy globally. Substantial research was conducted into its positive and negative impact on poverty around the world and into practical ways of assessing this impact. The demise of microfinance can be linked to the rise of digital financial services and its absorption into the wide agenda of promoting 'financial inclusion'.

The collection comprises books, official documents, reports, doctoral theses and grey literature assembled by Professor James Copestake and colleagues based in the Centre for Development Studies at the University of Bath whose work involved collaboration with other UK universities and with microfinance institutions around the world, including in Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Ghana, Bolivia, Mexico, Poland, South Africa and the USA.



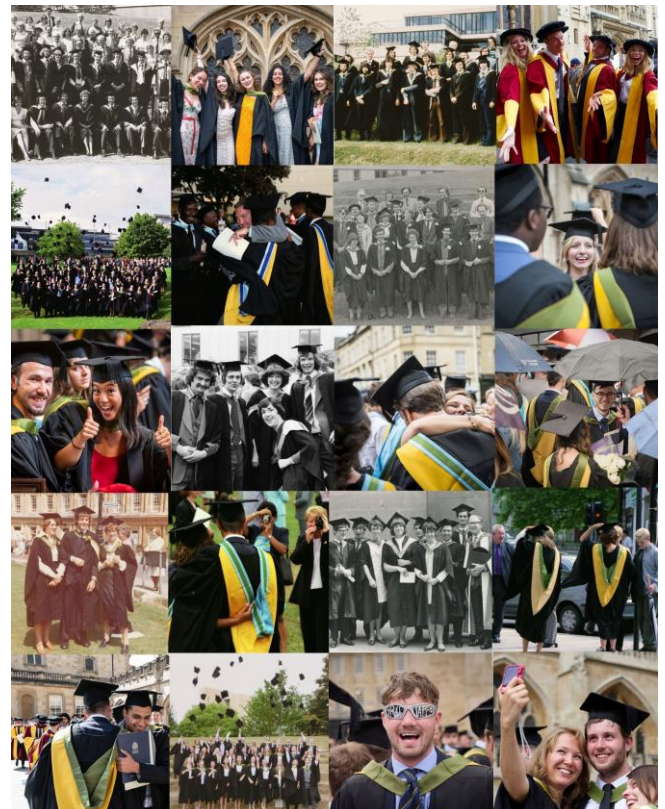


# General strike 1926

Material from the Bath Trades Union Council Collection made a guest appearance in 'Bath and the 1926 General Strike', an exhibition hosted by the Museum of Bath at Work between 2nd May and 25th June. Part of *General Strike 100*, a programme of events across the UK organised by the General Federation of Trade Unions to mark the centenary of the general strike of May 1926, the exhibition was opened by MP for Bath Wera Hobhouse.

## We ❤️ archives

Although we don't have our own account, Archives & Research Collections regularly contribute to various University social media channels. Sometimes we're asked for very specific content - Sir David Attenborough's 100th birthday, the Chinese New Year. Sometimes we supply #Throwback Thursday images (not always on a Thursday) and sometimes we supercharge a post by adding a bit of history to the current moment. We got lots of love for our 60 years of graduation images.



# Bringing butterflies back

It's easy to think of archives as things about the past and only about the past, but packaging time up into chronological compartments is not a good idea. Stuff gets missed. When Dr Rick Gawne, Curator of Natural History, Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas, visited to consult the butterfly notebooks of W. H. Dowdeswell (1914-1996) he was excited by the Meadow Brown (*Maniola jurtina*) data they contain and its usefulness for his ongoing research in the field of evolutionary developmental biology. As an academic who's also a curator he reminds his students not to underestimate the value of looking back to move forward in their learning.

