

# BROADSHEET

ISSUE 29





# WELCOME TO THE ISSUE

## number 29

Here is spring. On the nature of the season, in one of his typically idiosyncratic ditties, the poet e.e.cummings wrote 'spring is a perhaps hand'. He suggests it's often subtle but all-encompassing power to change everything around us. In parts of central and Eastern Europe, it has been a violent winter and an unsettling spring. Events have rapidly unfolded in the Ukraine, with the annexation of Crimea into the Russian Federation commanding column space worldwide. Amongst the decidedly ominous and tense headlines, there is the sad fact of the loss of lives. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, fiery February protests not only left hundreds of people injured, but also lead to the destruction of crucially important historical documents dating from 1878 to 1918, material from the Ottoman period and also records from the post-World War II war crimes commission. The violent loss of individual lives and that of records documenting a collective history are different kinds of human tragedies. Yet, they are both representative of the loss of something unique and irreplaceable. We echo the sentiments of the International Council on Archives in acknowledging this permanent memory loss and the immense challenges it will present to colleagues in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo.

The news from this peaceful patch is thankfully neither sombre nor unnerving, though there is lots of it. For those who weren't able to join us for the Digital Fabric of Scotland conference we hosted with The Scotsman, or the Public Records (Scotland) Act, 2011 conference in Glasgow, read on. We also heartily congratulate Falkirk Archives at Callendar House on being awarded Archive Service Accreditation. They are the first Scottish archive service to achieve this UK-wide standard. We look forward to seeing many more awards to follow.

*The Editorial Team*

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# ON THE COVER

A detail from the second Burgh Register for Aberdeen (1408-1414) where a man's face and a fish have been incorporated into the first letter on the page. "Fish Man" has now become something of a motif for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Archives, featuring on promotional material from leaflets through to our web and Facebook pages.

Recognised in 2013 by UNESCO as being of outstanding historical importance to the nation, and now available online through Scotland-sPlaces, the first eight volumes of the Burgh Registers for Aberdeen cover the years 1398 to 1509. The 5,238 pages represent the earliest and most complete body of surviving records of any Scottish town. Alongside the government's Exchequer Rolls and the Register of the Great Seal, these records are the only near-continuous record which survives for Scotland in the fifteenth century and an unrivalled insight into the political and social life of the Scottish medieval town. The depth of detail in these records is unique as the registers include not only the records of the town council, which usually met twice a week, but of the bailie, guildry and head courts.

Currently the focus for a joint project with Aberdeen University which will facilitate much wider public access, these late-medieval records form the core of a much larger collection under the care of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Archives. Jointly funded by the two local authorities, the archive is the gateway to the written history of the North East of Scotland. Visit [www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/archives](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/archives) for more information and to explore the collections. The image used on this page is the Charter Room in Aberdeen's Town House.

The UNESCO UK Memory of the World Register is an online catalogue created to help promote documentary heritage across the UK and the world. The register is part of a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) programme to support and raise awareness of archives and is available at [www.unesco.org.uk/ukregister](http://www.unesco.org.uk/ukregister).

## ABERDEEN CITY & ABERDEENSHIRE ARCHIVES





# PUDDING?

## GETTING OUR ACT TOGETHER

We all know the 14<sup>th</sup> century proverb, 'The proof of the pudding is in the eating'. Perhaps it is time for the sage words to be updated. We might have 'The proof of the act is in the doing'. Rather appropriate words for the conference held in the impressive Glasgow City Halls in December 2013 (a special thanks to Glasgow Life for providing the facilities free of charge).

Even more impressive than the venue was the array of speakers. From Humza Yousaf, Minister for External Affairs and International Development in the Scottish Government, through the Keeper of the Records of Scotland (Tim Ellis), the Scottish Information Commissioner (Rosemary Agnew), the Assistant Information Commissioner for Scotland and Northern Ireland (Ken Macdonald), to the voices of records practitioners and those tackling the efficiency and accountability agenda in Scotland, namely Dr Kenneth Meechan (Asset Governance Manager, Glasgow City Council), Dr Edward Coyle (Director of Public Health, NHS Fife) and Julie Whitelaw (Head of Corporate Services, West Lothian Council). Lessons from outside Scotland were supplied by David Huddleston (Head of Records Management, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland) and Heather Forbes (Head of Information Management and Archives, Gloucestershire County Council).

Impressive speakers. What next? Simply co-operation in mounting and contributing to the success of the event: from the Scottish Council on Archives and the National Records of Scotland, through the Archives and Records Association (UK & Ireland) and the Information and Records Management Society, to Glasgow City Council and the Archivists of Scottish Local Authorities Working Group.


What did they all regard as so important that they carved out time in their busy diaries? The clue is in the title of the conference, 'Getting Our Act Together'. All were there to persuade an audience drawn from Scottish public authorities that implementation of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 was a priority. Not just a priority because a big stick could be wielded against the wilfully recalcitrant. Rather a priority because implementation of the Act has positive outcomes: greater accountability, improved public services and increased efficiency.

At this point it would be usual to launch into an exposition of the most telling points made by the speakers. However, on this occasion the speakers can quite literally speak for themselves through the wonders of video filming and transferring it to the web. The Scottish Council on Archives decided to show its commitment to the 2011 Act not only by organising the conference but also by harnessing to the full modern means of communication. All you have to do is go to [www.scottisharchives.org.uk/ouract](http://www.scottisharchives.org.uk/ouract). Have a pen and note pad beside you. There will be points that particularly catch your attention or you will want to follow up.

Ah, yes, following up. The wise words of the speakers and their sensible calls to action will be productive only if those hearing them are motivated to act. So 'Getting Our Act Together' really does mean 'The proof of the act (or Act) is in the doing'. Where from here? The fortunate truth is that help is at hand - literally just a visit to a website or a 'phone call away.

