

Scottish Universities Special Collection & Archives Group (SUSCAG)

Meeting room 1.11, University of Edinburgh Library

05th December 2014, 11.00-13.15

Report of Meeting

Date and Time	5 th December 2014, 11.00
Venue	Meeting room 1.11, University of Edinburgh Library
Chair	Siobhán Convery
Secretary	Rachael Egan
Attendees	Caroline Brown , University of Dundee Grant Buttars , University of Edinburgh Siobhán Convery , University of Aberdeen Rachael Egan , University of Glasgow Angus Galloway , University of Edinburgh Rachel Hart , University of St Andrews Sarah Hepworth , University of Glasgow Rachel Hosker , University of Edinburgh Karl Magee , University of Stirling Victoria Peters , University of Strathclyde Helen Taylor , Heriot Watt University, Edinburgh Dr Joe Marshall , University of Edinburgh, attended at the start to welcome us
Apologies	Carole McCallum (Glasgow Caledonian University), Cathlin Macaulay (School of Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh), Maira Rankin (University of Glasgow), Lesley Richmond (University of Glasgow), Pat Whatley (University of Dundee), Susannah Waters (Glasgow School of Art)

Agenda points

1. Minutes of Last Meeting
2. Scottish Council on Archives Update
3. RLUK UDC Update
4. Scottish Graduate School for the Arts and Humanities
5. SUSCAG promotion: webpages, documentation, conference?
6. Funding Opportunities discussions
7. Members' news

Opening:

Thanks to University of Edinburgh for their hospitality and for hosting the meeting.

Introduction and welcome by Dr Joe Marshall, Head of Special Collections & the Centre for Research Collections. Invited members to come again and visit Edinburgh collections.

1. Minutes of last meeting:

The Minutes of the last meeting (22nd August 2014) were approved by members.

2. Scottish Council on Archives Update:

No meeting of the Scottish Council on Archives has been held since last SUSCAG meeting, however hoped to have meeting in the 1st week in January to discuss the new governance model. A consultation process is underway. Karl Magee attended the Glasgow consultation where there were 6 people in attendance. The key discussion points were advocacy and digital archives and then discussion about the proposed changes in membership e.g. individual membership v institutional membership. There is the possibility that SUSCAG could become an institutional member of the SCA.

With the new model of membership, SCA are trying to gain a cross-sectorial voice. It was agreed that the SCA plays a good role in bringing different bodies together. Though it was also agreed that members are not quite clear on the specific aims of the SCA review.

Caroline Brown is attending a meeting in January to find out more.

All encouraged to keep up links with the SCA and keep members informed of updates.

Ben Bennett submitted updates to Siobhán to share:

-There will be a conference in Edinburgh: '**Copyright & Cultural Heritage 2.0: Protecting Creators, Sharing Content**' in the Scottish National Gallery on 2nd February 2015, 12.30-17.00

-There will be a **Trustee Training and Governance** workshop 10th February 2015- about what being a Trustee means. The process for electing trustees will be made available nearer the time.

Members agreed that a SUSCAG member should stand as a Trustee to represent the Higher Education Sector.

-**Scottish Parliament Week** will be in March 2015 where there will be the opportunity to meet with MSPs and displays in the foyer etc. More details will be released in the New Year. Skills for the Future Trainees will be involved.

Action Point 1: Members agreed that arranging a SUSCAG presence for Scottish Parliament Week would be beneficial- Siobhán will follow this up.

-**Skills for the Future Trainees:** The project manager left and the post will be re-advertised at the end of the year with interviews in the New Year.

The trainees are all doing well and all met in Dundee 4th December. They make a good cohort and share experiences with each other. There are 6 trainees in total and the project funds have been allocated for another 2 years.

Members who have Skills for the Future Trainees would highly recommend getting involved in the programme.

Action Point 2: Members agreed that SUSCAG should invite Skills for the Future Trainees to a SUSCAG meeting in the future.

3. RLUK UDC Update:

Research Libraries UK (RLUK) and Unique and Distinctive Collections (UDC):

The RLUK Conference 2014 was held at the Library of Birmingham, **Discovering Collections, Discovering Communities**, 29-30th October

(<http://www.rluk.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/DCDC-programme-FINAL-pre-conference.pdf>)

A variety of papers were presented with a focus on Unique and Distinctive Collections. There were two attendees representing Scottish Collections: Siobhán Convery and Lesley Richmond. The TNA had a large presence there. The Memorandum of Understanding between the TNA and RLUK was discussed at the conference and a press release has subsequently been made:

<http://www.rluk.ac.uk/news/rluk-tna-mou/>

SUSCAG members who have met with RLUK members agree that closer collaboration of RLUK with the archives sector is welcomed and the group indicated support for wider discussions with other national institutions and bodies (e.g. NRS, SCA, NHS). It was noted that John MacColl (St Andrews) progresses to Chair in March 2015.

Members encouraged to watch for updates and to be involved in developing relationships between RLUK and Scottish repositories.

