

ISSUE 12

MARCH 2012

BR ADSHEET



E-Magazine of the

SCOTTISH COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES



CELEBRATING TEN YEARS
S C A
2002 - 2012

WELCOME TO THE ISSUE (number 12)

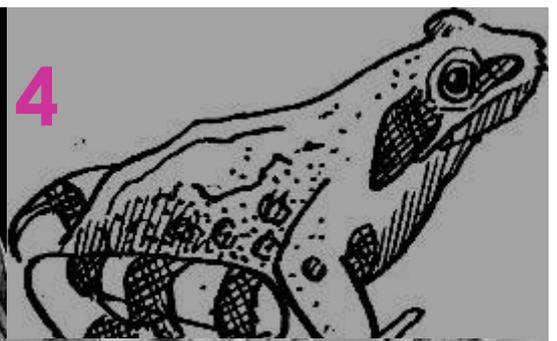
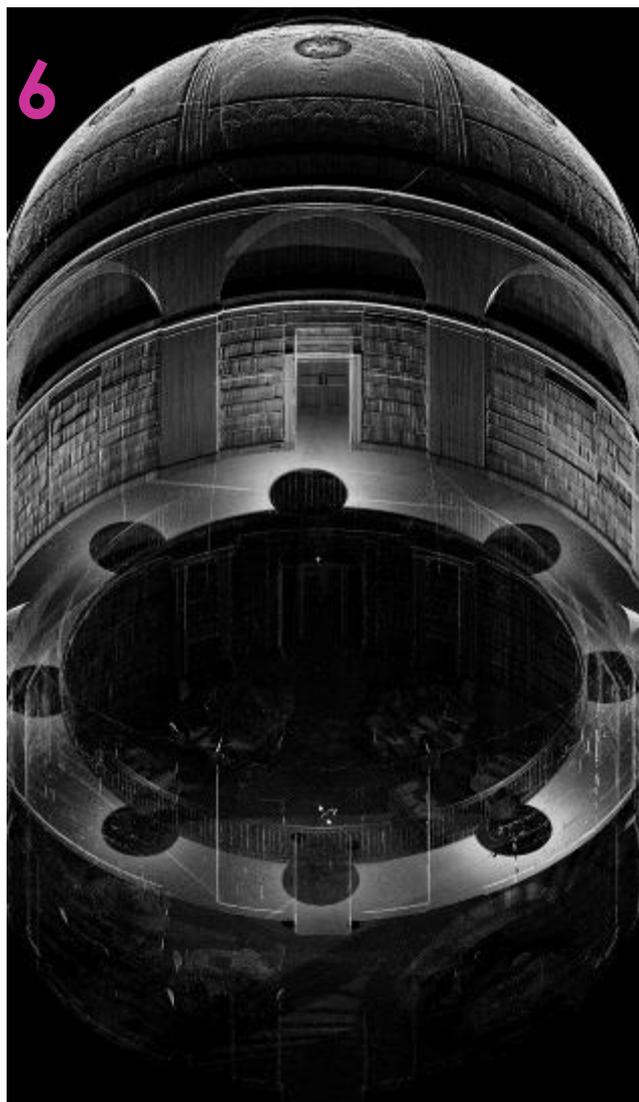
As you can probably tell from the slightly altered title on the front cover, the Scottish Council on Archives is having something of a birthday. This year the Queen gets diamonds to symbolise her Jubilee—meanwhile, for our Decennial, apparently we have to settle for tin.

