

Business Archives Surveying Officer Annual Report

1st April 2022 - 31st March 2023

The last twelve months have been a busy year for the Surveying Officer, as we saw businesses return to a new normal, and happy to have visitors return onsite once again. This meant a return to travel for surveying and consultancy purposes, and a number of businesses and organisations approached for the first time.

The first half of the year saw the completion of *Fieldwork: Mapping Scotland's Business Archives* which included a final analysis and gathering of data from previous surveys conducted by both the National Register of Archives for Scotland, and Business Archives Council for Scotland, which has helped us to understand more about the current status of business surveying in Scotland. It has provided us with a much more developed and thorough list of businesses and industries to approach in the coming years. The round-up included a trip to Broughty Ferry and Elgin to visit bakeries and a textile mill, as well as travel to Dumfries & Galloway to revisit an agricultural membership organisation.

One area of data that was clear from Fieldwork was the need to diversify the industries, communities and regions that are being surveyed in 21st century Scotland. Therefore at the start of 2023, the Surveying Officer turned her attention to a thematic survey focussed on the Scots-Italian community. Ice cream parlours are a major staple across the UK's high streets, with many dating back to the Italian migration to Scotland in the early and mid-twentieth century. A thematic survey of notable ice cream parlours and manufacturers was conducted in Jan 2023, and so far results are on track to show a 25% response rate from those businesses that were contacted.

Looking at the communities we survey also includes ensuring we represent all of Scotland's regions where possible. This led to the Surveying Officer developing a pilot partnership with the archivist of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar based in Stornoway on the isle of Lewis. Along with the archivist's local knowledge, the Surveying Officer developed a list of notable businesses in the Stornoway area, with two surveys then conducted including a solicitor's office. It is hoped that the format of a regional pilot will continue as part of the Surveying Officer's work as it provided a great opportunity to gain local knowledge, but also to offer the services of the Surveying Officer to local-authority colleagues that hasn't been possible before.

This year has also included the launch of a thematic survey of Scotland's bakery sector, that involved contacting more than thirty bakeries all of a varying size, and many fourth and fifth generation family businesses. This resulted in a 15% response rate which was a positive outcome, as the usual response rate from businesses to the offer of a survey hovers around 5-10% in most cases. This national survey also involved the Scottish Association of Master Bakers,

the sector's professional membership body which provided further opportunity to reach other businesses in the sector.

Over the course of the year, the Surveying Officer has also been able to provide practical opportunities for those interested in surveying and the business archive sector. Following on from a successful survey last year of Scotland's Garden Scheme which was undertaken as part of *Fieldwork*, the Surveying Officer has been successful in recruiting a student from the University of Dundee to undertake the cataloguing of the charity's archive. This project is providing a unique opportunity of practical hands-on experience in the sector, whilst also ensuring the collection is findable and ready for transfer to a suitable repository in the near future. A second student placement is due to begin in April 2023.

The Surveying Officer continues to provide consultancy services to a number of businesses, including further research recently being undertaken for the Loch Lomond Group, as well as completing a long-term cataloguing project for the Stornoway Trust, and supporting The Macallan in developing a product timeline.

Looking ahead there are some exciting plans on the horizon as we enlist the help of a student from the University of Glasgow to assist us in exploring the status of community archives cared for by non-top tier football clubs. The Surveying Officer hopes this will feed into a larger project taking a closer look at archives held within other areas of Scotland's sporting heritage including lower league rugby clubs. This follows on from a successful pilot project conducted with Bowls Scotland that sought to identify bowling clubs of a significant age or potentially vulnerable.

Additionally, Rachael will be launching a thematic survey later focusing on businesses and organisations relating to the outdoor economy and natural environment in Scotland. It is hoped there will be strong uptake from those in the sector due to the rich heritage of many of the businesses and conservation groups working in the area, as well as the fact that *Fieldwork* has shown that few have had record surveys completed in the past. A focus on developing a methodology for surveying digital records also continues as the Surveying Officer works with Edinburgh City Archives on the processing of the TIE collection.

The Surveying Officer has also continued to work as the lead representative for Scotland on the UK Crisis Management Team. The team has existed since 2009 to organise agreed responses to business archives under threat and to monitor and assist in steering records at risk into suitable homes. This year there have been 7 cases that the Crisis Management Team investigated in Scotland, including ongoing work being given to the University of Aberdeen archivist and Business Archives Council to support the identification and transport of historical records held at Stoneywood Mill.

