



AHSS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE SOCIETY OF SCOTLAND

www.ahss.org.uk

AHSS Founded in 1956 – Speaking for Scotland's Buildings | Autumn 2017 | No. 40



Diamond Jubilee
AHSS60
1956-2016



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Scotland has a rich heritage of castles, mansions and garden landscapes, ecclesiastical and industrial sites, cities, towns and villages. This wealth of buildings provides many opportunities for study, but despite being famous throughout the world, our heritage is in constant need of protection.

The Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland is committed to encouraging public understanding and appreciation of our built environment and supports the thoughtful and meaningful preservation and restoration of historic buildings.

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AHSS

Autumn 2017 | No. 40

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Glancing at this issue's main features, you wouldn't imagine there was much linking them. Glasgow's Greek-inspired architecture, Thomas Craig and his Edinburgh New Town plans, tower blocks and industrial Ironbridge seem (apart from the first two) quite disparate. Reading them more closely, however, and some common themes emerge: each were created in a time of significant cultural, social and technological change, and each were architectural expressions of great optimism and hope for the future.

Each of our authors also challenge the reader: Should we think of Alexander Thomson as 'Egyptian' as well as 'Greek'? Shouldn't Thomas Craig get more credit for shaping Enlightenment Edinburgh? Can't we find a way to accept that the heritage of tower blocks has value? And why, in a replica Victorian town, if you can buy pies from the baker and pints in the pub, can't you buy laudanum from the pharmacy? It's just not fair!

Speaking of fairness, I have to apologise to our new Chairman, Martin Robertson. The magazine has a tradition of inviting new Chairs to nominate their favourite building for our regular back page feature. This acts as a way to introduce them and their passions and I'm always fascinated by the range of choices. But what happens if you have been asked before? You have to choose your second favourite, which is exactly what Martin has gallantly done. His first choice back in 2009 was his own home – a delightful A-listed 17th century house bought from Shambellie Estate in 1977 – but his second favourite is a far more public structure and is just as fascinating.

I'm rather keen on anniversaries and so the inclusion of a piece on Thomson is to mark the 200th anniversary of his birth. Together with Scott Abercrombie of the Alexander Thomson Society, we have created a pull-out walking tour map, which I hope readers will enjoy. There are a few omissions, notably the Caledonia Road Church, but in the interests of saving space, time, and tired feet, I hope readers will forgive us!

Abigail Daly | Editor

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View from the Chair

MARTIN ROBERTSON

First, I must introduce myself as your new Chairman. I have been a member of the AHSS since I moved to Galloway in 2006. I have served as an elected council member for six years (2008-14), and was re-elected at the 2016 AGM. I shall endeavour to represent the Society and its membership properly and effectively for the next three years and aim to take the Society further along its intended path: promoting knowledge and protection of Scotland's built heritage.

I had not worked directly with Scotland's buildings before coming to live here, but I do owe my career as a government architectural historian very much to my experience of living in Edinburgh, attending the university there and exploring the buildings of Scotland in the late 1960s. My work in the selection of buildings for listing, in casework, grants and preparation of government papers concerning thousands of buildings for English Heritage, and more recently in Wales while working for Cadw, has given me a good background for understanding the significance and comparative value of Scotland's buildings.

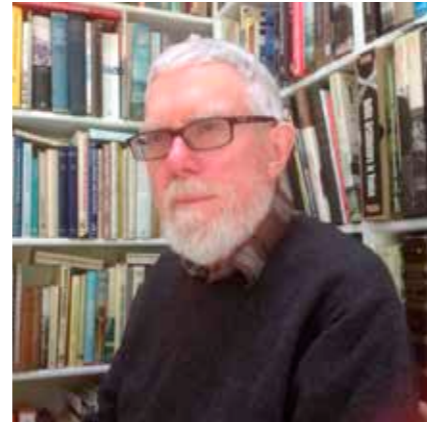
Think "Scottish architecture" and most people think "Georgian", and it was to protect this period's heritage that our Society was founded. As the years went by the Society expanded its scope in parallel with increased public interest in architecture of all functions, styles and ages. Similarly, the listing process now embraces Victorian, commercial, industrial and 20th century buildings in their turn. To understand them is to value them and that's what this Society must, and can, do. We must also remember that today's new architecture will become tomorrow's heritage and the AHSS should promote the highest standards of contemporary design and construction.

We are a society of limited means, so

we must target our resources in the most effective ways, and as a national organisation we should be seen and heard throughout the country. We should look beyond the major cities, and use our voice to argue that a building in Lerwick, in Stornoway, in Stranraer or in Peterhead is as important to the locality, and to the country, as any building in Glasgow or Edinburgh. We know that fine architecture is important (of course it is) but it is so often the humbler buildings which give the 'sense of place' and without which Scotland would be diminished.

It is vital that the Society should be even-handed and consistent in its support for the different kinds of buildings that Scotland has and in the advice we give through our panels and the central office to owners, local authorities and ultimately the Government. We must continue to protest at the loss of a building's features both listed and in Conservation Areas, at the loss of joinery and stone details, of chimneys and chimney pots, of the treatment of masonry with unsuitable mortars and renders, of the application of non-breathing surface coats.

Among the greatest threats to our historic buildings is climate change. Not only is our built heritage a victim of climate change, through issues such as increased rainfall, but most buildings actually contribute to the problem. It is estimated that around a third of carbon emissions are directly caused by heating buildings. When you consider that many older Scottish buildings are not thermally efficient, we must then begin to tackle the challenge of upgrading them in an appropriate manner that respects their character. Many of the humbler buildings which are vital to the appeal of our Conservation Areas have attractive traditional features and we have to ensure that these are not destroyed or



hidden in the name of thermal efficiency. Otherwise, it is not long before the whole of a Conservation Area is degraded. Addressing climate change is just one of our campaigning topics, along with encouraging proper building maintenance and reversing town centre decay.

I am pleased that our ongoing national campaign to save Edinburgh's former Royal High School has had a recent success, with the unanimous refusal by Councillors of the second hotel proposal put forward by Duddingston House Properties with Rosewood Hotels. As with their first hotel proposal, this application would dwarf the iconic A-listed building with large wings on both sides that would dominate the Hamilton Building. This refusal is a step in the right direction and we must await what comes next. Thank you to everyone who has supported the campaign thus far – we may well need your help again in the future.

I hope this has given you some idea of what I think is important in the Society's work and how the whole membership can help take it forward. You can all help by keeping up your membership and by encouraging others – especially your younger relatives – to join, by taking part in the events and by bringing local concerns to the attention of the Society. We can make a difference, we do make a difference, and all members help make our voice heard. ■



Royal High & Calton Hill by Tom Parnell licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

LATEST HOTEL PLANS FOR EDINBURGH'S FORMER ROYAL HIGH SCHOOL REJECTED

City of Edinburgh councillors have unanimously refused plans put forward by Duddingston House Properties (DHP) and the Urbanist Group to create a hotel on the site of Thomas Hamilton's A-listed former high school on Calton Hill.

As reported in the previous magazine, the new proposals attempted to address elements of the design that had been criticised when the developer's first planning application was (narrowly) refused in 2015. At a packed day-long public hearing on 31st August, presentations were given by a range of council officials, community representatives and conservation groups, including the AHSS, all of whom recommended rejecting the proposals.

The Chief Planning Officer Carla Parkes' report stated that the proposal was contrary to the Development Plan, Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement (HESPS), Historic Environment Scotland's 'Managing Change in the Historic Environment' guidance on demolition, extensions and setting, and the non-statutory Princes Street Block 10 Development Brief. Key arguments against the plans included that the scale, massing and proximity were inappropriate; that the ancillary wings were dominant rather than subservient to the Hamilton Building; and that the proposed demolition of the listed entrance lodge and gymnasium buildings was not justified.

Alison Johnstone MSP questioned whether the hotel would be a welcoming environment for the public to visit, as the developers have claimed, and added that her constituents were concerned by the scale and visual impact of the proposals. She also felt that the economic case hadn't been made and that tourism in the city was thriving, reminding the Councillors

that they were in a position of great responsibility as custodians of Edinburgh's future. Having explained it was the main doorstep issue during recent election campaigning, the MSP was asked if she'd received any correspondence in favour of the development – "no" was her answer.

Adam Wilkinson (Edinburgh World Heritage – EWH) spoke about the threat to Edinburgh's World Heritage Status, highlighting the examples of Liverpool and Vienna which are now on UNESCO's "in danger" list because of inappropriate redevelopments. Cliff Hague (the Cockburn Association) examined the economic case for the hotel, and argued that the risks were played down while the benefits were exaggerated. He ended with what was, perhaps, the quote of the day: "Keep Edinburgh the Athens of the North, don't make it the north of Athens!" Alistair Disley (AHSS Forth and Borders) detailed the design and conservation issues of the new plan, noting the loss of symmetry, its height and use of materials. Putting the matter in a wider context, he also urged the Councillors to consider the message that granting such a plan would send about the city's priorities.

Richard Price (New Town and Broughton Community Council Planning Convener), Carol Nimmo (Chair of the Regent, Royal, Carlton Terraces and Mews Association), and Councillor Alasdair Rankin all noted the widespread interest in and concern about the case amongst residents and the wider public.

Speaking in favour of the plans, Gordon Dewar (Edinburgh Airport) argued that there was the need for top-end, six-star hotel accommodation in Edinburgh, particularly to attract Middle Eastern visitors. Gordon Gibb, whose practice (Hoskins Architects) created the designs, sought to highlight the changes that had been made between the first and second applications, in response to the reasons for the initial plans' refusal. He questioned the contribution

that the existing ancillary buildings made to the Hamilton Building and emphasised the efforts that had been made to respect the views from and to the site. Two further speakers, consultants Andrew Wright and Gary Mapp, spoke in favour of the new plans, deeming them "careful" and the Council's reports "selective and biased".

The developer's own contribution to the meeting was left until to last and was surprisingly defensive. The Committee's Convener, Councillor Lewis Ritchie, pointed this out to David Orr (Chairman of the Urbanist Group) and invited him to end on a more positive note. Summing up at the end, Councillor Ritchie stated plainly that: "the hotel design is one of the most abhorrent and ugly I've ever seen... Edinburgh would not forgive us for giving consent." Other councillors expressed similar concerns, and the two planning applications were refused.

Following a competition, in early 2010 DHP was named as the "preferred partner", and the hope was that the site would receive much-needed conservation and a sensitive conversion. However, it would seem that the developers chose to ignore the Council's planning policies, guidelines and advice. Early in the process, meetings were held between the developers and conservation groups such as Edinburgh World Heritage in the hope that their collective expertise and insights would lead to an appropriate, world-class plan. EWH eventually ended discussions, explaining recently that: "only when it became apparent that our advice was being ignored did we withdraw".

After the public hearing, David Orr commented, "It is especially disappointing and worrying that this decision was made amidst a backdrop of wilful misrepresentation and misleading campaigning by Edinburgh World Heritage and the Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland." The accusations are contested

Membership benefits: Get your digital copy of the Journal

Members can access the AHSS's Journal, *Architectural Heritage*, digitally and search through all previous issues. The code or 'Access Token' remains **AHSSMEMBER2016**, which members should use to access the Journal, after registration. This code is valid until 28 February 2018. If you have already registered with the Edinburgh University Press website, please start at step 4.

1. Go to www.eupublishing.com/journals and register as a new user by clicking on the 'Register link' in the top right corner.
2. Submit your details and an activation email will be automatically sent to your email address.
3. Click on the link within the email to confirm your registration.
4. Log in to www.eupublishing.com/journals by clicking on 'Log In' in the top right corner.
5. Once logged in, click on the 'My Account' link and then the 'Access Tokens' tab, type in "AHSSMEMBER2016" and click 'Submit'.
6. Click the 'Browse' tab to view the list of EUP journals. You can also sign up for Table of Contents alerts via My Account or track citations to your article via the article abstract page.

by both organisations. It is notable that the developer's team had little to say on the quality and appropriateness of the DHP designs, instead focussing on the benefits to tourism and on making disparaging remarks about other parties participating in the hearing.

What will happen next is unclear. An appeal has already been lodged with Scottish Ministers against the decision to refuse the 2015 planning application and, at the time of writing, DHP have just announced that they will also appeal the latest planning decision. Keep up-to-date with the latest campaign news at: www.ahss.org.uk/saverhs

This item was prepared using official records of the meeting, notes taken during the live streaming of the hearing, and from news sources available online. At the time of publication, the official transcript and minutes from the hearing were not available.

FIFTH OF SCOTLAND'S COASTLINE AT RISK OF EROSION

A new tool, 'Dynamic Coast: Scotland's National Coastal Change Assessment' (NCCA), developed by the Scottish Government, Scottish Natural Heritage and the University of Glasgow, has identified that 19% of Scotland's coastal areas are threatened by erosion over the next 30 years. Using maps created since the 1890s, the NCCA aims to predict the extent of likely coastal change in order to inform better planning and appropriate development in at risk areas. Researchers have concluded that since the 1970s, the proportion of retreating coast has increased by 39% compared with 1890s–1970s,



An archaeological site on Easting Beach, Unst in Shetland, showing extensive erosion. "The Easting" by nz_willowherb is licensed under CC by NC2.0

and average erosion rates have doubled. They predict that if current erosion rates continue, by 2050 at least 50 buildings, 1.6km of railway, 5.2km of road as well as many cultural and natural heritage sites are likely to be affected. For more information, visit: www.dynamiccoast.com

WINDFARM GENERATES NEW INVESTMENT IN HISTORIC WICK HARBOUR

Earlier this year Highland Council granted planning permission for the conservation and redevelopment of two Thomas Telford-designed harbour buildings in Wick. They will form part of the new operations and maintenance hub for the massive Beatrice Offshore Wind Farm, located eight miles from the Caithness coastline in the Outer

Moray Firth. Work is now underway and SSE, who are project managing the windfarm, say the work should be completed next year. The Harbour Quay buildings form part of a group relating to the 1809 new town plan by Telford comprising warehouses, fish market, yards and a curing house, now the category A-listed Wick Heritage Centre.