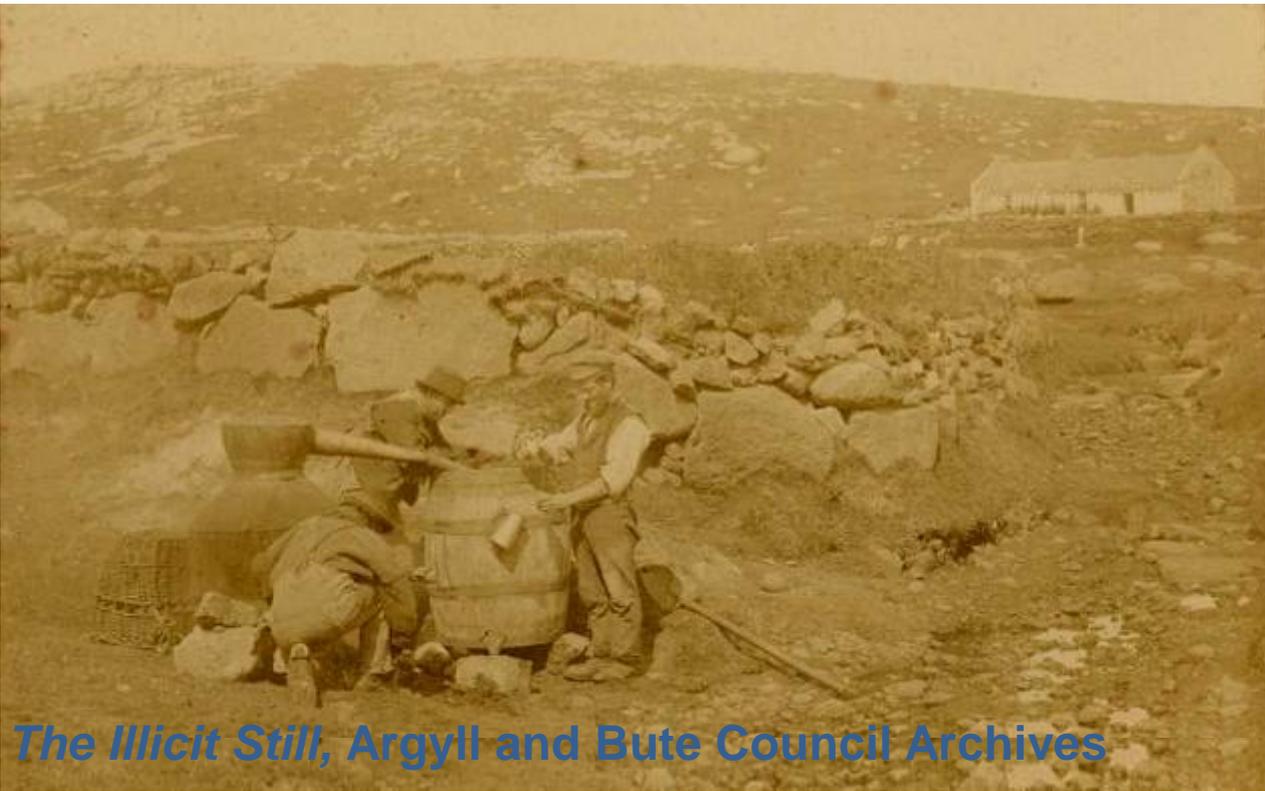
Never mind. To help celebrate we have an exciting and packed *Broadsheet* schedule planned for the year ahead. Issue 12 is no exception and is bursting at the bindings with lots of news, reviews and interviews from Scotland, (not to mention an international visitor on page 8).

After a well earned break, March sees the welcome return of our regular conservation 'Bench' with a somewhat large and unusual item under examination. Between infra-red scanning, vegetable growing and a trip to the House of Fraser, Issue 12 certainly has something for everyone, plus a few extras thrown in for good measure... Enjoy the issue!

www.scoarch.org.uk

The Editorial Team





The Illicit Still, Argyll and Bute Council Archives

(Kintyre Antiquarian Society Collection (Ref: KASC/1/11/77), c. late 19th Century)

The photograph was given to Father Webb of the Kintyre Antiquarian Society (now known as the Kintyre Antiquarian and Natural History Society), in the 1960s by Archibald Wilson. After conducting research in the local area, Father Webb identifies the three men as (right) Archibald McAllister, of County Antrim – known as ‘Red Baldy’ – and his two sons (left) James and (kneeling) Archibald.

The three men seem to have operated as something of a family firm whose activities ranged from smuggling to distilling illicit whisky. They appear to have flitted between Kintyre, Islay and Antrim depending on the vigilance of the revenue officers!

www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/community-life-and-leisure/archives

CATALOGUING GRANT FOR WEST LOTHIAN ARCHIVES

Emma Peattie
West Lothian Council Archives

Background Image:
Children Playing on Public Art
©West Lothian Council Archives

West Lothian Archives have been awarded a National Cataloguing Grant of £42,858 which will fund an 18 month project entitled ‘Livingston New Town: from Plan to Community, 1962-2012’. The project will see the cataloguing of the records of Livingston Development Corporation, including minutes, household surveys and promotional material, as well as some of our smaller Livingston collections. These include the records of the Rev Dr James Maitland, a key player in the town’s groundbreaking ecumenical experiment, the records of the Livingston Players, one of the town’s first arts groups, and records of Tam Dalyell, one of the Development Corporation’s fiercest and earliest critics. On completion the catalogue will be publicly available on Calm View, and summary collection guides will be distributed amongst the local community.

