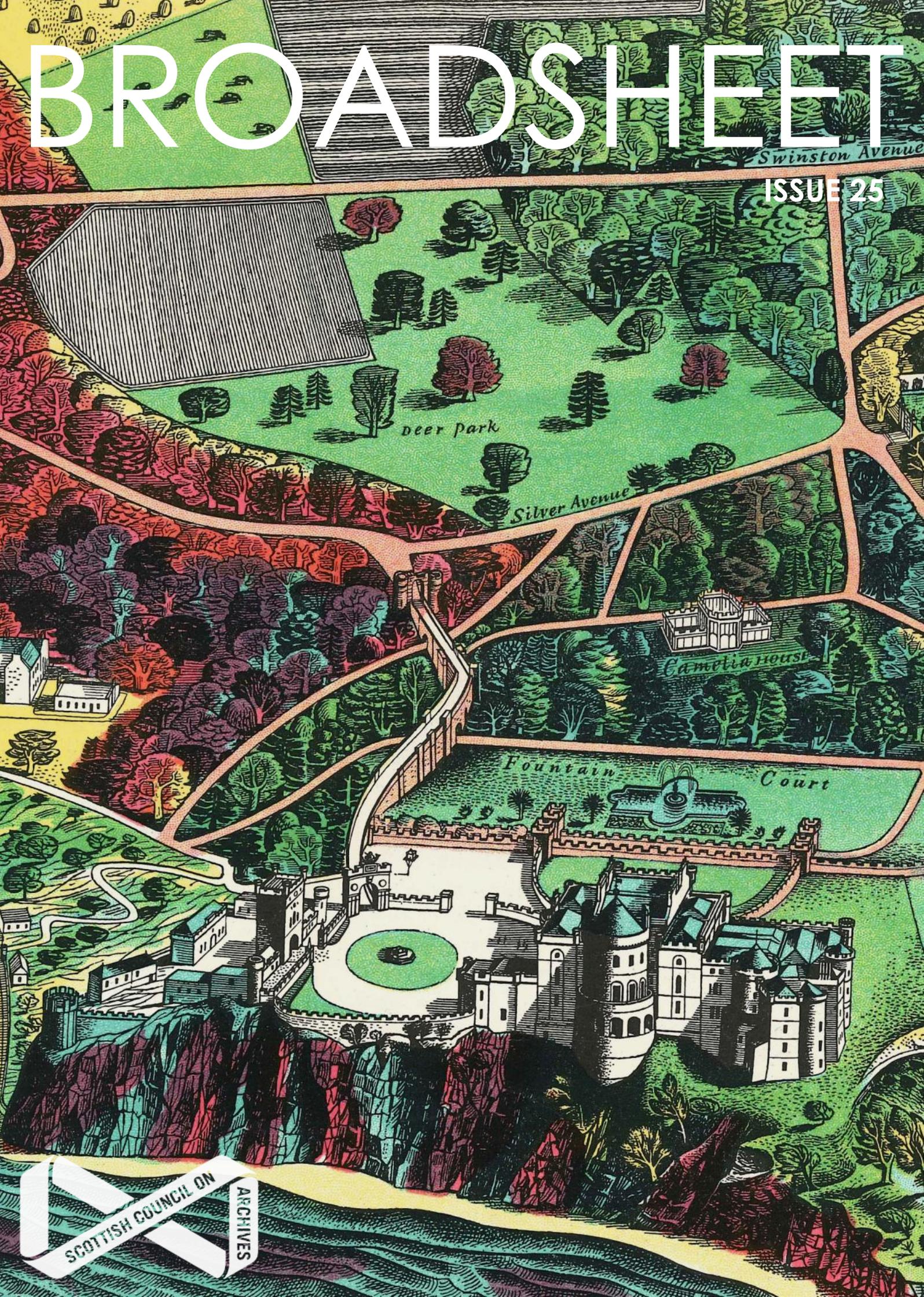


BROADSHEET

ISSUE 25



WELCOME TO THE ISSUE (number 25)

Community Archives Special Edition

"Solitude is fine but you need someone to tell that solitude is fine" - Honoré de Balzac. Time spent alone can be a rarity. It can also be a preference. Many would agree that solitude can be a wonderful thing. A chance to dream up far fetched schemes, unchecked by a sensible friend. Time to chat aloud to yourself while you ransack the secret junk drawer, take a nap in the middle of the day, read a good book. Without hesitation, you can devour that last biscuit. You can do as you please, pleased as you do.

Loneliness is solitude's distant and isolated cousin. It is not having anyone to share your secrets, books or biscuits with. Loneliness is a part of the human condition and most of us experience it at some point in our lives, but it would seem it is a growing phenomenon. According to a recent news item, one in ten people in the UK are lonely. This picture is not just made up of the elderly widow with only the television for company. Increasingly, young people are feeling disconnected and lost in a sea of social networks.

For prolonged periods, loneliness is a state of being that is not good for us. It contributes to illness, both mental and physical. Although we all live among others, we might not necessarily feel a sense of relatedness or belonging- in other words, community. The problem of loneliness cannot be solved simply by the presence of another-virtually, or in person. It can be only be eased.

People feel least lonely when they can share and develop their interests, create, learn something, feel a sense of purpose, contribute and connect with others. Community archives projects go some way to offer all of these antidotes to loneliness, with many other benefits besides. From Jura to Glasgow to the Borders, we hope you enjoy reading more about the wonderful and inspiring Community archive groups and projects going on across Scotland. Much about the experience of perusing archival material can be singular, solitary. All the same, in their creation and content archives are a reflection of shared experience and surely, this can offer some bridge across that breach of loneliness.

www.scottisharchives.org.uk

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The Editorial Team



The Working Archive campaign aims to encourage archives, their users and the public to celebrate the heritage of Scotland's businesses; the records of the products and services; and the legacy of working Scots.

The campaign also seeks to illuminate how archives themselves work. It is an opportunity to raise awareness of the special role that archivists play in communities, and on behalf of the organisations and users they serve.

Rarely-seen documents celebrating the legacy of working Scots have gone on show at the National Records of Scotland. From Antarctic adventure to tartan, from banking to engineering, and from coal to whisky, 'Scots at Work' draws together treasures from archives and museums across Scotland for the first time in support of The Working Archive campaign. This free exhibition at General Register House, 2 Princes Street, Edinburgh is open Monday to Friday until 21 June (closed 6 May).

WORKING COMMUNITIES

ON THE COVER

The archives of the National Trust for Scotland have two main elements; the organisational archive and collections of historic documents (family papers, estate papers, etc) which relate to the Trust's properties and families associated with them. Often these are held at the properties themselves although there is a significant collection of manuscript material housed at the headquarters in Edinburgh.

