

ISSUE 11

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BROADSHEET



*Who may tell my heart's revealings—
All its passions, all its feelings,
All its plaintive loving tone?
Thou, my chosen one, alone!*

News Review from the

SCOTTISH COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES



WELCOME TO THE ISSUE (number 11)

In December it was Santa, now this month Cupid himself is making an appearance on *Broadsheet's* front cover. 2012 is well and truly underway and judging by yet another packed news review, Scotland's archive and records management sector certainly isn't letting the January blues get in the way.

The beginning of a new year often presents an opportunity to take stock and assess your position; both positive and, dare we say it, negative. As witnessed by the sudden flood of diet books and gym memberships, it's a time to weigh up (excuse the pun!) and plan. With this in mind, the SCA held a consultation event earlier this month, inviting input from the sector and stakeholders into the organisation's future direction (Page 8). With confirmed funding for the next three years, a dedicated Council, staff and support fuelled by partnership working, SCA forward planning is well underway.

Not to be outdone, the *Broadsheet* team are also in full planning mode. Issue 11 sees the first of a new regular section written by archive professionals presenting their own personal favourite documents (Page 3). We also plan to launch a series of themed editions that celebrate and promote the vital work of Scotland's archives. However, as with most new year's resolutions, to achieve the best you need dedication, a strong will and lots of help ... in short, we need you! Your ideas for themes, content suggestions, interviews and events. Are there any issues you want to raise? Any questions or comments? *Broadsheet* is here to give the community a voice—help continue the dialogue by getting in touch.

www.scoarch.org.uk

The Editorial Team

TWO GUINEAS REWARD.

A MALE CHILD, Aged about Two or Three Months, was found exposed on a Stair, 6 Whitefield Road, Govan, on Christmas Night, at 9'15 o'Clock. It was laid at the Door of a house occupied by Donald M'Lean. Dressed in new White Flannel Barry, White Cotton Night Gown, Magenta-coloured Woollen Polka Jacket, old Red Napkin or Shawl, White Woollen Hood, and covered with a Woman's Light Grey Skirt. The Child is of Dark Complexion and has a languid appearance.

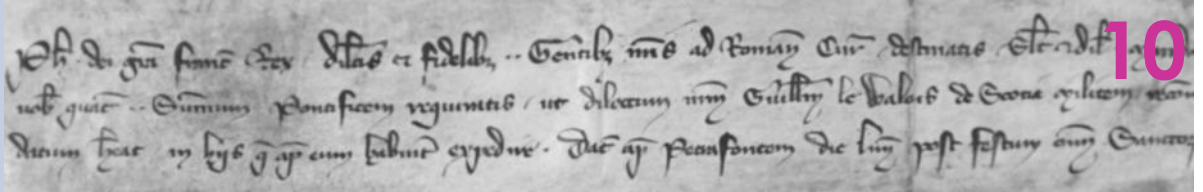
The above Reward will be paid for information as to the Parents or party who exposed the Child.

3

ANDW. WALLACE,

Inspector of Poor, Govan Combination.

PARISHIAL CHAMBERS 7 CARLTON PLACE, GLASGOW, 10th December, 1822



COVER IMAGE

Orkney Library and Archive

Valentine card sent to Miss Jane Grieve, Elwick Bank, Shapinsay in 1849 (reference GB241/D1/696). The card is actually a sheet of paper which has been folded up to envelope size and sealed with wax.

Date: 1849

Links:

<http://orkneyarchive.blogspot.com/>

<http://twitter.com/#!/OrkneyLibrary>



Who may tell my heart's revealing
All its passions, all its feelings,
All its plaintive loving tone?
Thou, my chosen one, alone!
Loving, with sincere emotion
With my heart and soul's devotion.

When I read the starry skies,
All my fondest hopes will rise,
On the shore—or on the sea,
Thou, art all in all to me.
Yes! In love's divine emotion,
Read—oh! read—my soul's devotion.

Miss Grieve's admirer is clearly smitten. He writes:

Who may tell my heart's revealing / All its passions, all its feelings / All its plaintive loving tone? / Thou, my chosen one alone! / Loving with sincere emotion / with my heart and soul's devotion.

When I read the starry skies / All my fondest hopes will rise / On the shore—or on the sea / Thou, art all in all to me. / Yes! In love's divine emotion / Read—oh! Read—my soul's devotion.