The Scottish Council on Archives operates strategically. Hence, it has invested heavily in the development of a key archives and records management tool. It went for the best, the internationally renowned Dr Barbara Reed of Monash University, Australia. She devised the Ar-





chives and Records Management Services (ARMS) Quality Improvement Framework. It is a comprehensive tool covering every aspect of the services named. Importantly in relation to the 2011 Act, the specific elements of ARMS relevant to records management have been mapped across to the elements of the Model Records Management Plan published by the Keeper of the Records. Implementation of the Act is central to the purpose of the tool.

ARMS is *not* a tool for records managers alone, though they will bring to it valuable practical knowledge, experience and training. ARMS is a self-improvement tool at its best when involving a cross-section of staff within an organisation. That way there is a real sense of ownership, team working and commitment. Looking from different perspectives should ensure that nothing of consequence is missed in the self-assessment process.

As with the speeches at the conference, let the internet take the strain. Have a dip into ARMS by going to [www.scottisharchives.org.uk/arms](http://www.scottisharchives.org.uk/arms). Puzzled about something? Need some clarification? Then all you have to do is lift the 'phone and contact the Scottish Council on Archives (0131 535 1362) or email [contact@scottisharchives.org.uk](mailto:contact@scottisharchives.org.uk).

Too good to be true? Well, there is no point in hiding the truth. Nothing is ever free. The biggest cost for your organisation will be in identifying the records management weaknesses that could undermine compliance with the 2011 Act and certainly impact negatively on your efficiency. However, it is better to tackle those realities using a tool that puts your organisation fully in charge of the process.

Other costs? If you opt to use ARMS, then you pay a very modest fee (£150). More important should be a readiness to impose on your organisation a small burden in terms of a little extra time. ARMS is a self-improvement tool and cannot sensibly be excluded from that same process. It has already been piloted, tried and tested, and amended in response to feedback. That virtuous circle needs to be maintained so as to ensure that the tool continues to meet fully the needs of its users.

Nothing stands still in our modern society. That is the message at the heart of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011. Public authorities' records management has to be fit for purpose. ARMS provides the reality check. Where there are deficiencies, it points the way to the self-identification of the remedies.

The proof of the pudding is indeed in the eating.



*Paul is the archive manager at the Heritage Hub, part of the Heart of Hawick and the archive service for the Scottish Borders.*

**Describe Archives in three words.** Potent, Particular and Potential-filled

**Why Archives?** I came back from working in Africa with no job, was offered para-professional archives work in Wales and was smitten by archives and their glorious variety.

**What projects are you working on at the moment?** Flodden Heritage Lottery Fund project, keeping our Memory Bank sustainable, completing retrospective catalogue conversion by March 2014, experimenting with tagging catalogue entries for GIS, negotiating for an important rugby club archive, oh, and maybe going to trust within six months.

**What do you feel are the main challenges currently faced by the sector?** I'd identify born-digital records and the fear that, however fast we develop our services, we can't keep up with the pace of change. I see numbers of self-directed enquiries tailing off, because online catalogues and ScotlandsPeople enable people to get the same, maybe better, outcomes from research in a short time as would have taken them much longer hitherto. Those numbers are not being replaced. I think one solution may be selling commissioned services, for real money, to support older people; there are now good precedents for this.

**What do you feel are the main strengths of the sector?** The astonishing resource in our care and the massive potential to share its stories with a wider audience.

**If you had an unlimited budget what would you do?** Recruit a charabanc full of people capable of delivering the massive potential of archives.

**What has been the highlight of your career so far?** Hard to choose one but getting the Heritage Hub post wins; it's a privilege and pleasure to go to work each day.

**Do you have a favourite document or story?** Probably the Seton Gordon correspondence which I listed at Lochaber in 2012. Seton Gordon was a naturalist and bird photographer but knew everybody in the Highlands and well-beyond it seems. He was fascinated by everything from piping, wolf-slaying and seaweed, to the only man who 'had seen a new MacBrayne boat'. At its heart is Gordon's deep friendship with Francis Cameron Head of Inverailort, and the collection documents two charmingly bonkers men playing out a life-long obsession with Highland culture and history.

It has left me with my own obsession; how did the son of the Town Clerk of Aberdeen end up so well-connected that, when he wanted to get from Uig to Orkney to meet Michael Powell, Emeric Pressburger's film-making partner, the Duke of Westminster persuaded the proprietor of The Times to send his private yacht out to take him there?





# ADVANCING ARCHIVES

## ACCREDITATION IN SCOTLAND

There are two important things to be said about Archive Service Accreditation. Firstly, it is a standard. Secondly, it has been created by unprecedented co-operation across a range of organisations in the UK with a direct interest in archives, including the National Records of Scotland and the Scottish Council on Archives.

Accreditation recognises three vital factors in service delivery: organisational health; collections management; and stakeholders and their experiences.

The first covers the service mission statement, governance, planning and resources (buildings, finances and staffing). The second deals with every aspect of collections, including information about them, how they are cared for and their conservation as well as disaster planning. The final element is about engagement: access policy, understanding and meeting the various needs of users and informing users.

Inevitably, a standard is something that has to be met (or otherwise). Attaining it is a reflection of commitment not only by those who operate a service but also by those who provide financial and other support for it.

Accreditation is essentially a process rather than an event. The advice to archives services is simple. Look at what accreditation involves, at the three vital factors and what would be required for a successful application. You may conclude your service is not ready to apply. Better to identify the gaps – whether in documentation or in delivery – and set about remedying the deficiencies.

It is important not to feel that accreditation is something for other services, that 'We are too small' or too something else to stand a chance of success. Accreditation is open to all services. It is flexible, and firmly grounded in the realities of running an archives service.

