

★ FREE ★

SPIRIT OF SUNSET SONG  
Quines past and present

STRUGGLES FOR LIBERTY  
African American Revolutionaries

# DISCOVER

The magazine of the National Library of Scotland • [www.nls.uk](http://www.nls.uk) • No.45 Summer 2021



**Fresh ink from  
new talent**

**Emerging writers respond to 2020**



**National Library of Scotland**  
Leabharlann Nàiseanta na h-Alba



# Malicious Mischief? | SUFFRAGETTES IN SCOTLAND

A NEW NATIONAL RECORDS OF SCOTLAND ONLINE RESOURCE



Many contemporaries regarded the suffragettes as violent troublemakers. The Scottish authorities often charged them with Malicious Mischief, but were they just criminals? Did the suffragettes' actions help or hinder the cause of women's suffrage?

Women's suffrage was the pursuit of the right for women to vote in political elections. Pursued by both women and men, it was a long and arduous campaign that was partially successful in 1918 when the Representation of the People Act came into force and gave some women the right to vote; and finally complete in 1928 when the Equal Franchise Act granted equal voting rights to both men and women.

Some of the best-known 'personalities' of this campaign were the suffragettes, who conducted increasingly dangerous militant acts in order to protest the lack of representation in government. However, militant suffragism was relatively short-lived. The first militant action occurred in Manchester in October 1905, involving Christabel Pankhurst. Militancy continued for nine years until a truce was called in 1914 to focus on the war effort. These few years dominate the discourse on women's suffrage because of the press attention they received. However, the pursuit of women's suffrage began long before 1905.



Crown copyright, NRS, H16164

Suffragists, who sought to gain the vote through constitutional means, had been campaigning since 1832, when the first petition on women's suffrage was presented to Parliament. This early movement sought to improve women's lot in areas such as education, entry into professions and married women's legal rights. They believed that equal representation in Parliament

was the only effective way to reform legislation relating to women and children.



National Records of Scotland (NRS) holds many records relating to suffrage activities. The apprehension and prosecution of suffragettes are detailed in records of the Scottish Office, Crown Office, the courts and the prisons. These files provide a fascinating insight into the treatment of arrested suffragettes by the press and the authorities. They include the circumstances of their arrest and

supporting criminal evidence, their journey through the court and prison systems with first-hand accounts given by prison attendants and doctors, which in some cases, include force-feeding

In 2018 to celebrate the centenary of some women gaining the parliamentary vote, NRS curated the exhibition 'Malicious Mischief? Women's Suffrage in Scotland'. As part of the exhibition, a mini-website was produced that gave visitors access to: a timeline of women's suffrage; selected transcriptions of census returns from the 1911 census; and images of the complete files relating to the suffragettes featured in the exhibition. Originally this resource was only available in-person, but it is now available online: [www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/exhibitions/women-suffrage/profiles.html](http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/exhibitions/women-suffrage/profiles.html)



Further expanded, this new resource now includes short biographies of the women represented in NRS' archives and allows users to view images of the full files held by NRS relating to suffragettes and their activities in Scotland. Explore the records, and find out more about the stirring story of the struggle for the vote by peaceful and violent means.





Harriet Tubman, credit Library of Congress

**4 NEWS**

Find out about cine-poem 'Lost Connections' and our new Climate Action Plan.

**8 SUNSET SONG**

We look at how the inclusion of the iconic novel in our digital archive allows us to view it from a modern feminist perspective.

**10 LEGACY OF CHANGE**

Dr John Scally discusses his decision to retire... and his transformative vision.

**13 FRESH INK**

We asked emerging writers to respond to 2020, with 10 chosen to receive a bursary. Here we feature dazzling excerpts of their work.

**24 YOUNG GAELIC VOICES**

See some of the superb works produced by students inspired by pioneering mountain women.

**27 FIGHT FOR LIBERTY**

Read about our new learning resource, with stories of the fight to end slavery.

**30 WHAT'S ON**

From Muriel Spark to Munros, our exhibits and events have something for everyone.

**FIND US ONLINE**

[www.nls.uk](http://www.nls.uk)

[@natlibscot](https://twitter.com/natlibscot)

[www.facebook.com/  
NationalLibraryOfScotland](https://www.facebook.com/NationalLibraryOfScotland)

[www.instagram.com/  
natlibscot/](https://www.instagram.com/natlibscot/)

[www.youtube.com/user/  
NLofScotland](https://www.youtube.com/user/NLofScotland)

From my reflections on retirement to exciting new digital resources and writing from fresh talent, there's lots to enjoy in this issue

# My fond farewell... and sincere thanks

It has been an immense pleasure and a great privilege to serve as National Librarian for these past seven years. I am incredibly proud of the work that has been done during my tenure to protect, grow and promote the world-class collections of the National Library of Scotland. When I decided to retire, it was a very tough decision to leave the Library, with which I have a long and emotional connection – I first joined as a junior curator more than 30 years ago, before returning years later as National Librarian.

Leaving in October will be a wrench but I will retire with great fondness for the Library, our wonderful donors and supporters, our superb staff, and all the people we serve.

A highlight in my final months has been reading some of the exceptional submissions for our 'Fresh Ink' initiative, when we asked emerging writers across Scotland to respond to 2020. From poetry and prose to graphic novellas, the works are hard-hitting and emotional and I hope you enjoy the excerpts we are featuring in this issue (pages 13–23). Elsewhere, you can learn about our fascinating new online learning resource, 'Struggles for Liberty: African American Revolutionaries in the Atlantic World', which features stories of the individual and collective fight for social justice. Learn more about abolitionist leader Frederick Douglass – and how Scotland played a crucial role in his life (pages 27–29).

Another addition to our digital offering is the inclusion of Lewis Grassie Gibbon's entire published works, with the iconic 'Sunset Song' the focus of another new learning resource, which invites readers to consider the experiences of "quines" past and present (pages 8–9).

So there is a lot to engage and excite you. Enjoy your summer reading and thank you for an amazing seven years.

**Dr John Scally, National Librarian**

e: [NationalLibrarian@nls.uk](mailto:NationalLibrarian@nls.uk)

**CONTRIBUTORS**

**Professor Celeste-Marie Bernier**  
United States and Atlantic Studies,  
Edinburgh University



**Mel Houston, ACR**  
Preventive  
Conservator



**Yolanda Bustamante**  
Fragile Formats  
Conservation Intern



**Rona Wilkie**  
Gaelic Language  
Facilitator



**Alice Heywood**  
Digital Learning and  
Outreach Officer

**FOR THE NATIONAL LIBRARY** EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: Barbara Burke. EDITOR: Lauren McGarry [lauren@connectmedia.cc](mailto:lauren@connectmedia.cc)  
**PUBLISHED BY** Connect Publications [www.connectmedia.cc](http://www.connectmedia.cc) ISSN 1751-5998 (print) ISSN 1751 6005 (online)

**NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND** | George IV Bridge | Edinburgh EH1 1EW | **TEL:** 0131 623 3700 | **EMAIL:** [enquiries@nls.uk](mailto:enquiries@nls.uk)  
The National Library of Scotland is a registered Scottish charity, No. SC011086

Frontiers (2019), dir. Eve  
McConnachie, courtesy of  
Scottish Ballet and preserved by  
National Library of Scotland, is  
featured in Lost Connections.



# Lost Connections



KH4 (1960s), produced by Smith-  
Schorstein and preserved by  
National Library of Scotland, is  
featured in Lost Connections.

A new archive "cine-poem" about the connections we have lost and gained over the past year has been created by 12 film and media archives across the UK. Through our Moving Image Archive, the Library is one of the curatorial partners collaborating on the ambitious short.

Lead curator for the Library, Dr Emily Munro, thinks the 15-minute film will resonate with people for different reasons.

"It's a film about recovery. Though it takes the past as its reference point, the purpose of the project was to say something about our collective responsibility to build better futures.

"We might be feeling diminished by the pandemic and there is much to reflect on but there are things to embrace, too. We wanted the film to honour these mixed feelings about our gradual reconnection with each other, our communities and the world around us."

The project is supported by the BFI Film Audience Network as part of Changing Times: New Directions and managed by Yorkshire and North East Film Archives. The film is narrated by Hussina Raja and edited by Andy Burns. It will screen in cinemas and online this summer.



ONWARD

UPWARD

14–30 August

Live + Online: [edbookfest.co.uk](http://edbookfest.co.uk)

**FEATURING:**

**DOUGLAS STUART  
IAN RANKIN  
VAL MCDERMID  
ELIF SHAFAK  
SALMAN RUSHDIE**

**JACKIE KAY  
JED MERCURIO  
PAT BARKER  
ALI SMITH  
KAZUO ISHIGURO  
MATT HAIG**

**DEVI SRIDHAR  
DAVID DIOP  
NGŪĪ WA THIONG'O  
EIMEAR MCBRIDE  
OLIVIA LAING  
AND MANY MORE...**

**EDINBURGH  
INTERNATIONAL  
BOOK FESTIVAL**



**Ideas + Stories for a Changing World**

# THE ROAD TO NET ZERO... OUR PLAN TO HELP TACKLE THE CLIMATE CRISIS



County of the Clyde' (1963), preserved by the National Library of Scotland

**W**e're making the final touches to our new Climate Action Plan, a positive vision that sets out the steps we'll be taking to become more sustainable over the next four years.

This work couldn't be more urgent. Scotland declared a climate emergency in 2019 and the effects of the climate crisis are becoming more and more apparent, at home and around the globe. With the COP26 climate summit being hosted in Glasgow later this year, the world's eyes will be on Scotland to help implement a meaningful and just climate agenda.

While the actions detailed in the plan take us only to 2025, Scotland has set in motion an ambitious target to become net-zero by 2045 at the latest. In the short-term, the Library is aiming for a 72.5 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, from our 2008/09 baseline. The Climate Action Plan will ensure sustainability is considered in all

aspects of our operations, from our waste management to procurement policies.

However, the plan is not just about making our buildings greener. As a national library, we sit on a wealth of information. This gives us opportunities to help shape the national climate conversation, but also a responsibility to ensure that conversation is inclusive and far-reaching.

In doing so, we can help to educate the public and build resilience in communities across Scotland as the effects of the climate crisis continue to be apparent.

That's why we'll incorporate climate change engagement into our public programming over the next four years.

We'll never become a truly sustainable and resilient Scotland if access to this knowledge is confined to a select few.

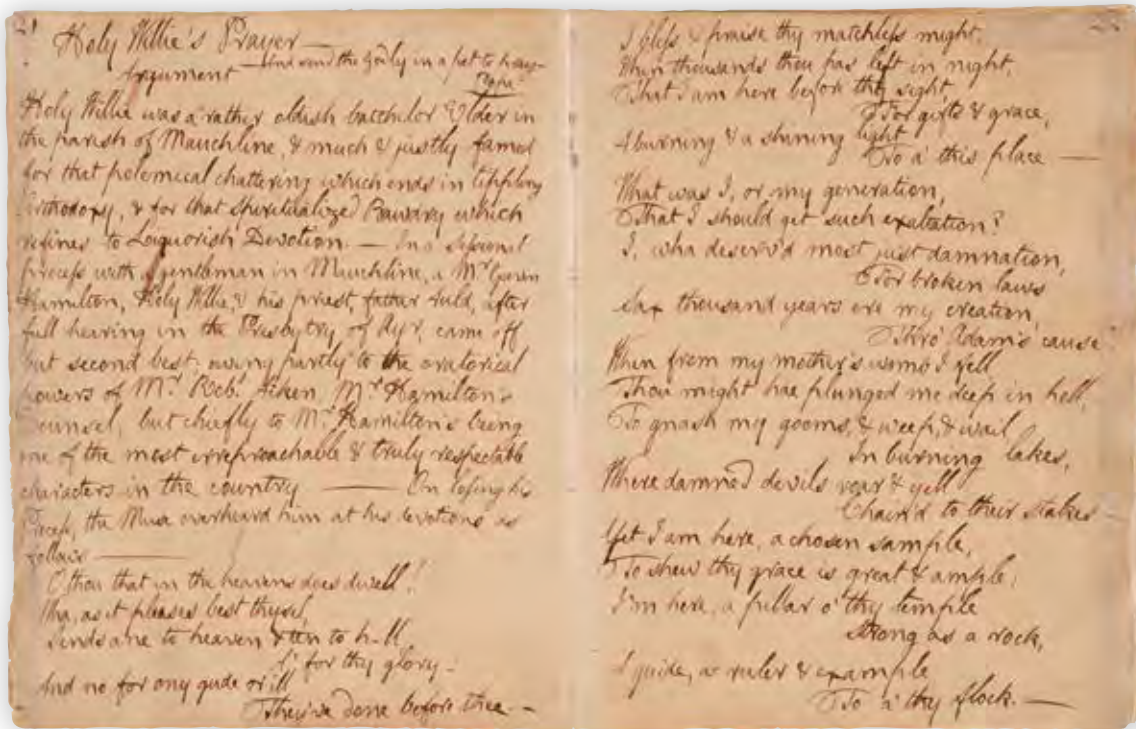
Climate information has to be available to everyone and presented in such a way so it is understood by people with different levels of knowledge, from schoolchildren and undergraduates through to lifelong

learners and PhD candidates. So as well as providing journal titles and book series on the science of climate and its related social issues, we're also thinking about other ways we can engage with people.