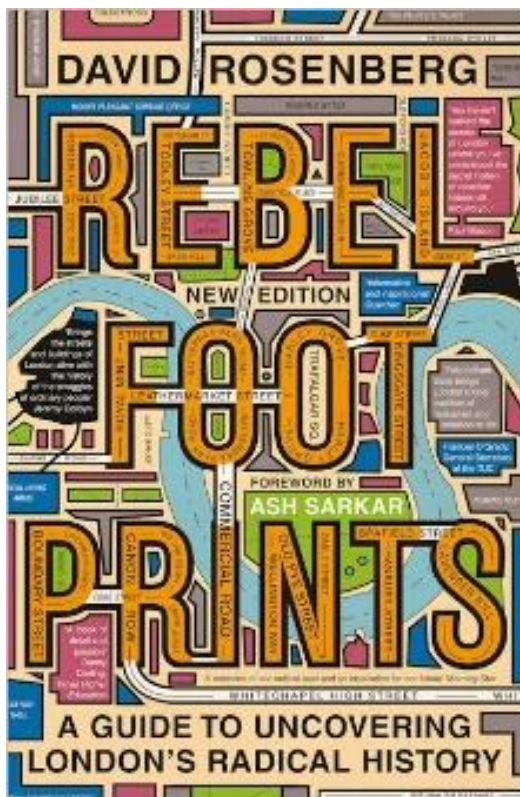
**Find out more at:**

<https://archives.bath.ac.uk/cabinet-of-curiosities/story/100>



# Keeping it in the family (1)

Our academic setting and the nature of our collections mean that we host fewer visits by genealogists than some repositories, so it was a proper treat for us to meet Esther and hear about her grandfather. Co-founder of the London Judo Society in 1946, an international competitor and author of several instruction manuals Eric Dominy first learned judo in a German prisoner of war camp. The sport in which he excelled became a defining feature of a life filled with adventure and achievement.



## Right and left

The A. K. Chesterton Collection is one of our most frequently consulted collections. It's used for all sorts of academic projects, from undergraduate dissertations to professorial research, by all sorts of people from the USA to Hong Kong and almost everywhere in between. Despite this variety, users of the collection have something in common; their study focuses on some aspect of the (extreme) political right. So, it made a nice change to be on the other side of things when author David Rosenberg referenced the collection while preparing a new edition of his book *Rebel Footprints*.



## Sporting bodies

Today sportswear is all about fashion, branding and marginal gains but there was a time when the stakes were higher. At the end of the 19th century when women began to take part in organised sport the clothes a woman wore communicated the role she was expected to perform. They conveyed passiveness, delicacy and restriction. Emmy Sale's PhD, entitled 'Dressed for the Field - Gender, Bodies and Society through the Material Culture of Field Hockey', explores how what women were wearing on the hockey pitch helped change our view of women everywhere. She visited in March to make use of the AEWH Collection.

## Keeping it in the family (2)

Sometimes a digital copy just isn't enough. In January Seungbin Yoo travelled from Toronto, Canada, to set his hands on the hard copy original of his father's 1992 PhD thesis entitled 'An Approach to Evaluating Exhibition Spaces in Art Galleries'. He wrote, 'Thank you again for the precious opportunity to see my father's dissertation. You have made my visit to the UK so much more meaningful! It is something that I will not forget for a long time.'



# *Sul*: Read all about it!

We've recently digitised 85 editions of *Sul*, the University of Bath student newspaper published between 1966 and 1974. We did this to keep them safe and to make them more easily accessible.

The newspapers give us a rare and very valuable glimpse of student life when things here were first getting started. This value comes with some complications, though. The newspapers are, inevitably, 'of their time'. The language used and views expressed are not always what we would hope or expect to find today. This means there's a tension between wanting to provide access to historical records and a desire to create some kind of barrier to the free circulation and multiplication (by humans and by machines) of potentially harmful content.

Digitisation is often seen simply as a neat way of removing barriers to access. This is true but it's not the full picture. Digitisation is not a neutral process. Archives are altered by it. Digitising archives dislocates them from their materiality, the circumstances of their creation and their temporal existence. It dehumanises them. Their evidential value is reduced. An edition of *Sul* published on 30th May 1969, is not the same thing as a digital copy of that same edition made 56 years later. Our relationship to the two things is different. It has to be.

Making digitised content freely available online can - often does - result in unmediated access. This is dangerous. Decontextualization flattens complexity, distorts meaning and facilitates inauthentic representation. Machines are not good with things like irony, sarcasm, satire, lies, provocation, misdirection, exaggeration, nonsense, creative disruption or intentional contrariness. These are very human things. They are also things that appear a lot in the pages of student newspapers published between 1966 and 1974.

Digitisation unavoidably involves reproduction, repetition and amplification. In 1970 over 80% of the University of Bath student population was male; almost all undergraduates were from the UK. The newspapers capture a particular voice speaking to a particular audience. And while the white male student experience is absolutely authentic, it is certainly not the universal student experience. It's important that we don't lose sight of this built-in bias.



To navigate these challenges, provide context and encourage critical engagement with the newspapers, while celebrating them as a profoundly precious information source, we built the digital *Sul* shelf. We asked students, staff, alumni and friends to select an article and respond to it, participating in a kind of enhanced shared curation. The *Sul* shelf is a place to connect, explore, comment and take ownership. So far content includes folk music, humour, visitors from China, igloo building at Kings Weston, outrage, the evolution of drag, a speech by Enoch Powell, dismay, joyfulness, the launch of the student radio station, pride, a crocheted coral reef for Earth Day and a poem about information governance.

With huge thanks to all our wonderful contributors!

