

# National Librarian and Chief Executive's Report to the Board September 2020



## LIBRARIAN'S KEY EVENTS SINCE JUNE 2020

On 11 August 2020 following five months of lockdown, the Library reopened to the public.



Thank you, thank you to everyone @natlibscot. Was so wonderful to be back in the reading room today. Thanks also for the great online service and events that have been running during lockdown. 🍌🍌🍌

## **Hidden Collections – Quarterly Update**

During this reporting period the Metadata & Maintenance Team have been concentrating efforts on providing metadata for the wider access Scottish electronic publications from the hidden collections. This work has been carried out by staff members working from home and 2445 have been catalogued.

The hidden collection contains publications from a variety of organisations ranging from Healthcare Improvement Scotland and the Scottish Parliament to Scottish Environment Link. It includes a significant donation of publications from Scottish Natural Heritage, who have chosen to archive their publications with the Library. The electronic publications in this collection are a significant contribution to worldwide scientific knowledge and chart the changes in approach and attitude to environmental conservation from the 1970s to the present day.

The Scottish Government and Scottish Parliament continued to deposit new electronic publications during lockdown, many of these present the Scottish Government's response to Covid-19.

These electronic publications are accessible through Library Search and are freely available to all, not only registered readers of the Library.

The Team continued to build on the success of the House of Commons hidden collection and provided access to 42,869 nineteenth century House of Lords publications. As with the previous project this involved loading records for electronic items accessed from the United Kingdom Parliamentary Papers e-resource into the Library catalogue and adding the holdings for the physical items to the catalogue records for the electronic versions.

## **A springtime harvest**

The statistics for the curated additions to the UK Web Archive for the first quarter of the reporting year (April-June) have revealed a bumper crop courtesy of the National Library of Scotland. The curated additions are those where a deliberate targeting took place to make sure we captured web content that might otherwise have been missed by the general domain crawl that takes place annually. The National Library of Scotland was responsible for archiving 5,455 websites out of a total for all six of the legal deposit libraries of 8,439 (that's 64% of the total). Nearly three quarters of the National Library of Scotland's total were archived by Trevor Thomson – a whopping 3,985 websites in three months (which is 47% of all of the curated web archiving for the whole country). Although a large amount Trevor's work was focussed on collecting Scotland's experience of COVID (1,367 websites), it wasn't the only collection he developed. An even greater focus was the building of a collection Scotland's schools (over 2,000 websites), with other important collections being built too, including Scottish responses to Black Lives Matter, a collection on Edwin Morgan's centenary, a large and ongoing collection of the websites of community initiatives in Scotland, and the archiving of the websites of 120 Scottish orchestras. With web content especially vulnerable to deletion or edit, and with the output of some communities and organisations now mostly online rather than in print, building curated collections of these archived websites is crucial in terms of safeguarding the memory of the nation.

## One Third Digital: Update for the Librarian's report to the Board

The Mass Digitisation Team returned to the studio when the Library reopened to staff on 27 July and are now back up running and working close to pre-lockdown capacity. The team have resumed digitisation of the Antiquarian Books of Scotland (ABS) collection, MacKinnon photography albums, fragile maps of Scotland on the hired Versascan scanner, and medieval manuscripts funded by Alex Graham. At the end of August, their focus will move to digitisation of the outstanding part of the Scottish chapbooks collection, as well as resuming digitisation of robust single sheet maps of Scotland on the studio's new 400 maps per day sheet-feed scanner.



While working from home during Lockdown, the team have carried out rights assessment on over 4,000 volumes from the ABS collection in preparation for them to go online. This included work on over 300 items which were previously flagged as in copyright and are now confirmed to be out of copyright.



The team has hosted a Robertson Trust intern, Brodie McKenzie, who is undertaking a six-week internship throughout July and August. Brodie is working to improve the Library's presence on Wikipedia by investigating how other organisations use the platform and writing articles on the Library's collections, for example this new article on the John Murray Archive [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_John\\_Murray\\_Archive](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_John_Murray_Archive). Wikipedia is the world's fifth most visited website; improving the Library's presence there will help to raise awareness of our work and help to drive traffic to our services and collections.

In July the Library won the Wikimedia UK *Partnership of the Year 2020* award for the Wikisource OCR Correction project which ran throughout lockdown.



More items were added to the [Rare items in Gaelic](#) collection on the Digital Gallery in early August, and around 4,000 more books will be added to the [Antiquarian Books of Scotland](#) collection in late August, bringing the total of online books from this collection to over 8,000.

During Lockdown, great progress has been made bringing thousands of special collections Scottish maps online that were digitised in February and March. This includes strongroom items from both printed and manuscript map collections such as the [Signet Library's collection](#) of 400 maps of Scotland, 1580s-1950s; 300 [county maps of Scotland](#) dating from the 1620s to the 1930s; and 300 [manuscript estate plans](#) forming a really interesting set of unique, detailed maps, stretching from Wigtownshire to Orkney.

Other maps put online during the reporting period include 102 specialised maps, plans and profiles relating to [Bridges](#), [Canals](#) and [Railways](#) in Scotland. These are grouped under [Transport Plans of Scotland, 18th-20th centuries](#), and include early plans for the [Forth & Clyde Canal](#), actively planned from the 1760s, the [Caledonian Canal](#) (1804-1847) and the [Union Canal](#) (opened 1822). The team also made available online 230 [Goat Fire Insurance Plans of Scottish Towns, 1880s-1940s](#), being very detailed maps showing the function of main industrial buildings, and often the names of particular companies or institutions there.

Another highlight of maps recently published online are a small set of 82 [military maps of Scotland](#), dating 1656-1923, including battle plans of Culloden, Falkirk, Glenshiel, and Prestonpans, as well as maps of military roads and maps related to the restoration of Edinburgh Castle in the 1880s.

Although we currently lack the infrastructure to make digitised sound easily discoverable online, the UOSH team posted a selection of clips from the collections being digitally preserved through the Unlocking Our Sound Heritage project on the [Scotland's Sound website](#).

The digitisation facilities at Kelvin Hall reopened to staff on 27 July enabling the resumption of tape digitisation as part of the UOSH project, and both film and video digitisation for moving image. 100 sound tapes were captured in the first 4 weeks back in the building. The immediate priority on return for the moving image team was the fulfilment of orders for content from production companies and individuals which had been placed during lockdown.



## Youth Employability Update

The Library has been seeking to expand our involvement in youth employability (YE) through the lockdown period in anticipation of the economic crisis to come and its predicted effect on young people.

### **Our approach to YE is guided by these principles:**

- We use the resources of the Library (collections, expertise, opportunity) to support young people in the transition from education to employment;
- We can work most effectively with young people who are coming out of higher education with limited work experience;
- We aim to achieve a situation where good news stories about young people achieving their ambitions through the Library encourage others to support our work; and
- Our work with young people in YE is also about engagement with collections and developing the audience of the Library.

Our activities fall into three broad areas:

- Offering young people employability coaching to fill gaps in their knowledge of the recruitment process and to level the playing field as they apply for jobs;
- Creating opportunities so young people to gain workplace insights and we can establish relationships with them; and
- Finding funds to support paid traineeships and internships that allow young people to demonstrate their capabilities, develop new skills and build their confidence.

### **Pre-Lockdown Status**

In March 2020 the Library had two Digital Access interns in post and one Alexander Graham Trainee reaching the end of their contract. We were running the recruitment process for our next three Alexander Graham Trainees and the Collections Care trainee was about to be appointed. We had also agreed to host four Robertson Trust Scholars (a programme supporting disadvantaged young people through university) on six-week internships in the Library over the summer. The Scholars are between third and fourth year at university.

We were also concluding our fashion-related YE project with a planned event on fashion and sustainability (drawing on our business collections) which would also act as a launch event for the zines produced by students at Herriot Watt University as an introduction to our fashion-related collections for their peers.

We had just completed a career development event for PhD candidates interested in the possibilities of curatorial work on 28 February and were following up with specific enquiries from that. Attendees at that event, plus volunteers working with the Sound Archive had been offered employability coaching. We gave employability coaching to 23 individuals through FY 2019-20.

## **YE in Lockdown**

Lockdown meant a significant re-orientation and a steep learning curve for YE at the Library. We paused the Alexander Graham Traineeship recruitments with one appointee and 150 applications still to be processed. We also paused the fashion programme.

We then had to re-invent YE as an online service. The learning curve has been fairly steep but we are seeing many unexpected advantages to digital delivery in terms of a wider reach and, therefore, increased numbers. Time will tell whether the relationships established online are as sustainable as those formed face-to-face. It's important to us that connecting young people with the Library at this stage in their careers helps keep them engaged with us throughout their lives and then go on to act as advocates for the Library.

## **Online Coaching and Outreach**

Lauren McCombe, our Google Arts and Culture Intern was successful, just before lockdown, in securing a permanent post at Stirling District Libraries – a 'dream job' that had repeatedly evaded her before her time with us. Helen Wiles, our User Experience Intern, was also looking for permanent work and we were able to provide her with some very focussed online coaching support for an application to the Home Office. This was a complex and challenging recruitment process and we were delighted to hear of Helen's success. Helen and Lauren have provided their own accounts of their experience with us below.

On 13 July we took part in an online careers event for PhD candidates at Glasgow University. Feedback was good and we have now been invited to provide another, longer, session in November.

On 22 July we took part in the online Scottish Graduate Careers Fair. Our offer of six internships (see below) generated a lot of interest and we chatted online with 216 students/graduates. Some of these conversations included offering attendees with access useful, up-to-date, advice on how to best present themselves in a recruitment process. This advice was also attached to the job descriptions to make the application process as transparent (and effective) as possible.

While suspending the Alexander Graham Traineeships recruitment we maintained a longlist of candidates for the Sound and Video posts. In giving our regrets to unsuccessful candidates we were also able to offer constructive feedback for future applications. Six people took us up on this and one long-listed candidate took the opportunity to ask how best they could present themselves at interview should they be invited. We provided our general guidance on improving interview performance.

Of the three Alex Graham Traineeships we expect the Collections Care Trainee to start work in September. The recruitment of Sound and Video Trainees will resume in September with a view to them starting work in November.

## **Online Volunteering**

Hands on work with collection material has always been a significant draw for our volunteer programme and has been a useful source of practical experience for young people interested in careers in libraries, archives or cultural heritage generally. It has been difficult to translate these into online equivalents in lockdown - particularly due to technical constraints on the off-site processing of collection materials for established volunteer projects such as *Unlocking our Sound Heritage* at Kelvin Hall.

## **Online Internships**

As the economic impact of COVID-19 became clearer it became equally clear that young people were likely to be especially hard hit. The consensus being that a failure to make a reasonably timely transition from education to employment can set young people's lives back considerably - with both personal and social costs.

### **Digital Research Intern**

Sarah Ames, Digital Scholarship Librarian, already had plans in place for a Digital Research Intern before Lockdown. We were very happy to support Sarah in turning this into an online opportunity and seeing it as a pilot for other online internships. This required adapting our recruitment and induction procedures to maintain an effective selection process and ensure a positive experience for the intern.

The Digital Research Intern, Lucy Havens, is a talented PhD candidate at Edinburgh University with a commitment to using data to enhance the positive impact of libraries in society. We have been meeting with Lucy on a regular basis to help her extract the maximum benefit in terms of her career from her experience with us.

### **Robertson Trust Interns**

Lockdown meant that we couldn't proceed with the Robertson Trust internships as originally planned. We therefore recast the content of the internships and, in one case placed the intern in a new department, to make online versions feasible. The first two interns started on 27th July, the second pair on 3rd August. The internships have a duration of 6 weeks and now have an online research focus. These intern projects cover: a survey of implications for the Library of bot-created content; development of an educational resource on Lewis Grassie Gibbon's *Sunset Song*; enhancement of webpages dedicated to research for senior secondary school pupils; and a survey of the Library's engagements with Wikimedia.

As well as working closely with the interns to enhance their future employability we aim to add value to their internships by helping them to develop their research skills before they return to university for their final year.

### **A Six-pack of Interns**

In June, the Library Leadership Team identified an opportunity to fund five internships to run before the end of the financial year. Another internship (for nine months) was funded by Bord na Gaidhlig following an application by Gill Hamilton, Digital Access Manager. We quickly identified suitable topics and areas where the interns could work and prepared role descriptions accordingly. We launched these at the Scottish Graduate Careers Fair on 22 July, our intention being that the interns would start online then move onsite as conditions allowed.