The SCA is looking for your archive love stories. Please visit www.scoarch.org.uk/notice-board/258 for further information.

Happy Valentine's Day!

PLANS FOR LIVING

An Exhibition Celebrating the 20th Century Architectural Plans from Falkirk Archives

At Callendar House on 21 January, a new exhibition opened exploring the buildings that surround us and impact upon our lives, from the houses we live in to the schools we went to. Using the architectural plans held by Falkirk Archives, 'Plans for Living' presents an opportunity to think about how our built environment contributes to society.

Since the 1880s, local authorities have regulated building standards and kept the architectural plans of many local houses, churches, shopping centres, high-rise flats, community halls and public buildings. The archival collections offer a fascinating insight into changing lifestyles as expressed through the progression of architectural design.

Admission to the exhibition is free, and Callendar House is open Monday–Saturday, 10am–5pm. For further details visit www.tinyurl.com/plansforliving

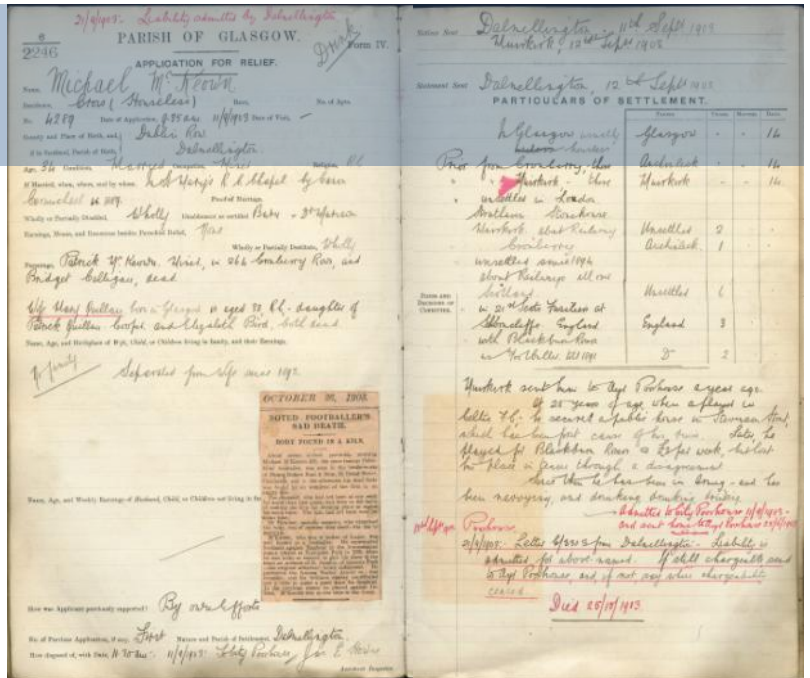
THE RICHES OF THE POOR

Glasgow City Archives' Poor Law Records

In the first of a new regular feature discussing personal favourite items, Dr Irene O'Brien, SCA Chair and Senior Archivist at Glasgow City Archives, shares heartbreaking tales of ordinary people struggling in exceptional circumstances, and tells Broadsheet how to make Jeremy Paxman cry...

What to pick. I am spoiled for choice from the many wondrous documents within Glasgow City Archives. Will I pick that 12th century papal bull, or a Charles Rennie Macintosh drawing, or one of our many other riches? Actually it is not a difficult choice at all. I frequently tell anyone who will listen that the best thing we have is our poor law applications. The wide-range of biographical information about so many of the poor whose lives are rarely recorded elsewhere in such detail, makes these one of the most important sources for family and social history in Scotland.

Poor law records exist all across Scotland but Glasgow's offer so much more (well I would say that). There are one million-plus applications and, in addition to the core information found elsewhere, Glasgow's remarkable poor law officers would tip in letters, press-cuttings (often



citing an appearance in court), certificates and even the occasional photograph. And they did not hold back on personal commentary – no data protection to preserve applicants from the judgemental and sometimes vicious comments of poor law inspectors. You find comments that an applicant was the 'laziest man in Glasgow' or that a woman 'made eyes at him and the house was nothing more than a brothel'. You will often see comments such as immorality or drink across the top of applications. Among my own ancestors, one was described as smelling of drink, another an imbecile. There was even a lunatic or two. All in-laws I hasten to add!

