The Rankin Files
Rebus author probes his past as he donates archive
The histories of prisoner-patients held in the Criminal Lunatic Department in Perth are revealed in this Fringe exhibition. Discover their stories as guest curator Professor Rab Houston (University of St Andrews) delves into the archives of National Records of Scotland and examines their crime, recovery and release.

Free Exhibition
1–30 August 2019, 10am–4.30pm
Access via Archivists’ Garden
HM General Register House, 2 Princes Street, Edinburgh, EH1 3YY
Learn more at www.nrscotland.gov.uk
The thoughts and deeds of 18th-century Scots still resonate today. That’s why this summer’s Northern Lights exhibition celebrates …

300 years of Enlightenment

There can hardly be a more appropriate exhibition for our main hall in Edinburgh than *Northern Lights*, which explores the Scottish Enlightenment.

The National Library of Scotland’s precursor, The Library of the Faculty of Advocates, had a key role in an unprecedented re-examination of science, art, religion, economics, history, ethics … everything. As such, we hold an unparalleled collection of items relating to the Scottish Enlightenment.

Those were the days of the polymath. Someone could be a painter and a politician, a minister and a scientist, an advocate and a novelist. Curiosity about the world and the human condition transcended professions.

Three centuries on, the works of Adam Smith, David Hume, William Robertson, Robert Burns, Thomas Reid and James Watt – to name just a few – continue to be influential around the globe, continue to shape our thinking.

Moving up-to-date, we come to Ian Rankin’s generous donation of his literary archive to the Library. With it comes a dowry towards a curator to catalogue and open up the archive. He writes glowingly of how he used our facilities to peek into the minds of novelists who influenced him. Now his archive is shelved in perpetuity alongside other literary greats.

The Library exists not only to preserve knowledge, but to share it. We are thankful to everyone who helps us to preserve the memory of the nation. We hope that upon reading this issue of *Discover*, you might learn something new.

Dr John Scally, National Librarian
e: NationalLibrarian@nls.uk
The National Library is a partner in a new Business & IP Centre which opened its doors at Glasgow’s Mitchell Library in April, supporting entrepreneurs and small businesses to start, protect and grow their businesses.

The partnership is with the British Library and Glasgow Life, with Santander as founding partner. It provides emerging and existing businesses access to a wealth of free business and IP (intellectual property) resources, including information on patents, trademarks, design and copyright.

The new service is the 12th National Network Centre modelled on the British Library’s Business & IP Centre, and is the first to open in Scotland.

The centre will harness the expertise of local public and private business, including experts in residence, and work with organisations such as Scottish Enterprise, Business Gateway, the Chamber of Commerce, universities and colleges and Glasgow-based enterprises to deliver a programme of free and low-cost workshops and events for anyone thinking of starting or growing their business.

National Librarian Dr John Scally said: “Creativity and innovation among entrepreneurs and start-ups rely on the most up-to-date information and advice available. “We have vast business and intellectual property resources in our collections and want businesses throughout Scotland to know that help and expertise is there. “We are pleased to partner with the British Library and the Mitchell Library to open this service in Glasgow. By our combined efforts we will help local businesses thrive.”

Find out more about the services on offer at glasgowlife.org.uk/libraries/business-and-intellectual-property-centre-glasgow

Budding entrepreneurs can continue to access our extensive resources at www.nls.uk/business
The Strathmartine Trust (established in 1999) is a charitable trust the primary object of which is to support research and education in Scottish History.

The Trustees seek applications for the following grants:

- **Strathmartine Awards** - up to £5,000 to assist with the completion of existing projects and to aid publication.
- **Sandeman Fund Awards** – up to £2,000 for research in the field of early medieval Scottish History.

Full details and application forms can be obtained from The Strathmartine Trust by e-mail to factor@strathmartinetrust.org or on the Trust’s website: www.strathmartinetrust.org.

The closing date for the return of completed applications in each case is 18 November 2019. Please note the closing date.
The Scottish Local History Directory – listing organisations, collections and resources – is now available online.

The directory is the culmination of an ambitious project between the National Library, the Scottish Local History Forum and Local Studies Scotland Librarians (LocScot), as well as invaluable research support from Strathclyde University’s MSc in Information & Library Studies students. It points readers towards a wide range of collections and expertise relevant to local history and community studies.

The directory is unique in its scope – it includes anything relevant to local history, including genealogy, companies, archaeology, sport, faith groups, schools and charities.

It comprises all formats, from original manuscripts to digital resources, which can be found in libraries, archives, museums, societies, and of course, online.

Not all listed organisations have a collection to visit, but all will be able to answer your enquiry. Eric Graham, broadcaster and historian of Scottish maritime history, said: “I used the directory to find links to sites which had images I could use for an article using the key word search, and found a wealth of interesting resources and sources which triggered thoughts for many other articles.

“It is a similar serendipity to that which makes browsing through physical museums so rewarding. You come across things you didn’t know were there.

“I spent a happy hour or two following the links to the websites of a wide range of organisations which hold local history resources – from details of the James Lind research into scurvy on the Royal College of Surgeons’ site to the Terra Nova ship model at Dundee’s McManus Art Gallery and Museum.

“Although there are already more than 200 resource-holding organisations listed, we should encourage our museums, archives, private collectors, societies and local history libraries to submit an entry to the directory to help reach a wider audience.

“It’s free to use and free to submit a listing. There must be thousands of potential resources out there.

“The directory’s advanced search facilities allow the user to find resources by type – such as primary, secondary, oral, images, maps, film, artefacts, etc – as well as by subject, era, and geographical coverage.

“The facilities also tell you how you can access the resource – in person or by appointment, and whether online access is possible.”