Scotland has scored its first success with the accreditation of Falkirk Archives. That service deserves commendation for being the first to make formal application for accreditation. It is even more important that Falkirk should be the harbinger of a series of successful applications from across a variety of archives and from across Scotland. Other services are lining up to apply. If you are thinking of applying or simply want more information about the accreditation process, then you can contact [accreditation@scottisharchives.org.uk](mailto:accreditation@scottisharchives.org.uk). You can read more about Falkirk's accreditation experience on page 8.

It is worth making a final point because it is important. Archivists frequently feel that archives are insufficiently valued and that their own work is not fully understood or appreciated. Accreditation offers the prospect of raising the profile of individual services and of the sector as a whole. Scotland needs to throw its weight behind that welcome change.

Lamp Lighter on Jackson Avenue  
By John P. Munn, 1937  
(Falkirk Community Trust)





# ACCREDITATION: THE FALKIRK STORY



Falkirk Archives is the first Scottish archives to go through the Archive Service Accreditation process. Tackling a new scheme is always a bit daunting. However, we took part in the Accreditation pilot last year, and as veterans of the museums accreditation scheme we were familiar with the types of policies, plans, procedures and practices which are expected.

Completing the application for Archive Service Accreditation is a little bit like writing up credits for ARA Registration or CPD because it's really a form of reflective practice. Describing and documenting existing practice helps to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each area of work and encourages reviews and improvements. External validation ensures that there is a balanced view of the results.

We regularly review our practices as a team and accreditation gave us another incentive to use these reviews to encourage improvements. Leading up to the pilot in 2012 we undertook a thorough review of our security and risk management procedures. We then identified disaster preparedness as an area needing some work and so in 2013 we arranged training for all Heritage staff who could be called out in the event of an incident. The Archive Service Accreditation pilot then suggested that we should review our access and outreach activities and so the team spent the next few months analysing and evaluating the range of activities we have tried over the last ten or more years. We were very

encouraged by this review and we found ourselves better able to explain and clarify our role within the wider context of the Heritage team and Falkirk Community Trust as a whole. The application form for accreditation then became much simpler to complete because we had all reflected on our current practice and contributed to our resulting Access and Outreach plan.

“

*We are so pleased to see the hard work of our team in Archives paying off with this accolade ... We're very proud of the work and the quality of Falkirk Archives and it's wonderful to see them getting the credit they deserve.*

Maureen Campbell  
Chief Executive of Falkirk  
Community Trust

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Our main building is far from perfect for an archive and this was an issue during the pilot. However, we have been able to demonstrate that we manage the risks to the archives very closely and thoroughly, and the Archive Service Accreditation scheme accepts this as meeting the required standard. In any organisation, there are things which are outwith the control of the archivist or even the Chief Executive, and accreditation does not demand miracles; but it does require a serious commitment to recognising, ameliorating and managing risks.

Archive Service Accreditation has been a very positive experience. It took a lot of work and commitment from the archives team, along with support from our museum, facilities and learning colleagues in the Heritage Team of Falkirk Community Trust. There will always be other things we can do to improve, but it is incredibly helpful to get an informed external view of our work and I would recommend the process to all archives services.

By ELSPETH REID  
Archivist, Falkirk Community Trust



# THE WORKING ARCHIVE A WORKPLACE ROMANCE...

In February, the Scottish Council on Archives and the Working Archive asked you to send us a love note about the images in our Working Archive gallery. The gallery celebrates Scottish working lives and happens to feature images of rugged fishermen, glamorous typists, dashing bankers and enchanting nurses.

We were thrilled at the response we received, with many people taking inspiration from the images and, in a few cases, penning some lines of poetry themselves.

The image that struck a chord with most was the 'tea tasting' at Melrose Tea (background image) from an Edinburgh City Archive collection. We found it impossible to pick just three winners so went for four, each of whom received a box of chocolates. Our winners were Matthew Naylor, Kate Page, Sarah Higgins and Lynda Rankine.

## Untitled

*Many lovely images, a privilege to behold.  
We have tea packaging, tea production; though permit me to be bold -  
It is the spying of tea sampling that makes my mind scream "sold"  
Amongst the pieces of silver, we have emotional gold.  
Beauty in this image and the classy act it portrays;  
Greater variety in teas makes for legendary days.*

By MATTHEW NAYLOR

## An Ode to Tea

*McGonagall I take inspiration from thee,  
Of how to write the perfect Valentine's ditty,  
For surely a poem about love sublime  
Should have the most stupendous rhyme.*

*What would a day be without a Melrose cuppa?  
Not once, not twice but six times before supper,  
Yet as the Tea Tasting photo does show,  
There are standards of love to be upheld, you know.*

*You might not have anywhere to put it down,  
But a saucer's a must to prevent a frown,  
Cream, sugar (and a dram or two),  
Will all help create the perfect brew.*

*Ceylon, Earl Grey, Darjeeling we've beheld,  
Are always delightful to see upon the shelves,  
For with water good feelings it will impart,  
To warm the very cockles of your heart.*

By KATE PAGE



# THE DIGITAL FABRIC OF SCOTLAND

## STRATEGIC THINKING, DIGITAL DELIVERY

The Scottish Council on Archives-sponsored 'Digital Fabric of Scotland' conference - at the Scottish National Galleries, Edinburgh, on 29 January – reflected the Council's commitment to promoting strategic thinking in the archives sector and beyond.

Few things require more in the way of strategic thinking than how Scotland deals with the ever-growing opportunities flowing from digital innovation. There could be no better way to promote understanding of that innovation than by bringing together those who are driving it in Scotland and elsewhere. Attendees heard from a range of expert speakers and thus better understood the scale of change and the opportunities offered by that change.

The Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs, Fiona Hyslop, delivered a keynote address that reflected the Scottish Government's commitment to digital matters, a commitment already shown in *Scotland's Digital Future* with its four main themes of digital public services, the digital economy, digital participation and connectivity (see [www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/09/6272](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/09/6272)).

Ms Hyslop began with an awesome statistic: it is estimated that almost 25 billion electronic communications – e-mail, Twitter, Facebook and mobile phone 'apps' – are made in Scotland every day. Against that background, she made it clear that the 'how to' of ensuring continued access to the most important information ('digital continuity') was a task not just for archivists but also one that faced business.

A revolution in how information assets were used could be secured only by 'the golden thread of co-operation' between the public and private sectors and between different disciplines (each with unique expertise and experience).

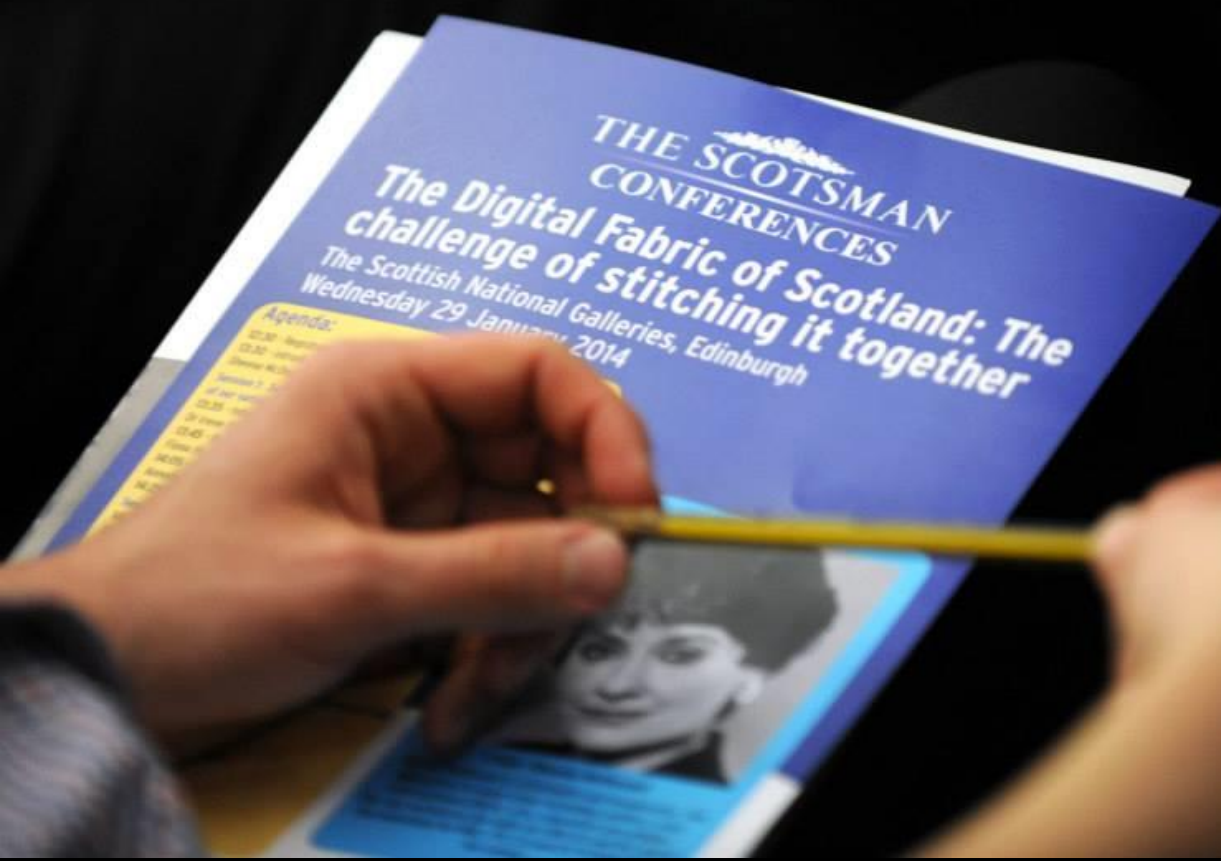
Co-operation could meet the challenge of ensuring continued access to valuable information over the decades:

*Technology offers the means to deliver across different software platforms. Robust records management provides the principles and practice to ensure that relevant information is identified, located and accessed. Neither discipline has the all the answers. Together they can offer a breakthrough that ensures access to valuable data for many decades to come.*

Ms Hyslop commended the National Records of Scotland for grasping the issue of long-term access to government information by working towards setting up a trusted digital repository.

A core purpose of the conference was to show some of the most important ways in which digital resources are created and used. A dazzling array of speakers rose to the challenge beginning with Annelies van den Belt, the CEO of DC Thomson Family History. She pointed to a Scottish diaspora of some 50 million – with particular concentrations in the USA, Canada and Australia – as a potentially huge market not only for online databases of family history-related records but also for encouraging visits to Scotland to pursue research in the original records.

Professor Lorna Hughes of the University of Wales showed how digital archives were being used in research, in teaching and for sheer enjoyment, and how digitisation of collections long since physically separated could be brought together again in the virtual world. She spoke about the impressive National Digital Library of Wales, a fee-free resource with over two million users.





Catherine Hardman, Deputy Director of the Archaeology Data Service, University of York, described the operations of the service, emphasising that data were vital for future interpretation. She set out a sustainable business model focussed on cost across preservation, management and administration, ingest, dissemination and data refreshment.

Ben Sullivan, Head of European Operations for KE Software said that digital developments had created radically new ways of opening up access to heritage treasures, including archives. However, delivering success depended on sound preparatory work such as identifying potential users, putting in place workflow procedures and having a digital asset management system.

