

PRESERVATION SPECIAL EDITION

ISSUE 35

BROADSHEET

Magazine of the Scottish Council on Archives



SCOTTISHARCHIVES.ORG.UK

WELCOME

number 35

Welcome to the conservation and preservation issue of *Broadsheet*. You will see that many of the pieces touch on the impact of calamitous disasters not only on collections of objects, but also on the communities affected by the shock and loss that fire and floods leave in their wake. Disaster is never a welcome guest. Nonetheless, the better prepared we are if and when it strikes, the greater chance we have to safeguard both people and collections. At the SCA 'Fire in the Archives' event in September, speakers from the National Library of Wales and The Glasgow School of Art showed us that if there is a positive to be retrieved from disaster, it is in the valuable lessons we can learn from those that have been through it.

As the Convener of the Scottish Council on Archives Preservation Committee, I'm encouraging all archive services in Scotland to complete our online Conservation and Preservation survey. The Scottish Council on Archives Preservation Committee aims to take a strategic approach to identify priority areas for action relating to the preservation and conservation of Scotland's archive collections and of course, the associated access issues. Disaster preparedness is integral however, we want to hear more from you about what the overall preservation priorities and challenges are for your service. The survey has been designed to mirror aspects of the UK Archive Service Accreditation Standard and it shouldn't take too long to complete. Please take some time to complete the survey as the results will inform the focus of the Preservation Committee's work to help services in Scotland address preservation needs through practical initiatives and activities.

Find out more about the Committee and our activities here: www.scottisharchives.org.uk/preservation. Please participate in the survey here: www.scottisharchives.org.uk/preservationsurvey2015.



Linda Ramsay
Convener, SCA Preservation Committee



COVER IMAGE

Johannes Regiomontanus: Calendar (printed in Venice by Erhard Ratdolt, 9 August 1482). Featuring an instrument with two moveable volvelles showing the motion of the moon. University of Glasgow Special Collections
www.scottisharchives.org.uk/uogspeccol

CONTRIBUTORS

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CONTACT US

Use our survey to give feedback (good or bad!): www.scottisharchives.org.uk/magazine/feedback or send us your questions and content ideas via email: contact@scottisharchives.org.uk

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Scottish Council on Archives is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Scottish Charity Number SC044553.

THE 2011 JAPAN EARTHQUAKE & TSUNAMI

Photographs saved from disaster as memories
by Yoko Shiraiwa (Paper & Photograph Conservator, Tokyo, Japan)

Four and a half years ago, Japan experienced an unprecedented disaster. The Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami resulted in the dead and missing of more than 18,000 people, with nearly 200,000 still living in temporary housing. Yoko Shiraiwa, a paper and photograph conservator based in Tokyo, shares how - in spite of the enormous damage to the area - many family photographs washed away by the Tsunami have been collected and miraculously recovered.



For those who lost everything in the disaster, including their homes and families, the rescued photographs became precious beyond imagination. We think of family photographs as records of the special moments we enjoyed together and memories we want to pass on to the next generation. After a disaster, photographs are especially important because people look for confirmation of their existence in them. Photographs acquire new sentimental values, as objects belonging to lost family and friends. Without them the owners would not have been able to show the respect due to their loved ones.

In addition, the photographs have passed through the hands of many people, mostly unknown, who worked tirelessly to recover them. The photographs have been washed, dried, digitized, ordered and re-

housed in new albums by organizations and volunteers. The works and actions involved were extremely time consuming and at times heart-breaking. Volunteers from across the country participated to save these photographs, hoping one day they would find the owners and be reunited with them.

“ After a disaster, photographs are especially important because people look for confirmation of their existence in them. Photographs acquire new sentimental values, as objects belonging to lost family and friends. ”

The process of saving and preserving as many photographs as possible was difficult enough, however reuniting them with their owners and reacting to the ‘human factor’ was even more complex. Each family responded to the disaster and the photographs in different ways. Some felt uncomfortable having

them handled by strangers. Some felt unable to come and collect their family photographs for many years. Many chose to have photographs cleaned as much as possible, even if this meant removing or

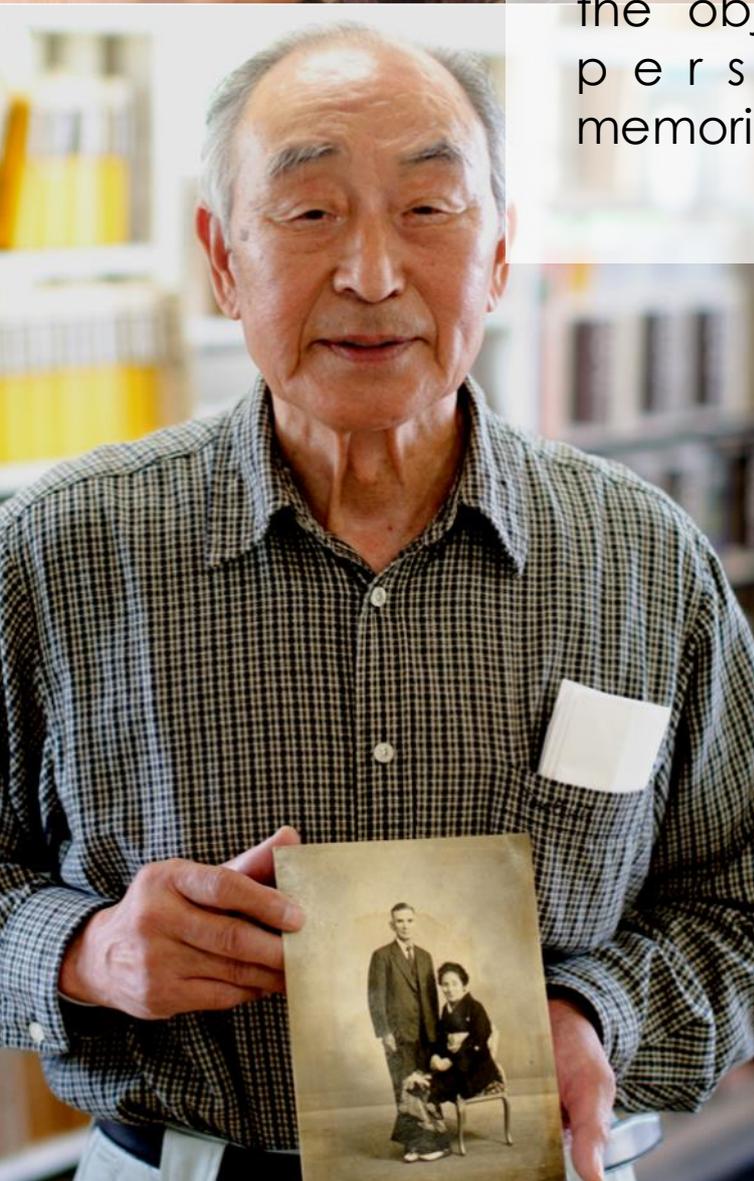




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We had to learn to respect the objects as personal memories.

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destroying part of the image, rather than be reminded of the debris in which they were found and their loved ones lost. There were many instances which conflicted with my normal conservation practice. We had to learn to respect the objects as personal memories.

The future of these unclaimed photographs is still unknown. Some are considered as an important historical record of local events and scenery. At this level personal objects become part of the collective memory of a society. While people remain to search for their photographs they should be preserved.

The digitalization of images has diminished the role of photographs as objects to be revered. In the past, photographs were arranged in albums, handled as objects and often given to loved ones and families with personalized messages as presents. The disaster in Japan has reminded us how important they are as objects. The process of conservation and of the restitution of photographs saved from the disaster demonstrated to us that physical traces left on photographs often interact with memories and this can only happen if they continue to exist as objects.

