



friends newsletter Issue 86 Summer 2020

Note from the Editor: **Priscilla Barlow** psbarlow@sky.com

Despite current conditions, contributions to this issue have been excellent. In particular we thank those members of the library staff who have kept us up to date. Sadly we have no visits or events to report and the Dates for your Diary is quite blank. Lockdown has prevented planning

meetings with Duncan in the lobby of the Central Hotel but I have to thank him most sincerely for keeping me on the right track - and sane - online. We are happy to report that Lucy has agreed to continue looking after the business end of membership pro tem and we note that this year's Visiting

Research Fellowships have been extended to end of 2021 to allow researchers time to complete work. On a more optimistic note the library staff report they have been busy preparing for a gradual return to a kind of normal. Hope you are all safe and well.

University of Glasgow Library response to Covid 19

Library Services have ensured that virtual services to the University community were as seamless and responsive as possible. We were able to successfully move key services online due to ongoing investment in e-resources, the development of Reach Out and the expertise and commitment to delivering excellent services to support learning, teaching and research within Library teams.

Library Services consulted with academic staff to provide additional online resources to enhance existing online provision of e-books and other online resources. Publishers provided free temporary access to collections of electronic material to support teaching and research.

Library staff are working with academics for the start of the academic year, encouraging further take up of Reading Lists@Glasgow service, identifying existing e-content and scoping the possible acquisition of additional e-resources.

Consultation has been taking place with academics regarding collections-based teaching with Archives and Special Collections in semester

Martina McChrystal
Director of Library Services
University of Glasgow



one. Plans are well advanced for standardised online elements to cover skills teaching and introductions to collections, enhanced with course-specific content, including digitised content packs and video live-streaming.

Archives & Special Collections (ASC) are working with colleagues across the University to ensure our experience of, and response to, the Covid-19 pandemic is captured and preserved as part of the University Archive. The current focus of this collecting has been around the processes, procedures and guidance the University has provided to support the transition to working,

teaching and learning remotely. ASC will capture activities such as the Covid-19 Testing Centre.

We will collaborate with research groups, such as the Medical Humanities Research Network, to map out the resources required for further research projects.

Library Services are returning incrementally to our Main Library building, following Scottish Government and University guidance. The library launched its Click and Collect service on 21 July, which has already received over 2,000 requests for material.

The library opened the Postgraduate Space on 3rd August for study and to support completion of dissertations. Again, this service has been extremely popular.

We look forward to welcoming our University community back to the Main Library building on 24 August, with all distancing protocols in place, and in accordance with Health and Safety requirements.

Politics and the Media in Scotland

A very small number of Friends braved the elements on Thursday 20 February to hear what turned out to be our last event before the coronavirus lockdown.

Those of us who had made the effort were extremely privileged to hear Professor Hutchison's cogent, informative and highly entertaining talk. Totally at ease with his subject, he left us with an enhanced insight into the relationship between politics and the media. He is an Honorary Professor in Media Policy at Glasgow Caledonian University. His publications include **Modern Scottish Theatre; Centres and Peripheries: Metropolitan and Non-Metropolitan Journalism in the Twenty-First Century; The experience and contexts of drama in Scotland; The media and literature in contemporary Scotland: challenges and opportunities; The history of the press**



ABSTRACT

In his talk David Hutchison considered the various theories about the impact of the media on people's political views. He then surveyed the current press and broadcasting scene in Scotland, drawing attention to the precipitous decline in the sales of newspapers, and pointing out the loss of market share by indigenous Scottish

titles to editionised versions of English titles. Broadcasting, he argued, is in a much healthier state, though both media face serious competition from the online world.

He made the point that Holyrood has taken an interest in media policy, in particular though the work of the 2007 Broadcasting Commission; some aspects of media policy, however, remain reserved to Westminster. He reviewed the coverage of the 2014 independence referendum and argued that, while there was clear evidence of bias in some of the press coverage, the broadcasters made a reasonable effort to present both sides of the argument fairly. He acknowledged that other observers might take a different view. Turning to the future, he made the point that the lack of a strong opposition party at Holyrood means that the media will continue to play a pivotal role in calling the Scottish government to account. This could make media/government relations rather tricky at times.