The focus of the contribution from Tim Ellis, Keeper of the Records of Scotland, was on secure access to digital information over future decades. He presented a stark choice – create robust digital continuity or face a future wrestling with the digital equivalent of hieroglyphics. Achievement of the continuity goal requires collaboration, the right skills in the right place and dealing with the challenge when creating data rather than attempting to ‘bolt on’ solutions afterwards.

Rosemary Agnew, the Scottish Information Commissioner, gave a presentation that asked a deceptively simple question, ‘Is FOI Enough?’ In fact, it was a fundamental challenge to the way so many think about information and access. The rapidity of digital communication could be transformative if there were a culture change to the ‘proactive rather than reactive; sharing rather than disclosing; communicate rather than respond; and use information to enable, not constrain’. Read more about this new approach to FOI in Rosemary’s article on page 12.

BT is a massive player in the digital environment in Scotland. Brendan Dick, Director of BT Scotland, presented two sides of his company’s operations. The first was the roll out of broadband across Scotland, the infrastructure enabling the creation of a digital society and also enormously facilitating business. The second element of the presentation concentrated on BT’s past and that of its predecessors as shown in its impressive archives. No doubt present-day digital advances will figure in BT’s future archives.

The conference focussed on the opportunities offered by digital innovation, on the challenges faced and on the vital importance of co-operation. Archives and records management were rightly seen as having a pivotal role in meeting the enormous challenge of digital continuity. However, it was equally right to emphasise that no one discipline has *the* solution.

What can archivists and records managers do to advance the continuity agenda? Speak up. Advertise the vital contribution your expertise can bring to the table when your employing organisation is discussing that agenda. But remember that no one has all the answers in a digital environment where change occurs at a bewildering speed. Above all, network. Listen, learn, share. The archives and records management sector has a unique opportunity to contribute to something of vital importance to the nation.



Fiona Hyslop MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Culture & External Affairs



Conference Delegates



Annelies van den Belt, CEO DC Thomson Family History



Panel Discussion



Dr Irene O'Brien, Chair Scottish Council on Archives





# IN THE DIGITAL AGE IS FOI ENOUGH?

Expectation is increasingly to be able to access information on demand, and receive instant responses to questions – Is FOI Enough? After all, the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 was drafted long before the benefits of digital services were imagined by us mere mortals, so do FOI provisions stack-up now?

The short answer to the question is YES! – but, the culture that underpins how it is applied by public bodies needs to adapt and evolve. The shift has to be to see FOI as being a rights-based enabler, rather than a process-led control mechanism.

Examples of really good FOI practice that I see are from Scottish public authorities already embarked on this change journey, but there is still a long way to go. Ask an authority what it understands by FOI and the response is inevitably about responding to information requests and so engaging the whole request, review, application to the Scottish Information Commissioner process, along with comments about the 'burden'. Rarely do we hear that FOI is really about the active sharing and publication of information and when people can't find what they are looking for, they can make an FOI request. In other words, the starting point for many organisations is to react to requests to disclose information, rather than proactively share it in the first place.

This starting point is significant because it colours the whole approach to access to information. The very fact FOI is so often referred to as a burden, highlights that many public authorities simply miss the point that it is just one part of a wider communication system. If they didn't have the right to make FOI requests, people would still ask questions; authorities would still have to respond in some way as they can't simply ignore service users. The difference FOI makes, and why it is so important to society, is it provides an enforceable back-stop that ensures Scottish public authorities engage with people as a matter of duty, if not a matter of course. This duty, whose origins are founded in the principles of openness, accountability and good public service, is best delivered because the service is so good in the first place it has become a matter of routine, not because an organisation feels obligated to 'do FOI'.

Viewed as a vehicle for communication and part of a wider strategy for engagement, FOI becomes a great enabler, rather than a constraint. The real challenge is making that strategy citizen-driven so the information we routinely publish is what people want to see. This won't eliminate FOI requests but it will make them easier to respond to.

My message is very simple: maintain the strengths of FOI, such as enforceability, but evolve the FOI culture to be rooted in proactive sharing and communication, rather than being reactive. Use information to enable, not constrain, coming from the starting-point of the citizen's needs.

By ROSEMARY AGNEW  
Scottish Information Commissioner

The pace of technological change presents very real challenges in relation to digital records and services, and access to information. For as long as our approach and underlying culture about public records and services stay the same, we will be playing catch-up.

In the early days, the focus of service-based organisations' was predominantly on technology itself: a tool to streamline and automate the administration of processes. The benefits of record keeping electronically were rooted in concepts of 'the paperless office', particularly the savings which might be gained by not storing paper records. As technology and its uses progressed, though, we literally 'got digital'. Communication was revolutionised, getting quicker and instantaneous. We generate increasing numbers and types of records, digitally, than was ever envisaged at the outset.

Many realised that without effective records management it is difficult to find, retrieve, manage and control these digital records, so they sought to 'sort-out' their records. This impacted on archivists and records managers as it raised their profile, and fundamental questions such as: what should be archived for posterity and how long is posterity anyway? Unfortunately for public bodies still trying to catch-up on the 'sorting-out' the next big thing is already well on its way: digital services.

Just read the Scottish Government's Digital Strategy or about regulations coming out of the EU such as Re-use and INSPIRe, to see that the game is ramping-up. It is no longer enough to simply have everything catalogued, accessible and organised (essential to being able to respond to FOI requests). Public bodies are required to deliver services in a more holistic way, using digital tools; while users are increasingly finding the most effective way to access services is through technology.

This should be causing us to ask questions about access to information held by public bodies, and so, by definition, statutory provisions enshrining access to information rights.

I asked myself the question: in a society where the ex-



A woman with dark hair, wearing a dark top, is smiling and looking down at a desk. She is surrounded by papers, a laptop, and other office supplies. The background is slightly blurred, showing a typical office or library setting.

