

Ballasttrust

Understanding Technical Archives

Annual Report
2013-2014

Key achievements in 2013-14

- Managed The Working Archive an archives awareness campaign for Scotland
- Appointment of Business Archives Surveying Officer
- Exceeded 400,000 online views on Flickr
- Ballast Trust history viewed over 10,000 times online



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Image: Headed notepaper from Bow, McLachlan & Co. Ltd, 1905

Director's Report

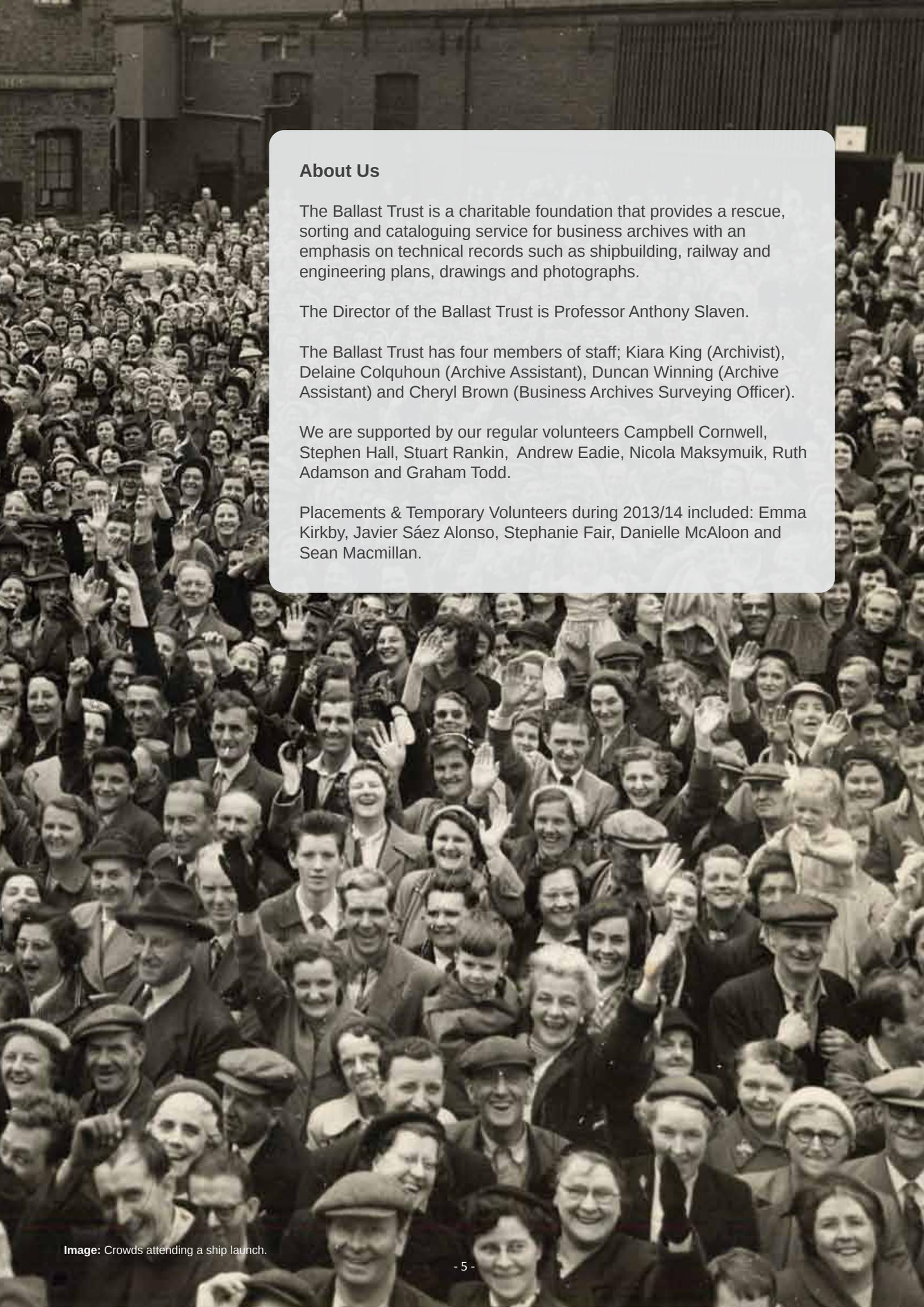
It is pleasing to report that in our 26th year of activity, the Ballast Trust has maintained a remarkable level of industry. The specialised interests and skills of the staff and volunteers has continued to focus on collections relating to shipbuilding and railways. Much of the cataloguing and sorting has involved plans and drawings relating to the Highland and the Glasgow and South Western Railway. This time consuming work relies on the traditional documentary skills of the archivist and volunteers to preserve the physical records for consultation. In contrast the staff have also been exploring the digitisation of some of our collections to make them more accessible. We have successfully digitised some images of paddle steamers, and images of our extraordinary collection of Headed Business Note Paper which captures the publicity and expert knowledge of a wide variety of firms. These have in a sense been a pilot for a more ambitious objective, the digitisation of the very rich and large Dan MacDonald photograph collection. This could only be undertaken through project funding, a proposal which will be explored in the coming year. In addition to exploring digitisation, the staff have also extended the development of appraisal guidelines for assessing technical business records from shipbuilding into welding and helicopter manufacture. These guidelines are freely available to archivists confronted with technical records but lacking the specialised knowledge to appraise them without expert guidance.