The grant comes at an important time in Livingston’s history; 2012 marks the 50th anniversary of the creation of the new town. For the people of Livingston it is a time to celebrate and remember the transformation of the town and the growth of a community. The project gives us a chance to capture the renewed interest in our history and to give local people access to, and ownership of, the records that underpin and document this important period. The project will begin in April and we are currently recruiting for a project archivist—visit <http://tinyurl.com/projectarchivist>

SCA PATRICK CADELL BURSARY 2012

The SCA is pleased to invite applications for the Patrick Cadell Bursary 2012, which is aimed at providing an annual CPD opportunity for a volunteer, archive professional or records manager working in a Scottish unit. The bursary will cover the fee for a course from a range of modules offered by the Universities of Dundee and Glasgow, or equivalent. Here the recent recipients reflect on their experiences for Broadsheet. The SCA wishes both Louise and Stephen all the very best for their future careers. For further information on how to apply please visit www.scoarch.org.uk/notice-board/259 The deadline for submissions is 31 March 2012



Thanks to the bursary, in September 2011 I began the module *Sound and Vision: Collecting, Preserving and Managing Film Sound and Oral History* through distance learning via the University of Dundee. The course offered a chance to

build on my MSc in Information Management and Preservation from the University of Glasgow. Discovering more about specialised archives has always appealed to me: I'd been transcribing oral history records as an archive volunteer, I have a research background in film studies and have worked as a film programmer. I'm interested in mixed archival collections and I wanted to equip myself with the knowledge and confidence to tackle audio-visual materials.

The course was conducted entirely through Dundee's virtual learning environment. We studied four units, but I found 'Preservation of Audio-Visual Material' really challenging (as someone with one science GCSE to her name, getting my head around the characteristics of media carriers was difficult, but essential in the ability to identify and preserve these archives).

I am currently the temporary archivist at the Centre for the Study of World Christianity, University of Edinburgh, where I work with a mixed collection of paper and audio-visual material. Sorting through boxes of cine-film, cassettes and reel-to-reel tape, I am extremely grateful for my notes from *Sound and Vision*! Archivists are increasingly faced with such a variety of material that a single qualification cannot be expected to cover every scenario and medium—it is important that we continue to equip ourselves with the skills and confidence to preserve future accessions, whatever shape they make take.

LOUISE WILLIAMS



In 2000 the Glasgow bookseller John Smith & Son (est. 1751 and now the oldest in the world) moved their office to smaller premises. From their skip I saved about 200 books, correspondence, minutes and ephemera dating

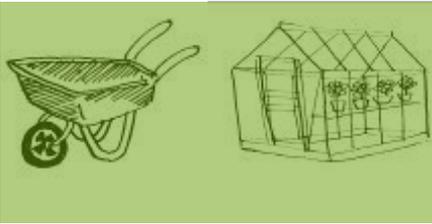
from 1746 to the present. This is what began to seriously interest me in archiving. I obtained my MSc in Material Culture and the History of the Book from the University of Edinburgh and became an archive volunteer, first with the Centre for Research Collections at the university, and now currently with the Ballast Trust - two widely different but equally pleasurable environments to work.

With the help of the bursary, I chose the University of Dundee's *Principles and Practice of Records Management*, as an excellent way of acquiring specific skills while working. Being unfamiliar with how records management operates, there was some initial disorientation, but the module introduced the processes and provided an understanding of current methods.

This may sound strange, but the part I found most enjoyable was creating a business classification scheme for one of the exercises! With increased awareness of the importance of business archives, especially in relation to advertising and publicity, an understanding of business structure and the role of information and record processing is essential.

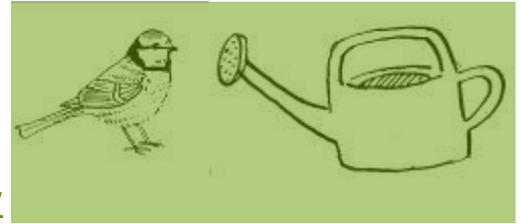
I thank the Patrick Cadell Bursary, and the SCA, in assisting with my career development and for providing an unexpected morale boost in these austere times. My aim is to donate the John Smith & Son material at a future date.

STEPHEN HALL



GLASGOW ALLOTMENTS HERITAGE PROJECT

www.sags.org.uk/GlasgowHeritage/



Allotments represent a lot more than places to grow carrots and carnations. They are centres for the local community and often reflect the changing economic and social history of the times. Recognising the potential for involving plot-holders (young and old) in exploring this important legacy, the Heritage Lottery Fund awarded the Scottish Allotments and Gardens Society, in collaboration with the Glasgow Allotments Forum, a grant to produce materials on 'The Heritage of Community Growing in Glasgow'. The project ran from September 2010 to January 2012, with members of 12 sites across Glasgow participating by collecting information about where and when their plots were established. Numerous archival resources were used and, reflecting the diversity of the allotment community, the assembled stories are both captivating and wide-ranging.

