

Ballasttrust

Understanding Technical Records

**Annual Report
2024-2025**

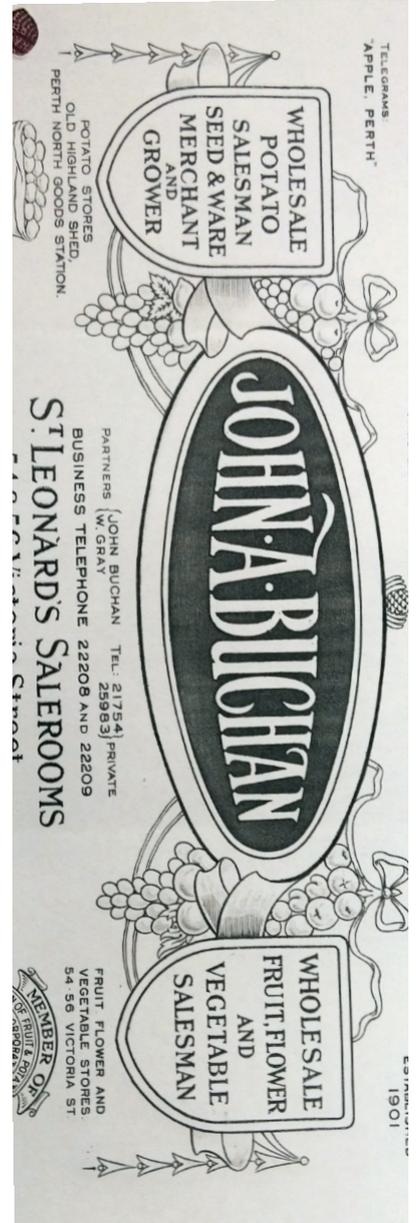


Key Achievements

- Rachael Muir won the Archives and Records Association's Record Keeper of the Year award for her role as Business Archives Surveying Officer for Scotland.
- Ballast Trust partnership with Lloyd's Register Foundation to review and return British Corporation records.
- The first joint BACS/BAC business archives conference held in Scotland.
- Consortium partnership developed for a project titled Supporting Scotland's Sporting Heritage.

Contents

Directors Report	4
About US	5
Review of Work	6
Projects	10
Awareness Raising and Sectoral Participation	11
Business Archives Surveying Officer	14



John A Buchan Ltd headed paper, 1971
J S Symons Collection

Director's Report

This year marks my fifth report as Director and the 37th in the history of the Trust. Several of our projects this year have caused me to reflect on Bill's legacy in terms of the collections he acquired for the Ballast Trust. We're very much looking forward to returning the British Corporation records to Lloyd's Register Foundation and seeing how they fit back in with the core records of the British Corporation and what Lloyd's will do with the material. All involved have been grateful to Bill and the Ballast Trust for giving the plans safe harbour since 1991. Our work with the trade manuals he collected and saved from a wide variety of collections the Trust processed has highlighted what a unique resource he had created and I hope that next year will see us engage with this material further to highlight the treasures within it. Lastly his eye for quality photographs and the details of his purchase of the Dan McDonald collection has been revealed in his own correspondence files. Here we can see his enthusiasm for the collection which has renewed ours and I'm determined to deliver an engagement project with this collection in 2025.

This year we've been joined by the largest number of student and career volunteers that we've seen in recent times. I'm pleased to say that they have all been great additions to the team and would like to thank our regular long-term volunteers for being so welcoming and sharing their knowledge and expertise. And to extend that thanks to all our volunteers for providing their time, conversation and skills. A special mention must go to Gerard who joined us in May and has revealed a talent for home-baking which all of the Thursday volunteers have appreciated!

Sectoral partnerships have again been a focus of the work of the Ballast Trust and our Surveying Officer. We have completed the first year of our two-year funding agreement with the National Records of Scotland and have been encouraged by the new Keeper's interest in our activities and the support we've received from colleagues at NRS. We always knew that the priorities of this national role would align with those of NRS. This year Rachael has delivered an excellent service as Business Archives Surveying Officer across Scotland with surveys in Prestwick, Peebles and Pitlochry to mention just a few locations. Rachael continues to secure new testimonials that evidence the value and support there is for her role.

A new impetus this year has been the investigation and development of externally funded projects and while neither of our projects were successful in this round, we are hopeful that as these are developed further in 2025/26 they may have a positive outcome and enable us to deliver even more to the Scottish business archives sector.

Finally, I wish to record my delight in Rachael's success at the Archives and Records Association's excellence awards in August. I had nominated Rachael for Record-Keeper of the Year award in recognition of the contribution she has made to developing the profile and sustainability of the role of Business Archives Surveying Officer in Scotland in the last eighteen months. It was great to see her work and the role of Surveying Officer more widely recognised by the UK archives sector. Both Rachael and myself received recognition awards from the University of Glasgow in relation to this piece of work as part of their reward and recognition scheme which was also very much welcomed.

Kiara King
Director, April 2025
Ballast Trust

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 & Archivist of the Ballast Trust is Kiara King and the work of the Trust is supported by our Archive Assistant Delaine Colquhoun and home to the Business Archive Surveying Officer Rachael Rennert (nee Muir).

Trustees

The Trustees for the Ballast Trust meet three times a year and the Trust is administered by our lawyers Turcan Connell. The Trustees are currently:

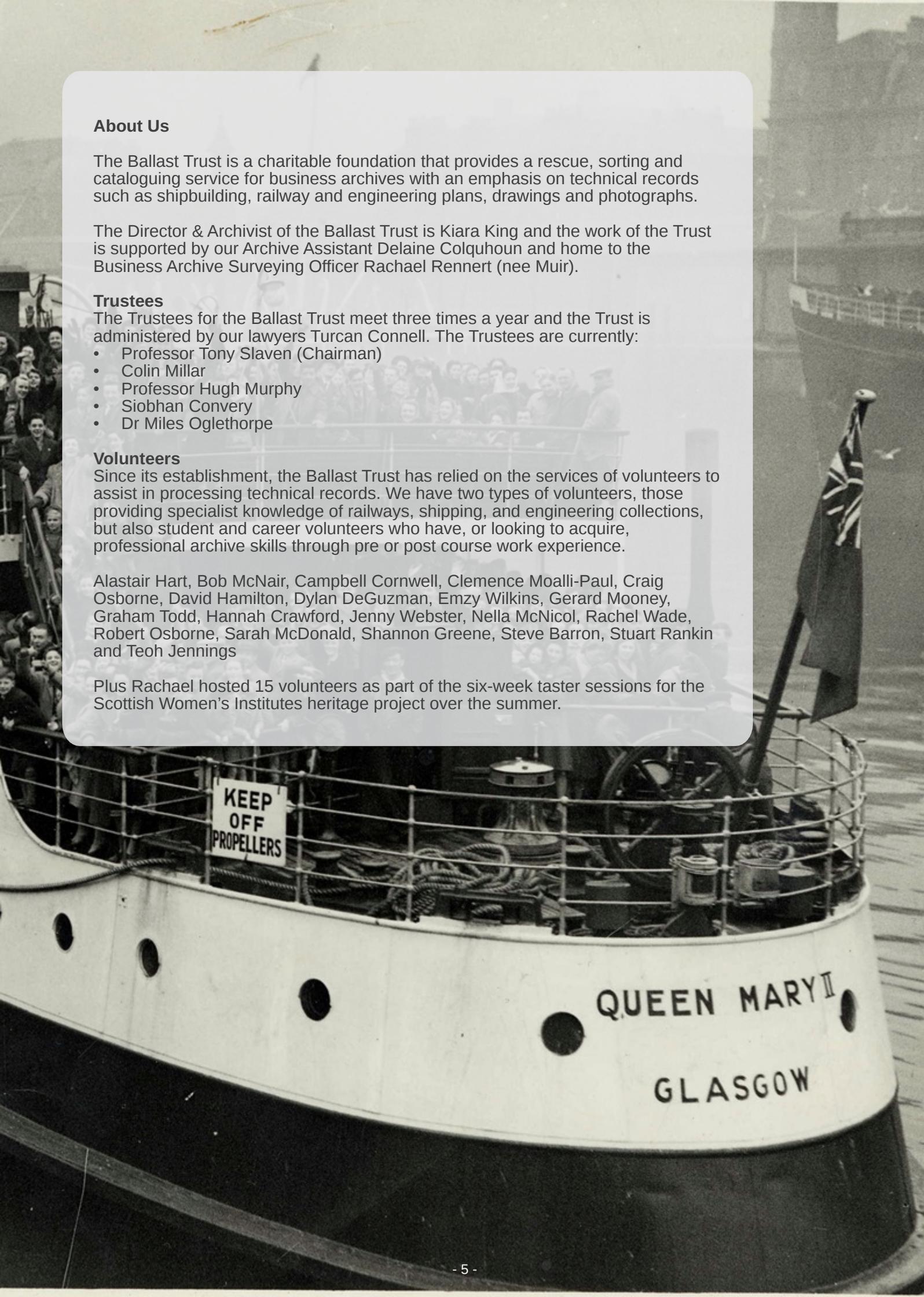
- Professor Tony Slaven (Chairman)
- Colin Millar
- Professor Hugh Murphy
- Siobhan Convery
- Dr Miles Oglethorpe

Volunteers

Since its establishment, the Ballast Trust has relied on the services of volunteers to assist in processing technical records. We have two types of volunteers, those providing specialist knowledge of railways, shipping, and engineering collections, but also student and career volunteers who have, or looking to acquire, professional archive skills through pre or post course work experience.

Alastair Hart, Bob McNair, Campbell Cornwell, Clemence Moalli-Paul, Craig Osborne, David Hamilton, Dylan DeGuzman, Emzy Wilkins, Gerard Mooney, Graham Todd, Hannah Crawford, Jenny Webster, Nella McNicol, Rachel Wade, Robert Osborne, Sarah McDonald, Shannon Greene, Steve Barron, Stuart Rankin and Teoh Jennings

Plus Rachael hosted 15 volunteers as part of the six-week taster sessions for the Scottish Women's Institutes heritage project over the summer.



Review of Work

During this reporting period, the Ballast Trust has been staffed Tuesday to Friday with staff working from home other days. Volunteers are welcome on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Kiara King

This year has seen the creation of a new working relationship with the National Records of Scotland as we managed our quarterly grant claims to NRS and meetings with them to update on the work of the Surveying Officer and agree shared objectives. In December the new Keeper of the Records of Scotland, Alison Byrne attended our quarterly meeting which was a positive sign. The relationship has worked well and it has been apparent that our priorities naturally align and are further complemented by the work that Rachael does with colleagues at the National Register of Archives for Scotland to monitor records in private hands. We're looking forward to continuing the relationship into 2025/26.

Much work in the second half of the year also revolved around our partnership with Lloyd's Register Foundation to review our British Corporation ship plans material. This is a collection that William Lind had received from Lloyd's in the early 1990s. Discussions about joining up the various parts of the British Corporation took place in 2023/24 and this year Kiara has worked with Alastair to prepare the collection for transportation with a review of material and packaging taking place. Kiara also managed a review of the British Corporation survey reports held at the University of Glasgow with some selective scanning of reports during the collection audit. In May 2025 the ship plans from the Ballast Trust along with ten linear metres of survey reports will be transferred to Lloyd's.

There has also been collaborative working with colleagues at the University of Glasgow, the National Library of Scotland's Moving Image Archive and Stirling University Archives around a funded project to look at the business records of creative industries. Kiara led on a funding application to the National Archives' resilience grant scheme in January which was unsuccessful but we will continue to investigate ways to engage with the creative industries. Related to University working was direct support for one of the University's Library Research Fellowships with Kiara acting as the key contact for Abi Jubb from the University of York while she was researching the House of Fraser records. Kiara also received support from the University to attend the Archives and Records Conference which allowed her to be present at the award ceremony for Rachael's Record Keeper of the Year award.

Collections work at the Ballast Trust has focused on box listing smaller collections and the Edinburgh City Engineers collection as this is a collection that multiple volunteers can work on at the same time and with an influx of new student and career volunteers it has been busy. The assistance of Craig in having an overview of the collection has been very welcome and we now have more than 1,000 rolls catalogued and repackaged.

Kiara attended external meetings for BACS, STICK and two SCA committees and the Archives and Records Association's Editorial Board. This year has involved extensive work with the Business Archives Council of Scotland around their journal and the annual conference which took place in Glasgow. The conference was very successful with nearly 70 attendees at Edrington's headquarters hosted by the Macallan archive and more than 60 attendees online from the UK, USA, Ireland, Sweden, Hong Kong and Denmark

Delaine Colquhoun

Delaine has continued work on the Duncan Winning collection and started to catalogue some series of it in detail. Duncan's correspondence and letter books have proved particularly interesting and informative in terms of understanding the wider collection and informing appraisal decisions.

Delaine's continued presence on-site this year has been appreciated to provide support for our student volunteers by answering their queries, managing their expenses and crucially to ensure the building can remain open on set days as surveying work and other visits and activities require Rachael or Kiara to be off-site.

Rachael Muir

Rachael continues to thrive in her role as Surveying Officer with another great year. A key achievement was her success at the Archives and Records Association's excellence awards in August where she was nominated for and won the Record-Keeper of the Year award in recognition of the contribution she has made to developing the profile and sustainability of the role of Business Archives Surveying Officer in Scotland. In terms of her surveying work this year, Rachael has again delivered a strong programme of surveying, maintaining a response rate of over 20% in her approaches to 83 businesses. Rachael also carried out a

regional survey for Angus and a thematic survey for the Scottish forestry and timber trade in this reporting year.