The specialised expertise of the Ballast Trust continues to play a lead role in the development and implementation of the National Strategy for Business Archives in Scotland. Our archivist, Kiara King, manages this initiative which in its third year has focused on encouraging archival and public awareness of business archives through its programme of The Working Archive, with successful exhibitions in the General Register House of the National Archives of Scotland, together with a Business Archive Day held in the building of the Scottish Parliament. The Ballast Trust itself has an active awareness initiative through its web page, and especially its Flickr photo images which have now attracted over 400,000 views since its inception in 2009.

Perhaps the most significant new initiative this year has been the appointment of the Business Archive Surveying Officer, Cheryl Brown, with effect from March 2014. This re-establishes the vital support, search and rescue service for business records throughout Scotland. The post is resourced for one year in the first instance, the funding provided mainly by the Ballast Trust and Lind Foundation, together with contributions from University of Glasgow Archive Services, the Business Archive Council of Scotland, and the University of Aberdeen Special Libraries and Archives. The Surveying Officer is supported by a small management committee which will also actively explore prospects for funding to support the continuation of the post beyond the initial period. This is an important commitment in support of our business heritage and continues a service first established with the Colquhoun Lecturer in Business History in the University of Glasgow in 1959.

It is a pleasure to record my thanks to the staff, volunteers and Trustees for their support and commitment to the work of the Ballast Trust.

Professor A Slaven
Director
The Ballast Trust
May 2014



About Us

The Ballast Trust is a charitable foundation that provides a rescue, sorting and cataloguing service for business archives with an emphasis on technical records such as shipbuilding, railway and engineering plans, drawings and photographs.

The Director of the Ballast Trust is Professor Anthony Slaven.

The Ballast Trust has four members of staff; Kiara King (Archivist), Delaine Colquhoun (Archive Assistant), Duncan Winning (Archive Assistant) and Cheryl Brown (Business Archives Surveying Officer).

We are supported by our regular volunteers Campbell Cornwell, Stephen Hall, Stuart Rankin, Andrew Eadie, Nicola Maksymuik, Ruth Adamson and Graham Todd.

Placements & Temporary Volunteers during 2013/14 included: Emma Kirkby, Javier Sáez Alonso, Stephanie Fair, Danielle McAloon and Sean Macmillan.