NEW ROW OVER PERTH CITY HALL

A design competition aimed at identifying the preferred bidder from five short-listed ideas has seen Dutch firm Mecanoo recommended by Perth and Kinross Council, despite it being ranked third according to the agreed scoring system. Mecanoo's designs were apparently favoured by Historic Environment Scotland as they involved the least disturbance to the external appearance of the site, and the firm's plans also received the greatest number of positive comments from local residents and businesses. However, the RIAS (who established the scoring system used by the council) and the firm who ranked highest, LDN Architects, have expressed concern that the proper tendering processes has not been followed.

EMPTY HOMES DEVELOPMENT OFFICER APPOINTED BY ORKNEY ISLANDS COUNCIL

Orkney has one of the highest rates of empty homes per capita in Scotland, with 6.9% of housing stock empty, according to the council. Working with North Ronaldsay Trust, the officer will work to bring empty homes back into use by providing advice and information to owners. The Trust plans



Lerwick Town Hall (above) and stained glass detail (right) Both images by "erin is licensed under CC by NC2.0

to renovate 30 buildings it has identified as suitable for reuse, and work through the list at a rate of one per year. The new officer will become part of the Empty Homes Partnership, funded by the Scottish Government and led by Shelter Scotland, who see the 34,000 homes currently deemed 'long term empty' as an opportunity to tackle homelessness by bringing them back into use.

LERWICK TOWN HALL CONSERVATION WORK NEARS COMPLETION

The A-listed building, opened in 1883 and designed by Alexander Ross with alterations by John M. Aitken, has undergone extensive restoration focussing on its stained-glass windows and stonework. The project, which was overseen by Shetland Amenity Trust and supported by lead consultants Groves-Rains Architects, began in 2016 and involved removing all the glass panels. Some are by James Ballantine & Son, dating to 1883 and Cox and Sons/Buckley & Co. of London, dating to 1882, and relate to historical figures significant in Shetland's history such as Olaf Trygvasson, King of Norway, who brought Christianity to the area in the 10th century. A slight delay in work resulted from the need to open new areas within the local quarry in order to source better quality replacement stone, but it is anticipated that the work will have been completed by the end of September.

INVESTIGATION LAUNCHED FOLLOWING FIRE AT LOCHEE OLD PARISH CHURCH, DUNDEE

The B-listed church, designed by David Neave around 1830, was gutted by fire on 4th September. It had been on the At Risk Register, and was deemed at 'low' risk and in 'fair' condition according to a 2016 site visit. Planning permission had been granted in 2015 to convert the church to flats and, according to an interview with the developer, Edinburgh MI, in the Courier newspaper, construction work was about to start. Dundee Historic Environment Trust has given the developer a grant and they had secured further funding from the Bank of Scotland. No injuries or loss of life were reported; however, police are investigating whether the fire was started deliberately.

MACKINTOSH'S WILLOW TEA ROOMS IN GLASGOW RECEIVE HLF BOOST

A £3.6m grant has been awarded to The Willow Tea Rooms Trust to enable the completion of extensive conservation and redevelopment work. As well as restoring the tea rooms and Salon de Luxe, the Trust will create a new visitor centre, education and learning suite, conference facilities and shop. The grant was announced in August and the aim is to re-open the building in time for the 150th anniversary of Charles Rennie Mackintosh's birth on 7th June 2018. The A-listed building was bought by the Trust in 2015 with support from Social Investment Scotland, and a key aspect of the project is to ensure the building's long term financial sustainability.



DUNFERMLINE CARNEGIE LIBRARY AND GALLERIES OFFICIALLY OPENED

The new cultural hub integrates the original, and world's first, Carnegie Library (1883) with buildings designed by Richard Murphy, and includes a museum, art gallery, café, library, study, and archive facilities. The architects were appointed in 2007 and construction work began in 2014, with doors opening in May of this year. Five Cultural Trust, who manage the building, say they are receiving over 5,000 visitors each week.

DO YOU HAVE A NEWS STORY?

If you have an idea for an event, news item or feature, get in touch with the Editor: abigail@ruskinlane.co.uk
All suggestions welcome!



Artist's impression of Wick harbour © Angus Mackay



'Willow Tea Room' by Teri is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

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OCT

61st Annual General Meeting

The Engine Shed, Stirling
11am, Saturday 28th October 2017 | Free (lunch £12)



© Historic Environment Scotland

The AHSS is delighted to announce that our next AGM will be held at the first dedicated centre for building conservation in Scotland, The Engine Shed, Stirling. Kindly hosted by Historic Environment Scotland, we shall have a fascinating day exploring the new centre to find out how the building will operate as the hub of conservation, and hear from the expert team at HES about their own renovation and extension project.

A historic and characterful building within the city's industrial landscape, The Engine Shed building, used as a goods transfer shed, was built sometime between 1896 and 1913. The exact details of its construction were subject to an information blackout, and are still unknown, as it was part of an important military complex. This will

be a great opportunity for AHSS members to chat and mingle whilst exploring a landmark restoration project.

Our AGM will take place before lunch and will offer an opportunity for members to ask questions of the Council and review the annual accounts. We shall welcome our new Chair, Martin Robertson, and consider nominations for Trustees. If you are interested in joining the AHSS Council and shaping our Society, we would be delighted to hear from you, to discuss the role further. Please contact Sarah in the National Office, nationaloffice@ahss.org.uk

Attendance at the AGM is free and open to all. Please use the enclosed form to book your place for lunch (£12) or visit www.ahss.org.uk/events/AGM2017

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Study Tour 2018

Galloway and Kirkcudbright
Friday 4th – Monday 7th May



Our National Study Tour shall continue its survey of Scotland's architectural delights with a 2018 trip to Galloway and Kirkcudbright. Organised by our President, Simon Green, Tayside and East Fife Chair, Adam Swan, and Vice Chair, Caroline McFarlane, this trip is guaranteed to leave you dazzled by the architectural gems on offer in the southwest of the country.

Attendees will need to have a good level of physical fitness in order to enjoy hopping on and off the coach multiple times each day, exploring old properties – including turnpike stairs – and to make the most of a full-on weekend schedule.

As with previous years, the destinations and exact itinerary will be revealed on the coach on the first morning of the trip. Not only does

this raise an element of intrigue but it also allows us to visit exclusive properties not otherwise known to the regular tourist!

The cost of the tour is £510 per person, based on two people sharing a room and will include visits, accommodation, transportation, meals and refreshments as provided. A limited number of single occupancy rooms will be available, subject to a supplement of £90.

Please find enclosed our booking form with further details on the architectural interest of the area and hotel particulars. The tour is often oversubscribed, so please return your booking form in good time to note your interest, we shall then confirm your place in due course and issue the cancellation policy.

www.ahss.org.uk/news/StudyTour2018

2017

Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology

A year of events and activities promoting Scotland and supporting tourism
Throughout Scotland



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The year-long themed programme continues with plenty of entertaining and educational events still to enjoy. The full calendar can be seen at www.visitscotland.com/about/themed-years/history-heritage-archaeology. Highlights include:

Flights into Scotland's Past: Stirling Castle - ends 31st October

Exhibition entry is included with Stirling Castle admission price

An exhibition of Kieran Baxter's aerial photographs and visualisations of Scottish historic monuments and landscapes, from Shetland to Galloway. The exhibition is based on the photographer's PhD project, (www.topofly.com) which aims to better understand how an emerging array of aerial platforms and digital image processing techniques can be used to enhance public engagement with built heritage and archaeology.

Shining Lives: New Lanark World Heritage Site

6.30pm, 21st–22nd October (please note revised dates)

Free but tickets should be purchased in advance

A light and sound projection on the World Heritage Site buildings that uses historic images and video footage from New Lanark and the surrounding area together with music, lighting and living history. www.newlanark.org/visitorcentre/shining-lives.shtml

The next in VisitScotland's themed 'Years of...' will be the 'Year of Young People 2018'. To get involved visit yoyp2018.scot/get-involved

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Fifty Years of Conservation Areas

Trades Hall, Glasgow



'Crail' by vlasta2 licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

As part of the Scottish Civic Trust's 50th anniversary celebrations, and to mark the Civic Amenities Act of 1967, the Trust's next annual conference will tackle the theme of "Fifty years of conservation areas" - what has been learned, what has been lost, and what are the threats and opportunities in the future. There are over 660 conservation areas in Scotland covering a wide variety of buildings, civic spaces and landscapes. The conference is organised in partnership with Historic Environment Scotland and The Institute of Historic Building Conservation.

For more information visit www.scottishcivictrust.org.uk

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Great Greek Glasgow

This year marks the 200th anniversary of the birth of Alexander 'Greek' Thomson and in this article SCOTT ABERCROMBIE examines the Greek Revival in Glasgow and Thomson's contribution to the movement. Scott Abercrombie is an architect based in Glasgow, the Director of The Alexander Thomson Society, and runs www.GreatGlasgowArchitecture.com

Right: Portrait of Alexander Thomson
© Courtesy of Historic Environment Scotland

Below: Plates from Stuart and Revett's 'Antiquities of Athens' (1762) - The Parthenon and the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates
Contributed by Smithsonian Libraries to archive.org



When one thinks about the legacy of the Greek Revival in Scotland, it is hard not to focus on Edinburgh, the birthplace of the Scottish Enlightenment and the city which would gain the epithet 'The Athens of the North.' It was home to two of the key architects of the movement – William Playfair and Thomas Hamilton – as well as some of the most important buildings of the Revival constructed in Britain: Hamilton's Royal High School, Playfair's work at the Scottish National Gallery, the Royal Academy of Scotland and, most notably, the latter's collaboration with Charles Robert Cockerell at the National Monument. Yet whilst the movement is often considered to have reached its pinnacle in Edinburgh – where the coalescent factors of architectural talent, a picturesque landscape and the availability for major public commissions allowed a legacy of great works to be quickly established – it was in Glasgow that it began, where it endured longest, and from which its most unique manifestations emerged.

The Greek Revival was an architectural sub-movement of Neoclassicism that emerged in the late 18th century, and reached its zenith in the first half of the 19th century. Following on from the Palladianism and subsequent neo-Palladianism exemplified in the work of Robert Adam, the Greek Revival in architecture developed from a widening study of the physical relics of the Ancient Greek civilisation combined with the general opinion that Grecian art and architecture was purer and more accomplished than the Roman precedents of the Revival's aforementioned predecessors. Respect for the intellectual and creative achievements of the Greeks was already rife in Britain and had been for centuries, but until the early 18th century, those who desired to travel in Greece as part of the Grand Tour were faced with instability in the region and so the focus remained on France and Italy. It was with the period of relative calm between the Great Turkish War (1683–1699) and the Greek War of Independence (1821–1832) that access to Ottoman Greece opened up, and provided the opportunity for the monuments of Athens to be accurately



recorded and disseminated for the first time.

Architecturally, the most influential output of this time was the publication of James 'Athenian' Stuart and Nicholas Revett's four-volume, *Antiquities of Athens*, funded by the Society of Dilettanti in Rome. With Revett making the measurements and Stuart preparing the drawings, the pair travelled through Athens, Attica, Corinth, Thessalonica and Delphi, producing over 300 drawings and recording key buildings, monuments, and their associated details and sculpture. The first volume was published in 1762 and in the introduction Stuart emphasised that Vitruvius – and thus subsequently Palladio – drew his primary influence from Greek sources and not Roman. Whilst this brought notable criticism from Stuart's competitors, such as Robert Adam (charmingly nicknamed at the time 'Bob the Roman'), the revival of the Greek style was coming into fashion across the arts as part of the wider Romantic movement and there was little that could be done to stem the tide.

"Never at any other period has so much energy, beauty, and virtue been developed; never was blind strength and stubborn form so disciplined and rendered subject to the will of man, or that will less repugnant to the dictates of the beautiful and the true, as during the century which preceded the death of Socrates. Of no other epoch in the history of our species have we records and fragments stamped so visibly with the image of the divinity in man."

Percy Bysshe Shelley on Athenian culture in the 5th century BC, from 'A Defence of Poetry' (1821). In poetry and literature the cultural titans of the Romantic movement, such as Keats, Byron, Shelley, and Sir Walter Scott, all outwardly admired Greek culture, producing translations of classical Greek texts, championing the Greek Revival in the arts, and going so far as to die in the Greek War of Independence in the case of Keats. Architecturally, the style allowed for the confluence of Classicism and Romanticism, the combination of 'Sublime' and 'Beautiful' architecture established within a Picturesque composition, terms defined by Edmund Burke in one of the key texts that preceded the Romantic movement: his



Justiciary Courts, Glasgow, completed 1811 (William Stark).
© Crown Copyright: Historic Environment Scotland



The Royal Exchange, Glasgow, completed 1827 (David Hamilton) -
photographed c.1875 © Courtesy of Historic Environment Scotland

1757 treatise, 'A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful'. The essence of which is that 'the Beautiful' is found in that which harmonious and aesthetically pleasing, and that which relaxes or inspires love; whilst 'the Sublime' is exemplified in things which inspire awe or fear through characteristics of vastness, the infinite or magnificence.

And nowhere was this more cohesively achieved than in Edinburgh where, between 1820 and 1840, a collection of great minds took to the Calton Hill with the vision of creating a Caledonian Acropolis, suitable for the 'Modern Athens'. With Hamilton's Royal High School below Playfair and Cockerell's ultimately failed reconstruction of the Parthenon at the National Monument representing the Sublime, and the monuments to Dugald Stewart and Robert Burns capturing the Beautiful, the Greek Revival in Edinburgh was at its height. But the city was struggling financially and, by 1829, the National Monument's nickname was already transitioning from 'Scotland's Valhalla' to 'Scotland's Disgrace' and by the mid-1830s the city was bankrupt, thus halting the development of the New Town. By the time the city recovered in 1850, architectural fashions had changed and the popularity of Neo-Gothic and the tartan pageantry of Scots Baronial had risen out of a desire for a more 'authentic' national style. By 1846 Sir Walter Scott who, despite once being the most prominent backer of the National Monument project, was being commemorated with a Neo-Gothic memorial, whilst Playfair was adopting the same style for his New College project for the Free Church of Scotland.