By YOKO SHIRAIWA
Paper & Photograph Conservator, Tokyo, Japan

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For those who lost everything in the disaster, including their homes and families, the rescued photographs became precious beyond imagination...

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TAN! TEINE! FIRE! FIRE!

Ruth Honeybone, Lothian Health Services Archive Manager blogged about the Scottish Council on Archives' September event *Fire in the Archives* on www.lhsa.blogspot.co.uk/ reprinted here.

The training wasn't delivered in Welsh and Gaelic, as the blog title might suggest, but there were excellent speakers from Aberystwyth and Glasgow who talked about their experience of fire and how it impacted on their buildings, archive collections and services. They were joined by a representative from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, and the day brought together a wealth of experience that those attending could draw on and take back to their own organisations.

The day of lectures and question and answer sessions began with an introduction from Linda Ramsay, National Records of Scotland, who highlighted the role of the SCA in relation to the preservation and conservation of the nation's archives. (If you'd like to find out more about SCA, see their website at www.scottisharchives.org.uk and for their group dedicated to preservation www.scottisharchives.org.uk/preservation). The presentations are available online at www.scottisharchives.org.uk/preservation/fire.

The first speaker was Iwan Bryn James from the National Library of Wales, who talked about their 2013 fire. The main thing that I took from Iwan's talk was the need to be fully prepared: have an up-to-date plan that sets out what you would do if your building and/or collection was affected by fire, and make sure you have all the materials and kit (especially protective equipment for staff) ready to go just in case. Because they were so well-prepared, staff at the Library were able to start co-ordinating their response while the fire service was still putting out the fire – not a moment was lost, which meant that they were able to save the vast majority of the collections that were affected by the fire.

We have a robust and detailed disaster plan in place, and boxes of materials that we could use if we were ever faced with a similar situation, but Iwan's talk gave

me lots of food for thought and has resulted in a list of tweaks and minor additions that I'd like to make to our plan to make it better still!

Susannah Waters then talked about the more recent fire at The Glasgow School of Art. Like Iwan, Susannah described how the fire started, what damage had been done and what their response had been (and continues to be). Also like Iwan, preparation was key to their response, but Susannah also highlighted the need to think about how you would co-ordinate offers of volunteer help and how you utilise, and react to, social media. So a few more things for me to add to my list of disaster plan tweaks!

The day finished off with Gavin Gray, an experienced firefighter, talking us through the legislation that governs fire safety and our responsibilities within it. It was extremely useful to hear from someone with a different perspective on the topic and his talk drove home the necessity for high quality, up-to-date information that you can give the fire service on arrival – especially covering your building's layout and your priority collection items for salvage.

I had thought that listening to others talk about threat and damage to their wonderful collections would make for a depressing day at best and cause me a sleepless night at worst – but that was far from the case! The willingness of fellow sector professionals to share their experiences so we could all learn from them was really inspiring, and much of what they talked focussed on the positives that can come from these difficult situations; a surprisingly large percentage of collections affected by fire can be repaired, community spirit can be fostered, current and new audiences can be engaged and, ultimately, resilience and value can be built in to the

By RUTH HONEYBONE
Lothian Health Services Archive

EMERGENCY PLANNING FOR COLLECTIONS

The National Trust for Scotland Approach

The fire at The Glasgow School of Art (GSA) in May 2014, which caused huge damage to an iconic building and led to a salvage operation for the collections held within it, was a real stimulus for the National Trust for Scotland's (the Trust) approval of an internal project focussing on emergency planning for properties with collections. Whilst this was an area of work that had been highlighted for a number of years - it was picked up in our Cost of Care exercise of 2013 which looked at the cost of conservation across our whole estate - like many heritage organisations, the GSA fire has highlighted the need to re-evaluate emergency preparedness.

The Trust's Emergency Planning for Collections project started in March 2015 and will last for 18 months until the end of September 2016. It has been funded through a dedicated Conservation Deficit fund which was a product of the 2013 Cost of Care exercise which identified key areas of concern for the Trust in terms of the conservation of its built and natural heritage across Scotland.

The Trust conserves and cares for over 50 buildings with collections displayed in-situ in their original contexts. Many Trust buildings have important and historic interiors and unique collections of furniture, paintings and decorative objects. We also care for about a dozen properties which have collections of historic archive material within their walls. These range from the family and estate paper collections at



C18th sack back dress, Newhailes House, Musselburgh

properties such as Drum and Brodie Castles to the collections of Gaelic and Celtic material held within a house on the island of Canna. As might be imagined these can present significant challenges, but it is these historic interiors and collections that the Emergency Planning for Collections project is focussing on.

As a heritage organisation with historic properties open to the public, the Trust takes its responsibilities to its staff and visitors very seriously and has a comprehensive approach to health and safety, which ensures the safety of everyone working at, and visiting, our properties. Therefore, the Trust is well equipped in terms of emergency action for people. However, it is not currently as well prepared to deal with emergency situations affecting its collections; that's where this project comes in.

The Emergency Planning for Collections project aims to put plans and systems in place so that the Trust will be better able to cope with an emergency affecting collection items. It aims to raise our levels of preparedness and to ensure that we have arrangements in place should the worst happen at one of our properties.

There are three main strands to the project and these include:

1. Writing and preparing an emergency plan for every



Falkland Palace, Fife

Trust property holding historic collections

2. An audit of existing emergency equipment at properties and then the provision of essential materials and equipment so that our properties are prepared to deal with emergency situations affecting their collections.
3. Training for staff in emergency planning and collections salvage

Through the successful completion of this project, Trust properties will be in a better position to deal with an emergency situation should the need occur. The information required for staff to communicate with each other, and the emergency services, will be collated into a usable document. The basic emergency kit will be accessible in the first stages of an emergency. Staff will be trained in the use of emergency equipment; in the contents of the emergency response plan and in salvage techniques.

This is a key area of work for the Trust over the next year and will raise Collections Trust Benchmarking standards across our properties in terms of emergency preparedness. It will help the Trust to maintain and

achieve Museum Accreditation standards and it will address one of the main areas of concern identified in our Cost of Care exercise. It is also hoped that the Trust will contribute to the re-emerging emergency support networks across heritage organisations, museums and archives in Scotland so that we can help to raise the preparedness and resilience levels across the heritage sector.

The GSA fire last year was a terrible event and it was shocking to see the damage caused. However, it was inspiring to see the heritage sector in Scotland working together to help minimise the damage and salvage what could be saved. It was a wake-up call for many heritage organisations and I am proud that the Trust has responded to this event in such a pro-active manner and is clearly demonstrating its commitment to emergency planning and to its unique and special collections.

By JULIE BON

Emergency Planning for Collections Project Manager

Muniments room, Drum Castle, Aberdeenshire



Decorative ceiling, Kellie Castle, Fife



The Hill House, Helensburgh

FIERY MEMORIES FROM THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND

“I remember being accompanied to that basement and hearing the sound of water pouring into a strongroom. Opening an outer wooden door released a rush of water through the metal grill immediately behind it. It was surreal...”

The Scottish Council on Archives ‘Fire in the Archives’ event was a must for me, and I was not disappointed. Iwan Bryn James, Susannah Waters and Gavin Gray each set out their ‘hands on’ experiences and what shone through was their in-depth expertise. A great deal of what they said resonated with me – the drama of fire, the pervasiveness of (dirty) water, survival of material where severe damage was expected, herculean efforts on the part of staff and the salvage operation.

My experience was two decades ago. A quiet Monday - 2 January 1995 – was turned into one of disbelief, near panic and exhaustion. On that day fire broke out in Belfast’s Parliament Buildings (Stormont) (pictured). The seat of the blaze was the House of Commons chamber. Where did the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) hold some of its most important modern historical records? - in a basement directly below the chamber.