We received a total of 366 applications for the internships. Interviews will be completed by the end of August with a view to having all interns in post by the end of September. Interns will work remotely until conditions allow them to move onsite. The interns will benefit from peer-mentors – members of Library staff who completed an 'Aspiring Leadership' programme and who were looking for opportunities to consolidate their skills. These mentors were also involved in the recruitment and selection process.

The interns will each have a research-based project to work on, the outputs of which will contribute to the work of the Library in the strategic context of *Reaching People*. These projects will focus on equalities and inclusion in archival description; creating a one-stop media centre; supporting work on the climate crisis; balancing data rights and personalisation; reaching under-represented audiences; and creating a Gaelic language interface for Library Search.

## **Maintaining Momentum**

We hope, as public events become feasible in the Library, to revisit the Sustainable Fashion show originally scheduled for April and, as universities settle into new ways of working with students, to complete the distribution of our guide to collections for fashion-related students – the *Lost for Words* zine.

However, working on YE through digital channels has generated fresh insights and new opportunities and there are many possibilities still to be explored. It has also become clear that the demand for practical career support at a crucial stage in the lives of young people is huge. Careers officers at Edinburgh University commented on the stir caused by our offer at the online Graduate Recruitment Fair. Many candidates have expressed their appreciation of the Library investing in 'no experience required' roles at a time when the general outlook seems so bleak. The engagement value of YE work in the current context is hard to quantify but may well turn out to be a significant long-term benefit for the Library.

## **Intern Stories**

### **Lauren's Story**

To say that my internship at the National Library of Scotland was a benefit to my professional life would be the understatement of the year. More than just improving my prospects of finding employment in the library sector, this internship proved to be the catalyst for my entire career – a career, I should note, that I had been struggling to get off the ground for quite some time.

When I started work at the Library, I was 27 years old: I had graduated in 2015 with a 1st Class Honours degree in English Studies and had been volunteering in various libraries and archives wherever I could. This volunteering was sporadic, in part owing to the fact that I could not financially support myself by working part-time; and conversely because my local library services simply did not have the hours, time, or staffing to support my efforts in getting my professional foot in the door. I had been consistently rejected for even entry level Library Assistant roles since I had left university. When the day of the internship interview came, I stood in the room with 5 other candidates for the job – all of whom were fresh, shiny recent graduates – and, feeling hopelessly outmatched, confessed that I had been working as a dog-walker for two years. I could hardly believe it, then, when I received the call offering me the internship, citing my forthrightness and my clear drive to get where I so desperately wanted to go.

Determined that my years of frustration wouldn't be in vain, I threw myself into the internship and was elated to find that the Library was willing to let me. Over the course of 6 months, I researched, created, and launched 4 online exhibits in conjunction with the Library's partnership with the Google Arts & Culture Platform – managing the project myself from day one. I attended meetings with senior management and was always made to feel that my perspective and contributions were valued. I was encouraged to be bold in my endeavours and to push myself



creatively. I was assured that the project belonged to me as much as it belonged to the Library, as the final published exhibits would be the beginnings of my 'portfolio' to show to future employers. I ran workshops, participated in school outreach events, and had full agency to stretch myself as much as possible. When Google invited me to consult on a larger Scotland-wide project that they were planning, the Library were fully supportive in 'sharing' me – and so I went from ceaseless job rejections to splitting my time between Scotland's biggest library and one of the largest companies in the world.

My experience at National Library, therefore, was one I can only describe as an exercise in exponential growth and unmitigated support. The employability coaching I received on top of my internship work was particularly invaluable, as I learned to reflect and package my professional development at the Library in a way that would make me appealing to the wider job market. Even when challenges arose, I found myself increasing in confidence every single day.

Over six months I transformed from someone who struggled to believe that they belonged 'in the room' to someone who had the sureness to walk into my next interview and talk about what an asset I had been to our country's greatest literary institution, how I had been head-hunted by (actual!) Google, and all the good work I had produced in managing a project entirely of my own. I received the call the next day offering me a permanent, salaried post as a Library Technician: a role that was several grades above the very jobs I had applied for with the same local authority and never even made it to interview.

To say that I loved being an intern at National Library of Scotland would be another understatement of great magnitude. During my time there I was challenged, I was changed, and I was raised up. More than anything else, I am profoundly grateful that the Library took a chance on my character over the checkpoints on my CV. I don't know where I would be had it not been for that chance but, if there is one thing I know for certain, it is that these internships have the potential to transform the lives of their next recipients. I am living, breathing, working proof of that fact, and I hope that there are many others like me who can bring such positive experiences to the future of the ever-changing of the library sector. I am delighted to have been one of the first in the National Library of Scotland's internship programme, but I am even more heartened to know that I will not be the last.

## **Helen's Story**

I started applying for jobs in my last year of Uni. As soon as I came back to campus in September, I was applying for every graduate scheme I could find – mostly in things that I had never heard of and had little interest in – panicked to get a job so that I could fend for myself. I had no idea what an English literature degree could lead to, and I knew I could put my mind to anything given the chance, but the problem was that chances weren't appearing. Everything required industry experience, even the most basic minimum-wage jobs (sometimes even unpaid ones), none of which I had apart from a waitressing job I'd taken to help pay for things going through Uni.

When I saw the advert for the Google Arts and Culture internship at the National Library, it was a breath of fresh air. I had applied for over 40 jobs at this point – being told 'unfortunately not this time' or just being ignored completely. I hadn't even considered living in Edinburgh, but I'd never seen an opportunity that sparked such excitement in me. I made an application instantly, having space to talk about my passion and interests rather than how I'd showed a skill I didn't really understand. I couldn't believe it when I got an email saying that I was shortlisted for

interview! It was the only application process where I was genuinely excited and felt like I had chance to show my potential.

I got the email to say that unfortunately I had been unsuccessful, and while upsetting, I knew each candidate at the interview deserved a place as much as me. Never did I expect to receive a phonecall a week later while on holiday in Greece to be offered a Usability and UX post! I was passionate about making digital items accessible to a range of people, and had been advocating for things that, back then, I had no idea were actually leading me towards user experience. I listened to podcasts on sun loungers about what UX was, scribbling questions on hotel paper. When I had another phonecall to give my answer, it was a straight 'yes' and I couldn't believe I was being offered a job in something that a few weeks ago I didn't know existed.

When I started the role, I took on training courses (online and in person) and visits to other institutions like the British Library, the University of Edinburgh, the Wellcome Trust and Digital Science.


I took to the UX discipline straight away, with the Library being flexible enough to allow me to take on my own projects in addition to what was required in my role. I felt like I was absorbing knowledge like a huge sponge, and my love for my work extended so that I created a successful UX blog, joined the community in Edinburgh where I gave talks and met other contacts, and completed an abundance of projects to make a real difference to the Library.

Despite my contract being extended, I knew it was time to look for jobs again. I was dreading the disappointment that came with my previous experience of doing so, but knew I had so much experience under my belt now, and better than this, colleagues around me who helped me build my confidence and be able to articulate these experiences in a way that mattered in the job market. After only one job application, I progressed through the interview stages for a User Researcher job at the Home Office (amidst the chaos of the pandemic) and was ultimately successful. This was one of the best opportunities I'd seen available, where I could get to work on improving digital services that would make a difference to such a wide range of people on behalf of the government. It didn't seem real that in the space of a year, I could go from not knowing what UX was to seeking a career in it!

I will be forever thankful to the Library for taking a chance on me, nurturing me and allowing me to become the person that I am today. I have made friends, created experiences and found a love and passion for something entirely new. It can be demoralising applying for jobs out of University with grades but nothing else behind you. It seems like a impossible cycle that can't be broken – you need experience for a job, but can't get a job without experience. For breaking that cycle, the Library are giving a chance to so many young people like myself who have the potential and drive to do amazing things in whatever field they want, and for that I will always be grateful.

# Statistics for the use of Library digitised resources on external services and the nls.uk domain from 1 April 2020 – 30 June 2020 unless otherwise stated.


## External services



**WIKIMEDIA**


94 Wikimedia sites  
23,706 pages, increase of 270% on last quarter  
**8,581,141 views**

**YOUTUBE** [BIT.LY/YOUTUBENLS](https://bit.ly/youtubenls)



12 new videos  
**26,588 views, 40% increase on last quarter**  
627 hours watched, 100% increase on last quarter  
**186 new subscribers, 127% increase on last quarter**

**INTERNET ARCHIVE**



**INTERNET ARCHIVE**

4,850 items in  
13 collections  
**210,552 views**

**FLICKR** [BIT.LY/FLICKRNLS](https://bit.ly/flickrnls)



2,500 images with  
**211,351 views**

**INTERESTING OBSERVATIONS**

One area that has shown significant growth is YouTube. During COVID lockdown we are actively uploading content and promoting this to our users in the form of talks and events that would previously have taken place on Library premises. For the first time since producing this report the top-viewed video in terms of minutes watched in 2020-21 Quarter 1 was a video that was also released in that quarter. It will be interesting to follow this into the next quarter where we will see the impact of scheduled releases like 'Her Story'



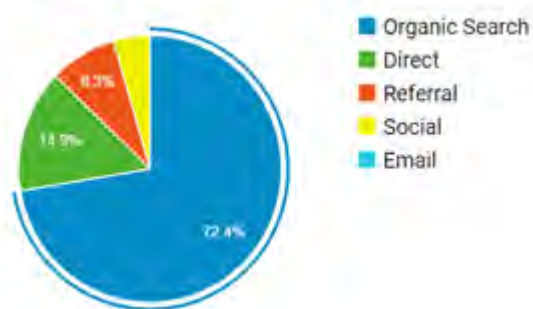
## nls.uk domain use

The following charts and statistics give an insight into the audiences of six National Library domains.

Due to the extra efforts to promote digital content and services during the Covid-19 lockdown, we have seen an overall increase in web visits by a third, with around 2.1 million sessions this quarter compared to an average of 1.5 million sessions per quarter last year.

### DIGITAL GALLERY [DIGITAL.NLS.UK](https://digital.nls.uk)

Top Channels



175,331 users with 242,892 view sessions  
7.07 pages per session  
3.14 minutes average duration on site

#### Top referrals (non-Library)

en.wikipedia.org 1,933 users  
baidu.com 571 users  
futurelearn.com 241 users

#### Location of users

55%UK (54% Eng, 42% Sco, 2% Wal, 1% NI)  
16%USA  
6%Australia  
4%Canada  
3%India

The number of web sessions was: **109,161**.

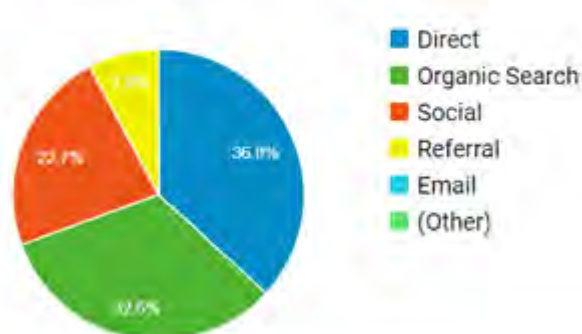
The top 5 'landing pages' for these sessions included

/gallery/ (3%)  
/directories/ (1%)  
/scientists/biographies/james-watt/index.html (1%)  
/scientists/biographies/lord-kelvin (1%)  
/indiapapers/plague.html (1%)

### MAPS [MAPS.NLS.UK](https://maps.nls.uk)

650,977 users with 1,421,046 view sessions  
3.89 pages per session  
4.29 minutes average duration on site

Top Channels



#### Top referrals (non-Library)

archiuk.com 2,803 users  
uk.search.yahoo.com 1,623 users  
en.wikipedia.org 1,534 users

#### Location of users

88%UK (76% Eng, 18% Sco, 5% Wal, 1% NI)  
5%USA  
1%Australia  
1%Canada  
0.4%France

The number of web sessions was: **1,421,046**. The

top 5 'landing pages' for these sessions included

/geo/explore/side-by-side (17%)  
/geo/explore/ (15%)  
/(11%)  
/geo/find (8%)  
/os/6inch-england-and-wales/ (4%)

## MAIN WEBSITE WWW.NLS.UK

134,438 users with 197,045 view sessions  
2.05 pages per session  
1.26 minutes average duration on site



### Top referrals (non-Library)

uk.search.yahoo.com 422 users  
ordancesurvey.co.uk 402 users  
baidu.com 336 users

### Location of users

68%UK (49% Eng, 47% Sco, 2% Wal, 1% NI)  
13%USA  
4%Australia  
3%Canada  
1%New Zealand

