

Scottish Records Association
Scottish Charities No. 008896

Annual Report of the Council for 2013-2014

Council met three times during the year and thanks are again due to the National Records of Scotland for the use of their facilities at General Register House, Edinburgh. At the Thirty-Sixth Annual General Meeting of the Association held on 8 November 2013, members voted to alter Section 5, part (ii) of the Constitution to provide for a new office of Web Editor, and to rename the existing office of Datasheet Editor as Newsletter Editor. Dr Stefanie Metze, who had been co-opted as Honorary Web Editor in June 2013, was formally elected as such at the Annual General Meeting, while Dr Kirsteen Mulhern, Mr Douglas Roberts and Mrs Olive Geddes were elected as Ordinary Members of Council. Mr Keith Adam and Dr Kirsteen Croll will step down from Council on completing their terms of office in November 2014, and Council extends its sincere thanks to them.

Membership

Membership levels have remained steady during 2013-2014. Around 10 new members joined the Association, but losses were also sustained through deaths and cancellations. The total membership currently stands at 272 (201 individual members and 71 institutional members), which is slightly down on the previous year's total of 277. Of these, 10 individual members and 12 institutional members are based overseas. The new website and increased publicity have helped to raise the public profile of the Association, prompting a number of general enquiries about the benefits of membership. There has also been an increase in the number of members willing to be contacted by email, making for easier and faster communication with the membership as a whole.

Finance

The Association ended the financial year with a balance of £4,303.99 in the current account and £5,326.98 in the savings account. *Scottish Archives* volume 18, for which there was a budget of approximately £4,500, came in significantly under budget at £3,384.91. *Scottish Archives* volume 19 has yet to be paid for, and will consequently appear in next year's accounts. The 2013 Annual Conference made a loss, but this was shared by the Archives and Records Association (Scotland), thereby lessening the impact. However, the conference budget has been exceeded owing to the fact that payments for the hire of the 2012, 2013 and 2014 Annual Conference venues were all made during this financial year. Expenditure on travel to Council meetings came to £57.60, well within the £300 budget.

Conference

This year's Annual Conference was held jointly with the Archives and Records Association (Scotland) and took place at Perth Concert Hall on 8 November 2013. The theme was 'Et in Archiva Ego: Artists in the Archives,' and an audience of around 60 people enjoyed a most stimulating and thought-provoking day, with artist Hugh Buchanan's illustrated presentation, 'Dead Flies, Dust and Tax Demands' proving particularly popular. Council is grateful to everyone who helped to organise the conference, especially Robin Urquhart; to Ben Greenan and Steve Connelly for their skilful chairmanship of the morning and afternoon sessions; to all nine speakers for their engaging and entertaining presentations, and to the staff of Perth Concert Hall for their efficient assistance on the day.

Visits

Two visits were organised this summer for members of the Association and their guests. On 6 June, 7 members and guests enjoyed a comprehensive tour of the Sir Duncan Rice Library at the University of Aberdeen, including the Special Collections Centre and the on-site Glucksman Conservation Studio. On 1 September, 9 members and guests visited the Black Watch Museum and Archives at Balhousie Castle, Perth, where they received a guided tour of the Museum galleries followed by an opportunity to view and handle some of the treasures from the regimental archives. Council is grateful to Andrew Macgregor of the

University of Aberdeen, and to Emma Halford-Forbes, Richard McKenzie and Willie Cooper of the Black Watch Museum and Archives for facilitating these visits and giving so generously of their time and expertise.

Publications

The Association's new website (www.scottishrecordsassociation.org) went live on 15 October 2013. From January-September 2014, the site was accessed by 3,332 users; 87% of these were first-time visitors, while 13% were returning visitors. Almost three-quarters of all visitors to the site (73%) came from the UK, with the remaining visitors coming from the USA, Australia, Brazil, Canada, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy and Spain. Issues 20 and 21 of *Retour*, the Association's combined newsletter and archival summaries, appeared in autumn 2013 and spring 2014. *Scottish Archives* volume 18 was published and distributed to members in November 2013. Volume 19 is expected shortly. In accordance with a decision by Council, journal articles (from *Scottish Archives* volume 17 onwards) are to be made available on the Association's website one year after publication.

Representation on and to outside bodies

Council continues to represent the interests of members in the care and custody of records on the Scottish Council on Archives. This year, the Association also lent its support to a Symposium on the future of the Scottish Catholic Archives, held at the University of Dundee on 17 May 2014.