Alongside her surveying work, Rachael led the application submitted to the UK National Archives 'Archives Revealed' fund for the consortium project 'Supporting Scotland's Sporting Heritage' in partnership with National Library of Scotland, University of Stirling and Sporting Heritage. Whilst this was unsuccessful, the project partners are all minded to investigate other funders and Rachael has organised meetings with the National Lottery Heritage Fund that sound promising for 2025/26.

Consultancy work has led to key successes like the implementation by the Grand Lodge of Scotland to recruit for a heritage manager following Rachael's recommendations in August 2022 and Rachael was involved in this recruitment process in April 2025 that has led to the creation of a permanent post filled by an archivist. A more extensive piece of consultancy work this year has been the Heritage Lottery funding of Scottish Women's Institutes' heritage project. This project included funding for Rachael to continue cataloguing their collection for 1 day a week for a year (c.£9,600 income over two financial years).

Rachael continues to develop the role and its partnerships and was involved in setting up bi-annual meetings between the Surveying Officer, National Library of Scotland, National Records of Scotland and Historic Environment Scotland to discuss current business collections of interest and at risk, and also to discuss the wider archive landscape and current challenges. This is a welcome initiative and will undoubtedly lead to better outcomes for our sector and its business archives.

Alastair Hart

This year, Alastair's knowledge and work on the British Corporation collection has been invaluable. After we agreed in December 2023 with Lloyd's Registers that the British Corporation material would be returned to them, Alastair has assisted with the preparing of the material at the Ballast Trust and also in reviewing the survey reports held at Thurso Street.

This project has grown in size as Kiara identified more pockets of material belonging to British Corporation around the Ballast Trust. We have now agreed a date of 12th May for the collection to be transported to London. Alastair has reviewed and packaged 114 archive boxes, 6 bankers boxes of folded river class plans and 49 rolls of corvettes and trawlers drawings.

In addition, Alastair has started work on the reviewing and appraisal of plans and drawings for the A F Craig collection (general engineers) held by the University of Glasgow.

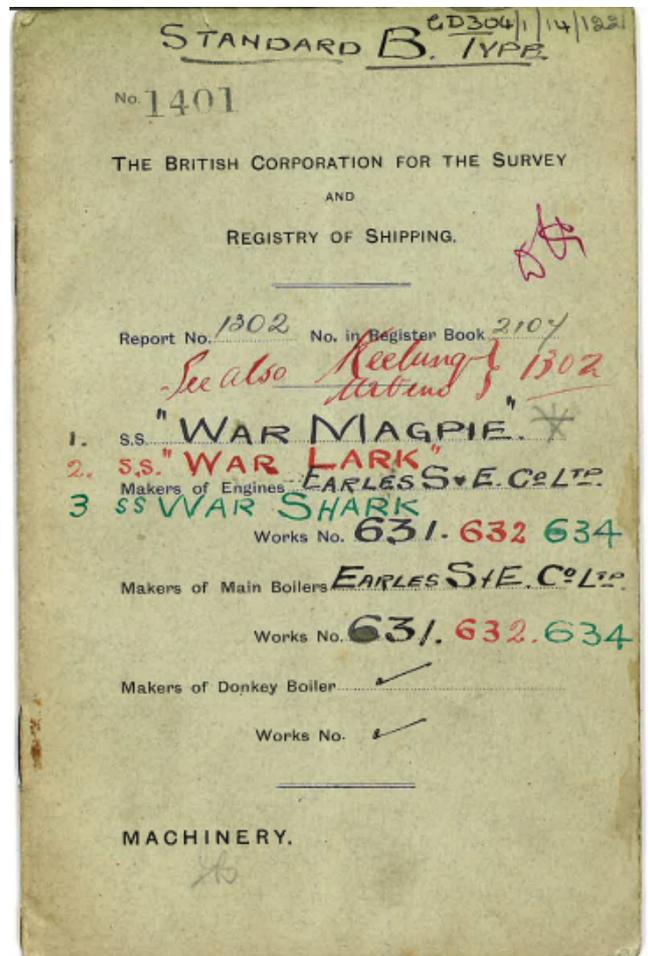


Bob McNair

Bob has continued his work on box-listing the records belonging to model maker and researcher Phil Thomas. This has been a time-consuming task as many of the boxes are in disarray containing a mixture of research material, articles, photographs and photocopies. However, the material will be appraised alongside the plans and drawings used by Phil Thomas for his model making that the Ballast Trust also holds and offered to an archive.

Clemence Moalli-Paul

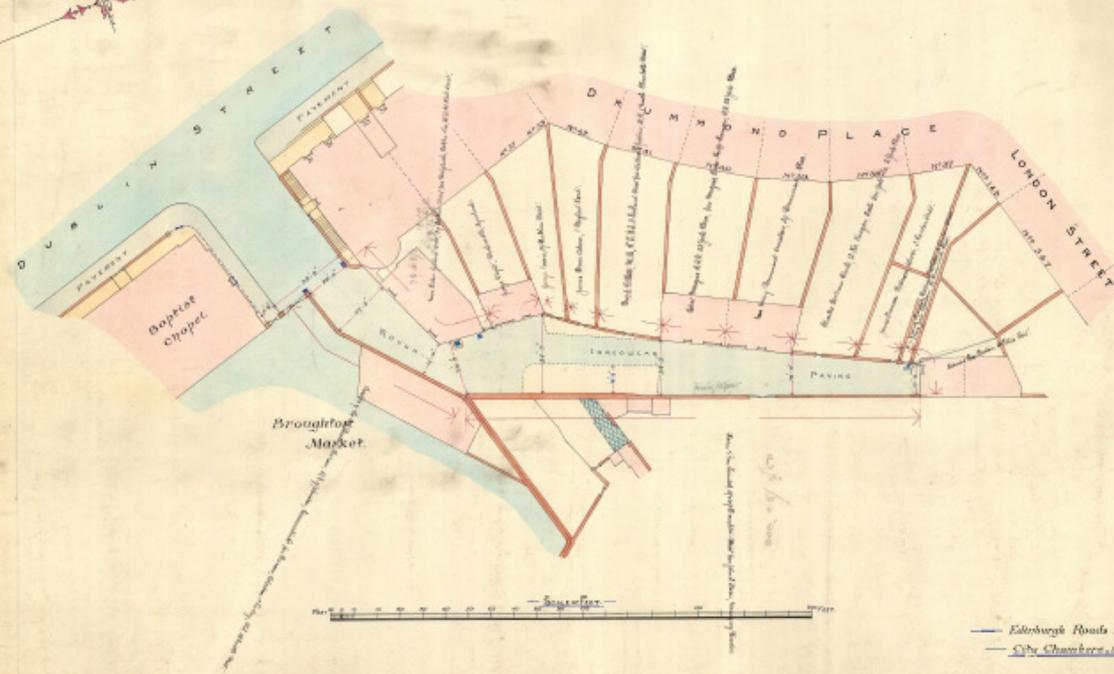
This year Clemence has worked remotely on creating social media content for Instagram using our Dan McDonald collection.