The number of web sessions was: **197,045**.  
The top 5 landing pages for these sessions included:

/collections/topics/slavery (8%)  
/digital-resources (6%)  
/family-history/births-deaths-marriages (3%)  
/family-history/emigration (3%)  
/collections/maps (2%)

## MOVING IMAGE MOVINGIMAGE.NLS.UK

98,289 users with 132,536 view sessions  
2.07 pages per session  
3.38 minutes average duration on site



### Top referrals (non-Library)

hibs.net 862 users  
en.wikipedia.org 354 users  
scotishballet.co.uk 181 users

### Location of users

61%UK (62% Sco, 34% Eng, 1% Wal, 1% NI)  
24%Spain  
6%US  
2%Canada  
1%Australia

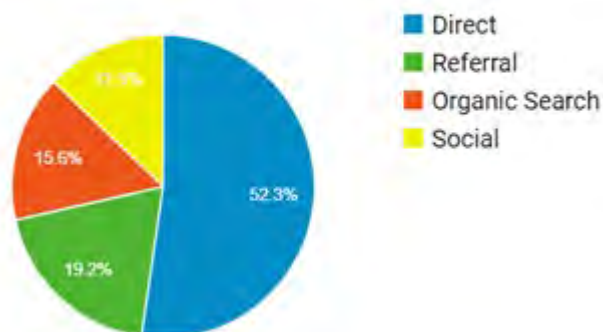
The number of web sessions was: **132,536**. The top 5 landing pages for these sessions included:  
/film/0133 - ('MAJORCAN MEDLEY') (26%)  
/film/2326 - ('Halfway to Paradise: Greenock Pub') (1%)  
/film/0280 - ('Hill Sheep Farm') (1%)  
/film/8528 - ('Easter Road Parade') (1%)  
/film/5973 - ('Ninian central Platform') (1%)



## DATA FOUNDRY DATA.NLS.UK

2,269 users with 3,036 view sessions  
2.40 pages per session  
1.48 minutes average duration on site

### Top Channels



### Top referrals (non-Library)

mail01.tinyletterapp.com 152 users  
baidu.com 45 users  
dhawards.org 29 users

### Location of users

43%UK (54% Sco, 42% Eng, 3% Wal, 1% NI)  
23%USA  
8%China  
3%Canada  
3%India

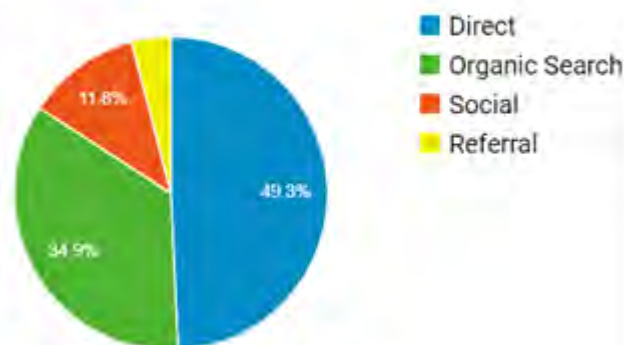
The number of web sessions was: **3,036**. The top 5 'landing pages' for these sessions included:

/ (34%)  
/data/digitised-collections/encyclopaedia-britannica/ (31%)  
/data/map-spatial-data/edinburgh-boundaries/ (4%)  
/projects/finding-lost-footpaths-using-gb1900/(3%)  
/data/digitised-collections/britain-uk-handbooks/(3%)

## SCOTLANDS-SOUNDS.NLS.UK

783 users with 1,027 view sessions  
1.87 pages per session  
2.06 minutes average duration on site

### Top Channels



### Top referrals (non-Library)

baidu.com 12 users  
t.umblr.com 5 user  
blogs.bl.uk 4 user

### Location of users

53%UK (55% Sco, 40% Eng, 3% NI, 2% Wales)  
10%Canada  
9%USA  
6%UAE  
2%China

The number of web sessions was: **1,027**. The top 5 landing pages for these sessions included:

/unlocking-our-sound-heritage-uosh/ (8%)  
/our-sounds-from-uosh/ (7%)  
/safe-sound (6%)  
/online-sound-collections/collections-with-online-recordings/ (6%)  
/2020/05/26/collection-reflections-01/ (6%)

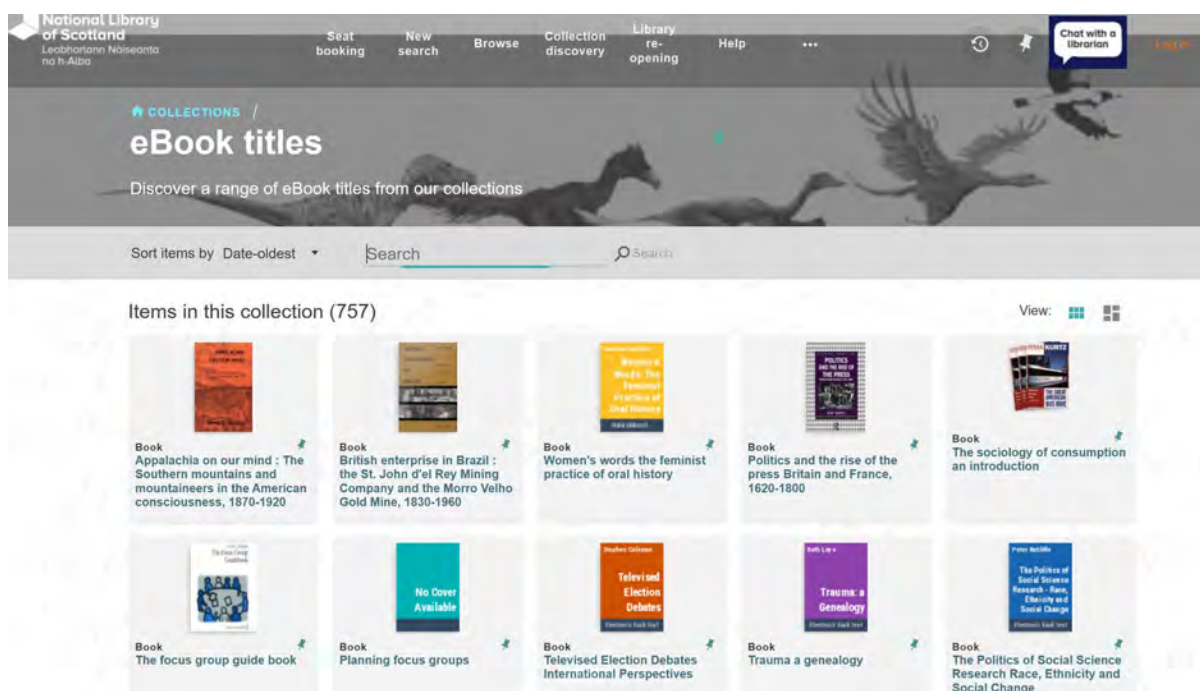
## INTERESTING OBSERVATIONS

A highlight from the Moving Image Archive is the film Majorcan Medley (film 0133). This film accounts for 26% of all landing pages this quarter with over 32,000 views, the majority from Spain. This is due to the film being featured on the front page of a Spanish social media site meneame.net. This shows the organic reach of our collections and the great engagement that can happen with our content.

## Acquisitions over Lockdown

### £9K of eBooks purchased and made available over lockdown

During lockdown the Acquisitions Team have purchased 138 individual eBooks (£9K worth) for the collections. These were all ordered, received and made available with staff working from home. All titles have been purchased in perpetuity and are available for remote access from home or work, as is our standard practice for eBook purchase. Visibility of this content is being enhanced via the [Discovery Collection](#) feature on *Primo LibrarySearch*, following maintenance and development work by the Team and colleagues in Digital Access. This collection brings together all the individual eBook titles purchased over the years and helps to highlight titles that readers can access remotely; this has been of even more significance during lockdown and the Library's currently limited onsite services. There are currently over 750 eBook titles in this collection.



Library Search Collection Discovery feature – eBook collection

### When an eBook supplier goes into administration

A challenging situation arose during lockdown when Dawson Books (part of the Bertrams Group) went into administration in June. Up to this point Dawson Books was one of the Library's main contracted print book and eBook suppliers via the Scottish Higher Education Digital Library Consortium (SHEDL), and the Acquisitions Team had to act quickly to ensure continuity of eBook access. Working with Askews – another of the SHEDL contracted book suppliers – the team were able to switch access of around 250 titles to the Askews eBook platform before the Dawson platform came down. The team will now turn their attention to transferring print standing orders from Dawson to a new supplier.

## 200 print title orders ready to go

Since April colleagues in Collections & Research identified around 200 print books for purchase. Over lockdown the Acquisitions Team suspended deliveries from print book suppliers but were able to reserve newly selected print titles with booksellers and suppliers. These orders have now started to be released in a staggered fashion, with around 40 titles ordered from small booksellers released in the third week of August, and orders with mainstream titles via larger vendors to follow. The small backlog of items received over lockdown have already been processed and will be available to readers shortly.

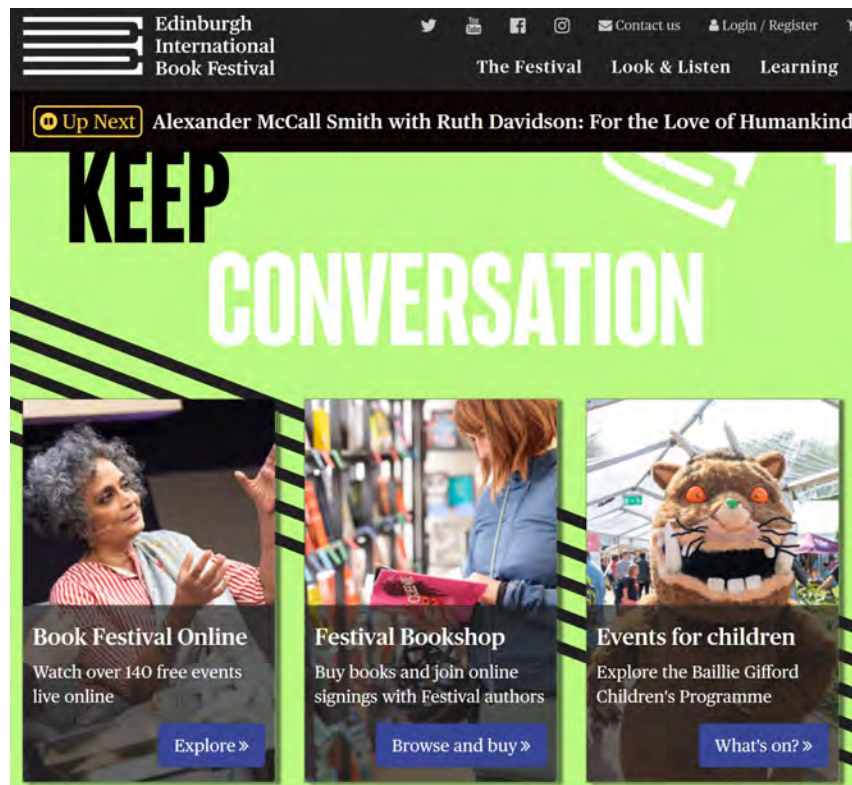
## Collecting the Coronavirus Crisis

Jennifer Higgins from the Acquisitions Team is leading on the collecting of publications and ephemera as part of the Library's effort to build a collection that reflects the nation's shared experience of the Covid crisis in everyday life. Working from a list of organisations identified by colleagues in General Collections, Jennifer has been in touch with a range of supermarkets to request copies of signage, posters and similar items, as well as being in touch with various trade associations in order to contact a wider pool of traders. The response has been mixed so far, with some supermarkets keen to help and others refusing to donate material. Jennifer is not discouraged and continues to work on a variety of approaches, including writing a [blog for the Library](#) and drafting a news piece which will appear on the [Scotland's Towns Partnership](#) website in September. Jennifer will shortly be using the Library's new Digital Deposit Scotland service to collect Covid-related e-publications from Scottish organisations under Legal Deposit.



## Edinburgh Book Festival & Legal Deposit blog post

In a [new blog post](#) Jennifer Higgins from the Acquisitions Team is proactively promoting Legal Deposit, whilst also flying the flag for Scotland's publishers and the Edinburgh Book Festival. This is part of the Acquisitions Team's aim to build stronger relationships with Scottish publishers which will pay dividends when contacting publishers to request supply under Legal Deposit, as well as helping to support them and the Edinburgh Book Festival during this challenging time. It also forms part of the groundwork for seeking print donations from key Scottish publishers to supplement electronic copies of their titles received under Legal Deposit, in line with the new Collection Development Policy and Library Plan.