I remember being accompanied to that basement and hearing the sound of water pouring into a strongroom. Opening an outer wooden door released a rush of water through the metal grill immediately behind it. It was surreal. The lights were switched on, and stayed on despite water pouring through the ceiling and over the fittings. Every drop of water directed at the

seat of the blaze found its way into that strongroom. Fetid water and some of it – as one person found out – near boiling.

The immediate objective was to move archive boxes away from the water. A human chain was formed with the help of fire officers. Getting down to work, and seeing boxes move to safety reduced the air of near panic. After a few hours the immediate, exhausting task was finished.

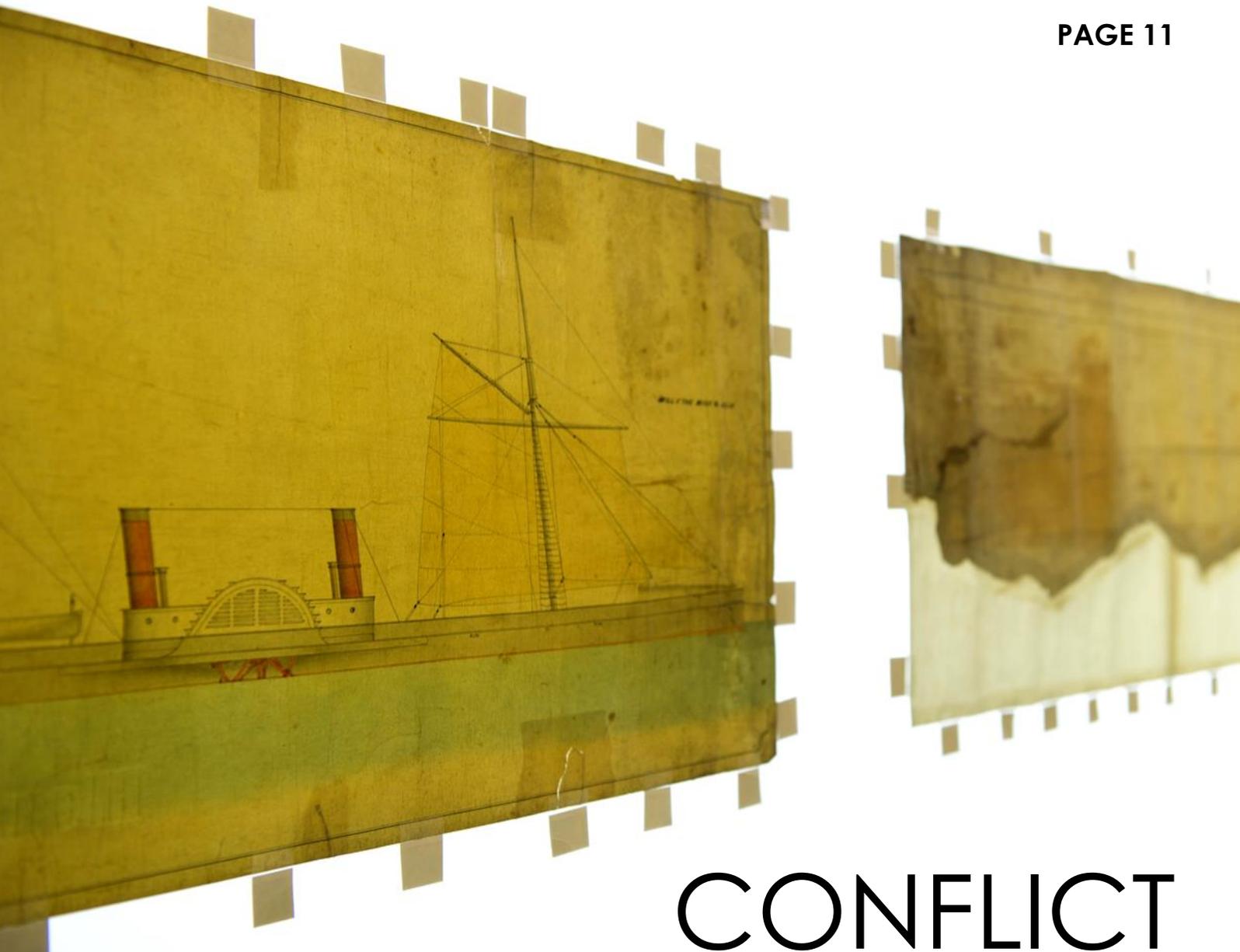
Fire and water left a searing memory, but the tireless commitment of PRONI staff – administrative, conservator and archival - still shines through - wading in (literally), carrying and emptying boxes, moving very heavy volumes and taking immediate action to limit water damage (fortunately, boxes and volumes both resisted water infiltration).

The disaster reaction plan proved resilient. Through a holiday long weekend, staff sped to the scene. Everyone knew precisely what had to be done and in what order. The conservators directed most really important operations while also carrying out the urgent work to dry water affected documents.

Staff emerged from the incident ‘on a high’. Not a single document lost. PRONI’s reputation enhanced. And what a story there was to tell.



By DR GERRY SLATER
Former Director & Deputy Keeper of the Records
Public Record Office of Northern Ireland



CONFLICT COMMEMORATIONS

A Glasgow Preservation Project Raising the Complex Narratives of War-time Records

Anniversaries can often raise difficult questions about how we promote the value and potential use of archives, especially when dealing with war commemorations. In a period of historical revision, ongoing controversy over recent conflicts and the increased awareness of the realities of war, attempts to mark such anniversaries can be problematic to say the least.



This year marks the 150th Anniversary of the American Civil War's fifth and final year, an anniversary which, for us here in the Preservation Unit at the University of Glasgow Archive Services, highlights a significant connection between our collections and these apparently more distant events.

Among our large Clydeside shipbuilding collections are plans for vessels built to beat the Union blockade of the Confederacy during the conflict. In conjunction with this anniversary, a conservation project in our Preservation Unit preserved the ship plans of William Simons & Co Ltd; including plans for the so-called blockade runners.

With their great speed and increased capacity to hold cargoes, blockade runners were usually side-wheel steamers designed to be much faster than union ships. Long and low, often nine times as long as they were wide, they normally entered port on moonless nights at high tide using the light alignment system to guide them in: the Confederates had darkened all their lighthouses to make navigation difficult for Union ships. Burning anthracite coal during runs because it produced low smoke and more revolutions than the bituminous supplies, most were painted grey as the best option for blending into the horizon. Lifeboats were mounted so as to hide the ships profile. Lights were masked for obvious reasons and only the binnacle was left uncovered but protected for navigation.

Though the plans were produced far from the events of the American Civil War, they illustrate the far-reaching implications of military-industrial connections. The drawings testify to the Clyde's engineering and shipbuilding prowess - which resulted in world leading technology and the production of the fastest vessels of their time. However, their heritage is much more complex and includes their significance as business records in a morally ambivalent enterprise which effectively provided tacit support to the slave owning Confederacy.

This complex history, combined with the myths and legends that have grown-up about blockade runners, made the Simons Plans preservation one of the most interesting projects undertaken by us. With 85 per cent of the total collection pre-dating 1870, the collection is an invaluable resource of information on ship building on the nineteenth century Clydeside.

“ Though the plans were produced far from the events of the American Civil War, they illustrate the far-reaching implications of military-industrial connections ... their heritage is complex and includes their significance as business records in a morally ambivalent enterprise... ”

Beginning in 2014, it involved the preservation of 680 plans of 156 vessels. Co-ordinated with the help of archivists, conservators and volunteers, our intention was to preserve and enhance the accessibility of the plans whilst also highlighting the importance of the blockade runners.

