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PRESS RELEASE

NORTH KENT COLLEGE TAKES CENTRE STAGE IN BBC2s GREAT BRITISH RAILWAY JOURNEYS

North Kent College's Oakfield Lane Campus was the proud recipient of a very special visit by Michael Portillo who visited to film the popular programme "Great British Railway Journeys." The programme aired on Thursday 21st February on BBC2. Michael Portillo journeyed from Piccadilly Circus to Gravesend stopping off at Dartford to learn all about the origin of netball.

Great British Railway Journeys is a BBC documentary series in which Michael Portillo travels the length and breadth of the country by train. He chose to come to Dartford to visit the birth place of Netball, The Osterberg Centre situated at North Kent College.

Michael spoke with Anne Stuart, former Bergman Osterberg sports college student and visited the archives of Bergman Osterberg College where Netball was devised from basketball back in 1897. He also tried his hand at a game of netball with the college students in the aptly named Osterberg Sports Hall.

As well as being a strong female figure in the fight for feminism, Madame Bergman Österberg had a significant role in the invention of netball, and pupil, Mary Tait, was responsible for the invention of the gym slip.

The archive is full of interesting material including local history and links with Dartford town, the history of physical education and the work of North Kent College, and of course the life and work of Madame Bergman Österberg.

Michael commented "It's absolutely superb to see the enthusiasm which Madame Österberg brought to the region and now through this archive, the memories live on. This is a great inspiration for the local community."

The Bergman Österberg archive is open to the public, at North Kent College's Dartford Campus on Oakfield Lane. To visit the archive please email Rosemary Moon at rosemarymoon@northkent.ac.uk or our website page devoted to our history on :

<https://www.northkent.ac.uk/college-life/general-information/our-history.aspx>



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NOTES TO EDITORS:

North Kent College offer an extensive range of Further Education, Higher Education, Access to Higher Education, Apprenticeships, Industry Placements and Part-time courses and Training for Businesses. We provide young people with the next step after their GCSEs as an alternative to A Levels and a route to University or a career. We also have opportunities for people who are looking at studying at an undergraduate level, or who want to change career path or up-skill for career progression.

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