



SCOTTISH
COUNCIL ON
ARCHIVES

**ANNUAL
REVIEW
2019-20**

LEAD • INFORM • INSPIRE



**The Scottish Council
on Archives**
is an independent
advocacy and
development body
for the archives and
records management
sector, providing
leadership, and
building capacity.

OUR VALUES ▶

We are an independent and trustworthy organisation which responds to the needs of our members. By working in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders, we strive to inspire the highest standards in collection management and service delivery.

OUR VISION ▶

Scotland's documented past is valued, understood, and shared.

MISSION ▶

Leading Scotland's archives, records management, and conservation sector to inspire and inform the nation.

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FOREWORD

Any perspective on 2019/20 is bound to be shaped by the Covid-19 pandemic which was having a major impact by March 2020. After a year of good progress in the many areas outlined in this review, a rapid response had to be developed to enable the organisation to continue to support the sector in the challenging new environment while continuing where possible to deliver the existing activities. Staff quickly moved to home working while the programme of activities was transformed to one of online delivery, postponement or in a few instances, cancellation. The effectiveness with which this was achieved reflects well on the Director and his team, while also demonstrating the need for agile and flexible thinking, underpinned by clear strategic aims.

During the year, the Scottish Council on Archives took steps to reshape itself as a more focused organisation, with the establishment of a Management Committee to review policies and processes as well as manage business, and setting up new Groups to take forward specific areas such as Advocacy. The ambition is to enable the trustees to concentrate more on strategic developments to support the archives, records management and preservation community in Scotland. Relationships with partners particularly across the UK will be critical to this, and the creation towards the end of



Dr Irene O'Brien and Bruce Jackson, September 2019.

the year of a new funding pot for the conservation of Scottish archives with the National Manuscripts Conservation Fund, with additional welcome funding provided by the National Records of Scotland, is a promising example. The first strategic development event for trustees was held in Dundee in February and was a stimulating event, even if many of the ideas will have to be reshaped in the light of the massive impact, financial and otherwise, of coronavirus.

The Director's Report gives full details of what has been achieved over the past year and I will not pre-empt this. I thank both the staff and trustees for their support and work over the past year, but it would not be possible to omit thanking Dr Irene O'Brien for her massive contribution as Chair of the SCA since its formation in 2002. Taking office as her successor I am aware of how much time, effort, and thought she has put in over that considerable period, achieving much and laying the groundwork for major future developments. I am delighted that Irene accepted the position of Honorary President.

BRUCE JACKSON, CHAIR

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

SCA has had another busy year, working in collaboration with a wide range of partners and stakeholders to deliver a programme supporting and promoting the work of archivists, records managers, and conservators.

The 'First Steps' tour, coordinated by SCA and National Records of Scotland (NRS), for groups maintaining community archives, has been very successful. There is clearly an interest in and appetite for guidance on subjects such as conservation, storage, and digital preservation. It is also clear that many of these voluntary groups would value advice on meeting a basic archival cataloguing standard to help make their collections more accessible.

Other achievements in the year include the launch of a Collecting Policy Framework; the development of a significant new series of emergency planning guidance documents; a second 'Why Archives Matter' conference on the theme of 'Heritage, Memory, Identity'; and a dedicated education coaching programme which was provided to eight archives services across the country.

Helping services on the archives accreditation journey has been a focus for the Accreditation Working Group. We were delighted to celebrate in the success of the National Library of Scotland and Nucleus: The Nuclear and Caithness Archive who were both granted Accredited Archive Status in 2019.

The new archives portal is taking shape with a likely launch in late 2020, and I am delighted that we will be working with Jisc/Archives Hub in creating this important new resource.

JOHN PELAN, DIRECTOR



OUR WORK

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Our programme of activity is designed around six strategic objectives as set out and agreed by trustees in March 2019 as part of a new strategic plan, reflecting our commitment to our members and support for the Scottish Government's National Outcomes.

- ▶ **CAPACITY BUILDING:** Build capacity in the archives, records management, and conservation sector to encourage best practice, improve skills and raise standards.
- ▶ **EDUCATION AND OUTREACH:** Realise the educational and outreach potential of archives to inform and inspire teachers, students, and local communities.
- ▶ **ACCESS TO ARCHIVES:** Promote the widest possible access to physical and digital archives and records.
- ▶ **ADVOCACY AND IMPACT:** Advocate the benefits and positive impact that wider engagement with and use of archives can deliver.
- ▶ **PARTNERSHIP:** Foster a collaborative relationship with a wide range of partners both within and outwith the archives, records management, and conservation sector to meet shared objectives.
- ▶ **GOVERNANCE:** Ensure that the Scottish Council on Archives is effectively managed with a robust and sustainable business model.



MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

► Collecting Policy Framework

A new Collecting Policy framework was launched at the SCA Annual Members' Meeting in September 2019. The purpose of the framework, which was developed in collaboration with a wide range of organisations, is to support and promote best practice in collecting, establish high-level outcomes and to ensure dialogue around collecting policies and activities remains open across the sector.

► Community Archives

We delivered a very popular programme of 'first steps' training, in collaboration with National Records of Scotland, for groups across Scotland involved in managing and developing community archives.

► Planning Matters: Emergency Planning Guidance for Archives

In collaboration with National Records of Scotland, we produced a new series of emergency planning guidance resources and templates, offering services a roadmap to developing emergency plans to suit their organisational circumstances.

► New Scottish Archives Portal

After the successful delivery of a pilot project in 2019, we are now on track to build a new national portal which will improve access to archives collections across Scotland in 2020, working in collaboration with Jisc/Archives Hub.

► Education

As part of our three-year Education Plan, we provided bespoke coaching support for eight services archive services across the country.

► Advocacy

The second successful 'Why Archives Matter' conference titled 'Heritage, Memory, Identity', took place in Stirling in April 2019, with a focus on education, architecture, cultural heritage, archaeology, and genealogical research.



PRSA Conference delegate feedback

“

As someone who is totally new to this world, I learnt a lot and did not feel too much of an outsider.

Wide range of topics covered and now have a greater understanding of saving the digital information.

”

CAPACITY BUILDING

Archive Service Accreditation

Now in its sixth year, the archive service accreditation standard continues to be the primary benchmarking model for improving and enhancing services. However, in recognition that factors such as staff shortages, competing priorities, Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 (PRSA) compliance, and the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry have made it difficult for many services to apply for accredited status, the Archive Accreditation Working Group (established by SCA and NRS) has been exploring ways to support the sector at the pre-application stage, with more emphasis on guidance and mentoring. In 2019-20 the National Library of Scotland and Nucleus: The Nuclear and Caithness Archive were granted Accredited Archive Status.

SCA and NRS act as joint assessors for the standard in Scotland. The archive service accreditation standard is underpinned by partner bodies, The National Archives (UK); Museums, Archives and Libraries Division of the Welsh Government; Archives and Records Council Wales; the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland; the Archives and Records Association UK & Ireland (ARA UK & Ireland); National Records of Scotland; and SCA.

Accreditation training feedback:



Great facilitator. Fun, friendly and gave great tips and advice. Also good to talk to other local authority archivists about starting accreditation.

7
capacity-
building events

270+
attendees

6,200+
SCARRS
visits

ARMS: Quality Improvement Framework for Archives and Records Services

We continue to endorse the use of ARMS, a self-evaluation tool that can support archives and records services in meeting everyday pressures, needs and priorities. The framework has been endorsed by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland, the Scottish Information Commissioner, and the Chief Executive of Quality Scotland. ARMS addresses all key policies and procedures needed for compliance with the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011.

Copyright

SCA continues to be an accredited member of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights. SCA is represented on the committee by co-opted trustee, Victoria Stobo, who monitors and participates in debates concerning changes to copyright law in the UK and Europe.

Collecting Policy Framework

The new framework was launched at a collecting policy-themed event coinciding with the SCA Annual Members' Meeting on 5 September 2019. The Collecting Policy group is focussed on the development of a decision tree and progressing framework actions.

Left: Caring for photographs, part of our community workshop with National Galleries of Scotland.

Economic Impact Toolkit

We continued to promote the Economic Impact Toolkit to services and develop the resources on the SCA website. The toolkit is designed to help archive services measure and promote the economic value of their work in relation to jobs and spending in their local areas. It helps to reinforce the message that archive services make important contributions to the local economy. The Economic Impact Toolkit was developed in partnership with Museums Galleries Scotland.

Preservation

The SCA Preservation Committee leads on supporting the sector in preservation and conservation issues, and in the delivery of the three-year Preservation Action Plan, launched in 2019. An important part of its work in 2019/20 was the development of new guidance and disaster templates, commissioned from conservator Fiona Macalister, to offer services a roadmap to developing an emergency plan to suit their organisational circumstances.

Covering preparation, response and recovery, the guidance has been developed to aid those who care for archives wherever they are held: archive services, special collections within libraries, and those housed in private historic houses. It focuses on key factors to consider when preparing an emergency plan, and will be amended and updated on an ongoing basis, taking the impact of Covid-19 into consideration in particular.

In March 2019, SCA secured financial support from NRS to contribute towards a new funding partnership with the National Manuscripts Conservation Trust. The new funding scheme, due to be launched in spring 2020, will enable Scottish archives and other eligible institutions to apply for a grant towards the cost of a manuscript conservation project.

Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011

In May 2019, NRS and SCA held a conference in Glasgow for professionals with responsibility for implementing PRSA within their organisations. The event attracted a capacity audience and included presentations from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture; Keeper of the Records of Scotland; and representatives from NRS, Digital Preservation Coalition, Scottish Government, and Scottish Funding Council. Topics included the launch of the New Model Records Management Plan, the Progress Update Review, digital preservation, and web harvesting.

The conference was developed and coordinated by NRS and SCA in partnership with the Archives and Records Association Scotland and the Information and Records Management Society Scotland.

Scottish Council on Archives Record Retention Schedules (SCARRS)

The retention schedules continue to be one of SCA's most popular products with around 500 downloads every month. Frank Rankin of IG Scotland provides quarterly reviews, and the Association of Local Authority Archivists Working Group (ASLAWG) has agreed to submit feedback on the reports. Frank is also working with a subgroup, primarily local authority archivists and records managers, to look at the development of a 'SCARRS light' tool that better aligns with SharePoint and cloud-based office systems.

SCARRS provides local and other public authorities with up-to-date guidance for the compilation of retention schedules to help manage the records they create and use day-to-day. SCARRS covers 26 functions and is freely available to download from the SCA website. Delivery of the schedules has proved useful in supporting the implementation of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011. The schedules also offer a reliable point of reference for the many organisations preparing for compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation.

Right: Caring for photographs, part of our community workshop with National Galleries of Scotland.



EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Education

There was significant demand for our education coaching programme for archive services, with eight services provided with dedicated and bespoke coaching time from the SCA Education Development Officer, Douglas Roberts. The coaching support provided assistance to Abertay University's National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) Volunteer Programme; an archive and theatre project with Argyll Estates in Tiree; the outreach programme at Fife Council Archives; a travelling archive exhibition in East Dunbartonshire, aimed at reaching deprived areas of the community; and a set of secondary school resources for Perth and Kinross Archive service. Douglas has also provided advice to North Lanarkshire Archive service to help develop and improve their public programme of workshops and events. The Scottish Jewish Archive Centre also received support to further develop their education and outreach offer. The education section of the SCA website has been updated with new case studies, blogs, and resources.

SCA also hosted a one-day training event at New Register House, Edinburgh, on creating archives-based education resources, with attendees from across Scotland and England. Presentations about using creative arts in archives-based projects were

also delivered at the ARA-UK training event at the University of Dundee and at Edinburgh Schools Archives day conference.

Volunteering

SCA's Programmes and Development Manager sits on the ARA Volunteering subcommittee. The committee met in January 2020 to discuss upcoming plans, and these include an NLHF bid to encourage youth volunteering in archives and a review of the group's membership and remit. The committee is canvassing for new members with representation from individuals with links to education, black, Asian, and minority ethnic groups, and the charity sector.

Feedback from a third year student at St John's RC Academy, Perth



I was interested in learning about the historical element and getting to work with the recording equipment. I'm interested in all forms of performance, so this was really exciting to participate in.

Right: Students from Boclair Academy, East Dunbartonshire, performing *Theatre of Remembrance*.

11
archive services
supported



63
archivists supported



290
school students
involved



16
community
volunteers



576
resource downloads





In July, SCA worked in partnership with the Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG) and Glasgow Life, to organise the popular CAHG Annual Conference. The focus of the conference was 'Moving Memories: Migration in Community Archives', with fascinating presentations recording the experience of migration from across the world, including South Asia, Ukraine, and Kurdistan, to communities throughout the UK. The conference also featured the presentation of the CAHG Awards.

Above: *Colourful Heritage*, winners of the Gathering Heritage Award, are a Glasgow based charity that celebrate and preserve the stories of South Asian and Muslim heritage in Scotland. Pictured left to right: Nick Barrett, Shazia Durrani, Tariq Shaikh, founder and trustee, Saqib Razzaq, Omar Shaikh, Aman Durrani and Jane Golding, CAHG Chair.

Community Archives

Our new community archives programme has been very successful with extensive interest from and engagement with groups across Scotland. The 'First Steps' programme of works, coordinated in partnership with NRS, took place in Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Hawick, Inverness, Perth, and Oban. An additional event, planned for Stornoway in March 2020, was postponed due to the Covid-19 outbreak. Additional workshops on digital preservation, photographic collections, and sound archives were also held.

SCA's Community Engagement Officer represents Scotland on the UK-wide Community Archives and Heritage Group and has been in discussion with the group and the Chief Executive of the Archives and Records Association about the possibility of establishing a Scottish branch.



ACCESS TO ARCHIVES

Archives Portal

In partnership with Jisc/Archives Hub, we have made good progress in the development, of a dynamic new portal which will gather and make accessible archives collections from across the country. These include local authority archives; health, business and community archives; private collections; and records held by under-represented groups.