Our many family historians use the applications to discover the often sad, sometimes funny stories about the poorest members of society. They might find an ancestor who was 'an awful boozier', the mother of illegitimate children (the record is 12, all with different men), an orphan, a convict, a man who deserted his family or often just a poor person struggling to make ends meet in very harsh times. A particularly sad application records that 'this woman and her family seem almost in starvation, but has a dread of Parish relief. Refuses to accept relief in any shape or form'. One from 1879 for a foundling child found abandoned on Christmas night, is another heartbreaking example. The application includes a poster advertising a reward of 2 guineas for information about the boy's parents. The child grows up and is often dependent on poor relief to survive. The last entry is a note that he was killed in Elder's shipyard at the age of 21.

There is also a wide academic interest, looking for instance at Irish or other migrant groups, medical health provision, children, or a micro-study of a particular street. The scope for academic study is endless.

All life can be found in Glasgow's poor law records and you get a real feel for what it was like for large swathes of the population of the City. On a daily basis we witness users making real connections with long-gone ancestors. They made even Jeremy Paxman cry!

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Inspector of Poor, Goran Combination.

PAROCHIAL CHAMBERS, 7 CARLTON PLACE,
GLASGOW, 21st December, 1879.

Dr Irene O'Brien
Senior Archivist, Glasgow City Archives

ARCHIVES ACCREDITATION

Edinburgh Workshop

by **Janice Tullock**

Archives and Heritage Consultant

Friday the 13 January 2012 was not such an unlucky day for the participants of the first of a series of Archives Accreditation workshops, hosted by the Scottish Council on Archives. A range of professionals met in Edinburgh to hear about plans to develop a UK wide scheme to accredit archive services and to discuss what should be in an accreditation standard.

The group explored the proposed benefits of an archives accreditation scheme and heard about the research undertaken to date. The relative merits of the proposed model for archives accreditation were discussed:

<i>ELEMENTS OF THE PROPOSED MODEL</i>	<i>DETAIL</i>
Standards/ Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify common standards with museums then:• Develop standards specific to archives and to different archive types
Sections of the standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Should have the same sections as the revised Museum Accreditation Scheme: <i>Organisational Health</i> <i>Collections</i> <i>Users and their experience</i>• The word user is meant in the widest sense and can mean mainly internal users.
Delivery process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A UK wide administrative structure, coordinated centrally by the National Archives• An open invitation process to participate with some prioritisation by national assessing bodies• Flexible approach to participation
Grading/Levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A core (minimum standard – weighted to different archive types)• 1 basic level + 1 or 2 enhanced levels
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A nationally managed assessment process, moderated by a UK wide Panel• Levels of validation to be confirmed• Aim to have links with museum accreditation process• Widen Committee membership to include other sectors (e.g. education, health, business)
Guidance & support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop regional partnerships and peer support networks• Create a central UK wide digital resource• Develop a UK training programme and networks through ARA

Figure: Proposed model of an Archives Accreditation scheme

Participants then began to discuss the content of the proposed standard, examining requirements such as those for collections storage and digital policies.

This workshop will be followed up by four further events and a webinar on 9 February 2012. The detailed work to create the standard will take place in an online environment from early February. If you would like to participate in the process please contact: asd@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

THE DOUGLAS CAUSE

Heir Hunters 18th Century Style

One of the most fascinating aspects of working in archives must be the discovery of unexpected sources in surprising places. For example, who would think to look in Court of Session case papers for the transcription of a 1748 Paris hotel register, or the records of an Edinburgh lawyer for lists of surgeons serving with the French army? Yet both of these survive among the voluminous papers relating to the infamous Douglas Cause; a scandalous legal battle which kept three nations agog in the mid 18th century.