Machinery Report, 1918
British Corporation

DUBLIN STREET LANE

PRIVATE STREET.



Dublin Street Lane, 1906
Edinburgh City Engineers

Craig Osborne

Craig has continued his unfailing work cataloguing the rolled plans and maps in the Edinburgh City Engineer's collection which is being processed on behalf of Edinburgh City Archives. This year he also carried out an audit of the reference numbers used to identify gaps in the sequence and reorganise the rolled and packaged items. This has been enormously helpful, allowing us to complete the references used up to 1031. To date Craig has catalogued more than 500 rolls, involving the description of many hundreds of individual plans. In March, Craig also listed a small collection of plans for Kelvin diesels.

David Hamilton

David continued work on the John Clark collection, related to sugar machinery engineering works and took a break from volunteering in September.

Emzy Wilkins

Emzy joined us in September with a background in Information and Library Studies. She began by box listing additions to the Hanna, Donald & Wilson collection and cataloguing Scottish Canals material. Emzy then took the lead on a project to catalogue our collection of trade manuals. This involved researching best practice for processing and describing 'grey literature' and industrial publications. Before she left in February to take up a position as Special Collections Librarian at the Mitchell, Emzy had developed description guidance and templates for the project.

Gerard Mooney

Gerard started volunteering with us in May 2024 and has box listed additions to the Mavour & Coulson collection as well as completing the listing for Malcolm Fraser Architects and preparing appraisal recommendations for this collection as part of his work. More recently, he has carried out a review and enhanced listing of the Lamberts Creative collection where he has shown an understanding of appraisal considerations.

Graham Todd

Graham completed the extensive listing of the archive collection belonging to the late Sandy Maclean, a private railway researcher. This has been a long and sometimes arduous task for a collection that now stands at around 30 linear metres. However, Graham has tackled it with enthusiasm and quiet determination. He now turns his attention to a private collection of railway plans and drawings belonging to our former volunteer

Andrew Swan.

Jenny Webster

Until she took up a project research post at the University of Glasgow in July, Jenny had been reviewing the collection catalogue for the Business Archives Council of Scotland. This involved enhancing the file and item level descriptions and making updates using the University's EMu collections management system.

Robert Osbourne

This year Bob has continued his work on the British Rail collection of pre-grouping plans and drawings for the five Scottish railway companies (pre-1923 grouping). This project involves reviewing existing listings and updating references and then eventual repackaging. So far the locomotive and coach rolling stock material from the former Caledonian Railway (CR) Company has been reviewed and the next phase, the CR freight stock, has commenced.

Steve Barron

This year Steve completed his work to review and update the box list for the legacy Scott Lithgow material which included technical documents and drawings related to oil rigs and special operations vessels. Steve's subject knowledge of the sector allowed him to make informed appraisal recommendations for this collection. He has since started to list the collection of MacTaggart Scott plans.

Stuart Rankin

Stuart has focused his work on the archive collection for the Glasgow and South Western Railway (GSWR) Association. This is a collection that he developed and curated for the GSWR over many years. In 2024/25 Stuart has completed the listing of the 22 boxes and begun reappraisal of their contents with approximately 20% of this work completed.

Student volunteers

We're fortunate to have assistance from student and career volunteers throughout the year and where they have been with us for an extended period like Emzy, Gerard and Jenny their project work is outlined above.

For those who have recently joined us or carried out shorter placements or more ad-hoc volunteering as their time allows they have worked on a variety of tasks. These have typically included box-listing collections, digitising negatives and many of them have contributed to the cataloguing of the Edinburgh City Engineers collection in particular. In 2024/25, our student and career volunteers included Sarah McDonald, Shannon Greene, Hannah Crawford, Teoh Jennings, Nella McNicol, Rachel Wade and Dylan DeGuzman.

Volunteer Recognition

This year our Lind Lunch returned was held in late January following on from our usual Christmas mince pies for volunteers. Kiara sent out three issues of the 'Ballast news' email newsletter to volunteers during 2024/25.

Collections

We have had three accessions this year and two returns. We also loaned several items from the Sandy McLean railway collection to the Museum of Scottish Railways for a one-day exhibition as part of their volunteer week activities in June 2024.

Deposits and Accessions

- Scottish Bowlers Fellowship (membership organisation).
- MacTaggart Scott additions of glass plate negatives (hydraulic engineers).
- A F Craig additions of plans (engineers).

Returns and Deaccessions

- NVA Collection, (arts organisation) physical material transferred to University of Glasgow's Archives and Special Collections.
- Hardie Collection, (art dealer) transferred to the National Library of Scotland.

Projects

Much time was spent on Business Archives Council of Scotland related activity this year as the council entered its second year of joint events with the Business Archives Council (England & Wales) and the journal work increased as the editorial board was set up.

Business Archives Council of Scotland

The work of the Business Archives Council of Scotland (BACS) is strongly supported by the Ballast Trust with Tony serving as President, Kiara as Deputy Convenor and Rachael as a member of the executive committee. This year we have worked to support their events, website, membership and journal.

Kiara led plans to take forward the journal by setting up a new editorial board with seven members. This has resulted good academic links and a partnership with the University of Glasgow to make use of their open access publishing platform and the re-launch of the journal under a new title as Business and Industrial History: A Journal of Archival Research. A special whisky themed issue of the journal is planned for publication in May 2025.

Business Bites our joint series of online talks with the Business Archives Council (BAC) continued. Four Business Bites sessions were organised in May, June, September 2024 and February 2025 with Kiara providing zoom hosting facilities and promotion of the events. They were on the following topics:

- 'Environmental Sustainability' with Alexandra Wade from the London Metropolitan Archive and Dr Alasdair Bachell from the University of Dundee.
- 'The Importance of Record Surveying' with Rachael Muir.
- 'Commercial Opportunities for Cultural Heritage Organisations' with Naomi Korn of Naomi Korn Associates.
- 'Cataloguing Business Archives' with Emma Blowers from Dorset History Centre and Kath Roper-Caldbeck from University of Glasgow.