This constantly expanding directory is completely free to use and free to add your own listing. It features a map search tool that allows users to search for organisations by geographic location.

From Shetland Museum and Archives in the north to Hawick Archaeological Society in the south, it has the whole country covered.
Visitors to the National Library at Kelvin Hall will be whisked back to the dawn of the digital age this summer with retro games and analogue activities – and free screenings of 80s feature films.

A total 80s takeover runs from Tuesday 23 to Saturday 27 July with talks on our film, sound and video collections from the decade and a seminar on computer games.

Newly digitised showreels from the era will be on display, too.

Get ready for an analogue attack as we bring out our VHS and Betamax players, clip on our Walkman and show you what the Library’s moving image and sound collections are all about. Kids – young and old – can even design their own VHS cover and cassette cards.

Our 80s activities are part of the Library’s multimedia retrospective – Back to the Future: 1979-1989 – which includes essays relating to that decade. Topics range from Margaret Thatcher’s first general election victory in 1979, the ‘Right to Buy’ policy of the Conservative Party and Scottish nationalists’ occupation of Edinburgh’s old Royal High School, to the controversies and rivalries of the Olympic Games, synth pop, the Sony Walkman and the Challenger Space Shuttle disaster.

We have millions of items in our collections that relate to the decade, which our essayists – staff writers and guest writers – used to explore their topics.

Also included in the website is a wealth of video content from our Moving Image Archive – pieces include an interview with Alex Ferguson when he was manager of Aberdeen FC in 1980, a piece about mixed marriage (between different Christian faiths), the Glasgow Garden Festival in 1988 and Scottish big-screen gems from the decade.

Check it out at digital.nls.uk/1980s

**FILM SCREENING SCHEDULE**

- **Wednesday 19 June, 5.45pm**
  Restless Natives (1985)

- **Saturday 20 July, 2pm**
  A 1980s playlist you won’t want to miss!

- **Wednesday 24 July, 5.45pm**
  Gregory’s Girl (1980)

- **Saturday 27 July, 2pm**
  Local Hero (1983)

- **Wednesday 7 August, 5.45pm**
  Highlander (1986)

For full details of workshops and screenings, visit www.nls.uk
Crime writer Ian Rankin – the creator of the detective Rebus – sifted through his writing life as he prepared to donate his archive to the National Library of Scotland. It was a revelatory process for a man who has used our collections to learn the innermost thoughts of his heroes.

The poignant privilege of sitting next to Spark, Gray and McIlvanney

So many boxes. Every time I thought I’d reached the end, I found another. Boxes filled with manuscripts, with newspaper and magazine reviews and print advertisements, with contracts, with unfinished and unrealised projects, with photographs, with correspondence, with bank statements and bills and expenditure receipts...

I am a hoarder by nature and here was the proof. Not that this had presented any problem during decades spent up-sizing, moving from a rented room to a small flat to a semi-detached house and eventually to a three-storey detached house with separate garage and workshop. But each and every room had come to be filled with books, mementoes and boxes which would eventually fill and sit there unmarked, while an empty box was placed on top.

And now it was time to downsize and declutter. Thank goodness for the National Library of Scotland, who said they might be interested in my archive.

So, in July 2018, I began the process of opening and sifting each and every box. It would take the next six months and prove mortifying and therapeutic in equal measure. I unearthed whole manuscripts (for TV and film projects, for example) that I could not remember having written. Unpublished stories, too. And mentions of other stories and unrealised projects in letters to and from my various agents and publishers. Some things I decided to keep close to my chest (a daily diary kept between the ages of 12 and 32); others deserved little more than shredding (travel tickets, restaurant bills, ancient bank statements and tax returns).

Everything else went into a series of fresh boxes – 23 of them. I think – to be collected and stored in the Library. This, in itself, was both a privilege and a thrill. I’ve visited the extensive archive in the bowels of George IV Bridge, poring over items once belonging to Muriel Spark, Alasdair Gray and William McIlvanney. All three were important to me in my early days as a writer, and now my life would be shelved alongside them.

It would take the next six months and prove mortifying and therapeutic in equal measure.

I say that the process of gathering (or rather thinning out) my archive was therapeutic, but it was poignant, too, for two reasons. One, I belong (I think) to perhaps the last generation of writers who actually possess an extensive written archive.

Letters and manuscripts dating from the 1980s remain fresh, having been kept hidden away from the light (and damp, thankfully) through several decades. I wasn’t always so fortunate. I lived in France between 1990 and 1996, and when it came time to move back to Scotland I brought a box of first edition hardbacks of my first Inspector Rebus novel Knots and Crosses down from the attic – only to find that mice had made a substantial nest of the ruined contents.

The second reason for the poignancy relates in part to this, because while I was in France (in pre-internet days) I wrote a lot of letters and received many in return, and my archive includes correspondence from Iain Banks, Ruth Rendell, P D James, William McIlvanney, H R F Keating, Colin Dexter, Michael Dibdin, Iain Crichton Smith and Philip Kerr – all of whom alas, are no longer with us.

I had actually forgotten how often Iain Banks and I used to write to one another – me with my clattering daisy-wheel printer, he with his dot matrix. As I opened and re-read each letter, memories flooded back – of Willie signing a book to me and wishing me luck with my first detective novel; of Iain Crichton Smith sleeping on the floor of my London flat when he was in town to receive a prize; of Colin trying (and failing) to teach me a few Latin phrases.

It was, in the end, a struggle to let go of these small parts of myself, but I know my archive is in the very best of hands – and safe from nesting mice.
Thanks to a substantial donation from Ian Rankin, the Library will recruit a curator to catalogue and promote the archive. The curator post is also made possible through generous donations from The W M Mann Foundation and The Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation.
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