In September, we will launch the film 'Living Proof' – a compilation of footage from our Moving Image Archive which explores Scotland's relationship to its industrial past and the connection it has to our present-day crisis. All going well, we will tour the screenings throughout Scotland this autumn.

There are lots of ways we can get people talking about the climate crisis, from touring an archival film to publicising a map collection showing the effects of climate change on Scotland's coasts.

We hope these activities will prompt fresh ideas and start discussions on tackling the crisis. Conversations about climate change don't have to be dominated by graphs and data. Film, sound, maps and stories all help us understand the complex web of crises related to climate change.



Collection items on sale would greatly complement some of the treasures we already have. 'Holy Willie's Prayer' in the hand of Burns, left, and 'Waverley' in the hand of Scott, below

# The Honresfield Library

Saving the literary treasure trove for public use

**M**any of you will no doubt have read the news that one of the most coveted literary collections still in private hands, the Honresfield Library, was being put up for sale. We're part of a consortium trying to ensure that this remains with relevant public institutions throughout the UK, and we will be working hard to bring peerless Sir Walter Scott and Robert Burns manuscripts to Scotland.

The bid to save the Honresfield – one of the most important private collections of manuscripts and printed books, associated with some of the greatest writers in the UK – is being led by Friends of the National Libraries (FNL).

We feel that we cannot let these items go abroad or into private hands. They should, and must, be in public collections.

We are grateful to the vendors and their representatives, Sotheby's, for deciding to postpone the auction of the first part of the library, originally announced for July, in order to preserve the entire library as a collection to be allocated to libraries around the UK for the benefit of the public, and to give

time for the institutions to raise the necessary funds.

The Honresfield Library has been largely inaccessible for the past 80 years, its contents examined by only a few trusted scholars. It was formed at the end of the 19th century by William Law (1836–1901), a Rochdale mill owner living at Honresfield, a few miles from Haworth, West Yorkshire. The bulk of the collection has remained in family ownership and is largely intact. A private library of English and Scottish literature of such significance has not been on the open market for many decades – nor is one likely to appear again.

The Honresfield collection includes the complete working manuscript of Sir Walter Scott's iconic novel 'Rob Roy' and part of the autograph manuscript of his verse romance 'The Lay of the Last Minstrel', his light-hearted travel journal of a voyage off the Scottish coast in 1814. There is also a copy of Scott's 'Border Antiquities', with extensive manuscript revisions, and an exceptional collection of Scott first editions in their original condition. Other Scottish material of huge importance includes an early volume of poems by Robert

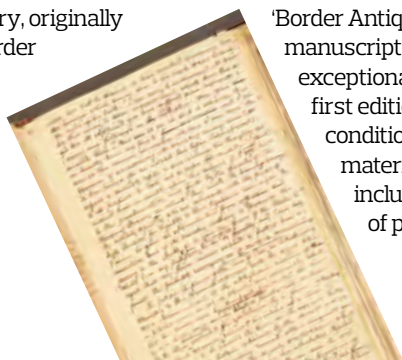
Burns – in his own hand and containing some of his earliest recorded literary works – which is known as the 'First Commonplace Book'.

There is also individual autograph poems ('Cessnock Banks' and the 'Brigs of Ayr') and some of the poet's earliest correspondence, including the only extant letter to Burns's beloved father.

Fundraising appeals have been launched by the National Library of Scotland, with other consortium libraries and museums. If successful, ownership of every individual item will pass to the appropriate national, regional and specialist institutions across the UK that will benefit the widest possible public.

National Librarian Dr John Scally, a trustee of the FNL, said: "Once in a generation, a collection of books and manuscripts appears from almost nowhere that is met with a mixture of awe and stunned silence, followed by concerted action to bring it into public ownership. The UK-wide consortium is determined to raise the funds to ensure we can save the Honresfield Library for everyone to share and enjoy."

**Q** For more information or to donate, visit our website at [nls.uk](http://nls.uk) or email [development@nls.uk](mailto:development@nls.uk)



# SUNSET SONG: QUINES PAST AND PRESENT

The inclusion of Lewis Grassie Gibbon's novel in our digital archive allows students to view this classic text from a modern feminist perspective, writes Digital Learning and Outreach Officer Alice Heywood



SEGGET

**RESOURCE:**  
A sketch map reproduced  
by permission of the  
Mitchell Literary Estate

**W**ith Lewis Grassie Gibbon's entire published work now digitised and made available on our website, 'Sunset Song' is the focus of a new learning resource aimed at both students and lifelong learners.

Consistently voted one of Scotland's favourite books, 'Sunset Song' is arguably one of Scotland's most iconic novels, read and loved by generations. Following the indomitable character Chris Guthrie, it tells her story from girlhood to adulthood as she takes on the role of wife and mother. The novel is a moving and evocative narrative of a small rural community in the North East of Scotland as it comes to grips with the changing world of the 1900s and the disruption of the First World War.

When the novel was first published in 1932, many readers reacted with disgust at its frank portrayal of sex and childbearing and its scorn for the rich and powerful. Almost 90 years later, 2021 feels like a relevant moment to reconsider the novel through a modern feminist lens and point a new generation of readers and students towards considering the underrepresented female voice in both

Scottish fiction and society at large. Through a close reading of some key moments in the novel, the learning resource draws attention to themes such as the role of women, identity, and social class. Other themes like land and nature are discussed, and how they are repeatedly evoked through Chris's responses to events. They illustrate her deep connection to the landscape, a connection which Grassie Gibbon drew heavily on from his memories of growing up in the North East of Scotland.

Doric, the language of the North East, is also interwoven in the resource through creative responses to the novel by modern women, or 'quines'. Through their songs and words, these modern quines show how something of Chris's spirit lives on in all who persevere through challenges and adversity with the same tenacity, resilience and boldness. We're delighted, therefore, to have a contribution by First Minister Nicola Sturgeon featured in this section.

Fittingly, the resource also benefitted from the input of a Robertson Trust intern, Stephanie Martin, who the Library hosted in the summer of 2020. Stephanie provided a fresh and dynamic perspective, selecting passages and contributing to the themes as well as making connections to other Library collections linked to in the resource.

A self-declared working-class young woman, Stephanie is in many ways a 21st-century mirror to Chris Guthrie's spirit and intelligence.

By bringing together the voices and reflections of modern women, this resource aims to inspire learners of all ages to take a fresh perspective in their

own reading of the novel and use it as a springboard for their creative responses to the book. By drawing attention to the various identities Chris's character encompasses, from daughter to wife and mother, the resource also invites people to consider the lived experiences of women past and present and find threads of commonality in their own personal stories.

Other highlights of the resource include pages from the original typescript and a hand-drawn sketch map, as well as audio extracts read by one of the contributing quines. Learning activities for English students mapped to the Curriculum for Excellence have also been provided to prompt further discussion and study of the novel.

**📖 To access the resource, visit [nls.uk](https://nls.uk), select 'Digital resources', then 'Learning Zone', then 'Literature and Languages'.**



## FRIEDA MORRISON, RADIO PRODUCER AND BROADCASTER

I've tried to leave the North East a few times – whether via work or by sheer necessity – but I've always been pulled back, like so many others. And if they couldn't come back, many have written about this area from a distance, such as James Leslie Mitchell, otherwise known as Lewis Grassie Gibbon. The North East isn't just a



skelp of land, culture is as potent a force as the soil itself.

It's a wye o livin, a wye o thinkin an a wye o spikkin.

Our cultural identity stems fae the land and the sea.

He must have been aware of these precious links as he travelled around this district as a farming journalist and someone who grew up here and the Mearns.

'Sunset Song', the first book in his 'Scots Quair' trilogy, was the first book I read at school in the rhythm of my own language. It remains my favourite.



# transformative journey

The Library has been given a renewed sense of purpose during Dr John Scally's seven-year tenure



**TURNING A NEW PAGE:** Dr Scally says it was a "tough, emotional moment" when he decided to retire from the Library but he knew he needed to simplify his life

**“**It was a tough, emotional moment," National Librarian and Chief Executive of the National Library of Scotland, Dr John Scally, says of his decision to retire this year. "The pandemic changed so much for many of us and, turning 60 in March, I decided I needed to simplify my life given my wife lived 400 miles away. We have been apart for many months due to lockdown."

Scally's career at the Library has been in two phases. He was the Deputy Head of Rare Books at the Library before becoming Director of University Collections and subsequently Director of Library and University Collections at the University of Edinburgh (during which time the university doubled in size).

With further experience and enhanced skills, he returned to the National Library in 2014.

"Your perspective is totally different when you're at the top level at the Library," he explains. "My responsibility was to think about the strategic direction and to simplify and restate the purpose of the Library. The acquisition of the John Murray Archive by the previous National Librarian Martyn Wade and Chair Michael Anderson had made a significant impact. So too had the opening up of the George IV Bridge front hall area as a visitor centre and the new Special Collections Reading Room, which was pretty spectacular.

Some really good foundations had been laid. I had the feeling, however, that the Library needed to set its sights on being a truly physical and digital library and to also break out of Edinburgh."

Scally's achievements have included the 'One Third Digital' initiative, a pledge to have a third of the Library's holdings in digital format and freely accessible online in time for its centenary in 2025.

He recently launched the Library's Data Foundry – publishing Library collections as data for digital scholars. He also oversaw major capital projects totalling £15 million – the redevelopment of the Library's Causewayside building in Edinburgh, and the opening of the Library's state-of-the-art facility at Kelvin Hall in Glasgow, which houses the Moving Image and Sound Collections.

Scally ensured that the transformative vision of the Library was supported with funding, both from the Scottish Government as well as the Library's loyal patrons and donors. "Funding only follows good ideas," he explains. "We needed to justify that, as well as maintaining our buildings, we needed to maintain and develop our digital estate – which doesn't come free. It also enabled us to develop the young workforce in the cultural sector, something our donors really got behind. I enjoyed working with donors – we achieved a lot together over the past seven years."

While his digital work has been significant, Scally has also had a critical role in the acquisition of a number of high-profile collections. He was successful in securing the second volume of the Edinburgh Calotype Club photographic album, produced by the oldest photographic club in the world. "I still don't know how I did it, but I

persuaded the auction house to put it in a later sale, which meant we could raise the funds and we won the bidding war!"

More recently, Scally worked with crime novelist Ian Rankin to secure the donation of his literary archive, which is now available at the Library's reading rooms. "I worked with Ian to convince him to gift it to the Library and he also agreed to put money into having it catalogued. We have some great writers' archives. So, this was one in a long line of belters."

He is proud of what he has achieved for the Library, as well as of his career overall. The first in his family to go to university, his childhood dream of becoming Spider-Man was followed by ambitions to be a teacher. He spent much time reading at Glenburn Library in his hometown of Paisley, "roaming far and wide" through a mixture of factual and fiction books. His English teacher, Mrs Anderson, was his inspiration, having given him a copy of 'Catcher in the Rye' by JD Salinger. "It blew me away," he said. "I returned it and she said, 'it's not my book any more, it's your book'. It's my most important possession, a dog-eared paperback."

Having been accepted at Moray House in Edinburgh to study English and History, his honours dissertation was sent to a professor at Cambridge who asked him to do a PhD with him and his love of reading and books was cemented. Scally has a number of research interests, including

## ● I will leave with a great fondness for the Library and its superb staff ●

book history, book illustration and early modern history. He has published on a number of these topics, including a book on Robert Louis Stevenson's illustrators, articles and book chapters on the Scottish Parliament before 1707 and the British Civil Wars of the 1640s.

He is currently writing two books but also has plans to fill his days during retirement with a barber training course, a cooking course, a French language course and lots of travel.

"I will leave with a great fondness for the Library and its superb staff," he says. "I have had a privileged position in helping the Library establish a clear view of its future as a national library for everybody's benefit."