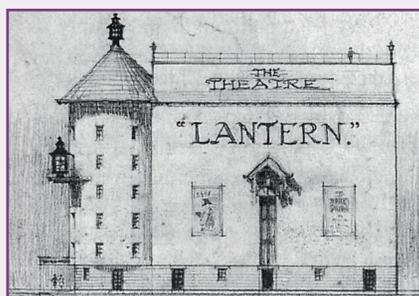
The Theatre That Got Away



Glasgow Theatre Heritage – a social and architectural journey was the title of the talk due to have been given on March 26 by Graeme

Smith and unfortunately cancelled by lockdown. Graeme was chairman of the Friends of Glasgow University Library 2010-2016. He initiated and directed the publication of *Friendly Shelves: The University of Glasgow Library*. He has also published *The Theatre Royal: entertaining a nation* and *The Alhambra Glasgow*. He is currently working on a book about the Blythswood district of Glasgow

The Talk That Got Away, due to the pandemic, would have finished its discourse of theatre buildings over 250 years with an illustration of the Theatre That Got Away. Starting from 1764 with the purpose-built Playhouse in Alston Street, just west of the then Glasgow city boundary, theatres and music halls burgeoned after the Reform Act of 1832. Theatre styles would



• Graeme Smith (left) and the unbuilt Lantern, planned for Glasgow city centre

reflect artistic fashions -external and internal to draw the crowds - building regulations, safety laws and above all – competition. In the 20th century the advance of picture houses with more comfortable seating for all brought modernisation to theatres, the Alhambra in Wellington Street becoming the most spacious and comfortable. In the 1930s the Empire in Sauchiehall Street was substantially rebuilt in Art Deco style.

City centre sites thrived more so than the half-dozen suburban theatres due to the success of Glasgow's tramway

services. However the latest theatrical buildings are in off-centre sites which can have extensive car-parking. These include the Clyde Auditorium and the Hydro on what was Queen's Dock. Theatre buildings within other buildings was known in the 19th century and revived in the 1980s with the small Mitchell Theatre opening within the expanded Mitchell Library and the smallest of all, but perfectly formed, Athenaeum inside the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in Renfrew Street.

In the 19th and 20th century some projected theatres never saw the light of day. In Graeme's view the most delightful One That Got Away was the Lantern Theatre, complete with roof terrace, designed by architect James Salmon, Jr.. (known as Wee Troot). This was proposed in 1919 for the Scottish Repertory Company, to be their home instead of renting other theatres. It would have been in Bothwell Street at the corner of Pitt Street.

David Murray Book Collecting Prize 2020

The judging panel had a very difficult task in awarding the prize this year, and we are now delighted to reveal the winners of our 2019-20 David Murray book collecting prize. The Coronavirus lockdown disrupted the usual course of events, so in these exceptional times we made the exceptional decision to award the prize jointly to two very worthy winners (in no particular order): **Rachel Fletcher for Lexicography and the history of English:**

In the third year of her PhD on Old English dictionaries, Rachel's deep love of her subject is evident in her growing collection of lexicographical lovelies. Rachel's collection focuses on dictionaries as evidence for the history of the English language.

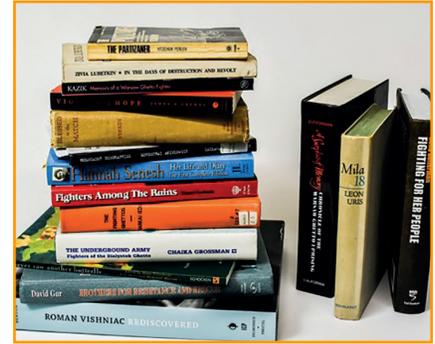
Rachel's entry included a comprehensive listing of all her books. As one judge commented, this is a 'very interesting collection with a clear theme and good organisation'.



