



2026 RSVP Digital Event

“Yesterday’s News: Behind the Scenes at the British Library” with Beth Gaskell

Chat Transcript

- 10:01:16 From Michelle Elleray : soon-to-be-very snowy Toronto!
- 10:01:18 From Isabel Seidel : Hello from Aberdeen, Scotland.
- 10:01:19 From Jacqueline Stamp : Hello from Ashford, Kent, UK
- 10:01:32 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "soon-to-be-very sn..." with ❤️
- 10:01:38 From Paul Fyfe : Raleigh, NC chapter of the Beth Gaskell fan club
- 10:01:43 From Francesca Colonnese : Hello from Seattle, where it is unusually sunny.
- 10:01:44 From Katherine Malone : Hello from Brookings, South Dakota, where the current wind chill feels like -32 F!
- 10:01:47 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "Liverpool, UK" with 🤝
- 10:01:53 From Francesca Colonnese : Reacted to "Raleigh, NC chapter ..." with 👉
- 10:01:54 From Linda Hughes : hello from dallas-fort worth texas
- 10:01:56 From Andrew KING : Hello from London
- 10:01:57 From RSVP Host : Welcome everyone from a frosty Victoria BC!
This is Alison Chapman (VP) behind the RSVP logo
- 10:02:04 From Francesca Colonnese : Reacted to "Welcome everyone fro..." with 💜
- 10:02:23 From Jessica Poole : Hello from Ontario Canada

10:02:26 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "Hello from Brookin..." with 🙌

10:02:30 From Fionnuala Dillane : And hello from rainy sixty eight day of January in Dublin

10:02:32 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "hello from dallas-..." with 🙌

10:02:34 From Andrew Hobbs : Hello from Preston, Lancashire, UK!

10:02:35 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "Hello from London" with 🙌

10:02:46 From Chris Prom : Hi Everyone, I'm Chris Prom for the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and actin head of the History, Philosophy and Newspaper Library, as well as a historian whose used newspapers extensively for my own research.

10:02:50 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "Welcome everyone f..." with 🙌

10:02:57 From RSVP Host : Reacted to "Hi Everyone, I'm Chr..." with ❤️

10:02:58 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "And hello from rai..." with 🙌

10:03:02 From Caroline Jones : Hi everyone from a very foggy Derbyshire, UK

10:03:02 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "Hello from Preston..." with 🙌

10:03:02 From RSVP Host : Reacted to "And hello from rainy..." with ❤️

10:03:10 From RSVP Host : Reacted to "Hello from Preston, ..." with ❤️

10:03:14 From RSVP Host : Reacted to "Hi everyone from a v..." with ❤️

10:03:20 From Francesca Colonnese : Reacted to "Hi everyone from a v..." with 😬🌊

10:03:45 From Claire Robinson : Hello from just outside Manchester (UK) it's a bit wet and windy here!

10:04:33 From Tarini Bhamburkar : Reacted to "And hello from rainy..." with 🙌

10:05:25 From Chris Prom : Lots of good memories of using British newspapers through the BL, back in 1998.

10:07:31 From Chris Prom : Replying to "Lots of good memorie..."

Ahh, Colindale, I was trying to think of the facility name, thank you!

10:09:51 From Andrew Hobbs : Is the service any faster if you are in the Yorkshire reading room?

10:10:38 From Andrew KING : strategic placing of the DNCJ! ❤️

10:10:50 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "strategic placing ..." with ❤️

10:10:52 From Gillian Walters : Reacted to "strategic placing of..." with ❤️

10:10:56 From Kaari Newman : Reacted to "strategic placing of..." with ❤️

10:10:58 From Tarini Bhamburkar : Replying to "strategic placing of..."

Was thinking the same!

10:11:05 From Andrew KING : Reacted to "Was thinking the sam..." with 👍

10:11:22 From Maria Zirra : Reacted to Is the service any f... with "👍"

10:12:01 From RSVP Host : Reacted to "strategic placing of..." with ❤️

10:12:22 From Matthew Stephens : Yes!

