

NATIONAL LIBRARY
OF SCOTLAND

ANNUAL REVIEW 2014-15

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



Exhibitions that educate and entertain

NATIONAL LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

What is expected of a national library? How can it best serve its existing users and reach out to new audiences? What priorities should it set? How can it take advantage of the opportunities presented by the digital revolution? What support can it offer to help achieve the wider economic and cultural objectives of Scotland?

These are just some of the questions and issues that have been addressed across the Library as we have developed our future strategy: *The Way Forward 2015-20*. It has been a privilege to work with staff and the Library's Board members to decide where we want to be in five years' time and how we are going to get there. Our vision is to be recognised as one of the leading national libraries in Europe and we will work hard to achieve that goal.

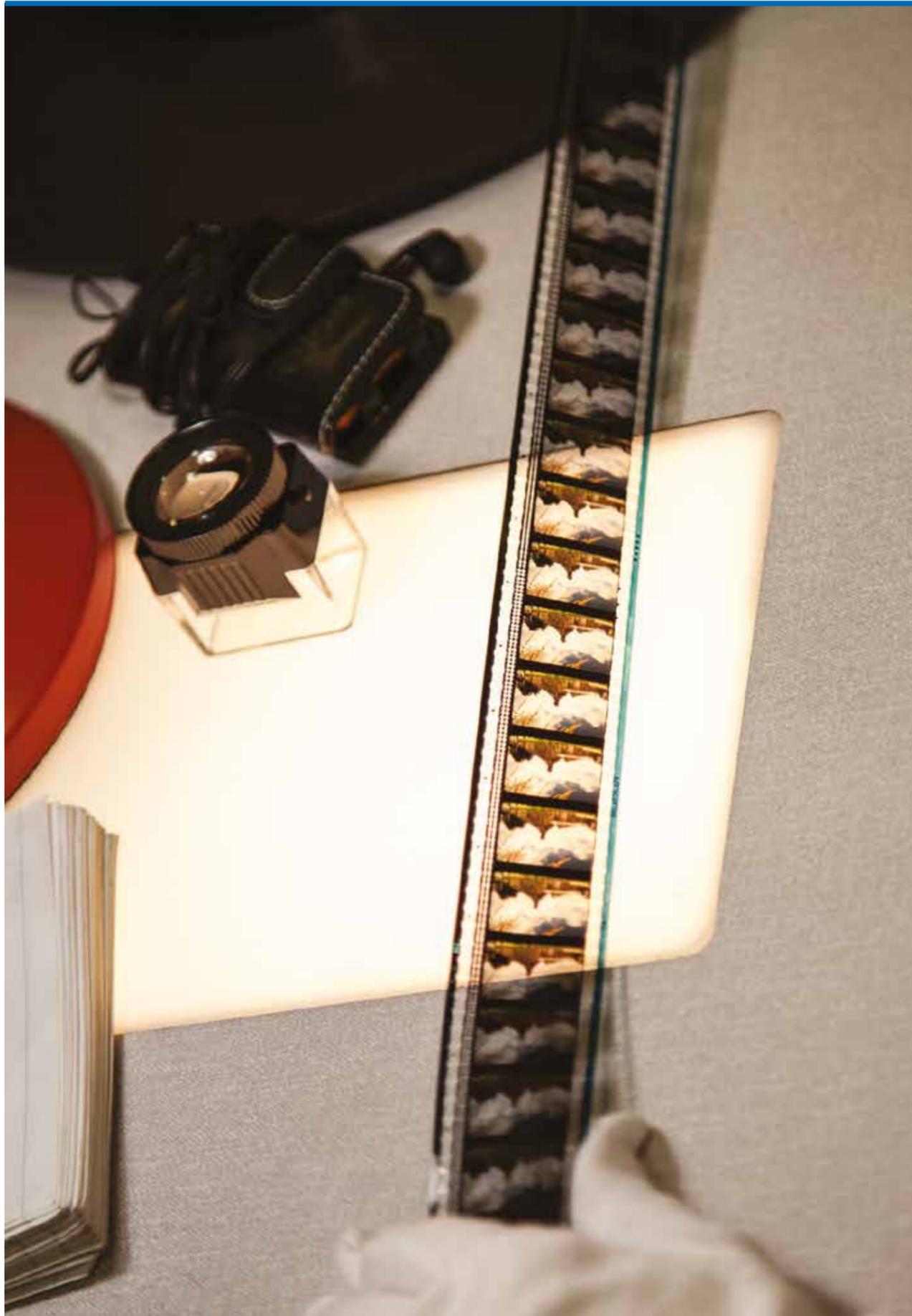
I was honoured to be given the role of National Librarian when I joined the organisation in September 2014 from the University of Edinburgh. One of my first tasks was to receive one of Scotland's oldest books, the *Aberdeen Breviary*, into the ownership of the Library. The last time such a unique example of early Scottish printing was added to the collection was more than 200 years ago, making this a very special acquisition. It now takes its place along with 24 million other items we hold in our collection. This is the beating heart of the Library and extends from our oldest item – an ancient letter written on papyrus from the 5th or 6th century – to the 4000 new items we take in every week.

