



friends

The Friends of Glasgow University Library

Newsletter

September 2012

Note from the Editor *Priscilla Barlow psbarlow@talktalk.net*

We are particularly pleased to print Professor Marshall Walker's thoughts on being Edwin Morgan's literary executor and to announce a major donation of artefacts to the Scottish Theatre Archive. Helen Durndell's annual letter to the

Friends and the abstract of the talk by Dr Richard Jones are featured. The presentation to the Library of the generous donation by Lady Joan Williams, the retirement of Miss Alva Caldwell and the outstanding visit to the Centre for Textile Conservation

are covered. An innovation is the highlighting of the work of two research students. The Friends look forward to your continuing support and hearing from you. We hope you have enjoyed a warm and happy summer.

Commemorating Sir Alwyn

A gift to the Friends by Lady Williams, (former Friends Convener) to commemorate her husband, Sir Alwyn Williams (1921-2004), was the occasion of a very pleasant event in the Principal's Lodging on 22 May 2012. Sir Alwyn, a highly respected geologist, Principal of the University and Vice Chancellor from 1976 to 1988, managed amid his University duties to continue his research interests.

Over the tea cups and glasses we were introduced to Professor Maggie Cusack of the School of Geographical and Earth Sciences by Professor Graham Caie Clerk of Senate and Vice Principal (deputising for the Principal). Professor Cusack spoke fondly of Sir Alwyn's meticulous timetabling of their work together in palaeontology. Julie Gardham, Senior Librarian, Special Collections, introduced the two volumes bought, after much consultation, with Lady Williams' generous gift.

The books will generate much interest among students of geology. Giovanni



Julie Gardham, Professor Caie, Graeme Smith, Professor Cusack

Michelotti's *Description des Fossiles des Terrains Mioscenes de l'Italie Septentrionale* published in 1847 should bring the Professor of Biomineralisation (Cusack by name) up to Level 12. *Monographies d'Echinodermes Vivans et Fossiles*, a collection dating through 1838 to 1842 by Louis Agassiz and others (with 63 plates), add significantly

to the Library's holdings of works by Agassiz and of the history of science generally. These volumes are already available to readers. Both bear a bookplate commemorating Lady Williams' gift in Sir Alwyn's memory, Graeme Smith, Chairman FGUL, thanked all those who had contributed to such a satisfactory afternoon.

R.S.

...Future Talks...Future Talks...Future Talks...Future Talks.....All Details on the Back Page...



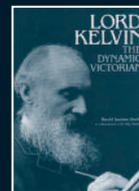
October:
Sir Alwyn Williams - Principal Investigator



November:
William Wallace - Pretender and Accidental Hero



February:
David Stow - A Sort of Amateur Teacher



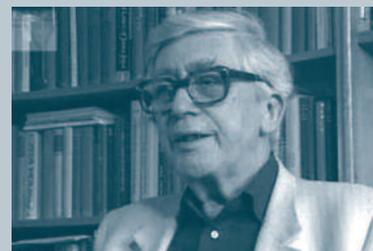
April:
Lord Kelvin's Achievements Today



Executing Edwin Morgan

Marshall Walker, Professor Emeritus, University of Waikato, New Zealand.

Prof. Walker taught in the University of Glasgow's English Department till 1983.



'I'd like you to be my literary executor', he said over a coffee in the College Club. 'But I'm going to New Zealand next year', I said, 'I'll be too far away', and this was already mid-1980. 'That doesn't matter', he said, compounding the honour, 'I'd like you to do it anyway'.

It had to be yes. I was a declared fan and had worked joyously with him on the interview originally published in *Akros* 11: 32, reprinted in Hamish Whyte's indispensable *Nothing Not Giving Messages* (1990). Finding that a working relationship in the Department of English had evolved into friendship and become the privilege of a lifetime with happy hours spent in the book-lined eyrie of his flat overlooking Great Western Road with a window ledge for a seagull, and a balcony for jumping into the sun or taking off for the moons of Jupiter or up the road to Loch Ness to hear the monster singing. Eventually, in 1992, he'd take off for my new home in New Zealand where I introduced him to a packed hall at Wellington's International Arts Festival and he

read his poems in Hamilton on receipt of an honorary doctorate from the University of Waikato. Not long after the millennium I seduced the University's Department of Theatre Studies into staging *A.D.*, his trilogy of plays on the life of Jesus. 'The First Men on Mercury' and 'Little Blue Blue' were already campus hits.