10:12:34 From Andrew KING : Reacted to "Yes!" with 👍

10:12:40 From Francesca Colonnese : Reacted to "Yes!" with 💜

10:12:44 From Claire Robinson : Reacted to "Yes!" with 👍

10:12:45 From Kaari Newman : Reacted to "Yes!" with 🎉

10:12:48 From Francesca Colonnese : Reacted to "Yes!" with 🎉

10:12:52 From Caroline Jones : Reacted to "Yes!" with 🎉

10:13:26 From RSVP Host : Reacted to "Yes!" with 🎉

10:19:03 From Clare Horrocks : So, does this degradation become a motivator for investment in further digitisation?

10:19:22 From Tarini Bhamburkar : Reacted to "So, does this degradat..." with 👍

10:19:35 From Claire Robinson : Reacted to "So, does this degradat..." with 👍

10:19:45 From Michelle Elleray : Reacted to "So, does this degradat..." with 

10:23:09 From Andrew KING : Reacted to "So, does this degradat..." with 

10:25:38 From Andrew Hobbs : Love the miscellaneous volumes, like a lucky dip

10:25:45 From Andrew KING : Reacted to "Love the miscellaneo..." with 

10:25:45 From Lars Atkin : Reacted to "Love the miscellaneo..." with 

10:25:48 From Michelle Elleray : Reacted to "Love the miscellaneo..." with 

10:25:49 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "Love the miscellan..." with 

10:25:50 From RSVP Host : Reacted to "Love the miscellaneo..." with 

10:25:52 From Katy Birch : Reacted to "Love the miscellaneo..." with 

10:25:54 From RSVP Host : Reacted to "So, does this degradat..." with 

10:25:55 From Kaari Newman : Reacted to "Love the miscellaneo..." with 

10:25:56 From Claire Robinson : Reacted to "Love the miscellaneo..." with 

10:26:00 From Caroline Jones : Reacted to "Love the miscellan..." with 

10:26:03 From Isabel Seidel : Reacted to "Love the miscellan..." with 

10:26:25 From Andrew KING : Reacted to "Is the service any f..." with 

10:27:02 From Anna Stark : Reacted to "Love the miscellaneo..." with 

10:27:30 From Tarini Bhamburkar : Reacted to "Love the miscellaneo..." with 

10:29:10 From Inigo Fernández : Reacted to So, does this degradat... with 

10:30:08 From Paul Fyfe : Q: Has the BL and/or its partners been employing ML/AI for OCR? And potentially for other forms of cataloging, description, analysis, etc.? Basically, I would be interested to hear your thoughts on AI in cultural heritage institutions.

10:30:41 From Andrew KING : 2 related questions: The prospect of disbinding was a shock from the PoV of users - what would be the effect in the catalogue and for ordering? Q 2: are you planning on setting up a user group for catalogue entries on newspapers and periodicals - and for system for user-discovered updates? In fact is there already a system for providing more accurate updates to the catalogue?

10:30:45 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "2 related question..." with ❤️

10:30:53 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "Q: Has the BL and/..." with ❤️

10:30:56 From RSVP Host : Reacted to "Q: Has the BL and/or..." with 👍

10:31:07 From RSVP Host : Reacted to "2 related questions:..." with 👍

10:31:20 From Linda Hughes : You mention research when you are lucky enough to have some time for it - what are you researching now?

10:31:39 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "You mention resear..." with ❤️

10:32:05 From Andrew KING : Reacted to "You mention research..." with ❤️

10:33:07 From RSVP Host : Reacted to "You mention research..." with ❤️

10:34:35 From Josh Povall : You mentioned the extensive knowledge of the Specialist News Reference Team, as a new PhD candidate researching nineteenth-century newspapers I was wondering what sort of things they are able to help with?

10:36:51 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "You mentioned the ..." with ❤️

10:37:20 From Paul Fyfe : Replying to "Q: Has the BL and/or..."

Thanks!

10:38:05 From Whitney Thompson : Do you know if there are any plans in the near or less-near future to digitize News of the World from its microfilm? I could be wrong about this, but it seems like that's one of the last big London titles from the long 19th century etc (if not the last) that hasn't been digitized. I suspect I'm not the only one who's spent a chunk of time speed-reading microfilm and, ergo, would love a full-text-searchable version 😊

10:39:23 From Isabel Seidel : I have a question about the quality checks involved in digitising: There have been many instances where I have accessed

a newspaper online/in digitised format but I can't read the whole article because the page on either side is blurred because the newspaper must not have lied flat while it was being copied/digitised. This makes me wonder how much the digitised pages are checked by actual humans for completeness/high quality before being made available online? And whether/how this issue is being recognised and addressed within newspaper conservation?