### What does 4.5 months backlog of serials look like?

Following lockdown on 20 March, physical deliveries to the Library were halted. This included suspending of all incoming delivery of collections material via mail, the Agency for the Legal Deposit Libraries (ALDL), print book suppliers, publishers, and subscription agents.

Following the re-opening of the Causewayside Building on the 27 July and the return of a skeleton staff, delivery of collections and general mail could resume. For the Acquisition & Description Division this was to be a significant undertaking, with close to five months of incoming collections material to manage.

The first step was the release of the Royal Mail [Keepsafe](#), which colleagues in Collection Support Services had arranged for holding Royal Mail deliveries to the Library. On building resumption this was released and normal deliveries of mail resumed. For Acquisition & Description this backlog amounted to seven cages of mail, with over 100 mail sacks. The bulk of the contents were serial publications – academic journals, newspapers, local newsletters, magazines - received directly by the Library. These needed to be unpacked, sorted, and arranged into chronological order before staff could begin processing the material.



In parallel, the first post-lockdown delivery from the ALDL took place on the 31 July. This consisted of 70 crates of material – books and serials - with similar deliveries arriving over subsequent weeks, all requiring unpacking, stamping, processing, cataloguing and shelving, before being available for readers.

The serials mail component was undoubtedly the most challenging element of the backlog, as the images below will testify. Thanks to expert planning within the Serials Team, and coordination with colleagues in Acquisition & Description, Collection Support Services and Estates, we were able to create a temporary, expanded processing area for serial publications, and develop revised workflows for their efficient management. Due to this work, Serials staff successfully completed sorting of the serials backlog within the first three weeks of return, with collections now being processed and being made available for reader consultation.

This has been the biggest single live backlog the Serials Team have had to deal with, but thanks to their expertise, flexibility and hard work, and the cooperation of colleagues in other teams, we are ahead of schedule and making good progress in dealing with the physical intake, current and backlogged, and making them available to readers.

It will take some time to assess the impact of lockdown and COVID on publishing output and the Library's collecting, including potential gaps in our collections. However, all the teams within Acquisition & Description have made an excellent start in managing the backlog of the physical intake, and this remains a priority for the Division.





## Fire Protection Work

Over the past number of years the Library has been working to improve fire protection across the estate. The progress of this work has been monitored by the Audit Committee with a report provided in February (AC/20/07) and a further update at the August meeting. The latest update is that the reports commissioned on the sprinkler and smoke extract systems at Causewayside have been received from the consultants and have been reviewed by the Library Leadership Team.

In relation to smoke management within the Causewayside building, the report provided three options/concept designs for the Library to consider. The range of costs is from £1.2 million to £1.6 million. All these costs include £300K set aside for temporary protection works to the collections during any works. In relation to sprinklers the report considered all the systems that could be used (Hypoxic/Water Mist/Sprinklers etc.) and narrowed it down to four options based on either sprinkler or water mist). Budget costs have been included for all four options and these range from £2.5 million to £7.7 million. Costs are considerably higher for the mist systems.

At present the most likely total cost is in the region of £4.3 million for replacement of both systems. The LLT agreed at a May meeting that, subject to Scottish Government funding, that the Library should progress this work to a further design stage. This will continue to review the international standards which have changed since the original sprinkler system was installed at Causewayside.

The Scottish Government have recently confirmed that the Library will receive an additional £250k in the 2020/21 financial year to begin some of the work on this project. This funding will be used as follows;

- To continue work on CAD drawings of the Library's estate;
- To purchase vertical and horizontal barriers for use within the Causewayside stack floors – this will add to some of the funds the Library has set aside from its own budget; and

The funds may also be used to start the further design work on a sprinkler and smoke extract system for Causewayside.

**Collection - Option 1 – No ductwork**



## Collections Recovery Survey completed

Prior to staff returning to the Library after lockdown, the Collections Care team was tasked, by the Business Continuity Team, with completing a visual check of all our collection items in storage. This was to ensure that no issues relating to mould or pest infestations, had occurred during lockdown.

Five Collections Care staff, Simona Cenci, Mary Garner, Claire Hutchison, Joe Jackson and Paul Hambleton, completed the survey across both George IV Bridge and Causewayside over a period of two weeks. The surveys showed that no major damage to the collections occurred during the lockdown period. The main problems highlighted were some level of dirt and debris on the floors of the stacks, four active minor leaks (which have subsequently been addressed), and some increased pest activity in localised areas of the Causewayside building.

The surveys also offered the opportunity to discover some areas of concern, not directly linked to the lockdown, which can now be addressed such as inappropriate storage and specific boxing requirements. This is the first time the Library has undertaken a survey of its collections on this scale. The results provide a clear baseline of general conditions which will be very useful data for our new Preventive Conservator, Mel Houston ACR, to work with when she joins the team in September.

## Work on the JMA Project Resumes

After 5 months in lockdown, conservation work on the John Murray Archive has now resumed. It has been a delight to return to practical work. It has also allowed us to induct our JMA technician, Gemma Kelly:

*‘On returning to the Library I began work as a Conservation Technician for the John Murray Archive. Having moved into this role during lockdown I had carried out research into the collection and read JMA condition reports and relevant articles in preparation for the practical work. Since returning I have been thoroughly enjoying the detailed and precise nature of the work which is required to make the collection accessible. Having the opportunity to work closely with the archive has reinforced my understanding of the significance and scale of the collection and the importance of preserving the archive as a lasting public resource’.*

Gemma has excelled at her training; her keen interest and curiosity in conservation has not gone unnoticed. Claire Hutchison, JMA Conservator, states: ‘I am very happy to be working with [Gemma] on this project and look forward to seeing her progress’.



## Filming a virtual visit to the conservation workshop

On the 11 August the conservation workshop was filmed in preparation for Doors Open Day, which will be an entirely online event this year. Robert James from Imaging Services was behind the camera, and Shona Hunter from the conservation team was on hand to provide a commentary. Taking the form of a short guided tour, the film highlights some of the specialist equipment that is used to look after the Library's most fragile collections. Once edited, the film will be uploaded to the Library's website, along with two other short films. These 'virtual video visits' will be accompanied by a blog about the history of the Library and its buildings, including a paragraph about the development of the bindery / conservation workshop. Furthermore, a live Zoom webinar will be presented by Robbie Mitchell, providing further insight into the history and function of the library.

It is possible, and perhaps likely, that the film of the conservation workshop will be used again in the future for advocacy and outreach purposes. For example, as an alternative for the guided tours previously scheduled as part of the IIC Congress to be hosted in Edinburgh in November this year.

## Collections Care staff training session goes global

On Thursday the 20 August, Preventive Conservation Intern Joe Jackson recorded a presentation, with Library Conservator Shona Hunter, titled '*Caring for Collections: protecting and preserving your family history*', to be delivered as part of the Scottish Indexes Conference, scheduled to take place on Sunday the 30th of August. [www.scottishindexes.com](http://www.scottishindexes.com).

The presentation focused on aspects of collections care relevant to those researching their family history. It covered common agents of deterioration, like poor handling, and provided viewers with 'do try this at home' tips on the storage and housing of books, papers and photographs. In addition, the presentation encompassed short tutorials on how to use a Clarkson book support, and how to retrieve books from a shelf without causing damage to the head-cap. Participation in this event enables a broad international audience to benefit from the expertise of the Library's conservation department. In addition, it contributes to raising the profile of the Library, which will also be represented by Craig Stratham who is giving a talk titled: '*Using the National Library of Scotland's maps website to aid your local history*'.

Joe and Shona's presentation is based on the staff training sessions regularly delivered by the collections care team. It is hoped that it will form the basis of an online offering, enabling Library staff to pursue collections care training in a socially distanced workplace.

# Moving Image and Sound Archive Updates

## Digital Engagement



*Liam Paterson presenting an online talk about the Edinburgh Festival using footage from the moving image archive. This was a scheduled event and the [recorded talk](#) remains online via the NLS YouTube channel.*

Working from home the Moving Image and Sound Collections team sustained a varied programme of online audience engagement using blogs, online talks, social media events and posts, and the publication of new curated content based on the collections. Over the last three months regular “Film Fridays” have been created by the Access and Events Team as virtual Facebook events which present links to a selection of short films from the collection, or one longer film. While the links are to films which are already available to watch online at any time, these events create a sense of an occasion and generate interest. The two most popular events in recent months were the ever-popular “*Birth of a Sewing Machine*” in May (174 guests via Facebook) and “*Glasgow 1980*” in July (79 guests). Other recent successful engagement activities have included the curators talk on the Edinburgh Festival pictured above, an experimental [compilation of gardening clips set to music](#) for delivery over social media in June, using the hashtags #ArchiveZ and #TapeBoxTuesday to highlight amazing sounds from collections in the National Library and across Scotland, a weekly program of content produced with Kelvin Hall partners for social media, and using Twitter threads to present a linked series of films. This [thread](#) on was published to tie in with the 50th anniversary of the Kingston Bridge and is special because we received clearance from Glasgow City Archives to publish the 1970 film '*Highway over the Clyde*' online for the first time.

The Library blog is another tool used to combine access to collections with curatorial commentary. In May Dr Emily Munro's post on [politics, publicity and potatoes](#) looked at Scotland's tattie howking films and in July her post titled '[Cine Cycles](#)' considered women, bicycles and a sense of freedom with a specially made compilation of clips and links to other films in both the Library collections and at the BFI.



A still from '[Potato Picking Trailer](#)' (1950)

The tattie howking research was originally undertaken to provide evidence identifying the animator of the Potato Picking Trailer as the famous Halas and Batchelor animation company. This was achieved and the catalogue record updated. The blog was featured on the [Halas and Batchelor website](#).

Finally, the creation of new biographies for key film makers in the collections is another way to engage audiences and encourage them to explore from one film in the collection to others. We released a biography for film-maker, artist and educator [Louise Annand](#) in July, written by Marisol Erdman in the Access and Events Team. As well as pulling together existing catalogue records by this film-maker we can now add newly catalogued records and digitised content from her personal film collection to this listing. Recent additions include [Burrell Collection: Preparation and Conservation of Exhibits](#) (1979) and a fascinating record of the artist Edith Simon at work in [Portrait in Paper-Cut](#) (1983). This compliments the archive at [Acc 13772](#), already held in by the Manuscripts and Archives Division.

### Improving access to collections

The Moving Image and Sound Team worked from home to increase access to digital content during May, June and July. This work included rights identification and negotiated agreements with rights holders; cataloguing; creation of access copies from existing digital masters over VPN; and for moving image material ingest into the public catalogue. 300 new digital access copies of moving image collections were added to the public catalogue during June and July. Material which can be viewed online off-site has been prioritised during the lockdown. Recent additions include:

- [Crieff Encounter](#)
- Five additions to the [Margaret Tait collection](#)
- A [set of four painting lessons](#) from Dundee artist James Mackintosh Patrick
- Six additions to the [Louise Annand collection](#)

There are now over 2,700 items from the moving image collection available to view off-site (2085 full length items, the remainder being clips).



## Re-opening of Kelvin Hall

The Library facilities at Kelvin Hall re-opened for staff use on the 27 July following a full risk assessment and development of a responding operations and space plan with the support of colleagues in Estates. Numbers of staff working on-site will remain low until we re-open to the public in September as per the Glasgow Life timetable. The priority has been to resume those activities which cannot be done from home, particularly digitization of collections, fulfilment of footage sales orders placed during lockdown, and collection appraisal. Conor Walker, Audio Preservation Engineer, got off to a flying re-start capturing 100 tapes in the first four weeks back in the sound studio.