🕒 **Dr John Scally will retire from his position as National Librarian in October.**

# Writing Prizes & Courses

- . Short Story
- . Short Memoir
- . Flash Fiction
- . Poetry

# Editorial & Critique Services

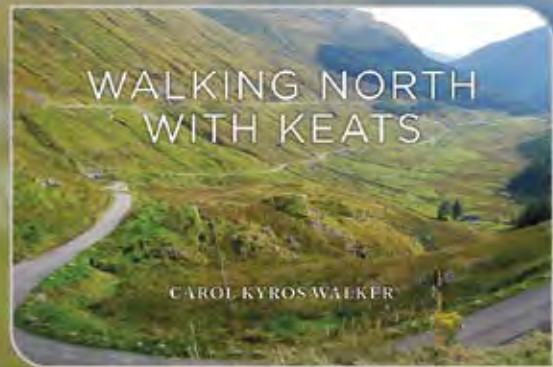
Providing assistance to  
writers and poets

All Online:  
[www.fishpublishing.com](http://www.fishpublishing.com)

Fish Publishing  
Durrus, Co. Cork, Ireland



Recapture the landscapes, landmarks, poetry  
and letters of Keats' epic walk of 1818



**Walking North with Keats**  
by Carol Kyros Walker

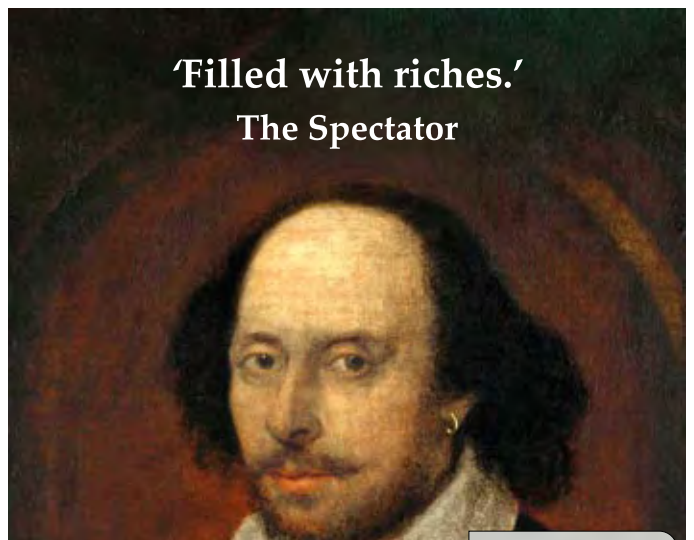
This revised edition of a 90's classic contains over 150  
photographs retracing the tour Keats took in 1818.

Hardback | £25.00 | 256 pages | Available Now

Save 30% using code **NEW30** at  
[edinburghuniversitypress.com](http://edinburghuniversitypress.com)

EDINBURGH  
University Press

**'Filled with riches.'**  
**The Spectator**



**Living with Shakespeare**

Saint Helen's Parish, London, 1593-1598  
by Geoffrey Marsh

A microhistory of London's St Helen's Parish,  
revealing the lives of Shakespeare's neighbours and  
their potential influences on his writing.

Hardback | £25.00 | 512 pages | Available Now

Save 30% using code **NEW30** at  
[edinburghuniversitypress.com](http://edinburghuniversitypress.com)

Living with  
**Shakespeare**

SAINT HELEN'S PARISH, LONDON,  
1593-1598  
GEOFFREY MARSH



EDINBURGH  
University Press

An illustration featuring a blue ribbon that loops around the central text. A yellow hand holds a red pen, and a red hand holds a yellow pen. The background is a light cream color.

# fresh ink

## NEW WRITERS RESPOND TO 2020

**I**t was quite a year. In a bid to support artists, and to provide a platform for the diverse voices that make up 21st century Scotland, we invited emerging writers to respond to the year 2020.

We were overwhelmed with the replies – 250 people applied, pitching a range of exciting and topical ways to respond to a most eventful year. We were only able to

award 10 people the £1,000 commission to develop work – work which is also being added to our literary archives.

All works will be published on our website from 12 July.

Poet, writer and creative practitioner Nadine Aisha Jassat worked on the Fresh Ink initiative with the Library. She said: "I have read work which has made me

cry, work which has brought me peace, and work which has filled me with awe at the talent of the storytelling and art."

The following pages provide excerpts of each work, encompassing prose, poetry, graphic novella, playwrighting and personal essays. If you find the works as intriguing and evocative as we have, visit our website, [nls.uk](https://nls.uk), for more.

## NIGHT SWIMMING

I had another brush with the Italian God and his foreign methods. We went on holiday to visit Dan's southern relatives, and it was here that I was bewitched by a faith that incorporated acts of creativity, stories created in the present moment, and individual to the believer. In the streets of Naples were golden skulls on little obelisks, to be touched for good luck. I stared at the golden crowns, all worn down. I had never encountered a God who could be wooed like this, who could be persuaded and entertained.

Elsewhere, the ebulliently masculine culture of Naples meant that bodies were never far from our minds. Dan's aunty served us a rum-soaked phallic sponge cake – 'eat it, it's good luck!' and we were given a cornicello, a red ceramic chilli pepper. This is hung up in the house to promote virility, good luck, fertility, prosperity – accounts differed as to what it would bring, but it would certainly bring us more.

I loved these potent, symbolic gifts, while never allowing myself to touch upon the cold truth underneath. At the time, we were facing up to the reality that we might never be able to conceive a child. Under the colossal heat of the Campania sun, I felt enclosed in good fortune, certain of future wellbeing. It was a magic trick, my very first. Dan,

meanwhile, tolerated my new-found love for the interiors of Catholic churches, the flowers that flowed and candles that melted and folded, undisturbed. I peered up at side-show altars, for specific prayers to appointed saints, and made plans to buy a litter of nativity figurines. I think Dan thought I was only in it for the accessories. Which was right, just about. I was drawn to this confident interference with fate, this sense that we might make up the stories of our futures ourselves, and best of all, there were physical props to assist this magic.

When we returned home, the sober Protestant God was waiting. I kept the cornicello in its little red box on a shelf. I felt guilty, for bargaining in bad faith, trying to force my way. To pray for a child seemed an ugly act, when I considered that so many people long for a child and endure the pain of never having one. I would never contend that they simply hadn't prayed enough. I returned to my unglamorous, atheistic convictions. Our future was a question, and the certainties of the present offered no comfort and assuaged no pain.

Then two bright red chilli peppers arrived in our monthly vegetable box delivery. They were cuddled together, gleaming. I forbade myself to think about what I was doing when I tied them with string and hung them up. They cheered

me up when I came in the kitchen each morning. I sometimes touched them, a prayer that was bodily, not something that could be put into words.

I tricked myself and I let myself be tricked. In the autumn of the next year, 2019, I found out I was pregnant.



**Amy Jardine**

I live on the East Coast with my partner and son, and our cat. I try to write as often as I can; sometimes about small things, like my cat. Sometimes about big things: the internet, creativity, the future, good books I've read. I'm currently working on my first novel.

## jd stewart

jd stewart is a gay writer /performer / digital content creator based in Edinburgh. He holds an MFA in Dramatic Writing from New York University and an MSc in Playwriting from the University of Edinburgh. He co-created 'The One Fifty Marchers', a UK LGBTQ history podcast with Frazer Flintham.



Photo © Jake Lee Smith

## PLEASE ANSWER YOUR PHONE, I NEED TO TELL YOU THAT I LOVE YOU

### NEWS

**April 13th, 2020: 21,012 Covid deaths.**

ME

I take extra shifts at work to get through the empty loneliness which greets me every morning. Each room feels like its own cell. I now know this will not last a few weeks. I sit in the hall and wait to hear someone coming up the stairs. I hope that it's you. Every day I hope that it's you coming back to me.

### NEWS

**April 17th, 2020: 26,121 Covid deaths.**

ME

They continue to clap for heroes. I am not a hero. I have to pay rent. I have to eat. I have to live. I tell myself I have to keep going even though my insides feel numb and the only thing that I want is to feel your laughter on my fingertips.

FRIEND ONE

You haven't answered your phone. Are you okay?

FRIEND TWO

Did you watch Tiger King?

FRIEND THREE

I've become a runner. I'm doing 10K every single minute of the day.

FRIEND FOUR

Do you sell yeast at work?  
Can you get me some?

ME

The cracks are bigger. I should have measured them when I saw them but I am too afraid to step on the ladder. I'm worried that I fall and if I fall I won't be able to answer my phone if you call. I'll have to drag my body to the door and even then I won't be able to reach the handle to open it. My door has no handle. It's hard to open. Everyone says that.

GRINDR

Welcome back, b----! I knew your a-- wouldn't stay away for long.

### NEWS

**April 27th, 2020: 36,480 Covid deaths.**

ME

The guys across the street have moved their living room around. If I look at their apartment from my living room I can see the only decoration they have is a Scottish flag. One time I passed them in the street and they are both English. They have English accents. I am not attracted to them because they look the same. I can't tell them apart. But one of them looks like you.

PIGLET

It's not me.

ME

I know that.

PIGLET

Have you tried to call?

ME

I'm tired. Of waiting.

PIGLET

Maybe you should give up. You are good at giving up.

ME

That's not fair.

PIGLET

I think you are.

ME

I do as well.

### NEWS

**May 10th, 2020: 45,186 Covid deaths.**

ME

I hate the clapping. It echoes up the street and into every crack inside my apartment. I don't clap for anyone.

Working in a shop has shown me who people really are. I'm afraid when this is over I'll be at lunch with a friend and they will know one of the people who treated me like s----. On that day I hope I treat them like s----.

### NEWS

**May 12th, 2020: 46,053 Covid deaths.**

CUSTOMER ONE

I'm not using the self-service.

CUSTOMER TWO

I've not got it. You don't have to act like that.

CUSTOMER THREE

What do you mean I can't come in with my whole family?

CUSTOMER FOUR

F---- you, I've followed all the rules.

ME

I am a human punching bag.

CUSTOMER ONE

Why don't you have any more toilet paper?

CUSTOMER TWO

You need to watch your tone when you talk to me.

CUSTOMER THREE

It's my human right to pay with cash and you have to take it.

CUSTOMER FOUR

I'm going to report you to your manager.



Photo © Rhiannon Swan-Price

## Jude Reid

Jude lives in Glasgow with her husband, two daughters, dog, cat and rabbits, and writes dark stories in the gaps between work as a surgeon and wrangling her menagerie. Her short fiction has been published in numerous anthologies including 'Haunted Voices: An Anthology of Scottish Gothic Storytelling', 'Places We Fear To Tread' (Cemetery Gates Media), and 'The Corona Book of Ghost Stories'. She is currently working on her first novel.

## MAGPIE

### Part I: The Sin

1350, Selcouth Priory, North Ayrshire

"Do you think it's an omen?" Sister Magrete asks.

A single magpie is standing on the grass in the middle of the cloister. It's not uncommon to see the birds here, digging for worms or picking at a carcass, but this one is poised and still in a way that makes Ishbel think of an illumination on vellum. It's bigger than the usual, too, the size of a raven, each fine pinion feather outlined against the next in stark rows of black and white. If it spread its wings it'd stretch a full four foot wide. If Ishbel was prone to fancies she'd swear it was watching them.

"The bird? An omen?"

Magrete nods, her teeth worrying away at her lower lip. She's new to the cloister, still learning the shape of days bounded by prayer and contemplation instead of milking and churning, but the work's hard all the same.

A few minutes for a quiet walk is all the peace Ishbel will have until Compline, and the girl is filling it with chatter.

"It's a bird, Magrete. I don't think it's an omen."

The girl's red-raw hands wring at the black skirts of her habit. "My granny says they're the devil's bird, cursed because they wouldn't mourn for Christ."

"If the prioress hears you at that nonsense she'll send you back to the byre."

Magrete is undeterred. "And they appear when death's on its way, to carry away the souls of the dead."

"Best expect a few more, then."

A cool wind stirs the quiet cloister air, and a shiver runs down Ishbel's spine that has nothing to do with the magpie. The priory sits on the pilgrim route between Whithorn and the Glasgow Cathedral, and between spring and autumn fresh news comes with every pair of walking feet. This year the same tidings arrive each time: the pestilence is creeping from the south like a rising tide, and its arrival can only be a matter of time.

The bird turns its head to one side and takes a casual hop towards them. Magrete makes a little mock-rush at it, waving her arms to scare it away. It doesn't seem much concerned, but its wings beat the air long enough for it to perch on the stonework, amber eye still glittering down at the cloister below.

"It's an omen, I tell you." Magrete juts her jaw stubbornly forward. "Where the magpie goes, death follows."

"You're havoring," Ishbel tells her.

"Leave omens for the farmyard and stick to your prayers."

But omen or no omen, death comes to Selcouth that night, soft as a first kiss.

"The pestilence has reached Ayr," the prioress informs them over supper. No

one speaks, but a soft rustle moves along the trestles as cups stop short of lips, bread returning uneaten to the table. To Ishbel the news comes as no surprise, but plenty of the older women have clung to the hope that the channel, or the English border, or God's grace alone might save them from what's to come.

They've all heard the stories. Coughs and fever that soon turn to blackened swellings of the flesh, bloody froth on the lips and a swift, suffocating death. For each hopeful tale of survivors, there's a report of a village where the dead rot in their homes with no one left to bury them. Some say that the plague is God's judgement on the wickedness of the world, a second flood to winnow the sinners from the righteous. If the stories are to be believed, godly folk are thin on the ground these days.

"We await guidance from the Abbot in Kilwinning as to where our duty lies. For now, we continue as we always have, in service to God and Christ Jesus."

A soft, murmured 'amen' passes from sister to sister. Magrete's eyes are closed, her red knuckles clenched tight around her rosary as her lips move in silent, fervent prayer.