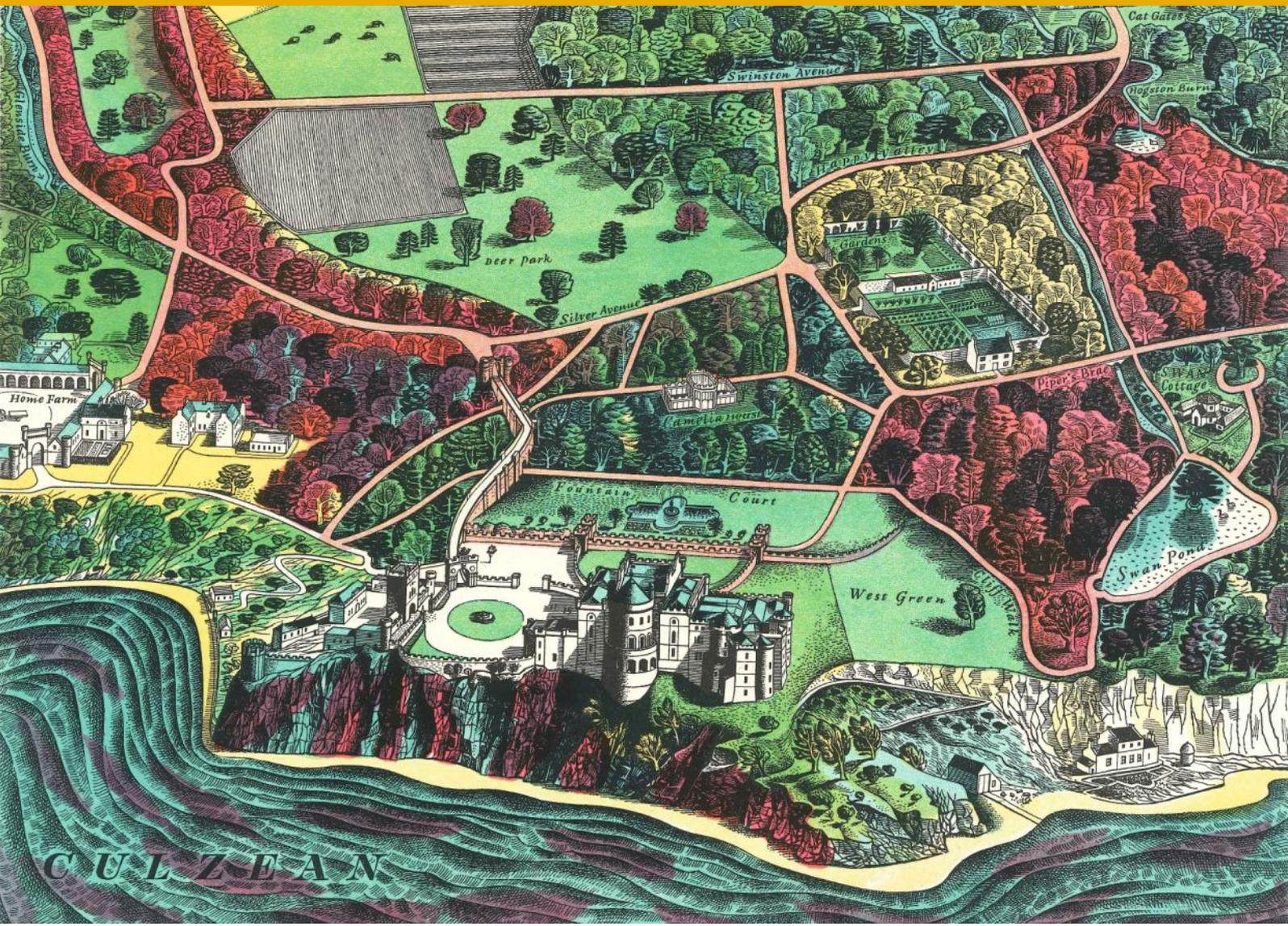
Ian Riches, Trust archivist, states that "one of my main goals is to try and reach a wider audience - whether it's via the website or in person at an event which has an archive focus". The archive is planning a series of online guides to help promote the collection, along with a series of one-off events. The events are hosted by various Trust properties with the aim of engaging the public, particularly local communities, in the archival treasures connected to that property.

The first of these events recently took place at Culzean Castle in Ayrshire (this month's cover is a George Mackie print of Culzean from a c1960s leaflet.). There is a large collection of letters, plans and ledgers relating to the castle, the estates and to the Kennedy family (Earls of Cassilis/Marquesses of Ailsa). People had the opportunity to interact with property staff and guides (some of whom were in period costume) about different aspects of Culzean. The archives section was designed as a 'taster' event to see what interest there might be and the display of selected items enabled people to get closer to them and even handle some documents.

The range of items on display – from personal letters and schoolbooks, to household accounts such as a Wine Account from 1863-1867, stimulated much discussion and interest from those attending, particularly letters written to the 1st Marquess of Ailsa by such correspondents as the Duke of Wellington and Robert Peel. One visitor was so enthused to see an actual letter written by the Duke of Wellington that when she was allowed to pick the letter up (in gloved hands of course!) she said she felt tingles down her spine.

Quite often people view great estates such as Culzean as being far removed from everyday life – a nice place to visit, have a picnic, stare at some grand family portraits... However, the documents held in the archives can tell a different story – one that concerns local people and local lives. Places like Culzean have long been a central focus for regions and communities. For example, one ledger on display from 1939 concerned with individuals employed on the estate generated a lot of interest as it contains the surnames of workers recognised as being local to that part of Ayrshire. This has inspired plans for a further event solely focused on records like these which highlight the direct links between local communities and their heritage.

By IAN RICHES
National Trust for Scotland Archivist



BRING YOUR OWN ARCHIVES... The picture of community archives and heritage groups across the United Kingdom is difficult to get a handle on. We know ... because that's what we've been trying to do for almost a decade now.

The Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG) was established in 2004 and has evolved much over that time with many significant milestones along the way: in 2006 we launched our website (www.communityarchives.org.uk) which community groups can promote themselves on, and in 2007 organised our first conference (now an annual event). Since then we have produced cataloguing guidance, launched an award scheme for community heritage groups and started to offer regional events across the country.

All of these things illustrate how far the group, and the community heritage world, have come in the last ten years. So what about the future? CAHG continues to work to spread the word about community heritage (not just archives anymore, but heritage in its broadest sense) through articles, advocacy, networking and ideas exchange, support and guidance on a range of topics and ensuring that community heritage remains on the agenda at the highest levels.

CAHG is now a Section within the Archives and Records Association. We continue to develop more guidance (a digital preservation toolkit, film and sound guidance and education guidance will be launched this year). 2013 will see three regional events - April saw our first funding workshop in Chelmsford, May will have the Scottish showcase and there is another funding workshop planned for Exeter in October - as well as the annual conference on the theme of Industrial Heritage (10 July, London). The awards will be presented at the conference and the next round will open for nominations towards the end of the year.