RLUK have also published its 'Unique and Distinctive Collections' report:

(<http://www.rluk.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/RLUK-UDC-Report.pdf>)

The high-level summary highlights some familiar issues for the sector and the report would seem to be directed towards RLUK directors and decision makers to raise these issues.

There will be a meeting in London, late January, to discuss RLUKs proposed UDC Hub. Siobhán Convery and Lesley Richmond will be attending. Members discussed what the merits of the UDC Hub will be. It is not a gateway hub to share catalogues on, but for Archivists to share experiences. There was discussion as to what the UDC would deliver for the sector and the resources required to contribute.

Members are encouraged to read the RLUK report and give some thoughts on what benefits the UDC Hub may bring to SUSCAG members. Send to Rachael Egan who will collect responses to forward to Siobhan ahead of the meeting in late January.

4. Scottish Graduate School for the Arts and Humanities (SGSAH):

Siobhán Convery and Rachael Egan fed back on progress concerning the SGSAH event in progress. So far an event has been organised with Karl Magee in Stirling University, for Thursday 19th February. In consultation with Judith Henderson, the event was to show-case collections in Stirling (and with presentations from a couple of other HEIs) relating to the theme 'Arts in the Archive' for starters. Judith hoped for a couple of other similar events covering different themes over the course of the semester, hosted by different HEIs.

Helen Taylor expressed an interest in joining the Stirling event and bringing some Textile items for handling.

Siobhán Convery expressed interest in hosting an event with the theme 'Health and Wellbeing'.

Caroline Brown expressed interest in hosting and contributing to an event.

Karl Magee noted that it would still be useful for those not giving presentations to be present to talk to the students in the intervals.

Rachel Hosker expressed interest in hosting an event at the University of Edinburgh and noted that their Student Engagement Officer would assist organising.

Members expressed concern over ensuring that enough students attend to make the event worthwhile, perhaps imposing a minimum number. Also discussed was the fact that if SUSCAG had an engagement officer, such as the University of Edinburgh's, such events would be easier to co-ordinate over different HEIs.

It was agreed that such a post for SUSCAG would be useful. It was noted that the Scottish Funding Council's 'Research, Innovation and Outcomes' group have a track record in supporting inter-institutional collaboration in the HE museums sector (led by UMiS).

Members agreed that there was a resource gap for HEIs involved in the Graduate School programme.

Members also pointed out that engagement with students alone is not enough; we need to make academics aware of the research potential of our collections, for attracting future research projects.

Members discussed the possibility of another 2 events such as the proposed event in Stirling in the coming academic year and agreed that this was perhaps unmanageable. Perhaps students could be involved in organising them?

The discussion turned to the proposal for internships in the second year of the SGSAH programme. While welcomed by some intuitions to explore further, it was noted that some SUSCAG members

may not have the capacity for further internships given existing support for volunteers, placements and interns.

Following a lengthy discussion, members suggested that instead of 2-3 events focussing on one theme each, there be a bigger one-day event organised e.g., a conference with break-out sessions covering different themes. This can be discussed with Judith at the Next SUSCAG meeting. Perhaps the SGSAH Knowledge Exchange and Industry Liaison Officer could be involved.

Caroline Brown circulated a document about '**Cohort Development Funding**': "Cohort Development Fund scheme allows the SGSAH Panels to support training initiatives directed towards supporting the disciplinary training needs of doctoral researchers in the Arts and Humanities." One panel includes Caroline and covers Libraries, Special Collections, Archives and Museums. Members were previously unaware of this scheme. This may overlap with our involvement with SGSAH.

Action Point 3:

The proposed event in Stirling 19th February will go ahead as planned and form a pilot event. All SUSCAG members are encouraged to attend and meet the SGSAH students.

A SUSCAG meeting will follow the event, from 2pm. Jude will be invited to this meeting to discuss further how SUSCAG members and the SGSAH can work together, the possibility of a larger event and the year 2 placements.

Karl Magee and Rachael Egan will co-ordinate on the event.

5. SUSCAG promotion:

Deferred to allow time for members' news

6. Funding opportunities discussions:

Deferred to allow time for members' news though expressions of interest have been forwarded to Siobhán Convery and a meeting will be arranged in the New Year. Thanks to those who expressed interest. Siobhan can follow up in March-time due to other commitments in January/February.

7. Members' news:

Grant Buttars and Rachel Hosker (University of Edinburgh):

- Joe Marshall the new Head of Special Collections & the Centre for Research Collections.
- Changes in the organisation of Special Collections with a dedicated and stronger archives team. The archives team have a good brand and identity but remain embedded within the Library.
- The Wellcome Trust funded project with Patrick Geddes collection underway.
- Internally funded project to create on-line history of the University nearing completion.
- Implementing Archives Space as archive management system.