Work in Progress

Kiara King

Responded to BAE Systems request for assistance with Yarrows and Fairfield material and listed Yarrows records on site at BAE Systems and reviewed the Kvaerner/Fairfields records

Following discussions with the University of Glasgow's Business Archivist Clare Paterson, the Ballast Trust hosted staff from the University of Glasgow Archive Services for a week in August. This enabled them to take action on several of their collections and was very successful. The work carried out included appraisal of order books for the Hunslet Barclay collection (locomotive manufacturers) and negatives for Scotts' Shipbuilding & Engineering Co Ltd. The Robert Harvey collection (sugar machinery engineer) and plans for MacKenzie Niven (ship riggers) were catalogued. Volumes in the collection for Clifton & Baird Co. Ltd (machine tool manufacturers) were cleaned by their conservator and repackaged.

Delaine Colquhoun

Completed and boxed the William Lind correspondence, continued with rolling and numbering the Montague Smith Collection for the National Records of Scotland. Assisted Campbell Cornwall with the editing of the work done by Andrew Swan on the pre-1923 railway drawings collection for the National Records of Scotland.

Duncan Winning

Finished re-cataloguing British Rail civil engineering plans for the National Records of Scotland, 1,131 plans have been rolled and numbered. Finished re-cataloguing pre-nationalisation weight diagrams for the National Records of Scotland collection. Identified engine types in a photographic collection from Lobnitz & Co. Ltd (shipbuilders and marine engine builders) that were part of the William Lind collection. Currently re-cataloguing post-nationalisation British Rail civil engineering plans for the National Records of Scotland.

Campbell Cornwall

Identified and catalogued 42 Highland Railway locomotive drawings in the collection of pre-1923 railway drawings for the National Records of Scotland. Continued work on the Kenneth Kirkwood McKay slide collection (a private collection of transport photography). This is estimated to be over 10,000 slides and requires detailed examination to identify and sort the collection.

Stephen Hall

Working on a project to evaluate the possibility of digitising the glass plate negatives in the Dan McDonald Collection for preservation purposes. This included trials with current equipment at the Ballast Trust and now exploring options within the collection for themes that might work for a possible funded digitising project. The exploration will help determine possible interested parties, through the various themes and joining up other parts of the collection.

Stuart Rankin

Catalogued Glasgow & South Western Railway, Highland Railway and Great North of Scotland drawings from the collection of pre-1923 railway drawings for the National Records of Scotland.

Ruth Adamson

Volunteered as part of the Project Scotland scheme which is a youth volunteering programme and carried out a variety of tasks. These included updating our library catalogue, digitising over 400 images of paddle steamers and sharing with online community via Flickr.

Andrew Eadie

Listing and appraising the business headed notepaper collection we hold as part of the Ballast Trust's own collections. Items have now been selected, digitised and shared via Flickr website.

Nicola Maksymuik

Box-listed pension records for J & JC Dorward Ltd, clothing manufacturers, material rescued from Caerlee Mills in the Scottish Borders. Catalogued items in the Edinburgh City Engineers collection for Edinburgh City Archives. Box-listed material in Marshall and Fleming collection for the University of Glasgow Archive Service.

Graham Todd

Sorting and listing the Kenneth Kirkwood McKay slide collection (a private collection of transport photography).

Deposits and accessions

- Ferguson Photographs (2 Im) - University of Glasgow Archive Service
- J & JC Dorward Ltd (2Im) - National Records of Scotland

Returns and deaccessions

- R McAlister & Sons to Glasgow City Archives
- Papers of Robert Harvey to University of Glasgow Archive Services



Image: McAlister collection returned to Glasgow City Archives, March 2014

Projects

National Strategy for Business Archives in Scotland

The Ballast Trust continues to take a lead role in the implementation of the National Strategy for Business Archives in Scotland throughout 2013/14. The main focus of the third year of implementation was the year-long awareness campaign The Working Archive. The campaign was managed by the Archivist and aimed to encourage archives, their users and the public at large to celebrate the heritage of Scotland's businesses; the records of the products and services they delivered; and the legacy of working Scots of all kinds - whether in business, farming, healthcare, education, the church or government.