So you can see that there has never been a better time to find out more about community heritage. If you would like to join CAHG or sign up for our e-newsletter, it is free and easy to do - go to our website and follow the links. Or come along to one of our free events and find out more about what CAHG is about and what we can do for you.

By LAURA COTTON
Chair, Community Archives and Heritage Group



GROWING ARCHIVES

Glasgow's Allotments Heritage project started in 2010 with a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The central purpose of the project was to explore the heritage of twelve allotment sites in Glasgow. Although the funding ended over a year ago, the project work continues with other sites joining in. Once they start to uncover the seemingly endless strands and aspects of the heritage of their allotment sites, Gardeners of all ages are quickly drawn into the search.

There has been little previous research into Glasgow's allotment history. Documents often do not survive, so there is a gap in knowledge about the unique histories of the sites. Many of the allotment sites are almost one hundred years old, having been established in the First World War. People often do want to know about their plot of land, when the site started, who were the previous owners and about the people who cultivated their plots before them. Some sites have a few existing sources such as minute books, accounts, plot-holders lists and the occasional flower show poster or plot-holder planting schedules. More senior plot-holders, some of whom started cultivating a site with their parents, are a valuable source of stories but the archives are where much of the key corroborating information is found.

Victoria Park was created in the First World War. Following the war, the Council decided that Parks should not be used for allotments. Eric Martin from Victoria Park explains how he located more information about the history and movement of the site: *It started off with the archives at the Mitchell where I got the early stuff about how the plots were set up and the St. Mungo prize winners from the Council Minutes. I then got a book from the Glasgow City*



Archives of old Scotstoun with some photos in it about the Scotstoun Agricultural Showground. I then went online and got more photos of the area.

The Council minutes and images revealed that the land allocated for these allotments after the war had previously belonged to the Scotstoun Sewage Company. A discovery which solved the mystery of why a sewage pipe runs the length of the site with man hole covers in a few of the plots!

A plot-holder from Garscube (background image is a detail from the ordnance survey of Dunbartonshire (XXIV.13, 1938) showing Garscube, courtesy of Glasgow City Archives) also found that his research journey highlighted the complexity of connections that can be unearthed about the historical context of an allotment site: *After I got my plot, I decided to research how Garscube allotments started. Glasgow City Archives at the Mitchell Library revealed that The Society of Friends had approached Sir Archibald Campbell, the landowner, in 1932 for a piece of land. This was to enable the men of Maryhill who were struggling to feed their families due to the depression. More information about the Society of Friends involvement in allotments in the thirties and Garscube in particular was found from the estate papers of Sir Archibald Campbell in the University of Glasgow*



Glasgow Allotments Heritage Project



NEW
VICTORIA
GARDENS
GREENHOUSE

7 Oct 1926

FATHER & JIM

history of their local area.

After exploring the Council minutes and piecing together the different committees involved with allotment sites, Chris Wilkinson became interested in the wider political context. The University of Glasgow holds a collection of the papers of Victor Webb, an active member of the Society of Friends and the Scottish National Union of Allotment Holders from the 1930s until 1990s. Letters, minutes, and comments from the politicians and civil servants found in the National Records of Scotland revealed an engrossing story of the battles over land and resources for allotments. Ordinance surveys and other maps also offer insight into the changes and development of the sites over time. Altogether, the varied discoveries and research of the group are a very rich resource indeed. There is great potential for all of this material to be further explored and brought together to form one of the first comprehensive accounts of the allotments movement in Scotland.

By JUDY WILKINSON

1921
4-716

archives. This led to interest in land transfer and a visit to consult the Sasine records and the National Records of Scotland.

Children from the Playbusters Group have a plot at Westhorn Allotments and also became interested in the history of their site. They were fascinated by a story about a feud between the Glasgow Distiller Thomas Harvey and local residents when he built a dyke along a public footpath which now runs beside the allotments. The children have also made their very own archives with stories of the present plot-holders for the benefit of future generations. They have carried their enthusiasm for researching the origins of their plot into another project on the

INTERVIEW

HELEN FOSTER

EDUCATION OFFICER

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE

ANCIENT & HISTORICAL MONUMENTS OF SCOTLAND



Helen is the education officer for Scran, a digital service managed by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS). Scran makes available over 370,000 digital resources for educational use on its [website](#) and hosts material from archives, museums, libraries and media. Helen works with educators and learners to enable users to access and use Scran resources in support of professional practice or personal research. This work regularly involves community-based groups who are interested in contributing their own archive material to Scran.

Helen is a committee member of the Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG) and is currently planning an event with the Scottish Council on Archives entitled 'Local Archives, Local Lives: A Gathering of Scotland's Community Archive Groups and Archivists'.

In your view, what is the definition of a community archive? A tough one, because there are so many definitions out there and the term can mean different things to different people. Community archive initiatives are incredibly diverse and can range from small collections of material, collected and looked after voluntarily by private individuals, to larger groups who may work in partnership with heritage professionals. And they can be about so many different things at a local level; industry, pastimes and sport, music, ethnicity, faith, the list goes on. One of the key features of community archives, for me working in the heritage sector, is that they represent bottom-up heritage. They are usually instigated and driven by the community of interest they represent which itself has ownership of the collection and materials which make up that archive.

As a CAHG committee member based in Scotland, what are your goals for the region? The CAHG committee is made up of a mix of members from community archive groups and professionals from the heritage sector across the UK. As I live and work in Scotland, I naturally have an interest in work going on up here. My goals are to raise the profile of the CAHG in Scotland. It has the potential to be a great networking tool, a platform for groups to promote their work and a useful resource for both established groups and those just starting out. Hopefully, more groups will sign up as members and register their groups on the CAHG online directory – it's all free! This month sees the first CAHG regional event being held in Scotland in partnership with the Scottish Council on Archives. Hopefully this will be the first of many events we can hold across Scotland to showcase work in this area.

What do you feel are the main challenges faced by community archive groups? There are many challenges. Funding will always be an issue. Community archive and heritage groups often overcome obstacles because they are driven by people who are committed and have a passion for what they do. But groups can't exist on enthusiasm alone and funding always helps.

Other than that, I would cite sustainability as another issue. New technology means that many groups have some kind of online presence which gives them a wider reach. But websites will always need maintaining and technology will constantly evolve and need updating. Short-term funded projects can also sometimes be problematic when it comes to sustainability. Having a life beyond an end date requires a good deal of forethought at the outset.

Do you have any general advice for those thinking about setting up a group or project in Scotland? There is advice available on the [CAHG website](#) about setting up a community archive group. The website also offers advice covering, amongst other things, cataloguing, collections care, setting up a website and funding. It's a great place to start. I'd also recommend joining the CAHG network and speaking to other groups. Making a link with a local authority archive might also be useful—the [Scottish Archives Google Map](#) by the Scottish Council on Archives can help identify services in your area.