Individual groups approached the project in different ways, but many consulted a variety of archives, including estate papers and Council minutes held by Glasgow City Council Archives, Glasgow University Archive Services, the National Library of Scotland and the National Records of Scotland. The group concerned with south-west Glasgow, for example, built on their existing knowledge of the estate papers of Sir John Stirling Maxwell and discovered that their site was established in 1932 as part of the Scottish Allotment Scheme for the Unemployed. Another example involved the use of *Digimap* (an online mapping service delivering maps and data from the Ordnance Survey, the British Geological Survey and Landmark Historic Maps) to show the establishment of allotments, and their subsequent demise due to conflicting pressures from encroaching housing and industry, thereby painting a vivid picture of the changing geography of Glasgow.

Not only do the stories and photos collected form a valuable resource, but they also provide a sense of continuity and belonging between those currently working the plots and their predecessors. There is now a forum that allows personal memories and experiences to be heard and treasured, such as one plot-holder, now almost eighty years old (Image-Jean from Betty's story), who remembers eating tatties, turnip and cabbages, cooked on a wood burning stove whilst sheltering from the Clydebank Blitz in the allotment hut.

The work of the various groups has resulted in leaflets for each site and an exhibition featuring the research, accompanied by portraits of plot-holders, was held in the Mitchell Library in Glasgow. There were two successful events in the spring and autumn of 2011 where plot-holders presented their results and shared experiences and memories. There is also a dedicated website and copies of the material will be submitted to Glasgow City Archives.

The impact of the project has been varied and wide-reaching. Three primary schools and one intergenerational group, 'The Play-Busters', united to write story boards, filmed a video, and gave presentations. Not only have they learnt about the history of allotments and their local communities, but they have also benefited from the project by developing other skills and increasing their personal confidence. The impact for plot-holders themselves has been greater still, largely due to the enormous success of harnessing people's enthusiasm and eliciting local responses. The project represents a window through which the allotment community has reconnected with their history, with each other and with their local communities.

Not bad for a vegetable patch...

JUDY WILKINSON (*Secretary, Glasgow Allotments Forum*) and
RONA WILKINSON (*Consultant, Glasgow Allotments Heritage Project*)



Images: drawings created as part of the project

© Emily Chappell Illustration and Design

THE BENCH SPECIAL



Perspective View of the Bridge and Register Office
1779, Drawn by J. Donaldson. Engraved by J. Phillips, Edinburgh)
(Source: Arnot, Hugo The history of Edinburgh)



Scanning gets underway at General Register House, Edinburgh

Public buildings are the most splendid monuments of a great and opulent people. The purposes for which they are intended, admit of magnificence in the design, and require solidity in construction.

Robert and James Adam:
Works in Architecture

Historic Scotland and the National Records of Scotland are collaborating on the 3D scanning of Robert Adam's architectural masterpiece - General Register House (GRH) in Edinburgh.

This exciting project will produce a high definition survey of GRH on to which will be mapped high resolution photographs to generate a photo-realistic rendered model. Once captured, the data can be utilised for many different purposes, including virtual tourism, conservation and education.

This innovative technology, which is being used as part of the Scottish Ten project (<http://www.scottishten.org/>) to scan Scotland's five UNESCO World Heritage Sites together with five other internationally important sites from around the world, has been developed by Historic Scotland in partnership with the Cyark foundation. The team will produce a detailed 3D survey of the exterior and also of the interior of the principal apartment; Adam's recently restored rotunda featuring his largest dome. When combined with archival research, the digital data will enable an objective and historically accurate model of the building as it would have appeared when completed in around 1788, before Robert Reid's addition of the north range and the alterations to the screen wall in the 19th century.

Designed and built between 1774 and 1789 by Robert and James Adam, GRH was the first purpose-built public record repository in the British Isles. Pre-dating both the Public Record Office of Ireland (1830s) in Dublin and the Public Record Office (1858) in Chancery Lane, London, it should be seen as a major achievement of the Scottish Enlightenment. It was also the first public building in Edinburgh's New Town, occupying a pivotal position at the south end of the North Bridge which, before the creation of the Mound, formed the principal link between the Old and New Towns. It is a tribute to the quality of Robert...

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

ADAM'S MASTERPIECE
A Model of 18th Century Elegance
Recreated Using 21st Century Technology

THE BENCH SPECIAL

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

...Adam's design that almost 225 years later GRH continues to serve its original purpose.

