

BROADSHEET


Issue 2

April/May 2011

A Voice of Consensus on Archive Matters



News Review from the **SCA**
SCOTTISH COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES



Welcome to the Issue (number 2.)

Welcome to the April/May edition of *Broadsheet*, the monthly news review from the Scottish Council on Archives.

Issue 1 proved a great success and it was brilliant to receive your ideas and comments – please keep them coming and if there is something we are doing well or could be doing better, please let us know!

Thanks to your input, this second issue is packed with event reviews, features and news articles. Our regulars include Picture of the Month, courtesy of the Falkirk Council Archives, and an interview all the way from the Hebrides with David Powell, Archivist for Tasglann nan Eilean Siar. In celebration of Tartan Day (6th April) our 'conservation bench' is suitably decked out in all things plaid. In other news, the SCA Chair, Dr Irene O'Brien, has turned roving reporter for *Broadsheet* with a feature on the impressive new Public Record Office in Belfast. We also have a piece on the newly formed National Records of Scotland.

On behalf of the SCA thank you for taking the time to read the magazine and for getting involved. We hope you enjoy Issue 2!

The Editorial Team

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Picture of the Month



Lamp Lighter, by John P. Munn (1937)

Lamp Lighter – Jackson Avenue,
by John P. Munn (1937)

The image was taken in Grangemouth in 1937 and the photographer was obviously using some artistic license with the title – this is actually a photograph of a workman repairing the streetlight.

Source: Falkirk Council Archives (John P. Munn Collection)

www.falkirk.gov.uk/archives

www.falkirk.gov.uk/collection

Submit your images to
info@scoarch.org.uk



SCA Spotlight ... Vice-Chair Pat Whatley

It is fair to say that the Scottish Council on Archives' Vice-Chair, Pat Whatley, leads a very demanding professional life. As her 'day job', Pat is the University Archivist at the University of

Dundee, and is also the Director of the Centre for Archive and Information Studies (CAIS), which offers Masters degrees in Archives and Records Management.

Pat regularly writes and lectures on archives and related issues and has been known to edit the occasional academic journal. In addition to the SCA, Pat serves on the committees of a number of professional bodies. She is a member of the Arts and Hu-

manities Research Council Peer Review College and Research Panel, is Secretary to the International Council on Archives Section on University and Research Institutions (ICA/SUV), and is a member of the Section Bureau of the ICA Section for Archival Education (ICA/SAE). Pat also Chairs the Council of the Economic and Social History Society of Scotland and is a trustee of the Scottish Historical Trust.

Pat has an honours degree in history from the University of Strathclyde, and is preparing to submit a PhD in History.

www.scoarch.org.uk/about-us

www.dundee.ac.uk/cais

www.dundee.ac.uk/archives

What's On the Bench

Saho Arakawa, Conservator, National Records of Scotland

Not many people are aware that the responsibility of sealing all official letters, patents and documents in Scotland with the nation's Great Seal, falls on the shoulders of the small conservation team at the National Records of Scotland. Using only red vermillion and natural Scottish beeswax from Ormiston in East Lothian. 181 Acts, including the Freedom of Information Act, City Status, commissions and other significant appointments, such as the First Minister, have been sealed here in the department.

One such document is the Scottish Register of Tartans Act, which was passed in 2008 to promote and preserve one of Scotland's most iconic and valuable assets. Created with input from Tartan industry experts, George MacKenzie, the Keeper of the Records of Scotland, acts as the Keeper of the Register



whilst archivist Alison Diamond administrates and oversees the registration of new designs.

As part of the registration process, we strongly advise people to submit woven samples. I am the designated contact that ensures the physical textile samples we receive

are preserved and permanently stored in the National Archives to the correct standards. Based on the nature of the pattern, I select the sample size which is then prepared for sample folders. Furthermore, each woven specimen is assigned a reference number which is written on pre-washed

unbleached cotton tapes and then stitched into place. Over sized samples such as carpet or scarves are stored separately in custom archival boxes. To date we have received 125 samples from all over the world, including those registered by fashion designer Vivienne Westwood, UPS and the official Scottish Parliament tartan.