The heritage sector needs to promote its offer to community archive groups and community groups should recognise that this can be a reciprocal relationship.

What do you think the professional sector can do to encourage greater partnership working with community projects? More events like the CAHG/Scottish Council on Archives one are a positive step and help get people with a common interest together to talk and share ideas. The heritage sector needs to promote its offer to community archive groups and community groups should recognise that this can be a reciprocal relationship. With Scran for example, we can make images available to support research in the community and to stimulate reminiscence work and oral history gathering. In turn, Scran can offer to host some of the oral history material collected which can then be used in schools across Scotland (who have automatic access to Scran for educational use).

For time-specific project work, the heritage sector is often accused of parachuting in, running a project and then leaving once the project reaches an end. A great deal of thought needs to go in to what happens at the end of a project – is there life beyond it? Is it something that a group can sustain themselves? It is a shame to stumble across orphaned websites.

Can you tell us about some inspiring projects you have been involved with? Scran was involved in Bathgate Once More, a project led by the Workers' Education Association and a number of other partners, which brought together former workers from the Bathgate Truck and Tractor Plant in West Lothian to remember the anniversary of its opening and closure. Artefacts and photographs were collected and oral histories gathered. Some of these digitised recollections are now hosted on the Scran website, like the model talked about above.

I'd also like to mention the CAHG featured archive of the month, **Project Pigeon**. I wasn't involved in this but I think it's a fantastic project which really does demonstrate the potential and diversity of community archives. Based in Birmingham, the project has worked with the local volunteers to create an archive of memorabilia, photographs and interviews celebrating the city's rich pigeon fancying heritage, an important aspect of the area's social history. I am interested in ways that archives can stimulate creative outputs and this particular archive has been the inspiration for a book and a series of radio plays.



CELEBRATING COMMUNITY

Image Courtesy of Shetland Museum and Archives

The Friends of Glasgow Necropolis was established in 2005 to raise awareness and funds for conserving and restoring the Necropolis. We are passionate about the many different aspects of the cemetery that range from genealogy and social history, to architecture and biodiversity. The Tour guides do a vast amount of research and the Chair, Ruth Johnston, has published both a Pocket Guide and a book, *Afterlives*. Sales of these publications, donations from monthly bespoke guided tours, a variety of talks and grant applications provide funds for conservation and restoration.

Indeed, many activities undertaken by the group involve the restoration of monuments. Projects achieved to date include the William Miller monument and the Necropolis main gates. Currently on site the restoration of four mausolea is underway as a result of a major fundraising appeal; the Friends' Buchanan Sisters Appeal raised £20k and was supported by Glasgow City Council and Historic Scotland. Various other projects are also taking place, such as the restoration of the monument to Joseph Gomoszynski, featuring an extremely rare crest – this project is funded by the Polish Consulate.

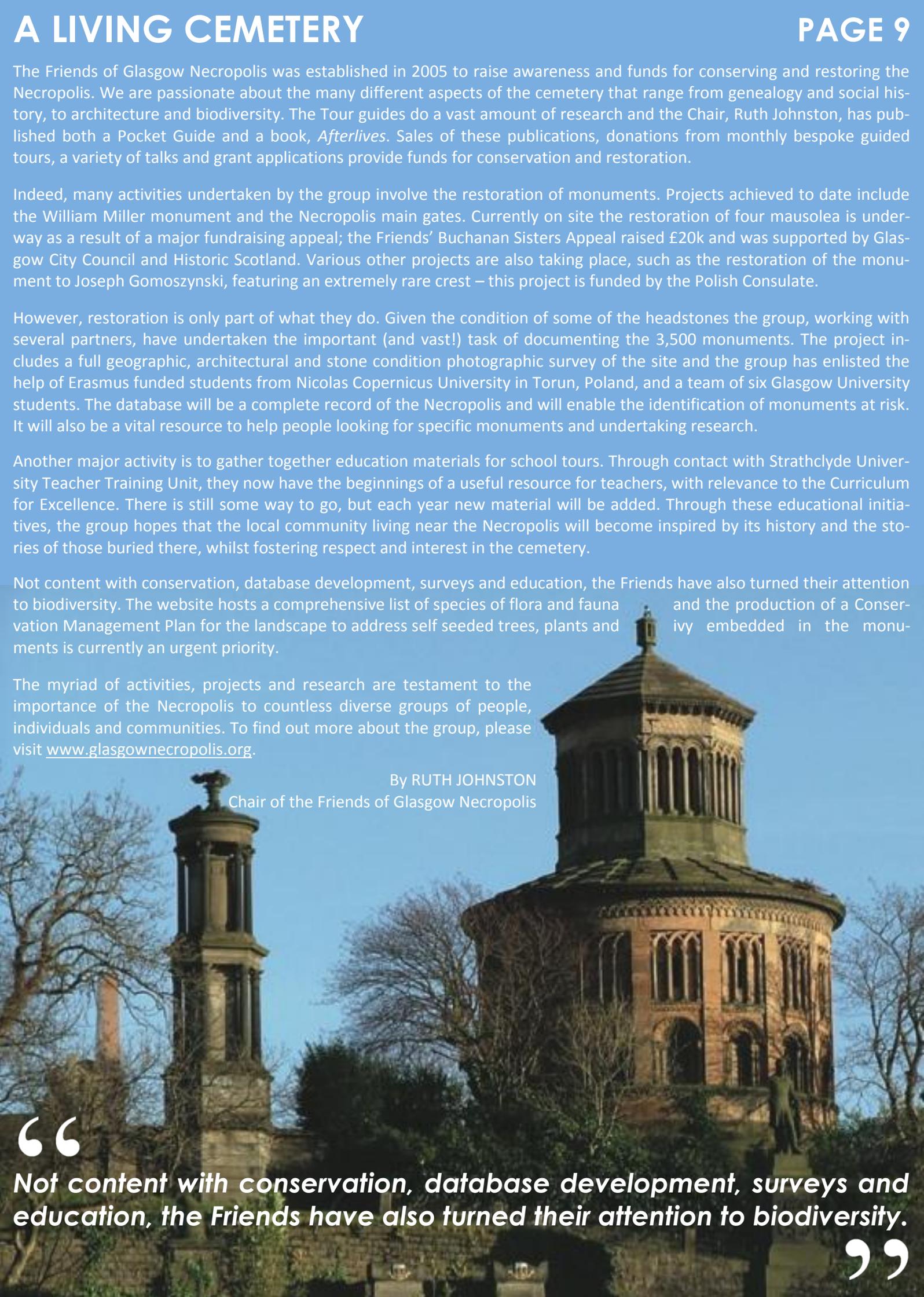
However, restoration is only part of what they do. Given the condition of some of the headstones the group, working with several partners, have undertaken the important (and vast!) task of documenting the 3,500 monuments. The project includes a full geographic, architectural and stone condition photographic survey of the site and the group has enlisted the help of Erasmus funded students from Nicolas Copernicus University in Torun, Poland, and a team of six Glasgow University students. The database will be a complete record of the Necropolis and will enable the identification of monuments at risk. It will also be a vital resource to help people looking for specific monuments and undertaking research.