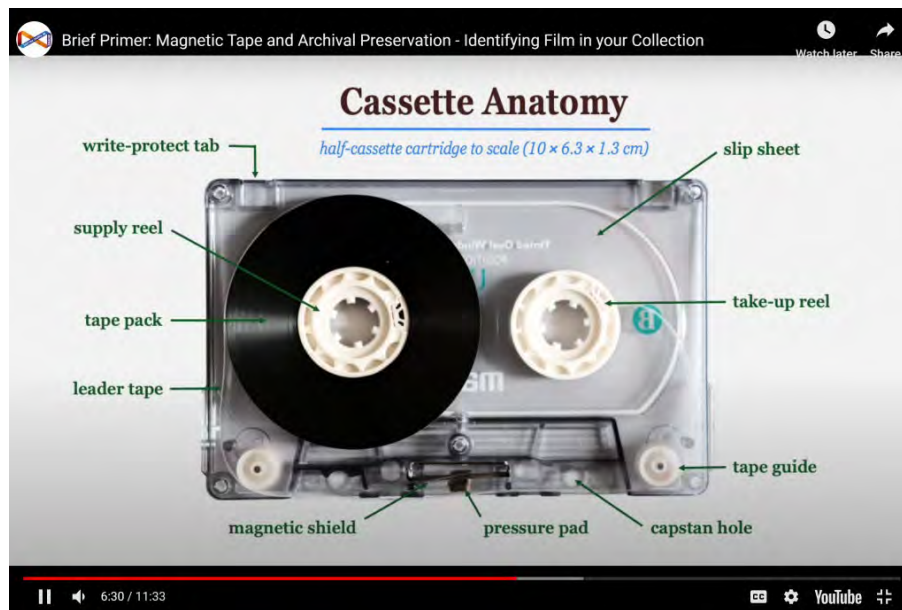
## 'Her Century'

It was clear early in the summer that plans to provide free screenings of the 'Her Century' archival programme at George IV Bridge during the festival would have to be radically altered. Working with colleagues in Public Programmes, a two month online screening was devised and then launched with a 'premiere' event comprising an introduction by the curator, Dr Emily Munro, and a live Q & A as the film screened. An associated creative writing workshop with Nadine Jassat was moved online and new learning resources created to deliver long term impact during the 20/21 school year.

With good publicity via Good Morning Scotland, The National, and Reporting Scotland, 160 people joined the live premiere and with one viewer getting in to say they were amazed to see themselves with their parents and brother in a section filmed at his nursery school in Wynford, Glasgow 1975/6. Since then 4,600 people have watched the programme on YouTube which is excellent.



## Professional engagement



Slide from online narrated presentation "Brief Primer: Magnetic Tape and Archival Preservations" by Conor Walker

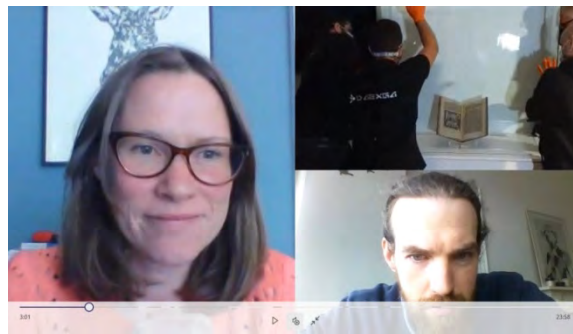
Almost the last public event held at Kelvin Hall before lockdown was a very popular workshop for community archives run by the Sound team and sponsored by the Scottish Council on Archives (SCA). During lockdown, the Sound team created online versions of some of the same content. These are narrated presentations on how to plan a sound or moving image digitisation project, a brief primer on magnetic tape and archival preservation, cataloguing considerations for audio collections, and debunking the myths of copyright. The resources went live on the Scottish Council on Archives [website](#) in mid-July and they should provide a long lasting, useful resource for archivists, librarians and museum professionals. A live online webinar on the care of sound and moving image collections, again in conjunction with the SCA in late August, was fully subscribed demonstrating the ongoing desire across Scotland for training in basic conservation, cataloguing and digital preservation while creating a network of resources to support people working with community archives.

Other members of the team have also been continuing their professional engagement through online presentations at events run by Film Hub Scotland, Scottish Indexes and SCURL.

## Loans Updates

RL00135: Galica Abroad, Gaiás Museum, Spain

The exhibition Galicia Abroad at the Gaiás Museum in the Idade de Cultura was closed to the public on 14 March as part of the effort to stop the spread of coronavirus in Spain. The exhibition closed one month ahead of schedule but it was another three months before access to the museum was possible. Unable to send a courier until after lockdown restrictions were eased in Scotland, the Collections Care team remotely supervised the de-install and packing of our loan to the museum. We worked closely with colleagues at the Gaiás Museum and with Spanish and UK based shipping agents to finally realise the return of the loan on 27 July. FB.m.500 Von adelischen mannlichen Tugenten, Erbarkeyt, vnnd Zucht, Ritter Pontus. Ein rhümreich, zierlich, vnnd fruchtbare Histori, von dem... is now safely back at the Library and available for consultation once again.



Sally Todd and Ryan Gibson provide remote supervision of the de-installation of our loan by the Spanish team on-site

RLI00057: Northern Lights, National Galleries of Scotland

Loan items featured in the Northern Lights exhibition were returned to the National Galleries of Scotland on 12 August as Library activities resumed. Careful orchestration of people in the space was required to ensure 2m distancing could be maintained as the de-install, condition checking, packing and transit was completed.



## Zoom into Scotland

As people are spending more time at home through lockdown there is growing interest in local history. What is that building? Who is this street named after? Where do those gates lead? Zoom into Scotland is a new blog series aiming to tap into that demand. The project is in the research strand of the Library from Home. Growing out of a staff idea to provide geographic access to collections for local studies it aims to engage with public across the whole of Scotland.

Each fortnight a blog piece is released linking Library online content to a local authority area, from the areas with lowest population to the highest to maintain audience interest. Because the focus is on digital content, the pieces can be researched by staff working from home. Led by Paula Williams, more than 20 staff from eight teams across the Library are participating in the project, from design of the template, researching and leading on blogs, to social media promotion.

With 32 local authority areas the blog series will run until October 2021, although there are already plans to extend into other geographic areas such as national parks and towns.

The template suggests content for each blog including a range of formats across the collection as well as specific topics such as food, mythology, antiquities, and people. This gives the blogs consistency but also scope to include regional highlights. It also includes links to authority run local studies collections. The template was designed to aid participation by staff who have limited access to technology at home. The shared template will also enable the collation of a list of more than 600 works which will form the core for a possible future geo-tagging project.





## Music at home

While the Music Retroconversion Project continued to run successfully while staff worked remotely, we turned our attention to encouraging people to enjoy the music which we have already made available online through the #musicalhome postings on the @nlrarebooks twitter feed. Every week Music Curator Almut Boehme selects a piece of music from our digitised collections and invites followers to try playing it for themselves. Much of this music was originally published for amateurs to play at home, and the selection deliberately includes pieces for a range of abilities. So far Scottish folk songs and music for piano, flute and voice by Mozart, Handel, Verdi and other classical composers have featured.

Frontispiece to *The delightful pocket companion for the German flute: containing a choice collection of the most celebrated Italian, English, and Scotch tunes*, volume 1 (London: R. Bremmer, 1763), shelfmark Glen.186 from which a piece of Handel's Water Music was tweeted in July.



## Memorialising Mary Queen of Scots

The Royal Society of Edinburgh-funded, Glasgow University-led project *Memorialising Mary Queen of Scots* has been wholly pivoted to workshops with the public also invited to attend. Dr Anette Hagan, Rare Books Curator (Early Printed Collections to 1700), has attended the two run in August featuring Mary Queen of Scots collections at National Records of Scotland and the National Museum of Scotland, and published a blog about one of our items, a rare 16th-century German broadside, on the project website: <https://mqsglasgow.ac.uk/index.php/2020/07/23/the-martyr-queen-mary-in-a-german-broadside-2/>





## Curators' Favourites: Recommended Reading from our Collections

In June we started a new fortnightly series on the Library Blog: Curators' Favourites, where staff introduce books and other works from our collections which are freely available online, mostly from our own Digital Gallery. This is about encouraging reading for pleasure, and the items selected are in their different ways personal favourites of the curators who have chosen them. The series has given us a chance to enjoy our own digitised books – something we rarely have time to do! – as well as to be reminded of how diverse they are. The series began with Helen Vincent on Catherine Carswell's feminist classic *The Camomile*, and so far has included Ian Scott writing about Lewis Grassie Gibbon publishing under his real name of J. Leslie Mitchell, Kirsty McHugh on travellers' tours of Scotland, Graham Hogg on Victorian bestseller R.M. Ballantyne, and Paula Williams on Alasdair Alpin MacGregor's Highland folk-tales.

## Advocates' Catalogues As Data

Historic library catalogues might seem an unlikely subject to attract attention on social media, but the @nlsrarebooks tweet about the publication of the historical Advocates Library catalogues as a dataset on the Data Foundry in July saw 6,750 impressions, and some heart-eyes emojis in response:



More international attention for the Data Foundry came from Sarah Ames' blogpost 'Special collections as data: the National Library of Scotland's Data Foundry' published in August on the CERL blog (Consortium of European Research Libraries), where she is a member of the Digital Humanities Working Group:

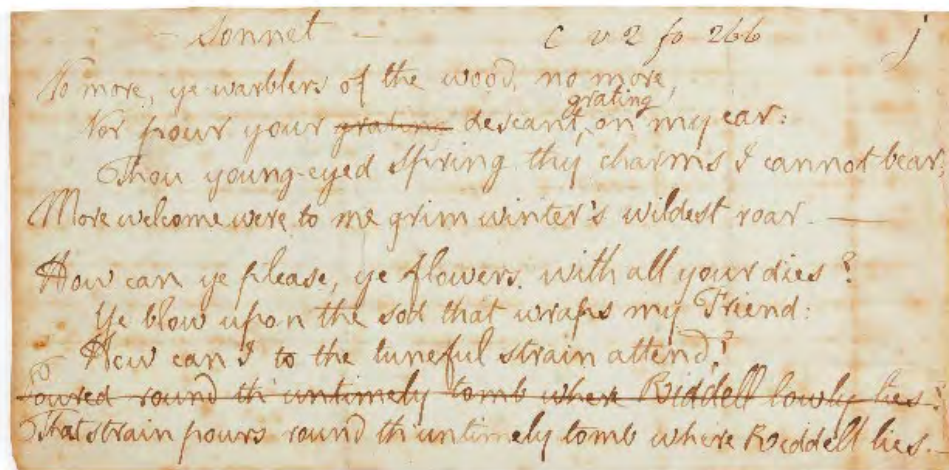
<https://cerlblog.wordpress.com/2020/08/13/special-collections-as-data-the-national-library-of-scotlands-data-foundry/>

## Manuscripts Acquisition: Letters and poem of Robert Burns (Acc.14167-Acc.14171)

The Library acquired four letters and part of a poem written by Robert Burns at the Lyon and Turnbull auction on 17 June. The four manuscripts are autograph letters from Burns to: Francis Grose, on sending him his poem Tam O'Shanter; James Smith, on his feelings about Jean Armour prior to Burns's planned emigration to Jamaica; Thomas Sloan, on a recent interaction with Robert Riddell of Glenriddell; and, David Staig, on writing poetry. The poem is part of a Sonnet written by Burns on the death of Riddell. The material on Riddell is especially relevant to the Library's collections as the Glenriddell manuscripts of Robert Burns, held at the Library, constitute the largest single collection of Burns's manuscripts in existence.

Several of these manuscripts have remained out of the public eye for decades. The letters and the poem have been previously published, but in several instances these publications came from transcripts of the originals which have not been seen since J. DeLancey Ferguson edited the letters of Robert Burns in 1931. The poem demonstrates evidence of Burns's poetic process and contains alterations and variants not found in published versions.

The Library was able to acquire these manuscripts with financial assistance from the Soutar Trust and the Friends of the National Libraries whose generous contribution helped to cover the overall costs of the purchases.



From Burns's Sonnet on Robert Riddell of Glenriddell

## General Collections recent acquisitions

### Edinburgh Travel Book, by Floc'h (Louis Vuitton, 2020)

We have just purchased the deluxe limited edition of Louis Vuitton's *Edinburgh Travel Book*, by French cartoonist and illustrator Jean-Claude Floch (Floc'h). Floc'h uses his 'ligne claire' style to capture the city of Edinburgh in exquisite fashion. This new publication, signed by the artist, includes an original silkscreen painting printed on Vélin d'Arches paper by Atelier Silium. It is a limited edition of 30 copies. The travel books are a series by Louis Vuitton that pairs a different artist with an international destination (typically a city), resulting in a fascinating new lens through which to see each place. Floch's illustrations are very much in the style developed by *Tin Tin* creator Herge, giving the book an early- to mid-20th century mood. The price, at £2,020, and limited availability, and indeed its desirability, meant that it was important for Scotland to acquire a national copy. It is not the only Louis Vuitton item that we have in our collection. It will join two suitcases that belonged to mountaineer Fanny Bullock Workman.