A fully digitised version of the *Aberdeen Breviary* is also on our website which allows people who cannot visit us in person to be able to share in the riches held at the Library. One of our biggest challenges in the next decade will be to bring online more of our vast collections. This will involve processing on a large scale and will mean that, behind the scenes, the Library will be more of a physical and digital factory.

This is what will increasingly be expected of us. While there will always be people who prefer to excavate physical content in a library, many more will want easy online access to what they are looking for. It is our responsibility to meet the needs of every type of user and that means there has to be a much greater emphasis on online content. Our strategy commits us to having a third of our collection in digital format by 2025.

There is no doubt that the Library holds a special place in the cultural life of Scotland and we aim to reach out to more people in more parts of Scotland, as well as further afield. For most of the Library's existence, people have only been able to access our collections by coming into our premises in Edinburgh. In 2016, we will open our first base in the west of Scotland at the Kelvin Hall in Glasgow and we will explore new opportunities to establish a physical presence in other parts of Scotland.

By collecting and preserving published material, the Library acts as the guardian of the memory of Scotland for current and future generations. One exciting project demonstrates the importance of this role. In 2014 the people of Scotland voted in an historic referendum to decide whether or not they wanted to become an independent country. We have begun an archival project, *Collecting the Referendum*, which seeks to provide as full a record as possible of this crucial event. It includes collecting books, reports, serials, and ephemeral material such as flyers, leaflets, etc., as well as websites, moving images, sound and archival material. Capturing these important moments in history will become an increasingly important part of our role. ▶



One of the thousands of films in the Library's Moving Image Archive

NATIONAL LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

Essential maintenance work was completed this year on the roof and external fabric of our flagship building on George IV Bridge in Edinburgh while a major refurbishment began on our Causewayside building in the city. Both these schemes are vital to allow us to house the collection in the best conditions possible and safeguard it for future generations. We are grateful to the Scottish Government for their support on both these schemes.

Balancing our budget is always a challenge as we seek to improve what we do and expand into new areas. Since 2009 we have generated savings of £2.87 million to accommodate reductions in our income. At the same time, we have been successful in attracting additional money through fundraising. The *Aberdeen Breviary* was purchased with the support of some of the Library's benefactors and there has been a similarly positive response to the appeal to help us buy the final tranche of the archive of the prominent Scots-born writer Muriel Spark. We will build on these and other partnerships to develop new income streams to support our work.

It is natural in reports such as this to focus on the main developments through the year but attention also deserves to be paid to the ordinary matters that are the lifeblood of an organisation such as this – making material available to readers; repairing and conserving the collection for future generations; managing the finances and the Library's estate; improving our online presence; preparing and staging exhibitions; supporting researchers; linking with schools; organising events and much, much more. Each and every day, it is these things on which the reputation of the National Library of Scotland is built.

We were fortunate during the year in welcoming five new members to join our Board whose membership has been completely refreshed since early 2014. It has an equal balance of men and women, one of the first public organisations to meet the Scottish Government's guidance on equality and diversity in appointments to Scottish public bodies. This means we now have a new Board, a new National Librarian and an emerging new strategy which is setting a new direction for the organisation. There are exciting times ahead.

Dr John Scally
National Librarian and Chief Executive

“The Library has a superb collection of books and manuscripts on the history and culture of Scotland, and also mounts regular exhibitions. Genealogists investigating family trees come here, and amateur family sleuths will find the staff helpful in their research.”

OFFICIAL REVIEW ON FODOR'S TRAVEL,
The world's largest publisher of English language travel and tourism information.



The Aberdeen Breviary, one of the first books published in Scotland

A YEAR OF PROGRESS

Throughout the year the Library has worked to objectives set out in its Corporate Plan.