Another major activity is to gather together education materials for school tours. Through contact with Strathclyde University Teacher Training Unit, they now have the beginnings of a useful resource for teachers, with relevance to the Curriculum for Excellence. There is still some way to go, but each year new material will be added. Through these educational initiatives, the group hopes that the local community living near the Necropolis will become inspired by its history and the stories of those buried there, whilst fostering respect and interest in the cemetery.

Not content with conservation, database development, surveys and education, the Friends have also turned their attention to biodiversity. The website hosts a comprehensive list of species of flora and fauna and the production of a Conservation Management Plan for the landscape to address self seeded trees, plants and monuments is currently an urgent priority.

The myriad of activities, projects and research are testament to the importance of the Necropolis to countless diverse groups of people, individuals and communities. To find out more about the group, please visit www.glasgowcemetery.org.

By RUTH JOHNSTON
Chair of the Friends of Glasgow Necropolis



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Not content with conservation, database development, surveys and education, the Friends have also turned their attention to biodiversity.
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FROM THE COMMUNITY

FOR THE COMMUNITY

Stow Parish Archives has been in operation since 2005, when a group of likeminded and hardworking parish residents secured funding to develop a local history collection within Stow Town Hall – an iconic centre of the community since its opening in 1857. Appropriately the collection is housed in the Reading Room which, until the 1960s, contained a small library donated for villagers' self-instruction. Today the public can view photographs and maps of the surrounding area, a changing display of artefacts, and an array of local history research projects compiled and donated by community members.

From elephants to street-lighting, murder to marriage, the archive holds endless stories within its diverse collection. Accessions cover every aspect of local life. We hold records of business (invoices, letters, reports) audio visual materials (photographs, artworks, postcards), artefacts (door handles, pipes, bottles), literature (including the original stamped books from the reading room), and oral histories. Much of our collection has been digitised allowing the originals to remain with their owners.

Some of our more fragile accessions are housed within Hawick Heritage Hub, the Scottish Borders Local Archive and History Centre. Our relationship with the Hub has proved invaluable. Not only has the Hub provided us with key advice since our establishment, but they have also introduced us to relevant materials within their collections enabling cross referencing, contributed to events and aided us in our digitisation projects.

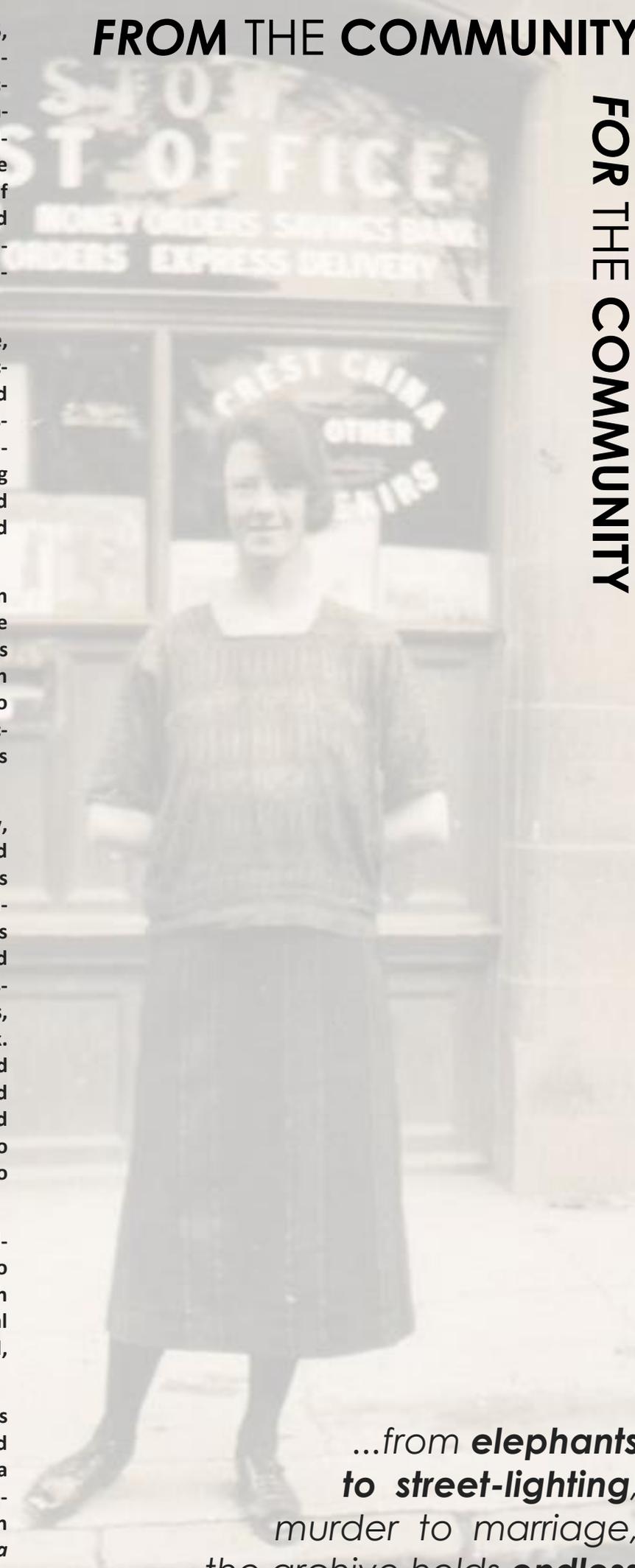
As a community archive we collect from the community, *for* the community. We are unstaffed and so access and outreach are key priorities. The group organises events bringing collections to the community and the community to the collections, as well as imparting the archive's accumulated knowledge. We have, for example, worked with primary school children within the archive and classroom to encourage the development of research skills, and introduced traditional games to Stow Sports Week. We also reach the wider community - extending beyond the locality - through social networking. This has enabled us to receive and respond to international enquiries and inform followers of our activities. In the future we plan to use the collective knowledge embodied by the archive to form a Wikipedia page on the parish.

A new collaborative project has involved taking the collection to members of the community and asking them to provide information on the content and context. Through this work 'Aunty Ida' and 'Granny Brown' (once mythical relatives of every child in the village!) have been named, and the roots of the community more firmly placed.