The shift away from the Greek style was echoed across Britain, everywhere except Glasgow, where in 1840 the greatest exponent in Glasgow was still nearly a

decade away from setting up his practice. J. Mordaunt Crook, author of the seminal book, *The Greek Revival: Neoclassical Attitudes in British Architecture, 1760–1870*, describes the movement as spanning "from 'Athenian' Stuart to 'Greek' Thomson", and whilst this discounts the disciples of Thomson who carried the torch after his passing, it delineates the key span of the movement from its unassuming inception in 1750 through to its supernova, that last great burst of energy which was the emergence of Alexander 'Greek' Thomson, and the work he produced up until his death in 1875.

The Greek Revival in Glasgow began in earnest with William Stark's Justiciary Courts, completed in 1811, and home to the first Greek Doric portico in Scotland. Andor Gomme and David Walker record in their book, *Architecture of Glasgow*, that Stark (1770–1814) was perhaps, "the originator of neo-Greek in Scotland", and as much as this was for his own designs, it was also in his legacy as an influencer of taste amongst the aristocracy, and in his role as master to a young William Playfair. Upon his death Sir Walter Scott remarked, "more genius has died than is left behind among the collected universality of Scottish architects".

Despite Scott's claim, of the same generation as Stark was the man considered to be the 'Father of the Profession' in Glasgow: David Hamilton (1768–1843). Hamilton showed himself capable of adapting to a variety of styles across his career; but it was his middle period – where he appropriated the lessons of the Greek Revival – that his work was considered to be at its most successful. He was set apart for his eclectic neo-classicism, and in that regard, can be seen as a forerunner of Alexander 'Greek' Thomson in his ability to skillfully curate architectural elements gathered both from scholarly study and

those of his own invention. Hamilton's most prominent building in Glasgow is the Royal Exchange (1827), now the Gallery of Modern Art, and whilst not in itself neo-Greek, it is encircled by perhaps the most successful example of unified urbanism in Glasgow: Royal Exchange Square. The plan was executed by Hamilton, but developed by Archibald Elliot who was responsible for the full recreation of the Erechtheon's Ionic portico for the Royal Bank of Scotland which sits in the middle of the two arms that extend around Hamilton's exchange.

Between 1800 and 1830 Glasgow's population trebled, and this expansion in population necessitated an equivalent urban expansion which resulted in the Blytheswood New Town. A gridded sprawl that marches westwards unhindered by matters such as topography, the New Town is populated by two and three storey Georgian townhouses defined by a simplified classicism, the adornments of many of these are derived from the Greek. Porches were taken from the 'Doric Portico at Athens', the 'Ionic Temple on the Ilissus', and, most commonly, the square anta columns of the 'Choragic Monument of Thrasylus', whilst the window surrounds were extracted from the Erechtheum. This was emphasised by Alexander Thomson who, whilst lecturing on the Greek, noted that the Erechtheum's windows provided the template for "nearly every street house that has been built in Glasgow in the last sixty or seventy years."

Glasgow's population continued to grow and by 1840 another 200,000 had made their way to the city, and as residential development continued westwards there was a growing necessity for new municipal buildings in the city centre. Highlights include the Custom House on Clyde Street (1840) by John Taylor which utilises the Choragic



Interior of St Vincent Street Church (Alexander Thomson).
© Philip William Sayer

Monument of Thrasylus and the Athenian Agora as its precedents, and Clarke and Bell's Grecian amalgamation for the City and County Building (1844) in the Merchant City.

The use of Greek precedent for public buildings was an established norm due to their association with the Athenian idyll, but in Glasgow in particular the style also found particular favour in the design of Presbyterian churches. As Miles Glendinning notes in *Scottish Architecture*, when discussing Glasgow in the 19th century, "the most popular pattern for churches was a Greek temple." The reasoning behind this being that the architecture was believed to represent a purity of thought and rationalism that was in opposition to the more decorative and elaborate styles which had been commonly associated with Catholicism.

One of the most successful early forays was John Baird's, now sadly demolished, Wellington Street Church (1827–1909) for the United Presbyterians with its Ionic Temple on the Ilissus, one in a series of neoclassical churches he completed in the first half of his career. It was this church that was highlighted as one of the key examples of the Greek Revival in Glasgow by Baird's former assistant, and the man who would go on to become the movement's Glaswegian figurehead: Alexander Thomson (1817–1875).

Thomson worked across the spectrum of architectural commissions in Glasgow at the time, applying his singular vision to houses and tenements, offices, warehouses, and his churches that would go on to be considered by American historian Henry Russell Hitchcock as "three of the finest romantic classical churches in the world". His ideas reinvigorated the Greek Revival in Glasgow and he was so inextricably linked to it that he obtained the sobriquet 'Greek' Thomson; yet of all the architects mentioned, his work is perhaps the least obviously Greek.

Thomson's palette of details was drawn from across civilisations – reaching as far back as ancient Egypt and as far forward as Schinkel and Soane – whilst his overall compositions were rarely comparable with any precedent. Where Thomson did utilise Grecian elements, they were complemented by objects of such individuality that the original source of the part is obscured by the unique whole, for example at St Vincent Street Church where Thomson's Erechtheum Temple front is placed upon an Egyptianised podium and alongside an exotic and incomparable tower.

But Thomson was 'Greek' Thomson as much in his attitude towards architecture, as he was in his designs, and was as convinced in his belief that the achievements of the Greek's surmounted all others, as he was in his desire to forge a new style of architecture. It was this freeing of the style from the bounds of historicism that brought about a Greek resurgence in Glasgow and which allowed Thomson's disciples to carry it forward into the next generation.

"In Glasgow, the main legacy of Thomson's work, after his death in 1875, was to legitimise Greek Classicism as the continuing mainstream of the city's architecture."
Glendinning, 1996

Thomson was followed by a generation of architects who would continue to happily utilise this free, Greek style across Glasgow including Hugh and David Barclay, Alexander Skirving and James Sellars. The latter's St Andrews Halls (now the rear entrance to the Mitchell Library) being a standout example of the Greek revival at its late-Glaswegian finest, showcasing a sublime massiveness adorned with a fantastic sculptural scheme provided by the ever-present Mossman's – Glasgow's premier family of architectural sculptors – delivered in the Greek idiom yet as a wholly original composition.

Background image, 'Mandala', created by 'Zoë Herbert (The Alexander Thomson Society) for the 'Takes on Thomson' project.

Although architects like James Miller still made use of some Greek elements in the early 20th century, these were often heavily stylised and much more recognisable as being of the American school of neo-classicism than of Greek derivation. Therefore, the post-Thomson generation were the last of the truly neo-Greek architects and with the close of the century the Revival in Glasgow faded away, decades after it had perished elsewhere.

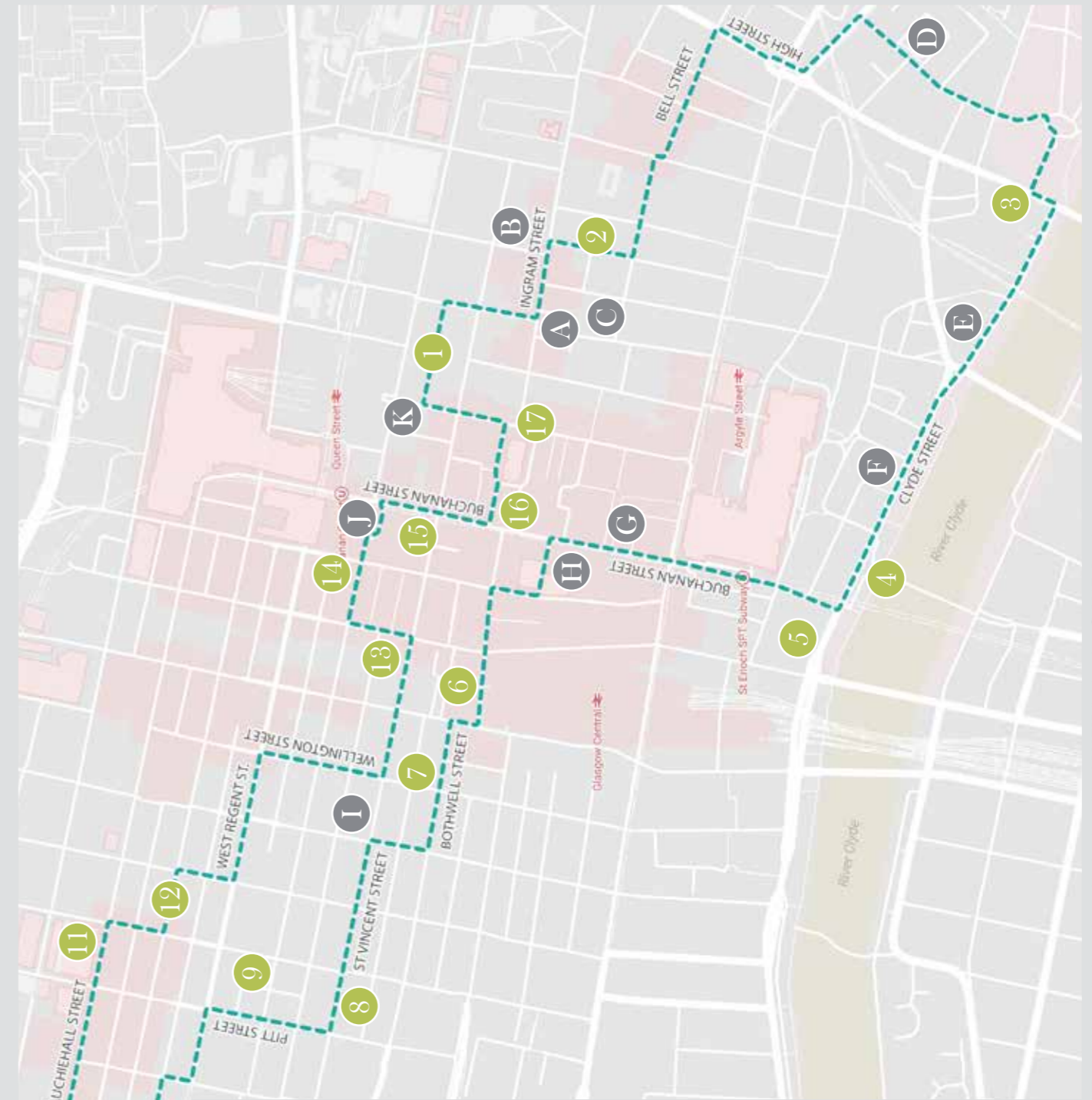
The Greek Revival coincided with the golden century of Scottish architecture, wherein the scientific knowledge and philosophical ideas developed during the Enlightenment were applied across the built environment and at a time when the availability of source books facilitated an unprecedented expansion in the ability to apply historic styles of architecture to new constructions. Thomson noted this in 1859 when he stated, "If an architect wants an idea, he does not require to fly away into the region of the imagination to fetch it – it is ready to hand on the adjoining shelf and needs only to be fetched down."

The unique characteristic of the Greek Revival in Glasgow though, was the ability to move beyond the production of pure facsimile. The style in Glasgow took apart the elements of these precedents and re-assembled them so that they might fulfil the needs of a developing Victorian city and be successfully applied to building types for which there was no Greek equivalent. Whilst some criticised the style for its inflexibility, the architects of Glasgow proved this to be a failure in others to see beyond the historical precedent to the laws and ideas which gave rise to the original works of the Greeks. Whilst Glasgow will never compete for the title of the Athens of the North (how different this might have been if Thomson had been permitted to establish a Weegie Acropolis in the West End for Glasgow University's new campus), it can be satisfied in the knowledge that architecturally it pushed the boundaries of the style further than any other. ■

Scott Abercrombie leads guided walking tours of Glasgow's Greek Revival buildings, for more information visit:
www.alexanderthomsonsonociety.org.uk

Further events: www.Thomson2017.org.uk

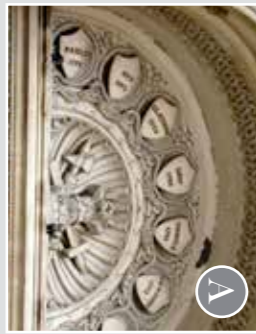
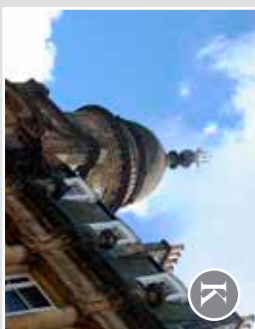
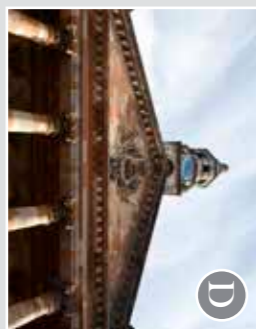
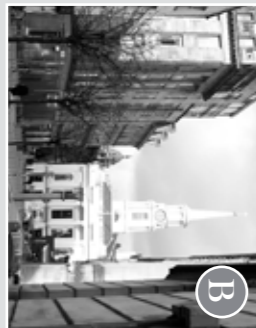
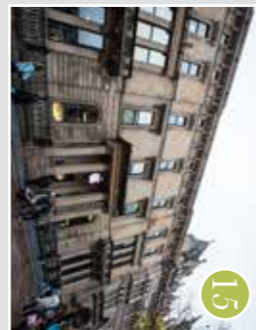
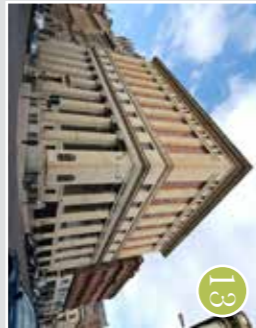
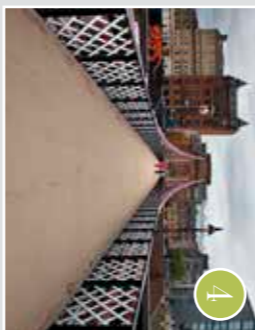
GREEK GLASGOW WALKING TOUR