Our project comprised a few stages: first plans were unpacked and old packaging discarded. Then plan details were recorded including the ship's name and number, type of vessel (a brig, a screw steamer etc.), the year of construction, and the type of plan (lines plan, a deck plan or rigging plan). During repacking, plans were rolled around tubes and placed inside a protective Tyvek® sleeve before being stored in telescopic Cube Tubes, allowing the rolled plans to be adequately supported, whilst enabling easier access.

The historical significance of the four blockade runner plans, along with their condition, made their conservation a priority. In particular, plans for *Will o' Wisp* and *Julia* all required a wide ranging treatment. In the process of removing the secondary linen, which then enabled the removal of the backing textile, it was found that the linen was sufficiently degraded to simply break up. Old paper repairs were also removed, which allowed for thorough washing. All the plans were fully relaxed and lining was carried out using Japanese tissue and wheat starch paste adhesive, providing the support with a secondary sympathetic layer.

The plans were then repaired using the controlled application of heat; this helped to infill damaged areas, a process completed with plans attached to the sintered glass wall in the conservation studio. After repair some plan edges remained uneven despite the repairs being

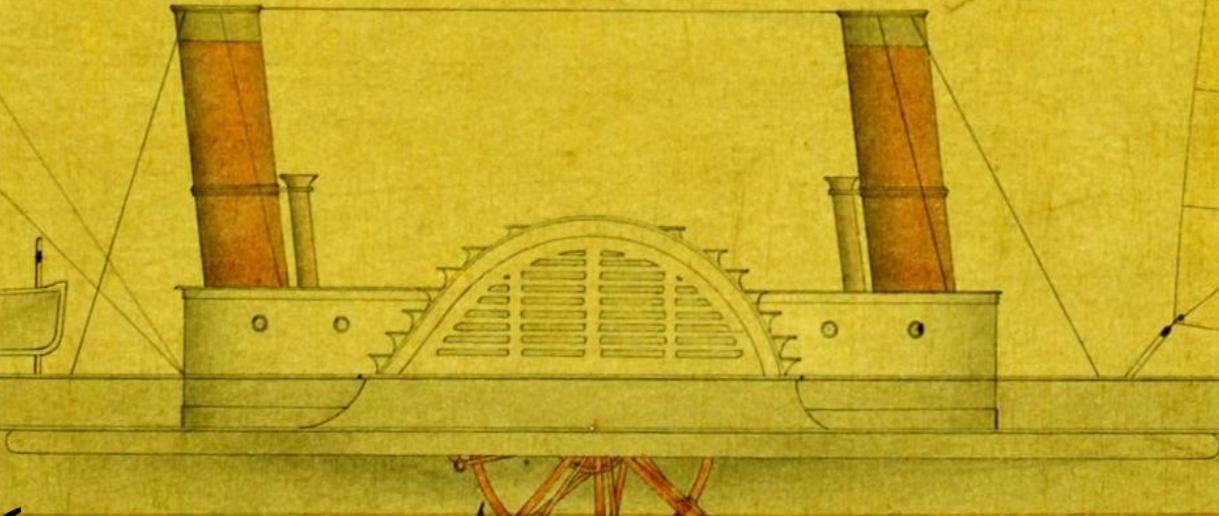
attached and flush to the object. However, it was decided that some small areas could be retouched in order to recreate a finished 'square' item. The conserved plans were repacked in polyester pockets and stored in plan chest drawers.

Another aspect of the project was to enhance the global reach and reputation of the Simons' plans. Given their age, the comparative rarity of some of the material - including plans of blockade runners - and the fact that many of the plans were so well drawn, there was plenty of scope to promote this collection. In one successful instance of this, we used some of the plan images to compile a very popular Flickr set. Our archive also holds a number of other documents relating to the building of blockade runners by other Clydeside shipbuilders and we hope that visitors will continue to benefit from these rich primary sources.

Records relating to conflict can present the archive sector with difficult and often complex narratives. However, these collections form a vital part of Scottish - and international - history. Whether close to a battlefield, or thousands of miles away, war is often as an all-consuming, global event. In this case, the Simons records were created far from the field of battle, but nonetheless they have a story to tell and a role to play on the anniversary of this particular conflict.

We gratefully acknowledge the support of a grant from the National Manuscripts Conservation Trust in making this project possible.

By ELZBIETA GORSKA-WIKLO
Preservation Manager
University of Glasgow Archive Services



“ Records relating to conflict can present the archive sector with difficult and often complex narratives. However, these collections form a vital part of Scottish - and international - history. ”

RAISING STANDARDS

Using Archive Service Accreditation to improve collection care: a personal view

I was fortunate enough to be working at the British Library when the Scottish Council on Archives and the National Records of Scotland took the far-sighted decision to work with the Library as a way of addressing findings in the report, 'An Archival Account of Scotland'. Published in 2000, the report pointed to a need for greater knowledge about the state of preservation and conservation of archives in Scotland.

COLLABORATION

The collaboration brought together the National Records of Scotland's conservation know-how, with the publicity, advocacy and strategic approach of the SCA, and a well-used methodology (the Preservation Assessment Survey) from the British Library. Over three years the three organisations worked with archives in Scotland to assess their preservation needs, publishing 'Our Past, Our Future' in 2014.

Since then, the SCA's Preservation Committee has developed an action plan that seeks to address many of the report's findings through practical and cost-effective initiatives. The action plan aligns to Archive Service Accreditation and so I thought I'd focus this piece on how the archive service accreditation standard can be used to address the common preservation and conservation challenges that the preservation assessment surveys identified, and that form the focus of the preservation working group.

ISSUES TO ADDRESS

The three main findings of the Preservation Assessment Surveys were: (1) A need for improvements in storage facilities and procedures for the management of stored collections (91 per cent of collections surveyed 'inadequate'); (2) A need for improvements in environmental management (82 per cent of collections surveyed 'inadequate'); and, (3) A need for organisations to have up to date emergency control plans and greater staff confidence in their ability to implement the plans (42 per cent of collections surveyed 'inadequate').

Storage facilities, environmental management and emergency planning sound like mammoth issues to address. In fact, I remember being literally howled at by delegates when I suggested at a conference that it is within every organisation's reach to produce an emergency control plan. I am not belittling the constraints under which people operate, the most significant of which is time, but I am a firm believer that archive services with all levels of resource can take steps – albeit of different sizes – to improve the standards of care of their collections.

REALLY USEFUL TOOL

The key most often relates to improving the understanding of the risks to the collections and how these can be managed. I therefore also believe that, even if your archive service doesn't intend to apply for accreditation in the short-term, (though I hope it does), the standard and associated guidance can be used as a tool to help you manage the care of your collections.

The section of the archive service accreditation standard that relates to collection care and conservation requires: "A documented approach to collection care and conservation activity, guided by coherent policies, plans and procedures. This approach should cover both analogue and digital materials, where relevant, and be approved by top management, or an appropriate delegated authority." (Archive Service Accreditation standard, p.13).

The accompanying guidance is a really useful document that provides pointers on what should go in to each of:

- a collections care and conservation policy
- a collections care and conservation plan
- procedures for collections care
- and a disaster recovery (or emergency control) plan and procedures.



SYSTEMATIC APPROACH

This sounds like a lot of paperwork and if you are working towards accreditation it probably feels like a lot of paperwork. But the guidance is scalable, i.e. it describes what might be achievable by organisations of different sizes and types, it poses questions that will help you to think about the issues and has many tools and resources that can help you find the information needed to put together policies, plans and procedures.