The archive reaches out, it grows and it gives. It benefits the parish by safeguarding its communal memories and identity. It strengthens our sense of community within a village rich with social history and networks. It establishes the Parish of Stow as a community in which we can have pride: *Stow is a bonny place, It lies between twa hills, And if you want a bonnie lass, Apply to Mercers' Mills!*

By LUCY STOCK

...from **elephants to street-lighting,** murder to marriage, the archive holds **endless stories** within its **diverse collection...**



JURA LIVES

The Jura Lives project is a community-led initiative to create an archive on the Isle of Jura. A two year project now entering its sixteenth month, it is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and LEADER (part of the Scottish Government's Rural Development Programme).

Born digital recordings of Jura residents relating the actuality of life on the island will be made available on a searchable database of living memories and series of podcasts which are being compiled as fifteen minute radio-style documentaries. The project has been designed with residents and those with island connections at its heart, but the unique heritage being captured has the potential to attract a much wider audience.

In an initial period of consultation with the community, previous fieldwork recorded on Jura through the School of Scottish Studies was reviewed. This led to the identification of eight priority topics to research: Childhoods; Change; Organised events such as ceilidhs, weddings, funerals; the Community, Landscape, Wildlife & Livestock, Transport and Activities on the estates. Project coordinator, Jane Carswell, discusses her experiences of recording Jura Lives...

What's been motivating us here on Jura has been to preserve the vivid stories and accounts of old ways of life of a community in transition, before it is too late. In order to 'do it properly', in line with common archive practise and in a way with the best chance of longevity, we have been on a steep learning curve. The registered charity (Jura Development Trust) that hosts the project and won the funding keeps its own records on paper. Prior to this venture into heritage and digital records management, the volunteer directors focused their energies on capital expenditure projects and writing economic development plans. The potential to expand the oral history cataloguing system to other documents, and other collections, is becoming apparent. It's also been fascinating to see the idea evolve that our heritage can become an actual as well as a virtual asset. Advice indispensable to this conceptual growth, and the nitty gritty practicalities, has been received from National Life Stories archive and the oral history department at the British Library, from Tobar an Dualchais, the curator at the School of Scottish Studies, and the training run by the Oral History Society.

Across 65 interviews and 18 on-location sessions, the number of master tracks in the collection to date total 551. Every track is to be summarised, and the summary to be cut and pasted into a database to be used as a rich index. So far, we are 15% of the way through the processing, this having given us 103 extra records. We have a recording studio partner who helpfully has a background

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The results are warm, evocative and meaningful, reflecting a small and close community which brings wonderful intimacy to the interviews and bountiful respect for each individual.

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in consultancy and database design for clients like the Contributions Agency, so in the end, we're pretty confident of our file-naming codex and cataloguing system.

Perhaps it is something to do with being physically cut off from other population centres, but there is insecurity that if we are the sole holders of what we've collected, it could languish once the funding has receded. There is also the danger that the collection could be so self-contained that it's irrelevant. Unfortunately for us, there is not yet an established Scottish Sound Library, but if anyone out there can think of a central home for back-up copies, closed or open, we'd love to hear from them!

Jura's population of only 200 people is facing the threat of decline. Over 60% of current residents originally came to the island from elsewhere. The diaspora of now elderly residents who used to come 'home' at the Glasgow fair are fading. Nonetheless, there is still a strong extended community, many with family connections who return every summer to holiday homes. The project's allocated time and budget seemed like a big opportunity for Jura, given its low population numbers. The aim was to be democratic and inclusive, so that as many people could contribute and share in its ownership as possible. The results are warm, evocative and meaningful, reflecting a small and close community which brings wonderful intimacy to the interviews and bountiful respect for each individual. There are however some conspicuous omis-

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Perhaps it is something to do with being physically cut off from other population centres, but there is insecurity that if we are the sole holders of what we've collected, it could languish once the funding has receded.

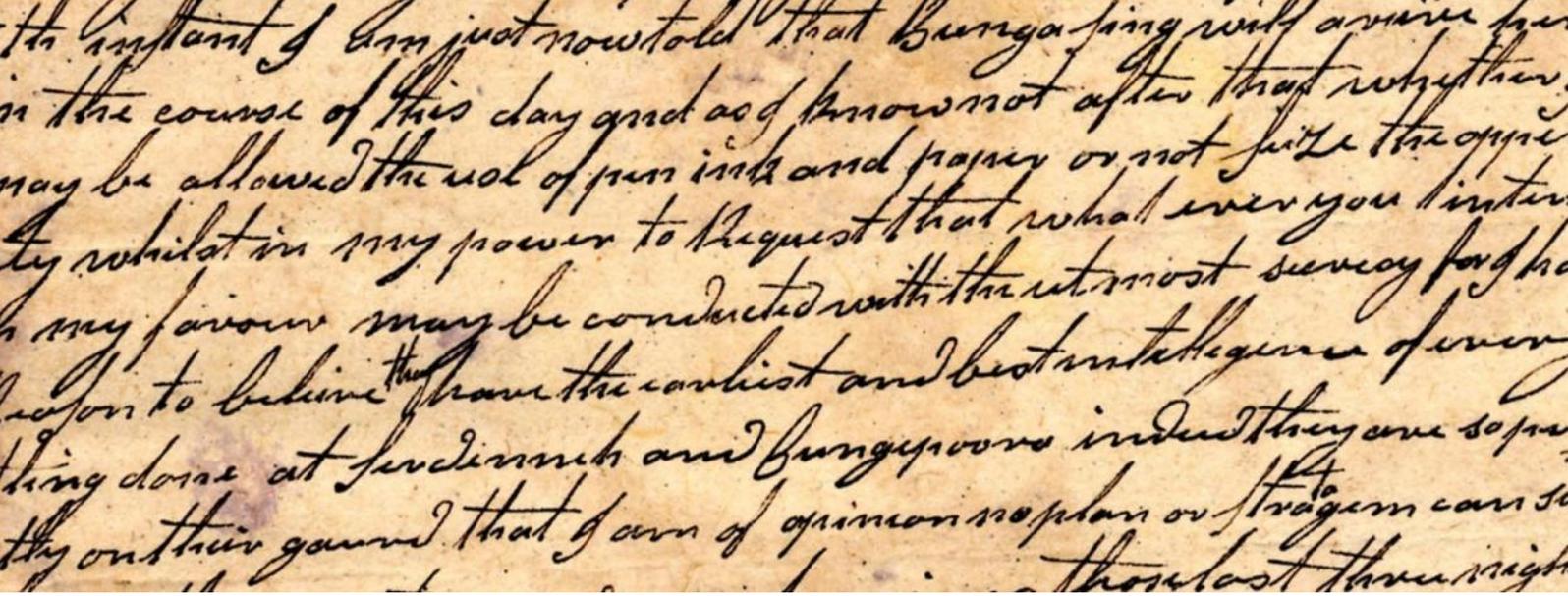
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sions arising from the delicate hierarchies and complex alliances at play - a sort of wisdom of saying nothing which might come back as reprisal. Perhaps this could be characterised as the classic gentlemanliness of the West Coast!