Crisis management and records-at-risk

- *M & Co, Clothing Retailer, Paisley, 1934/1953-2022.*

BASO has contacted liquidators on several occasions but no response.

- *Scottish Youth Theatre, Charity, Glasgow, 1976-Present.*

Collection surveyed and records transferred to University of Glasgow as part of Scottish Theatre Archive.

- *Scottish Amicable Life Assurance Society, Insurance, Stirling, 19th century-2022.*

Collection surveyed and records transferred to University of Glasgow. Cataloguing post for this collection planned for 2023.

- *Stoneywood Mill, Aberdeenshire*

Owners Arjowiggins entered administration in 2022. BASO has been liaising with Aberdeen University and CMT as part of a UK wide working group to secure records relating to several sites. The Scottish records have been identified, and awaiting transfer. A home is still waiting to be confirmed for English-related records, with a bid having been submitted to the TNA Records-at-Risk fund.

- *Film house, Edinburgh.*

Offer of survey by BASO, but NLS undertook survey at Edinburgh site. BASO liaised with staff at Aberdeen site but no records identified of note so survey not required. Archive transferred to the National Library of Scotland.

- *R S McColls, newsagents, Glasgow, 1901*

BASO liaised with administrators and staff, but it was confirmed that there was no surviving historical records.

- *Caledonian Brewery, Edinburgh, 1869-2022.*

Collection surveyed, a mix of archive records and objects identified. Colleagues at University of Glasgow collected archival material to join an existing collection for brewery as part of Scottish Brewing Archive. Able to contact museum colleagues at National Museums Scotland and Edinburgh City Museums who also visited and have indicated an interest in some of the objects.

Record surveys, advice and consultancy

- *Anderson Macarthur, solicitors, Stornoway, 1897-present*

Survey completed and recommendations report sent. Conducted as part of regional pilot with Tasglann nan Eilean archivist.

- *Ashers Bakery, bakery, Nairn, 1877-present*

Survey completed and recommendations report sent.

- *Dumfries and Lockerbie Agricultural Society, professional membership, Annan, 1962-present*

Survey completed and recommendations report sent.

- *Dunblane Bowling Club, sports club, Dunblane, 1822-present*

Survey completed and recommendations report sent. Deposit of records to Stirling Council Archive likely in second half of 2023.

- *Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home, charity, Edinburgh, 1883/84-present*

Survey completed and recommendations report sent. BASO to undertake historical research as part of their upcoming 140th anniversary.

- *Equi's Ice Cream, ice cream manufacturer, Rutherglen, 1922-present*

Survey completed and report to be sent, March 2023

- *Fairfield Heritage, Glasgow*

Survey completed.

- *Glasgow and South Western Railway Association, Kilmarnock*

Survey completed.

- *Glenmorangie, distillery, Livingston, 1843-present*

Engagement visit undertaken and recommendations report sent. Job description drawn up and provided but not able to progress.

- *Goodfellow & Steven, bakery, Broughty Ferry, 1897-present*

Two survey visits and student cataloguing placement arranged. Due to begin in April 2023.

- *Grand Lodge of Scotland, freemasonry, Edinburgh, 1736-present*

Survey completed and recommendations report sent. Interested in developing a Collections Manager role. BASO providing advice where required.

- *Heineken Office*

Surveyed a large number of historical artefacts requiring transfer. BASO managed to arrange an uplift with Edinburgh Museums and Galleries.

- *J Milne and Sons, auctioneers, Aberdeen, 1867-present*

Engagement and advice visit to take place March 2023.

- *John Gordon & Son, sawmill and timber merchants, Nairn, 1862-present*

Repackaging and further processing undertaken to build on first survey visit.

- *Johnstons of Elgin, textile mill, Elgin, 1797-present*

Engagement visit undertaken and recommendations report sent. Interested in archivist role but no response to report.

- *JR Miller collection: currently held by the Moving Image Archive, National Library of Scotland (records relate to STV)*

Advice given to NLS colleagues. Final decision on future cataloguing of collection to be reached.