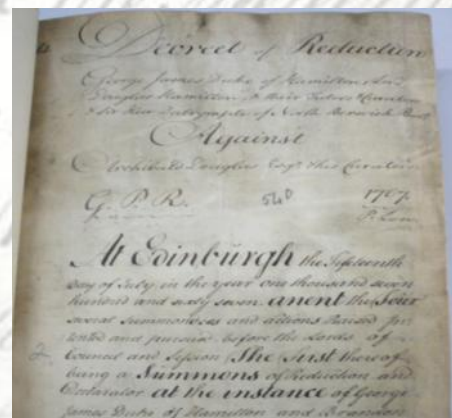
In July 1748, a 50 year-old Lady Jane Douglas gave birth to twins in Paris. Against the wishes of her brother, the Duke of Douglas, Jane had married the charming but dissolute Colonel James Steuart. News of the births spread quickly to Scotland and rumours circulated that the children were actually orphans purchased on the streets of Paris. The childless Duke refused to accept the “nunnery children” as his heirs and stopped his sister’s allowance. Despite attempts to petition the Duke for compassion, Jane was pursued in London and Edinburgh for outstanding debts. She never recovered from the death of one of the twins in 1753 and a few months later, destitute and disgraced, the tragic Lady Jane Douglas died.

Five years later, the Duke of Douglas married. His wife, Peggy, appealed insistently in favour of the surviving twin until, 10 days before his death in 1761, the Duke finally relented and named Archibald Steuart as heir to the estates, worth some £12,000. The decision

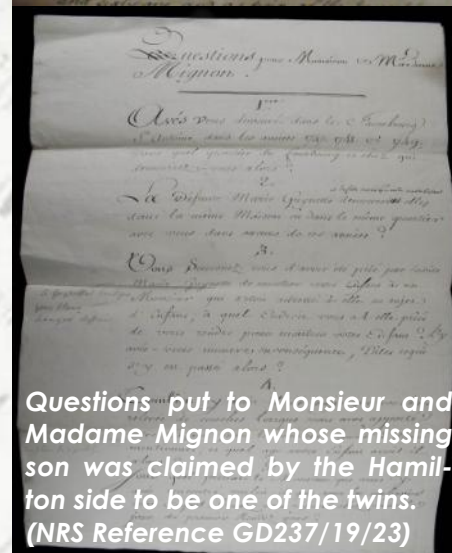
was contested in the Court of Session by the Duke of Hamilton, thus beginning the Douglas Cause which lasted for 8 years, cost the Hamilton and Douglas sides nearly £54,000, and absorbed the finest legal minds in Britain.

In 1767 the Hamiltons were declared victorious. However, true to the complex nature of the saga, there was one final twist when the decision was overturned by the House of Lords in 1769. So enthralled were the public that when news reached the streets of Edinburgh there was rioting and the homes of Hamilton supporters were attacked.

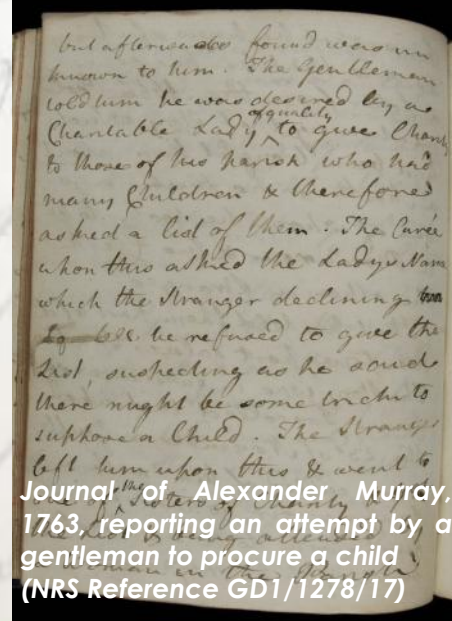
As well as the legal papers generated by the case, held by the National Records of Scotland (NRS) and the House of Lords Records Office, much documentation survives among private papers. NRS also holds some of the papers resulting from Andrew Steuart’s Parisian investigations where he tried to establish the truth of what happened in July 1748 – the remainder are in the National Library of Scotland. These include lists of witnesses, copies of statements and transcripts of speeches made in the House of Lords. Perhaps most intriguing is a collection of correspondence, sent back from Paris, that provide a fascinating insight into the investigations, including the fears that Archibald might indeed be an imposter. Further papers are to be found among the Home of the Hirsell collection, held privately, including a document in Lady Jane’s hand which, it has been speculated, may be her confession.