When the data collected by the Preservation Assessment Surveys was looked at, it was often this systematic approach to thinking about the risks to collections and how they can best be managed that was missing. And this comes back to my earlier point about the 'mammoth' issues: you may be well aware that your collection stores don't meet PD5454 but if you can't meet it all (!) identify what poses the biggest risk to your collection and address that, or identify what you can do that achieves some of the stated best practice.

I'd suggest starting with an overall policy – what your organisation will do to manage the care of its collections. The policy needn't be long (in my opinion, they're quite often better if they're short and focused), then carry out a risk assessment (as simple or complex as is within your means, though better data in = better data out). Use the policy and assessment in

combination to plan what you can realistically do to take the more practical steps to improving standards of care. But congratulate yourself on already having achieved one of the most significant leaps – an awareness of the issues specific to your collection.

MANAGEABLE PIECES

Sounds simple? It can be if you break the issues down into manageable pieces. You don't have to do it all at once but it's good to make a start. And if you can work with colleagues so that there's a service-wide understanding of managing collection care risks, so much the better. To come back full-circle to collaboration, the SCA Preservation Committee hopes to draw together examples of policies that will be of further help to archives in Scotland that are developing their own. So if you have something to contribute, keep an eye out for the call for information.

And as to that emergency control plan - you can do it, go on, try it...

By CAROLINE PEACH

Caroline Peach works as an independent consultant. She is a member of the Scottish Council on Archives Preservation Committee and a member of the Archive Service Accreditation committee.

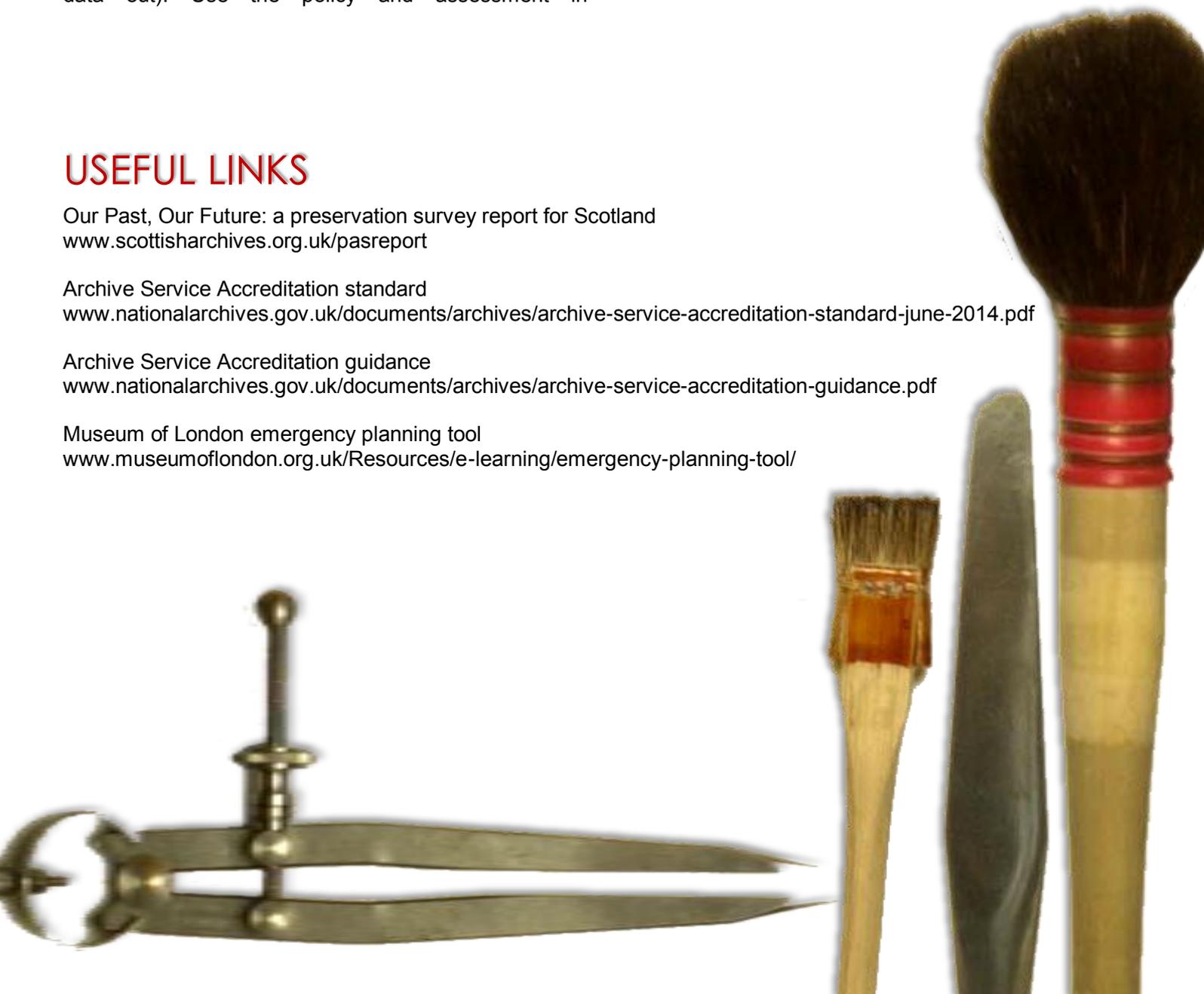
USEFUL LINKS

Our Past, Our Future: a preservation survey report for Scotland
www.scottisharchives.org.uk/pasreport

Archive Service Accreditation standard
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/archive-service-accreditation-standard-june-2014.pdf

Archive Service Accreditation guidance
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/archive-service-accreditation-guidance.pdf

Museum of London emergency planning tool
www.museumoflondon.org.uk/Resources/e-learning/emergency-planning-tool/



FOR TODAY, FOR THE FUTURE

Safeguarding documentary cultural heritage

Throughout the centuries, libraries and archives have been essential for the preservation, conservation and safeguarding of the world's heritage. The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) upholds the mission and made this one of our core aims: Culture is a basic need. A community thrives through its cultural heritage, it dies without it.

SAFEGUARDING OUR HERITAGE

At IFLA, we work with our members and our extensive preservation and conservation network on many different aspects of safeguarding documentary cultural heritage for the next generation. We engage in issues around digital preservation with the UNESCO PERSIST Project ([click here](#)) we manage a network of 14 Preservation and Conservation Centres ([click here](#)) and work closely with UNESCO and the Blue Shield ([click here](#)) on safeguarding heritage affected by natural and man-made disasters.

Preservation and conservation of documentary heritage in all its formats has always been a priority for IFLA. However throughout the last decade it has become apparent that, as one of the founding members of the Blue Shield and with close relation to UNESCO, more concrete measures are needed by IFLA to better respond to disasters and to raise awareness for disaster preparedness. Based on similar schemes by the International Council of Museums and the International Council of Monuments and Sites, we started working on the Risk Register for Documentary Heritage.

IFLA RISK REGISTER

The IFLA Risk Register for Documentary Heritage is an essential tool to serve documentary collections world-wide. It is a closed, confidential database where institutions and holders of documentary heritage are encouraged to submit details on their collections. By submitting information, IFLA has reliable and trustworthy contact details in regions if a disaster strikes. It also

enables IFLA to pinpoint where collections are held if this is required by UNESCO or the Blue Shield. Furthermore, the Register can act to draw attention to libraries and archives during international cultural heritage rescue efforts.

In addition, IFLA is working to raise awareness of risk preparedness and planning as well as staff training in institutions ([click here for resources](#)). We want to ensure people are aware of preventative methods to secure their collections in order to minimise the damage if disaster occurs.