1. Sir Walter Scott Memorial (1837), A. Handside Ritchie
 2. City and County Buildings (1844), Clarke and Bell
 3. High Court of the Justiciary (1814), William Stark
 4. Portland St Bridge (1853), Alexander Kirkland
 5. Custom House (1840), John Taylor
 6. Grosvenor Building (1864), Alexander Thomson
 7. Bavarian Brauhaus – Former Bank (1934), James Miller
 8. St Vincent St Church (1859), Alexander Thomson
 9. Malmaison (1839), John Stephen
 10. 520 Sauchiehall Street (1895), David Paton Low
 11. Centre for Contemporary Art (1865), Alexander Thomson
 12. Blytheswood New Town, Various
 13. Bank of Scotland (1927), James Miller
 14. Shilling Brewing Co. – former bank (1930), James Miller
 15. Apple Store – former Western Club (1840), David Hamilton
 16. Former Royal Bank of Scotland (1827), Archibald Elliot
 17. GOMA and Royal Exchange Square (1830), David Hamilton
-
- A. Corinthian Club (1841), David Hamilton and John Burnet
 - B. Hutcheson's Hospital (1805), David Hamilton
 - C. Trades House (1799), Robert Adam
 - D. St Andrews in the Square (1756), Alan Dreghorn
 - E. The Briggait (1873), Clarke and Bell
 - F. St Andrew's Cathedral (1817), J Gillespie Graham
 - G. Argyll Arcade (1827), John Baird
 - H. The Lighthouse (1895), Honeyman and Keppie
 - I. 200 St Vincent Street (1929), Sir John James Burnet
 - J. St George's Tron Church (1807), William Stark
 - K. Merchants' House (1878), John Burnet & Son

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“ In commercial Glasgow - as a modern Athens - Grecian architecture has been showing new forms in the old spirit, putting, as it were, new wine into old bottles; and I need scarcely say now, in even a London publication, that the author of this peculiar modification is Alexander Thomson. Building News, 1868

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The Drawing Room, Weston Park. Paintings shown, Sir Peter Lely. 1.3m(h) x 1m(w)

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WESTON PARK

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Tower Block UK

Documenting and redefining the story of high rise social housing in the UK

HANNAH GARROW is the Research and Community Engagement Assistant for the project, *Tower Block UK*. She has a background in urban planning and architectural history with over a decade's experience in the heritage sector and public policymaking. She is currently completing a PhD at Newcastle University looking at place narratives, identity and belonging.

In 1994, Miles Glendinning and Stefan Muthesius published their book *Tower Block* which, based on survey work and interviews carried out between 1987 and 1990, provided a comprehensive history of multi-storey mass housing in the UK. Move forward 20 years to January 2015 and the Heritage Lottery Fund awarded the University of Edinburgh a grant for 'Tower Block UK', a project which combines digital archiving with public engagement to create an openly-licensed database containing information about every high rise (defined as six storeys or more) social housing block in the country.

The project began with the digitisation of over 4,000 images taken in the late 1980s as part of Glendinning's survey work (he is also the Project's Co-ordinator). For some, tower blocks, particularly those that were demolished only a few years after the photographs were taken and on sites that are now dramatically altered, these might be the only public images available to document the existence of the buildings and to remember the communities that lived in them. The images, which are contained on Kodachrome slides, have been catalogued and uploaded onto our searchable, openly-accessible database. Alongside the photographs are links to journal articles, references, videos and other relevant information relating to the commissioning

and design of the towers. In total, the database contains 2,930 individual building projects, some comprising only a single block, others several identical blocks, and in total covering near to 7,000 towers.

Although the site has been live since June 2016 and is usable as a research resource, there are still a number of refinements that we would like to make before our project comes to an end next year, to ensure the data we have curated is comprehensive and useful. For example, we are currently geo-locating the blocks to produce maps and visualisations showing their spread across the country and to give an indication as to the extent of demolitions. There is also a section on each page where members of the public, particularly residents and former-residents, but also housing managers, construction professionals and anyone else with an interest in, and experience of, the blocks, can add their own comments, memories, information and photographs. This is part of our commitment to co-create the archive with the public in recognition of the fact that much of the relevant data and knowledge about high rises is held by the communities who lived in and around them.

Social media has also proved to be an important resource in this regard and we have established a presence for the project on both Facebook and Twitter. Our Facebook page, which we set up in April this



Above (both images) Calder Park, Sighthill in Edinburgh (photographs taken 1982)
Lower image © Crown Copyright: Historic Environment Scotland

year, sits alongside the database by providing an open forum for the sharing of images, experiences and memories of tower blocks in the UK. The comments we have received through the database and Facebook site provide interesting and important insights into the architectural and social history of the buildings and add a qualitative richness to the written histories of tower blocks in the UK. What is clear is that there are many different experiences and opinions, some positive, some negative. However, everyone who contributed showed an appreciation for the resources created by the project and a desire, for whatever reason, to document and keep their memories alive.

One of the aims of the Tower Block UK project is to emphasise the social and architectural importance of multi-storey mass housing in the UK, particularly as tower blocks and social housing are increasingly vanishing from our landscapes, irrevocably altering the social and physical fabric of our urban environments. Once the most prominent and dramatic legacy of the post-1945 reconstruction drive, many of the blocks which defined the skylines in places like Glasgow and Birmingham have now been demolished, their communities dispersed and their land redeveloped. Many more, across the country, are currently facing the uncertainty of demolition. There has been much written about the

effects of lack of maintenance, poor quality construction or design on the physical fabric of the buildings and for many the stories of anti-social behaviour, damp and mould, which tend to dominate the tower block related media, provide a further rationale for the wholesale demolition of tower blocks (though notably often only those erected as social housing) to be replaced with supposedly more 'humane' low-rise architecture.

This stigmatisation of tower blocks has been brought into sharp focus recently following the tragic fire in Grenfell Tower in June this year. The investigation is ongoing, but initial evidence suggests a catalogue of errors on behalf of those responsible for managing the tower and points to the significance of recent refurbishment works, particularly the addition of external cladding, as having altered the integrity of the original design. Nonetheless the disaster will likely further undermine public opinion of tower blocks and has already been seen by some as an excuse to accelerate their eradication from our cities. Yet, as our database – and the voices of residents and ex-residents who have been motivated to speak up in response to criticisms – demonstrates, for many, tower blocks are important reminders of their own histories, or remain places of belonging, memory and meaning.

Tower Block UK thus hopes to form



“

Thank you for this. We moved there in 1970 when I was five years old and much of the estate was still a building site, with huge piles of earth and parts of old runways were still visible, we used to dodge the dumper trucks and explore the air raid shelters. We lived on Instone Close for about 10 years or so then moved to Helena Close until I was about 18 years old. Lots of memories... good and bad. My whole youth was in that concrete.

Ken commenting on the Roundshaw Estate in Sutton, demolished 2012.

The best years of my life were living on Darnhill when these high rises were up, and the worst day ever was watching them be demolished. The flats themselves were spacious and comfortable and the views depending on which floor you lived on were fantastic, you could see for miles and many an evening I would stand on my balcony watching the world go by. Everyone seemed to get along with everyone, neighbours were friendly and were always there to help if you needed it and there was never any trouble or complaints. We just all lived as a one happy community.

Vivien commenting on the Darnhill Estate in Rochdale, demolished 2005.

I am 82 years old... and I and many others to not want our homes demolished on the whim of a woman who doesn't live here... No way can they accommodate the same number of people on such a small piece of land. Re-housing is not what we want. Refurbishment, improvement and general TLC is what these buildings need.

Audrey commenting on Falinge B (Seven Sisters) in Rochdale where four of the blocks are currently proposed for demolition.

Above: Red Road Estate, Glasgow
© Crown Copyright: Historic Environment Scotland



Above: The Broomhill Flats, Glasgow

Left: View of 18-storeyed point blocks under construction. The Whiteinch-Broomhill development was approved for construction in 1963 to designs by the Scottish Special Housing Association, and built c.1965 by Miller of Edinburgh. It has a reinforced concrete frame, but incorporates traditional brickwork. This photograph shows one of the tower blocks under construction. A crane can be seen on top of the structure, and the final third of the tower has yet to have its walls built. Bands of different coloured facing blocks form a geometric key pattern.

Both images © Crown Copyright: Historic Environment Scotland

an integral step in banishing the negative assumptions surrounding life in multi-storey social housing while also avoiding the tendency to over-romanticise. Through our project we want to tell a more balanced narrative of high rise living, to document the scale and pace of the post-war drive to build affordable, high-density housing, and to encourage people to see the blocks as a product of an important commitment to provide a home for everyone in society who needed one. In tandem with the database development we are also actively engaging with communities and other interest groups through a series of public events to promote the resource to as wide an audience as possible and to encourage people to participate in its enhancement and expansion with their own personal accounts. We have delivered five such events so far with a number of others planned before the end of this year.

For our first event last year we joined forces with Historic Environment Scotland's 'Scotland's Urban Past' project to run an exhibition and social history walks in Cumbernauld. Multi-storey housing in Cumbernauld has long defined its skyline with tower blocks originally planned by the Development Corporation as visual markers to add to the 'Italian hill town' aesthetic. A number of these blocks are now gone with the remaining ones due for demolition later

in 2017. The exhibition, which documented Cumbernauld's place in the history of post-war architecture, was held in the newly-opened Cumbernauld Community Enterprise Centre and drew 133 visitors over the course of one afternoon (despite typically Cumbernauldian weather conditions!). As well as our twelve exhibition panels, the Scotland's Urban Past team collected and scanned the local community's photographs of the town to add to their national database (and for us to add any of the tower blocks to ours). In addition, Cumbernauld resident Jean O'Reilly braved the rain and ran two social history walks of the town, leaving from and returning to the exhibition site. These took in the remaining tower blocks as well as Cumbernauld's other notable architecture including the town centre megastructure and some of its earliest low-rise housing in Seafar.

Later this year we will be hosting a Housing History Day which is intended to introduce members of the public and students to ways in which they can research the history of post-war housing in their area while providing them with a wider historical context to the study of post-war social housing in Scotland. The event, which will take place in Motherwell at the North Lanarkshire Heritage Centre towards the end of October, is a follow-up to our first Housing History Day which was

held in Edinburgh last year. That event saw attendees meet at the Historic Environment Scotland archives where they were given an introduction to researching post-war housing before having the opportunity to browse the extensive national collections. After lunch, the group travelled to Wester Hailes, one of Edinburgh's peripheral post-war social housing estates. There, they were introduced to the archive of the community newspaper, *The Sentinel*, which ran in the 1980s and 1990s at a time when Wester Hailes' high rise housing was being heavily criticised on grounds of poor living conditions. After the presentation, the group were taken on a social history walk of the area by resident Eoghan Howard who is also the co-founder of the Wester Hailes 'Our Place in Time' local history initiative.

In addition to community events, we are carrying out training and seminars for interest groups around the country who may wish to use the database to inform their own community engagement or research projects. So far we have given talks on the global history of mass housing and tower blocks as a vanishing heritage alongside live demonstrations of our database to groups in Aberdeen and Manchester. We are actively looking to engage with more parties who might be interested in learning about the history of post-war social housing, the Tower Block UK



Above: Hutchesontown C, the Gorbals in Glasgow – photograph taken c.1964. © Historic Environment Scotland (Spence, Glover and Ferguson Collection)

Top right: Falinge B College Bank, Rochdale – photograph taken 1982.

Right: Cables Wynd House, Leith – photograph taken 1982.

To find out more about Tower Block UK visit www.towerblock.ed.ac.uk or get in touch with Hannah directly: hannah.garrow@ed.ac.uk
Facebook /TowerBlockUK and Twitter @Tower_Blocks

database or our project activities. We are particularly interested to work with groups, for example young people, who might not be amongst the traditional audiences accessing heritage, but who have first-hand experience living in or growing up in high rise social housing and for whom our database could be an important first point of access to learning about the past.

In fact, accessibility is central to our project. As well as challenging prevailing assumptions about life in high rise blocks or on social housing estates, the project challenges our definition and understanding of what constitutes 'heritage'. Many people reading this may not have considered tower blocks, especially those with little aesthetic or design merit, to be an important part of our heritage; in fact they have often been categorised as the *antithesis* of heritage. Many may not find the architecture pleasing to the eye or still regret the loss of the neighbourhoods and buildings that, in

many cases, were cleared to make way for the blocks and their surrounding estates. However, there is undoubtedly a rising appreciation in the UK and internationally for the architecture and material culture of the post-war period which is leading to a rediscovery of this important part of our recent history. There are a growing number of books, talks and exhibitions looking at the development of post-war estates and buildings including tower blocks. Some of these are still narrowly defined around architectural or aesthetic merit, but others seek to highlight the building activities and socio-political context which shaped the intentions of municipal authorities across the country as well as, crucially, the experiences of the individuals and communities who lived in them; providing important sources of information for local historians and researchers.

In Scotland the Edinburgh International Book Festival's recent attempt to engage



communities outside the country's capital through their Reimagination Festival, focusing on life in Scotland's New Towns, is an excellent example of this activity and Tower Block UK were pleased to have been able to participate in the Cumbernauld incarnation of the Festival in May this year. The decision by Historic Environment Scotland in February 2017 to award category A-listed status to Cables Wynd House and Linksview House in Leith in Edinburgh similarly demonstrates a desire to recognise and protect the architecture of this period. We are delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has enabled us to make a small contribution to this field of interest. With it they have acknowledged that for communities and individuals in many of the UK's cities, tower blocks are an important part of their personal history and a heritage that deserves to be recognised, documented and celebrated. ■

James Craig: architect of Edinburgh's New Town

ANTHONY LEWIS was born, bred and educated in Edinburgh but has lived and worked in Glasgow for the past 25 years. He is currently the curator for Scottish history at the city's museum service and has also researched the life and work of James Craig (1739–95). The subject of his PhD was 'Builders of Edinburgh's New Town, 1767–1795' (Edinburgh, 2006) and a book has been published of the same title (Spire Press).