Decision of the Court of Session, 1767, declaring the Hamiltons victorious (NRS Reference CS22/538)



Questions put to Monsieur and Madame Mignon whose missing son was claimed by the Hamilton side to be one of the twins. (NRS Reference GD237/19/23)



Journal of Alexander Murray, 1763, reporting an attempt by a gentleman to procure a child (NRS Reference GD1/1278/17)

Founded officially on the 1 May 1931, the National Trust for Scotland (NTS) has grown into a major conservation organisation and Scotland's largest membership charity. Since its incorporation, the Trust has accumulated a body of archival material which reflects that status. The two main strands to the collections are the institutional archive, (comprising of administration files, correspondence, minutes, reports and publications), and the historic collections, (the family papers and records linked to NTS properties).

SHOWCASE

The institutional archives, housed primarily in the new headquarters at Hermiston Quay, Edinburgh, are a wonderful record of the history of the Trust. The administration and correspondence files outline the acquisition and management of its many properties, including iconic visitor attractions such as Culzean, Bannockburn, Crathes and Cul-loden. The archives also serve to highlight the NTS's many conservation activities.

One of the 'founding fathers' of the Trust, Sir John Stirling Maxwell, remarked at the first AGM that the NTS "serves the nation as a cabinet into which it can put some of its valuable things..." These 'things' include the collections of family and estate papers. Occasionally, these came as part of the overall acquisition, such as the Irvine Papers at Drum Castle or those at Broughton House (home of the artist EA Hornel). Many of them have been surveyed by the NRAS and are publicly available for research. The collections are of great significance for both local and national history, but their locations—often in castles or country houses—pose preservation challenges. A few years ago I surveyed many of these archives using *Benchmarks in Collections Care for Museums, Archives and Libraries*. Resulting from this assessment, storage conditions were improved, acid-free preservation materials purchased and some of the collections were audited in greater detail.



NTS guides and leaflets are a particular delight. On the left is a Falkland Palace commemorative brochure celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Royal Charter. In the centre, the watercolour image of Culzean is taken from the first guide book in 1945. Finally, the entrance ticket/bookmark for Inverewe Garden was part of a limited edition produced in the early 1970s. Other highlights of the archive include a treasure trove of books, letters, diaries and photos relating to St Kilda acquired when the 5th Marquis of Bute bequeathed the islands to the NTS in 1957.

This has been a whistle-stop tour of the archives of the National Trust for Scotland, but I hope it has given a flavour of the many and varied collections the Trust holds for the benefit of the Scottish nation.

Ian Riches

Archivist for the National Trust for Scotland

ARCHIVES OF THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND

2/6
ADMIT ONE ADULT TO THE
GARDEN

SCOTTISH COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES

*At the Heart of
Scotland's Archives*

By **Dr GERRY SLATER**
SCA Policy Advisor

With corporate planning under way and a change of status – to a charity and limited company – the time is right for the Scottish Council on Archives to consult stakeholders about its future direction and priorities.

In response to invitations to a range of organisations, 35 individuals gathered at Glasgow's Mitchell Library on 11 January, including the SCA Chair and three Management Committee members. The key players were the non-SCA attendees. They were drawn from government (in the broadest sense), business, the arts, medicine, universities, a range of archive services, the Archives and Records Association (Scotland), the Scottish Records Association, a museum service, a religious trust, the National Library, the National Trust and users with a special interest in local history.

After a brief overview of the SCA today from its Chair, Dr Irene O'Brien, it was down to work with four groups involved in four intense sessions. The scope was wide, covering how both archives in Scotland and the SCA might look in 10 years' time as well as possible vision statements for them. Opportunities and risks over the decade were identified. The core purpose was to identify how far the 'on the ground' realities and the 'big picture' were likely to be shared by the archives sector and the SCA, rather than merely assume they would coincide.

“The simple reality is that the sector is not well resourced, but there was no hint during the day that the pressures should curtail the ambition to achieve better.”

The final session pulled together what had been considered earlier by focussing on how the SCA might deliver its vision and the possible priorities it should pursue. Several areas were offered for consideration - the SCA governance structure and representation, the core issues for the advocacy role, whether modest steps were more appropriate in the likely economic climate, how the SCA might show the impact archives have (feeding into the National Outcomes, improving efficiency, etc), what would inspire both archives practitioners and users and, finally, how the SCA might 'most effectively get its message across'.