The project, which we hope to launch in late 2020, will vastly improve access to Scotland's online archival collections. As well as bringing together data from recognised repositories into a dynamic new portal, the project will also set out to help catalogue and share the stories of communities across Scotland and, through engagement, training and mentoring - particularly with volunteers - ensure these become part of the country's national record.

Archives Portal survey respondents:

I think the plan for Archives Portal Scotland is great and long time in the waiting.

Looking forward to development of portal and will do all we can to support the initiative.

Communications

Through our website, social media feeds, and e-bulletins we engage with and inform a large and diverse audience of professionals and volunteers from the archives, records management, digital preservation, cultural heritage, genealogical sectors as well as the general public.

'Broadsheet' is our quarterly e-magazine, featuring archive-related articles and news from across Scotland, and beyond.





Feedback on the 'Why Archives Matter' conference:



Really enjoyed the event and came away inspired and with ideas to take back to our organisation for our own projects in how we can use our archives more.

ADVOCACY & IMPACT

We established an Advocacy Working Group in 2019. The group, which is chaired by SCA's Chair, Bruce Jackson, includes both archivists and records managers. Its purpose is to bring together archivists, records managers, and conservators to help them become better advocates for the sector and to inform as well as prioritise SCA's advocacy-related work.

A second 'Why Archives Matter' conference was held in the Engine Shed, Stirling, in April 2019, with support from the Built Environment Forum Scotland and NRS. The conference featured presentations from academics, historians, archivists, architects, and representatives of community archive groups.

I'm not an archivist and I've taken away the huge role archives have in recording history and how people lived; how archives provide a platform for local people to learn recording and archive techniques and the wealth of a nation's memory that is treasured and available for public access.





PARTNERSHIP

National Records of Scotland

Our partnership with NRS is extremely important to us, and we remain grateful for their ongoing support, partnership, and guidance. NRS is represented on a number of the SCA's working groups, and we work closely with many of their staff across different departments on a range of projects and policy issues, including education, engagement, compliance, cataloguing, conservation and preservation.

Digital Preservation Coalition (DPC)

As an associate member of the DPC, SCA is committed to supporting the promotion of best practice in digital preservation. The SCA Director attended the annual iPres conference in September 2019, which took place in Amsterdam.

ARA UK & Ireland

SCA has a strong relationship with both ARA UK & Ireland and its Scotland branch. The SCA Director, John Pelan, and colleague, Victoria Brown, have had regular meetings with the ARA Chair and Chief Executive, and the ARA Scotland Chair to discuss areas of mutual interest and opportunities for collaboration.

Left: Caring for photographs, part of our community workshop with National Galleries of Scotland.

46
new members



5
new
organisational
members



GOVERNANCE

The establishment of a Management Committee, chaired by the SCA Vice-Chair, Elizabeth Roads, has strengthened our commitment to good governance in areas such as HR, risk management, and financial control. The new committee led on the review of SCA's constitution, making several recommendations on simplifying the membership structure which were adopted at the Annual Members' Meeting.

SCA continues to work to deliver and contribute to the National Outcomes of the Scottish Government. Effective oversight is provided through quarterly meetings with Laura Mitchell, Deputy Keeper of the Records of Scotland, and regular reporting on our activities. The SCA Director also meets regularly with Paul Lowe, Keeper of the Records of Scotland.

SCA's commitment to equality and diversity both within the organisation and more widely in the sector has led to discussions on creating a new working group to examine the key issues and learn from the experience of others.

Left: Survey plans by George Langlands for the division of crofts (ref AP PV 19) on display at An Iodhlann, the local community heritage centre on Tiree. © Argyll Estates

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The invaluable contributions of our trustees, members, funders, volunteers, and partners are critical to the success of every initiative and project we deliver. We would particularly like to thank National Records of Scotland and Scottish Government for our annual grant funding, without which SCA would struggle to function. We would also like to acknowledge the ongoing support and partnership of NRS, and we remain grateful to them for continuing to provide office and venue space.

In 2019/20, we worked with numerous individuals and partners, including National Records of Scotland, Museums Galleries Scotland, Historic Environment Scotland, National Library of Scotland, Built Environment Forum Scotland, Scottish Library Information Council, Archives and Records Association; The National Archives; the Community Archives and Heritage Group; and archive services in local authorities, universities and other organisations throughout Scotland.

We would like to give thanks to the many people and organisations who continue to support SCA.

Front cover: Community youth theatre members recording voiceovers in Perth & Kinross Archives' project about local WW1 soldier John Alex Veitch, as part of SCA's Education Coaching Programme. *Inside front cover:* Survey plans by George Langlands for the division of crofts (ref AP PV 19) on display at An Iodhlann, the local community heritage centre on Tiree. © Argyll Estates. *Inside back cover:* Caring for photographs, part of our community workshop with National Galleries of Scotland.

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