# DEVELOPING SKILLS: LOTHIAN HEALTH SERVICES ARCHIVE INTERNSHIPS

In 2013, the Centre for Research Collections at the University of Edinburgh piloted an exciting new internship programme to teach and develop skills in the archive and conservation disciplines, and to provide valuable experience of the working environment in a higher education institution. Our first two interns worked with the Lothian Health Services Archive (LHSA) team: Fiona, the archive intern, developed a cataloguing system for part of the photographic collection and Charlotte, the conservation intern, researched and undertook new treatments on a small collection of parchment documents.

These 10-week internships were a great success, with positive outcomes for both the interns and the LHSA collections they worked on. In her final report, Charlotte said “I really cannot stress enough how great this internship has been. I have learnt so much and developed skills in so many areas”.

Following on from the pilot programme, we put together a second 10-week conservation internship. This time we provided a focus on the preventive treatment of a recent acquisition of Hamish Henderson material to the University's Special Collections and Archives, from condition surveying through to basic remedial treatment and re-housing of the whole collection to make it easily available for research. This internship was awarded to Fiona Priestley (pictured), who had been a volunteer with LHSA prior to the internship, and she describes the internship and her work in more detail followed by a quick Q&A.

“Most of my time during the internship was spent on the papers of Hamish Henderson, one of the founders of the School of Scottish Studies at the University. He was a fascinating character and the collection reflects every aspect of his rich and varied life, from his work as a folklorist and song-collector amongst the travelling folk of Scotland, to his war career, to his strong libertarian views and active campaigning against apartheid and nuclear missiles. Although in relatively good condition, his papers needed to be re-housed to reflect best practice and to bring them in line with our other collections. I took around 32,000 sheets of paper, repaired each as necessary and arranged them in such a way that people can now access them for cataloguing and research.


I also visited several other conservation studios and projects, along with learning a little about each area of our department to improve my understanding of how my work fitted in with that of my colleagues.

During my internship, I gave a talk about volunteering and internships to a large group of colleagues and I wrote a full report on my work, detailing everything from the life of Hamish Henderson himself, to how long I have spent working on the collection, to recommendations of future work which could be undertaken.”

**Why conservation?** I am an archaeology graduate who ended up working in public relations, and have been a full-time mum for 10 years. I am fortunate in that I have had the chance to consider what I would really like to do in life and what I might be good at. I am a very keen crafter and a patient and careful person, and combining all of these personality traits and skills, conservation seemed to be the perfect match. A volunteering opportunity came up at the conservation studio in the University's Main Library and I was able to ‘dip my toe in the water’ to see if it really suited me, and luckily, it did!

**For an organisation looking to implement internship opportunities, have you any advice in terms of how they can help develop skills and prepare participants for a future career?** Think about the range of things you do in a year of your work and try to make a potted version as far as possible, giving a flavour for all the types of work you do – administrative and practical, in-



A woman with dark hair is sitting at a desk, looking down at some papers. She is wearing a dark top. The desk is cluttered with papers, a pen, and other small items. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a library or office setting with bookshelves.

house and external etc. However, be careful not to pack too much into a short internship or the value of the experience will be lost in a haze of confusion.

Understanding the field they are working in is as important as learning practical skills for someone new to a career. Help them to network, to see how and where others in the field work and to see the full cycle of the work they are involved in. For example, I spent time learning about cataloguing, enquiries, the Reading Room, photography of objects, costing my project, writing up the practical work, researching the materials and the biography of Hamish Henderson etc. to see where my work fitted in. It has helped me to understand the requirements of others using the material I worked with.

After appropriate training, grant your intern some independence, which will allow them to find pitfalls and solutions as if they were already employed in the sector. Of course, always be available to advise and support.

Be sure to introduce your intern to all members of staff and their roles. This will help them to feel able to talk with those people and ask questions of them. Allow them to join team meetings or, if possible, to sit in on planning meetings at a higher level. Several doors have opened for me through the colleagues I have been introduced to here at the University.

Try to set regular review sessions, and help the intern to recognise their weaknesses as well as strengths. Then you can adjust their work plan to strengthen areas where they are weaker.

Never treat your intern as cheap labour or a lesser member of your organisation, as this will be the impression they take away of their future career. Internships are a great opportunity to share the knowledge you have already gained, letting the next generation stand on your shoulders

***What do you feel are the main challenges faced by anyone undertaking an internship placement?*** Financial restraints and family commitments. People looking for internships are often newly qualified with little income, or looking for a career change and therefore with potential home commitments. Flexibility within the internship is definitely helpful. For example, I have young children and my internship stipulated that I work 350 hours, but my start and finish times were up to me within the standard core hours of the department. Without this flexibility, I would not have been able to participate.

I also think some people have a misconception that an intern only makes the tea and does the filing, when actually it is a hugely valuable opportunity to learn, and getting past that idea can be difficult. Thankfully, that is not at all the way my colleagues at the University felt about it! Internships are now more-or-less essential in the development of a career in conservation, and in many other fields.

***What do you feel are the main benefits of undertaking an internship and what have you gained?*** There are so many things to learn in a profession that cannot be taught in a class. An internship can show a person who is new to the field those nuances, giving them a more rounded and developed point from which to begin their career. It can also provide a flavour of work that they might not yet have seen, for example a person who intends to set up as a freelance conservator on qualifying may find an internship in a museum really broadens their knowledge.

***What were the highlights of your internship?*** I would say that growing in confidence enough to know that I will be a conservator after university has been my biggest achievement. I have loved learning about Hamish Henderson, a rare and relevant character in 20<sup>th</sup>-century Scottish history, and I have so enjoyed meeting some wonderful and helpful people who I have learned so much from.