Love it or loath it, tartan remains a national icon worn proudly all over the world, and thanks to the Scottish Register of Tartans this symbol of national identity and heritage is here to stay. Samples from the Register can be viewed in the Historical Search Room at the National Records of Scotland and we hope that more and more people become interested in tartan, particularly in designing their own patterns. For some inspiration have a look at the site and enjoy the variety of pattern and colour.

www.tartanregister.gov.uk



Collections Management: A Risky Business

Earlier this month, the SCA hosted a workshop for conservators, museum curators, archivists and librarians from across Scotland interested in learning more about a new, free, online risk assessment tool for the collections in their care. What constitutes a 'risk' to a collection can mean different things to different organisations. RAPT aims to help collections managers to quickly and effectively evaluate the unique and common risks faced by their collections.

A variety of heritage professionals met in Edinburgh to hear presentations from the *Risk Awareness Profiling Tool* (RAPT) development team. Additional speakers included Katrina Thomson, who spoke about Archives Accreditation, and Gillian Simison of Museums and Galleries Scotland who discussed Museums Accreditation.

The 'brain-child' of Simon Cane, Head of Operations for Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, RAPT is a simple and easy to use tool that can be utilised for advocacy and to increase awareness. Simon began the event by stating that RAPT "informs decisions and makes organisations more robust and resilient". Designed to produce a 'snap-shot' overview of any organisation, emphasis is placed on self-assessment with 20 questions covering the four main areas of Assets (focus on risks



Left to Right : Simon Cane, Duncan Clarke, Tanya Pollard, Katrina Thomson and Gillian Simison

such as fire and flood), Systems (for example, emergency procedures and security plans), Finance (funding and income) and Audience (visitor expectations and public resources).

Tanya Pollard, Collections Care Development Officer based at the London Hub, went on to describe the development of RAPT and explained that areas such as functionality and flexibility were key. The fact that the tool is web-based enables results to be formulated

quickly and efficiently.

Duncan Clarke, Collection Care Officer for Museums Birmingham, concluded the consultation by demonstrating that RAPT provides you with a tailored risk profile that identifies ways in which an organisation can move forward and improve, stating that "as well as asking the question, RAPT highlights where the answer can be found".

To find out more about RAPT or to try it out, please visit: www.raptonline.org.uk

Interview with David Powell, Tasglann nan Eilean Siar (Hebridean Archives)



Describe archives in three words.
Unique. Rewarding. Inspirational.

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

Besides the obvious digital challenge everyone is feeling the financial pinch at the moment. We're all trying to do more with fewer resources. For us here in the Western Isles, we're trying to set up a new service in a time when all other services are being cut. Therefore, advocacy and tact are really important.

Being able to show the relevance of records to our employers and stakeholders is really important but not necessarily something we're all good at. Therefore, I think it's important that we all support organisations like ARA and the SCA who can help to give us the tools we need. However, sometimes, it does feel like there just aren't enough hours in the day.

Why Archives?

I did a music degree originally but had always had a fascination with music manuscripts and original documents. I toyed with music librarianship for a while at University but then got a summer job working with a children's charity sorting out their historical records. That immediate link with history, the making order out of chaos and helping others to find the answers to their questions really appealed and I realised archives was the career for me. I may be a frustrated musician, but I'm a very happy archivist!

If you had an unlimited budget what would you do?

Well, we're currently putting together a stage 2 HLF application for a new Museum & Archive here in Stornoway which is currently causing sleepless nights and general

hair-loss across the Council. It would be great to just be able to do it properly without worry about budgets. A sister archive repository and digitisation suite in the Uists and another on Barra with appropriate staffing would be marvellous too – the island communities really value their records being local and currently everything is centralised in Stornoway. I'd also really like to help out the Comann Eachdraidh (Historical Societies) who do such sterling work up here and are screaming out for resources. Oh, and if there is anything left, some more Gaelic lessons wouldn't hurt.