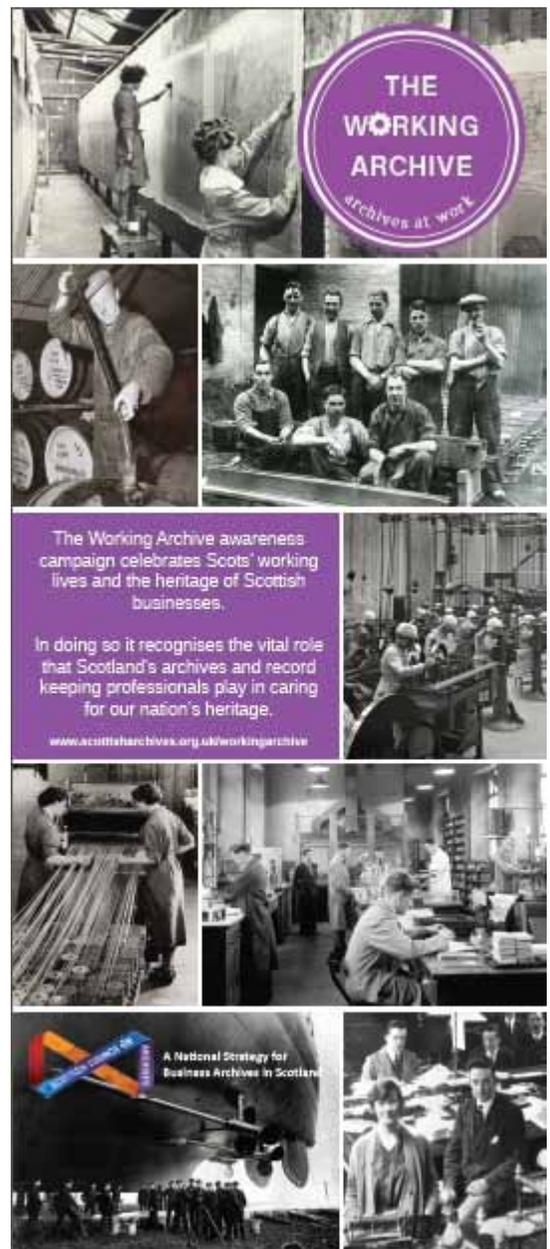
A key event in The Working Archive campaign was the Scots at Work exhibition held in the Adam Dome room in General Register House at the National Records of Scotland from Monday 29th April to Friday 21st June. This exhibition featured items from 14 archives, museums and businesses which celebrated the diverse heritage of Scotland's businesses, and their products and services. They ranged in subject from Antarctic adventure to tartan, from banking to engineering, and from coal to the world's best-selling whisky.

Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs, Fiona Hyslop MSP welcomed the exhibition as:

“ A fascinating insight into the diverse heritage of Scotland's businesses, and their products and services. Visitors have the chance to view artefacts that show not only the historic contribution of the nation's companies to globally important events, but also how consumers and employees carried out their business at home and abroad over hundreds of years.

The Working Archive campaign finished in April 2014 and featured a gallery of 150 images from archives across Scotland, a Valentine's Day competition and the campaign website www.scottisharchives.org.uk/workingarchive which will remain online as a resource for the future.

The National Strategy for Business Archives in Scotland Implementation Group also participated in the Scottish Council on Archives' awareness and advocacy days at the Scottish Parliament in October 2013. One of the three days was focused on business archives and the Archivist attended as a representative of the business archive sector.



Crisis Management Team

The Archivist has been joined by the Surveying Officer to represent Scotland on the Crisis Management Team. The team exists 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 were eight cases that the Crisis Management Team investigated in Scotland. Records were saved in one case that of Caerlee Mills in the Scottish Borders where records relating to J & J C Dorward Ltd, clothing manufacturers were removed and box listed and will be transferred to the National Records of Scotland to join an existing collection for that company.