Helen Taylor (Heriot Watt University):

- Digital Preservation Policy is to be approved soon.
- Re-development of website underway with a greatly improved website going live in the New Year.
- Milestone events coming up include: bicentenary of James Watt's condenser, improving the steam engine; International Year of Light next year with event at Heriot Watt towards the end of the year in conjunction with UMiS; in 2016, 50 years of Heriot Watt being a University; 2021 bicentenary of Heriot Watt.
- The new train-line to Heriot Watt may increase the numbers of researchers.
- The Great Tapestry of Scotland at Tweedbank Station may have an impact on visitors and perhaps an exhibition space that Heriot Watt could use.

Rachel Hart (University of St Andrews):

- New Head of Special Collections, Gabriel Sewell, was head of Special Collections at Durham.
- Working towards organising out-storage at Dundee.
- Redevelopment of the basement of the Library for Archives continues. We will be informed as this progresses.
- Carnegie funding of 2 conservators.
- Digital Archives Officer post was advertised this week- working in the Virtual Records Management Unit.
- Whaling project goes from strength to strength with an exhibition at the Scottish Fisheries Museum in March.
- The Golf project is in its 3rd of 4 years with an exhibition planned for the Open Championship.
- Reading room in Martyrs Kirk in high use with 40% increase in readers and productions.

Caroline Brown (University of Dundee):

- Restructuring of the University underway. Remains to be seen what the effects will be for Archives.
- The Michael Peto collection exhibition is coming up.
- Thera Trust project: Strathmartine heritage project, a partner HLF project, underway with Dundee involved in the oral histories.
- Involved in the Memory Box project, Scottish Government funded, to create a bank of images as a tool for Alzheimers and Dementia treatment.
- Book of WW1 poetry now in the shop and includes images from the archive collections.
- Digital projects are in conjunction with IT. Test-case project for managing digital material involves preserving the '5 million questions' videos from the Referendum campaigns.
- 2017 sees 50th anniversary.

Sarah Hepworth and Rachael Egan (University of Glasgow):

- Conference about R.D. Laing 10th October 2014 who died 25 years ago. Conference organised by UofG academic (previous PhD researcher) in conjunction with 200 years of mental health care in Glasgow. Also organised a creative writing workshop connected with Laing's collection. Very successful events. The tour of the stacks to show Laing's collected library was particularly effective.
- Academics and the Scottish Theatre Archive were involved in an outreach project at a family history event in the Mitchell Library. Concerning family history of those with connections to Theatres in Glasgow.
- Wellcome Trust project to catalogue Syphilis volumes in progress and on track for completion with a symposium planned.
- Incunabula project continues with a major exhibition in the Hunterian from the end of February-June.
- Copyright project underway in conjunction with CREATE team with the scrapbooks of Edwin Morgan, to scope the copyright issues in carrying out a diligent search for the copyright holders represented in the scrapbooks.
- Wellcome Trust- Award to catalogue Scottish Allotment collection. A PhD student is using the collections and will plan some public engagement next year.
- Collecting Cultures grant- HLF funding to develop textile collections- first part to map gaps in the textile collections and the second part of the funding to add to them- hoping to concentrate on the survey work.
- WW1 project is to continue for a 2nd year.
- Ben-Line cataloguing project is coming to a close with the cataloguing almost finished. We also have a partnership with Edinburgh City archives for use and on-line engagement with the collection.
- The 2-year project to digitise asylum records of Gartnavel and Royal Crichton is progressing well.

Victoria Peters (University of Strathclyde):

- Currently recruiting for Wellcome Trust project to catalogue papers relating to Asbestos.
- Collaborative Wellcome bid with Special Collections Edinburgh.
- Investigating the use of Archivematica for digital preservation (sister to Atom software). There is a meeting of a fledgling Archivematica users' group in January.

If you would like to go to the Archivematica meeting, please contact Victoria who can pass on your name.

Karl Magee (University of Stirling):

- Wellcome- catalogue record of the Royal Scottish National Hospital up and running. In the process of appointing 2 conservation trainees.
- Hosts and Champions Commonwealth Games exhibition- funding from Scottish Government Legacy 2014 to tour the exhibition. Archive trainees are to prepare the exhibition for touring and the cataloguing of the 2014 records.

Siobhán Convery (University of Aberdeen):

- There is a current exhibition commemorating the 500th anniversary of the death of founder Bishop William Elphinstone which features many 15th century items.
- Fiona Watson has retired from the NHS Grampian Archives and a successor has been appointed.
- 1 year post to catalogue the King's College Archive (1495-1860) will be advertised in the New Year. The post was co-funded with the 'Friends of Aberdeen University Library'.
- Following the departure of the Exhibition Officer, Aberdeen will soon be recruiting for the post with an advert appearing in January.
- Durham University colleagues recently carried out Raman spectroscopy of the Aberdeen Bestiary.
- Department heavily involved in the Explore project and Book Week Scotland.
- Reported that the Rolls of Honour for Aberdeen University have been digitised and are available on-line.

End of SUSCAG Business meeting

Date of next meeting	Thurs 19th February 2015 in Stirling after SGSAH event
Venue	Stirling University Library
Time	2pm following SGSAH event beginning 10am