### Ethnic Newswatch

The Library has just subscribed to Ethnic NewsWatch (a ProQuest eResource). This impressive resource provides current full-text newspapers, magazines, and journals of the ethnic and minority press, providing researchers access to essential, often overlooked perspectives. Our subscription also provides historical coverage of Native American, African American, and Hispanic American periodicals from 1959-1989. Together, these resources present an unmatched, comprehensive, full-text collection of more than 2.5 million articles from over 340 publications. Perhaps the most valuable aspect of the resources is the inclusion of unique community publications not found in any other database, as well as top scholarly journals on ethnicities and ethnic studies.

The historical file of Ethnic NewsWatch: A History provides over 300,000 articles from 1959-1989. This hard-to-find content provides primary source material across three turbulent decades—the civil rights struggle, Vietnam War protests, dramatic changes in immigration law, trickle-down economics, and the status of migrant workers.



## Rare Books acquisitions

Returning to George IV Bridge meant picking up where we left off with taking in the latest additions to the collections. When we went into lockdown, one parcel from an antiquarian bookseller was still in transit, and there were some anxious moments before its safe arrival in the Library was reported to us by our Security colleagues. It was a great relief finally to be able to unpack the parcel in July.

Cataloguing was also able to resume, with 70 acquisitions from 2020 already newly discoverable on our catalogue since July 27, including the volume of albumen prints and the Scottish traveller's account of a voyage to the Ottoman Empire reported in the last Librarian's Report when we could not show their wonderful illustrations



Image from *Tour in Norway*, [Dundee, Valentine and Sons, c. 1888] Valentine and Sons, *Tour in Norway*, [Dundee, c. 1888], Phot.sm.167

'Sultan Mahmoud on his way to the Mosque', from Charles Macfarlane, *Constantinople in 1828. A residence of sixteen months in the Turkish capital and provinces*, London, 1829. AB.8.220.3



**Other acquisitions include:**

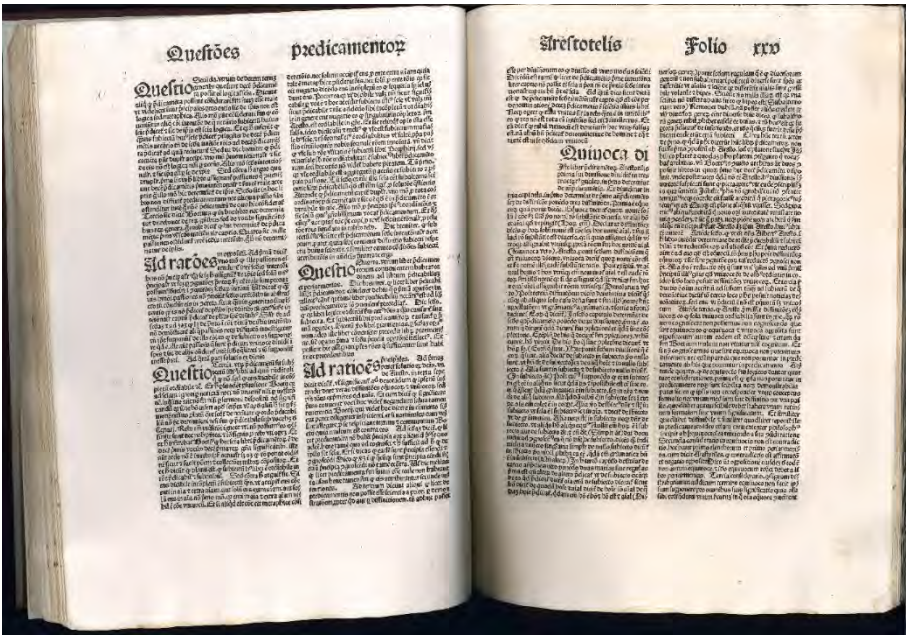
John Duns Scotus, *Cursus optimarum questionum cum textualibus expositionibus Porphyrii atq[ue] veteris logicae Aristotelis*, [Cologne, 1492?]

A welcome addition to our collection of incunabula (pre-1501 books), this is the only recorded edition of a compilation which brings together three tracts which are attributed to the medieval philosopher, John Duns Scots (c. 1266-1308). Duns Scotus is commonly regarded as having been born in Scotland. His works on ancient philosophers such as Aristotle were highly influential in the Middle Ages, being initially preserved in manuscript form.

Following the invention of printing in the mid-15th century, they were in turn in printed in Continental Europe. Over 30 printings of works by him are recorded in the ISTC (Incunabula Short Title Catalogue), there are no other UK locations for this work recorded in ISTC.

Zaal Books, €5,000

Inc.46.1



*Nach dem Englisch[en] Original. Simon Lord Lovat ein Schottlaend, aus der Graffschafft Argyle... Hamburg, [1747]*

This is a very rare illustrated broadside concerning the famous Jacobite chieftain, Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat, who was executed for treason in London in 1747 after the failure of the Jacobite uprising of 1745-46. It is apparently an extended advertisement for the German translation of the Lord Lovat's memoirs. The translation had just been published 'in 13 numbers' by the Hamburg publisher Grund, from whom the viewer of the broadside is directed to purchase that book in the caption. The broadside uses the well-known portrait of Lovat done by William Hogarth, while the Jacobite chieftain was in prison. In this German adaptation, even Lovat's manuscript 'Memoirs' lying open on his desk have been translated for the German viewer. Beneath the portrait is an engraved, 8-line biography giving a sketch of the doomed lord's life and misdeeds, as well as an account of his trial and execution.

Inlibris LLC £450

AP.6.220.2





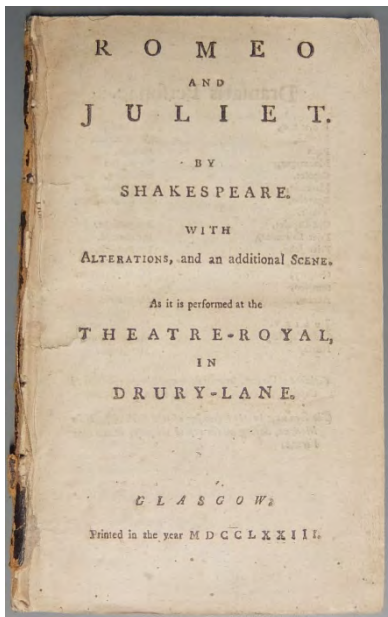
*The Holy Bible, Containing the Old and New Testaments ...* Edinburgh, 1772

Bound in full green morocco decorated with gilt in rococo style by James Scott of Edinburgh. A beautiful binding with an interesting provenance. This book was once part of a two volume set with a similarly bound Book of Common Prayer. The latter volume is recorded in Loudon, *James and William Scott bookbinders*, Item Js9 page 34 (owner unknown). It was part of the John Roland Abbey sale at Sotheby's on 21 June 1965, lot 226. Both our volume and the companion volume are inscribed "S.E. Philips 1774" which, as suggested by Loudon, is probably the date of the binding.



John Cameron £3,250

William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, Glasgow, 1773.



A piracy. The version with the 'additional scene' (by Garrick) noted on the title page had previously been issued in Scotland in an Edinburgh piracy of 1753, printed for James Reid in Leith. The only previous edition of *Romeo and Juliet* to have been printed in Glasgow would have been the part bound up in the *Works* issued by the Foulis brothers (1752-1765). This is the only known copy of this edition.

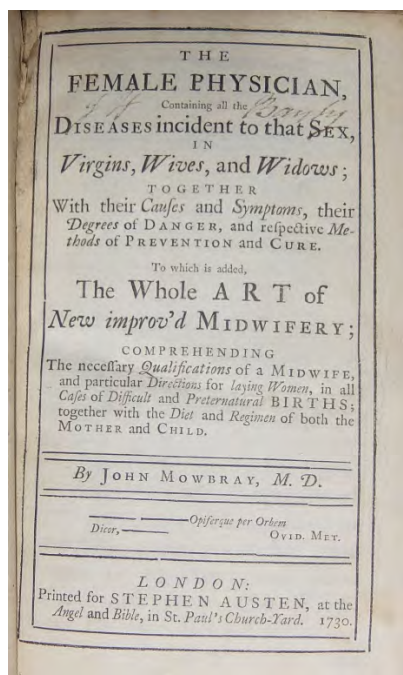
David Harrison £925



John Maubray, *The Female Physician*, London, 1730.

Maubray was most probably born in Scotland and established himself in London as a man-midwife. *The Female Physician* was his first published work. Despite being a pioneer in the teaching of midwifery, writing about it, and proposing a lying-in hospital, there is evidence that Maubray did not have much practical experience for he says he was only called 'occasionally' to births in London. He discouraged the use of forceps and other such instruments but is also known for his credulity, accepting astrologers' views on the magic number seven, believing that babies born in the seventh month of pregnancy were stronger than those born in the eighth.

Patrick Pollak £700



## Filming of Allan Ramsay: Writing the Scots Enlightenment

The Library's most recent Collections in Focus display '*Allan Ramsay: Writing the Scots Enlightenment*' which launched in February was cut short owing to the Library's closure. To ensure that the display could still be enjoyed by members of the public who were unable to view it, the exhibits were filmed for inclusion on the Library's website. The Ramsay display was a collaborative effort between the National Library of Scotland and a team at the University of Glasgow who are working on an AHRC funded project 'The Collected Works of Allan Ramsay', which focuses on the works of the poet Allan Ramsay (1684-1758).



Filming took place in late July before the Library reopened to the public, and saw Dr Ralph McLean discuss the significance of Ramsay's contribution to Scottish literature and music alongside colleagues from Glasgow, Dr Craig Lamont and Dr Brianna Robertson-Kirkland. The filming and image capture was carried out by Robert James of the Library's Imaging Services team. The final film will soon appear on the Library's website and also on Glasgow's dedicated Allan Ramsay site:

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/critical/research/researchcentresandnetworks/robertburnsstudies/edinburghenlightenment/>.

## CENTRE FOR ROBERT BURNS STUDIES

Centre for Robert Burns  
Studies

The Collected Works of Allan  
Ramsay

→ The Editorial Team

### THE COLLECTED WORKS OF ALLAN RAMSAY

These are the webpages of the AHRC-funded project to produce a multi-volume edition of Allan Ramsay's works, a

## New enquiry management system

On 22 June we successfully migrated our existing enquiry management system, QuestionPoint, to a new system called 'Ask a question'. An [enquiry and chat](#) form is available for the public to place their questions, a useful list of [popular questions](#), which is a new feature for the Library, to increase in due course and a revised [contact](#) page. Centralising the enquiries in one system, with the ability to assign them to the appropriate subject area, by nine separate departmental queues, will increase efficiency, create a central recording and tracking point, and address the cyber security concerns relating to multiple shared email addresses which make us vulnerable to phishing attacks.

The Implementation Team, led by Liz MacDonald, General Reading Room Manager, worked hard to achieve this transition, which has been under discussion for some time. The launch of LibAnswers is a credit to the Access and Collections and Research teams, who got to grips with a new enquiry handling system in the middle of the lockdown.



## Collection Discovery

The Library recently launched a new 'Collection Discovery' feature on our Library Search service, which can be viewed at the following address: <http://bit.ly/CollectionDiscovery>

Collection Discovery lets us curate and highlight specific Library items and present them as a collection to our users in a more visual and appealing way than the usual Library Search results.

There are at the time of writing two collections available: one containing over 700 eBook titles which may be accessed on-site or remotely by Library members with a residence in Scotland; the other is topical and highlights over 30 titles about the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

Over the coming weeks and months we plan to add more collections. Some ideas that we are considering include: items used in and for the upcoming Petticoats and Pinnacles exhibition, Scottish Government material, titles relevant to ethnicity studies, items presented as part of the Curators' Favourites blog posts, films from the Moving Image Archive or Web Archive material.



## Virtual events

The Library's Public Programmes team has been running two virtual events per week since May – 27 to date. There have been 4,148 attendees, a 466% increase in attendance from 2019. Of these attendees 66% are not members of the Library, 38% are first-time attendees to a Library event, are from six continents and 51 countries - one quarter of the world's countries!

Following lockdown, the Public Programmes team spent April planning a new virtual events programme which launched in May, led by Kenny Redpath and Joanna Stevenson. The new virtual programme consists of two talks per week on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5pm featuring guest speakers and Library staff. So far, the talks have covered a wide range of topics including maps, Gaelic printing, women's sport, nature, wild swimming, bookbinding, storytelling, and even live music. The team even produce their first ever Library Fest – a week-long series of events in August to mark the absence of the Edinburgh's festivals.

The virtual events programme has helped the Library to stay connected to loyal audiences whilst reaching new audiences from farther afield including the USA, Nigeria, the Philippines, and Siberia. 38% of attendees had never attended a Library event before. The virtual events programme has also enabled us to expand our capacity from 100 people in the Board Room up to 500 people on a Zoom webinar for the really popular events.