Kiara led the organising of the second joint BAC and BACS conference held in Glasgow and hosted by the Macallan. The conference was very successful with a strong programme that included corporate archivists from Levi's, Hennessy, the Times and Guardian newspapers and Swire's speaking along with others including The Macallan who are hosting. We had nearly 70 attendees at Edrington's headquarters hosted by the Macallan archive and more than 60 attendees online from the UK, USA, Ireland, Sweden, Hong Kong and Denmark. As part of the conference, Kiara also arranged a visit to Glasgow City Archives for 15 conference attendees on Friday after the conference to see items from their business collections. In addition, prior to the conference Kiara and Rachael hosted a visit by Philippa Turner of the National Archives to the Ballast Trust and Scottish Business Archive at the University of Glasgow.

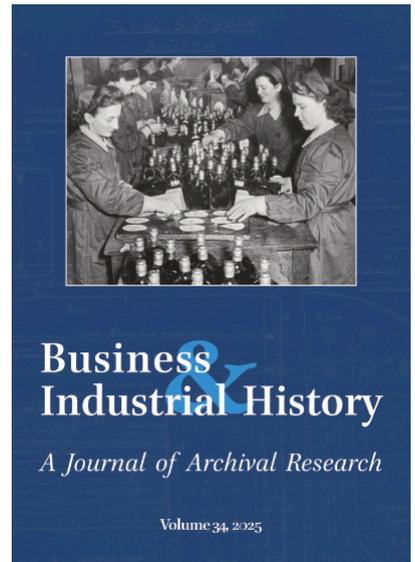
The joint conference again meant that the BACS 2024 AGM was held as a separate in-person event in June at the Bell Library in Perth with a half day set of talks focused on archives and museums. Planning has begun for the 2025 conference which will be held in York has begun and Kiara is on the organising committee for this along with three others from BACS and BAC.

Dan McDonald Anniversary

Kiara had meetings with Emily Malcolm, transport curator at Glasgow Life who hold a collection of notebooks and postcards from Dan McDonald. We had hoped to develop a partnership project to promote Dan's work in 2024/25 with an exhibition or other online engagement activities and join up the two parts of the collection to encourage researchers.

However, there were issues around copyright and use of the photographs that placed a halt on plans. Recently Kiara and Emily have restarted discussions and hope to put a proposal together after carrying out some due diligence work around the copyright issues.

Glenaray, built 1944
Dan McDonald Collection



BIH Journal Cover, 2025



Awareness Raising and Sectoral Participation

Awareness raising is a key objective for the Ballast Trust and both the Archivist and Surveying Officer contribute to this through active participation in different sectoral organisations, presentations and participations at conferences and workshops. Our online presence through our website and social media also helps to raise awareness of both the Ballast Trust and Surveying Officer's activities and services.

Sectoral Participation

The Ballast Trust is represented on the following committees and networks:

- The Business Archives Council of Scotland (BACS)
- Capturing the Energy
- Corporate Collections Network
- Crisis Management Team
- Glasgow Area Disaster Planning Network
- Scottish Council of Archives Board of Trustees (SCA)
- Scottish Transport and Industrial Collections Knowledge network (STICK)
- Archives & Records Association (ARA) Section for Business Records

The Ballast Trust is a member of the following organisations and associations:

- The Business Archives Council of Scotland (BACS)
- The Business Archives Council (BAC)
- International Council on Archives - Section for Business Archives (ICA-SBA)
- Scottish Council of Archives (SCA)
- Scottish Local History Form (SLHF)
- Scottish Records Association (SRA)

Professor Tony Slaven

Participations

- President of the Business Archives Council of Scotland
- Attended BACS Executive Committee meetings

Kiara King

Presentations

- Presented at University of Glasgow's Archives and Special Collections team meeting on the Ballast Trust's highlights for 2023/24. Online, May 2024.
- Presented at the ARA Scotland event about the ARA Professional Registration Programme. Online, October 2024.
- Delivered a two-hour class at Thurso Street on business archives for modern materials masters' students. Glasgow, February 2025.

Participations

- Attended UK Crisis Management Team meetings and the UK Records at Risk group convened by the National Archives online throughout 2024/25.
- Attended Business Archives Council of Scotland executive committee meetings and Business Bites events throughout 2024/25.
- Attended monthly collection development meetings for University of Glasgow Archives & Special Collections providing input on business archive topics and updates on processing of ASC collections at the Ballast Trust, online throughout 2024/25.
- Attended Scottish Council on Archives (SCA) Trustee and committee meetings online throughout 2024/25 with one in person meeting in Dundee.
- Attended STICK committee meetings online throughout 2024/25.
- Attended training for developing websites "Who Do Your Clients Think You Are? with Mia Bennett and Fiona Brooker" provided by Society of Genealogists. Online, April 2024.
- Hosted visit by BAE systems heritage archive manager Andrew Fetherston to the Ballast Trust and Scottish Business Archive. Johnstone/Glasgow, May 2024.
- Attended TNA event on the Action plan for Charity Archives: progress so far. Online, September 2024.
- Attended Transport for London's Corporate Archives talk on Highlights of the Collection. Online, November 2024.
- Organised and attended the annual BACS/BAC conference Liquid Gold: realising the potential of your business archive collection. Glasgow, November 2024.
- Organised and attended the Glasgow Area Disaster Planning Network's 20th Anniversary event.

Glasgow, November 2024.

- Attended the Edinburgh 900 event hosted by the Chambers of Commerce in partnership with Edinburgh City Archives. Edinburgh, December 2024.
- Attended a visit by the Scottish Yachting Archive to Thurso Street to discuss shipbuilding collections. Glasgow, January 2024.
- Attended the Make Your Mark Volunteer Managers Conference. Stirling, February 2025.
- Attended training by the SCA on Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals. Online, March 2025.
- Hosted visit with Rachael by the School Archives and Records Association to the Scottish Business Archive at Thurso Street. Glasgow, March 2025.

Rachael Muir Presentations

- Rachael presented her rescheduled Business Bites event titled The Importance of Records Surveying. Online, June 2024.
- Presented at Edinburgh 900 event hosted by Edinburgh's Chamber of Commerce in partnership with Edinburgh City Archives. December, 2024.
- Business History workshop. Glasgow, July 2024.
- Organised and hosted visit by the School Archivist Group to the Scottish Business Archive at Thurso Street and presented on the role of Surveying Officer. Glasgow, March 2025.