ABOVE: The largest and the smallest books in Rachel's collection. RIGHT: Some of the books in Micaela's collection

Micaela Beigel for Once We Were Dreamers: A Collection of Jewish Resistance During the Holocaust:

Micaela is currently working towards an MRes in Human Geography. Her collection of some thirty items on Jewish resistance during the Holocaust resonates deeply with her sense of identity and personal growth as a young Jewish woman who grew up in Brooklyn. Like many book collectors, Micaela started young, although it was many years before she actually



read her first 'accidental' acquisition *A Surplus of Memory: A Chronicle of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising* by Yitzhak "Antek" Zuckerman.

As well as each winning £250 to spend on their own book collections, Rachel and Micaela also receive a year's membership of the Friends of Glasgow University Library. The judges offer their warmest virtual congratulations and thanks for two such outstanding entries.

JULIE GARDHAM

#edwinmorgan100

Celebrating the centenary of Scotland's first National Poet

By Sarah Hepworth (Archives & Special Collections University of Glasgow Library)

2020 is the centenary of the birth of Edwin Morgan (1920-2010), a poet, translator, and educator, celebrated for the humour and humanity of his work. He was a hugely influential figure in the cultural life of Scotland, becoming Glasgow's first Poet Laureate and Scotland's first National Poet (The Scots Makar).

He had a long association with the University of Glasgow: as a student in the 1930s and 1940s, and as a member of staff in the English Department until 1980. He gifted his extensive collection of personal papers, including poems, scrapbooks, and correspondence, to the University Library.

A generous donation from the Friends funded the cataloguing of over 500 handwritten draft poems. Cataloguing of the collection has supported numerous research projects, including a biography of Morgan, Selected Letters, and numerous articles, on subjects including translation and concrete poetry.



Sincerely yours as ever

Naturally, the impact of COVID-19 has affected the Library's plans to commemorate Morgan's centenary. We had intended to open an exhibition on Level 2 in April, to coincide with Morgan's birthday on 27th and a two-day international conference

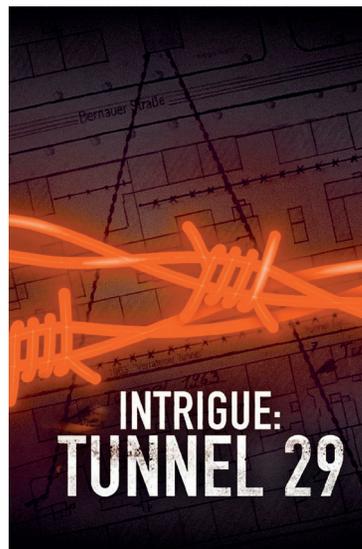
at the University. We look forward to re-scheduling these activities in due course, and Level 12 displays to highlight the remarkable contents of Morgan's papers.

In the meantime, a series of workshops held earlier in 2020 resulted in a wonderful range of creative responses to Morgan's intriguing scrapbooks. These have been published as 'The Centenary Collection'. We are contributing to online celebrations: material from Morgan's papers features in an exploration of Morgan's life and work on the University's Scottish Literature webpages and in videos which are being released every month by the Edwin Morgan Trust.

The Library's contribution to Doors Open Day 2020 will focus on Morgan's time at the University. Morgan's inventive life and legacy continues to inspire and we are delighted to support #edwinmorgan100 through the Library's collections.

Lockdown reading

Five committee members, David Baillie, Duncan Beaton, David Fergus, John Warren, Priscilla Barlow have shared their 'lockdown reading' with us.