In 1790, following the completion of the building, James Salisbury was instructed to make a detailed wooden model (now lost) to record what had been built for maintenance purposes and as a guide to the architect's proposals for its future extension. The new digital model will perform similar functions with the advantages of 21st century technology.

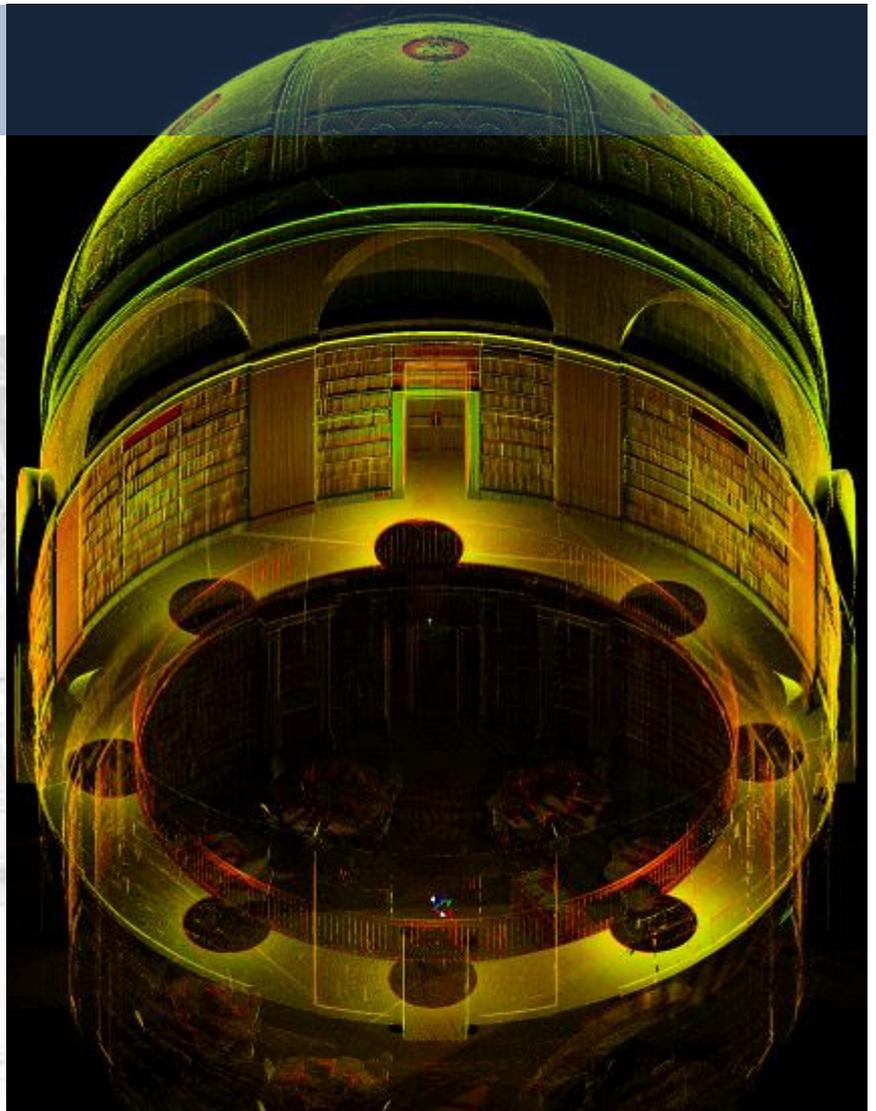
JOHN MCLINTOCK

In the commission for the Register House, Adam was set a problem [ie. designing a public record repository] without any relevant precedent for its solution...That after two hundred years his building remains as it was, functioning as designed, is an irrefutable argument against Adam's critics who, in 1773, castigated his lack of 'Grandeur and simplicity'...