Nothing stirs in Ishbel, no surge of divine love, no faith in the rightness of what is to come, not even a renewed commitment to serve and obey.

Nothing but a heaviness in the pit of her stomach, a slow-growing, creeping fear.

fresh ink



## ON STATUES

some things age like milk.  
tweets trumpeted from an  
orange gas bag,  
January 2020's "best year ever" plans,

but racist ideology double dipped  
in bronze,  
is timeless. that s--- is built to last.  
unless

you arrive at a generation, tired of fighting  
the same war their grandparents fought.  
when an object you thought was

immovable is met with an  
unstoppable force, does it feel  
like you're sinking?

and will it ever sink in,  
if you shout,  
"there ain't no Black in the union jack"  
when The Empire strikes,  
The People will strike back.

## ON VIOLENCE

"tread softly, because you tread  
on my fragility"

this is how they ask her  
to march quietly

it's hard to always come in peace when  
she always comes in pieces,  
dismantled by the brutality of strangers  
and guided by blood

"is this what dr king was dreaming of?"

this is how they shame and  
invalidate her rage

she doesn't know what king would say  
because they silenced him with

lead as he preached, armed only  
with peace, in a suit and tie

which is why respectability  
doesn't guarantee safety

no matter how softly she treads, her  
skin will be read as

*threat*

the word violence is a battered suitcase,  
stuffed full of Blackness and fit to burst

historically, the Black Body has been  
forced into the narrowest of words

and rearranged to spell  
a different truth

they will make an anagram out of you,  
but punish anyone who unscrambles

violence to find voice

## Mae Diansangu

Mae Diansangu is a Black queer spoken word artist from Aberdeen. She is co-founder of intersectional feminist arts platform, Hysteria, and is a member of Scottish BAME Writers Network's operational team. Mae is part of a network of Black community activists organising under BLM Scotland, and her work often centres on social justice themes.





## Nazmi McCartney

Nazmi McCartney is a young poet from Edinburgh. She has been writing poetry since she was 13, and much of her work explores loss, loneliness and her search for peace in the inner world. Other than writing, she enjoys collecting colourful socks and sipping green tea.

### SMALL COMFORTS

though you have grown numb to anticipation, you wake and mumble good morning to a new day. the same day.

today, you will:  
close your eyes when you hear the seagulls cawing outside  
and pretend you're watching them soar over your head  
as your toes sink into warm, soft sand.

discover a ruined building to roam  
and revere  
as if it were a garden in bloom, and then conjure

in your mind the scene that led to the empty bottles,  
charred wood and burnt newspapers  
littering the ground.

recall the last hug you had with someone dear,  
think of all the places your body pressed against theirs,  
repeat the words they murmured softly in your ear,  
and feel the wind that rushed over you when your bodies parted.

cocoon yourself in fairy tales and universes not your own  
meet storytellers and their characters and imagine how, in another life,  
you might interact with them, what your place might be,  
how you might love and be loved, how you might be different  
and how you might be the same.

you tumble through your new routine until it comes time to run away to sleep. in the back of your mind you say goodnight to the world and urge it to spin a bit faster, because you know you will wake tomorrow to relive the only day your body can still remember  
heaving you through, where you will return, yet again,  
to the same small comforts.

Drawing by Candice Purwin © Candice Purwin



## Candice Purwin

Candice Purwin is a writer and illustrator making comics in Edinburgh. Her work documents everything from social and political movements to the changing of the seasons, finding the human stories and tiny creatures which bind these great, tectonic shifts together.

### THE UNWILLING COMPANION

Three quarters of a year spent aimlessly. Walking, walking, shying away from the next ray of sunshine that will stab and ooze through my bedroom window. Before that happens, I find myself crawling out the door to another nighttime walk around the same streets. I see yesterday's - or tomorrow's? - me across the road, swaying. Is she singing or crying? She is clutching a year's worth of diary entries to her chest. One by one they escape from her arms to disintegrate around her, but I do not move. I am not her friend. Gentle wind scatters the remnants of the pages across the shadow we cast together. Eventually, she lifts her head, turns her gaze to me, and winces. I cannot meet her eyes. Not now, not when I counted in the year alone, far from home. As a chorus of jovial voices rang like bells downstairs, she loomed, foreboding at the foot of the bed, while I lamented in a body unable to move. Now, as I watch her form grow shapeless and ebb into the air around me, I hope I can look her in the eye next year. Until then, we will both carry on, walking, walking.

# OCTOBER

HALLOWEEN IS CANCELLED

## WEEK 41

MY COMPUTER DECIDED PRETTY EARLY ON IN THE PANDEMIC TIMES THAT IT WAS NO LONGER GOING TO STREAM ANYTHING OR ZOOM ANYONE.



IN AN ATTEMPT TO KEEP UP WITH THE ZEITGEIST GRANDMA-STYLE, I PICK UP 'LOVECRAFT COUNTRY', RECENTLY ADAPTED FOR TV BY JORDAN PEELE, ON ONE OF MY LAST LIBRARY TRIPS.



## LOVECRAFT COUNTRY - MATT RUFF

## WEEK 43

WHILE THIS WHOLE COLLECTION OF SHORT STORIES IS BRILLIANT, THIS ONE ABOUT A BLACK FEMALE SINGER AND AN INFERRED ELVIS PRESLEY STAYED WITH ME. SHE MANAGES TO WRITE BOTH A FIERCE INDICTMENT OF BLACK WOMEN'S ERASURE FROM AMERICAN



MUSIC HISTORY AND A TENDER STUDY OF AN UNLIKELY FRIENDSHIP.



## YOU CAN'T KEEP A GOOD WOMAN DOWN - AZICE WALKER

WE ZEALOUSLY GIVE THE COUNTRIES WHO DID A BETTER JOB THAN US THE OL' STINK EYE.



I MAKE ONE LAST EXCURSION TO MY GEORGE IV BRIDGE SANCTUM BEFORE IT CLOSES AGAIN. DIGITAL BORROWING HAS SAVED MY LIFE THIS YEAR BUT THERE IS NOTHING LIKE THE SMELL, SERENDIPITY + DUST MOSES OF AN ACTUAL LIBRARY AND I'M A LITTLE AFRAID SOME OF THEM WON'T RE-OPEN.



## WEEK 42

AN "ETERNAL SUNSHINE..." PREMISE, A LITTLE WITCHING + CRAFTING. A WORLD IN WHICH YOUR MEMOIRALS CAN BE BOUND, INTO BOOKS TO BE LOCKED AWAY, LOST, STOLEN OR SOLD.

THE ERASING + REPURPOSING OF MEMORY MIGHT BE WHAT 2020 IS DOING TO MY BRAIN.



## THE BINDING - BRIDGET COZZINS

## WEEK 44

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AS DEEPLY ENTRENCHED + IMMOVABLE AS THAT PULLED TOOTH OF A ROCK, BROODING OFF THE COAST OF NORTH BERWICK. THIS BOOK PALPITATES WITH STRANGE + SUDDEN SURGES OF ANIMALISTIC MALE VIOLENCE. BALANCED PRECARIOUSLY WITH THE POWER OF AWKWARD, IMPERFECT UNBREAKABLE FEMALE ALLYSHIP.

(IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOT HOW DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, ALREADY EPIDEMIC, HAS INCREASED DURING THE PANDEMIC)



## THE BASS ROCK - EVIE WYLD

SOME HAD LEARNED FROM SARS. AN AUSTRALIAN FRIEND THINKS THEIR FAILURE TO HANDLE THE WILDFIRES LED TO THEM DOUBLING DOWN ON THEIR PANDEMIC RESPONSE. SOME OF THOSE COUNTRIES PERHAPS, HAD GROWN UPS IN CHARGE.

WHATEVER THEY DID, WE DIDN'T DO. SO EVEN WITH HALLOWEEN CANCELLED, THINGS IN THE UK REMAIN SCARY.





Photo © Angela Legg

## Sean Wai Keung

Sean Wai Keung is a Glasgow-based poetry, performance and food maker. His work often uses food as a starting point for explorations of identity and migration. His first full-length poetry collection, 'sikfan glaschu', was published by Verve Poetry Press in April 2021. Full credits can be found via [seanwaikeung.carrd.co](http://seanwaikeung.carrd.co)

**25/01/20**

For the first time in 76 years  
Lunar New Year and Burns Night fall  
on the same day

## THE RECIPE

### haggis

(recipe by 衣谷水原)

sheep stomach  
sheep lungs  
sheep liver  
sheep heart  
oats  
onion  
pepper powder

- soak lungs, liver and heart in water for an hour
- wash the sheep stomach four times
- cut the lungs, liver and heart into pieces and place in cold water
- boil over high heat, then take out
- wash oats and put on a baking tray, bake until golden brown
- cut onion into pieces
- mash lungs, liver, heart, onion, and pour into dish
- add oats and pepper powder to the mash
- pour the broth that you cooked the lungs, liver and heart in over the mixture
- turn the sheep stomach inside out and tie the head up
- fill the stomach with the mixture, not too tight, about two-thirds
- tie the other end of the stomach up
- boil for three hours, without a lid, adding more water if needed.

everybody is eating together  
and together  
we make a body:

the lungs are the transport system they  
allow us to travel safely  
the heart is the houses we visit in order to  
see our loved ones  
the stomach is love  
the liver is processing  
this body comes together with  
other bodies  
to form a body of bodies  
we wrap ourselves tightly in bodies  
for warmth and comfort and  
food – we eat bodies together  
we create bodies together  
we remember bodies

According to an NY Times article written by Fergus M. Bordewich and published on Feb. 12 1984 titled Chinese Hearts In Scottish Highlands: "the celebrating of Burns has become a gala event in the People's Republic of China, where the poet has been taken on as a patron saint of proletarianism."

A few days after my family visit I travel to Dumfries and visit the Burns Mausoleum. A few streets over, a takeaway serves "Authentic Cantonese Cuisine". I buy some chips and they're delicious. Soon after I return to Glasgow, the first lockdown is announced.

## DEAR SONALI

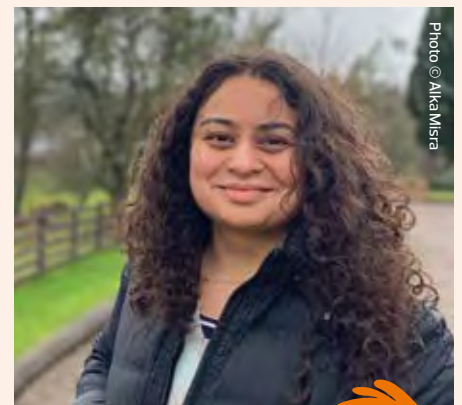
Before all that, what you're most excited for is Mama's visit. She has spent a few weeks in the US and will soon be on her way to you. It made sense to fly through the UK en route to India, though a bit excessive, you thought, since you saw her not even four months ago. And you'll be visiting home in another eight months or so. But look at our jetsetter mother, travelling across continents all alone. You've been concerned about her as she makes her way around the US in the frightening climate under Trump, though she's supposed to worry about you as the daughter and she's visited foreign lands by herself before you could even spell them. No wonder that Little Sonali had big dreams of gifting Papa a Mercedes and Mama a world tour. Thirty seemed like a good age to do this – Papa would still be able to enjoy his drives and Mama her travels in their sixties. Thirty seemed so old back then. Thirty painted a picture of a proper adult with her own car, house, family and career, along with a disposable income with which she could attempt to repay her parents' love and generosity, to give them the things they'd sacrificed so that their kids could have the best start in their lives.

You and I know better now. I'm turning thirty soon, and it is bleak. Not only because I can't tick off any of the Thirty Checklist Items and thus make for a p--- -poor imitation of an Adult, but also because...

You've had time to set up your new place and, unlike the university accommodation you stayed in during your master's, there will be enough space for both Mama and you to fit inside your

bedroom; you could even stretch your limbs without knocking something over! As much as you enjoy proving to her that you can take care of yourself, of course you've already demanded that she cook you kulcha channa and mattar paneer because sometimes there's no replicating her recipes. In return, she'll enjoy British 'delicacies' such as crumpets and scones and snack on as many fat juicy strawberries as she can get her hands on, though you'll keep reminding her that she has to keep a handle on her pesky diabetes. Both of you will travel to places in the UK that you haven't seen before, the highlight being the Lake District. She'll insist that it's more beautiful than the Scottish Highlands, but your loyalty to a nation you've lived in for the past few years will fight that. You'll take stunning pictures of her in landscapes that could pass off as cardboard backdrops of movie sets, and she'll try her best to return the favour but she'll either shake the camera, cut off your feet, or block the lens with a finger, until you give up entirely and not always graciously. As much as you'd like to keep the peace, you'll bicker about frivolous things that I can't recall now. What I do remember is the secrets you both will share that you never could in a man-filled house. You'll also learn to rein in the confidence that you have moving through public spaces, a delirious feeling that you've never experienced in India as a woman, when your wallet will be stolen in – where else? – London. Even after crying for a few hours over the monetary loss and the invasion, it'll take several weeks for you to rid yourself of the distrust you develop for these strangers in this foreign land. But you'll have to suck

it up, because Mama will be leaving in two more days and you won't want her trip to end on a negative. And I'm so glad that you do. Unbeknownst to either of you, this will be the last time that you'll be together for a year and counting. I only wish you would choose kindness over strife and hug her more fiercely as you say goodbye, though your taller-than-Mama body is still not accustomed to how your figures fit in the reserved-for-special-occasions embrace.