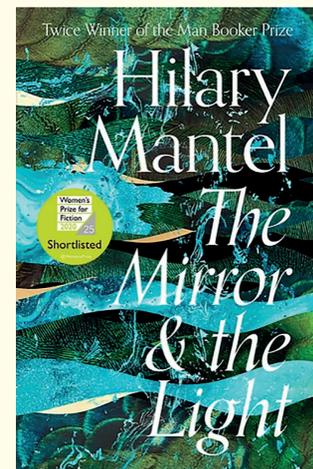
David Fergus

I came across a true story by Helena Merriman, *Intrigue: Tunnel 29* not between its hard covers but when it featured on Radio 4's Book of the Week. It was divided into 10, rather than the usual 5, broadcast episodes. Each was narrated by the author punctuated with reminiscences voiced by survivors of the drama.

The story, set in 1961, shortly after the construction of the Berlin wall, recounts how three young men living in the West of the city determine to tunnel into the East to provide an escape channel for relatives and friends. A team was assembled and work started. But vicissitudes were encountered: infiltration of the group by a Stasi agent, severe flooding, and financial worries which were overcome by an American TV station funding the enterprise in exchange for exclusive filming rights.

Eventually a tunnel was completed, breaking ground in the basement of a deserted apartment block, located near the wall in the East, an area subject to intense Stasi surveillance. So, strict rules were enforced for the selected escapees including the forbidding of any luggage. People were organised to enter the tunnel-building in penny numbers. All in all, 29 souls were ferried to the West on the chosen night – hence the title of the book.

This is a story of human courage, determination and above all compassion. Helena Merriman has ensured that its participants will be remembered.



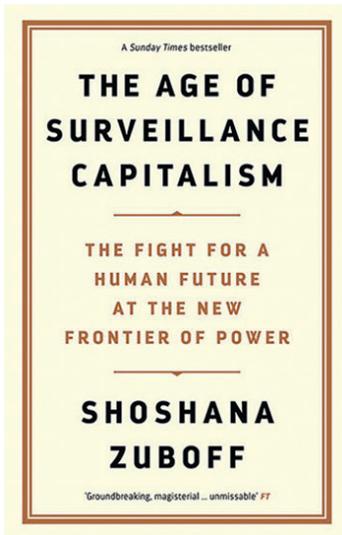
Priscilla Barlow

I read 3 books during the first weeks of lockdown. But as one of them was Hilary Mantel's *The Mirror and the Light* – 903 pages – I feel justified in claiming to have read 6.

Thinking isolation would be a good time to retrace my steps I joyfully reread *Jane Eyre*. Moving on, I picked up the challenge of the Mantel. The sheer weight was an initially daunting obstacle but it was worth the effort to overcome. The narrative is propelled by large patches of dialogue alternating with passages of beautiful prose.

Mantel successfully brings to the page the sense of Tudor life in all its aspects. In particular, she masterfully manages to create suspense in the story of the rise and fall of Thomas Cromwell, a story of which the end is well known.

I then moved on to my reward for finally finishing the Mantel; the Pulitzer Prize winner, Anne Tyler's latest novel *The Redhead by the Roadside*. Like many of her earlier books this is set in the Baltimore area, concentrating on the everyday lives of local people. On the surface it would appear to be trivial anecdotes but it is in fact an in depth, sympathetic revelation of her characters and their place in society. She has a way with words. My intention is to continue retracing my steps and return to Jane Austen.



JOHN S WARREN

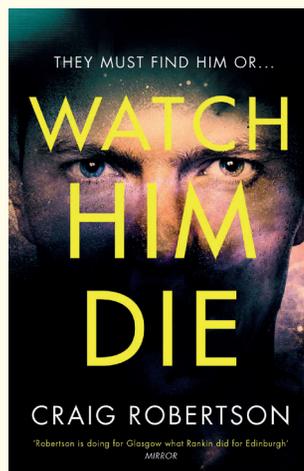
Much of my reading has been devoted to my research. I nevertheless have needed to read something else.

