

Information for librarians & information professionals working in Edinburgh - October 28th, 2009

NEWS AND EVENTS

e-bulletins: These are a quick and easy way to get an overview of current activities in particular fields. It's very easy to subscribe/ unsubscribe. Current ones in the ELISA inbox:

- **Voluntary Health Scotland:** an overview of how people are getting the information they want on health issues and how the various organisations are getting their messages across. Tel: 0131 225 7290 e.mail Phil McAndrew phil.mcandrew@vhscotland.info
- **Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature Trust:** the world of literature thrives in Edinburgh – keep in touch with all that's going on. Note that the Trust has a new home - they are now based within the Edinburgh Room at Central Library, George IV Bridge. Tel. (0) 131 220 2970 www.cityofliterature.trust
- **National Library of Scotland News** <http://www.nls.uk/news/newsletter.html>
- **Wired-GOV.net** - the UK's No. 1 government and public sector news alerting service delivering more official content from more departments and agencies to more subscribers than any government news alerting service available. Free service to all public sector and third sector subscribers. <http://www.wired-gov.net/wg/wg-main-1.nsf>
- **Scottish Storytelling Centre and Network e-Bulletin:** Keeps you in touch with the many exciting events and projects that storytellers across Scotland are involved in, and to inspire people to explore new approaches to storytelling and storymaking. To subscribe, contact Davide Panzeri at davide@storytellingcentre.com

SLIC – Free seminar - Innovation and Development Showcase

You can book your free place for this event being held in Perth on **Tuesday 3rd November** by clicking on this link: <http://www.slaite.org.uk/events/EventShow.cfm?uEventID=2407>

Come along and learn more about a range of sectoral initiatives and the day will incorporate the SLIC AGM where you can hear more about SLIC's activities from Director, Elaine Fulton. Lunch and refreshments are included in your free invitation.

Grampian Information Annual Conference “Cooperation and Innovation”

Aberdeen Douglas Hotel **5 November 2009**. Registrations close 29 October 2009 – ELISA members are eligible for a discount. Keynote speeches by Karen Cunningham of Glasgow City Council and Margaret Forrest, this year's CILIPS chair. The morning sessions will be presented by Wendy Ball, of Edinburgh's ELISA, about cooperative working and passport schemes, as well as Mick Fortune who will be talking about RFID and chairing the RFID conference the following week. The afternoon offers speed surgeries on a number of important CPD topics. For more information see www.grampianinformation.org.uk

CILIPS NE Scotland branch - Fundamentals of cataloguing course

There will be a one day “fundamentals of cataloguing” course encompassing MARC 21 and AACR2 on **Wednesday 11th November 10-4.30** at the Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen. The course will be useful for Library and Information Management paraprofessionals and professionals who feel they need a refresher course, and for those who have either no formal cataloguing training or for whom cataloguing is not their primary role. Cost £20; unwaged/students £10. Lunch included. Please contact Jennifer Morrison to book your place by emailing jennifer.morrison@cnrinternational.com or phoning 01224 303712.

ELIS Staff Development & Training Group

The Group has said farewell and thank you to Gill McDonald who has guided this Group as Convenor for nearly a decade. ELISA owes a debt of gratitude to Gill for her steadfast approach and for building up this Working Group so that it can continue with great confidence into ELISA Phase III. ... We are delighted to announce that Andrew McDougall, who has been representing the National Library of Scotland on the Group for a number of years has kindly agreed to take up the Convenorship – we are informed that the arm twisting was not too severe ... Andrew will be a great boon to the Group as the brief biography below indicates a valuable breadth of experience.

Andrew worked for 10 years in the book trade with a range of jobs from retail buying to publishing support and book distribution. He even drove a mobile library for a year. In 1999 he moved into Human Resources by taking a post-graduate course at Napier. He spent 3 years working in people development with Diageo, the drinks manufacturer, before moving into his current role as Training & Development Officer at NLS in 2003. He served on the board of the Scottish Poetry Library from 2002 to 2008. He lives in Carlops with his wife and two daughters.



EDITOR of TACIT

The ELISA Business Committee is looking for an energetic individual with an eye for new developments and a commitment to partnership working to be the Editor of TACIT. TACIT is one format that members of the ELISA community use to keep in touch – it is sent out to all Edinburgh-based libraries and information services. It is an effective way to advertise events, ELISA activities, vacancies and news, as well as providing contacts for useful partners. It is planned that TACIT be issued on a monthly basis and that the process of information gathering be as streamlined and collaborative as possible. This opportunity gives privileged access to a huge range of Edinburgh-based library contacts as well as giving a reason to keep abreast of the latest developments – a great CPD move! The work is voluntary and the time needed is estimated as 4 hours a month. Full briefing and support will be given. Expressions of interest to Wendy in any format (phone, e-mail, post, fax, pigeon) before **November 18th**.



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RAISING THE PROFILE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE FOR SCOTLAND

The General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) is the department of the devolved Scottish Administration with responsibility for the registration of births, marriages, civil partnerships, deaths, divorces and adoptions, and for the decennial census of population. The head of department is the Registrar General and staff are based at New Register House and Ladywell House in Edinburgh and Cairnmore House in Dumfries.