I loved the tang of sulphur in him as self-styled Demon, rattling the bars of convention and complacency. I loved his hyenas, centaurs, astronauts, Mercurians and Glaswegians, his Cinquevalli and city-boy *Cyrano*. I loved his energy, his delight in risk, the devilish optimism of his indefatigable curiosity, his peerless, nonconformist contemporaneity. I loved his internationalism and the radio-active dust of Scottishness that lies on the pulse and spring of his lines. The poet should be himself a true poem? This one was. I loved the work and the poem that was the man. Didn't everyone? Of course it had to be yes.

As literary executor, seeking to be of service, I undertook the job of doing what I could to bring work and man

together for future biographers in a time-line of his life. So we settled into a rhythm of regular meetings when I would ask questions and he would ransack memory and consult diaries, allowing ourselves a single malt only when digging was over for the day. When I left for New Zealand there was still much to discover, so whenever I returned to Scotland for research, or passed through en route for somewhere else, I stopped in Glasgow and we got back to work. Birth in Hyndland on 27 April 1920, then Pollokshields, Rutherglen, Glasgow High School, pacifism, Royal Army Medical Corps, Palestine, Glasgow University for History, Political Economy, French, English and Russian, Professor of English, innumerable readings at schools, coming out as gay when he was 70. Always writing towards Buckingham Palace for an OBE and laureateship first of Glasgow, then of Scotland. He was our first First Poet and the time-line was there for James McGonigal who begins his masterly *Beyond the Last Dragon: A Life of Edwin Morgan* (2010) with the perfect summing-up: 'Edwin Morgan is Scotland's best loved poet since Robert Burns'.

12. Lesley Richmond

Lesley, born in Edinburgh and brought up in rural Midlothian, graduated from the University of Edinburgh with honours in Scottish Historical Studies. Following a year in the University of Glasgow Archives, she worked with the Business Archives Council in London surveying records in attics and basements throughout the country. In 1987 Lesley became Deputy Archivist at University of Glasgow and in 2001, was appointed University Archivist.

Since 1987, Lesley has been an active member of the International Council on Archives, Business and Labour

Archives section, a major theme of her career being business records.

She has presented papers at conferences from Los Angeles to Beijing. Lesley teaches Archives and Records Theory to students on the University's Information Management and Preservation masters course. Currently she is one of the two Deputy Directors in GUL and has responsibility for Archives, Special Collections, the Print and Photographic Units and Information Resources Services.

Her passions are for gardening, wildlife and good detective fiction.

PROFILES





The Friends Visit the University of Glasgow Centre for Textile Conservation and Technical Art History

The Robertson Building Dumbarton Road

On 16 May, a privileged group of Friends were treated to an impressive and informative display of restoration, repair and conservation work undertaken by postgraduate students in this department. Under the expert guidance of Frances Lennard, Sarah Foskett and Karen Thompson, all highly experienced textile conservators, the Friends were shown the various types of materials e.g. wools and threads and the kinds of repairs necessary for the preservation of artefacts. It was

surprising to learn that precious items were washed often in quite a conventional way but with special detergents. We could but wonder at the patience and painstaking care required by the art of conservation so ably demonstrated. The postgraduate students, clearly proud of their skills and achievements, who had willingly stayed late for the visit, treated us to a display of fascinating items on which they are currently working. They include Lister's velvet breeches and coat Court dress; a

19thC Kilmarnock bonnet; a 19thC sampler; Chinese embroidered panels; a Maori wedding cape; a 19thC Glasgow University academic gown; a Léon Bakst costume for Diahgalev in a Ballet Russe production and a child's kilt. These items come to the centre from various sources such as the Hunterian, Glasgow Museums and Manchester Museums.

The visit was all too short!

Ololé: Breton Pride In Wartime

Lise Tannahill

Lise Tannahill is currently completing her MPhil thesis on the issues of Breton identity in French-language comics (*bandes dessinées, BD*). Her research includes *Ololé*, a Breton nationalist journal published from 1940-44. It is the first academic study of the journal,

Ololé was founded by Henri Caoussin when the Catholic *BD Coeurs Vaillants*, his previous employer, moved to Lyon. With strong Catholic underpinnings *Ololé* featured historical fiction and 'true' Breton heroes in strip form. Breton pride was clear.