I am lucky in still having access to a university library for e-books and journals; sadly the e-world of virtual books is not open to GUL Life Members like myself, but I have access elsewhere. Real books are another matter; but I confess that my guilty and furtive indulgence is the Leviathan of the book trade, the destroyer of bookshops: Amazon. Worse, I actually delight in the frisson accompanying the 'thud' of a book regularly dropping through my letterbox. I leave it unopened for 72 hours; waiting for the imagined droplets of virus to die on the package, before careful opening and hand-washing. So far no hand-wringing because it was the wrong book or other misadventure.

Ah, yes; the books. Shoshana Zuboff, *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism*. I actually acquired this some time before the lockdown, but is still to hand.

I start with it because I consider it a book that everyone should read. It is a timely reminder that the gee-whizz wonders of smart-phones, instant communication, online-shopping, shared videos and all the seductive riches of the new age of instant responses do not come free.

I have also been reading a collection of academic papers on *Modern Evolutionary Economics* and I am currently reading Murdo MacDonald, Patrick Geddes's *Intellectual Origins*, Jason Stanley, *How Fascism Works: the Politics of Us and Them* and TAB Curley, *A History of the Burmah Oil Company*.



DAVID BAILLIE

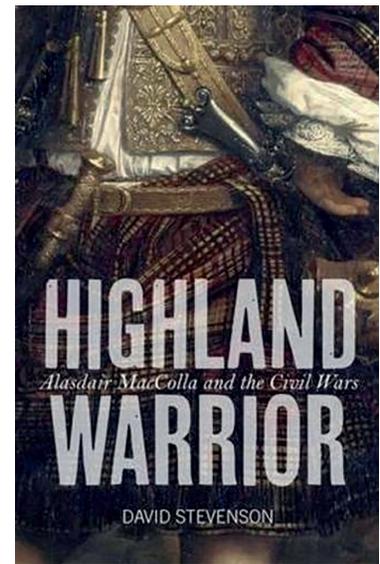
My primary rule during lockdown has been to read nothing about plagues and pandemics. Recent crime fiction has been, to a fair extent, my not-particularly-cheerful substitute, with an emphasis on 'tartan noir'. Craig Robertson's most recent, *Watch Him Die*, was the pick of the bunch.

The German author, Timur Vermes, is set fair to be the Jonathan Swift 'de nos jours'. His first two titles, *Look Who's Back* (Hitler resurrected in 2011 Berlin) and *The Hungry and the Fat* (on the intersection between politics, the media and refugees) strip bare the fantasy world of most in the West.

The two non-fiction titles which will live with me are Phillippe Sands' *The Ratline* and *Scotland's Slavery Past* edited by Tom Devine.

The former relates to Sands' relentless biography of Otto Freiherr von Wachter before, during and after World War II and his attempts to convince Wachter's youngest son that his father was far from a 'good Nazi'.

The latter is trail-blazing work, starting to lay bare the considerable Scottish involvement in the slave trade. Although very different from each other, both serve as a warning to all of us about how 'selective amnesia' can distort our view of the past - and hence the present.



DUNCAN BEATON

Although I have a background in the mechanical engineering profession my first love is History, especially Scottish History, and this is reflected in my self-isolation reading material.

When the need for isolation began I was re-reading Professor David Stevenson's *Highland Warrior*, the story of Alasdair MacColla Ciotach MacDonald, younger of Colonsay, right-hand man of James Graham, Marquis of Montrose, the Royalist Commander in Scotland opposed to the Covenanters in the Civil War, 1644-47. This book was first published as long ago as 1980 and has remained in print: my edition was published by Birlinn in 2014.

Staying with Professor Stevenson, I then read his *The Hunt for Rob Roy – The Man and his Myths*, first published in 2004 and still in print in 2016. As Stevenson drove a stake through the mythical Rob Roy from the start, dismantling the story we all thought we knew so well, it was tough to get into. Then it became a fascinating read, not just the story of the Highland Rogue himself but his equally roguish sons, and the society they lived in.