What has been the highlight of your career so far?

I've been lucky in that I've had a wide variety of jobs and experiences. Highlights have included seeing my first collection level description go live online, handling explosives in a sandmine and making a leap into the unknown by moving to a rather beautiful rock in the north Atlantic. The real highlight for me though is when I work with non-archivists – be it researchers or custodians of archives – and you see them getting excited about their research or discovering things in their own records.

www.cne-siar.gov.uk/archives

Introducing the National Records of Scotland



Duncan Macniven, Registrar General, and George MacKenzie, Keeper of the Records
(copyright: Scottish Government)

On 1 April 2011, the National Archives of Scotland and the General Register Office for Scotland merged to create a new body called the National Records of Scotland (NRS).

NRS is a Non Ministerial Department, which means that it is headed by statutory office-holders rather than by Scottish Ministers. These are the Registrar General for Scotland, Duncan Macniven,

and the Keeper of the Records of Scotland, George MacKenzie, both of whose statutory duties will be unchanged.

NRS will report to the Minister for Culture and External Affairs. The Minister for Enterprise, Energy and Tourism will also be involved in the work of the new body.

The amalgamation is designed to simplify and streamline public bodies in Scotland, making savings for the taxpayer while maintaining and improving the high quality of services provided.

NAS and GROS already worked together to provide a service to family historians, both at the ScotlandsPeople Centre in Edinburgh and online. The merger will help further joint working and provides

the opportunity to streamline administration.

NRS combines all the functions of the two former bodies and is responsible for preserving, protecting and promoting Scotland's national archives; the registration of births, marriages, civil partnerships, deaths, divorces and adoptions; running the Census; publishing information about Scotland's population and households; connecting everyone with Scots ancestry to information about their past; delivering an education service for schools; and implementing the new legislation on public records for Scotland.

It is therefore 'business as usual' for the majority of NRS staff and initially you are unlikely to notice much change. Apart from the name of the organisation, all contact details remain the same and the two organisations' existing websites remain accessible.

www.nas.gov.uk
www.gro-scotland.gov.uk

Laura Mitchell
Head of Corporate Development
National Records of Scotland



1911 Census

On 5 April 2011, one of the first tasks of the newly formed National Records of Scotland was to release information collected from more than 4.7 million Scots in the 1911 Census.

The archives were opened after 100 years in line with the closure period for all personal data collected by each census and made available for members of the public to search in the ScotlandsPeople Centre. Staff in period costume were on hand to provide advice and two centenarians attended to view their own entries in the Census.

The records include the name, address, age, occupation, birthplace and marital status of everyone counted in the 1911 census. For the first time details of the number of children born from a marriage are included, making it easier to track children between census years. In 1911, the Scottish population was growing quickly, partly as a result of better health and the resulting improvements in child mortality rates, and partly because of immigration. Compared to the previous census of a decade beforehand, the total population had grown by six per cent. This was the last census before the outbreak of the First World War during which many tens of thousands of young people recorded in 1911 would have been killed.

Public Record Office of Northern Ireland: the Future for Archives?



The Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) has opened the doors to its new building in the Titanic Quarter, Belfast. The choice of location is very appropriate given that shipbuilding archives, including some on the Titanic, will be returning home to where they were originally drawn and written. The regeneration of the Titanic Quarter, a very high profile landmark site, will formally put PRONI on the map as a must see tourist attraction for local, national and international visitors.

A regular visitor to the old PRONI, I recently had a busman's holiday to the new building where I was totally overwhelmed by everything about it. It is a building of supreme quality, in respect of provision for the archives and the users, and has been combined with many aesthetic attributes. In short, everything has been done to make this a fitting home for Northern Ireland's archives.