Participations

- Attended the 'ICA SBA Annual Masterclass' event Bringing heritage to life in a corporate setting. Online, June 2024.
- Attended Business History Summer School workshop on archives. Glasgow, July 2025.
- Attended the Archives and Records Associations annual conference titled Climate and Crisis: Tackling It Together. Birmingham, August 2024.
- Attended the Scottish Council on Archives' Meet the Funders event. Online, September 2024.
- Attended the annual BACS/BAC conference on Liquid Gold: realising the potential of your business archive collection. Glasgow, November 2024.
- Attended the Scottish Records Association conference titled: "Estate, Household and Family Collections and their Use in Research. Online, November 2024.
- National Museums of Scotland seminar titled Contemporary Collecting and Sustainable Technologies. Online, November 2024.
- The ICA symposium on Archives of Sports Materials and Collections in Japan. Online, November 2024.
- The Surveying Officer attended the SCA Conference BUILDING EVIDENCE: How Archives and Records support Scotland's Historic Environment. Stirling, December 2024.
- The ARA SBR seminar titled: Section for Business Records Luncheon Session: Christmas is just around the corner! Have you bought your presents yet?. Online, December 2024.
- Hosted visit by the School Archives and Records Association to the Scottish Business Archive at Thurso Street. Glasgow, March 2025.

Publications

Rachael has again contributed an article reviewing the Surveying Officer's year as part of the Scottish Council on Archives' ['A Year in Archives'](#) for 2023/24.

Enquiries & Visits

We received 23 enquiries this year, a slight increase on last year's 19 enquiries. We are still seeing enquiries about ships and shipbuilding but also those from fellow archivists or researchers looking for advice on how to manage business and technical records or how to find collections.

We thought several visits to the Ballast Trust including a visit from BAE systems heritage archive manger



The role of Scotland's Business Archives Surveying Officer, Rachael Muir, has involved surveying the records of over 200 Scottish businesses and helping those businesses for many of these collections with business records, as well as with literary, local, and national archives. With two shorter surveys, several records at risk cases, assessment, and remedial work, it has been a varied and exciting role for the current Surveying Officer, Rachael Muir.

In the period 2023/24, over 200 businesses were contacted, and 10 surveys were conducted, which achieved an overall response rate of 60%, a great increase on the average 30% response rate recorded in the past.

A continuous review offered throughout this year by the Surveying Officer has been underpinning support for those undertaking cataloguing placements and research, and the UK Crisis Management Team for Business Archives. The team has provided regular practical on-site visits to support two students with the cataloguing of Scotland's Garden of Knowledge & Shipbuilding. This summer has successfully provided ongoing professional development for those working on the archives, while also offering valuable follow-up support to new organisations keen to build on the survey experience and further develop their archives. The Surveying Officer hopes to be able to offer the opportunity of new cataloguing placements in the future.

There have also been several visits, reports, and media coverage this year, including a survey of one of the earliest examples of a contemporary company CEO in Scotland. This involved the Surveying Officer

visiting a Glendy in the Highlands to visit the office of the Glenachulish Peatmoss Trust, which works to preserve the last remaining peatmoss lery in Scotland.

The launch of a new thematic survey in the summer involved contacting those in the natural environment and outdoor sector. This led to several first-time surveys, including the Glasgow Museum, Bannockburn Wildlife Trust, the Scottish Tourist Guides Association, and the John Muir Trust, two of which have now been transferred to relevant archive services. Without the efforts of colleagues across the country, it would not have been possible to secure a home for these collections, and it has been a great reminder of the strength of partnership and collaboration within the archive sector in Scotland.

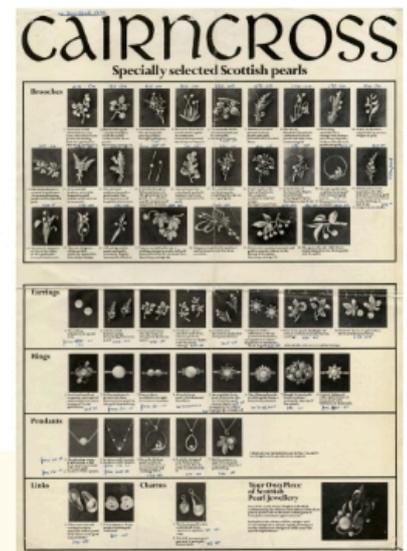
The Surveying Officer has also continued to work as the lead representative for Scotland on the UK Crisis Management Team for Business Archives. The team has visited other surveys to provide support to businesses with low underpinning records at risk and suitable homes. This year, there has been an increase in the number of at-risk cases compared with last year, with at least 15 cases that the Surveying Officer has investigated in Scotland alone. Most notably, this has included the well-known brands of Ted Baker and Hunter Brown. But unfortunately, there has been no progress in identifying any suitable homes.

However, there were successes, with the files of Alexander Wilkie, whose records were surveyed and transferred to File Archives, and a small number of records left following the closure of Cairness of Perth (broiler) after 100 years of trading.



Cairness broilers is one of Perth's oldest and best known businesses. When its closure was announced earlier this year, the Surveying Officer got in touch and offered to help with the cataloguing of any business records – which included written histories. She alerted me to an early records survey of the business, negotiated access with the owners, catalogued the records from the premises and deposited them in the archive.

ISABEL HARRISON
Archivist,
Culture Perth & Kinross



Andrew Fetherston, one of the maritime heritage catchups with curators from Fairfield Heritage Centre and Glasgow Museums and also Philippa Turner of the UK National Archives.

Kiara and Rachael have also hosted the following organisations for visits at Thurso Street to showcase the Scottish Business Archive - Scottish Yachting Archive, BAE Systems, Schools Archive and Records Association, Our Heritage, Our Stories project and the Pipe Factory heritage project.

Online Presence

Our website is the official home for information about the Ballast Trust and from it we link to our other online platforms like Flickr and Instagram. The Surveying Officer also has a dedicated website and we completed a refresh of this site 2024/25 with Rachael adding sections for testimonies and case studies to great effect.

For the Ballast Trust site this year we have benefited from having reconnected our analytical tools last year which now allows us to compare and see that the site received 2,100 visitors in the 2024/25 reporting period an increase of 38% on the previous year with 19,000 views in total. The top 3 countries visiting continue to be UK, USA and France. Our top content pages changed slightly to include 'surveying officer' and 'contact us' pages and were:

- Home
- About us
- Contact us
- History
- Surveying Officer

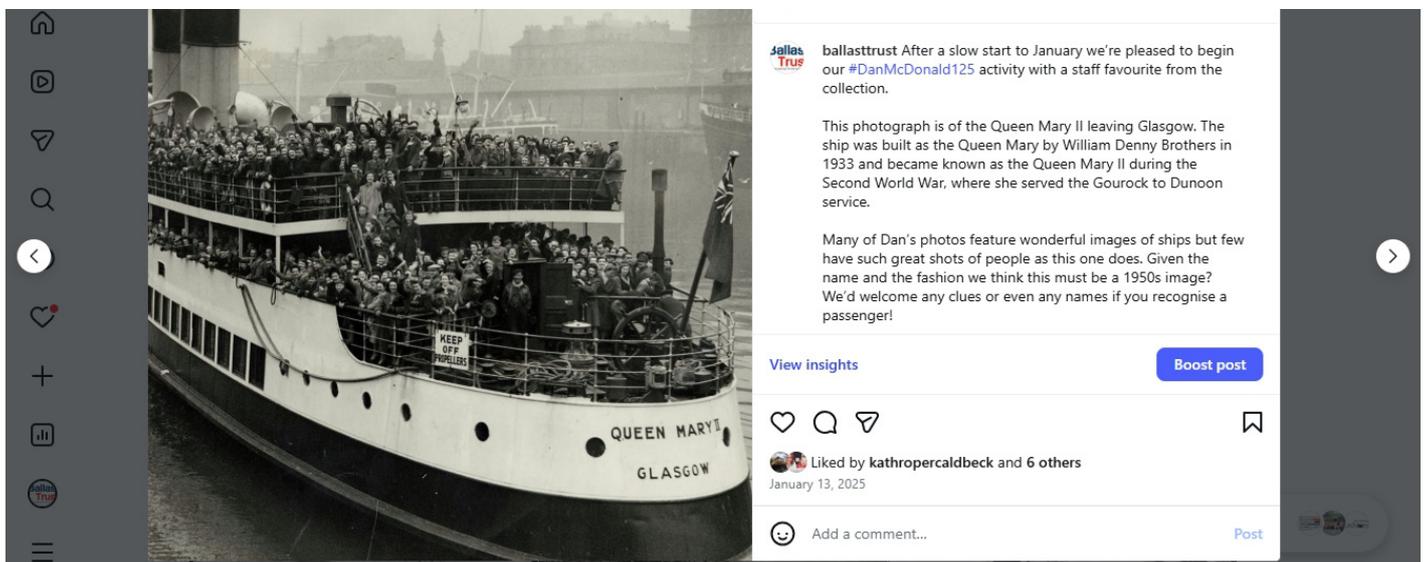
Social Media

We have taken the decision this year to limit our activity on the X/Twitter platform and point followers instead to our Instagram platform for content. Twitter has seen a huge drop in engagement and activity within the heritage sector since it was taken over by Elon Musk in 2023. Our own follower numbers have dropped from 1,109 to 1,004. This year has seen the emergence of BlueSky as a potential lead alternative platform. For now given the challenge to create content we will focus on Instagram rather than investing in a new platform but that may change in the future.

Our followers on Instagram are much fewer at just 269 but the platform does suit the mainly photographic collections we hold at the Ballast Trust in our McDonald and McLaren collections. Our volunteer Clemence has been working remotely on content for Instagram to showcase the Dan McDonald collection that will support any other activity we develop to showcase Dan and his photographic collection in 2025/26.

Flickr

While we haven't uploaded any new images this year our all-time total views of all photos increased by 3% to 2,454,994 with 60% of all 1,528 photographs uploaded favoured by users.



Business Archives Surveying Officer for Scotland

It has been a whirlwind of a year for the Business Archives Surveying Officer with lots of ground covered in terms of surveying, engagement, funding bids, profile-raising, recruitment, and relationship-building.

Approximately 83 businesses, organisations, trusts and charities were contacted by the Surveying Officer throughout the year, which resulted in 18 survey visits, and a 21.6% success rate. This again built on last year's success rate and continues to show an improvement against the usual 10-15% response rate.

Included in this year's proactive surveying was the roll out of the second regional archive survey, which this time featured Angus. More than 20 businesses were contacted at the end of September 2024 including Glamis Castle, Angus Soft Fruits, Strathmore Woollen Company and Saddler's of Forfar. However, responses were low despite repeated approaches by Rachael, and unfortunately no in-person surveys were arranged as a result of the project.

Separately, a thematic survey approaching companies and organisations within the Scottish forestry and timber trade was also developed and rolled out in January and February of 2025. Although initial engagement has been slow, further support provided by the Chief Executive of Confor, the UK forestry body has helped increase interactions. Currently, three surveys are planned for the summer including the Scottish Timber Trade Association, Donaldson Group, and Scottish Woodlands, and there is potential interest from the forestry sector for a more detailed look at heritage and story-telling within the Scottish forestry and timber industry, so it will be interesting to see how this develops in 2025-26. Rachael has sourced examples from Sweden in order to share and inspire about what could be possible. Further surveying work is needed in the short-term with long-term plans still to be confirmed, but there is likely to be the option of possible sponsorship from the sector.

A key focus for September and October was the consortium application to the Archives Revealed fund. The Surveying Officer led the work to bring together a consortium partnership that applied for funding to create a two-year project 'Supporting Scotland's Sporting Heritage'. This involved a fortnightly meeting with the other consortium partners, writing the application, and gathering evidence, statistics, and supporting documents. The application was hugely helped by Kiara's proof-reading, editing, and development of the budget. We were delighted with the final application, and accompanying letters of support we received. Unfortunately, the application was unsuccessful but the consortium partners have agreed to explore other funding options. Rachael has contacted the Scotland team at the National Heritage Lottery Fund and it is hoped that a follow-up application will be submitted in summer 2025.

Throughout the year, Rachael has continued the cataloguing of the Scottish Women's Institutes collection, as well as attending their monthly Heritage Meeting evenings. In November, the SWI found out that their heritage project will be funded by the Heritage Lottery. This project includes funds to continue Rachael's cataloguing of the collection for 1 day a week for a year (c.£9,600 income). The Surveying Officer also held five volunteer sessions over the summer at the Ballast Trust for the SWI. These sessions were designed for the volunteers to be able to gain experience of working with the SWI archive, as well as share their own specialist subject knowledge which can be incorporated into the archive. The Surveying Officer had also been contacted by a student from the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh with regards to undertaking research of the SWI archive being held at the Ballast Trust, and Rachael facilitated access to several research visits whilst the archive has been stored at the Ballast Trust. We look forward to seeing how the project develops over the course of the year!

The Surveying Officer presented at an Edinburgh 900 event organised by Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce to celebrate the city's anniversary and its businesses. The presentation was well-received, and led to two potential surveys of a chartered accountant firm and drinks company.

Continuing to develop an understanding of the renewables landscape in terms of record-keeping has been another ongoing objective over the last 12 months. The Surveying Officer has been developing her new WordPress and website skills by creating a new [project page](#) which provides details on the second phase of the Capturing the Energy project. In collaboration with the University of Aberdeen, this phase will focus on developing our understanding of recordkeeping within the renewables sector specifically. The Surveying Officer will be working on the project twice a month until December 2025 when the outcomes of the project will be reviewed.

Recruitment has played a significant part in this year's work for the Surveying Officer. The Surveying Officer

had created a recruitment timetable and summary for Walker's Shortbread to take forward the recommendation of a corporate archivist and records manager that had been supported by the company's owner. However, in the immediate days following, the death of Sir Jim Walker was announced, which was a great shock and extremely sad news to receive. He had been a passionate and inspiring advocate of his company's long and rich heritage, and the Surveying Officer had immensely enjoyed working with him.