10:39:34 From Andrew KING : Reacted to "I have a question ab..." with ❤️

10:39:53 From RSVP Host : Reacted to "I have a question ab..." with ❤️

10:40:07 From Andrew KING : Reacted to "Do you know if there..." with 👍

10:40:43 From Bénédicte Coste : Reacted to "Do you know if there..." with 👍

10:41:50 From Peter Nieuwenhuizen (NL) : In the NNB there is a low oxygen level in the newspaper storage rooms. Is that for preservation reasons? If so, shouldn't this be used for books from the same period also? Or is the paper of those printed books less vulnerable?

10:42:55 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "Do you know if the..." with ❤️

10:43:02 From Andrew KING : Reacted to "You mentioned the ex..." with ❤️

10:43:31 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "I have a question ..." with ❤️

10:43:57 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "In the NNB there i..." with ❤️

10:44:05 From Laurel Brake : is there any chance of forming a user group for readers in the Newsroom?

10:44:20 From Andrew KING : Reacted to "is there any chance ..." with ❤️

10:44:27 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "is there any chanc..." with ❤️

10:44:48 From Andrew KING : Replying to "is there any chance ..."

exactly Laurel

10:45:12 From Josh Povall : Replying to "You mentioned the ex..."

Amazing, thanks very much!

10:45:47 From Maria Zirra : Reacted to is there any chance ... with "❤️"

10:46:06 From Andrew KING : @Priti Joshi another strategic placing of the DNCJ!

10:47:06 From Lars Atkin : Now I'm no longer editing the Curran, I plan to accost Beth frequently at the BL to rant to her about the non-digitisation of colonial newspapers

10:47:10 From Isabel Seidel : Reacted to "@Priti Joshi anoth..." with 😂

10:47:16 From Tarini Bhamburkar : Reacted to "Now I'm no longer ed..." with ❤️

10:47:19 From Francesca Colonnese : Reacted to "@Priti Joshi another..." with 😂

10:47:25 From Kaari Newman : Reacted to "@Priti Joshi another..." with 😂

10:47:26 From Francesca Colonnese : Reacted to "Now I'm no longer ed..." with 💜

10:47:28 From Lars Atkin : I'm sure Beth will be thrilled to have these conversations again

10:47:36 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "Now I'm no longer..." with ❤️

10:47:36 From Kaari Newman : Reacted to "Now I'm no longer ed..." with 😂

10:47:39 From Andrew KING : Reacted to "I'm sure Beth will b..." with 😂

10:47:42 From Lars Atkin : Reacted to "Now I'm no longer ed..." with 😂

10:47:44 From Lars Atkin : Removed a 😂 reaction from "Now I'm no longer ed..."

10:48:09 From Peter Nieuwenhuizen (NL) : Arthur der Weduwen and Andrew Pettegree (St. Andrews Univ) have done a lot of work on newspapers that don't exist anymore (by calculations etc). Can you estimate which percentage is missing in your collection?

10:48:21 From RSVP Host : Reacted to "Arthur der Weduwen a..." with 👍

10:48:27 From Clare Horrocks : Replying to "Arthur der Weduwen..."

Great question!

10:48:34 From Lars Atkin : Reacted to "is there any chance ..." with ❤️

10:48:35 From Priti Joshi : Reacted to "@Priti Joshi another..." with 👍

10:49:00 From Lars Atkin : Replying to "is there any chance ..."

Great idea!

10:49:31 From richard Fulton : Thanks Beth. I have to go; aloha from predawn Honolulu

10:49:46 From Andrew KING : Reacted to "Thanks Beth. I have..." with 👍

10:49:53 From Lars Atkin : Reacted to "Now I'm no longer ed..." with ❤️

10:49:55 From Lars Atkin : Removed a ❤️ reaction from "Now I'm no longer ed..."

10:50:07 From Fionnuala Dillane : We are very lucky, Beth, expert that you are, to have you, pushing at these walls.

