



NEWS RELEASE

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ARCHIVES AND ANCESTRAL TOURISM FILM LAUNCHED TO WELCOME TOURISTS BACK TO SCOTLAND

The Scottish Council on Archives (SCA) has today, Wednesday 16th March, launched a short film to promote Scotland as a unique destination for ancestral tourists. **Ivan McKee, MSP Minister for Business, Trade, Tourism and Enterprise** welcomed the film at its launch in General Register House, Edinburgh.

Coming Home – Ancestral Journeys in Scotland highlights how Scotland's rich collection of archives held by local authorities, national bodies as well as small heritage and community groups tell the stories of the people who have left Scotland over the last four hundred years. These visitors are drawn back time and time again to learn about their ancestors' lives and the places they came from.

There are about fifty million people world-wide who claim Scottish ancestry from Australia and New Zealand, through Europe to the USA and Canada. Ancestral Tourism (AT) is already worth over £100m a year to the Scottish economy and has potential to grow significantly, according to research commissioned by VisitScotland. Ancestral visitors are particularly valuable, as they stay longer and spend more.

Coming Home – Ancestral Journeys in Scotland was commissioned by SCA and directed and edited by Amanda Rogers. The film can be viewed at www.scottisharchives.org.uk/ancestraltourism

John Pelan, SCA Director said: "Scotland's archives tell our stories, enrich our lives, connect us with the past and give us a sense of identity. Whether searching online or visiting an archive in person the ancestral tourist can learn an extraordinary amount of detail about

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their ancestors' lives and the place where they once lived. Our film, *Coming Home – Ancestral Journeys in Scotland* gives a hint of some of the amazing material to be found in Scotland's many archival collections. We are delighted to launch the film in 2022 – the Year of Stories.”

Ivan McKee, MSP and Minister for Business, Trade, Tourism and Enterprise, said: “With over 50 million people across the world claiming Scottish ancestry, ‘Coming Home’ promotes Scotland as a premier destination for ancestral tourists and urges them to come and experience all that Scotland has to offer.

“Ancestral tourism is hugely valuable to Scotland and is an area where we lead the world, with some of the most complete and accessible family records anywhere in the world. It is fitting this film is being launched in the Year of Stories, as our archives also play a role in helping to tell and illuminate some of our rich stories, allowing us to connect to the past and inform our own sense of identity.”

Noelle Campbell, VisitScotland Scottish Connections Manager, said: “Scotland’s history and culture is one of the top reasons for visiting Scotland, and research shows that millions of people with Scottish roots across the world are interested in visiting in Scotland and exploring their Scottish ancestry.

“Heritage centres and ancestral research facilities had seen an increase from people interested in tracing their own Scottish roots thanks to TV shows like *Outlander*. And as international travel opens up again, we hope to welcome more visitors, searching for their Scottish family history and have them enjoy all of the incredible experiences their ancestral homeland has to offer. We will be encouraging them to uncover their own Scottish story as we celebrate Scotland’s Year of Stories in 2022.”

Laura Mitchell, Director of Information and Records Services and Deputy Keeper said:

“National Records of Scotland is delighted to have been involved in the planning and creation of the SCA’s new film, *Coming Home – Ancestral Journeys in Scotland*. The film illustrates perfectly how ancestral tourism would not be possible without archives, the rich potential of Scotland’s archival collections, and the important role of the archivists and conservators who care for them.”

End

Notes to editors

The Scottish Council on Archives (SCA) is an independent advocacy and development body for the archives and records management sector in Scotland. SCA works in partnership with many organisations throughout the UK to support and promote the management and use of archives services and collections. SCA runs a busy programme of workshops and events and deliver projects and resources spanning engagement, education and advocacy.

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For more information visit www.scottisharchives.org.uk

VisitScotland is the national tourism organisation for Scotland. Our main aim is to contribute significantly to the advancement of Scottish tourism by giving it a real presence in the global marketplace and benefiting the whole of Scotland.

For more information about Visit Scotland and Ancestral Tourism research and statistics, visit: <https://www.visitscotland.org/research-insights/about-our-visitors/interests-activities/ancestry>

For more information about Scotland's **Year of Stories 2022**, visit <https://www.visitscotland.com/about/themed-years/stories/>

National Records of Scotland (NRS) is a Non-Ministerial Department of the Scottish Government. Our purpose is to collect, preserve and produce information about Scotland's people and history and make it available to inform current and future generations.

Our website has information on the records we make available to help people trace their Scottish ancestors online through our ScotlandsPeople website and on-site at our ScotlandsPeople Centre in Edinburgh and at Local Family History Centres elsewhere in Scotland.

See our [Family History](#) guide for full details.

Amanda Rogers is an experienced documentary, not-for profit, corporate, and live-event producer and director. She is the founder of Cinetopia, a small film company that produces media and events that connect the film community in Edinburgh and beyond. Amanda directed and produced the SCA-commissioned film, '[Why Archives Matter](#)' in 2018.

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