Separately, the Surveying Officer met with the head of Grand Lodge at the start of January to discuss recruitment plans by the organisation. It resulted in the Surveying Officer and Director of the Ballast Trust working hard to revise a job description for the Grand Lodge of Scotland as part of a long-running plan to appoint a Heritage & Collection Manager for the library, archive and museum. Rachael oversaw the write-up of a job description, the advertising, and the short-listing of the interviewees. Questions and a presentation question were set, and interviews were held in early April. Rachael was one of three persons on the interview panel.

In addition, following a survey of Scottish Canals in 2024, a meeting was held in 2025 to discuss the taking forward of a recommendation to recruit a records manager to the organisation and tackle storage capacity issues. This was confirmed in March 2025, and recruitment is due to go live in May 2025, with the Surveying Officer leading on advertisements for the position.

In December, the Surveying Officer also interviewed three students for a second phase of cataloguing at Goodfellow & Steven. Two students currently studying the postgraduate course were offered the position and undertook 5 weeks of on-site cataloguing in Broughty Ferry. They were well-supported by the business at all times, and it was a fantastic example of teamwork, and provided suitable practical experience alongside their studies. It is likely that following the completion of cataloguing that the collection will be transferred to the University of Dundee archive services, although this is still to be finalised.

During spring 2025, the Surveying Officer has been busy establishing the programme for a BACS summer conference to be held in June 2025 at the Scotch Whisky Experience. A good range of speakers from across the drinks, brand and marketing industries have now been confirmed. The event will also include an evening reception launch for the new BACS journal, and the AGM.

Now at the end of the 2024/25 reporting year, the Surveying Officer is taking bookings for surveys into July 2025 with a variety of surveys on the horizon including a children's charity, a forestry group, a health food retailer, and a business gateway enterprise. The forestry and timber survey will conclude, with another regional survey launched, as well as a new thematic survey, possibly exploring independent Scottish schools, with support from SARA, or building on the drinks industry conference to be held in June.

On a last, positive note, a personal highlight of the year was being awarded UK Record Keeper of the Year by The Archives and Records Association (UK & Ireland) at their annual conference in Birmingham. This was an honour to receive from peers, and hopefully highlighted the role of the Scottish Surveying Officer to a wider audience!

Crisis management and records-at-risk

There have been three successful cases of records having been safely deposited that were initially at risk. This included the archive of Craig & Rose, paint manufacturers, that were surveyed in 2023. As of September 2024 it had been transferred to Edinburgh City Archive.

The records of Charles Henshaw & Sons, architectural metalworkers, were also surveyed by the Surveying Officer following the company's liquidation at the request of Historic Environment Scotland. Following successful engagement with the relevant insolvency practitioner, a successful transfer of the records was completed, resulting in a superb business collection saved for the nation.



The image shows a vintage-style logo for Craig & Rose Ltd. The logo features the company name in a large, ornate font, with 'ESTABLISHED 1829' to the right. Below the name, it lists 'CONTRACTORS TO H.M. ADMIRALTY AND WAR OFFICE' and 'OIL, PAINT AND CHIEF BRITISH & FOREIGN'. A testimonial from Jennifer Hogg, Senior Records & Archives Officer at Edinburgh City Archives, is overlaid on the bottom right of the logo. The testimonial describes the successful transfer of records from the company in 2024, mentioning the collection of paint recipe books, photographs, and business records.

Craig & Rose | Paint Manufacturers | est. 1829

“ In 2024, with the Craig & Rose site closing, there was a fear that the unique records would be lost forever. The surveying officer was able to provide us with a survey list and liaise between ourselves and a representative of the company, until we formed our own relationship and we were able to build on the trust that the company had in the Surveying Officer. Thanks to them the whole process went smoothly and we now have nearly 20 linear meters of records which include paint recipe books, photographs, and business records. ”

Jennifer Hogg, Senior Records & Archives Officer, Edinburgh City Archives

The company of architectural metalworkers, Charles Henshaw & Sons Ltd was founded in 1904 and created many decorative, memorial and security features for churches, schools and commercial buildings throughout Scotland. When the firm went into administration in 2024, HES approached BACS for advice; the Surveying Officer contacted the administrators and created a summary of the Henshaw archive which comprised ledgers, sketchbooks, designs, photographs and publications covering most of the firm's history.

The Surveying Officer went on to provide invaluable liaison with the administrators and support as HES formalised the deposit of the material and arranged its transfer. As the Henshaw collection is important in its own right, and also relates to collections of architects' papers already held in the HES Archive, we were delighted to receive this significant archive to make it available to the public and are very grateful for the Surveying Officer's assistance. Veronica Fraser, Historic Environment Scotland

And finally, the records of the John Muir Trust were transferred to Highland Archives. Although not deemed at risk at the time of the survey, it became clear that due to storage pressures and changing staff, the records were not being managed and were at risk. With the support and help of the charity, a successful transfer of the entire archive was completed, totalling over 70 boxes of records charting a variety of eras and subject areas across its history.



Record surveys, advice and consultancy work

- ALLIANCE, part of Health Care and Social Alliance Scotland, charity
- Charles Henshaw & Sons, est. 1904, (building facade specialist), Edinburgh
- Confederation of Forest Industries (Confor), (membership body), Edinburgh
- Demarco Archive, (arts trust), Edinburgh
- Galloway & MacLeod, est. 1921, (agricultural merchants), Stonehouse, SL
- Glasgow Film Theatre, est. 1974, (creative arts/charity), Glasgow
- GMAC Film, est. 1982, (film charity), Glasgow
- Grandison & Son, est. 1886-2018, (plasterer), Peebles
- Ian MacLeod Distillers Ltd, est. 1936 (as Leonard Russell whisky broker), Edinburgh
- Institute of Chartered Foresters, Edinburgh (membership body), Edinburgh
- Motherwell Football Club, est. 1886, (sports club) Craigleith, Edinburgh
- Perth Theatre, est. 1900, (arts centre), Perth
- Pitlochry Festival Theatre, est. 1951, (creative arts/charity), Pitlochry
- Prestwick Scotland, c.1930s, (airport), Prestwick
- Scottish Bowlers Fellowship, est. 1954, (membership organisation), Glasgow
- Scottish Canals (non-departmental public body), Falkirk
- Scottish Decorators' Federation, est. 1857, (professional body), Stirling
- Scottish Football Museum (to survey collection of the Scottish Premier Football League)
- Scottish Women's Institute, est. 1917, (membership organisation/charity), Edinburgh
- The Denholm Group, est. 1866, (shipping agent), Glasgow
- The Young Women's Movement, est. 1924, (charity), Edinburgh
- Venture Scotland, est. 1984, (charity), Edinburgh
- Walker's Shortbread, est. 1898, (baker), Aberlour



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