**To read all about it visit the *Sul* shelf at:**  
<https://archives.bath.ac.uk/cabinet-of-curiosities/sul>

# 60 years old

Aging is not all plain sailing. Teething troubles have to be ironed out, assessments made, storms weathered and lessons learned. Course corrections may be necessary. But as the University approaches the ripe old age of 60, the future looks promising and there's lots to be proud of. In May staff, family and friends enjoyed afternoon tea, funfair rides and taster sports sessions as part of a campus 60th anniversary celebration. A display of photos from the University Archives illustrating six decades of the University's journey provided an engaging back drop.



## NASAC/UBSA/6WS/ Woodland lounge

In January when the Campus Services team tasked with refurbishing 6WS was looking for ways to brighten up the freshly decorated interior, the University Archives provided some inspiration. Images relating to the building's origins - it was designed by groundbreaking architects Alison and Peter Smithson - and subsequent use were incorporated into a colourful wall frieze. Referencing its history, purpose and occupation, the eye-catching vinyls help to position the building's past in its present and future.





# 1 South at 25

As the home of the institutional memory, the University Archives have a part to play in all kinds of anniversaries and the pause for reflection that comes with them. In September, when the Department of Chemistry organised 'A Look Back at the Last 25 Years of Chemistry@Bath' - an event to celebrate a quarter of a century in their 1 South home - we were able to add a bit of history to the mix.

## In the beginning...

Archives are often associated with endings, perhaps because they invite us to look back at an unchangeable present that is moving away from us into the past. Or perhaps because they function to evidence activity that has taken place over time. This can obscure the fact that archives are also about beginnings. They mark the point of embarkation as well as the final destination. It was fitting therefore that the Advancement Office began **The Hebron and Medlock Chair in Information Technology Report** with a newspaper cutting from the University Archives. This rather modest document serves to prefigure the course of an important, much-valued and evolving relationship while also firmly anchoring it to its origins.



# Facts and figures

We hosted 83 visits by individuals and groups to the Reading Room.

New accessions: Papers of Professor Richard Mawditt, OBE.  
Papers of Keith Falconer, OBE.

Total holdings: 1.7km (excluding map chests).

## Archives & Research Collections also appearing in...

- PhD research on Bedouin communities and social change in Jordan
- British Art Network funded project enquiry relating to designer Peggy Angus
- BA2 Issue 33
- 150th anniversary celebrations, Edgbaston High School for Girls
- 'The Landscapes of Bath's Two Universities', *Bathscape Footprints*, Episode 43
- Research on colonial violence, conflict and insurrection in Africa
- Visitor leaflet produced by Wotton-under-Edge Heritage Centre
- *Matsutaro Otani: The Life of a Judo Master*, Rio Finlay (2025)
- University of Bath Alumni Facebook page
- 'Tribute and Dismay: A Coda to the Scholarly Friendship of Eduard Fraenkel and Roger Mynors', Fiachra Mac Góráin, *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* (2025)
- Oxford Dictionary of National Biography entry for Ian Hay Davison (1931-2022)
- 'Greening the Church Year: A History of the Season of Creation', Aksel Johan Lund, *Studia Theologica - Nordic Journal of Theology*, 1-18 (2025)
- 'Supporting New societies for 60 Years', Jamie Watts, *Bath Time* **31(1)**, November 2025
- Undergraduate assignment on St Mary le Strand, London
- Research into the architectural legacy of Alison and Peter Smithson
- *Women and the Rise of Academic English Studies: Pragmatic Criticism*, Natalie F. Wright (2026)
- Research relating to comparative ecological work on elm trees
- 'Stanny's Stus: Images of Bedford Physical Training College', The Higgins Museum, Bedford

***For more take a look inside our digital Cabinet of Curiosities:***  
**<https://archives.bath.ac.uk/cabinet-of-curiosities/>**

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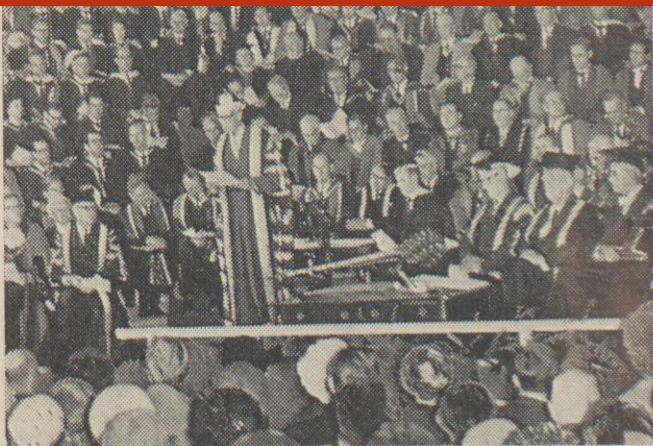
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