So what emerged? The interests of Scottish archives and of the SCA are the same... *REPORT CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE*



CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE...

Perhaps no great surprise there. Digital issues were prominent, from the challenge of ensuring that resources remain accessible over time, to the opportunities of reaching new users in new ways by exploiting technological advances. The SCA commitment to building on SCAN to create The Nation's Catalogue was certainly seen as offering vastly more access to the archival heritage and also exciting new ways of securing user involvement. There was a concern that user needs should be met as efficiently as possible in this as in all areas of archives and records management services.

Of course concerns emerged, and that was part of the exercise. The simple reality is that the sector is not well resourced, but there was no hint during the day that the pressures should curtail the ambition to achieve better. The general view was that archives and records management services must develop partnerships that offer a better product for the user, reduce costs and improve efficiency. The participants recognised the benefits of working collaboratively, of seeing beyond the confines of one institution or one specific area of archival interest, of bringing in expertise scarce in the sector.

The need for and the benefits of standards and best practice guidance were agreed. However, these were not seen as something wholly internal to the sector but (as with much else) were regarded as fitting into the overarching need to promote archives and records management outside the sector and especially among decision makers and funders.

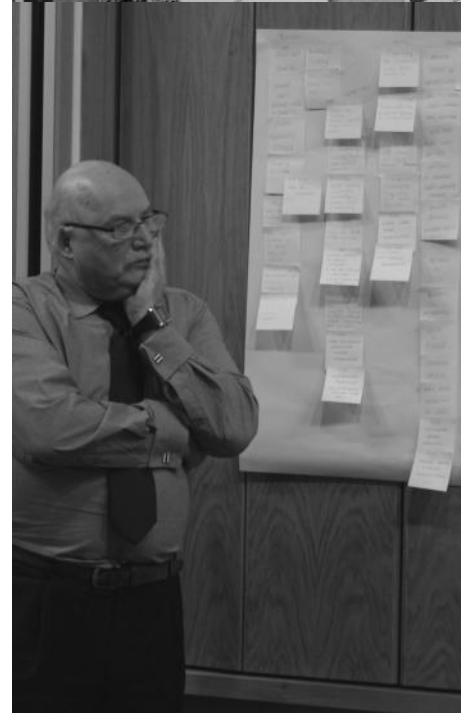
Much of what was discussed had at its heart a single word – impact. The gathering of statistical data about the impact of archives and records management activities was seen as a high priority. Literally, the sector must count.

Again and again, the lead advocacy role of the SCA was recognised as well as its role as a valuable facilitator. It was most simply described as the 'go-to' organisation or a central information hub for archives.

The participants displayed their enthusiasm and commitment. There was a buzz. It was a buzz that augurs well for Scottish archives as a whole. It was a buzz that augurs well for the SCA as the lead advocacy body for the sector.

Having taken on board the range of insights, perspectives and ideas from this consultation, the next step will be to inform and consult with the SCA's own Council on 2 February. The future direction of the SCA should then be clearer. It will then be about on the ground delivery, about getting things done. The SCA must show that archives and records really make a difference to individuals, families, communities and the nation. They have impact.

“Much of what was discussed had at its heart a single word – impact ... Literally, the sector must count.”



INTERVIEW

Carol Parry

Royal College of Physicians
and Surgeons of Glasgow



Carol is the Library and Heritage Manager at the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow. Beginning her career at the College as a part-time Archivist 16 years ago, her remit now includes management of the library (around 30,000 volumes), the archive (over 100 collections), the instrument and art collections as well as records management for the organisation. In addition to Carol, the staff consists of two librarians, a temporary Rare Books Cataloguer and volunteers.

The College is a membership body offering an up-to-date library service as well as being a historical repository. In addition to the core work of cataloguing and preservation, the Library and Archive offers various opportunities for the public to see the collections by organising a range of events such as the annual Doors Open Day. Carol also ensured the archive had a prominent role in the College's 2011 international conference at the SECC in Glasgow.

Describe Archives in three words.

Archives for ever – it was a slogan adopted by the then Society of Archivists some years ago and it has stuck with me ever since.

What do you feel are the main challenges currently faced by the sector?