Images: Item from the J & J C Dorward Ltd collection.

Knowledge capture

This ongoing project aims to document and capture the working practices of the Ballast Trust to share our knowledge of industrial and technical records with others. This year we have responded to enquiries about appraisal guidelines from archivists working with shipbuilding, welding and helicopter manufacturing collections. This has demonstrated that our appraisal guidelines developed for technical records and specifically shipbuilding plans can be adapted and used for many industries.

Electronic cataloguing

Our cataloguing software database, the Archivists' Toolkit continues to work well for us and all new volunteers received training in using it to catalogue collections. The Surveying Officer has also adopted it for business archive cataloguing that may result from surveying work. This year we have assisted a community archive in Goostrey, Cheshire with their implementation of it.

Raising Awareness

Ballast Trust History

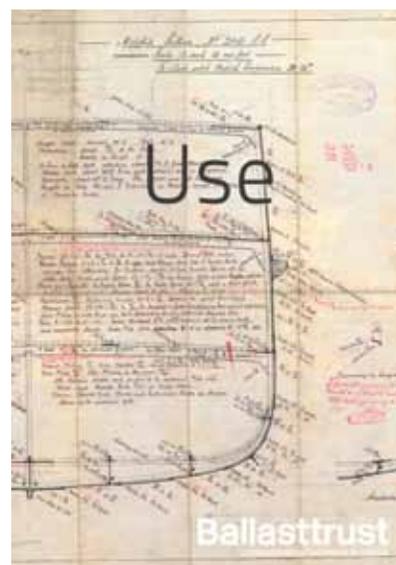
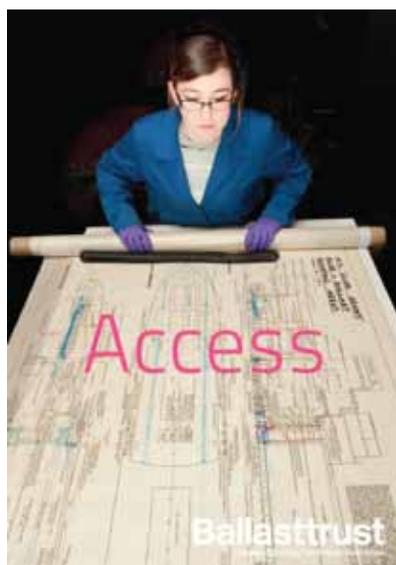
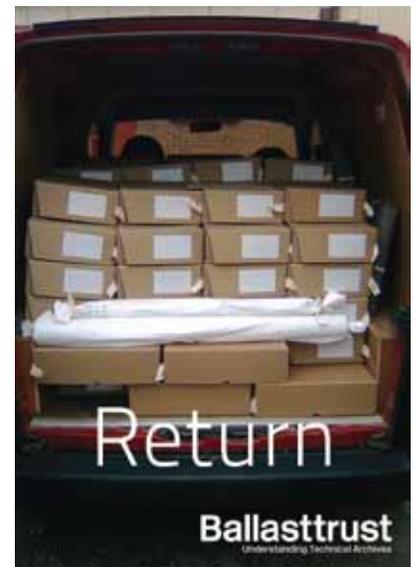
In January 2013 we published the Ballast Trust history to mark the 25th anniversary of the Ballast Trust. Since then online views of the history now stand at 10,232 and we continue to distribute the printed version at events and conferences staff attend.