*For more information on the volunteer and intern programme at the Centre for Research Collections please contact Serena Fredrick: [sere-na.fredrick@ed.ac.uk](mailto:sere-na.fredrick@ed.ac.uk).*



# EXPLORE YOUR ARCHIVE

CAMPAIGN REVIEW 2013



It happened. And it happened in a lot of archives. We estimate that, from 16 November 2013, 200 archives in the UK and Ireland did something under the Explore colours. Many held events, some put on exhibitions and displays. Some archivists donned costumes, some went to new places, some opened some doors. Story boxes of all kinds were produced and shared (in Scotland you commissioned special 'kist' chests—the image above is Glasgow City Archives'). Badges were worn. Local media wrote about the wonderful stories just waiting to be discovered in archives.

Social media was used a lot to communicate the Explore activities: the twitter hashtag was used thousands of times.

We also know the Campaign – led by the Archives and Records Association and The National Archives – was fully supported by key archives and organisations. Formally, the supporters were the Scottish Council on Archives, the National Records of Scotland, The Welsh Government through its CyMAL: Museums Libraries and Archives Wales division, The National Library of Wales, The National Archives of Ireland, PRONI and ARA Ireland. Informally, many more partners and friends stepped up too.

It was important that the Explore campaign made an impact with as many audiences as possible. Formal launches were held in Wales, in Dublin and in the Houses of Parliament in London. The Welsh Minister for Culture and Sport, John Griffiths, led the Welsh

launch; the All Party Group of Archives and History sponsored the House of Commons launch. Historian and broadcaster Dr David McCullagh was the celebrity leading the launch in Dublin.

And we know that nearly everyone liked the Explore look and branding. Unless this very courteous profession was being far TOO courteous all these months!

So what don't we know about Explore? Three things:

- 1) How was it for you? If you took part, what did it feel like and was it good? If you didn't take part – why not and might you take part in the future?
- 2) What specifically worked and what didn't? Was the artwork easy to use? Were the badges as popular as they seemed to be? Did you make a Story Box?
- 3) What's the best future for the campaign? It was always seen as a three year (at least) Campaign. So how do we pitch it in 2014 and beyond?

The Explore Evaluation is under way and many of you completed the online survey earlier this year. The Survey is one part of the evaluation of Explore Your Archive being undertaken for the Archives and Records Association and The National Archives by Marc Palascio from the University of York. Marc is also having conversations with as many people as possible and the Explore Your Archive team will share the results of the evaluation and recommend the way ahead for Explore Your Archive in April 2014. Watch this space!

By MARIE OWENS  
Head of Public Affairs, ARA UK & Ireland



# THE VICIOUS STRUMPET

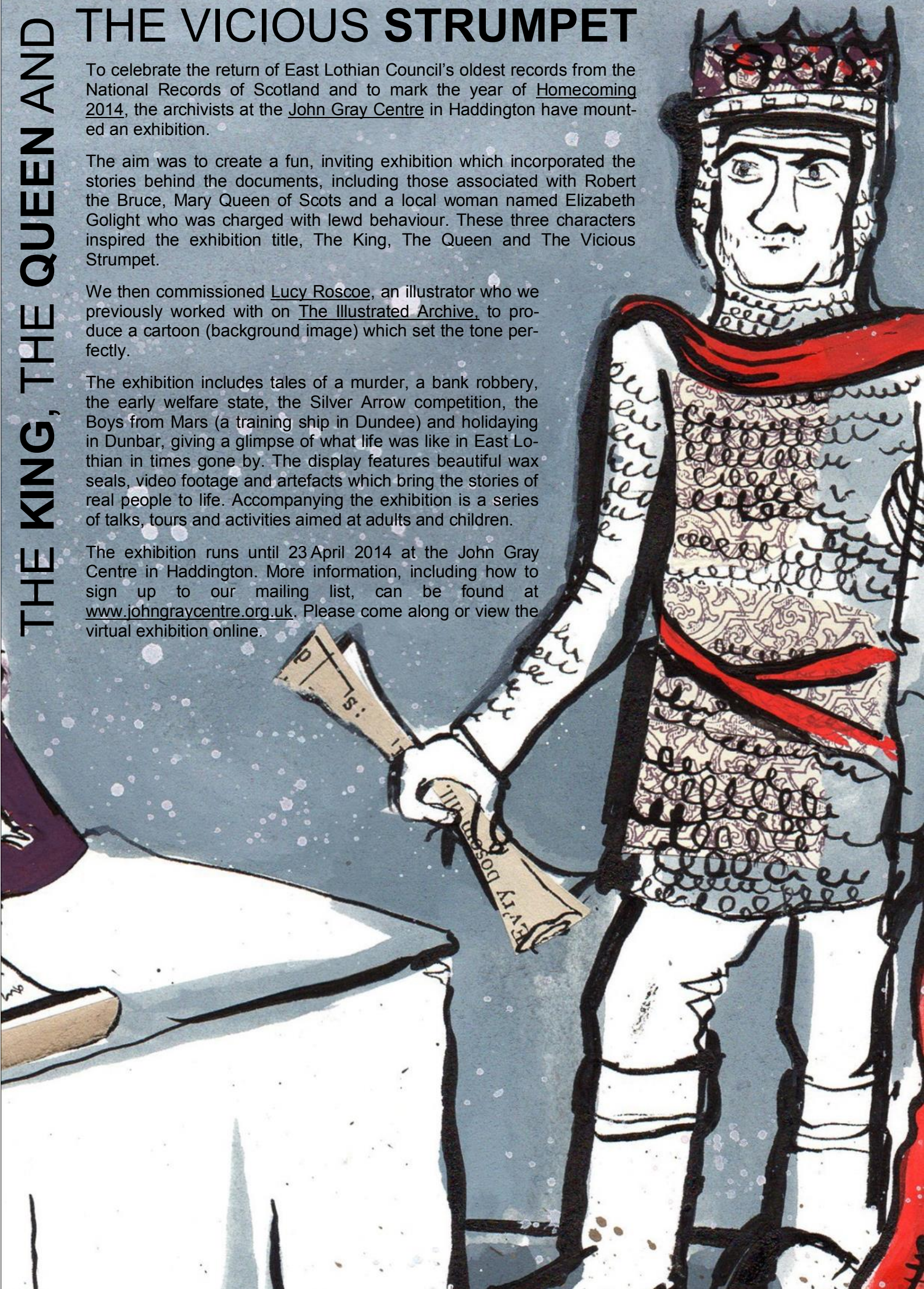
To celebrate the return of East Lothian Council's oldest records from the National Records of Scotland and to mark the year of Homecoming 2014, the archivists at the John Gray Centre in Haddington have mounted an exhibition.