These were to

- Strategically develop the collections
- Make the collections globally accessible
- Invest in staff and essential services
- Promote the Library to the widest possible audience
- Collaborate with partners and forge alliances
- Prepare for the future

SOME OF THE KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2014-15:

- Developed a strategy for the future development of the Library - this was a key area of work for 2014-15. Every organisation needs to have a clear set of priorities to guide its work and direct its future development. The Library's staff were closely involved in identifying where action needs to be focused.
- Added 195,000 items to the collections through legal deposit and spent £1.55 million on the purchase of further items.
- Made a major acquisition in securing the *Aberdeen Breviary* – one of the first ever books to be published in Scotland more than 500 years ago.
- Increased traffic to the Library's website to almost 3 million visits and welcomed over 100,000 visitors to the Library's exhibitions.
- Launched a fundraising campaign to buy the final part of the archive of the Scots-born and internationally famous writer Muriel Spark. Her archive is one of the most comprehensive records of a writer's life ever assembled.

- Received an award from Wikipedia UK in recognition of the Library's support for the sharing of knowledge and information.
- Developed plans to create Sound Scotland, a distributed national archive of the country's sound heritage.
- Began building work on an innovative digital library at the Kelvin Hall in Glasgow, due to open in 2016. It will provide integrated access to all digital collections, including the Moving Image Archive.
- Launched an online educational initiative *Oor Wullie's guide tae Scots language* to help primary schools teach Scots. It was produced in association with Oor Wullie publisher DC Thomson and will help six to eleven-year-olds become familiar with the richness of the Scots tongue.
- Appointed five new members to the Library's Board which is responsible for setting the strategies, policies and priorities for the organisation. With these appointments, the Library became one of the first public bodies in Scotland to have an equal share of men and women on its Board.
- Completed a major roof repair project at the Library's flagship building on George IV Bridge in the centre of Edinburgh and embarked on a major renovation of the Causewayside building in the city.
- Added hundreds of images from the Library's historic collections to Wikimedia Commons for use in Wikipedia – one of the world's most popular websites – where they can be seen and shared by people everywhere. The images included photographs of construction of the iconic Forth Rail Bridge.



Dame Muriel Spark whose archive is held at the National Library

- Received the Customer magazine of the year award at the Scottish Magazine Awards for the Library's *Discover* magazine. It is the fourth time the magazine has won the award in the past six years.
- Staged two major exhibitions *Behind the Lines: Personal stories from the First World War* to mark the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of WWI and *Game of Crowns: The 1715 Jacobite rising* which told the story of Royal intrigue that led to the rising 300 years ago.
- Implemented a new pay and grading system for staff.
- Increased media coverage to a record £3.3 million advertising value equivalent.
- Hosted and organised the Elizabeth Soutar Bookbinding Competition and the Callum Macdonald Memorial Award for poetry pamphlet publishing.
- Completed work to create a full listing of the archive of the celebrated travel writer Sir Patrick Leigh Fermor, regarded as one of the most charismatic characters of the last century.
- Carried out extensive conservation work to preserve thousands of drawings by the 20th century cartoonist Sir Osbert Lancaster. He introduced the pocket cartoon to British newspapers in a career at the Daily Express that ran from 1939 to 1981.
- Supported and staged events at book festivals around Scotland.
- Staged a special display on World Book Day with the rarest edition of one of the best loved children's books of all time — *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

.....

“Cannot quite believe how good this historic maps site is... National Library of Scotland, we salute you.”

STEVE POOLE,
on Twitter

.....

“This award is to thank the National Library for placing their trust in the open knowledge movement — without their enthusiastic support, open culture in Scotland would not be where it is today.”

JIMMY WALES,
Founder of the online encyclopaedia Wikipedia

.....

“Fanboy moment: just been to National Library of Scotland and got to open one of the boxes from the Muriel Spark archive. Diaries galore.”

CRIME WRITER IAN RANKIN,
on Twitter

THE LIBRARY IN NUMBERS

24 MILLION

The total number of items in the collection ranging across books, manuscripts, archives, websites, maps, music, moving images and sound.

209,333

The number of published items added to the collection in 2014-15 – almost 600 a day.

2.9 MILLION

The number of sessions by users on our website - a record for the Library.

102,000

The number of people visiting our exhibitions – the first time a six-figure attendance has been achieved.

£3.3 MILLION

The value of media coverage achieved at the Library – another record.

10,680

The number of people attending our events programme – the most successful year ever.

545,658

The number of images of collection items that were made available through our website.

93%

Satisfaction levels among the users of the Library's services.

4000

The number of physical items added to the collection every week.

200 KILOMETRES OF SHELVING

Enough to stretch from Edinburgh to Inverness.