## Sonali Misra

Sonali Misra is an Indian author and PhD researcher in Publishing Studies. Her debut non-fiction, '21 Fantastic Failures', was released in 2020, and her short stories and essays have appeared in British and Indian anthologies. She's the Co-founder of The Selkie Publications CIC and Co-chair of the Society of Young Publishers Scotland. [www.sonalimisra.com](http://www.sonalimisra.com)

## A MOST PECULIAR WAY

22-09-2020 - *RETROGRADE ORBIT*  
965,642 Earth souls lost.

Our lives revolve around Mission Control's briefings. Disease replication numbers, death statistics, percentages and acronyms punctuate our day. Director Sturgeon urges us to remember the FACTS protocol ensuring basic cleanliness and 2m social distancing.

My routine starts with medication and ends with meals and data entry. Collins has the additional burden of



Photo © Suzy A. Kelly

### Suzy A. Kelly

Suzy A. Kelly holds an MLitt in Creative Writing (Distinction) from the University of Glasgow. Their work is published in *Gutter*, *Northwords Now*, and *New Writing Scotland*. Suzy is currently a postgraduate research student and is working on their debut historical crime novel, 'Vile Deeds of the Amazing Crab Girl'.

housekeeping duties and helping me perform my toilette whenever my energies crash. Purrlot oversees rations, sleep schedules, grooming, and waste management. Wolfe performs a daily spacewalk after Director Sturgeon's announcements. She's like the One o'Clock Gun for us, but without the panicked tourists squawking and ducking.

Collins sits cross-legged on his bunk with Wolfe and whispers, 'The rages and despair. I can't cope.'

It's about me, I think.

I clear my throat before entering, feeling weighted down, as if I've swallowed a boulder. 'I've got that Zoom journaling group starting today...'

'Mmhmm. That's great,' says a thin-lipped Collins. He turns his back, like he's given up on me, and plays with Wolfe. 'Where's your Freddy-teddy? Where is he?'

'Wish me luck?' I say, 'I could use a hug.'

Collins struggles to smile but he still wraps his arms around me. 'Good luck.'

Purrlot rolls onto his back and demands we cuddle him. Wolfe is my loudest cheerleader. He tosses his fluffy grey teddy towards me, his favourite possession, and barks when I catch it.

'Thanks, buddy,' I say.

I clutch the stuffed bear with the ragged nose to my chest. For a moment, the boulder in my belly transforms into a Wolfe-shaped feather. But in my chair on the flight deck, I freeze. Stop spinning. Launch the meeting. Act. Make contact. Take a chance?

29-09-2020 - *WORST-CASE SCENARIO*

1,002,864 Earth souls lost. Over a million deaths in two-thirds of a year while a second wave of infections surges

across the planet. The journaling group is now a weekly Zoom. Whenever my throat constricts in a meeting, I hold Freddy-teddy in the crook of my arm and squeeze its paw until the heebie-jeebies pass.

Kay1234, the cheery administrator, greets the ten of us and leads the group meditation. We spend 50 minutes writing our hearts into our journals. Cameras optional. The final ten minutes is a celebration of members' insights. We hear everyone with patience and empathy.

'Routine is key to surviving confinement,' I say to HellsBells666.

Like me, she's 45 and propped up by pillows. She contracted the virus in April, like Director Johnson in London. She still suffers energy loss and brain fog. Her body aches like a bruise. Like me, she's shorn her dark hair short after her arms struggled to bear its weight. The online newspapers call this 'Long Covid' but Myalgic Encephalomyelitis sufferers recognise kindred patients.

'Babywipe bath and fresh pyjamas... you did great today!' I say.

HellsBells666 and I fist bump the screen in solidarity. Kay1234 moves around the sharing circle.

On my turn, I say, 'I examined my fears. The lump on Wolfe's shoulder has doubled...' I dig my nails into my talisman's foot. 'He collapsed in his bunk yesterday.'

1, 2, 3...

'Quick,' says Collins with a tremor rising in his throat. 'Wolfe needs us...'

I bite my cheek and wave goodbye to the group.

Wolfe shivers. There's no shine to his hazel eyes. It's like he's leaving us. Collins, Purrlot, and I all agree to bunk in with him tonight.

## TREADING WATER

The humpback whale can produce the widest range of frequencies of any living creature. Some frequencies are so low they can transmit through water right across an ocean. When humpback whales were numerous and ship engines few or non-existent, the seas must have rumbled and chirped with their songs.

In the mornings Andrew gets up first and puts the kettle on for tea, and while he waits for the water to boil he sits down at the piano to start his day with Bach. This morning, a fugue. The aria's tune sings out brightly, opening up the morning. In my fug of morning sleepiness I hear it unfold its form through the rooms of our house with the soft geometry of rose petals opening. From inside one arpeggio another one opens up and spreads itself out. The aria dives beneath its own reflection inverted in the left hand, then breaches the surface again as its notes ripple outwards, echo, turn and repeat. Call and response, point and counterpoint, sound and undersound. Swell and underswell. I hear his fingers running faster to keep up with the sparkling flow of notes, his delight in Bach's cleverness and the satisfying splash of chords that announces the end.

Beneath this bright moment there is another one, inverted. Surface chop and underswell. Images from the news light up my little screen, people being bundled off the streets of American cities into unmarked cars at gunpoint. And the fires. Fires again. Fires everywhere. Trees are burning. Grasslands burning. Peatland smouldering. Not here, no, but just out

of sight. The weight of queasy dreams lingers, even as the morning sun lights up my breakfast jam like a jar of rubies.

In Shetland, sailors once learned to navigate by the feel of the 'mother wave' beneath their boat's hull, a deep, slow underswell beneath the surface chop that told them the direction home, no matter the weather and wind. Behind the commotion and squall and chop. The mother wave. The undersound. The low frequency song that travels the breadth of the ringing world.

I spent Saturday picking, shelling and freezing beans and peas, setting out new seedlings, pinching out the tomatoes. Then as the rain came in, reading, dozing, staring out the window, trying not to read the news, reading the news, wishing I hadn't read the news. Dinner, bit of telly, shower, bed. Sunday coffee, breakfast, laundry, lunch, clean out the hens. A walk. Dinner, bit of telly, shower. Bed.

This Monday morning dress, brush teeth, wash face, coffee, toast, emails, lunch... round it goes. I walk the usual route from loch to sea and back again, past fields of grazing cattle, stubble, barley, wind on my left cheek, then on my right.

When does contentment slide into boredom?

And then here's the sheen on the barley coming, the green of it just beginning to slide towards gold, shimmering in the wind with that soft sea-sound, to wake me up to the moment and drop me back, as if startled, into life again.

When I look at the boredom I see it's really wanting, always wanting something else, something over there,



Photo © Samantha Clark

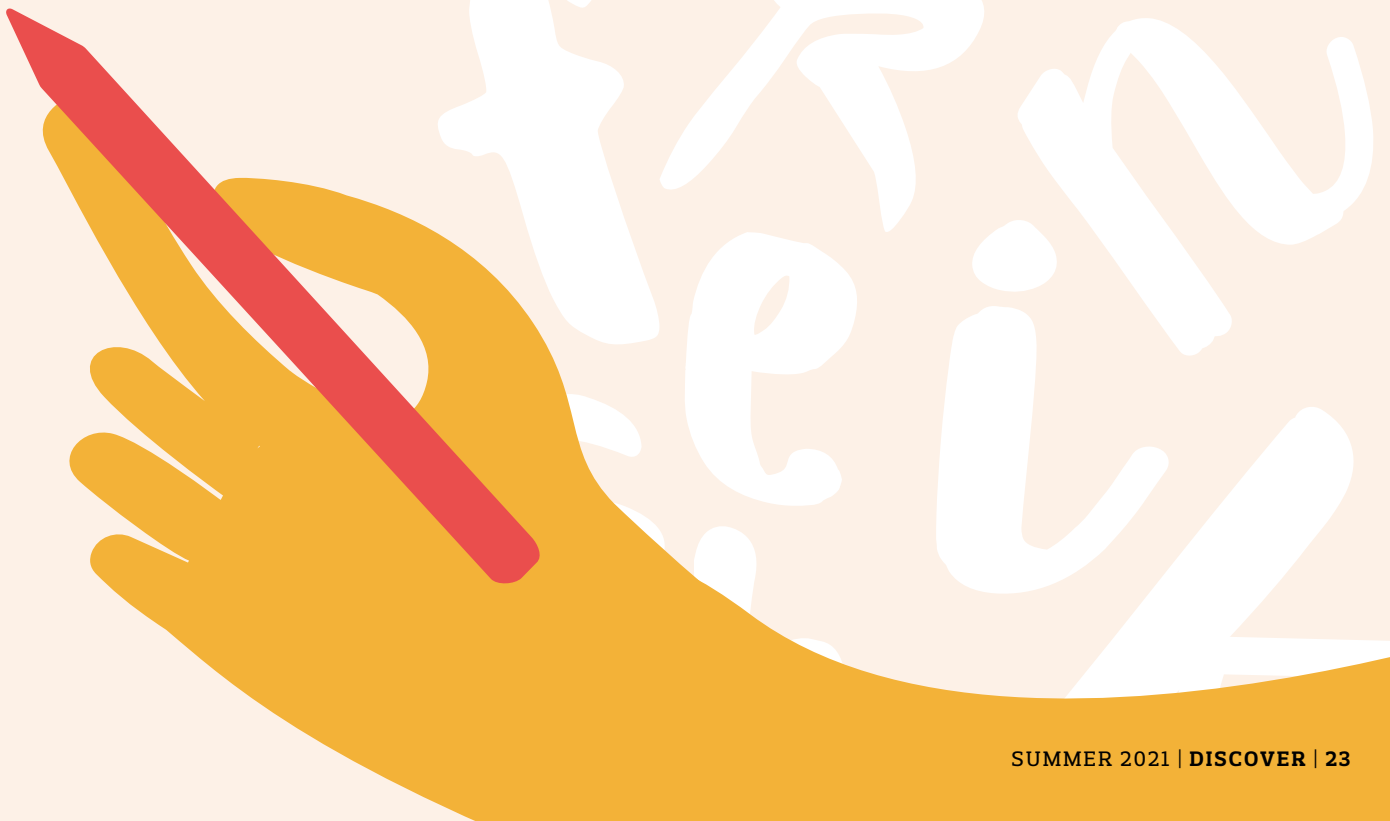
## Samantha Clark

Samantha Clark is a visual artist and writer based in Orkney. Sam received a Scottish Book Trust New Writers award in 2018 and a Scottish Emerging Writers Residency at Cover Park in 2020. Her first book, 'The Clearing', was published by Little, Brown in March 2020.

something better, something other than this.

What if I ignored all that wanting and just looked at this? This ripening field and this shimmering loch and these swooping terns and hungry bonxies and downy cygnets and the numbers of the dead and the sick and the warming sea and the rising graphs and the plots and trajectories and timelines and the here that's somehow also there, because this always reaches beyond itself and out into the crazy, endless tangle of it all?

And I can say I'm bored?



# Beatagan agus Binneanan

**C**haidh Beatagan agus Binneanan a chruthachadh mar phròiseact foghlaim tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig airson a bhith a' sealltainn air an taisbeanadh 'Petticoats and Pinnacles' aig Leabharlann Nàiseanta na h-Alba le taic bho Baillie Gifford. Fo stiùir Rona Wilkie, chuir sinn fàilte air sgoilearan àrd-sgoile bho air feadh na h-Alba agus sheall sinn air cultar nam bànan na beanntan, san latha an-diugh agus gu h-eachdraidheil. Leis gu robh Gàidhlig againn, bha sinn cuideachd a' sgrùdadh na h-eachdraidh bho shealladh Ghàidhealach agus a' dèanamh coimeas eadar cultaran tùsanach agus boireann's

na beanntan. Gach seachdain bha gnìomh aig na sgoilearan ri dhèanamh, agus fhuair sinn eisimplearan fìor mhath de sgrìobhadh, ealain agus ceòl bhuapa. Bha sinn cuideachd glè fhortanach òraidean a chluinntinn bho Paula Williams (LNA), Janni Diez, Dr. Dòmhnall Uilleam Stiùbhart (Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, UHI) agus Dr. Priscilla Scott.