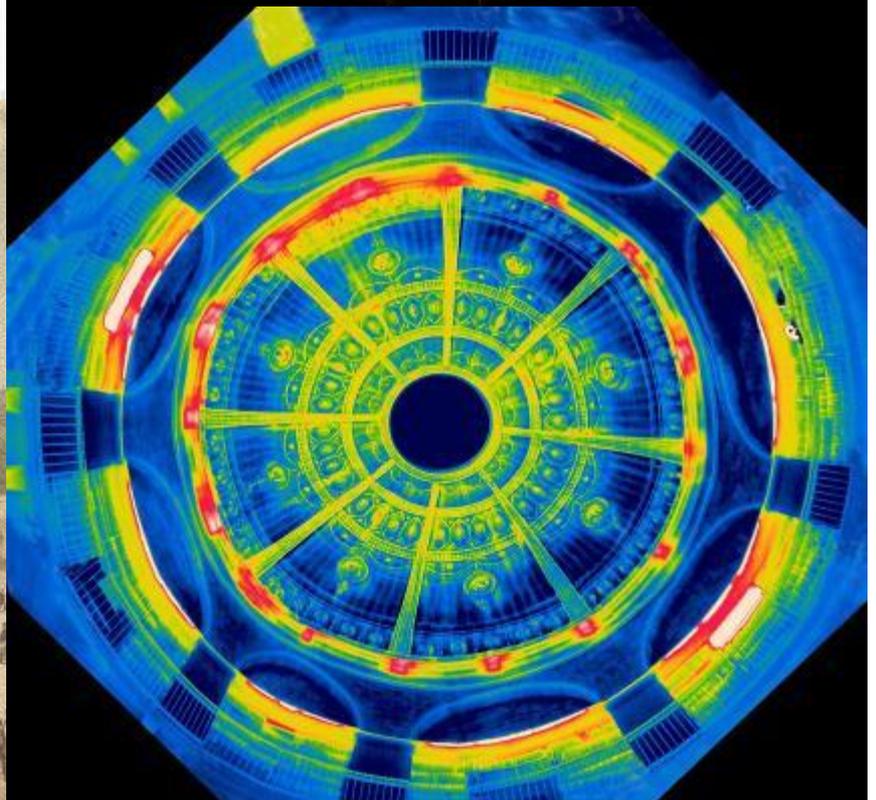
A.A.Tait: The Scottish Historical Review.



Register House
c1889, T Nelson & Sons



Thermal imaging, happening concurrently, to identify any vulnerabilities. Part of the project's focus on sustainability.
Courtesy of National Records of Scotland Conservation



HOUSE OF FRASER ARCHIVE

The Project Behind the Shop Floor

In December's issue of *Broadsheet*, Clare Paterson announced the launch of Glasgow University's House of Fraser Archive catalogue. This article reflects on the Arts and Humanities Research Council funded project, *Empowering the User: the Development of Flexible Archive Catalogues*, which led to the catalogue.

The project's main aim was to create a flexible finding aid that could cope with complex records with multiple provenances and was responsive to the needs of researchers. We wanted to create something different from the normal, rigid finding aid which struggles to represent multiple contexts. We decided to take a more flexible approach by using the 'series' approach to description pioneered in Australia. In this approach, records are listed only at series level rather than being grouped together in fonds and subfonds. The result is a set of standalone series descriptions which can then be linked dynamically to any number of different contexts. In our project, we decided to link our record series to brief histories of the organisation(s) or person(s) who created or used them, as well as to descriptions of the function(s) that gave rise to the records. We also wanted to link records to other, related items. For example, it would be important to link a series of ledgers with the journals and cash books from which the ledgers were originally compiled. In each case, we would be careful to describe the relationship between the linked entities in order to bring out fully the record's provenance.

The House of Fraser Archive was settled on as a test bed for the project because of its size and complexity. Over time, some two hundred stores have joined or left the House of Fraser Group and it has acquired at least nine separate store chains. This makes it a particularly challenging collection to list. The records have complex relationships with each other and multiple and changing provenances, all of which we had found impossible to represent adequately in a normal, hierarchical list.

After three years cataloguing, we ended up with a large set of individual descriptive elements with many links between them. (To ensure we were not limited by the functionality of any existing cataloguing software, we encoded our descriptions in XML and designed bespoke software for the online delivery.) Since the records were not fixed in a single arrangement, we hoped that users would be free to navigate the catalogue as they wanted, picking and choosing their own way through it rather than having it dictated by the archivist. In order to test whether we had achieved this, we carried out some user testing on a small group of academic researchers. The results were encouraging. All our testers were able to navigate through the catalogue without getting lost. One tester liked being able to 'flit about'. Another liked following the links and discovering things serendipitously. A third commented that what historians are always looking for is 'connections' and she thought that the catalogue might offer a good opportunity to do just this.

Initial impressions, therefore, are that this more flexible catalogue is popular with users. Obviously, more feedback is required and now that the catalogue is up and running, we have the opportunity to get comments from a wider range of users. It will be fascinating to see what they make of it. Please do try out the site and tell us what you think!

<http://housefraserarchive.ac.uk/>

VICTORIA PETERS

University Archivist, Strathclyde University
Formerly Project Archivist, Glasgow University



AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Christine Woodcock is a Tour Facilitator for Genealogy Tours of Scotland – a specialist tour operator based in Canada and focussed on Scottish family history.