Due to its remoteness in western France, Brittany was not easily influenced by Republican ideals prior to mass communication, retaining a cultural identity very

different from the Parisian, (French) standard model. Breton is mainland Europe's only Celtic language.

During German Occupation, most *BD* publications closed or moved to Lyon leaving only two - the German-backed, openly anti-Semitic *Le Téméraire*, and *Ololé*. Lack of competition and Brittany's unusual wartime status made *Ololé* unique.

At the Liberation Caoussin was arrested for collaboration, his publishing house banned. While *Ololé* featured many *BD* artists, their involvement is ignored by many official biographies. Whether this is deliberate or due to oversight is unclear, as is the scholarly neglect of



Ololé despite increased levels of research on *BD* in general. Doubtless Brittany's difficult relationship to the occupation's events have played a part.

The Chemical Analysis of Medieval Manuscripts



On 23 February, Dr Richard Jones, senior lecturer in Archaeology, gave a fascinating talk with demonstrations of the highly technical equipment used in his research.

Abstract

The art form of illuminated manuscripts is well demonstrated in the University's treasured possession of the manuscripts donated by William Hunter and in William Euing's collection of Dutch work. Much is already known about these manuscripts; religious, classical and medical treatises. While the types and styles of illustration as well as the basic techniques are well understood (Cennini's *Il Libro dell'Arte* written in 15th century Florence is an essential technical guide), less is known about the artist's materials on individual manuscripts

A grant from the Leverhulme Trust has made possible the application of two techniques of analysis that are entirely non-destructive: X-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF) determines which elements are present and their concentration, and

Fourier Transform Infra-Red spectroscopy (FTIR) can identify compounds, especially organic compounds. A pilot study of six North Italian 14th-15th century manuscripts aimed to establish the identity of the various pigments. The narrow X-ray beam was directed onto a particular coloured area and within two minutes the elemental composition was determined. Results include copper as the colorant for one of the blues (probably azurite), green and turquoise; lead for yellow and occasional red, while the more common red was vermilion. It is hoped this study will develop into a long-term technical investigation of GUL's illuminated manuscripts. Work will soon begin comparing the North Italian artists' palette with those prepared by French and Dutch artists of the 15th century and later.

Richard Jones

On 24 April Dr Hilary Macartney gave a talk *The First Photographically Illustrated Book on Art (1845)*. An abstract of this talk will be printed in the next issue.

Creating a 'Cabinet of Curiosities'

Alexandra Doak



Postgraduate Alex Doak and her display of shell books

As a History of Art postgraduate student, I was introduced to the work of Emanuel Mendes da Costa (1717-1791) during a project-based work experience placement (January-April 2012) with Special Collections. Da Costa was a prominent naturalist who traded in natural history objects such as fossils, corals and shells whose contribution to science, art and to the collecting habits of the 18th Century has gone largely unnoticed. Recent academic investigations into his correspondence shall hopefully alter this.

My brief was to research a rare copy of da Costa's *Conchology, or a Natural History of Shells* (London:

printed by T. Jones [1770-1771]), recently purchased with support from the National Fund for Acquisitions and the Friends of Glasgow University Library. My project was to create a display for this publication alongside a selected number of related items to be featured in the display cabinet in the foyer area on level 12 of the Library.

This small exhibition case is used to publicise Special Collections material and the current items now on display include da Costa's three beautifully illustrated shell publications and three of Hunter's original shells, on loan from the Hunterian Museum.



The Clerk Retires

Earlier this year our Clerk, Alva Caldwell, announced she would be relinquishing office after 15 years sterling service to the Friends. During this period Alva has taken on board cyberspace in most of its manifestations; e-mail; data bases; jpegs and so on; as far as we know she neither tweets nor blogs and she is not on facebook. Her handling of the mailing lists has been masterful and her meticulous minute-taking has kept the committee on its toes. She has

been our *poste restante*, our delivery service and tactful link with our various speakers as well as masterminding the Friends outings. Alva's initial appointment was instigated by Lady Joan Williams. At the last meeting of the season on 24 April, on behalf of the Friends, our chairman Graeme Smith presented Alva with a gift voucher - for a store of her choice - and a begonia plant. We are assured she will not be resting on her laurels but will undertake new challenges.

Good luck Alva!

Letter from Helen Durdell

University Librarian

Dear Friends,

I am writing this with a background of drilling noise and shouts from workmen clambering all over the outside of the Library - part of the recladding project.

The hoist used to attach panels for Glasgow City Planners' inspection is based on the flat roof outside my window.