Beatagan agus Binneanan was created as a Gaelic Medium educational project to consider the themes in the 'Petticoats and Pinnacles' exhibition at the National Library. Directed by Rona Wilkie, we welcomed senior high school pupils from

across Scotland and studied the culture of women in the mountains, both historically and in the present time. Given we had Gaelic, we also looked at the history from the Gaelic perspective, and compared indigenous and female perspectives of the mountains. Each week the students had a task to complete, and we received excellent submissions of literature, art and music, featured on these pages.

We were also very fortunate to hear talks from exhibition curator Paula Williams, Janni Diez, Dr. Dòmhnall Uilleam Stiùbhart (Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, UHI) and Dr. Priscilla Scott. The project was supported by Baillie Gifford.

## Innes Mac Nèill, Àrd-Sgoil Phort Rìgh

### TOISEACHD AN T-SÀMHRAIDH

A-nist air 's gu bheil rotach bhreith na h-uain builleach seachad, rinn sinn ar slighe shuas a' mhonaidh às an taigh againn fhìn a tha shìos cùl a' mhealbhain air taobh an iar an eilein, gus do ruig sinn an àirigh bheag eadar Beinn Bhirisg is Beinn Mhàrtainn, a chaidh a thogail uaireigin dhan t-saoghal a' chaidh a' dhìomhchumhneachadh a-nist. Nuair a rànaig sinn an àirigh, bha an t-sàmhchair 's an sìth a bh' air a bhith na bheannachadh don àite seo airson na bliadhna a chaidh seachad air a' mhilleadh, leis a' chlann ag èigheachd 's a' sglamhachd 's mo dhuine a' toirt an anaim aiste. Abair staid a bha taobh a-staigh na h-àirigh, gu dearbh cha robh mo dhuine no mo chlann dol gam chuideachadh ga sgioblachadh. "'S e obair bhoireannaich a tha sin," a chanas iad! Gheibh iad "obair bhoireannaich", seallaidh mise dhaibh "obair bhoireannaich" nuair a thoiras mi dhaibh sgleog air cùl nan cinn. Co-dhiù, cha b' ann fàda gus an do chrìochnaich mi sgioblachadh a-mach an àirigh 's gun robh e deiseil airson cadail ann. Dh'ith sinn stiubh' 's buntàta an oidhche úd, 's iomadh stiubh a' dh'itheas sinn mus till sinn dhachaigh 's gun urrainn dhuinn iasg no maorach ithe a-rithist. Chan urrainn dhuinn a dhol dhan eaglais fhad 's a tha sinn shuas an seo, ach bidh sinn fhathast ag ùrnaidh agus a' cumail aifhrrinn bheag dhuinn fhìn gach seachdain, fiù 's mur nach eil sagairt againn an seo. 'S na mìosan a tha ri thighinn, tha na gillean a' dol a dhol a-mach a h-uile latha a choimhead às deidh nan caoraich agus mise air mo cheamhail shuas ann am bothan bheag, a' glanadh càc nan caoraich far an t-aodach aca 's a còcaireachd biadh dhaibh fàd an latha gun chuideachdadh no sgàth. An t-aon

rud a bhios mi a' coimhead air adhart ris aig an taigh - 's e bhith a' dol dhan eaglais 's a bhith a' seinn òrain luaidh leis na caillich, agus chan urrain dhomh fiù 's sin a dhèanamh shuas an seo. 'S na seann laithichean, nuair a bha mi nam nighean òg, bhithinn a' coimhead air adhart ris an t-sàmhradh, a-nise cha mhòr 's gur e uallach a th' ann.

**Fionnghuala Nic a' Mhaoilan**

### DEALANACH IS TÀIRNEANACH

'S ann a bha dealanach,  
'S ann a bha tàirneanach,  
Gun suaimhneas neo sàmhchair,  
Ach cumhachd ar maighstir.

Mar sgiorraich nam bochdainn,  
Air an losgadh ann an Ifhrrinn,  
Is sòlas àrd-nèamh,  
Nuair nach bi ann ach seimh.

Chan ann ach cogadh  
a mhaireas gu sìorraidh,  
Eadar ar Tighearna,  
'S Rìgh nan Diabhailta.

Ach mu dheireadh thall,  
Thig e gu gèill,  
O chionn 's gun e mathas  
a shoirbheachas le amharas.



## Ella Rose Ridley, Àrd-Sgoil Sheumais Ghilleasbuig

### AIR AN TUATHANAS

A-muigh airson àileadh glan.  
Air an tuathanas,  
tha a' ghaoth a' dèanamh osnadh aotram  
a' siubhal tron fhalt agam.

Na sgòthan a' seòladh  
a' coimhead sìos air an t-saoghal  
shàmhach.  
Am fear a' dèanamh dannsa tlàithe  
leis na seanganan agus seilcheagan.

Na geugan a' smèideadh ris na h-eòin,  
na h-eòin a tha a' seinn òran

cho àlainn ris na flùraichean fodha  
far an robh na seilleanan a' poileanachadh  
nan neòinean

Na faoileagan a' leum suas  
às dèidh an uilebheist meacanaigeach  
a' tighinn.  
Na faclan fiadhaich a' tionndaidh  
gus an achadh a threabhadh.

A' coiseachd tron nàdar.  
A' toirt anail a-steach.  
Air an tuathanas.  
A' faicinn, a' cluinntinn,  
a' faireachdainn.



## Caitlin Wright, Àrd-sgoil Sheumais Ghilleasbuig

### A' MHUIR

Socair, sìth  
a-muigh air an tràigh.  
Oir tha'n cuan air m' òrdagan  
's na faoileagan fuaimneach  
air faire.

A-nis tha mi a' faireachdainn  
suaimhneach,  
Làn toileachais nam sheasamh an sin,  
a' coimhead fada air falbh,  
fada air falbh - a-steach don mhuir  
mhòr ghorm.



1



2

## Elissa Hunter Dorans, Acadamaidh Allt a' Mhuilinn

1. Seo an t-sealladh bhon àirigh a bha air ainmeachadh san òran 'Bha mis' a-raoir air an àirigh'. Tha faclan an t-òran air an sgaoileadh tron dealbh.

2. Seo pìos a rinn mi mu dheidhinn cò leis a tha an fhearann. Air taobh chli den aodann tha duine beartach aig a bheil oighreachdan ann an Alba. Aig deireadh an wire, tha padlock ann le bratan na h-Alba gus sealltainn gu bheil a' mhor-chuid den dùthaich priobhaideach. Air taobh dheas den aodann, tha duine tùsanach a chail a chuid fhearann air sgath 's an duine beartach agus le sin tha deòir a' tighinn a-mach às a shuil.

# McNAUGHTAN'S

BOOKSHOP & GALLERY

Scotland's oldest secondhand and antiquarian bookshop (est. 1957)  
Books bought & sold | Catalogues issued | now hosting Typewronger Books

3a & 4a Haddington Place  
Edinburgh, EH7 4AE  
Open Tuesday to Saturday

+44 (0)131 556 5897  
info@mcnaughtans.co.uk  
www.mcnaughtans.co.uk  
@mcnbooks



## The Forest Bookstore

**SELKIRK**

26 Market Place, TD7 4BL  
Tel: 01750 22763  
info@theforestbookstore.co.uk

The State is destroyed,  
but the mountains and rivers survive.  
- Du Fu, Tang Dynasty

The mountains and rivers are destroyed,  
but the State survives.  
- Nanao Sakaki, 20th century

The blue mountains are constantly walking.  
- Dögen / Furong

Literature, Art & Environment • Contemporary & Modern • Scottish & International

INDEPENDENT  
BOOKSELLER



**Edinburgh's Smallest Bookshop!**

**New Books,  
Small Press  
Publications &  
Zines**

Online Catalogue and full list of  
Services available on our website:  
[www.typewronger.com](http://www.typewronger.com)  
or email  
[info@typewronger.com](mailto:info@typewronger.com)

# Typewronger Books

find us @ McNaughtans; 4a Haddington Place, Edinburgh, EH7 4AE

## THE SCOTTISH GENEALOGY SOCIETY

Family History Centre

All Scotland's OPRs on film... census records...  
Largest M.I. collection in Scotland and free access to  
[www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk) and [www.indmypast.co.uk](http://www.indmypast.co.uk)

Contact us at 15 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2JL

Telephone 0131 220 3677  
[enquiries@scotsgenealogy.com](mailto:enquiries@scotsgenealogy.com)  
[www.scotsgenealogy.com](http://www.scotsgenealogy.com)



## DRÀMA NA GÀIDHLIG

CEUD BLIADHNA AIR AN ÀRD-ÙRLAR

A CENTURY OF GAELIC DRAMA

EDITED BY *Michelle Macleod*

ISBN 9781906841416

Paperback | 376 pages

April 2021 | £19.95



ASSOCIATION FOR  
SCOTTISH LITERARY STUDIES  
[www.asls.org.uk](http://www.asls.org.uk)

### CONTENTS

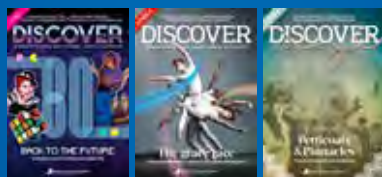
- Rèiteach Mòraig – Iain N. MacLeòid  
*Morag's Betrothal* – John N. MacLeod
- Am Fear a Chaill a Ghàidhlig – Iain MacCormaig  
*The Man Who Lost His Gaelic* – Iain MacCormick
- Ceann Cropic – Fionnlagh MacLeòid  
*Ceann Cropic* – Finlay MacLeod
- Tog Orm Mo Speal – Iain Mac a' Ghobhainn  
*Give Me My Scythe* – Iain Crichton Smith
- Òrdugh na Saorsa – Tormod Calum Dòmhnallach  
*The Order of Release* – Norman Malcolm MacDonald
- Sequamur – Dòmhnall S. Moireach  
*(A' Ghàidhlig le Catriona Dunn)*  
*Sequamur* – Donald S. Murray
- Scotties – Muireann Kelly with Frances Poet
- Bana-Ghaisgich – Màiri Nic'IlleMhoire  
*Heroines* – Mairi Morrison

Compared to Gaelic poetry, the history of Gaelic theatre has not been a particularly long one, with the first examples appearing in the eighteenth century. However, drama in Gaelic began to thrive in the twentieth century, and modern Gaelic drama has the power to break down barriers and to touch people across linguistic and cultural divides.

This collection is a celebration of this often-overlooked genre, bringing together eight Gaelic plays from the start of the twentieth century to the present day. Accessible to non-Gaelic speakers, this book contains English translations as well as an introduction to the history of Gaelic theatre, and to the playwrights whose skill and commitment to their art deserves much wider recognition.

# DISCOVER

The magazine of the National Library of Scotland



To advertise in this magazine please contact  
[alison@connectmedia.cc](mailto:alison@connectmedia.cc)

Josiah and Nancy Henson,  
photographed in Glasgow

THE FIGHT FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE



**WORDS:**  
**Celeste-Marie Bernier**  
Professor of United States  
and Atlantic Studies, the  
University of Edinburgh



# Struggles for LIBERTY

African American Revolutionaries in the  
Atlantic World – an online learning resource

“My part has been to tell the story of the slave. The story of the master never wanted for narrators. The masters, to tell their story, had at call all the talent and genius that wealth and influence could command. They have had their full day in court. Literature, theology, philosophy, law and learning have come willingly to their service, and if condemned, they have not been condemned unheard.”

These are the hard-hitting words of Frederick Douglass, who was born into the “hottest hell of unending slavery” in Maryland, United States, in 1818, and who became one of the most renowned social justice campaigners, authors, activists, orators and philosophers in world history.

Writing in 1892, Douglass was only too painfully and personally aware that the history of white US enslavers – sanitised, censored and repackaged to fit a white supremacist mythology of history – would be the dominant story.

Douglass, who lived in the “house of bondage” for the first two decades of his life, was dedicated to the revolutionary power of “words as weapons” in the freedom struggle. Writing and delivering thousands of speeches, letters and essays, he relied on his “living human voice” to do justice to the untold and repeatedly silenced “story of the slave”.

Warring against the deadening stranglehold that he knew would be exerted by white racist amnesia, in each of his tellings of the “story of the slave” Douglass bore witness to white racist atrocity, persecution, abuse, torture, violence and death. He was not alone. Douglass was one among untold numbers of African American revolutionaries who dedicated their lives to telling the “story of the slave” in the unending global fight for equal human rights.

‘Struggles for Liberty: African American Revolutionaries in the Atlantic World’ is a new online learning resource which includes interactive maps and downloadable learning activities for teachers, including activities mapped to the Curriculum for Excellence.

The resource shares the life stories of the individual and collective fight for social justice – not only by Frederick Douglass, but by many more enslaved, self-liberated and free African American freedom-fighters living and labouring in the “cause of liberty” in the US, Britain and Ireland in the 19th century. Here the “stories of the slaves” are told



Harriet Tubman by Benjamin F Powelson, Library of Congress

through books, letters, photographs and documents held in the National Library, the Walter O. and Linda Evans Foundation Frederick Douglass Collection, and across international library holdings.