EFFECTS OF DISASTER

In 2013 armed groups occupied Northern Mali and Timbuktu, a city famous for its cultural heritage and its vast amount of public and private libraries and invaluable documentary heritage. To safeguard the manuscripts during the occupation, volunteers smuggled them into safety to Bamako with the help of international support. The manuscripts have since been kept in the capital and are undergoing restoration and digitisation work ([click here for more on this work](#)).

Cases like Mali are devastating and are happening world-wide over and over again - for example

currently in Syria and Iraq. But heritage also gets damaged or destroyed by natural disasters, as the destruction of temples, archives, libraries and museums in Nepal showed after the earthquake earlier this year.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

What we need is your involvement. It is essential that we collect as much relevant data in the Risk Register as possible. We aim to cover all of the world's regions so we can react if disasters happens.

We have three 'asks':

1. Submit your documentary heritage collections to the Risk Register.
2. Talk to other institutions and private holders to encourage them to register their collections.
3. Help encourage everyone to implement disaster preparedness and risk mitigation plans and ensure that their staff are trained in disaster preparedness and recovery.

Together we will be able to make a difference to save more of our cultural heritage today and for the future! For further information visit www.ifla.org/risk-register or contact julia.brungs@ifla.org.

By JULIA BRUNGS
IFLA Policy and Research Officer



Cello player in the partially destroyed National Library, Sarajevo, during the war in 1992 (by Mikhail Evstafiev)



CONSERVATION TREATMENT

THE COLLECTION

The 116 volumes of the Aberdeen County Assessed Tax Roll collection covers 1799-1832 and records annual details relating to various taxes payable by individuals in the county area, such as how many windows were in their buildings, how many horses they owned, how many servants they employed, and from 1801 also included armorial bearings, hair powder, etc. The Rolls list the names of individuals liable to pay the taxes listed, and provide an address and sometimes an occupation.

The collection also gives a detailed record of life in North East Scotland during a time of great national change. It is therefore possible to chart socio-economic developments such as the boom and bust of the linen industry in Huntly during the Napoleonic Wars (introduction by Ruaraidh Wishart, Aberdeen City Archives).

CONDITION AND TREATMENT

At the Highland Archive Services Conservation Studio, based in Inverness we were consulted about sharing the work load of this unique project as part of our ongoing external work program.

The volumes are half bound, sewn on hemp cords. Some of the sewing is staggered, others sewn 'all along'. The sections vary from single folios, to three or four folios per section. The paper is handmade with chain lines and watermarks on a paper mould frame; the media is written in iron gall ink used for writing with either pencil or red ink used for lines, to aid the writer. The boards range between a poor strawboard to a durable millboard.

The corners of the boards were originally reinforced with parchment, the boards and corners have then been covered in a blue grey paper or blue grey marbling design. The spines are a mixture of two coverings; either brown paper or parchment has been used. The boards are tired, worn around the edges and spine, the board maybe delaminating slightly and the adhesive sewing has broken down from previous wear & tear and conditions stored in. There are some minor tears through the volume; the boards are loose and the spine maybe missing or in poor condition.

Within the collection the condition is very similar as the bindings are identical, except from some unique characteristic traits between bindings.

THE TREATMENT

Each page in the volume is collated before disbinding. There are often miscounting's within volumes, pages added, etc., which make this process especially important. It also allows the conservator to gain an understanding of the binding structure and the pages being bound.

The cover and pages are carefully cleaned using an aerated latex sponge and fine goats hair brush. If required, further cleaning was carried out using a grated eraser. Black insulation tape used to attach the boards, was removed from by heating the tape, this softened the adhesive and a crepe eraser was used to remove any remaining adhesive residue (pictured above).



Above: Repair using Tengucho tissue and Tonasawa Japanese paper

Tears were repaired using a Tengucho tissue with a 3 per cent methyl cellulose / 12 per cent wheat starch paste. The repairs are trapped between bondina (an interleave polyester material), blotting paper, board and weight to aid flat, even drying. Any outer folios requiring repair were reinforced; the repair is carried out by pasting out the paste over the Tengucho tissue, and transferred onto the area of the folio requiring repair. The Japanese paper is shaped using a draughtmens pen with an alcohol and deionized water mix.

The boards had a folio endpaper pasted to them, which was originally sewn; here a slip of mulberry paper was inserted between the board and paper and adhered over onto the face of the folio, to act as a guard to support the sewing. The sections have been re-sewn using hemp cord, sewn on a frame, and later lined with Atsukuchi and Canson Mi Tientes using paste.

The boards have been consolidated using paste, and a western paper Canson Mi Tientes, has been

inserted or attached around the edges of the boards.

The cords were attached to the board using paste and allowed to dry under pressure. The spine was covered with Canson Mi Tientes which overlapped onto the covers using 3 per cent methyl cellulose / 12 per cent wheat starch paste if brown paper was used as the covering material.

If the parchment spine bindings are still present, the old parchment has been lifted, the brown Canson Mi Tientes 431 inserted and the original parchment has been adhered onto the brown paper spine lining. This is a very pleasing project to work on, the volumes though in need of serious conservation treatment and time, are still in very good condition regarding the media and binding style. Once completed the volumes are stabilized, though remain aesthetically the same as originally bound two hundred years earlier.

By RICHARD AITKEN
Senior Conservator, Highland Archive Service

Below: Sewing the sections onto hemp cord using a frame



THE ITALIAN JOB

Working at my conservation bench, I've often experienced an emotional connection with the documents; they are the produce of mankind and tell many stories, after all. But with the three Registers of the Italians in Scotland I've recently been working on, the connection has been in every way special.

The Registers belong to the Italian Government and are on temporary deposit at National Records of Scotland for conservation. Being created in Scotland and kept at the Consulate General of Italy until recently, these documents are a census of Italians living in Scotland just before World War II and are absolutely unique. The Scottish registers date from 1933 to 1939 and tell a lot about this small community that had a significant influence on Scottish culture. A prominent expert in the field, Dr Terri Colpi, has been studying the surviving Registers and speaking to her has presented me with invaluable information.

My aim as a conservator has been to carry out conservation treatment to make sure they were sound enough for handling and imaging. But being an Italian in Scotland myself (just 80 years later!) I felt an incredible bond between myself and these documents. Actually, between myself and these people.

The registers contain about 1500 forms, each one filled in with data regarding a householder, spouse and their children. There are data about where they were born, how long they had been living in Scotland, whether they were members of the Fascist Party, how

many children they had, and much more information. There are photographs of toothbrush moustaches, buttoned-up shirts and ties, well-tailored jackets and combed brown hair.

And between the lines there are stories - stories of people struggling to remember their mother tongue after living here for so many years, mixing up English and their local Italian dialect. Stories of people escaping the peasant life to sell ice-cream or spread their cuisine. Stories like Gino, who was abandoned by his wife; she left him and their three young children and ran away with a guy from Florence. But he managed to get a divorce and started a new life. Stories like Giuseppina, one of the few women recorded on their own, a 22 year old teacher, just arrived in Scotland ... I wonder how she feels, how lost she may find herself.

There are other characters like Giovanni, photographed with his children, and Oscar with his daughter framed between himself and his smiling wife. Pietro couldn't sign the form because he was interned in a mental health hospital. Ugo came to study Naval Engineering in Glasgow. Many of them later sadly died in the Arandora Star tragedy.