Funding under a time of financial cut-backs is probably one of the main challenges. Maintaining as high a profile for the sector as possible is essential and this is where the work of bodies such as the SCA and the Scottish Records Association is so important. Having just attended the recent consultation meeting of the SCA in Glasgow, I was very impressed by the enthusiasm and commitment there is within the sector. This enthusiasm and commitment needs to be continually conveyed to those in government, both nationally and locally, to ensure long-term success for the sector.

Why Archives?

This is an easy one! When I was in the sixth form at school the Bedfordshire County Archivist came to give an illustrated talk about local history. I decided then that I wanted to be an archivist too. Since qualifying (I did the archive course at U.C.L.), I too have given numerous talks about archives and local history. But archives are a lot more than giving talks, and I have

always enjoyed working with original records and making them available.

What projects are you working?

As usual I'm working on several things at once. I'm finalising an exhibition on travel and international medicine. The exhibition was researched by two undergraduates from the University of Glasgow who came on a work placement to the College. The exhibition uses a range of archival material including items from the collection of Sir Ronald Ross who was awarded a Nobel Prize for Medicine for his work on malaria.

I am also organising an evening symposium - *Celebrating Lister* - which will be held in May. This year is the 200th anniversary of the death of Joseph Lister who first practiced antiseptic techniques using carbolic acid at Glasgow Royal Infirmary. The symposium will include a main lecture on historical milestones in the understanding and management of sepsis, together with short talks on the barber surgeons in Glasgow and the Lister items at the College. The symposium will be accompanied by a display of items relating to Lister (we have letters as well as instruments and a Lister spray).

We will shortly be getting a new website for College. The basic structure of

the new web pages for the Library and Archive has been signed off and now the task will be to rewrite existing content and add new material. We want to be able to show the collections in the best possible light, offer more online exhibitions, and also make the pages helpful and accessible to readers.

What if you had an unlimited budget?

I'd bring the storage accommodation we have up to BS 5454 standard. It's an impossibility in reality, though, as the building is nineteenth century and we're never going to meet the stringent requirements of BS 5454. But if we could make it as good as possible, that would be wonderful. It would be good, too, to have some larger exhibition cases (but quite where I would put them would be another matter!).

Staff-wise it would be good to have more cataloguers so that all the book collections can be fully catalogued. I'd also like to start up the archive trainee scheme here again.

Any career highlights so far?

Seeing those who have come to College as archive trainees, volunteers or on work experience placements going on to have successful careers in the sector.

January 2012
www.rcpsg.ac.uk

WALLACE LETTER ARRIVES IN SCOTLAND

BY **ALAN BORTHWICK**
National Records of Scotland

In 2010-11 an academic research group of distinguished historians and archivists from Scotland, England and France was asked by the Scottish Government Culture Minister Fiona Hyslop (now Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs) to study the provenance of the Wallace letter of recommendation in The National Archives (TNA), London, to find out if possible where and why it was created. This letter is from King Philip IV of France, directed to his agents at Rome asking them to assist Sir William Wallace in his unspecified business with the pope. It is dated 7 November 1300.

The letter was discovered in the 1830s among the English Chancery records in the Tower of London, caught up with a mass of other miscellaneous royal letters from a wide variety of European monarchs. When The National Archives was created in 1838 under its then guise as the Public Record Office, this letter was transferred there.

One of the points that the experts' group considered was whether or not Wallace would ever have possessed the letter himself—he is not named in it as its bearer, which would have been quite conclusive proof. The group decided that it can be stated as likely that the letter was in his possession at some point.

In the light of this conclusion, after the group's March 2011 meeting Ms Hyslop wrote to the Minister of State, in the UK Ministry of Justice, to ask for the letter to be brought to Scotland for public display in 2012 and 2014, and to be housed by the National Records of Scotland (NRS). After some negotiation, agreement was reached about these points, and the letter is now stored in NRS.

A press call to announce both its arrival in Edinburgh, and its first exhibition, (in August 2012 at the Scottish Parliament building), was held on 12 January. There was widespread media coverage of the event.