- *Kays Curling, manufacturer and retailer, Ayrshire, 1851-present*

Survey completed and recommendations report sent.

- *Macfarlane & Co, solicitors, Glasgow, 1971-2022*

Surveyed prior to closure. Records deposited with Glasgow City Archives.

- *Queens Park Bowling Club, sports club, Glasgow, 1866-present*

Records surveyed as part of thematic survey with Bowls Scotland lead. Recommendations report sent and records repackaged.

- *Scottish Amicable Archive*

BASO assisted with move to Scottish Business Archive at Glasgow University

- *Scottish Association of Bakers, professional body, Edinburgh/Dunfermline, 1891-present*

Survey completed and recommendations report sent.

- *Scottish Youth Theatre, charity, Glasgow, 1976-2022*

Survey completed and recommendations report sent. Records transferred to Scottish Youth Theatre at University of Glasgow.

- *Society of Occupational Therapists, professional body, Edinburgh, 1932-1974*

Survey completed and recommendations report to be sent March 2023. Currently held at Queen Margaret University.

- *St Johnstone Football Club, sports club, Perth, 1884-present*

Survey completed and recommendations report sent.

- *Stornoway Port Authority, harbour, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, 1865-present*

Survey completed and recommendations report sent. Conducted as part of regional pilot with Tasglann nan Eilean archivist.

- *Thomas Thomson, flax and jute mill, Blairgowrie, 1820s*

Survey completed and recommendations report sent. Liaising with NRS Conservation Dept over solution and long-term plan due to poor condition of records, but no response received from record owners.

- *Verrecchia's (The University Cafe), ice cream manufacturer, Glasgow, 1919-present*

Survey to be completed March 2023.

- *Walkers Shortbread, baker, Aberlour, 1898-present*

Engagement visit only. Interested in archivist role but pending future decisions by company.

- *William Hardie (artists) : NLS collection*

Advice provided but transpired to be an object only collection with very little archive material so other suitable repositories and help suggested.

Participations, presentations and publications

Attended the Scottish Record Association's conference '*Spoken Record: Communities and their Sound Archives*', May 2022.

Attended the ARA's seminar on '*Managing Audio Visual Collections*'.

Completed Digital Preservation Coalition's course titled '*Novice to Know-How*' course.

Attended a variety of presentations given over a week as part of ICHORA 2022 (*International Conference on the History of Records and Archives*, organised by The National Archives)

Attended several presentations at the *Discovering Collections, Discovering Communities* conference, July 2022.

Attended the ARA Section for Business Record's Summer Seminar on *'The Intersection of Business Archives and Genealogy.'*, July 2022.

Attended a *'Meet the Funders'* event hosted by Scottish Council on Archives and the National Manuscripts Conservation Trust to find out more about potential conservation funding avenues, August 2022.

Attended the *'Staging and Exhibition: How can an Archive reveal its secrets?'* event hosted by the TfL Archive team, September 2022.

Attended TNA webinar exploring TNA's Discovery *'Managing Your Collections'* online database and system, September 2022.

Attended an online training event hosted by the ARA's Museum and Archive group titled *'An Introduction to Mixed Collection Care'*, September 2022.

Attended several BAC virtual *'Lunch and Learn'* events over the course of the year.

Attended several BACS *'Corporate Connections'* events.

Attended the TNA's webinar on the launch of *'Records at Risk TNA fund'*, December 2022.

Attended BACS Executive Committee meetings.

Attended a quarterly meeting of the CHARM group, a group of charity archivists who meet on a quarterly basis, January 2023.

Attended a Digital Preservation Coalition (DPC) Digital Preservation Workflow webinar, March 2023.

Attended a one-day ARA training session *'Introduction to Advocacy'*, March 2023.

Judge for the Business Archives Council annual cataloguing grant.

Presented at *'A Re-appraisal of Surveying: A Vital Tool for Contemporary Collecting'* - *'Reflections on Surveying in Scotland: Challenges, Partnerships and Opportunities'* (Presented with Dr Alison Rosie, National Register of Archives for Scotland)

Presented at the Business Archives Council for Scotland, conference 2022 - *'Records surveying tools and techniques in 21st century Scotland'*.

Presented to the Archivists of Scottish Local Authorities Working Group following development of regional pilot with Western Isles Council.