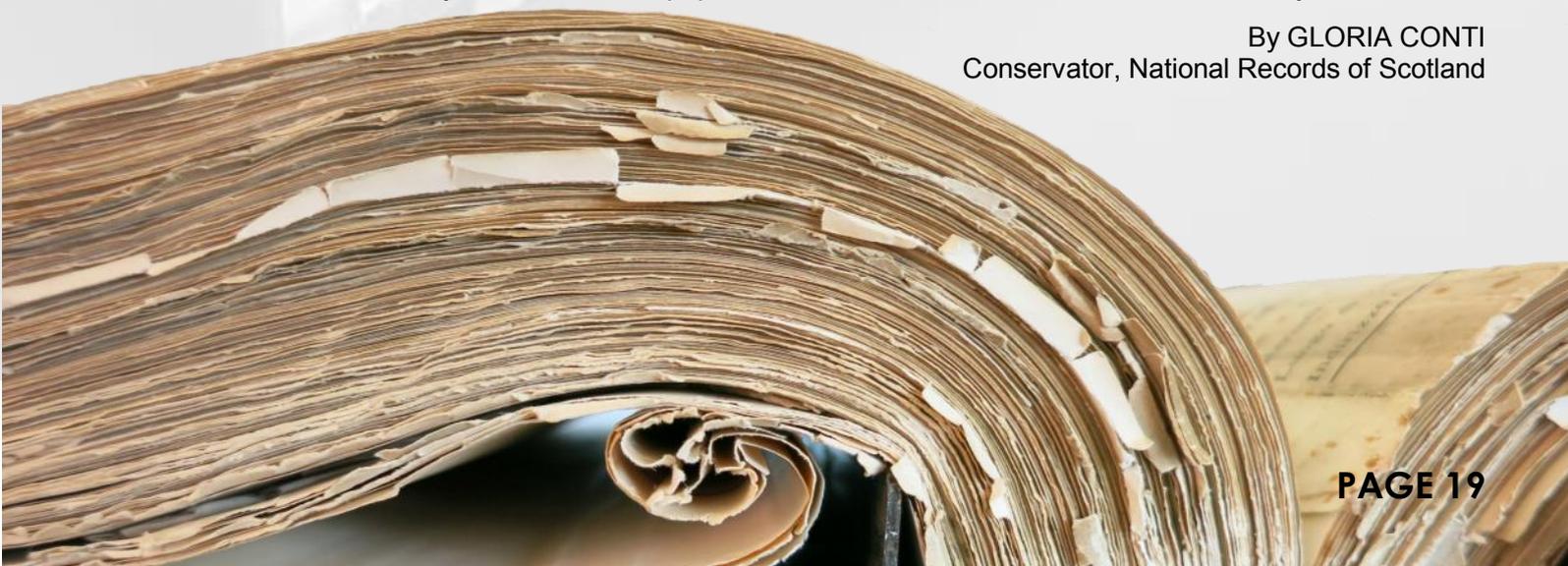
The conservation treatment has been time consuming. Modern paper always looks better than it actually is - being so intrinsically brittle and prone to tearing - so about four out of five papers had to be repaired. Also, what usually looks good on hand-made paper doesn't produce the same effect on modern paper as it's made of short



fibres. Therefore I developed a way to make repairs as invisible as possible using Japanese paper coated with methylcellulose, unusually cut with a sharp blade rather than torn or needle cut. Some photographs have been cleaned and repaired and the discoloured residues of old adhesive tape have been treated on a suction table (a large flat surface that sucks air through thin holes avoiding a solvent to spread and cause damage but at the same time allowing it to be effective on the material).

In December 2015 the registers will be the focus of an exhibition at National Records of Scotland about the Italian Community in Scotland.

By GLORIA CONTI
Conservator, National Records of Scotland





BALANCING PRESERVATION AND ACCESS: EXHIBITIONS

University of Glasgow holds one of the UK's most important collections of early printed books, or 'incunabula', published over the fifty years from the invention of printing in the mid-15th century. A recent major exhibition - *Ingenious Impressions: The Coming of the Book* - took a dynamic and progressive approach to showcasing these rich collections. However, exhibitions often present challenges and in her article conservator, Louise Robertson, discusses the complexities of preservation versus access.

An initial survey was carried out to detail and assess their individual preservation needs and considered the amount of stabilisation needed to ensure they could be safely handled and exhibited. It was also apparent that in the future, the collection as a whole (over 1000 incunabula) would be subject to increased handling and use. A plan was then drawn up which prioritised those requiring more complex interventions such as board reattachment, re-backing, rebinding, repairing broken text blocks, and tear repairs. It is also worth noting that each volume selected for exhibition was completely cleaned and interesting detritus from the spines were retained for use by scientists and researchers in the future.

The balance between preservation and access was considered to ensure the protection of the material for as long as possible. Consequently, each individual volume within the whole collection received its own custom made box or enclosure.

CONSTRAINTS

Most heritage volumes are limited to how far they can be opened and viewed, especially whilst on exhibition. This is so that there is no undue pressure on the spine for extended

periods and allows the book to close well after use. Normally books show one opening while on display. It was felt from early in the planning stages that it would be wonderful to be able to present several openings safely and draw attention to the covers of original bindings where there was interesting decoration or structural aspects of importance.

TESTING

Prior to exhibition, as a solution to facilitate multiple openings we carried out tests on similar volumes (in size and paper) in the studio over several months using rare earth magnets to hold open a variety of openings in the book. The test books sat in cradles at a fairly steep angle, although deemed safe enough by conservation staff not to cause undue stress on the spines. This was to reflect the angles of the wall mounted cradles which were employed in the actual exhibition. Pre testing photography of some pages was carried out under microscopy to view fibre structure change during these tests. The magnets were then fixed at different openings. Regular checks were carried out to note any slippage or movement of magnets and at the end the selected pages were viewed under magnification and



photographed for any change or flattening of fibre structure to the pages.

In the exhibition, the magnets were covered and lined before use so that attention was not drawn from the visual experience of these splendid volumes. Additionally, the Hunterian design team, with involvement from the object mount and display maker, Richard West, fixed mirrors onto the plinths to allow more of the binding to be viewed of those which were in their original covers.

CARE AND HANDLING

From a preservation handling viewpoint it is worth noting here that there is a massive increase in handling when items are chosen to go on exhibition that is sometimes not fully realised. From volumes being initially selected, then condition surveyed, conserved, measured and fitted for cradles, stored, then handled again for installation and de-install, not to mention any imaging for publication or digitisation that is carried out at this time as well. There is an inevitable increase in use after exhibition which must also be

considered. It is therefore vital that collection care staff are involved from the earliest stages to condition survey and make recommendations as to being fit for exhibition.

In terms of preservation planning specific to the exhibition this ranged from agreement of safe areas to remove material from exhibition in the event of an emergency. We were also supplied with regular updates in the environmental monitoring of the spaces and alerted to any changes. Even though the exhibition venue is next door to the University Library, there was still a lot of planning around transportation of material avoiding student areas etc. Security of the material is of paramount importance at this time.

As mentioned previously, there are also preservation considerations through digitisation. The University Photographic department produced a Flickr set as part of the greater Glasgow Incunabula Project ([find out more by clicking here](#)), of which there are over 4000 images detailing important and often unique aspects of the volumes.

By LOU ROBERTSON
Paper Conservator, University of Glasgow

BEETLE FROM YOUR

DO YOU KNOW YOUR VODKA

Whether you are new to Integrated Pest Management (IPM) or routinely identify insects found in your collection, the Scottish Pest Identification Network is a useful resource for all working in collections care in Scotland. Identification of insects seems straightforward when looking at the English Heritage Museum pest poster ([click here](#)), or when consulting the online database What's Eating Your Collection ([click here](#)), but haven't we all been faced with an insect which does not seem to resemble any examples in the identification resources or which is partially decomposed making positive identification challenging?