Following the "Scottish Robert" theme my most recent read was *King and Outlaw – The Real Robert the Bruce* by Chris Brown, who has taught history at the universities of St Andrews and Edinburgh. This history of our "Hero King" is not in the same league as Professor Geoffrey Barrow's *Robert Bruce: and the Community of the Realm of Scotland*, but is an ideal starter read for someone new to the story.



PROFILE 28 SALLY BELL

Sally joined University of Glasgow Library in September 2019 as Head of Collection Development. She grew up on the east coast, and then moved a little further west to New Lanark where she lived for 11 years.

She studied History at University of Glasgow, before completing a PgDip in Information and Library Studies at University of Strathclyde.

Her first professional post was with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde as a Cataloguer and then Assistant Librarian. This kick-started a roving career through multiple library sectors.

She went on to work as a Research Librarian at The Herald and Evening

Times newspapers, a News Media Manager at BBC Scotland, and Faculty Librarian at the University of Strathclyde. Always one to do her research thoroughly, this broad experience cemented the fact that managing library collections was the part of all her jobs which gave her the most satisfaction; a convenient revelation shortly before her current post became available.

Outside work Sally is never bored. She has two cats and two snakes, collects records, occasionally DJs, goes swimming just about anywhere the water is safe and relishes the chance to take a photo cut out board portrait.

NEW PUBLICATIONS



Transforming Early English The Reinvention of Early English and Older Scots

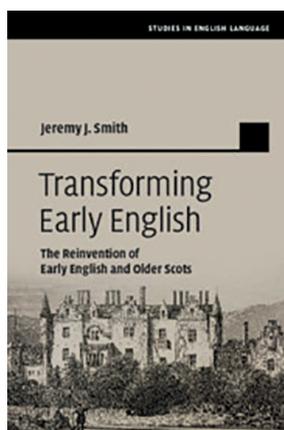
Jeremy Smith

(Includes images from Special Collections and acknowledgments of help from Julie Gardham, Bob Maclean, and Niki Russell and the team.)

Examined are: Thomas Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765): Sp Coll Bd20-h.24
G.J.Thorkelin (ed), *De Danorum Rebus Gestis* (1815) (the first edition of *Beowulf*): Sp Coll Bc30-x.16
Robert Crowley (ed), William Langland: *Piers Plowman* (1550): Sp Coll 1168 (copy owned by Robert Burton, author of *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 1621)
Thomas Ruddiman (ed), Gavin Douglas: *Virgil's Aeneis* (1710): Sp Coll Bo2-b.15

Included is discussion of Glasgow's copy of Thomas Berthelette's edition of John Gower, *Confessio Amantis* (1554): Sp Coll Bm5-f.18. The book was sold to GU in 1693 by a Captain John Anderson; an earlier owner was James Dougall, deacon of Glasgow's Incorporation of Gardeners.

Jeremy Smith is Professor of English Philology in the University of Glasgow. He is a



Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh and of the English Association, and an Honorary Fellow of the Association of Scottish Literary Studies. His research is at the interface between English historical linguistics, the history of Scots, and book history, and his recent publications include (in addition to *Transforming Early English*, 2020) corpus-informed studies of literary and religious vocabulary, and studies of the punctuation of early English and Scots texts.

DID YOU KNOW ABOUT...



The National War Museum Library

The Library is based in the National War Museum which is housed in Edinburgh Castle. Its collection of 11,000 volumes (both monographs and journals) concentrates on all aspects of Scottish military history from 1660 to the present day. Particular strengths are the collection of regimental histories and holdings of the Army Lists from the 1740s. Related subjects include medals, campaign histories, uniforms, weapons and biographies. The library holds a microfilm copy of the Duke of Cumberland's papers. The Library is open by appointment on Tuesdays 10:00 – 13:00. Workshops tracing Ancestral Military Histories are run every November.