Alex Haley once wrote: "In all of us there is a hunger, marrow deep, to know our heritage - to know who we are and where we came from. Without this enriching knowledge, there is a hollow yearning. No matter what our attainments in life, there is still a vacuum, an emptiness, and the most disquieting loneliness."

Discovering who we are seems to be an integral part of the Baby Boomer Generation. In our collective lifetime, families have been on the move. Unlike the 1950s when our parents were starting families, we don't live, marry, work and die in the same neighbourhood, and often not even in the same city as the rest of our families. The stories and oral histories that allowed previous generations to know in their souls who they were are not as accessible for the Boomer Generation.

Some 40 million Americans and another 6 million Canadians can lay claim to Scottish Ancestry. For the Boomer Generation, the longing to return to their ancestral homeland to find out, first hand, who they are as a people, and as a collective, is strong. While some records can be easily accessed online from North America, these documents can only give a sense of dates,

names, and locations. We yearn to know more. We yearn for every tidbit of information. We have a collective desire to know the social history of the struggles, challenges and triumphs of our Scottish ancestors. The Boomer Generation has reached, or is approaching, retirement. They can now dedicate their free time to family history research. For many, they are fast becoming the oldest generation in their respective families and they have an internal drive to ensure that when they are gone, the family legacy and the family memories will live on. Many understand that the best way to truly understand their ancestors is to visit their homeland.

Genealogy vacations are on the rise. People are 'heading home' in an effort to discover their heritage. This will have a positive impact on the economy of countries such as Scotland where the history and heritage are rich and where the repositories provide priceless treasures of their own.

The Scottish Archives are some of the best in the world. As a nation, Scotland has worked hard to preserve its national memory. But preservation is only part of the story. For anyone travelling to an archival repository, the most important part of their research experience is not just the interaction with the archival documents, but their interaction with the archivists themselves. These professionals provide the road map to the archives and the histories contained within. It is the archivist who helps the researcher truly understand the information that can be gleaned from the records. The archivist can put the documents into perspective. The archivist can help the researcher know where to look next. And it is the archivist's enthusiasm and passion for what they do that puts the passion and enthusiasm into the researcher himself. It sparks the learning, and quells the yearning.

The Scottish archivists are a rich and essential part of Scotland's national treasure – its history, its culture, its collective memory.

INTERVIEW

Alan is the Records Manager and Information Compliance Officer for the University of Dundee. He oversees Records Management Services (which is part of the wider department of Archive, Records Management and Museum Services) and is responsible for the University's compliance with information legislation such as the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts.

Alan is also the Programme Leader for the University's Masters degrees in Records Management by online distance learning, offered by the Centre for Archive and Information Studies (CAIS).



Describe Records Management (RM) in three words.

Challenging, rewarding and worthwhile. Records and information underpin societal rights, freedoms and collective memory. Whilst it's easy to get caught up in daily pressures, it's important not to lose sight of the fact that recordkeeping really does matter.

Why RM?

I started my career in archives in 2000. At that point everyone was scrambling to understand the implications for archival collections of the then new Data Protection Act (DPA). As I found out more and more about legislation and recordkeeping and helped to prepare our archive's procedures to comply with the requirements of the new law, I became interested in the implications of RM decisions and legal imperatives on archives.

The local authority I worked for was also in the process of moving to new headquarters and the need to rationalise its records had given RM a higher profile. My colleagues and I were involved in various initiatives and I found I was particularly interested in that aspect of the profession.

Then along came Freedom of Information. From the outset it was clear that this was going to represent a fundamental shift in the importance of recordkeeping within public sector organisations. By

this point I was working in another organisation, still in archives, with modern records and with some RM responsibilities. I made sure that I understood what was coming with FoI, largely because of my previous experience in dealing with the impact of new legislation—I wanted to ensure I was ready for the implications of this new law on my current role and in respect of the collections.

Meantime, as public sector organisations became aware of the implications of FoI, there was a brief moment when records managers were in demand and various recordkeeping jobs were redefined or created. I took the opportunity to move into RM permanently and realised the goal that I had set myself when working on DPA compliance in my first post.

What projects are you currently working on?

As always, there are several things occurring at the same time and, despite it being a cliché, there really is no such thing as a normal day. Over and above my routine duties, we are involved in a project with JISC to try and establish the true cost of complying with FoI requests, I'm working with colleagues in IT on a pilot scheme to implement a document management system for the electronic records of the University's governance committees and I've been assisting...

ALAN BELL
University of Dundee

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

...colleagues in Archive Services with some records survey work and technical input for our project to capture the archive of Canongate books in Edinburgh.