Hopefully, the various shades of silver proposed for the aluminium overcladding panels will be approved. The project is progressing rapidly through the current phase of repairing the hundreds of existing

concrete panels. Looking from the outside like a giant library classification scheme, every panel has been inspected, mapped and marked.

In addition to this £4.5M project, the university has released a further £1.7M to provide c170 extra study spaces, badged for postgraduate students.

The University has also authorised a budget for a Scoping Study to determine the next steps for Library Redevelopment focussing on the entrance and Levels 1, 2 and 3. The recent Friends Reception at the Principal's Lodging was an excellent opportunity to engage senior University staff in a discussion about the FGUL Committee's wish to donate funds to facilitate a 'public engagement space' within a redeveloped foyer, to include an exhibition and meeting space. Hopefully this can be achieved within the next couple of years.

A long term Friend and current Chancellor of the University, Sir Ken Calman, recently opened 'An Fosglan' (Gaelic for entrance porch) a small display area at the entrance; a glimpse of the possibilities. The current exhibition marks World Malaria Day highlighting the University's contribution to research

work in this vital area.

David Weston retired from his role as Keeper of Special Collections

in January, after an exceptional career in the service of this library. He continues in an honorary research capacity. Under the leadership of Lesley Richmond, Deputy Director and University Archivist, Julie Gardham becomes Senior Special Collections Librarian.

A new post of Project Officer to coordinate Library/Archives support for the University's internationalisation agenda has been funded for a year from 1 August.

The library also has a team implementing software (Talis Aspire) which aims to create seamless links between academic course teams recommending information resources (book chapters etc.) to students and the delivery of those resources through Virtual Learning Environments or the library catalogue.

As ever, very happy to receive questions from Friends!



Dates for your Diary



Thursday 25 October: AGM 6.30pm
7pm: Professor Maggie Cusack Head of School
(School of Geographical and Earth Sciences)
Sir Alwyn Williams - Principal Investigator.



Thursday 22 November: 7pm
Dr John Reuben Davies
William Wallace: Pretender and Accidental Hero.

2013



Tuesday 29 February: 7pm
Dr Glenda White
David Stow - A sort of Amateur Teacher.



April: (date to be confirmed)
Dr Kenneth Skeldon
Lord Kelvin's Achievement Today.

Talks in the Library, McKenna Room, Level 7, followed by refreshments. Open to members and visitors.

The James (Jimmy) Scotland Archive Donation

The Scottish Theatre Archive has recently received the donation by Professor Alastair Scotland of the complete professional archive of his father James Scotland CBE MA LLB MEd FEIS (1917-1983).

The overwhelming majority of the archive consists of his written, directing and acting work on and for the stage (both drama and variety), radio and television over almost 50 years, and represents a massive output filling 25 packing cases. It includes original papers, photographs and audio recordings. James Scotland was a student at Glasgow University from 1934 to 1946 (including a break for war service), over which time he gained three separate first-class honours degrees (ie not a triple first).

Card Sales

Mrs Margaret Paxton, cards convenor reports that the grand total of monies received from card sales at the following venues, City Chambers, Jordanhill Parish Church, 1A The Square plus other miscellaneous sales, amounted to £401.



News Snippets

Edwin Morgan's £1000 bequest has been allocated to support the Library's cataloguing of his manuscript draft poems 1980-2003.

Mrs Freda Tuck is the new Membership Secretary of The Friends and she will now be in contact regarding subscription renewals and the welcoming of new members. She is experienced in business support and the maintenance of membership records of a number of community organisations.

Two of our members, Alison Adams and Stephen Rawles with Alison Saunders (Aberdeen University), have recently published *A Bibliography of Claude François Menestrier*. Thousands of copies in libraries between Vienna in the East and San Francisco in the West were examined.

Lesley Richmond has assumed the role of Keeper of Special Collections in addition to being the University Archivist.

FGUL bookmark is available in the Library at the desk at the entrance, Level 2, in the reading area, Level 7 and in the foyer, Level 12.

Friends of Glasgow University Library

Chairman	Graeme Smith
Hon. Secretary	Dr Peter Davies
Committee Members	Priscilla Barlow Sheila Craik Margaret Paxton Ronald Singleton Lesley Richmond (ex officio) (Library Deputy Director) Dr Helen Cargill Thompson

Accountant: Lesley Paddison
Membership Secretary: Freda Tuck

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