



The Société Jersiaise was formed in 1873.

Included in its founding objectives were the creation of a museum and library, but by the time of society's second Annual Report attention was being drawn to the importance of 'Recording in permanent photography local prehistoric monuments, buildings and ruins.'

With the practice and collecting of photography identified as priorities they were put to use as parts of the museum and library operations.

It is the recording of research, as documentary and scientific records and as an independent art form that has established over more than 140 years the photographic archive we have today.

What is an Archive?



History  
Knowledge  
Power

First and foremost they hold a record of our history. Whether it is contract, minute book or photograph they items they hold provide knowledge of how the world was. Context is also vitally important to archives. Without context a single photograph is next to meaningless. Context provides reference points between information sources, which allows us to gain knowledge of the world and create meaning. Whether that is in order to explain the past, understand the present or to comment on potential futures. That is why we collect, and as research led photographers that is the process you will be engaging with.

## What will you find in our archive?



Photography arrived in Jersey on 9th May 1840 just nine months after it had been first publicized in the urban centres of England and France.

The archive holds examples of work by important nineteenth century photographers such as William Collie, Charles Hugo, Thomas Sutton and Henry Mullins. The collection incorporates late nineteenth century studio collections of negatives by Jersey based photographers such as Ernest Baudoux, Albert Smith and Clarence Oules.

And, important twentieth century holdings, such as, a major archive of over one thousand negatives by Percival Dunham, Jersey's first photo-journalist and the archive of Emile Guiton, Honorary Curator of the Société Jersiaise Museum and founder of the Photographic Archive.

Lets take a quick look at a couple of those photographers now.

# Henry Mullins



Henry Mullins was part of the circle of photographic pioneers at the Royal Polytechnic Institute, Regent Street, London where the first photographic studio in Europe was opened in 1841. Mullins arrived in Guernsey in summer of 1847 and settled in Jersey the following year.

Mullins's portraits of Victorian islanders are preserved on the pages of his photograph albums, which served as a catalogue of clients for his professional practice.



He was by far the most prolific of the first generation of Jersey photographers in the mid-nineteenth century. He produced thousands of portraits of islanders between 1848 and 1873. He was the photographer of choice for leading members of Jersey society and successful local and immigrant families.

# William Collie



William Collie started his professional life as a portrait painter. He was one of the earliest photographers working in the Channel Islands, operating from Belmont House, St Helier, until 1872.

William Collie was probably the first photographer to use Fox Talbot's calotype process in Jersey and some of his previously unpublished photographs featured alongside those of Fox Talbot in an exhibition at the Musée Dorsay in Paris in 2008 of the first photographs taken on paper in Britain from 1840 to 1860.



In the late 1840s he made a series of salt paper print portraits titled 'French and Jersey Market Women' which were later exhibited at the London Great Exhibition of 1851. Many of these portraits actually show friends and family dressed as the migrant market women Collie met at St, Helier's Market.



# Thomas Sutton



Thomas Sutton is a very important figure not only in the story of local photography, but also in wider photographic history. Sutton had a workshop and studio in St Brelade's bay from 1848 until it burnt down in about 1854.

A prolific author, Sutton wrote a number of books on the subject of photography, including the *Dictionary of Photography* in 1858.

In 1859, Sutton developed the earliest panoramic camera with a wide-angle lens.

In 1861, Sutton created the first [single lens reflex](#) camera.

Sutton was also the photographer for [James Clerk Maxwell](#)'s pioneering 1861 demonstration of [colour photography](#).



On top of all that he also produced the first photographic publication of the island - "Souvenir de Jersey", from which this image is taken. Sutton's work was focused on the landscape both built and natural. Whilst being important documentary records, with layers of conceptual possibilities, his work is also stunningly beautiful.

## Emile Guiton



He was a very active member of the Société Jersiaise – curator of the Museum, on the Executive Committee, joint honorary secretary and editor of the Annual Bulletin. Emile Guiton was also a keen amateur photographer. His subjects included the recording of archaeological excavations, artefacts, publications and daily life. Emile Guiton also recognised very early on the importance of collecting photographs, both as a valuable social historic resource and as interesting artefacts in their own right.



He experimented with colour at the beginning of the twentieth century in “Autochromes”. This is Marret Road, just up from Harve de Pas in 1911.

# Archives, knowledge and social memory

Archives are repositories of information, by accumulating information, we can provide context and build an understanding of how the world was at a particular time. The romans talked of an immortal memory held within the archive, and whether any archive will last for eternity or not, they understood that by building on each others knowledge we can create a collective memory that last generations.

The important thing for us today is making sure that all our voices are heard as part of the collective memory, the knowledge held in archives has generally that of the the established elite. It is our responsibility to make sure our voices are heard, last year we accessioned the work several of the year 13 students and we will look to do that again each year, we're just looking for interesting stories and obviously good photographs.

The Photographic Archive Catalogue containing over 36,000 images can be searched online at..

<http://photographic-archive.societe-jersiaise.org/>

[photoarchive@societe-jersiaise.org](mailto:photoarchive@societe-jersiaise.org)

Online we have over 36,000 images for you to explore, the image resolution is quite low online so please email us if you have any images that you want copies of for research. If you want to explore the collections in person just let us know and we can arrange an appointment.

I hope you enjoy today, and we look forward to seeing the work you produce, I think I am going to talk through a few processes now.