Our broad approach and presence at public events has led to some feeling of intrusion, which is interesting when compared with those reports, recordings or pieces of research made from out-with the community. Working from within the community brings an extraordinary level of access to what is going on here in real time and is not confined to the same prominent sources and spokespeople time after time. The results are not taken away with the retreating TV crew or academic, but are on our doorstep for us to permanently consume and take responsibility for. From a public project's point of view, these are all positives, but it is easy to see the flip side of this from the perspective of the private individual.

An increase in on-island skills was a desirable outcome of our funding, so 12 volunteers completed a computing course, 18 took up licenses to improve their typing through an online programme, and nine attended specific training about transcribing the audio. There is a steering group for the project which depends on some individuals giving up their time and attending to other business by email. The project officer's post is paid only for the first 21 hours per week. So, our desire to be ambitious, inclusive, and community-led and focused, depends on a significant burden being carried by the voluntary sector. So far, the project has been incredibly lucky with people's generosity. A gratitude / giving dialectic is a good one for a community project like this. With seven months to go until the launch of the archive, however, we still have a lot to do...



The instant I am just now told that Bengal is with a more
in the course of this day and as I know not after that whether
may be allowed the use of pen ink and paper or not since the office
by which it is my power to request that what ever you desire
in my favour may be conducted with the utmost secrecy for
reason to believe that from the earliest and best intelligence of ever
thing done at Serdecumb and Bangalore indeed they are so pre
thy on their guard that I am of opinion no plan or Stragem can be
thou hast thou right

A COMMUNITY OF FRIENDS

What is the connection between a school's coat of arms, letters from a hostage to an Indian princess, and a wander round the Co-op? They are just three of the many projects recently undertaken by the Friends of Perth and Kinross Council Archive.

Established in 2001, the Friends aim to educate the public and raise general awareness of archives through voluntary assistance, publishing, education, advertising and fundraising for specific acquisitions, all for Perth and Kinross Council Archive. Friends can be as involved as they wish and, for a very reasonable annual subscription, the 170 members receive a biannual newsletter and free admittance to a series of talks.

For those who prefer to be a little more hands-on, volunteers work on a variety of projects from cataloguing to outreach. A team of volunteers transcribed Perth burgh burial records and this database is now available to search via the [website](#). Similar projects have produced databases for sources on both World Wars, the Jacobites and Militia papers, while ongoing activities involve producing handlists of collections ready for staff to arrange and list.

Outreach projects have taken Friends in all sorts of directions. Some volunteers have manned stalls at rural fairs and open days to promote the Archive. A team produced a script based on Perth and Kinross Council minutes and made oral history recordings for the *Mosaic of Wartime Alyth*. For the *Heraldry 800* competition, Friends helped staff produce resource packs for schools designed to help pupils understand the basics of heraldry and show them what kinds of records can reveal their community's history and culture. For the

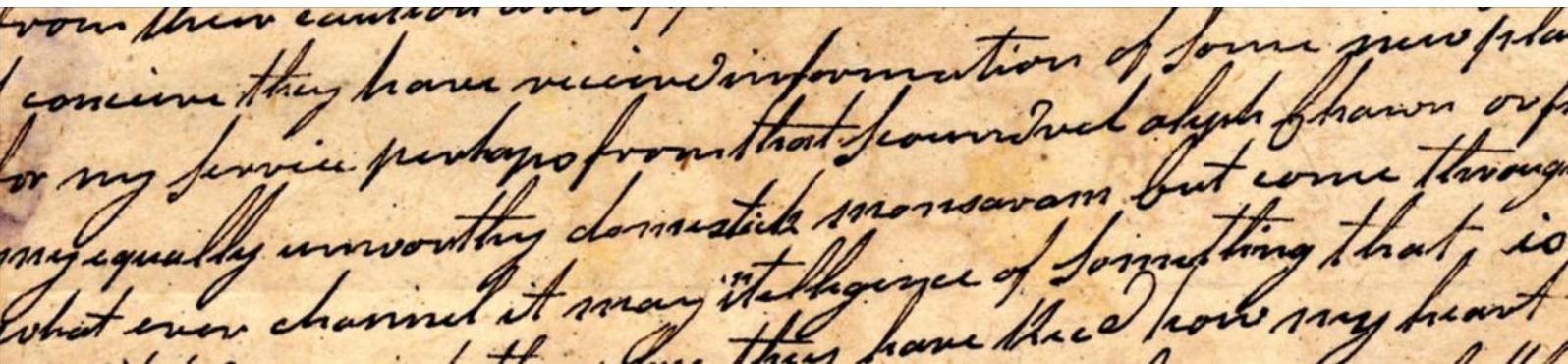
competition, pupils produced a coat of arms demonstrating what is important about their community.

Friends' talks are also open to the public, providing an opportunity to raise awareness of the work of the Archive (and some pennies!). Future topics include *Army Records and the Family Historian*, *Old Railways and Steamer Services of Breadalbane*, and *The Glass People of Perth* – reserve your seat via the website!

The Friends' publishing aim is fulfilled by the production of source lists such as *Education, Leisure & Recreation*, and a current project will result in an illustrated booklet of Perthshire's Highland District sources. For the excellent Friends' newsletter, we are very fortunate in having an editor with both dedication and publishing expertise. Our speakers contribute abstracts of their talks, and some volunteers submit articles based on their projects.

In addition to assisting the professional staff, the work of the Friends also has a major positive impact on volunteers. I joined as a volunteer some years ago, when a batch of eighteenth century letters (pictured), written by an officer of the East India Company while being held hostage, got me hooked. The Archive staff have always offered encouragement and support, not least during my study for a post graduate certificate in family and local history with the University of Dundee. I have learned new skills while volunteering and I recently completed work on the Perth Co-operative Society papers, being shown how to arrange and produce the descriptive list and entering the data into CALM. A fairly compact collection, admittedly, but both Archivist and Friend have derived some satisfaction from a job well done.

By JACKIE HAY



conceive they have received information of some new plan
for my service perhaps from that scoundrel duke of Devon or
my equally unworthy domestic messengers but come through
what ever channel it may intelligence of something that is
thou hast thou right

WHAT A HISTORY! THE WORKERS' EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION

This year the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) members across Scotland are working together on a project to research the history of our Association from six WEA centres (Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Fife, Glasgow, Inverness and Kilmarnock) and to gather material to illustrate and present the WEA Scotland story on our new website. The project is being funded by a small grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund *All Our Stories* programme and will conclude with a special conference in Aberdeen to be held on 30 November 2013, as part of the Aberdeen Branch Centenary Celebrations. Groups are now busy visiting libraries and archives to study annual reports, pamphlets, class programmes and records; carrying out oral history interviews with key tutors, learners, members and organisers; writing up their own personal stories and experiences; and, sorting out important material currently held in WEA offices for future deposit in national and local archives.