For CAIS, I've been working with some of our tutors to refresh various elements of our teaching materials. I'm in the process of finishing an article for a colleague in Canada, which discusses standardisation and RM standards. We successfully secured a Programme Commission award from the International Council on Archives and are developing an online resource that will take the form of a guided bibliography on various recordkeeping subjects. Finally, I'm starting to think about a module I'll be teaching in our May semester on the legal frameworks that impact upon recordkeepers, over and above the FoI and Data Protection Acts and the Environmental Information Regulations.

Please describe the documents or records you encounter regularly.

One of the difficulties of being responsible for data protection and FoI in your organisation is that you never really know what will be requested. However, there are certain recurring themes that I see quite often:

- financial reports and vouchers (both in the form of reports from the ledger accounts system and the vouchers themselves);
- staffing files from Human Resources;
- minutes and papers from various meetings around the University;
- files concerning the University's relationships with its partners and stakeholders.

What do you feel are the three main challenges currently faced by the sector?

Clearly, as prevailing economic strictures impact upon our organisations, the level of available resource and the concomitant impact upon service levels is something all recordkeeping services are trying to manage.

The implications of the Public Records (Scotland) Act are important for those bodies included in the scope of the legislation and has raised the profile of recordkeeping once again. Whilst the management of the impact of the legislation will put pressure on records managers and archivists, the enactment was timely in

a wider sense as FoI compliance has become routine and records management was again being characterised as a 'back-office' service. The challenge for all archivists and records managers is to ensure that their services maintain a sufficient profile within their organisations for them to be effective.

Finally, the tsunami of digital information in our organisations will continue and I am unconvinced that recordkeeping services are equipped with either the resources or the technical knowledge to cope fully. When Dr Chris Prom, Assistant Archivist at the University of Illinois, undertook his Fulbright-sponsored 'Practical E-Records' project with CAIS in 2009 one of the things that struck us both, and something we raised later in a joint conference paper, was the volume of technical and other knowledge required to cope with e-records in the average recordkeeping service and the disconnect between the literature and the practical guidance available at the time. Things have moved on somewhat since then and Chris' work, alongside the work of groups like the Digital Preservation Coalition and the Digital Curation Centre, has been crucial to that process, but coping with digital information still requires a high level of resource and a steep learning curve for recordkeepers.

Any career highlights?

I've been very lucky in my career to date as I've met many interesting people and taken part in various projects, both nationally and internationally. I think, however, that contributing to the establishment and continued success of CAIS has been one of the most rewarding things I have done.

When we started there was no professional educational programme offered by distance learning in Scotland. We have grown to become one of the largest programmes in the UK (in terms of student numbers), have established a unique model, commissioning external expert theoreticians and practitioners to write and teach our courses, and we have developed an international community of students, tutors and stakeholders. It's also a real highlight each year to see people you've worked with for a number of years come back to Dundee to graduate from our programmes.

<http://www.dundee.ac.uk/archives/>
<http://www.dundee.ac.uk/cais/>

SCA

CELEBRATING TEN YEARS
SCA

2002 - 2012

AND FINALLY...

The East Lothian Archives move to the new John Gray Centre (JGC) is imminent. Our store is a flurry of activity while items get packed, listed and moved. The JGC building will not only be home to a new archive and local history service, but will also provide a branch library and a museum. Not content with physically bringing all these services together we also wanted to unite them online.

The new JGC website includes a catalogue portal where users can input one search term and get results from all heritage partners. At times this seemed like a near impossible task! The archive collections needed major cataloguing and the museums database was outdated. Additionally, the Council Archaeology Service joined us in the project and the requirements for the Historic Environment Records (HERs) provided further challenges.

The first task for the archive was properly cataloguing our collections. A year ago we had 200 records on CALM, half of the collections were unlisted and the rest were listed in various documents—most of our collections were inaccessible to enquirers or even to us.

We began by listing the collections using Excel. CALM was stripped back and the cataloguing process began from scratch with a clear structure. We now have 12,000 records on CALM - roughly 95 per cent of our collection.

The final website is something we could only have dreamed of a year ago. The HELO portal (Heritage East Lothian Online) is now up and running and people can search across the heritage services. A search for 'Yeomanry', for example, brings up racing silks from the museums, HER records from Archaeology and a firsthand account of the Charge of the Light Brigade from the archives. There are added extras to explore such as a map with historical overlays, and an iPhone app is in development. One of the aims of the archive service is to add an image for each of our records - evidently a long term aim!

The Archives and Local History Centre opens on 23 March - visit the site at www.johngraycentre.org

Frances Woodrow
Archivist,, East Lothian Council



A SCOTTISH COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES PUBLICATION

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