At a price of £29.2m, which was actually below the original budget of £30.5m, the building of course meets UK's BS5454 standard and in accordance with good practice, the 14 storage areas (housing 40km with 15-20 years accrual space) are in the centre of the building protected by water suppression and smoke and air quality sampling systems. Furthermore, as part of the new system all the stores are colour coded. I was in the green storeroom and the mobile shelv-

ing, ladders and doors are all green, making it easy to coordinate the move and also allow staff to know immediately where they are.

In terms of user facilities, these are also very high quality and include exhibition, learning and meeting areas. This part of the building is intended to be a totally public area, accessible by anyone in the community. To gain entry to the search and reading rooms, with their electronic ordering, free wifi and laptop points, you need to be a member of PRONI and your reader card opens the secured doors into the main reading room, which is very spacious and equipped with state of the art copying facilities, including a self-service digital camera.

The building exudes quality of finish, enhanced firstly by the incorporation of archive images into the fabric of the building, and secondly by the display of some wonderful public art. In the public area, among a number of art works, there is a large display case of objects depicting how archives are stored, including bundles, rolls, charters, etc. I was amazed to find that these were made of porcelain and the detail of PRONI's earliest charter, a 13th century Papal Bull, was absolutely stunning.

I came away thinking that this is what archives deserve: to be preserved and protected in high-quality storage, and for public

access facilities of the highest standard. How apt it was that I began my tour in the green storage area - I was certainly green with envy and thought how wonderful it would be if I could have facilities like this. Well everyone has a dream!

*Dr Irene O'Brien
Archivist on Tour and Chair of SCA*



**"...this is what archives deserve:
to be preserved and protected in
high-quality storage, and for
public facilities of the highest
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Events Diary

6th May – Perth:

Annual General Meeting of the Archives and Records Association Scotland.
AK Bell Library, Perth 2pm to 4pm
Email jbaird@scotborders.gov.uk

6th to 7th May—Glasgow:

‘Scotland in Motion’ - Economic and Social History Society of Scotland Conference
Email eshs@keapub.fsnet.co.uk or visit www.ESHSS.co.uk

7th May – Perth:

‘Routes Across the Map’. The seminar will focus on recent research exploring the value of maps in understanding the history of transport and communications across Scotland.
Email maps@nls.uk or call 0131 623 3970

11th May—Glasgow:

‘The Nation’s Catalogue: New Developments for Scotland’
The SCA welcomes your input on the next phase of the [SCAN-Scotland Online Project](http://www.scoarch.org.uk/notice-board/207) at this consultation day.
Email victoria.brown@scoarch.org.uk or visit www.scoarch.org.uk/notice-board/207

16th to 18th May – Glasgow:

Digital Preservation Training Programme. A training course developed to assist you in designing and implementing an approach to preservation that will work for your institution.
www.dptp.org or <http://store.london.ac.uk>

20th to 21st May—Glasgow:

The British and Irish Sound Archive Group Training Event and AGM.
BBC Scotland’s Information and Archives Department at Pacific Quay, Glasgow
Email jonathan.draper@norfolk.gov.uk or visit www.bisa-web.org

26th May, Inverness and 1st June, Edinburgh:

‘SCARRS Project Workshops – a practical approach to implementing records retention’
The SCA are holding two workshops as part of the [SCARRS project](http://www.scoarch.org.uk/notice-board/204) to formally launch the phase 2 records retention schedules for Scottish Local Authorities.
Email victoria.brown@scoarch.org.uk or visit www.scoarch.org.uk/notice-board/204

The Scottish Council on Archives was launched in May 2002 to establish a shared vision for the future development of Scotland’s archives. It is made up of representatives of the archival professions, as well as users and owners.

The SCA supports and promotes archive and records management services across Scotland through a range of advocacy, marketing and development activities. To find out more information about us and what we do, and also news, project updates, information and events relating to archive, conservation and records management services in Scotland, please visit www.scoarch.org.uk

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