WEA's story in Scotland is a fascinating one and provides a rich and untapped source of material for the study of 20th century working people's history. Founded in 1903 to open up education for working people, the Association was at the forefront of efforts to widen access to higher education. For generations of people whose formal education ended with school the WEA has been their University providing classes in history, literature, politics, art, science and philosophy amongst many

other subjects.

In more recent years WEA has worked with many libraries and archives to organise numerous projects which draw on and value the life experiences and knowledge of local communities, extend access to archive collections, and enable people to learn new skills to research, gather, interpret and present aspects of social and cultural history of Scotland that are important to them. Recent projects have included *Vivendo Discimus: The Life and Times of Riddle's Court, 1590-2007* with support from Edinburgh City Libraries, RCAHMS, Historic Scotland and National Library of Scotland, *The Best Day of the Year: 100 Years of the Bo'ness Children's Fair* organised in partnership with the Scottish Screen Archive and *Bathgate Once More: The Story of the BMC/Leyland Truck and Tractor Plant, 1961-86* organised in partnership with SCRAN and West Lothian Council Local History Library. All three projects benefited from community involvement and resulted in new materials: film, publications, exhibitions and archives, being produced. But this year it will be WEA's own remarkable history that will take centre stage.

For more information please email e.bryan@weascotland.org.uk or visit the [website](#).

By Elizabeth Bryan
Area Tutor Organiser
Edinburgh, Lothians and Borders Area WEA

“

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WE WANT YOUR TELEGRAMS!

The Science Museum in London has announced *Information Age*, a ground-breaking new communications gallery due to open in September 2014 that will celebrate communication technologies from the last 200 years. The gallery will incorporate a diverse range of personal stories to reveal how our lives have been transformed by innovations in communications. Activity is currently underway to capture the personal accounts of those who have been directly involved with significant events in communication history. The Science Museum is now working in partnership with organisations and volunteers across the UK to collect relevant examples of historical and contemporary information.

A telegram display in the 'Cable' area of the gallery will help convey some of these important stories. The Science Museum is now attempting to gather a selection of physical and scanned telegrams from across the UK that will be exhibited and possibly included in their permanent collection. To capture a truly national perspective, six museums, including the Science Museum, have each recruited volunteer community collectors to assist with identifying potential telegrams. These volunteers will work within their local community and run collecting days at each partner museum over the summer of 2013, where members of the public are invited to share their telegrams for scanning.

In Scotland, both the National Museum of Scotland (Edinburgh) and the Riverside Museum (Glasgow) are taking part and have community collector volunteers running these collecting days soon. On these days, individuals are invited to bring their own telegrams to be scanned and become part of the project.

The National Museum of Scotland event is taking place on 20 July. Please contact Kirke Kook at k.kook@nms.ac.uk for more information. The Riverside Museum event is being held on 27 July. Please contact Elena Trimarchi at Elena.Trimarchi@glasgowlife.org.uk for more information.

The criteria for telegrams the Science Museum would want to acquire includes telegrams that reflect the changing nature of communication and interaction between people, telegrams that reflect key events in British or global history (e.g. World Wars, Wall Street Crash, Coronation of the Queen), telegrams that provide further context around existing objects in museum collections, telegrams that show how the format has changed over time (e.g. from written transcription of a coded message to a printed message, either printed slip pasted down on a blank telegram form or printed by a page printer on blank paper), telegrams that show examples of the wide variety of content of typical telegrams, both in business and private messages - business appointments, personal congratulations, urgent requests, armed services (missing or killed in action) or general greetings like weddings.

We look forward to hearing from anyone who would like to bring in any telegrams they have at home (from Victorian times up to the 1980s). The topic of the telegram can be anything from national, international or local events to personal and family events. The length of the message is not relevant - it is the story within (or around it!) that matters. The museums are first and foremost looking to scan the telegrams, so no donation is required. If people are willing to donate the originals, further arrangements can be made.

Please contact Kirke k.kook@nms.ac.uk or Elena Elena.Trimarchi@glasgowlife.org.uk for more information.

COMMUNITY ARCHIVES TOP TEN TIPS

The National Register of Archives for Scotland (NRAS) is the body responsible for archives held in private hands in Scotland and has been giving advice to owners of private collections for over 60 years. From this experience we are aware of some of the issues of concern for groups collecting archives but who have no background in archives. So here are our top ten tips for community archives...

1

Speak to other heritage bodies to share knowledge and expertise. In particular, speak to your local archivist – don't be afraid that they will pick you up for doing the wrong thing. Build up a list of useful contacts and sources of advice. For example you can find local contacts using The National Archives' [address list](#) of repositories, and for connecting with similar community groups you can consult the [Community Archives and Heritage Group's](#) website.

2

Have a clear idea of what you wish to collect, and why you are collecting it.

3

Keep a register of accessions so that you know what you've got, who you got it from and whether it was an outright gift or loan.

4

Think about the long term future of your archive: draw up a protocol so that there is a policy in place for what should happen to the archives should the group cease to exist for any reason.

5

Have a limited number of individuals responsible for the archives – avoid having too many people directly involved. And beware of lending out original material – or keep detailed information of those to whom you have lent documents.

6

Train up other interested people so that when current members retire, the relevant skills and knowledge are passed on.

7

Ensure that your collections are adequately stored in a stable environment. The NRAS's [Archive Preservation Guidelines for Private Owners](#) has advice on environment and storage. Have a plan in place to alert members in case of fire or other incidents and consult your local fire brigade for their advice.

8

Photographs require special treatment: careful handling and storage. Avoid using the type of albums with adhesive pages. Also consider creating surrogates so that material isn't damaged by constant handling.

9

Consider carefully any digitisation project before starting. Set up a system to deal with and store any material that you are creating and receiving in digital format. Much advice on the internet is complex, but [this website](#) gives straightforward advice.

10

Be aware of issues relating to confidentiality, copyright and data protection. Information on copyright issues which might affect reproduction of items in your archive can be found in *Copyright for Archivists and Record Managers* by Tim Padfield and in *Copyright in the National Archives of Scotland: guidance for users* available on the [National Records of Scotland's](#) website.



Archives and Records Management Services (ARMS)

ARMS is a flexible management tool that can provide you with the support necessary to focus on key outcomes and performance indicators right across the full range of archives and records management services. Especially important in the context of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011, it assists in securing the necessary improvements in records management and in maintaining and building on those improvements. Take the tour [here](#).



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