Joyce and Louise retire

Over several years the Friends committee have had much to be grateful for in the constant cheerful help from Joyce Fyfe and Louise Johnstone. These ladies have been the practical link with the Library. From booking much sought after rooms for meetings to organizing the facilities necessary to the newsletter mailing, from turning up at a moment's notice to unlock the door when someone had forgotten to so we could have our meeting to providing answers to our queries. They have the gratitude and appreciation of us all. We offer them our heartfelt thanks and wish them a happy retirement. But there was so much more that both have contributed to the smooth running of the Library. Louise was the Business Services Manger and Joyce was Chief Administration Assistant.

THE ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS (ASC)

Conservation and Preservation Team



By **LOUISA COLES**

The team works with staff across library and archive sites to care for our collections and ensure they can be accessed safely by readers and researchers in our reading rooms, when used for teaching in seminars, and when on loan for exhibition.

We have a staff of three professionally qualified conservators: Ela Gorska-Wiklo (Preservation Manager); Keira McKee (Book Conservator) and Louisa Coles (Head of Conservation and Preservation)

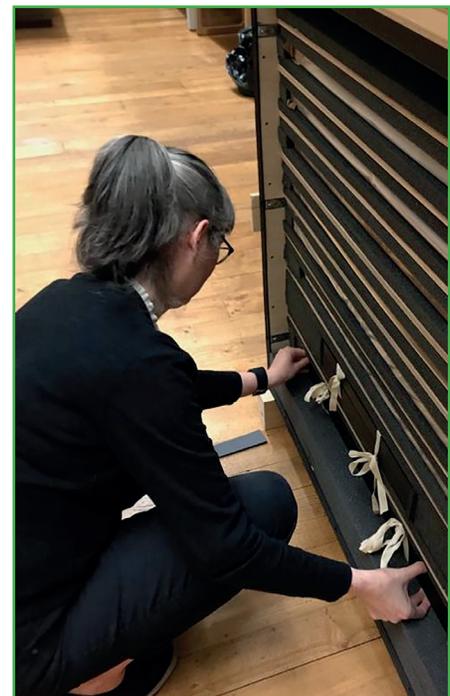
Our work is divided into two complementary strands: conservation and preservation.

Preservation can be described as those activities associated with monitoring and responding to agents that have the potential to accelerate deterioration.

Our responsibilities in this area include:

- Environmental monitoring (monitoring of temperature and humidity across stores to ensure a quick response to any anomalies)
- Handling guidance and training for staff and other users of the collections
- Integrated Pest Management (monitoring pest levels across our sites and responding if they present cause for concern)
- Identification and implementation of safer storage and display solutions
- Disaster prevention and response

Conservation involves the interventive treatment of items in order to make them stable for use. Common conservation treatments include mechanical cleaning, humidification, washing, tear repair, sewing stabilisation, and board re-attachment. This list is not exhaustive



Top left: A lending list is prepared for re-sewing; Top right: Book conservator Keira McKee gets to work on a Hunterian psalter; above left: Preservation manager Ela Gorska-Wiklo works on ship plans; Louisa Coles, head of conservation and preservation prepares a loan

though, and there are generally multiple options within each treatment type depending on the nature and condition of the object.

If an item is in very poor condition, it may demand significant levels of intervention to stabilise it for use, however we place significant value on maintaining the integrity of an object, and we are guided by a minimal intervention approach to conservation. We also believe that an evidence-based

approach is essential and work hard to keep up to date with the latest research and practice.

Our work is rewarding. It requires great manual dexterity, creativity in problem-solving, and an expertise in both science and craft. We work with some fascinating and beautiful items and have the satisfaction of enabling wider access to them, not only for current users, but for generations to come.



Dates for your diary

The Friends Committee regrets that at time of going to print they are unable to confirm any future talks, outings etc. However, there is an attractive list in planning stages. High on this list is the visit to Inveraray Castle and archive which had to be cancelled in May. When the situation is clearer we hope to have information for you which will be communicated by email or letter.

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www.gla.ac.uk/fgul
 (The website is currently under redevelopment but may be used to contact committee members.)

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