Annual Report

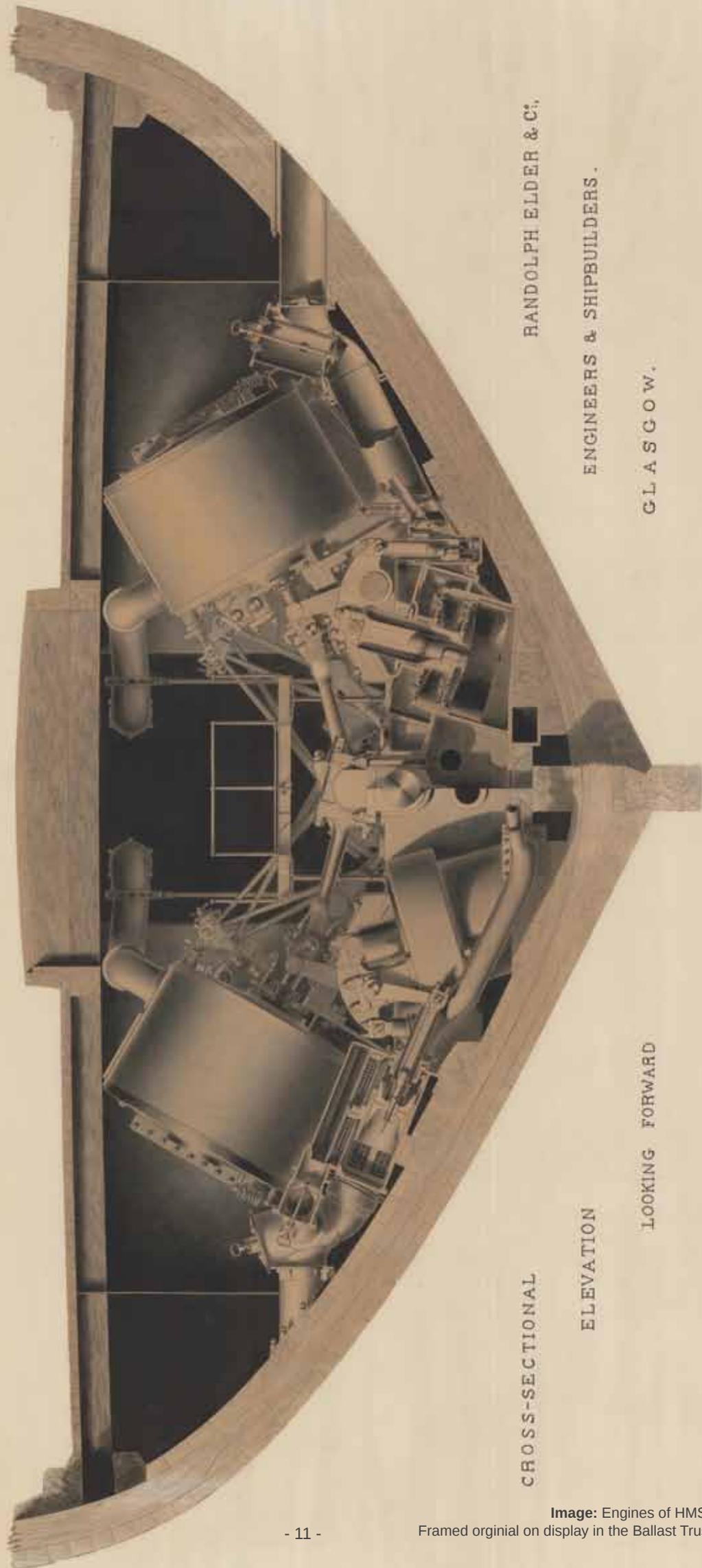
The annual report was again circulated widely and produced a number of helpful responses. In March 2014 we were contacted by the Constituency Office for Douglas Alexander MP and a visit to the Ballast Trust was arranged for May 2014.

Doors Open Day

In 2013 we participated in our third Doors Open Day on Sunday 15th September. We again created a display to illustrate the five stages and procedures followed by the Ballast Trust to deal with a collection from its rescue and/or deposit, through to processing which includes arrangement and description of the material prior to its return to a repository where access could be arranged for its use and consultation by researchers. We had 29 visitors compared to 44 in 2012 and have decided to participate every second year in the future.



ENGINES OF H.M.S. "CONSTANCE".



CROSS-SECTIONAL

ELEVATION

LOOKING FORWARD

RANDOLPH ELDER & CO.,

ENGINEERS & SHIPBUILDERS.