Portrait of James Craig c.1781, by David Allan National Galleries Scotland

When his father, William, died in 1762, Craig became the head of his family. He inherited the responsibility of looking after his mother Mary and aunt Janet. He had not yet completed his apprenticeship as a mason with the Incorporation of Wrights and Masons of Edinburgh at the Mary Chapel, which had begun in 1759 under Deacon Patrick Jamieson. The loss of his father prompted Craig to set himself up as an architect. He possibly reasoned that his apprentices' wages were not going to pay well enough and speculated (accurately) that the up-and-coming New Town offered career-making opportunities for a young architect. Architectural commissions from 1762 to 1766 remains unknown, with the exception of two plans for the bridge over Nor Loch in 1763, which were printed in *The Scots Magazine*, and for a road running along Canongate two years later.

James Craig was in a reasonable position to attract clients, thanks to the literary connections of his mother's family and the public roles held by members of his father's family. Craig used the fame of his maternal uncle, the nationally famous bard James Thomson (1700–1748), and his family's collection of associated memorabilia, to attract interest. He even went so far as to illustrate plans with stanzas from Thomson's work. His paternal grandfather, Robert Craig, was respected in public life, serving Edinburgh Town Council as Dean of Guild, and was a Governor of Heriot's Hospital. Robert Craig was also an elder of Greyfriars Church, and provided his son William with enough respectability to become Edinburgh Town Council's mace and sword bearer in 1745, and another son, James, to be a clerk to the Church Session. The family gave young James, the ambitious architect, an introduction to the Church and Council's patronage.

On 26 August 1766, James Craig's plan for Edinburgh's New Town was chosen as the best of six entrants competing anonymously for the prize to design the largest and most comprehensive urban planning project in the country. The announcement that Craig had won the competition made his career: If potential clients had been unsure of employing the relatively inexperienced architect, his New Town plans encouraged a growing list of clients and patrons, including nobility, literati, businessmen, academics, Town Councils, and church Ministers.

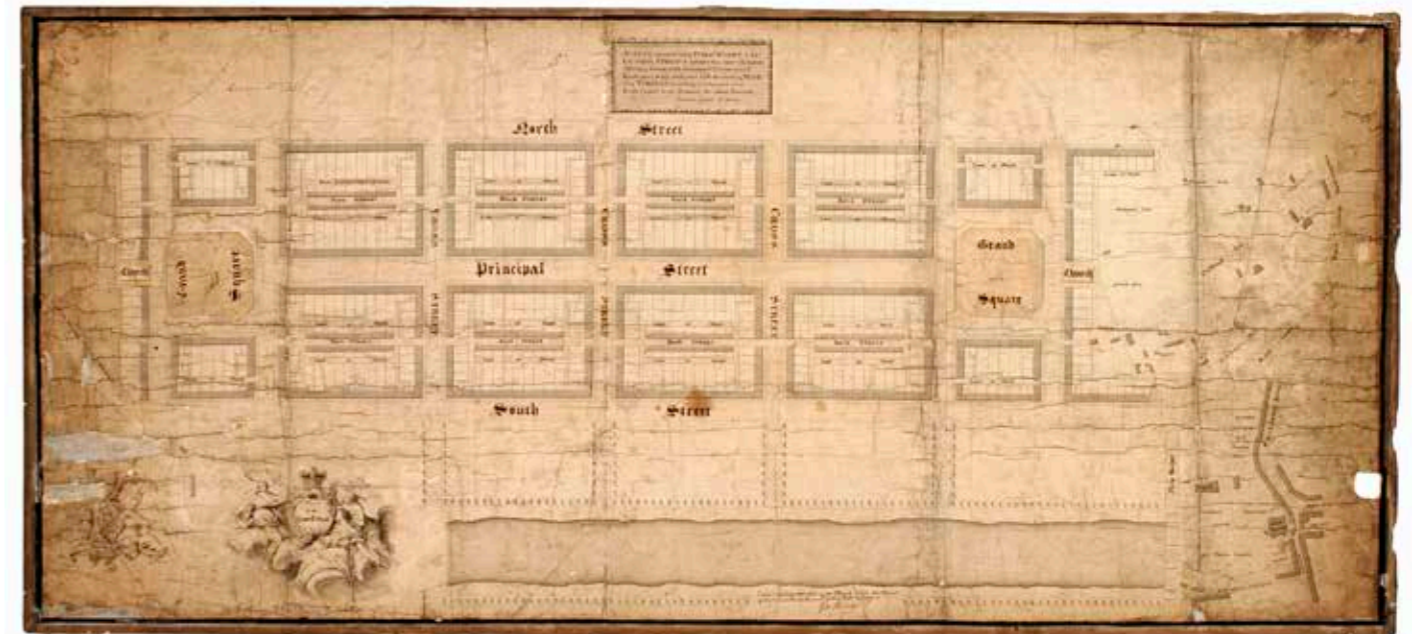
His winning design, accompanying letters and subsequent planning committee papers and plans are now sadly missing from public collections. The losses have provided gaps in knowledge and these gaps have allowed ingenious speculative papers to be published on what they might have contained. The remaining relevant primary evidence is in Edinburgh City Museums and Archives. These include the official revised New Town plan, signed by Lord Provost Gilbert Laurie on 29 July 1767 and displayed in the Museum of Edinburgh, and a few administrative documents.

The collection does not include the New Town plan committee papers which would have recorded alterations made to Craig's prize-winning plan. Whatever they were and whoever instigated them, Craig was always known as the official plan's architect. He promoted himself as such extensively in correspondence, and his published copy plans were signed "inven et delin", meaning "designed and drawn by". Craig's role was celebrated further in subsequent press reviews.

The authorised New Town plan included two squares to the east and west with a series of parallelograms in between forming a regular grid of three major streets, three cross streets and two minor streets. Despite being presented as a triumph by Edinburgh Town Council, the New Town project as whole, from 1769 to 1781, was beset by political and economic difficulties, none of which were of Craig's making.

In 1770, 1774 and 1781 Craig offered a variation of the official plan by introducing a central circus to the plan. The 1774 and 1781 plans survive with the first illustrating an inner and outer circus of buildings, and the latter just one. These circus plans can be seen as attempts by Craig to assert himself as the project's primary architect and promote his vision for the city.

Edinburgh Town Council administrated the project, and to accept the circus proposal would have meant accepting a uniform façade designed by Craig, rather than allowing buildings of any style or design to be built (providing they conformed to the street plan). The magistrates were drawn to the idea of invigorating investment in construction but were uncertain of the housing market and what the uptake would be if people were forced to accept Craig's elevation design. Craig's revisions were never built. The elevation drawing for this circus is



James Craig's 'Plan of the New Town' 1767

Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.

not in a public collection, but Craig's later plans for the south bridge, published in his pamphlet, 'Plan for the Improving the City of Edinburgh', have survived and demonstrate the architect's liking for a variety of shapes, spaces and polygonal façade-fronted elevations.

Craig read books about the concepts of 'sublimity' and 'beauty' and, in combining building, topography and scale, offered something new to Edinburgh's hopes for reinvigorating its status as a capital city. Reviewing his town plans quickly show that Craig promoted a variety of shapes and spaces. Indeed, he liked to contrast uniformity with variety, and follow the edicts of taste laid down in books on the subject in his library, such as those by Alexander Gerard and Lord Kames. Within the plans his prescriptions for buildings also asked for

contrasts of façades and functions.

The largest engagement Craig had in the New Town was as architect of the Royal College of Physicians Hall and Library in George Street (1775–1780). Finally he had been given the chance to build in the space he had created. By 1779, as the project developed, he provided plans for the College to increase the size of the Hall with wings to the east and west. Letters to the Town Council to petition for the land and promote these plans included entering into a dispute with a builder who held the land to the west – William Smith. Craig said that he would be embarrassed to have to build anything resembling Smith's! In his view, Smith and his property should be removed to make way for Craig and his Hall. Craig believed that the New Town architecture he offered through this grander scheme and his

circus would have increased the beauty of the whole area. The Council did not agree.

From 1767 to the early 1780s, Craig may have considered himself the unofficial city architect. Not only did he plan its largest expansion in the New Town, but also many other corporate projects – the proposed Bridewell at Pleasance, the Calton Hill observatory, the New Church at St Giles, Leith Ballast Quay, its Battery and boulevard, College classrooms and probably more. In 1791 the Town Council acknowledged his account with it for £350 but refused to pay because the in-debt architect's bank account had been effectively frozen. Had the account been paid then the entry for it would have been made in the Treasurer's account for the year and we would know what work Craig had done. The payment would have cleared the architect's debts. Undiminished, Craig worked on. There is good evidence to suggest that the next year he planned out central Glasgow for Glasgow Town Council to match the plan he had already made for Colonel James Blythwood. For an impoverished architect, being the town planner of Scotland's two largest cities was an impressive achievement.



A model of the Physicians Hall, George Street, Edinburgh. Could this have been commissioned by Craig to show his clients what the completed Hall would have looked like?

© Royal College Physicians of Edinburgh



John Laurie's 1766 map showing the Union Jack street plan
Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.

John Laurie's 1766 map with the 'rectified' street layout

**FROM PAST TO PRESENT:
HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE NEW
TOWN PLANS?**

Media coverage during his lifetime and after his death highlighted Craig as the architect of the New Town plan, and his reputation and profile were greatly enhanced by this. However, his obituary in the Scottish Register for 1795 commented that Craig "vainly flattered" himself, that he felt entitled to work owing to his relationship to Thomson, that he failed to make "sober plans" in business and died in debt. Was the implication of this that he was an alcoholic, and his debts a result of his addiction? Despite the negative impact of his obituary during the 20th century's reviews of his work, Craig enjoyed a good reputation in the Edinburgh's press immediately after his death in the early 19th century.

Since then, Craig's reputation has risen and fallen, but he has begun to be studied in more depth. In the 20th century, whilst Edinburgh's Georgian architecture was being defended in courts, by reports and (as readers will know) the Edinburgh Georgian Society, in 1966 Professor A.J. Youngson published the book, *The Making of Classical Edinburgh*. The next year the general public also enjoyed the Edinburgh Festival's exhibition and accompanying booklet, *Two hundred summers in a city: Edinburgh New Town bicentenary celebration, 1767-1967*. For academics, Anthony Forward completed his PhD at Edinburgh University in 1968, 'The Architecture and Planning of Edinburgh New Town: An Historical and Critical Study'. In 1971, M.K. Meade had an article published in *Architectural History*, and this article, 'Plans of the New Town of Edinburgh', is the only time this journal has published a review of Craig's work. Central to Meade's argument was to argue that John Laurie's surveys of Edinburgh of 1766 showed the transformation of the New Town plans

from a 'Union Jack' (above left) to a more recognisable grid of streets and squares (above right). The process of planning the New Town began to be represented more in print and since 1971 much has been learnt about the architect and New Town plans.

These events and publications should have placed Craig in a stronger position as a leading representative of Georgian Edinburgh's architecture. However, the review afforded him by Youngson's book presented him as a fractious failure, taking the Scottish Register's scathing obituary of 1795 to be a reliable account. Whilst it is true that Craig did have financial problems, he was not the only architect to face them. Youngson supported the obituary's account of Craig with quotations from his frustrated letters to the Royal College of Physicians urging it to respect his advice as a professional architect. It would seem from the tone of the letters that the College felt he was over-ambitious and had forgotten his place! Like other overlooked Edinburgh architects of the period, Craig was doomed to play second or third fiddle to the genius architect, Robert Adam, who was considered the true visionary representing the city's Georgian architecture.

Despite all the work to record, debate and conserve the New Town, no museum or consolidated collection about it and its architects was ever established. Fortunately, the City of Edinburgh Council Museums, Libraries and Archives, together with the National Records of Scotland, The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh and National Library of Scotland, collected Craig's drawings and some papers. However, these were not assessed or considered as one collection representing the architect's body of work in a book, or even an article. The only

published overview was Howard Colvin's *Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600-1840*, printed in three volumes and regularly revised from 1978 to the 1990s.

Following Youngson and Meade's leads, Stuart Harris's article, 'New Light on the First New Town', for the Old Edinburgh Club's journal in 1992, which suggested that Craig wasn't the architect of the New Town plan at all. Harris favoured William Mylne as the architect for supplying a "rectified plan" and suggested that Craig was both a failure and a fraud. Correspondence for and against his part in the plan went back and forth between Harris and others in the Scotsman newspaper for a brief period in 1995. However, in that year UNESCO inscribed the Old and New Towns as a single World Heritage Site, reaffirming the importance of Craig's plan and his legacy.

These celebrations resulted in the most significant assessment of Craig's life and work yet. Published articles and the first book to be written about him were matched by an exhibition at the Edinburgh City Art Centre. The book, *James Craig (1744-1795), Ingenious Architect of the New Town of Edinburgh*, edited by Kitty Cruft and Andrew Fraser, was a collection of essays on subjects including his life, portrait, New Town plans, collected works, drawing style and library. It was not a best-seller but it was the first serious academic review of the architect and his work.

Yet, nothing is ever straightforward with Craig. Even within the book its co-editor, Andrew Fraser, followed the fashion for diminishing Craig's hand in the New Town, arguing that his circus plans for the New Town actually represented one of the "two plans in different views" he made out for the committee in 1766. But his proposals for the circus were unbuilt and the argument made that Craig lacked real impact or importance. This negative view was revisited

again in 1995 and 1996 by Charles McKean when he also used Meade's analysis to argue that changes to the plan, and "the infection" of builders of the New Town, condemned the whole New Town project to failure. The intended London-inspired exclusive residential suburb of Edinburgh, the "Mayfair on Forth" or "London on Forth", was halted by commerce and common tenements. Once again, Craig was represented as a failed architect.