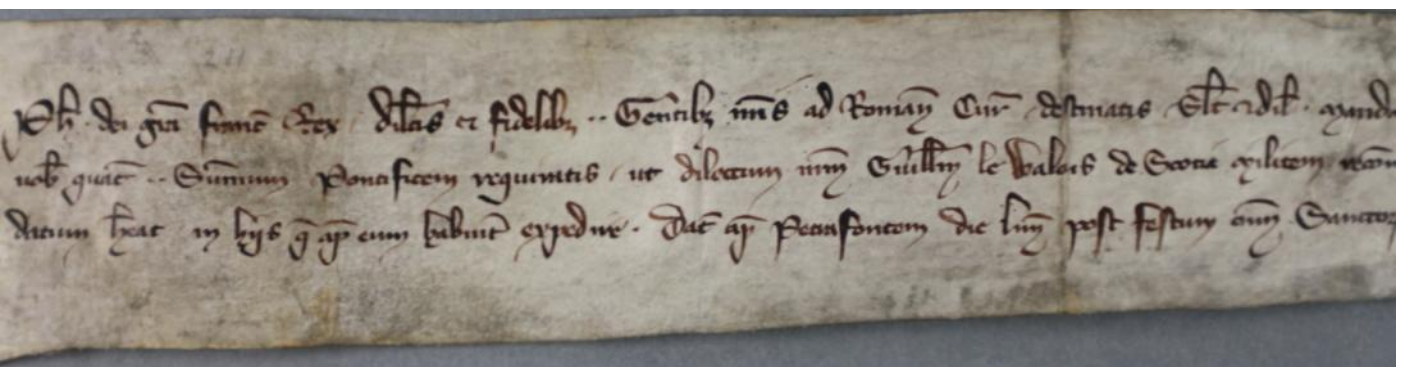
We're still at the planning stage of the exhibition, and can't be quite certain yet of what else we (or the Parliament exhibitions staff) will want to feature. There will definitely be two original documents: this specific letter and the 'Lubeck Letter' of 1297. One of the difficulties with the exhibition is the size, format and language of these documents. In essence, they are small, on parchment and in Latin. The letter we've borrowed from TNA is only three lines long (see the picture). Its content is quite informal: letters of recommendation I've seen from King Edward I, admittedly directly addressed to the pope, often use very florid language.

We're likely therefore to need transcripts and translations of the documents to be available for visitors, as well as captions and/or leaflets with a fair amount of explanation. But it's a commonplace now of exhibitions that captions are kept as short as possible, so striking a balance will not be easy.

We're also hoping to have some images of contemporary items (possibly more seals rather than text) which relate to Wallace and his time. Again, of course, this will require some explanation to make it work. There is a web-site feature providing further information about the experts' group work, and the letter:

www.nas.gov.uk/about/100604.asp

"This letter is from King Philip IV of France, directed to his agents at Rome asking them to assist Sir William Wallace in his unspecified business with the pope. It is dated 7 November 1300."





Perth and Kinross Archive Online

We're having a quiet celebration here at Perth and Kinross Archive, as we've just got our catalogue up and running online. It's a quiet celebration as we're acutely aware that there are a few tweaks needed to make it as easy to use as possible – and of course, there's the ongoing process of populating it.

It feels as if it's been a bit of a long slog; we bought CalmView early 2011, knowing that we had a lot of work to do before we could use it. We'd already made a start, using one of our volunteers turned temporary staff member spending months converting our typescript catalogues into Word documents. Then Anna, who came to us under the Future Jobs Fund scheme, spent hours converting the documents ready for importing into Calm. Meanwhile, we were lucky to get an IT team dedicated to getting CalmView up and running - it's so useful to have someone who understands the inevitable technical issues and can work with Axiell and ourselves to sort them.

The driving force behind the project was to help all kinds of users find information about the collections.

So, we've tried to use language that's not jargon-heavy to explain how collection arrangement works and to display records in a way that makes sense to users. User surveys should tell us if we're succeeding.

Inevitably, there's still a lot to do. Many collections had been put into Calm several years ago, and no longer match the style and format that we're now using. Other collections need to have series and sub-series records added so the hierarchy on the online version makes sense to all users. One collection appears to have a duplicate record series that we need to address – and there may be others. But we're optimistic that over the coming months, we'll be able to sort all these niggles.

So, have a look at the catalogue via www.pkc.gov.uk/archives and let us know what you think. If you're interested in doing a short task-based assessment, then get in touch at archives@pkc.gov.uk - the more feedback we have the better!

Dr JMM Merchant
Assistant Archivist
Perth and Kinross Council Archive

