This study morning will explore various aspects of the recent social and cultural history of the River Thames. With the aid of maps, photographs and listening to recordings with those who live and work on the Thames, we will explore two contrasting stretches of river in East and West London.

The study morning will draw heavily on a wide range of oral history recordings made by Dr Butler, who lived on a houseboat in London for ten years and undertook a range of research projects with riverside communities in London. The course will also include recordings made with dock workers in the 1980s from the Museum of London oral history collection.

We will listen and discuss highlights from these recordings to deepen our understanding of life on the River Thames in London in the 20th century, a period of rapid riverside development and change.

We will start up-river in West London at Hampton, featuring a once famous racecourse, an island casino, and numerous houseboats and riverside villas. This was a popular summer playground for wealthy Londoners, famously described by Jerome K Jerome in his comic travelogue *Three Men in a Boat*. We will encounter lock keepers, houseboat dwellers and yacht owners.

We will then go on to consider the memories of those who lived and worked on the wharves and docks in East London; in particular a stretch from Greenwich to Woolwich. We will hear dockers describe their work and their experience of the astonishing transformation of this stretch of river from the busiest port in the World to dereliction and regeneration.

**Recommended reading**

No preparatory reading is required. Further reading:


North East London Polytechnic Press  

There are countless general books on Thames history – a useful bibliography including key reports is here [http://www.the-river-thames.co.uk/books.htm](http://www.the-river-thames.co.uk/books.htm) and an annotated list of archives with River Thames related material here [https://www.gre.ac.uk/ach/gmc/research/projects/runningriverthames/resources/archives](https://www.gre.ac.uk/ach/gmc/research/projects/runningriverthames/resources/archives)

**Additional information**

This course is suitable for all, no prior knowledge is required. It allows you to spend time exploring a subject for interest, among like-minded people, without formal assessment.

**Intended learning outcomes**

Participants will:

- gain an understanding of the recent history and cultural geography of the River Thames in East and West London.
- consider the strengths and difficulties of using oral history recordings for historical purposes.
- appreciate how listening to a range of memories can deepen our sense of place.
- learn aspects of the lived history of the River Thames directly from a wide range of people who live and work on the River.

**About the tutor**

Dr Toby Butler is a freelance heritage consultant and oral history trainer. He directed and worked on oral history projects in India, the USA, Wales and England. Toby is known internationally for his work exploring how history and memory can be used to interpret places and their pasts. He has a particular interest in using place-based multi-media and has created oral history trails along the River Thames and in Victoria Park in East London. He is also the project director for the 'Ports of Call' project, which has been working with community groups and artists around the docks of East London to map and historically interpret the area ([www.portsofcall.org.uk](http://www.portsofcall.org.uk)) and more recently directed the Bethnal Green Disaster Memorial Project ([www.bgmemorial.org.uk](http://www.bgmemorial.org.uk)).
Short Course Programme
General information, terms & conditions

How to book a place
These courses are usually very popular so you are advised to apply as soon as possible. Places cannot be held without payment of the course fee.

- **Online Booking is preferred.** Please visit [www.kent.ac.uk/tonbridge](http://www.kent.ac.uk/tonbridge)
- **By post** to us at the address below, using the application form in the programme booklet. Please note that you will not receive an acknowledgment of your paper application; your payment will usually be processed when the course becomes financially viable, otherwise we will notify you of cancellation approximately seven days prior to the course. A paper application affirms acceptance of our terms & conditions.

Course cancellation
As these short courses are self-financing, each course can only proceed if there are sufficient enrolments. Therefore, if a course is cancelled due to insufficient enrolments we aim to notify applicants approximately one week before the course start date; if there is no suitable alternative course, we will refund the appropriate course fee in full. The University of Kent reserves the right to cancel a course for this or any other reason in which case the relevant course fee will be refunded in full. We advise that you do not buy books or other course materials until that particular course is confirmed as taking place: please contact us if you are unsure.

If you find it necessary to cancel your place on a course, please let us know as soon as possible. Refund requests, including the reason, should be made by email or in writing to us at the address below. We reserve the right to retain all or part of the course fee if you request a refund after 14 days of your online booking being made or paper application being received. Discretionary, partial refunds may be made, after the deduction of an administrative handling fee as follows:

- a course fee of up to and including £42 will incur an administrative handling fee of £10.00
- a course fee of £43 and over will incur an administrative handling fee of £12.50.

The University reserves the right to:

a) exclude any student if the student’s presence is making it difficult for the class to function properly
b) cancel or amend the length of any course if the circumstances so warrant.

Neither the University of Kent, nor its staff, can be held responsible for any damage, loss or injury, however sustained, suffered by participants attending courses. Insurance is the student’s responsibility.

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- Parking. There is plenty of public pay and display car parking locally, but please note that only selected car parks permit parking in excess of four hours; detailed information is available from [www.tmbc.gov.uk](http://www.tmbc.gov.uk). No parking is available here on site.
- Refreshments are not provided; food and drink can be purchased from any of the nearby café outlets - we are closely situated to the High Street and town centre. A hot drink vending machine is usually available on the ground floor of this building.

Mailing List and data protection
Those attending our courses are automatically added to our database and kept informed about new courses. This information is not released to outside organisations. Please write to us if you do not wish your details to be kept on our database.

*Please contact us if you have any queries or would like to register your email address to receive our course information updates. We look forward to welcoming you here soon.*

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