GROS was established when statutory registration was introduced in Scotland on 1 January 1855. At first staff were based in General Register House (GRH) but it soon became apparent that a purpose-built repository was required for the records created by the new system and for the Old Parish Registers which were to be transferred from the parishes to the custody of the Registrar General. The architect Robert Matheson was appointed to build New Register House (NRH), next door to the existing building. The Cavaye Collection of Thomas Begbie prints includes a fascinating image of the first phase of construction and the 'Edinburgh Evening Courant' of 21 June 1862 published a detailed description as it neared completion. The article refers to the great record room with its miles of shelving and accommodation provided 'to the whole of the Registrar General's department, and also to the offices of the Accountant in Bankruptcy, to the Teind office, Crown Rents Office, Lyon Office, etc'. The Court of the Lord Lyon – a partner with GROS and the National Archives of Scotland in the ScotlandsPeople family history project – is also still based in NRH.

GROS has been responsible for taking the census since 1861 and staff are busy preparing for the next one in 2011. The scope of the census has extended over the years: the 1881 census was the first to provide a count of the Gaelic-speaking population and a question about the number of rooms with one or more windows was included because of concerns about housing conditions. For a time, householders were asked if a person should be classed as lunatic, imbecile or idiot. The definitions of such terms and other explanatory notes can be found in the published census reports which provide analyses of the results alongside the statistical tables. The census also produces classifications of occupations and of industries, and indexes of place-names.

At the outbreak of the Second World War, on 29 September 1939 GROS carried out an enumeration of the civilian population. The resulting national register was used for issuing identity cards and ration books - every person had a unique civil registration number – and formed the basis of today's National Health Service Central Register, an index of NHS patients administered by staff in Dumfries to ensure the smooth transfer of records when patients move or leave the country. The Register is increasingly important for medical and demographic research. Other public health benefits of GROS's work are highlighted in a history of GROS by the Centre for the History of Medicine at the University of Glasgow. The 'Scottish way of birth and death' website includes sections on health, disease and vaccination and the importance of the vital statistics made possible by the registration system. The Registrar General's annual reports provide contemporary commentary on the statistics: the 1855 report discusses the different classes of disease and the effect of temperature on the death rate (with

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FOREIGN REGISTER-OF DEATHS;

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)
Name and Surname.	When and Where Died.	Sex.	Age.	Name, Surname & Rank or Profession of Father, Name, and Maternal Surname of Mother.	Cause of Death, Duration of Disease, and Medical Attendant by whose certificate.	Signature & Qualification of Informant.	When and Where Registered, and Signature of Registrar-General.
Robert Clark Master Painter (Married to Emma Swan)	1894 March Seventeenth 9 h. 25 m. P.M. Hotel Gascon Rue France (usual residence) Victoria Street Edinburgh	M.	68 years	Robert Clark S. S. C. (Deceased) Isabella Clark M. S. Black (Deceased)	Apoplexy Complication of Cerebral Sore (with cerebral sclerosis) Duration of Apoplexy 10 days As certified by William Henry Davidson M.D. F.R.C.S. F.R.S. Glasgow See General Register Office	(Signed) Edward Clark Son present J. Robertson Edinburgh As certified by (Signed) All at St. Peter's Church, New General Register Office	1894 April 11 th At Edinburgh Miss Ypsum Registrar-General
William Affleck Scott M. A., M.B., C.M. Surgeon and Assistant of the Surgeon-General (Married to Elizabeth Blantyre) British Central Africa	1895 March Twenty first 2 h. A.M. Blantyre	M.	33 years	David Scott Civil Engineer Mary Jane Scott M. S. Bannock (Deceased)	Natural Sore and Congestion of Lungs Kept 3 weeks	(Signed) Andrew Scott C.R. 12 Beith 16 Southam Place Edinburgh Certified by (Signed) J. Reid M.D. Glasgow	1895 May 25 th At Edinburgh Miss Ypsum Registrar-General
Robert Lewis Balfour Stevenson Author Second to Tommy Mitchell (son of Scott or Stevenson)	1896 December Third 8 h. 0 m. P.M. Napier Aberdeen Samaritan Islands	M.	44 years	Thomas Stevenson Civil Engineer Margaret Isabella Stevenson M. S. Balfour	Apoplexy Two hours As certified by B. Burns M.D. Health Office, Spid Public Service.	(Signed) Isabel Strong Step daughter deat at Victoria Certified by (Signed) Charles M. Woodford British Consul, Swansea 12 March 1897. (C.S.)	1895 June 1 st At Edinburgh Miss Ypsum Registrar-General

comparisons to data from New York and warmer countries); and the severe flu epidemic of 1918-19 was described in a supplement to the 1918 report.

GROS's publications such as the annual and quarterly statistical returns, population projections, household estimates and lists of popular baby names are widely covered by the media. In 2001 the annual report became an annual review of demographic trends – a much shorter publication, supplemented by statistical tables on the GROS website. In another sign of the times, the early annual and census reports are now available in digital format on the Online Historical Population Reports website.

No doubt the first Registrar General would have been aware of the value of the records for genealogical research but he would surely have been surprised to find that NRH has a new opening on its east side which links to GRH, where in late 1854 he was busy preparing for the introduction of civil registration. This new development is part of the ScotlandsPeople Centre which featured in Tacit of 15 April 2009.

Helen Borthwick, Librarian

Further information: www.gro-scotland.gov.uk
www.gla.ac.uk/departments/scottishwayofbirthanddeath/
www.histpop.org/ohpr/servlet/
 'Jock Tamson's bairns: a history of the records of the General Register Office for Scotland' by Cecil Sinclair (978-1874451594)