Despite, or perhaps inspired by, these criticisms, more articles have followed based on primary research rather than critical review. They have added to the list of his known works, and improved awareness of his contribution to Scottish Georgian architecture. At present, we can attribute him with 52 projects and 60 drawings. He surely completed more throughout his career, and these may yet emerge from archives and libraries. If the long-lost New Town committee papers and plans are found, or the auction catalogue of the sale of his drawings in 1795 is ever located, then a rich source of information will have been unearthed. In the meantime, studies could examine his known architecture in more depth using existing plans, correspondence, architectural design equipment and his library.

RECENT RESEARCH & FUTURE LEADS

Over the course of this decade, analyses of his works have provided new information about the New Town and architect. In 2011 the 1767 New Town plan was conserved in preparation for a new display at the Museum of Edinburgh. During this work, a patch was discovered over St Andrew's Square. It was removed to reveal a circular rather than square garden. This year, thanks to City of Edinburgh Council Museums and Galleries and Edinburgh University, the plan was x-rayed. Were there other hidden designs to be revealed? Results showed the western square had a matching circular garden with no hint of a central circus. Meanwhile, thanks to the National Portrait Gallery of Scotland, James Craig's portrait from 1781 has been x-rayed to see if the plans resting on his desk and at his feet were overpainted or masked other details. Nothing was discovered but this year has shown the potential for object-

centred analysis and the importance of active research in driving forwards our knowledge of the New Town plans.

However, a breakthrough in researching the New Town was made at the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh and we now know what the gold medal he received as one of his prizes for winning plan looked like. As noted earlier, Craig was the architect for the College's new Hall and Library on George Street. On 28 November 1775, the College laid the foundations of its new complex, and an opening ceremony included laying foundation medals to commemorate the day, made by the engraver,



Hector Gavin. When the building was demolished in 1841 to make way for the Commercial Bank (now called the Dome), the medals were recovered and passed to the College for safe keeping. One medal is a silver replica of the gold medal Craig was awarded for his New Town plan in 1767, and reads "JACOBO CRAIG ARCHITECTO PROPTER OPTIMAM EDINBURGH NOVI ICHNOGRAPHIAM D.D SENATUS EDINBURGENUS MDCCLXVII" roughly translated as "James Craig, architect, for the best plan of new Edinburgh, given by Edinburgh Council, 1767".

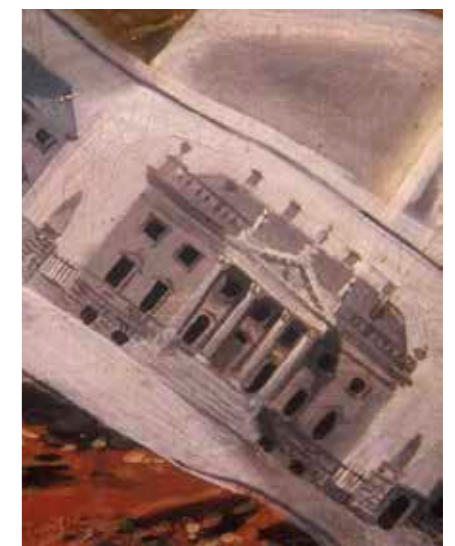
Today, using digital media, we have the opportunity to present a masterplan of all Craig had envisaged for Edinburgh. Plans could be united to allow researchers, academics, tourists and residents to see Craig's vision in augmented reality, and bring greater understanding of his scale of ambition to new audiences. Of course, Craig was not the only architect in Edinburgh. There are many others who also deserve more scholarship and attention. Among these is John Adam, the eldest of the Adam brothers, who acted as a consultant, arbitrator and colleague for Craig. Other architects who were working in the New Town and further afield were David Henderson, Robert Robinson, Charles Freebairn, George Paterson and John Douglas. Each made significant contributions to Scottish architecture and yet find themselves without a plaque, tour, display or book about them. In 2017, during this unique year of commemoration, perhaps we should start rectifying this. ■



The New Town plan with the patch over St Andrew's Square removed, revealing a circular garden. © City of Edinburgh Council Museums and Galleries



Detail from David Allan's portrait of Craig, illustrating his circus plan. © National Galleries Scotland



Detail from David Allan's portrait of Craig, illustrating his design for the Physicians Hall. © National Galleries Scotland

Medals © Royal College Physicians of Edinburgh



Ironbridge and the Heart of England

Notes from the National Study Tour 18–22 May 2017

JILLY MACLEOD is a freelance editor, project manager and occasional author of non-fiction books, whose clients have included HarperCollins, Dorling Kindersley, English Heritage and the National Trust. She has spent the last 20 years juggling work with studying the history of architecture and the decorative arts, and in 2013 gained a Masters degree in architectural history.

We set off promptly on our much-anticipated tour of Ironbridge and the surrounding area, breaking the 330-mile journey with a visit to **Hutton-in-the-Forest**, a Grade-I listed country house in Cumbria, owned by the Fletcher-Vane family (latterly the Barons Inglewood) since 1605. Our tour around the house – guided by Lord Inglewood himself – turned out to be a walking tour of the history of architecture and interiors. Evolved over five centuries around a 14th-century pele tower (a defensive structure unique to this part of the country), the house is largely built in a crenellated Tudor-Gothic style, one range dating from the 1630s, another from the 1830s and designed by Anthony Salvin. The true delight, however, was the incongruous baroque façade of the great hall, built in the 1680s and resplendent with Corinthian pilasters, broken window pediments, stone swags, and decorative urns in place of battlements. After our tour, with minutes to spare, we headed for the walled garden, passing some elegant topiary along the way, then continued our journey south, reaching our hotel, nestled in the idyllic River Severn gorge, in Shropshire, just in time for dinner.

The following day we made our way down to the **Iron Bridge** where we were met by Jim Clarke, a member of the Iron Bridge Museum Trust, who was to guide us round four of the many historic sites that lie within the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site. Built by the Quaker Abraham Darby III in 1779, the bridge is famous for being the

first known bridge in the world to be built of metal, and is recognised worldwide as a symbol of the Industrial Revolution. With no precedent to follow, the designer had turned to joinery techniques in its construction, and we were fascinated to see the mortise and tenon joints that still hold this masterpiece of engineering together. In the 1780s, thrilled by the new technology and the excitement of the local blast furnaces that belched fire day and night, visitors had flocked to the site and the town of Ironbridge had been built as a tourist centre to cater for their needs.

Our next stop was the **Coalbrookdale Museum of Iron**, situated up a narrow valley that runs north off the River Severn gorge. It was on this site that Abraham Darby III's grandfather, Abraham Darby I, had experimented in an old, abandoned furnace and discovered, in 1709, a way of smelting iron using coke instead of charcoal. It was an innovation that was to kick-start the Industrial Revolution, and miraculously the same furnace, originally built in 1639, is still extant, having been built over rather than dismantled when it was abandoned for a second time in the early 19th century. Rediscovered in the 1950s and since restored, the furnace still bears the initials of its first owner and his wife. After a brief tour of the site, we made our way to the museum building, where we were impressed by the enormous size of the iron pots made in the foundry in the 18th century and the extravagance of the luxury goods produced in the Victorian era, including a large table supported by four magnificent iron hounds.



Great hall façade, Hutton-in-the-Forest, Cumbria

We had no idea what to expect from **Blists Hill Victorian Town**, and the entrance hall containing an audio-visual display on industrial processes did little to raise our expectations. But we needn't have worried. Comprising six *in situ* historic buildings, including a brick and tile works, along with many original buildings relocated to the site and a few new-builds, the town provided an entertaining insight into life in Victorian Britain at the turn of the 20th century. There was a butcher, baker, bank, pharmacy, public house and blacksmith, to name but a few, each with its original fixtures and fittings and, where relevant, packaged goods, all overseen by role-playing attendants in period dress. But whereas you could buy a real pie from the bakers or a pint from the pub, it proved impossible to buy laudanum from the pharmacist!

Our last port of call in the World Heritage Site was the **Coalport China Museum**, located in the original Coalport factory, where many of the historic redbrick buildings have been well preserved. These included two bottle kilns, the saggars-makers' workshops (where rough clay pots were made to hold the porcelain inside the kiln), and the workshops for the china painters who, we learned, suffered from arsenic and lead poisoning caused by their paints. One of the highlights of our visit was the display bottle kiln, inside which the fabulous brick walls swept up in ever decreasing circles towards the oculus, and a cutaway revealed how the saggars, with their precious contents, were stacked for firing. Equally

fascinating was the splendid collection of Coalport china, dating from the factory's first year of operation in 1796 to its closure in the 1920s.

We then moved on to nearby **Buildwas Abbey**, founded in 1135 as a Savignac monastery by the Bishop of Coventry and converted into a Cistercian Abbey twelve years later. Now cared for by English Heritage, this Grade-I listed building is unusual in that, despite being a ruin, it retains much of its original fabric intact. The chunky Norman columns supporting early Gothic arches, topped by round-arched clerestory windows, caused a degree of speculation among us, but the guidebook explained the fusion of styles, suggesting the church was completed during a transitional period around 1190. The chapterhouse was particularly beautiful, with its elegant rib-vaulted ceiling and amazingly intact medieval tiled floor. An impromptu wine tasting at the ticket office caused almost as much excitement as the abbey, and several bottles of sloe gin and ginger wine were seen to change hands.

Our busy day came to a close with a flying visit to **Attingham Park**, a Grade-I listed country house designed in the Palladian style by Scottish architect George Steuart, built 1772–85 for Noel Hill, 1st Baron Berwick, and now in the care of the National Trust. The house has an undeniably plain façade, which Simon Jenkins described as "uncomfortably tall... the portico columns painfully thin", but the grandeur of the interior belies the plainness of the



Coalbrookdale Museum of Iron furnace



Blists Hill Victorian Town



Saggars in the bottle kiln, Coalport China Museum



Buildwas Abbey



Buildwas Abbey chapterhouse



Hereford Cathedral



Feathers Hotel, Ludlow



The candle-lit dining room, Attingham Park



Thornhill staircase at Hanbury Hall



Garden façade, Perrycroft



Naturalistic capitals at Blackwell

exterior. Of particular note was the splendid neoclassical plasterwork on the drawing room ceiling, with pairs of elegant sphinxes sporting fine 18th-century coiffures and low décolletages, and the delightful circular boudoir; with its slender Corinthian columns and exquisitely painted grotesques by Angelica Kaufmann. The highlight for many of us was the candle-lit dining room, laid out in preparation for a grand dinner, where the guide's detailed descriptions of dining etiquette helped bring the room vividly to life.

The next day we made the 50-mile journey through the gently rolling countryside of the Welsh Marches to Hereford, where our destination was **Hereford Cathedral**. Dating back to 1079 and built over a period of 440 years, little survives of the building's Norman roots, among the most prominent remains of which are the impressive stocky columns and rounded arches of the nave arcade. The cathedral is arguably best known for housing one of Britain's most outstanding medieval treasures – the celebrated Hereford Mappa Mundi, a spiritual and geographical interpretation of the world dating from c.1300. Fascinating as it was, some of us were equally intrigued by Grayson Perry's *Map of Nowhere* – a satirical study of belief systems inspired by the Mappa Mundi.

Our next stop was the medieval market town of **Ludlow**, where we were due to visit the ruins of Ludlow Castle, one of England's first stone castles, built after the Norman conquest. But, after taking a wrong turn

and driving around in circles for some time, we ended up in the aptly named Weeping Cross Lane car park on the far side of town. Having lost precious time, we were more than happy with a change of plan that gave us extra time to explore Ludlow itself. Described by John Betjeman as 'probably the loveliest town in England', and containing nearly 500 listed buildings, the centre of Ludlow proved to be a picturesque jumble of half-timbered, stone, stuccoed and redbrick buildings dating from the 15th through to the 19th century, with jettied stories, bulging windows, crooked walls and narrow alleys aplenty. Of particular note were 20 King Street, a half-timbered house with a double jetty, dating from the early 15th century, and the Feathers Hotel, where we stopped for tea, largely rebuilt in 1619 with an elaborately carved timber-frame façade dotted with numerous wooden faces that stared down at passersby.

Our final destination for the day, **Stokesay Castle**, proved to be one of the surprise highlights of the trip, although one member of our group was better informed than the rest and had wanted to visit since he was ten. A Grade-I listed building owned by English Heritage, it is, according to architectural historian Henry Summerson, 'one of the best-preserved medieval fortified manor houses in England' – a rare survivor from the 13th century with its great hall, solar (the private chamber used by the lord's family) and twin towers intact. The hall in particular was immensely atmospheric, with an original cruck roof, ancient stone

walls with plaster peeling off, sunlight streaming through the Gothic windows and swallows flitting in and out. Our enjoyment was enhanced by the entertaining and informative audio tour that featured the words of the antiquarian and botanist Frances Stackhouse Acton (read in a husky voice reminiscent of Fenella Fielding), who in the 19th century had helped to save the manor house from ruin.

Our final full day of exploration found us at **Ragley Hall** in Warwickshire, a Grade-I listed country house designed for the 1st Earl of Conway by William Hurlbert, with considerable modifications by Robert Hooke (a close friend and colleague of Christopher Wren). Built in 1680–83, with the addition of a grand Ionic portico by James Wyatt in 1780, its most outstanding feature is the magnificent double-height hall, designed in the 1750s in the baroque style by Scottish architect James Gibbs, with lavish plasterwork, paired Corinthian pilasters and an elaborate coved ceiling. The greatest surprise was the baroque-style mural painted on the south hall staircase by artist Graham Rust between 1969 and 1983. Commissioned by the current owner's father, the trompe l'oeil effect depicts family and friends standing behind a balustrade, surrounded by cheetahs, pink flamingoes and a flying saucer. It really shouldn't work, but it does!