The virtual programme has challenged the team to work in new ways and has presented longer-term considerations for the Library's digital infrastructure. The popularity of the programme means that once on-site programming resumes, we will need to consider how to balance the demand of online and on-site programming with our current capacity.

## Feedback

*'Please keep more events online even when lockdown ends, more accessible. Thank you for putting these recent talks on.'*

*'As a disabled person, I have found these webinars fantastic as it has opened up the NLS to me as its very difficult for me to visit in person. I really look forward to them. I really hope they will continue after lockdown!! Many thanks.'*

*'For those of us who live outwith the major centres, the pandemic has actually opened up a world that was previously inaccessible. I regularly saw talks at the NLS being advertised that I simply couldn't attend. Now having them online means I can. Please, continue to make these accessible even after things are 'normal' again.'*

*'I really enjoyed the webinar aspect that meant I could sit with a brew in my armchair. As I currently live in Cumbria and am about to move to Sri Lanka, webinar allow me to attend things I probably won't be able to in person in the future.'*

## Online workshops

In addition to the virtual events programme, the Public Programmes team have worked with departments across the Library to train colleagues to use Zoom and supporting the delivery of online workshops including family history, introduction to maps and Moving Image Archive sessions.

The Learning Team has also delivered a fortnightly series of creative writing workshops delivered by Marjorie Lofti Gill. Following the success of this series, a new online book series is being planned for the autumn.

## Family activities

Shortly before lockdown the Public Programmes team started a new monthly series of family workshops. To continue the relationship with new family audiences, Beverley Casebow worked with freelance specialists and internal colleagues to produce a series of online family activities. [These are now live on the Library website.](#)

## Stevenson's Lighthouses and Edinburgh College of Art

Each year the Library collaborates with Edinburgh College of Art to create a live brief for their students. This year, we asked students to respond to our Stevenson's archives and had planned to showcase their work as part of the Collections in Focus: Stevenson's Lighthouses exhibition. Unfortunately this exhibition was cancelled, but the students' artwork is [now displayed as a virtual exhibition on the Library's website.](#)

## Young film-makers competition

In April, the Library launched a young film-makers competition led by Sheena MacDougall from the Kelvinhall learning team, in partnership with the [Scottish Youth Film Festival](#). Young film-makers aged under 19 were invited to submit their entries responding to the theme of home. The deadline for the entries was 31 August and the winners will be announced in September. The winning films will be archived as part of the Library's collections.

## See you in 10 years

The Library is partnering with the Scottish Book Trust, inviting young writers aged 13-19 to submit their written work responding to the theme of '[See you in 10 years](#)'. The deadline for entries was 31 August. The winning entries will be included in a time capsule along with a new piece of writing by Val McDermid that will be stored by the Library for 10 years. The capsule will enter our stores in November as part of [Book Week Scotland 2020](#), and a special film about the project will be produced. The time capsule will be retrieved and opened in 2030.



## Exhibition works

The *Northern Lights* and *Alan Ramsay* exhibitions were successfully de-installed in August following staff regaining access to George IV Bridge. Works are now underway to carry out a light-touch refurbishment of the small Collections in Focus gallery (previously known as the Treasures gallery). In October work will begin to install our two upcoming exhibitions. Plans are being put in place to safely manage visitors during their visit, and scenario planning is underway in case of a second lockdown.

Enabling and design works are also underway to prepare for the new semi-permanent exhibition *Treasures of the National Library of Scotland*. The design and build will be complete by the end of November, and we plan to open the gallery in January 2021 in order to maximise opportunity for publicity and footfall.

## Coming up in Public Programmes

- *Petticoats and Pinnacles: Scotland's Pioneering Mountain Women* will open to the public on Thursday 29 October in the Special Exhibitions Gallery.
- *The Eye of a Stranger: Henrietta Liston's Travels* will also open to the public on Thursday 29 October in the Collections in Focus Gallery.
- There will be a special virtual offer as part of this year's [Doors Open Day](#) in September.
- We're partnering with the [Scottish International Storytelling Festival](#) to run a series of virtual events and in-person story walks in October.
- Plans are in-place to deliver a virtual Advanced Higher Programme to substitute our usual on-site programme which runs during the autumn term.
- A new Gaelic youth project is starting in October in partnership with James Gillespie's GME unit.
- A new virtual book group will run throughout autumn, open to the public.
- Our [online events programme](#) will continue to run throughout autumn. It is anticipated that we will resume our on-site programme in January 2021.

## New online maps and website improvements

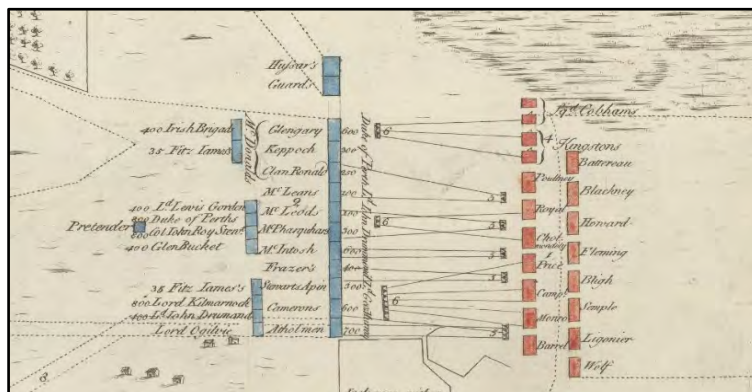
During July and August, we added a further 1,500 new early maps of Scotland to our website. Whilst not numerically significant (we now have 232,000 maps online), these maps are very important for their content, including many manuscripts, as well as special states of early maps of Scotland. We are now very close to completing our objective of having all our flat-sheet maps of Scotland online. The new additions include:

- 450 new [estate maps](#), stretching from Wigtownshire to Orkney. These are useful for showing the division of common land, the planning of new roads, farming and woodland, coal mining, the creation of designed gardens and landscapes, planned villages, architectural reconstruction, and the reclamation of foreshore.
- 180 new printed [town plans of Scotland](#), covering 22 towns, allowing urban change to be seen more clearly.



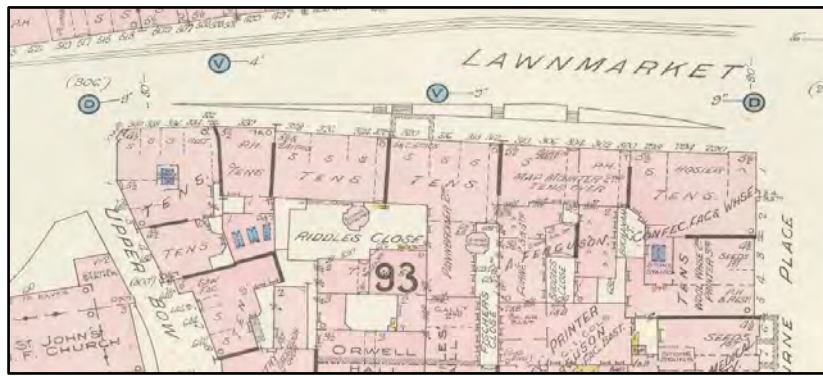
Hay's New Plan of Musselburgh.. (1824)

- 82 new [military maps of Scotland](#). These maps include battle plans of [Culloden](#), [Falkirk](#), [Glenshiel](#), and [Prestonpans](#), as well as maps of military roads, and architectural drawings of Edinburgh Castle..



A plan of the field of battle... near Culloden (1746)

- 230 [Goad Fire Insurance Plans of Scottish Towns](#). These very detailed maps show fire risk for the main industrial areas of seven towns and cities in Scotland, and are particularly useful for showing the function of each building, as well as the names of particular companies or institutions there.



Charles Goad, *Insurance Plan of Edinburgh, Sheet 12* (1906)

- 102 specialised early maps, plans and profiles relating to [Bridges](#), [Canals](#) and [Railways](#). These often show proposed new developments, that were not always realised. They include the construction of the [Forth & Clyde Canal](#), the [Caledonian Canal](#) and the [Union Canal](#).



John Bartholomew & Co., *Forth Bridge. General elevation* (ca. 1880)

- In addition to these new Library collections online, we were also delighted to have been granted permission by the WS Society to put their [Signet Library map collection online](#), containing 494 plans, including many special and important maps of Scotland. This collection has been held on deposit in the Library since 1981.

We have also been actively renewing content and functionality across the maps website. Many new and updated functions were brought together in a new page [Ten things you \(maybe\) didn't know about our maps website](#), which has been well-received. We have replaced our Ordnance Survey modern map layers with the new [OS Maps API layers](#) (launched in July 2020), added a new dynamic presentation of parishes and counties in our [Explore Georeferenced Maps](#) viewer, and refreshed and replaced all our [Help videos](#).

## Digital Scholarship update

### The National Librarian's Research Fellowship in Digital Scholarship

Digital Scholarship activity has continued as normal since lockdown. This has included recruiting our first Fellowship position: Dr Giles Bergel (Oxford University) has been appointed as the first National Librarian's Research Fellow in Digital scholarship. Giles is a digital humanist, based in the Department of Engineering Science. He has a long-standing interest in the digitisation of cheap print, with other interests including bibliography, typography and book design; and the histories of copyright and the British book trades.

Giles's project will use computer vision with the Chapbooks printed in Scotland dataset, to identify and analyse illustrations in chapbooks. This work, and these methods, will build on the well-known Bodleian Ballads project.

The project will ask what can be learnt from their illustrations about chapbooks' origins; about relationships between chapbook printers, publishers and distributors; and about the type and range of imagery available to their readers.

Giles has already delivered an introductory Digital Scholarship Staff Seminar about his project and will be carrying out a number of public engagement activities at the end of his fellowship in March 2021.

Find out more: <https://data.nls.uk/projects/the-national-librarians-research-fellowship-in-digital-scholarship/>



### Recruitment for Digital Research Intern and PhD student

The Library's first online, remote working post - Digital Research Intern – was recruited during lockdown, with Lucy Havens (PhD student, University of Edinburgh) the successful candidate. Lucy is currently working on creating Jupyter Notebooks for some of the Data Foundry's datasets, to present key attributes of the data to new audiences.

We also recruited a new PhD student with the University of Edinburgh: this SGSAH-funded project will explore the implications of Transkribus on archival and library practices, supervised by Professor Melissa Terras (University of Edinburgh), Dr Paul Gooding (University of Glasgow) and Sarah Ames and Stephen Rigden. Joseph Nockels will start on this exciting new project in September 2020, initially in a remote capacity.

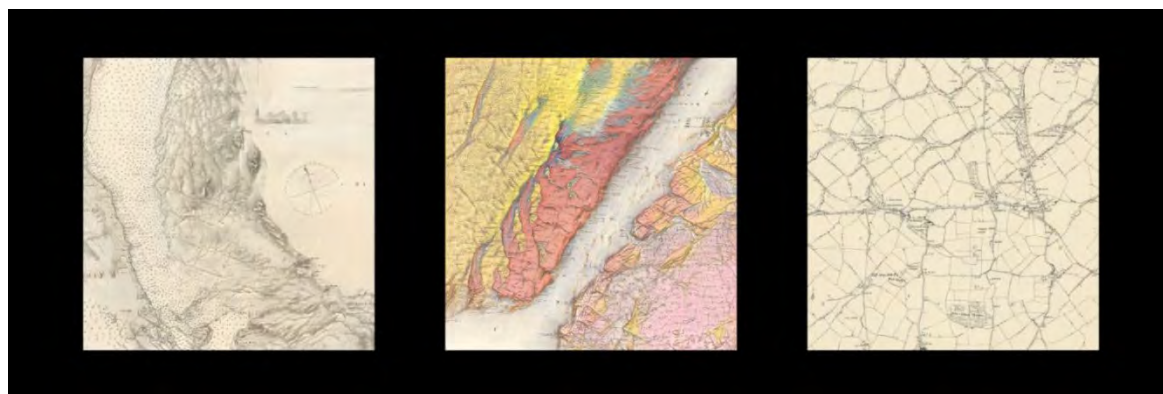


## Artist in Residence shortlisted for award

Martin Disley, the Library's Creative Informatics-funded Artist in Residence, has been shortlisted for the John Byrne Award for his work with the Library's map collections. 'What does an AI map show us?' explores the relationship between AI and maps, presenting a video of 'fake maps':

<https://www.johnbyrneaward.org.uk/entries/what-does-an-ai-map-show-us/>

Martin's residency with the Library concluded at the end of August, following an incredibly successful project, as well as an extremely well-attended and engaged Digital Scholarship Staff Seminar and public lecture for the Library with a global attendance (to be uploaded on the Library's YouTube channel soon).