10:50:14 From RSVP Host : Reacted to "We are very lucky, B..." with ❤️

10:50:15 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "We are very lucky,..." with ❤️

10:50:16 From Lars Atkin : Reacted to "We are very lucky, B..." with ❤️

10:50:16 From Francesca Colonnese : Reacted to "We are very lucky, B..." with ❤️

10:50:17 From Michelle Elleray : Reacted to "We are very lucky, B..." with 👍

10:50:38 From Priti Joshi : Reacted to "We are very lucky, B..." with 👍

10:51:43 From Elena Chestnova : If there is time, could you please say a few words about accessing digitised newspaper data at large scale? I.e. if I want to work with a large corpus with digital methods.

10:52:12 From Matthew Stephens : Reacted to "We are very lucky,..." with 👍

10:53:31 From Kaari Newman : Reacted to "We are very lucky, B..." with ❤️

10:54:24 From Claire Robinson : Reacted to "We are very lucky, B..." with 👍

10:54:41 From RSVP Host : Reacted to "If there is time, co..." with 

10:56:31 From Inigo Fernández : I have to go. Thanks, Beth

10:57:21 From Andrew KING : Reacted to "Now I'm no longer ed..." with 

10:58:24 From Isabel Seidel : Thank you so much for answering my question regarding issues with digitised newspapers. Your answer has helped very much. I've observed the blurred pages in particular with the Dundee Courier, whose owner also works much in family history (Find My Past), so quantity over quality in digitisation makes sense. Thank you!

10:58:32 From Priti Joshi : Thanks so much, Beth. Great talk & discussion! See you!

10:58:51 From RSVP Host : As Beth's excellent talk wraps up — here's the next Digital Event info:

Roundtable on The Edinburgh History of the Transnational British Press in Non-Anglophone Countries, 1800-1914 (Edinburgh University Press, 2025)

Friday 27 February 2026 8am PT/11am ET/4pm BT/5pm CET (60-minute session)

Watch our website for registration details soon! <https://rs4vp.org/>

10:58:53 From Andrew Hobbs : Reacted to "Now I'm no longer ed..." with 

10:59:01 From Tarini Bhamburkar : Reacted to "As Beth's excellent ..." with 

10:59:06 From Francesca Colonnese : Reacted to "As Beth's excellent ..." with 

10:59:06 From Lars Atkin : Reacted to "As Beth's excellent ..." with 

10:59:09 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "As Beth's excelle..." with 

10:59:09 From Caroline Jones : Reacted to "As Beth's excelle..." with 

10:59:23 From Andrew Hobbs : Reacted to "We are very lucky, B..." with 

10:59:26 From Martin Hewitt : Thanks, Beth. Really interesting, and I'll be contacting you offline about the Curran Index.

10:59:33 From Matthew Stephens : This was so fascinating, Beth. Thanks so much. I don't know how you manage to spin so many plates!

10:59:47 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "Thanks, Beth. Real..." with ❤️

10:59:47 From Tarini Bhamburkar : Thanks so much Beth! Fascinating talk and discussion.

10:59:50 From Lars Atkin : Thanks so much, Beth. I'll be hitting you up for coffee when I next got some research time.

10:59:56 From Clare Horrocks : Reacted to "Thanks so much, Be..." with 😂

11:00:04 From Lars Atkin : Reacted to "Thanks so much, Beth..." with 😂

11:00:08 From Fionnuala Dillane : This was so interesting Beth, many thanks

11:00:10 From Susanne Schmid : Thank you for this fascinating talk!

11:00:11 From Caroline Jones : Thank you so much Beth for such an interesting talk and Q&A - really fascinating! And thank you RSVP for organising 😊

11:00:13 From Andrew KING : Fabulous talk as ever Beth - Thank you!

11:00:16 From Anna Stark : Thank you!

11:00:18 From Josh Povall : Thank you!

11:00:20 From RSVP Host : Fantastic talk and very interesting Q&A — thanks to Beth and all!

11:00:20 From Hayley Bradley : Thank you all!

11:00:23 From Andrew Hobbs : Thank you Beth, seems like our beloved newspapers are in good hands

11:00:24 From Marielle Birks : Thank you so much, this was fascinating