“The title of the exhibition leads to comparisons between the power play in 17th & 18th Century Scotland and that in the fictional George R R Martin’s *Game of Thrones*. I therefore wondered if I would find it contrived; the battles of a real life conflict shoehorned into the mould of popular fantasy. Happily this was not the case. This story is the real deal.”

REVIEW OF GAME OF CROWNS EXHIBITION,
published in the Independent newspaper.

“I’ve purchased several of the wonderful maps that the National Library of Scotland produces from Victorian maps of London. The scale and detail is astounding.”

LESLEY PLANT, KENILWORTH,
in a letter to the family history magazine Who Do You Think You Are?

The National Library of Scotland would like to thank all our donors for their generous support this year.

Acquisition of the Aberdeen Breviary and the Compassio Beate Marie

Breslauer Foundation
Elizabeth Soutar Trust
Friends of the National Libraries
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OBE FBA FRSE Hon FFA and
Ms Elspeth MacArthur OBE
Dr Roger Collins and Dr Judith McClure
The Rt Hon Lord and Lady Coulsfield
Sir Sandy M Crombie and Lady Crombie
Dr and Mrs Michael Gray
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Lady Lucinda Mackay
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Dr Henry Noltie
Dr James Robertson
Lady Sarah Wolffe

We would like to thank the American Patrons of the National Library and Galleries of Scotland and their supporters, whose generosity has contributed towards making our historic maps available online and the acquisition of the Aberdeen Breviary and the Muriel Spark archive.

Mr and Mrs Patrick J Calhoun Jnr
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Mrs Patricia Savides
Emeritus Professor Alan A Tait
Dr William Zachs and Mr Martin Adam

The Callum Macdonald Memorial Award for poetry pamphlet publishing

The Michael Marks Charitable Trust
Mr Robert Gregor

Conservation of the Hew Morrison Collection

Mr and Mrs John N Allan

Development of new technology to enable 'the crowd' to transcribe our manuscripts online

Craignish Trust
P F Charitable Trust
Mr Alan Clements
Mr and Mrs Fred C Shedden OBE
Mr Tom Walker and Dr Walker
Mr and Mrs Richard F Wolff

Our education work with school groups

Cruden Foundation
JTH Charitable Trust
Margaret Murdoch Charitable Trust

Providing access to historical maps online

Samuel H Kress Foundation
Mr David Rumsey

Acquisition of the final tranche of the Muriel Spark archive, and recruitment of a curator to list and describe the archive

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The Trusthouse Charitable Foundation
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Mr Peter Kennerley and
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and Dr Elizabeth McCall Smith
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Mr Ronald Mitchell
Harry and Nicola Morgan
Mr and Mrs Charles E P Plowden
Mrs Helen Pope
Dr John Scally
Mr Dennis Smith
Ms Julie Taylor
Mr Nigel Watt
Mrs Ann Watt

Moving Image Archive

Mickel Fund

Cataloguing our Robert Louis Stevenson archive

Mrs Joyce Mehew

Supporting the overall work of the Library, enabling us to continue to safeguard our collections for future generations

Stichting Teuntje Anna
Ms Almut Boehme
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Miss Patricia Clarke
Mr and Mrs Jonathan Cobb
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Ms Leah Jeffers
Mr Ian W Moffett
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Ms Sarah J M Whitley
Mr W James Wolffe QC and
Lady Sarah P L Wolffe QC

We would also like to thank all our donors who wish to remain anonymous.

“I read about a scheme run by the National Library of Scotland called ‘Ask a librarian’ I sent an e-mail with our inquiry and a marvellous reply came back with a list of possible clues. This led to full production of a triple bill including a play set in a German trench.”

GRAHAM COWLEY,

Theatre producer who has made a specialty of rediscovering plays that have been forgotten, interviewed in the arts magazine ai

“I have never enjoyed myself so much in a library. Really wasn’t expecting to be wowed. Besides the books, the Library takes plenty of pride in organizing great exhibitions.”

JENISE L,

on the travel review website Tripadvisor

“Staff are friendly and helpful; the system of access easily understood. In short, everything is accessible for those with the time or inclination to make a visit to the building.”

REVIEW PUBLISHED ON THE ONLINE SITE PIPINGPRESS.COM

“This is a first class exhibition and one full of emotion and great history of a momentous period in our history. The exhibition is highly recommended.”

REVIEW OF THE BEHIND THE LINES EXHIBITION ON THE OUTBREAK OF WWI,
posted on edinburghguide.com

“Been a few times and always impressed, recently did some research on my family, great amount of information in special section, love the little paper models, terrific facility. Staff very helpful.”

M_WATSON 49,

on Tripadvisor

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