Dr Walter O. Evans, who in 2018 loaned items to the Library for the first public display of his Frederick Douglass family collection, said: “I was delighted that the first public exhibition of the collection was in Scotland, a country that was so very important to Frederick Douglass.

“Scotland played a crucial role in Douglass’s life, placing him on an international stage and helping to forge his world-renowned activism.

“I am impressed with the ‘Struggles for Liberty’ learning resource, complete with its wide variety of historic materials and curriculum-specific learning activities. ‘Struggles for Liberty’ will serve as an indispensable and easily accessible resource for students, teachers and those looking to learn more about the Douglass family and other 19th-century African American freedom-fighters.”

Professor Earnestine Jenkins, of the University of Memphis, writes: “The visual resources and written documents,

as well as interactive maps, highlight the central theme of family. Anna Murray Douglass, a free woman and activist in her own right, was the cement that held the Douglass family together.

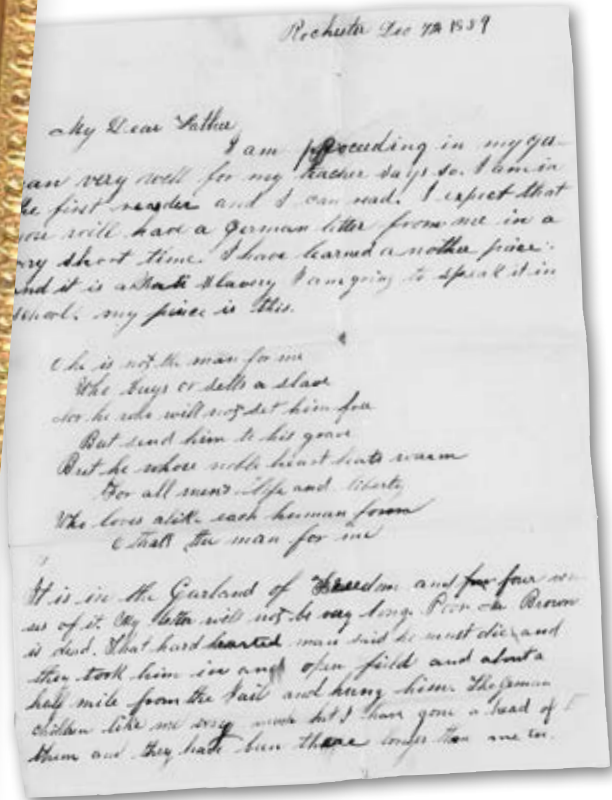
“International in scope, this learning resource is an invaluable record of the freedom narrative that permeated the Atlantic world during the long 19th century.”

Ernest J. Quarles Esq., of John Hopkins University, added: “This golden resource enables crusaders for justice and liberation in our global community to learn about a shared humanity as evidenced in these histories, narratives, speeches, etc. By so doing they can envision what allyship might look like from an international and intersectional perspective.”

‘Struggles for Liberty’ presents the “story of the slave” via the words of Frederick Douglass and Harriet Ann Jacobs, a self-liberated activist author who had been born into slavery in North Carolina in 1862. Jacobs published a revolutionary autobiography, ‘The Deeper Wrong; or, Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl’. Sharing her emotionally



ABOVE: Frederick Douglass, National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institute. TOP RIGHT: Annie Douglass's letter to her father, courtesy of The Frederick Douglass Papers at the Library of Congress



harrowing experiences with her readers, she issues a powerful appeal. Jacobs declares: "Slavery is terrible for men; but it is far more terrible for women. Superadded to the burden common to all, they have wrongs, and sufferings, and mortifications peculiarly their own."

The 'History of Black Abolition' theme of the resource looks at the activism of inspirational freedom-fighters Nathaniel Turner, David Walker and Maria W. Stewart. Born into slavery in Virginia in 1800 and executed by white enslavers in 1831, Turner was a prophet, philosopher, preacher, radical activist and military general. A world-famous Black hero, he led one of the most renowned wars against slavery by enslaved people in US history. During this period, David Walker and Maria W. Stewart, both free-born authors, orators, and equal rights advocates, published their speeches and essays in which they laid the foundations for a philosophy of Black liberation.

"Unchain your black hand!", Douglass's command to the US nation, opens the resource's 'US Civil War' theme.

Here we learn of the revolutionary heroism of the nearly 200,000 Black combat soldiers fighting on the front lines. We read a letter by Douglass's eldest son, Lewis Henry Douglass, who writes to Helen Amelia Loguen, a free-born social

justice campaigner and the love of his life, only moments before he goes into battle: "My dear girl while I am away, do not fret yourself to death, oh! I beg of you, do not. Remember that if I fall that it is in the cause of humanity."

The 'African American Activists in Scotland' theme shows that, over the centuries, Douglass was not the only African American freedom-fighter to live and work in Scotland. He was joined by hundreds of radical reformers including Josiah and Nancy Henson, Amanda Berry Smith, Ellen Craft and William Craft, William Wells Brown, and Ida B. Wells-Barnett. While revolutionary Underground Railroad liberator Harriet Tubman, a legendary freedom-fighter born into slavery in Maryland, did not visit Scotland, one source of support for her liberation campaigns in the US South was the financial contributions she received from the Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society.

A trailblazing anti-slavery campaigner, Samuel Ringgold Ward, an author and activist who had been born into slavery in Maryland, visited Scotland and held the nation to account for its villainous role as a "trafficker in human blood". Writing of the nation's atrocities, Ward condemned the names of white Scottish enslavers as "the largest, blackest roll and record of

infamy that ever disgraced the Scottish name or blighted Scottish character".

Finally, this resource shares the untold stories of the Anna Murray and Frederick Douglass family. A family of freedom-fighters – Anna Murray, his wife, Rosetta and Annie, his daughters, and Lewis Henry, Charles Remond and Frederick Douglass Jr., his sons – shared Frederick Douglass's conviction that "nothing of justice, liberty or humanity can come to us except through tears and blood".

Here we read the words of the Douglass's youngest daughter, Annie Douglass. At just 10 years of age, she writes a letter to her father in December 1859. She shares the "Anti-Slavery piece" she learned to recite in school: "O he is not the man for me/ Who buys or sells a slave." Scarcely months later, in March 1860, while Frederick Douglass was lecturing in Ayr, he received the devastating news that Annie, the "light and life" of his heart, had passed away.

To this day, Annie Douglass and her mother, father, sister and brothers live on as seven of the renowned and unknown African American freedom-fighters who have, and continue to, dedicate their lives to the "struggles for liberty" for all past, present, and future generations.

\* Unless otherwise specified, all quotations are the words of Frederick Douglass.

The resource is easy to find on our website. Visit [nls.uk](https://nls.uk), select 'Digital Resources', then 'Learning Zone', then 'Politics and Society'.

# WHAT'S ON

Since mid-2020, we have moved our events programme online due to Covid-19. Below is just a taste of what's coming up in the months ahead. For now, it's best to assume events will continue to be broadcast via Zoom. However, as lockdown restrictions ease, we might resume events at our George IV Bridge building later in the year. For more details and to book, check our website, [nls.uk](https://nls.uk).

**TUESDAY, 17 AUGUST, 2PM**  
**ANIMAL FARM**  
**TRANSLATED INTO GAELIC**

Writer and translator Angus Peter Campbell discusses translating the first Orwell book into Gaelic.

**TUESDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER, 2PM**  
**NEWS OF THE DEAD**

Author James Robertson discusses his new novel, which displays centuries of change in the atmospheric Scottish Highlands.



**TUESDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER, 2PM**  
**THE MUNROS: A HISTORY**

Seasoned hillwalker Andrew Dempster delves into the history of the Munros, from early mapmakers to modern record-breakers.



Muriel Spark

**TUESDAY, 5 OCTOBER, 5PM**  
**PRIME OF MISS JEAN BRODIE**

Norma Allen delivers this year's annual Muriel Spark lecture.

**THURSDAY, 7 OCTOBER, 2PM**  
**NATIONAL POETRY DAY**

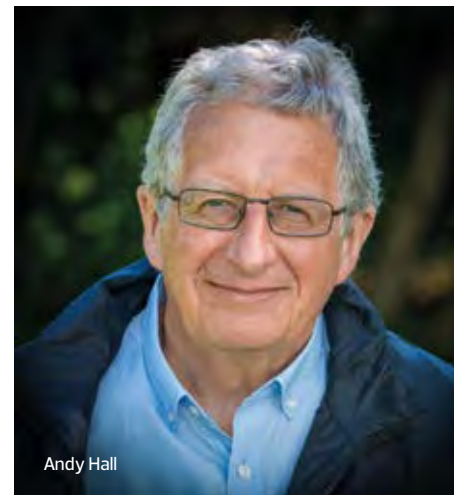
Peter Mackay and Jo MacDonald present some of the nation's 100 Favourite Gaelic Poems, as voted for by the public.

**TUESDAY, 19 OCTOBER, 2PM**  
**SCOTLAND, SLAVERY**  
**AND JAMAICA**

Kate Phillips looks at the relationship between Scotland and Jamaica from the 16th century onwards, from Scottish migrants to the enslaved population and the conditions that led to the anti-slavery movement and abolition.

**TUESDAY, 7 DECEMBER, 5PM**  
**DECISIVE MOMENTS**

Renowned photographer Andy Hall offers his expertise on how to identify photographic opportunities and capture them on anything from a professional camera to a smartphone.



Andy Hall

FOR THE MOST UP-TO-DATE DETAILS ON COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS AND TO BOOK, VISIT [NLS.UK](https://nls.uk)



#### MAJOR EXHIBITION

## Petticoats & Pinnacles: Scotland's Pioneering Mountain Women

SATURDAY, 10 JULY – SATURDAY, 28 MAY, 2022, GEORGE IV BRIDGE, EDINBURGH. ENTRY IS FREE, BOOKING ESSENTIAL.

● Suitable nailed boots were not to be had in this country, and boys' tweed suits were the only available outfit for women. When I appeared in my boys' suit (made by Forsyth), and wearing my big hobnailers, my own mother could not endure the spectacle and cried 'Oh what a fright you look! ●

JANE INGLIS CLARK, 'PICTURES AND MEMORIES', 1938.

This major exhibition explores the relationship between women and mountains, focusing on individual Scots who travelled, climbed and responded creatively to mountain environments, both in Scotland and around the world. Through their stories, the exhibition demonstrates the ways in which these women overcame ideals of femininity, masculinity and social convention to pursue their goals and ambitions. Supported by Baillie Gifford.

#### EXHIBITIONS

#### COLLECTIONS IN FOCUS

## The Eye of a Stranger: Henrietta Liston's Travels

SATURDAY, 10 JULY – SATURDAY, 6 NOVEMBER, GEORGE IV BRIDGE, EDINBURGH. ENTRY IS FREE, BOOKING ESSENTIAL.

● You have brought me up an excellent traveller, to take what I can get, and be content. ●

In 1812, Henrietta Liston, aged 60, and her husband Robert, who had been appointed British Ambassador to the Sublime Porte, sailed to Constantinople. They reached Turkey just as Sultan Mahmud II began the fourth year of his reign. Over almost eight years in the Ottoman Empire, Henrietta kept travel journals full of opinion, curiosity and wonderment. These, and Henrietta's earlier travelogues from North America, will be displayed with letters, maps, invitations and Ottoman documents to tell the story of her travels and her life in international circles during the Age of Revolution.



FOR THE MOST UP-TO-DATE DETAILS ON COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS AND TO BOOK, VISIT [NLS.UK](https://www.nls.uk)

# DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP



ABOVE: A typical broadside, this one announcing William Burke's execution. Noticeably, Burke is misspelt 'Burk'.

ABOVE RIGHT: Anastasia Athanadou, Yidan Yuan, Yongchang Zhu, Jingyi Chu's visualisation of the Scottish school exam papers includes an analysis of gender bias in the collection.



## NEW DATASETS ON THE DATA FOUNDRY

Our Digital Scholarship Service continued to run throughout all of the Covid-19 lockdowns of 2020 and 2021, and we released a number of new datasets on the Data Foundry, the Library's open data platform for digital scholarship.

A 'dataset' includes machine-readable text files, image files and more structured 'XML' text files – all of which enable computational research with the collections. One highlight of our recent releases is a collection of nearly 1,800 broadsides printed in Scotland between 1650 and 1910. Broadsides were a form of communication which predated the newspaper, and this collection provides extensive opportunities for further research into the hot topics and scandals of the day.

## FROM LOCKDOWN... TO JUPYTER!

During the first Covid-19 lockdown in 2020, we recruited an online Digital Research Intern to create Jupyter Notebooks for Data Foundry collections.

Jupyter Notebook is a web application which allows people to write and interact with live code.

Notebooks are often used in a learning and teaching environment and one of the beauties of them is that you don't need to know how to code to make use of them.

This enables those who cannot code to analyse Data Foundry collections which would otherwise be impossible to explore.