After the well-known entomologist and IPM consultant, David Pinniger, announced his intention to retire in 2012, the Scottish Pest Identification Network was formed between a group of conservators in private practice and major organisations including the Institute of Conservation's Scotland Group, the National Trust for Scotland and the Hunterian Museum. The Network currently runs annual training on IPM and insect identification and offers a service to aid identification of the less common insect pests. These workshops are designed to complement the National Museum of Scotland Pest Management Workshop.

This year's workshop was hosted at the University of Aberdeen's Special Collections Centre and hosted by the conservation staff. Curator of entomology at the Hunterian Museum and insect identification specialist, Jeanne Robinson, lead the 'Practical museum pest insect identification workshop for Archives, Museums and Historic Houses in Scotland'. The delegates included preventive conservation and textile conservation students, private, archive and museum conservators and managers of collections; all with varying levels of knowledge and experience of IPM.

Jeanne's passion and extensive expertise in her subject came across during her presentation on the main groups and species of pest insects found in historic collections, and on insect species which are a potential threat to our collections in Scotland. Jeanne presented useful information on aiding identification, points about the behavioral habits of different insects and clues to reading insect damage.

The practical session which followed was fun, interesting and served to consolidate knowledge from the presentation with real examples of insect damage to material and actual specimens. Laptops and USB digital microscopes were used to examine and identify the specimens, alongside the English Heritage Poster and other printed resources. The practical session took about two hours and included a red herring cockroach egg - which all of the delegates will surely be able to recognise now!

Drawing on my experience of IPM at the University of Aberdeen, I lead the discussion and presentation on housekeeping programmes, quarantine procedures, treatment options and the need for recording and analysing data.

The wide range of delegates' work contexts and experience made the discussions active and informative. It is a credit to the network that an effort is made to take the training to different cities in Scotland. If you are interested in finding out more about the Scottish Pest Identification Network, or possibly in hosting a workshop, please contact the Icon Scotland group at scotland@icon.org.uk.

By ERICA KOTZE
Senior Conservator

Special Collections Centre, University of Aberdeen

LARDER BEETLES?





INTERVIEW: KEVIN GOSLING

Chief Executive of the Collections Trust

The Collections Trust develops standards and provides advice to help museums and similar organisations manage their collections. When first set up in 1977 they were called the Museum Documentation Association (MDA). As that name suggests, the early focus was on data standards for museums. Today they are best known for SPECTRUM, a collections management standard used not only in all the UK's Accredited museums, but in around forty other countries too. Kevin joined the Trust in September as Chief Executive. Or, rather, re-joined – having been an outreach manager for MDA around the time SPECTRUM was launched in the mid-1990s. "It's good to be back".

WHY CULTURAL HERITAGE?

Studying Old Norse at university led me to spend a year at the Runic Archive in Oslo doing collections-based research on medieval inscriptions. My favourite was a runestick with a juicy bit of gossip from thirteenth-century Tønsberg: 'They're shacking up together, Clumsy Kari and William's wife.'

That year inspired me to take the Museum Studies course at Leicester University, and I've been working in museums and the arts for nearly thirty years.

WHAT ARE THE SECTOR'S MAIN CHALLENGES AND STRENGTHS?

For all organisations that look after cultural heritage collections the main challenge – as ever – is bridging the perceived gap between public-facing services and collection management.

One strength of the sector is that it has responded to that challenge, with many examples of effective programming that has de-mystified what happens behind the scenes. Both digitally and physically collections are being opened up as never before, which can only strengthen the funding case for the sector.

WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE PLANS AND PRIORITIES FOR THE COLLECTIONS TRUST?

I am only a few weeks into the job, so my main priority at the moment is managing our existing commitments over the coming months, and talking to our stakeholders about how we can be most helpful in the medium to long term.

As we will soon come to the end of some large European projects there is an opportunity to re-focus our work, so I am consulting widely about the best way forward. Expect a renewed emphasis on core standards and skills, which seem to be needed now as much as they ever were.

HOW WAS YOUR RECENT CONFERENCE?

Our conference was very successful, with well-received papers including a call for museums to keep sight of

their collecting role even in times of austerity, the challenges of managing digital assets, and an inspiring example of community co-curation at Mansfield Museum. We also outlined our timetable for consulting SPECTRUM community over the coming six months ahead of a planned revision of the standard in 2016-17.

WHAT IS YOUR VIEW ON PARTNERSHIP WORKING AND CAN YOU SHARE ANY SUCCESS STORIES?

A small organisation like the Collections Trust can only be effective through partnership working. The strength of SPECTRUM is that it was developed – and continues to be implemented – by a wide-ranging community of collections managers, software providers and national partners, both in the UK and overseas. Our relationship with the software companies – our SPECTRUM Partners – is particularly important as it is through their products that most of our collection management colleagues use the standard day to day.

DO YOU SEE CO-OPERATION GROWING BETWEEN ARCHIVES AND OTHER PARTS OF THE CULTURAL SECTOR?

Before taking up my current post, I worked for the Britten-Pears Foundation at the former home of Benjamin Britten in Aldeburgh. As well as looking after the most comprehensive archive of any composer, the Foundation also maintains the house Britten shared with Peter Pears, including their art collection and an extensive library. All, of course, catalogued according to the respective standards of archivists, museum curators and librarians, using different software. But the Foundation is now working towards bringing these three data sets together to enable integrated searching across the collections.

This reflects – in microcosm – a growing and encouraging trend that can only increase the opportunities for co-operation between archives and other cultural heritage organisations.

SCHEUER SKELETAL COLLECTION

Icon (The Institute of Conservation) has an active group in Scotland to represent conservators, conservation scientists and preservation specialists working in Scotland. The committee and observers of the Icon Scotland Group represent both private and public conservation, preservation and science across the disciplines. The Group promotes events training and seminars for professionals and those interested in culture and heritage.

In November Icon Scotland Group hosts the 18th Annual Plenderleith Memorial Lecture - The Scheuer Skeletal Collection: a unique resource for archaeology, osteology and forensic anthropology. This lecture will be given by Professor Sue Black and Dr Craig Cunningham from the Centre for Anatomy & Human Identification at the University of Dundee. The Lecture will be held in Dundee at Discovery Point on Thursday 26 November at 7pm. The lecture will be followed by a drinks reception in the Discovery Centre, included in the modest ticket price.

Professor Black is a leading forensic anthropologist and the director of the Centre for Anatomy and Human Identification at Dundee (CAHID). Her forensic expertise has been crucial to a number of high-profile criminal cases and in 1999 she headed the British Forensic Team's exhumation of mass graves in Kosovo. She founded the British Association of Human Identification in 2001, the same year in which she received an OBE for her services to forensic anthropology. She received the Lucy Mair Medal from the Royal Anthropological Institute in 2008.

Dr Craig Cunningham lectures in Anatomy and Forensic Anthropology within CAHID and leads the co-ordination and delivery of international training courses in skeletal development. He has responsibility for the curation of the Scheuer collection of juvenile skeletal remains housed within CAHID. His research involves investigating the development of the human skeleton and applying this knowledge to the identification process.

In 1990, Louise Scheuer and Sue Black decided to write the first text book dedicated to Developmental Juvenile Osteology. The work was begun in response to archaeologists, osteologists and forensic anthropologists who wanted to be able to recognise human juvenile skeletal remains and assign an accurate age at death. The book was awarded the Royal Society of Medicine and Society of Author's prize in 2001 and the research leading to it created a comprehensive collection of juvenile skeletal remains that is now known as the Scheuer Collection.

Craig and Sue will outline how this unique collection came about, its composition and its value to ongoing teaching, research and forensic case work. Please come and join us – tickets are available through Eventbrite here: <https://goo.gl/17eaAt>

By ROB THOMSON
Chair of Icon Scotland Group

ICON SCOTLAND AND THE PLENDERLEITH LECTURE



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