Our next stop was the elegant **Hanbury Hall**, a Grade-I listed country house in Worcestershire, built for the wealthy lawyer

Thomas Vernon, probably to the designs of one William Rudhall, and now in the care of the National Trust. Completed c.1706, it is built of red brick in a Dutch-inspired style common to the late 17th century, with a pedimented centerpiece, stone quoins, hipped roof and dormer windows. Inside, the great hall stands in stark contrast to that at Ragley, equally baroque in style but with a dark yet welcoming aesthetic. It is lined with pine panelling that has been decorated to look like dark walnut, while the walls of the cantilevered staircase depict scenes from the story of Achilles, painted by Sir James Thornhill and considered Hanbury's 'crowning glory'. To the rear of the house the gardens and parterre – originally designed by George London in 1701 – have recently been restored with reference to historic plans, maps, paintings and archaeological evidence.

We encountered our third Norman nave at **Great Malvern Priory**. Built as a Benedictine Monastery around 1085 and extended c.1440–1502 in the Perpendicular style, the priory survived the dissolution of the monasteries thanks to its conversion into a parish church in 1541. This Grade-I listed building is unique in housing England's largest display of 15th-century stained glass, the effect of which, according to Simon Jenkins, is "kaleidoscopic ... a shimmering refraction of pure colour". Equally stunning was the priory's famous collection of medieval encaustic tiles, among the largest of any English parish church and comprising some 100 different designs. But the star

attraction proved to be the richly carved misericords, many dating from the 15th century, the most humorous of which depicts three mice hanging a cat!

For many of us, our last visit of the day turned out to be the main highlight of the trip. Designed by the renowned architect CFA Voysey, **Perrycroft** is a sublimely beautiful Grade-II* listed Arts and Crafts house nestled in the rolling Malvern Hills. Built 1893–95 for the industrialist and MP John Wilson, it was Voysey's first major commission, in which he developed the themes of 'sweetness and light' to create a place of refuge and repose, far from the turmoil of the machine age. The house features many of the characteristics that define Voysey's style: a white harled exterior with a restful, long, low profile, large chimneystacks rising out of a hipped roof, exaggerated eaves, sloping buttresses and galleries of casement windows. That it has been preserved in such prime condition is thanks to the current owners Mark and Gillian Archer who bought the house from the Boys' Brigade in 1999, since when they have lovingly and sensitively restored it, along with the gardens, which had previously been used as an assault course.

Our return journey the following day was broken by a visit to another Arts and Crafts house. Standing in an elevated position overlooking Lake Windermere, and built 1898–1900, **Blackwell** was designed by Hugh Baillie Scott for the Manchester brewer and industrialist Sir Edward Holt,

who wanted a holiday home in the Lake District. Considered to be the finest surviving example of Baillie Scott's work in England, and now Grade-I listed, the house was built using local materials in a vernacular revival style, with painted roughcast walls, stone dressings and distinctive triple gables on the south front. The interior exemplifies the architect's belief in truth to materials, simple forms and exposed construction, and contains a wealth of original features, including naturalistic woodcarving, fabrics and wallpaper designs, stained glass, metalwork and tiles.

Having feasted our eyes on the rich abundance of decorative detail, we piled back onto the coach and headed for home, making one final stop for a welcome cup of tea and cakes at the Dryfesdale House Hotel in Lockerbie. Sloe gin and ginger wine were once more seen to change hands as we took the opportunity to thank the two Hamishes – Macbeth and McPherson – for all their hard work in organising a thoroughly entertaining and informative trip that was enjoyed by one and all! ■

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Highland Retreats: The Architecture And Interiors Of Scotland's Romantic North

Mary Miers
 Rizzoli (2017)
 ISBN: 978-0-8478-4476-0
 £45

Those attending the AHSS 2016 conference at Arisaig heard Mary Miers deliver a striking lecture, and offer us a foretaste of her new book which focuses on the architecture and interiors created by those who made use of the Scottish Highlands as a recreational paradise from the 18th century up to the present day.

On one level, thanks to the seductive picture essays on individual houses and the visually arresting photographs throughout, this is an indulgent feast which will be prized by a wide variety of collectors, historians, students, dilettantes and voyeurs of historic interiors. On that level alone, it deserves to be as successful as *Living in Scotland* (1987) written by Lesley Astaire and Roddy Martine, and illustrated by Fritz von der Schulenberg.

However, it would be a mistake to see *Highland Retreats* solely as a coffee table book, for it is a work of earnest scholarship made extremely palatable by Mier's facility with the pen. She addresses issues such as aesthetic appreciation, social history and architecture, explaining and revealing overlooked or ignored trends and generally driving home – without over-emphasising it as an argument – that the sporting or recreational exploitation of the Highlands was a matter of some import on a variety of levels. Whatever one's views on the phenomenon as a whole, these activities have helped generate much of the tourist infrastructure we see today. A significant percentage of present day visitor-spend in Scotland is generated by the shooting and fishing set, and the Highlands as a tourist destination is still sold through an appreciation of nature and history with a romantic flavour, even though fewer today have any interest in the sole pursuit of slaughtering wildlife.

Nor should this glossy tome be seen as simply a paean to the shooting and fishing culture of 'toffs' and business magnates. The pages are not littered with spent cartridges, dropped pheasants and quotes from

gamey sporting enthusiasts of yesteryear. Rather, we are given a serious examination of arresting aspects of a very real and influential historical phenomenon. Of course, the book will appeal to modern sporting enthusiasts and the socially connected, but perhaps it will have a more lasting influence on social and architectural historians. Miers celebrates the pre-Baronial taste for remote residences in picturesque settings, in which rustic effects, feminine furnishings, heather thatch and antlers might combine as, "these seasonal residences represented a unique take on Romantic ideas about nature and wilderness, while re-interpreting the cottage orne for the wild and inaccessible landscape of the Highlands. Interestingly, they were largely the creation of women."

Miers' own view is that the strong feminine theme she discovered when researching her book ran contrary to what is generally expected when thinking of the very masculine identity of a shooting lodge. So too did the prominence of non-conformist Liberal Unitarians (who mixed in artistic and literary circles) conflict with the stereotype of the sporting gentry. The wonderful resource of (mostly) unpublished paintings, sketches and diaries that Miers draws on, gives a strong flavour of life in some of the earlier picturesque lodges, as well as in Victorian piles such as Ardtornish and Arisaig House in the West Highlands.

The hardiness of many of the temporary residents is evident. For example, the Duchess of Bedford and her friends arranged at Glenfeshie the construction of a hamlet of thatched bothies for their autumn residence. The whole formed a kind of dis-assembled, primitive country house with each room as a separate hut. Here the Duchess entertained her "circle of fashion, statesmen, artists and lions of all kinds" including Landseer (reputedly her lover). Miers reproduces contemporary sketches of life there, including a striking interior view of the cruck-framed, quasi-vernacular, antler be-decked and imposing bothy which evidently provided a public room for the

encampment, demonstrating through this and other examples, some very interesting trends prior to Balmoral and 'Balmorality'.

Inevitably, historical determinism will out, and it is natural that Glenfeshie's two separate collections of bothies, long in decay by the 1860s, should be rather visually overwhelmed by the full panoply of "Bloodsports Baronial", announced in spectacular fashion by a two-page image of David Bryce's own devastatingly impactful watercolour of his remodelling of Blair Castle in 1869. This brutal panache is only slightly undercut by Osbert Lancaster's later cartoons satirising the full baronial exterior and interior style. Panelled interiors and stags heads often loom large, leavened by the more artistic interior-excess of Leiper's wonderful Kinlochmoidart and the outstanding quality of Lorimer's Arts and Crafts masterpiece, Ardkinglas.

It is refreshing to find in *Highland Retreats* a selection which is based not so much on successive stylistic movements as on function. At times it is puzzling, as when half-timbered Marr Lodge appears as "a vast gingerbread cottage with a twiglet porch". There are, of course, smudged edges between what is, or is not, a seasonal retreat, and what constitutes a country house in the broader sense; but the volume provides a sensible selection which combines documentation of millionaires' opulence, as at Kinloch and Skibo, with examination of surprisingly recent houses on a grand scale, as at revivalist Eilean Aigas (2001) or Corroul (1999).

This is a really beautiful, readable and instructive book which encompasses scholarly social history, the architecture of the Highlands, and lush interiors. Miers largely ignores the sporting details – excepting their role in interior decoration – in favour of a dynamic journey which created characteristic and sometimes highly evocative architecture as well as much of the basic infrastructure of the Highlands. The book is certainly an accessibly-written academic study, but it is also a grand gesture to a not-quite-obsolete phenomenon and perhaps, too, is informed and guided by the author's own identification with the idea of journeying towards a landscape she loves.

Being in a wider landscape – the great Scottish outdoors – and reacting to it is something many of us seek out as an antidote to city life. What better book to explore and understand an important Scottish phenomenon whilst travelling north in fact, or in spirit?

Michael Davis



**Bennetts Associates:
Five Insights**

Rab Bennetts et al
Artifice (2017)
ISBN-10: 190896765X
£38

Founded in 1987, Bennetts Associates quickly established an enviable reputation for some carefully wrought work infused with a poetic pragmatism. They published their first monograph back in 2005 (with Black Dog Publishing) and invited four distinguished writers (Richard Weston, Peter Carolin, Frank Duffy and Vivien Lovell) to outline the firm's ethos, lend some critical heft and map out the key themes of the practice; namely, 'Perception', 'Form', 'Construction' and 'Process.'

Its subtitle, "Four Commentaries", was wholly apposite and now, a dozen years later, comes a new monograph subtitled "Five Insights". Certainly the practice has grown substantially and has amassed an impressive back catalogue of projects – enough to fill a clutch of such promotional publications. However, rather than simply opting for a catalogue raisonné documenting every

project, the practice has reflected on the scope and purpose of such books (which can flounder as mere vanity exercises). The foreword, therefore, acts as a mission statement and recognises the supremacy of the book as a definitive statement, a marker in time, unlike the ever-changing, mercurial office website.

The practice of architecture has evolved rapidly over recent years, especially in terms of contractor-led design teams and the proliferation of 3D modelling (BIM). It is notable that Bennetts Associates has the confidence now to dispense with commissioned critics and instead draw upon the talents of its own staff to write the text for this new book. This inclusive strategy echoes the firm's structure as an Employee Ownership Trust and it is fascinating to get the inside track from a younger generation. So we have Rab Bennetts' opening remarks on 'An Alternative Model for Architecture',

alongside erudite essays by Job Architects, Associates and Part I Students. Each author benefits from a short bibliography confirming the depth of experience and eclectic diversity within the practice. So we have Denise Bennetts (Founding Director) on the subliminal manipulation of spatial experience, followed by Daniel Cotton (Architectural Assistant) writing about the architect's ability to draw on 'design memory'.

A detailed timeline demonstrates the variety of work undertaken including a number of Scottish projects such as the BT Scottish Headquarters, Loch Lomond Gateway Centre and Potterrow Development for the University of Edinburgh. The practice has recently secured another major commission from this client following their successful competition entry for the Old Royal Infirmary site. This A-listed building by David Bryce was envisaged as a five-star hotel in Foster's original Quatermire masterplan but failed to attract any suitably prestigious operators. Its new remit as a hub for "entrepreneurial citizenship" reflects the university's ambitious plans to expand its property portfolio and, at the same time, act as a dynamic catalyst for fresh thinking. A similar sense of innovation pervades this monograph which cannot fail to impress and deserves a wide audience.

Mark Cousins



**Drawing on Bangkok:
Mobile architecture and the metropolis**

Exhibition at m² Gallery
Peckham, London
7th May – 1st July 2017

On a relatively quiet residential south London street, the m² Gallery takes you by surprise.

The street is typical of the area and comprises two-storey terraced houses in yellow stock brick. But at its southern end is an unusual shed-like building with a flamboyant industrial appearance. The Quay House is a private residence and design studio, creatively converted by joint owners Ken Taylor and Julia Manheim from an old milk depot. Facing onto the street, its modest 'shop window' is housed in the building's ground-floor meter room: the name reflects both its physical size and associated function.

This window-room gallery, measuring 1m², blurs public and private boundaries. It invites residents and strangers to pause and peer into the window like worshippers gathering around a shrine. Since 2003 it has displayed over 80 exhibitions, and this summer, it showcased architect (and the AHSS's own Reviews Editor), Mark Cousins' recent fieldwork in Bangkok.

Cousins' exhibition, 'Drawing on Bangkok', comprises 31 methodical freehand drawings (one for each day in January 2017) of the city's street-food architecture. A single framed drawing takes up nearly half of the window, whilst the other drawings are arranged around it as a grid of thumbnails, resembling the layout of a monthly calendar. The curation is a public revealing of Cousins' sketchbook that is usually the architect's private domain.

Each one of his line drawings illustrate a different street-vendors' transportable

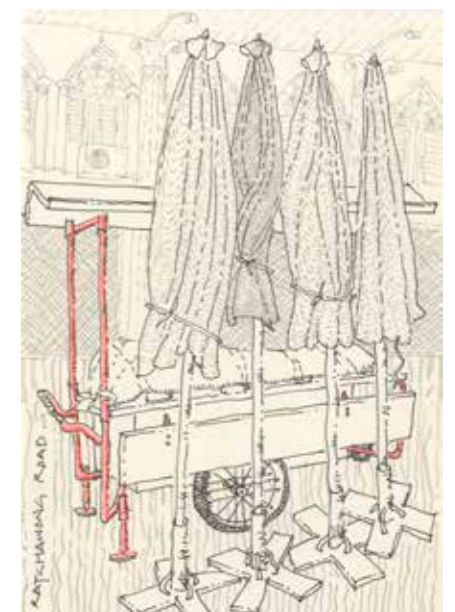
device: trolleys, carts, wagons, umbrellas, customised bicycles and accessories. These are defined personal territories, where mobility is fundamental to daily trading. Cousins' describes this as a "mobile architecture" and his sparing use of colour (pepper red) indicates the bespoke design of each device. The gallery's internal window sill is also filled with red peppers, slowly transforming under the summer sun.