GLASGOW.

Raising Awareness Online

We continue to maintain a website and blog with the two sites serving different purposes and their different levels of visitors can be seen in the statistics below for the period 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014. The website acts as the official home for information about the Ballast Trust and the blog is used to share more informal updates about projects and news. This year visits for the website have increased but we have found that without regular posting to the blog statistics have decreased. Going forward we will continue to encourage volunteers to write content for the blog to maintain our audience.

	Visits	Unique Visitors	Page Views
Website	1,279	995	3,293
Blog	2,193	1,841	3,985

This year we have found Twitter to be a more useful tool for professional networking and engagement within the archives sector to help raise our profile and we now have 262 followers with 25% of our tweets being retweeted.

Flickr

This year we continued to focus on uploading images from some of William Lind's miscellaneous collections, particularly the paddle steamer images uploading over 400 images from this collection. Our Flickr site now contains images from the Dan McDonald collection of ship photographs, paddle steamer and business letterhead images.

We continue to have an active audience for our images with 40% of them marked as favourites. Since we joined in 2009, we have now had nearly 400,000 views of our images and we continue to find Flickr to be a valuable tool for sharing images from our collections.



Image: Wemyss Bay Pier, c. 1875. Our most viewed image with 1,656 views to date.

What	2011	2012	2013	2014	Increase*
Uploaded images	321	419	621	1,095	43%
Photostream views	9,140	20,659	36,106	50,197	28%
Favourited images	90	160	253	437	42%

*Increase on 2013 figures. All stats based on figures to date.

Online publications

We've continued to use Issuu - a digital publishing website to upload and share pdf versions of the annual reports and also the history online. This allows us to embed links in the text and provide a more attractive way of reading documents which has been useful for the Ballast Trust history to create links to organisations mentioned in the text. To date the history has had 10,232 views since it was published online in February 2013.

Business Archives Surveying Officer

Since commencing the post of Business Archives Surveying Officer (BASO) in March 2014, I have been responding to enquiries which accumulated during the hiatus of the Business Archives Council of Scotland Surveying Officer role.

Records surveyed:

- BASF Performance Products plc, Paisley (chemical manufacturers)
- Currie Line Ltd, Leith (shipping line)
- Caledonian MacBrayne Ferries Ltd, Gourock (shipping line)

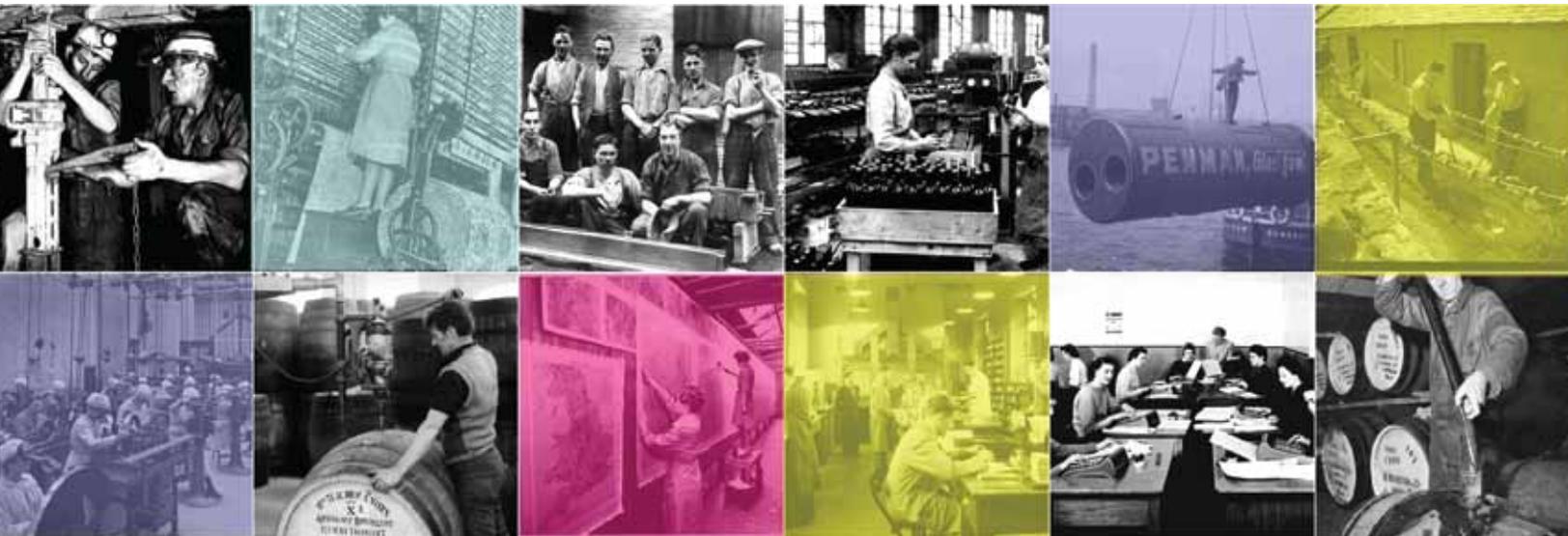
Collections accepted on deposit:

- MacTaggart Scott Co Ltd, Loanhead (engineers)- Glasgow University Archives Service
- Currie Line Ltd, Leith (shipping line)- Glasgow University Archives Service
- BASF Performance Products plc, Paisley (chemical manufacturers) – East Renfrewshire Archives

My tasks have also included research and cataloguing for Glasgow University Archives Service, updating of the BACS website and leaflet, and identifying future areas to be surveyed.

For the year ahead, I will focus on developing proposals for projects to survey business records of ethnic minority groups and investigate the management of digital records. Part of developing proposals in these areas will be to scope out any potential funding which the BASO post can apply for.

Cheryl Brown
Business Archives Surveying Officer
May 2014



Presentations, Participations and Publications

Professor Tony Slaven

Presentations

- Spoke at the Annual Scottish Maritime History Seminar Research on Scottish Shipping and Shipbuilding, Glasgow October 2013

Participations

- Attended book launch at the University of Glasgow Archive Service, October 2013.

Publications

- British Shipbuilding, 1500-2010: A History, Crucible Books, Carnegie Publishing, October 2013
- Crossing the Bar: An Oral History of British Shipbuilding 1956-1900, with Hugh Murphy Memorial University Newfoundland Research Publication No. 51, June 2013

Kiara King

Presentations

- Spoke at Local Lives: Celebrating Scotland's Community Archive Groups archives event organised by Scottish Council on Archives about The Working Archive project, community, Edinburgh, May 2013.
- Spoke at a session about business archives for the University of Glasgow masters' students, Glasgow, October 2013.
- Organised and spoke at Archives in Museums event for STICK at the University of Aberdeen, March 2014.

Participations

- Attended and organised four National Strategy for Business Archives in Scotland Implementation Group meetings.
- Attended three Scottish Transport and Industrial Collections Knowledge network (STICK) Committee meetings.
- Attended four Business Archives Council of Scotland Executive meetings.
- Attended viewing of Scots at Work exhibition with Fiona Hyslop MSP, Edinburgh May 2013.
- Attended opening of Arctic Convoy exhibition at National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh, May 2013.
- Attended European Oil and Gas Archives Network conference, Aberdeen, June 2013.
- Attended opening of Scottish Maritime Museum, Irvine, June 2013.
- Attended and organised Business Archives Council of Scotland event - 'Meet the Archivists' unlocking the research potential of business archives, Edinburgh, September 2013.

Publications

- Article on the Ballast Trust submitted to Business Archives journal of the Business Archives Council

Kiara King
Archivist
The Ballast Trust
May 2014

Trustees

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Professor John Hume
Lesley Richmond
Douglas Corner

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