Example GAN-generated maps by Martin Disley.

## Dataset updates

Dataset release on the Data Foundry has continued to go ahead as scheduled:

**June: Advocates Library Catalogues** <https://doi.org/10.34812/d5hw-ha44>

The Advocates Library produced several catalogues from the 17th to the 19th century: each one representing the Library's evolution from its legal origins and the ever-expanding number of books that it held. This dataset contains all of the catalogues of the Advocates Library.

**July: Lewis Grassie Gibbon First Editions** <https://doi.org/10.34812/a61z-m825>

This dataset consists of the first editions of sixteen books published by James Leslie Mitchell (1901-1935) during his lifetime under his birth name Mitchell and the pseudonym Lewis Grassie Gibbon.

**August: Weekly Casualty Lists** <https://doi.org/10.34812/ab5v-d816>

This dataset contains weekly lists from 1917-1919 of British service personnel who were reported as wounded, missing, taken prisoner of war, or killed in action.

## Digital Scholarship Staff Seminars resume



The Digital Scholarship Staff Seminar series resumed on Zoom, with June and July talks by Martin Disley (Artist in Residence) and Giles Bergel (National Librarian's Research Fellow). Future speakers and topics for 2020 include:

**Sara Veldhoen (KB, Netherlands):** 'Generating metadata with AI? Creating automatic assistance for bibliographical metadata'

**Dave Beavan (The Alan Turing Institute):** 'Experiences from Living with Machines'

**James Baker (University of Sussex):** 'Legacies of Catalogue Descriptions and Curatorial Voice'

**Mahendra Mahey (British Library Labs):** 'Repositioning British Library Labs'

Given their broad interest, we hope to open some of these up to academics and students outside of the Library.

## Conferences and publications

The Digital Scholarship Service has had a busy summer of participating in conferences and events, with many continuing online as scheduled; others have been postponed until next year. The Service has also joined the new CERL Digital Humanities Working Group, kicking off the contributions with a post on the CERL blog, and it has contributed to an Alan Turing Institute white paper.

### Presentations:

SCURL AGM, June: 'Collections as data and the Data Foundry: developing a Digital Scholarship Service at the National Library of Scotland'

CILIP sub-group, May (with Robert Betteridge, Rare Books Curator): '*Historic catalogues as data: Releasing the Advocates Library Catalogues on the National Library of Scotland's Data Foundry*'

LIBER2020, June: '*Transparency, provenance and collections as data: the National Library of Scotland's Data Foundry*' <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3921784>

DH2020, July: 'Developing the Data Foundry: the National Library of Scotland's data-delivery platform'

### Written outputs:

'*Special collections as data: the National Library of Scotland's Data Foundry*'. CERL Blog. 2020. <https://cerlblog.wordpress.com/2020/08/13/special-collections-as-data-the-national-library-of-scotlands-data-foundry/>

'*Challenges and prospects of the intersection of humanities and data science: A white paper from The Alan Turing Institute*'. The Alan Turing Institute. 2020. [dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.12732164](https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.12732164) (contributor) .

## Library wins Wikimedia award for Wikisource OCR project

At the recent Wikimedia UK AGM, the National Library of Scotland won the *Partnership of the Year* award in recognition of its work throughout lockdown to upload 3,000 Scottish chapbooks to Wikisource (<https://en.wikisource.org>), Wikimedia's online library of out-of-copyright digitised books. The project, which was set up and managed by the Mass Digitisation team, involved over 70 Library staff working together to correct OCR transcription errors and is thought to be the largest staff contribution to a Wikimedia project ever, anywhere in the world. The project focussed on the Scottish chapbooks, which were well-suited to this activity because they are openly-licensed on the Library's digital gallery, they contain interesting and engaging subject matter such as murders, disasters, intrigues and love stories, and because they are short texts, each item could feasibly be completed by one person in one day. Read more about the Scottish chapbooks at <https://blog.europeana.eu/2019/08/chapbooks-the-poor-persons-reading-material/>

The workflow involved multiple stages: the upload of books from the Library's Digital Gallery to Wikisource via Wikimedia Commons, Wikimedia's multimedia repository; an initial proofread of the transcription which involved correcting spelling errors and undertaking some basic formatting; a validation stage when the proofread text was signed off by another editor; and a final "transclusion" stage when the book was published on Wikisource. Following transclusion, the completed transcriptions are then exported from Wikisource and loaded back into the Digital Gallery, where they can be accurately keyword-searched and made available for computational analysis.

As well as improving the quality of transcriptions, the project has also increased the visibility of the collection: books uploaded to Wikisource tend to be viewed more frequently on that platform than they are on the Library's own website, and appear higher on Google search results. Added to this, staff have found working on the project to be a very positive experience as they learned more about the Library's chapbook collection, they developed digital and coding skills, and they felt connected to their colleagues during the anxiety and turmoil of lockdown. Staff in the Mass Digitisation team took on responsibility for the project, providing them opportunities for growth in areas such as communication, work allocation and project and service management. It has helped to increase staff engagement with Wikimedia projects, leading to the formation of an internal Wikimedia Community of Interest, while also improving the Library's relationship with the wider Wikimedia community, who have helped with advice and setting standards for the project. It has even had an international impact, with colleagues at Emory University in the USA emulating the Library's work with their own Wikisource project. Gavin Willshaw, the Mass Digitisation Service Manager, gave a presentation on the project at the Wikimedia AGM and will be running a Wikisource training workshop for the British Library in October.

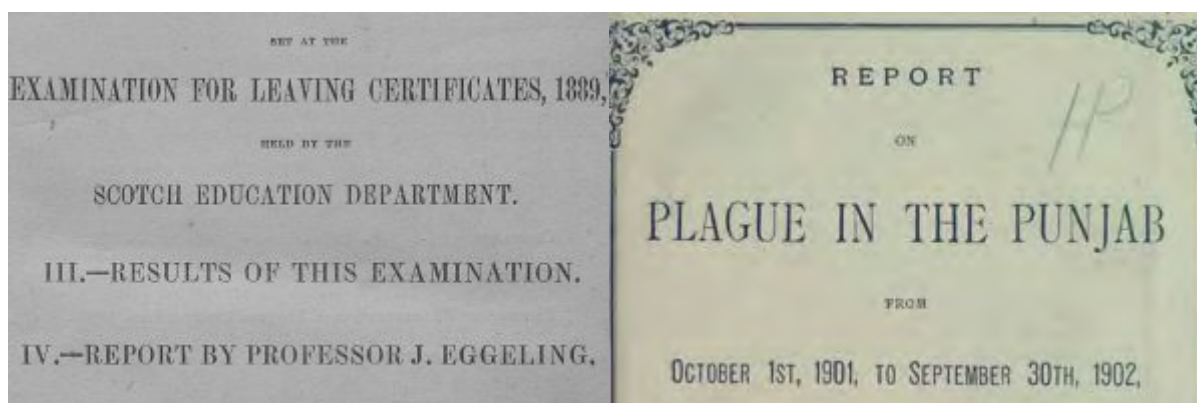
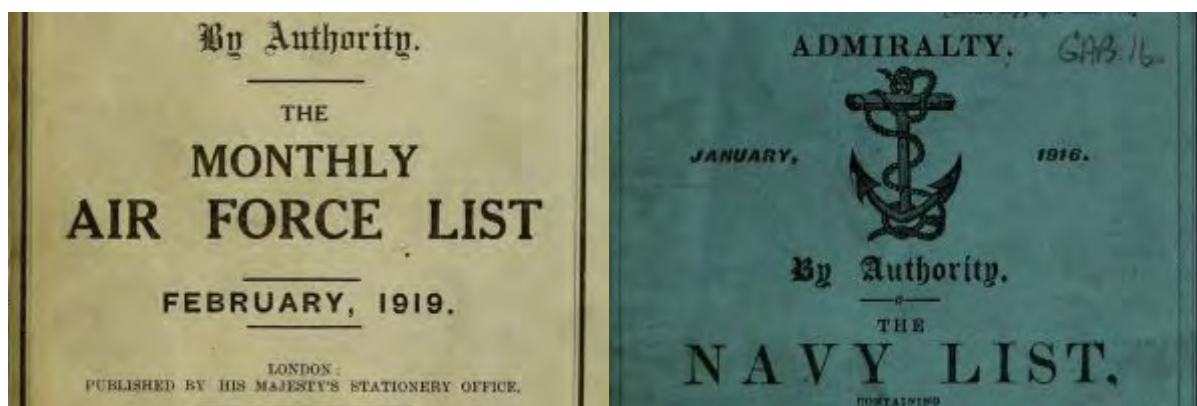
More information about the project can be found on its Wikisource project page ([https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Wikisource:WikiProject\\_NLS](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Wikisource:WikiProject_NLS))



## General Collections highlights

### It's official – Government publications are on the Data Foundry

Material from our Official Publications collections continues to expand the content available on the Library's Data Foundry. Recent additions include the Airforce Lists and the War Office Casualty Lists with the British Army Lists to follow shortly. This content joins the Navy Lists, Britain and UK Handbooks, the Scottish School Exam papers and the India Papers and provides a great sample of Government data for digital research and creativity. Not only are our official publications very varied, but the Open Government Licence that covers many UK publications means that we can make some of our more modern content available online too.





## Period poverty research collaboration

The Library continued its RSE funded research partnership with academics on the topic of period poverty, with an online event on 3 September called “21st century periods” by Bettina Bildhauer, Camilla Rostvik: *Menstruation is having a moment, right here, right now: Scotland is leading the global campaign against period poverty, menstrual cups and reusable pads are becoming fashionable, athletes are opening up about their menstrual cycles, and trans activists are vocal about menstruating. At the same time, the old stigma, taboo and disgust surrounding the bleeding remain. This talk will give you a brief introduction to what is currently happening in Scotland and uncover some of the reasons behind this watershed moment. Why have people been ashamed of menstruating for so long? How have artists, thinkers and activists tried to change that? What drives Holyrood’s current legislation for the free provision of period products? All genders and all questions welcome.*



## The show and tell must go on

Across the Library, many planned events had to be cancelled as COVID19 closedowns and restrictions took hold. It is great to see some of these events coming back now that conditions are, hopefully, improving. Anouk Lang is a Senior Lecturer at Edinburgh University and teaches a Digital Humanities class; she was planning a session with Jan Usher for students on the Medical History of British India collection. The session would provide important context around the collection, which is digitally available as a dataset on the Data Foundry. Jan (Social Sciences Curator) will now give the students a “guided tour” of the collection either virtually or in person if restrictions allow in October.

## **Bot-spotting at the National Library of Scotland**

At the end of July, Iona Fraser-Collins joined the Library on a six week internship funded by the Robertson Trust. Iona, a student at St Andrews University, is looking at the issues around collecting bot-generated content. Bot- and AI- generated content might sound like the stuff of science fiction, but it is already with us and affecting our lives in profound ways. Many people may have heard about Twitterbots, which can be used maliciously to generate spam, and disproportionately influence online discussion. People may also have heard about deepfakes, which raise important ethical questions about trust, authenticity, and indeed criminality. People may also be aware that their pensions increasingly depend on stock markets triggered by algorithms. But are we ready yet to read a novel where the author isn't a human. Can human influence ever be removed from bot-content? And in a catalogue record for a bot-novel, who or what is the author? To what extent is AI simply a tool like a printing press or a typewriter? Have we been here before? And do robots write better haiku than they do science fiction? The six week internship concludes on 4<sup>th</sup> September, and will result in a short horizon scanning paper. It will help with the development of our understanding about emerging formats and our ability to collect the publications of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. For more information on the internship and bot-created content, please contact Graeme Hawley.

## **Business is booming (and zooming)**

Over the course of June, July, and August, the Library's Business and Enterprise Partner (Elaine Simpson) was able to connect with over 300 people at online business networking events. Groups including Scottish Women in Business, Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, Creative Circles, Creative Mornings, Dis-ConnectED, and the Federation of Small Businesses are all meeting regularly on platforms such as Zoom, where Elaine is able to hear about business needs and interests, and typically has a short slot to profile our eResources and other services that can help. Right at a time when support for businesses has been most needed, the ability to access some of our business resources remotely has been invaluable. Online networking has proved so popular that it may well become a permanent feature for the business community, and it's great to be in that mix already.