

U DJR

Papers of John Rushton

1500s-1900s

Biographical Background:

John Rushton was born in Luton, educated at the local grammar school and later served in the Royal Navy as a trainee engineer from the age of sixteen. He left the Navy three years later and became a health and safety overseer for several years in Luton's factories.

To pay his way through a sociology degree from University College and the London School of Economics, he took several part time jobs including a sandwich board-carrier, barrel organ singer and a theatre dresser, during which time he was a dresser for Laurence Olivier at the Old Vic. He met his wife Eileen at the BBC and they were married in 1954.

In 1959 the couple moved to the Ryedale area, where John took up a post as a tutor organiser for the Workers' Education Association and also taught with the University of Hull's Adult Education Department in North Yorkshire for more than 30 years. He played a pivotal role in the development of local studies across north-east Yorkshire and was also heavily involved in the community at Pickering. His annual local history exhibition in the town ultimately led to the formation of the Beck Isle Museum, he was well known for his outrageous costumes at the Pickering Carnivals and he also wrote a local newspaper column and village pantomimes.

Despite being made redundant in 1992, John continued to lecture for the WEA and Hull University until he moved to Scarborough at the age of 71. He soon became involved in the local history scene and was a founding member and archivist of the Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre and also acted as president of the Scarborough Archaeological and Historical Society. He hoped to one day establish a Museum of the Seaside in Scarborough. Over the years, he also wrote six books, many about Yorkshire during the reign of Elizabeth I. In 2005, he was awarded an MBE for 'services to the community', particularly in recognition of his role in establishing the Ryedale Folk Museum.

John Rushton died in June 2013

Description:

The collection predominantly contains items relating to the Pickering area and includes handwritten bills, ledgers, household accounts, indentures, conveyances, wills and other papers of families and businesses in this area during the 1700s and 1800s. There are also some papers of the Crossland family, the Visitor's Book of the Ryedale Museum (c. 1935) and a few photographs of the Ryedale Folk Museum (1960s-70s).

Extent: 8 boxes

Related material:

'Mills on the Costa' [U DX191]

Records of Pickering and Hull monthly meeting of the Society of Friends (Quakers) [U DQR]

Access conditions: U DJR (1.33m linear metres, 8 boxes) is currently un-catalogued. In some cases a draft or box list may exist which may allow us to provide access to the collection ahead of the material being catalogued. If you are interested in this collection please contact Simon Wilson, Archivist at s.wilson@hull.ac.uk clearly outlining your interest and timescales.