We launched our first Notebooks in September 2020. These provide initial analysis of five datasets, enabling researchers to understand what the dataset contains, and to begin to frame initial research questions using the data.

## VISUALISING LIBRARY DATA

Data Science for Design students at the University of Edinburgh have been working on data visualisation projects using the Library's collections.

They have used our datasets to learn how to create data visualisations and produced websites, videos and 'data comics' exploring a variety of data.

Find out more about the geographical spread of information in the first eight editions of 'Encyclopaedia Britannica'; explore historic gender bias and other topics in the Scottish School Exam Papers collection; and find out how Britain presented itself to the outside world through our collection of Britain and UK Handbooks.

 To find our new datasets, Notebooks, or explore the data visualisation projects, check out the Data Foundry on our website. Visit [nls.uk](https://nls.uk) and select 'Digital resources'.



# WE STOP THE BAD THINGS HAPPENING

**Creating the right conditions is key to ensuring that all of the Library's treasured collections will be enjoyed for many more years to come**

Just before the second lockdown in December 2020, we recruited Conservation Institute Accredited (ACR) Mel Houston for a new role as Preventive Conservator. Mel is working across the Library to improve how we store, display and care for our collections.

As Mel herself says, her role is to "stop bad things from happening" and ensure that our fabulous collections remain in great condition for as long as possible.

More from Mel: "I've had a soft spot for the National Library since spending a lot of time in the Reading Room in the 1990s and knowing members of the Collections Care team. I have been impressed with how the Library carries out its duty of care to look after the collections and make them as accessible as possible.

"I remember being brought in several years ago to work out whether a piece of taxidermy in the collection was a tortoise



or a turtle and thinking this was fun! So when I saw the job advert for the new post of preventive conservator I was hooked. Preventive conservation – making sure bad things don't happen to

collections – has been around for over 70 years and the Library has incorporated good practice into how it looks after the 30 million plus items in the collections.

"The new post lets me help the Library consider how best to stop problems before they happen. We try to make sure that our collections have a useable life of at least 500 years and to do this we must make sure everything is stored in the right conditions – the wrong humidity, temperature, poor handling or plagues of moths can shorten a book, manuscript or map's useful life or destroy it altogether.

"I'm concentrating on the stability of the environment around the collections, working with colleagues to interpret the data provided by the Library's environmental monitoring system.

"Another simple thing we can do is provide boxes for collections. This buffers the contents from changes in environment and protects from dust, dirt and insects. It might be simple but the scale is enormous and, as it has the added bonus of allowing us to use less energy to sustain a stable environment, it is good news for our tortoise (in case you were wondering,) and all tortoises."

**Mel Houston**

# FROM MY WORKBENCH TO THE DINNER TABLE

**Adapting from on-site to homeworking during lockdown as Conservation Intern at the Library**

"Since October 2020, when I joined the National Library of Scotland, my placement has been focused on the conservation of fragile formats, which includes the Library's inherently frail collections items. It is a wide category, allowing for many stimulating projects.

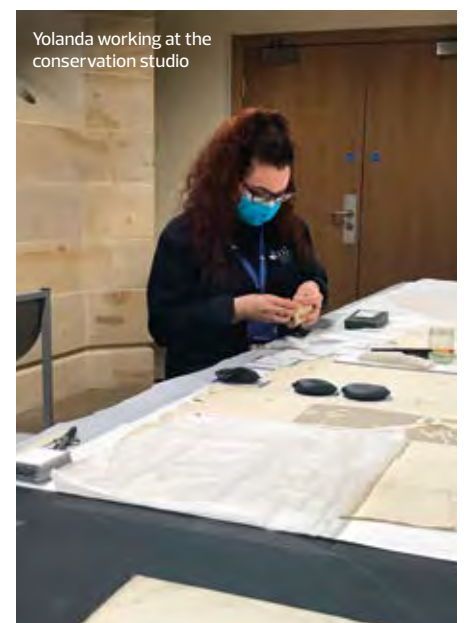
"Before lockdown, practical work was the major part of my duties. During those months I worked across the Library's two main collections buildings, in George IV Bridge and Causewayside, in collaboration with various members of the Collections Care team. I had the chance to perform treatments on bound and unbound materials, learn new binding techniques and be part of a 'conservation for digitisation' project.

"As conservators, our natural environment is the studio, so I had to

adapt my work plan and my expectations at the start of the next lockdown.

"I started considering lockdown as a window that allowed me to focus on tasks I would not have the time for otherwise, for example, networking with other organisations and conservators across the UK, attending a multitude of webinars, studying and researching, helping other team members in creating internal policies, becoming familiar with the work of other departments across the Library or, my main project, developing a decision-making matrix for the treatment of iron gall inks.

"If we learnt something from 2020 it is to expect the unexpected and the importance of resilience. So, lockdown was turned from a forced impasse, to just an unexpected diversion. Now that we are



Yolanda working at the conservation studio

back in the buildings, I plan to make the most of the rest of my internship, apply the tools that adapting from necessity has given me and make up for the time away from my bench."

**Yolanda Bustamante**

# Great Library resources...



**Join**  
YOUR NATIONAL  
LIBRARY  
TODAY!

You will need a Library card if you want to use our reading rooms or order items from our collection.

You can apply for a card online at [auth.nls.uk/registration](http://auth.nls.uk/registration)

or pick one up in person at George IV Bridge in Edinburgh.

Don't forget, you will need to bring proof of identity and confirmation of your address.

## ONLINE AT [www.nls.uk](http://www.nls.uk)

We have vast and growing resources available on our website, including digital versions of reference works, full-text facsimiles and business databases.

If you live in Scotland and register with the Library, many of these resources are freely available.

Additional conditions may apply in line with our licence agreements.

We also hold websites in the UK domain web archive, and articles or chapters from e-books and e-journals. Library card holders can view these at our George IV Bridge and Kelvin Hall sites.

## ALREADY KNOW WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR?

Due to Covid-19, you must pre-order material before coming to the Library. You will find our catalogue on our website. If you don't have a Library card but want to enquire about an item, phone 0131 623 3820 or complete our enquiry form on our website at [nls.uk](http://nls.uk). Select 'Contact', then 'Ask a Question'.



## MAIN VISITOR CENTRE

Where you will find our print collections, rare books and manuscripts, as well as reading rooms and digital facilities. The exhibition space, café and shop are also here.

### George IV Bridge

Edinburgh EH1 1EW

Phone: 0131 623 3700

Email: [enquiries@nls.uk](mailto:enquiries@nls.uk)

While restrictions due to Covid-19 are ongoing, many of our facilities are closed and our reading rooms are open on a limited basis.

For more information and to book your place, visit our website.



## FILM AND DIGITAL COLLECTIONS

Ideal for informal browsing or for those seeking a specialist viewing – or if you want access to our outstanding digital facilities.

### Kelvin Hall

1445 Argyle Street

Glasgow G3 8AW

Phone: 0845 366 4629

Email: [kelvinhall@nls.uk](mailto:kelvinhall@nls.uk)

While restrictions due to Covid-19 are ongoing, many of our facilities are closed. For more information, visit our website.



## MAPS

Our Maps Reading Room is available by appointment. Come in and see the world.

### Causewayside Building

33 Salisbury Place

Edinburgh EH9 1SL

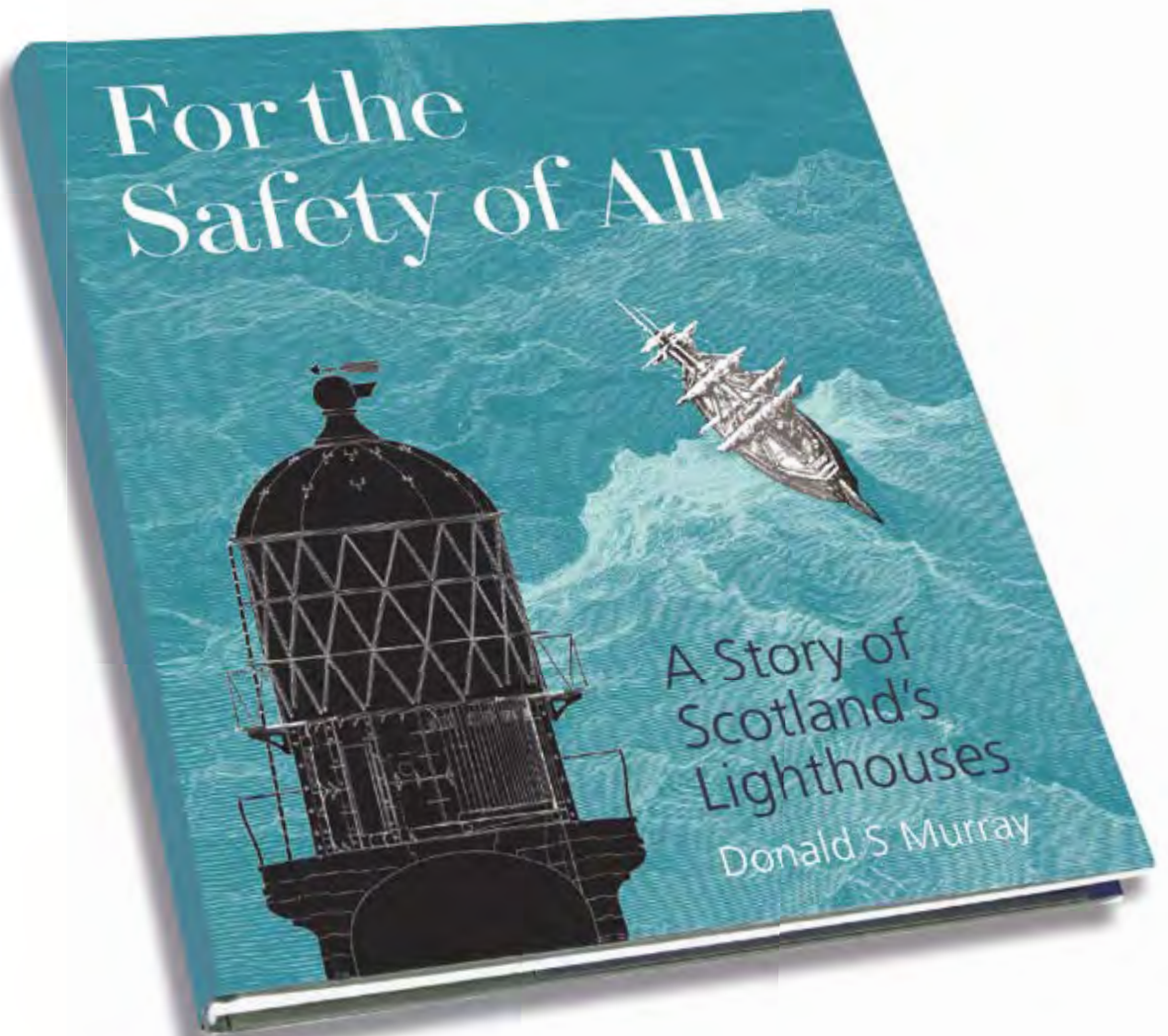
Phone: 0131 623 4660

Email: [maps@nls.uk](mailto:maps@nls.uk)

While restrictions due to Covid-19 are ongoing, many of our facilities are closed and our reading rooms are open on a limited basis.

For more information and to book your place, visit our website.

**'An incredible new book'** *The Herald*



**OUT 29 JULY 2021 – £25**

*'There have always been lighthouses in my life. There has been a closeness and steadiness to our relationship, as if they have kept pace and in close contact with me.'*

Lighthouses punctuate Scotland's coastline – a stoic presence on the edge of the landscape. Since the earliest of these hardy structures were raised, they have been a lifeline for seafarers at the mercy of treacherous weather and uncertain navigation. Today over 100 of Scotland's lighthouses are listed buildings.

In *For the Safety of All* Donald S Murray explores Scotland's lighthouses through history, storytelling and the voices of the lightkeepers. From ancient beacons to the work of the Stevensons and the Northern Lighthouse Board, and from wartime strife to automation and preservation, lighthouses stand as a testament to the nation's innate connection to the sea.

Published in partnership between Historic Environment Scotland and the Northern Lighthouse Board




HISTORIC  
ENVIRONMENT  
SCOTLAND

ÀRAINNEACHD  
EACHDRAIDHEIL  
ALBA



Northern  
Lighthouse  
Board



“I LOVED YOU, SO  
I DREW THESE  
TIDES OF  
MEN INTO MY  
HANDS  
AND WROTE MY  
WILL ACROSS THE  
SKY AND STARS”

**LAWRENCE, T.E.**

**SEVEN PILLARS OF WISDOM, A TRIUMPH**

One of the 32 'incomplete' copies presented to men who had served with Lawrence in Arabia

Offered 23rd June 2021

See website for sold price

For more information on buying, selling or valuations, please contact our Head of Rare Books, Simon Vickers, via email at [simon.vickers@lyonandturnbull.com](mailto:simon.vickers@lyonandturnbull.com) or call 0131 557 8844

**LYON & TURNBULL**  
AUCTIONEERS SINCE 1826