The aim was to create a fun, inviting exhibition which incorporated the stories behind the documents, including those associated with Robert the Bruce, Mary Queen of Scots and a local woman named Elizabeth Golight who was charged with lewd behaviour. These three characters inspired the exhibition title, The King, The Queen and The Vicious Strumpet.

We then commissioned Lucy Roscoe, an illustrator who we previously worked with on The Illustrated Archive, to produce a cartoon (background image) which set the tone perfectly.

The exhibition includes tales of a murder, a bank robbery, the early welfare state, the Silver Arrow competition, the Boys from Mars (a training ship in Dundee) and holidaying in Dunbar, giving a glimpse of what life was like in East Lothian in times gone by. The display features beautiful wax seals, video footage and artefacts which bring the stories of real people to life. Accompanying the exhibition is a series of talks, tours and activities aimed at adults and children.

The exhibition runs until 23 April 2014 at the John Gray Centre in Haddington. More information, including how to sign up to our mailing list, can be found at [www.johngraycentre.org.uk](http://www.johngraycentre.org.uk). Please come along or view the virtual exhibition online.





# WATER AND WOOD

## SCOTLAND'S NEW BRUNSWICK CONNECTIONS

Wedge between Canada's English and French-speaking provinces, New Brunswick was created in 1784 with the partitioning of Nova Scotia. As the new province was gradually settled and opened up, it was populated by different cultural groups. Scots were among them and the Provincial Archives of New Brunswick and the University of New Brunswick are working on creating a portal that traces the connections between Scotland and the Canadian province. This has involved tracing sources that illustrate these links.

Scots who settled in New Brunswick were diverse. They included loyalists who moved north in the 1780s following the American Revolution. The security of the province throughout the nineteenth century meant a continued military presence and imagery depicting this gives a flavour of the logistical challenges encountered during harsh winter conditions (background image: 'Soldiers on the move', 9 February 1862, courtesy of Glasgow City Archives).

The parts of Scotland from which New Brunswick settlers originated were various. Many went to work in the forests of New Brunswick, felling timber to export back to Scotland. The environment of dense forest was a culture shock for settlers from island communities where forest cover was rare. Labour focussed on wielding the axe was a new experience. This was true of Fair Isle families who left en masse in 1862 because of poverty and hardship, sailing initially to the Scottish mainland on the perhaps mischievously named vessel *No Joke*. The families had been actively recruited to New Brunswick where they were assured better fortune. However, in 1867 one of their number, William Leslie, wrote to an acquaintance in Shetland:

*I must ... tell you about our prosperity hear. I have been hear 5 years and am not a bit better or i was the day i came hear. I have wrought in a ship yard ever since we came hear but to no prophet. Best carpenters wadges [wages] fore the winter is a 1 dollar per day and no rise yet.*

Having made the trans-Atlantic voyage with his wife and five children, Leslie was obviously not convinced that a new land and a new trade had served him well.

Timber was New Brunswick's great resource, important for shipbuilding and for wider use in industrialising Scotland. Timber pens, used to

store and mature imported wood, can still be seen near Port Glasgow. Vessels also arrived at lesser ports, such as Dumfries, with timber – and departed with the next wave of emigrants. A taste of what voyaging on these multi-purpose vessels was like is suggested by the inventory for the 507 ton barque, *Liverpool*, of Grangemouth, which includes two pairs of hand cuffs, a pistol and a harpoon in the boatswain's store, a pig house in the cook's inventory, and a full medicine chest and nine charts in the chandler's store.

As New Brunswick developed, St John and Fredericton sometimes looked to their Scottish links for help. For example, Andrew Inches, originally from Scone, wrote to the Provost of Perth in 1871 seeking technical details of Perth's Water Works stating that 'We are much at a loss in this place for a sufficient supply of water for City & Domestic Use.' Meanwhile, a few miles to the south, one emigrant who had done well, saw water as a means of sharing some of his success with his former village of Dunning. Alexander Martin donated a public fountain in 1874. It remains in situ today.

New Brunswick is surrounded by water, but easy access to it had long been a problem as had been apparent in 1825 when fire destroyed 6,000 square miles of the Miramichi forest, hundreds of houses and resulted in 160 fatalities. Edinburgh had also experienced devastating fire a year earlier and a fund had been raised to ease distress. In 1825, it was suggested that £400 of the residue of this be sent to New Brunswick. However, not all of the Fund's committee members were sympathetic to the plan to send monetary aid to 'this distant colony'. The proposal was quietly dropped, suggesting that affinity between the old country and its diaspora in New Brunswick was variable.

These are some of the vignettes that provide glimpses of links between Scotland and New Brunswick that will form part of a New Brunswick Scottish portal. In addition to such archival documents, the portal will include the 1851 and 1861 New Brunswick censuses containing Scottish families, biographical sketches of ordinary and extraordinary Scottish immigrants, and a list of community place names which reflect the Scottish influence on the landscape. A blog has been set up at <http://nbscottishwebportal.blogspot.co.uk/>.

By IAIN HUTCHISON





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