Although these drawings show the configuration of the street devices, they are curiously absent of the people that make and operate them as their livelihoods. The vendors are mostly self-employed traders, serving inexpensive local food, and have become embedded in the everyday life of the city. They transform Bangkok's streets into slow-moving market spaces. But, at the same time, these vendors are also under threat, mainly from eviction by the metropolitan authority who want to 'cleanse' the city – Bangkok seemingly aspires to the Singapore model of the sanitised food-court.

Essentially, this exhibition is a catalogue of a street culture that may well become extinct. And in the same way that Bangkok's vendors' stalls are small-scale street interventions, the m² Gallery makes a similar ephemeral and informal impression.

Thomas Aquilina

The exhibition expands into Quay House itself with a series of framed drawings (700x500mm) and is accompanied by two hardback photo-books (full colour, 66 pages, 28x21cm) set in an A4 cloth-bound presentation box.



Above © Thomas Aquilina

Drawings from top right - © Mark Cousins

1. Rama IV Road (Bangkok): street food wagon selling Jackfruit
2. Ratchawong Road (Bangkok): street food stall in Chinatown with four umbrellas
3. Lang Suan Road (Bangkok): street food cart wrapped and parked on pavement



Edinburgh International Book Festival

12th- 28th August 2017

The promotional blurb for the 2017 Edinburgh International Book Festival (EIBF) mapped out an impressive 900 events packed into sixteen days. However, if you employed their on-line search engine and typed in “architecture”, only two relevant talks were identified. Fortunately, once you started to peruse the 130-page catalogue, it became clear that the programme included over a dozen architecture-related events from a diverse collection of writers, artists and academics. Several talks were grouped under the theme ‘Writing the City’ and promised to explore the notion of utopia and how Scotland’s post-war New Towns have met society’s aspirations. Organised in conjunction with the LSE’s Theatrum Mundi, a variety of speakers were invited to “investigate the city through speculative fiction and celebrate how writers inspire a city’s future.”

The sheer scale of this year’s Book Festival has obliged the organisers to spill out of their Charlotte Square compound and colonise the west end of George Street. The additional tented structures here included the antique Busco Theatre (dating from 1909), where **Chris Leslie and Johnny Rodger** were billed to talk about Glasgow’s abject failure to assimilate Modernism’s “high-rise revolution”. Both speakers stressed that this was a complex story and subject to diverse interpretations, largely dependent on your political viewpoint. Professor Rodger reminded us that the slum clearance programme and their replacement by a rash of multi-storey tower blocks was hailed as a great success at the time. However, the lack of maintenance, paternalistic management policies, falling employment rates and social marginalisation (all exacerbated by the rise of Thatcherism) led to their rapid decline. The focus of the discussion was Leslie’s excellent new book, *Disappearing Glasgow: a Photographic Journey*, (Freight Books) which documents the demise of the city’s tower blocks and affords us a sobering glimpse into the residents’ dystopia.



Above left: © Edinburgh International Book Festival

Right and below: © Chris Leslie
These images have been cropped from the original artwork.



Christopher Beanland
All images © Edinburgh International Book Festival

Scotland’s uncomfortable embrace of Modernist ideals was also the subtext to the talk given by **Angus Farquhar and Diane M Watters** on St Peter’s, near Cardross. This iconic building, designed by Gillespie Kidd and Coia as a seminary for Catholic priests, opened in 1966 but has acquired international notoriety (and almost mythic status) due to the tragic tale of its visionary design and brief flowering before being abandoned to the ravages of the west coast’s weather and wanton vandalism. Watters has researched St Peter’s for several years now and is well versed in cutting through such romantic embellishments to tell a more objective tale. The organisation NVA (Farquhar is their Creative Director) have been entrusted with the building’s stewardship, and have ambitious, Lottery-funded plans to consolidate the surviving structure and present it as a ruin set within an expansive designed landscape. Farquhar excoriated previous proposals for the site which included “more yuppie flats or a posh hotel” (with feature swimming pool) as being “banal and grotesque”, before giving an impassioned account of his vision for St Peter’s which will see its rebirth as a centre for education, public debate and art production. Only the chapel will be formally restored (as a multi-use venue) and this should open in 2019.

Farquhar is an accomplished showman and his tee shirt bore the simple (if provocative) statement “BRUTALIST”. Audience reaction appeared ambivalent but he would have found like-minded allies in **Christopher Beanland and Tom Dyckhoff**, who had been invited to address the topic of ‘Pros and Cons of a Concrete World’. Both guest speakers, however, largely elided the given theme and focused primarily on promoting their new books; namely, *Concrete Concept: Brutalist Buildings Around the World*, (Frances Lincoln) and, *The Age of Spectacle: Adventures in Architecture and the 21st-Century City*, (Random House) respectively.



Tom Dyckhoff

The latter offers a personal account of the current architectural scene and rails against the excesses of so-called iconic architecture. Dyckhoff admits to being an old school Marxist and sees financial gain (through property speculation) as the principal barrier to securing good design for all. He wants to see the propagation of sustainable environments and aligns himself with Alison Smithson in seeking “the poetry of the ordinary”. However, his influential Channel 4 documentary entitled ‘I Love Carbuncles’ (2004) proved a rallying cry for a new generation of critics, commentators and architectural groupies to adopt Brutalism as a new cult. He considers Britain’s adoption of Brutalism to be the first attempt to break away from Modernism’s diktats regarding universality and, in doing so, forge a more pluralistic, avowedly non-elitist approach.

It was evident that both speakers shared a genuine enthusiasm for Brutalist architecture, but the resultant conversation was somewhat polite and consensual, rather than argumentative and challenging. The same could not be said for **Will Self and Richard Sennett** who proved both combative and unfailingly entertaining. Although bracketed under the rather anodyne title ‘Draughtsmen Drafting’, the programme notes alluded to a discussion on the Italian author Italo Calvino, the intention being to explore “how the writer inhabits a city and how their creativity shapes the buildings around them.” But, given their considerable intellectual credentials (one being an acclaimed novelist and psychogeographer, the other is the LSE’s Professor of Sociology), neither felt obliged to stay ‘on topic’. Instead they offered us a more discursive, more nuanced, frequently autobiographical, take on city life.

Self was exercised by the “multi-dimensionality of engagement” in the city and ruminated on what he believes is a key aspect of the British/English psyche (which he labelled ‘uchronic’), whereby every contemporary residential



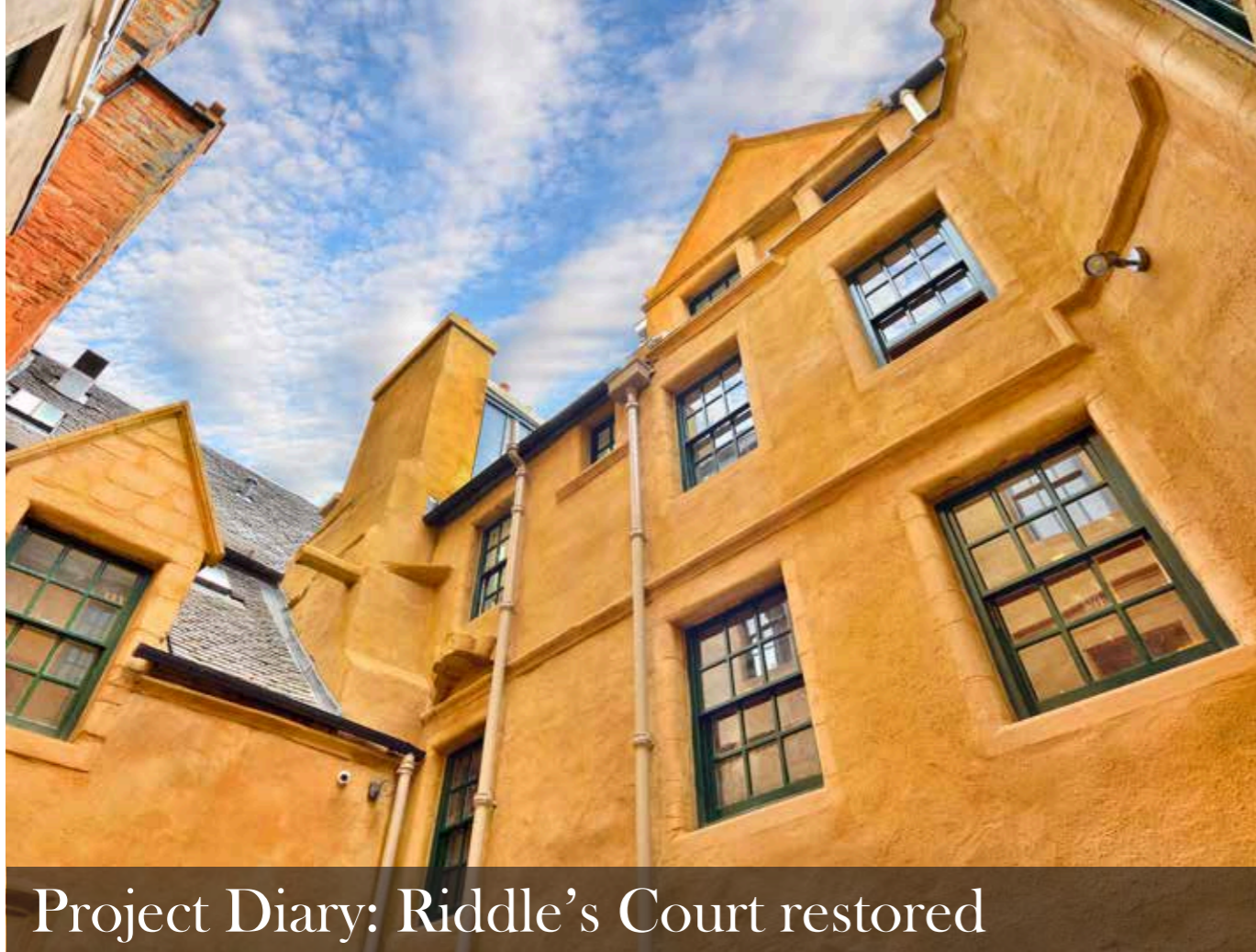
Will Self

development scheme harks back to an idealised era exemplified by endless cul-de-sacs populated by faux-Tudor semis. He castigated the commodification of the urban realm and the planning profession which he argued was “obsessed with location but with no sense of orientation.” Sennett concurred and called for cities to be more complicated, in part because “cities oblige you to learn how to handle complexity.”

Self displayed his usual erudition and mastery in badinage, peppering his talk with a catholic mélange of anecdotes ranging from the benefits of CAT scans for cabbies’ brains to a bizarre analogy about the suburbs mimicking oyster beds being fertilised by waves of semen (no less). His books are full of such colourful imagery and linguistic flourishes but his particular fascination with place is self-evident. His first novel, for example, imagines London as a giant hallucinogenic fungus, whilst his novelette, *Scale*, transposes you to a miniature model village.

Richard Sennett also appeared at a later session with **Saskia Sassen**, to talk about their contribution to the international conference ‘Habitat III’. Convened by the United Nations every 20 years, ‘Habitat’ is the principal global summit addressing issues relating to ‘Housing and Sustainable Urban Development’. They had been commissioned to examine the growth in urban conurbations and prepare a policy document. The outcome of their research, entitled ‘New Urban Agenda’, calls for the protection of the genuine public realm and promotes flexible patterns of growth. Sennett reflected on the notion that cities are “where you find what you’re not looking for” and wants to mobilise the intelligence of its citizens. One hopes Edinburgh can rise to this challenge and disprove Will Self’s mischievous assertion that its New Town looks like “a city designed for intelligent horses”.

Mark Cousins



Project Diary: Riddle's Court restored

Celebrating the return of Edinburgh's much loved 'Grand Tenement'
SCOTTISH HISTORIC BUILDINGS TRUST

SHBT and our partners have come to the end of the project to conserve Riddle's Court, saving it for future generations to visit, work in, learn in and enjoy. It is now time to reflect on the transformational journey this iconic building has undergone.

For this particular phase of Riddle's Court's 450 plus year life, the journey began a decade ago, when the City of Edinburgh Council announced plans to sell the difficult, labyrinthine venue with its single, spiral, access stair and tricky configuration.

In fact, the journey can be traced back further: to the 1960s when the City Corporation improved the venue as a place to hold public classes and events and to the 1890s when Patrick Geddes oversaw the 'opening out' of the external courtyard and the building's use as an undergraduate student hall. It can be traced back even further; to the 1830s with sweeping construction works, and the creation of Victoria Street, transforming the city, and to the early 1700s and the interior improvement works initiated by Anna, Duchess of Buccleuch.

Fundamentally, the history of Riddle's Court is all about the interventions and amendments made to it and, although the current vision for the building will not be its last, it is certainly one that should linger for the next few generations.

Walking through the familiar pend at 322 Lawnmarket you enter the external courtyard. A trail of sandstone roundels carved with botanical motifs mark your way, reflecting the line uttered by Geddes in his final speech as Professor of Botany, 'By Leaves We Live'. The north facing façade – freshly rendered, buff coloured – greets you as you enter. The unique pentice stair; a copy of Geddes' original, fascinates. To your left, a paving installation – a 'carpet of leaves' and a single stone sentinel – require your attention; a place for recitals? For reading aloud a poem, perhaps?

As you cross the next threshold, into the inner pend, you see

the words "By Living We Learn" carved into the flagstone, echoing the Latin inscription, "Vivendo Discimus" in the arch above. Geddes' Town and Gown agenda will live again as the Patrick Geddes Centre embarks on collaborative programmes of learning with academic, civic and heritage partners.

A new entrance, formerly a window on the east wall of the courtyard, takes you into a modern reception area where the history of Riddle's Court unfolds in interpretive displays and the restoration story recalled on film. An old fireplace, conserved by Graciela Ainsworth's specialists, houses the paper sculpture of Riddle's Court donated, anonymously, to SHBT during its fundraising campaign.

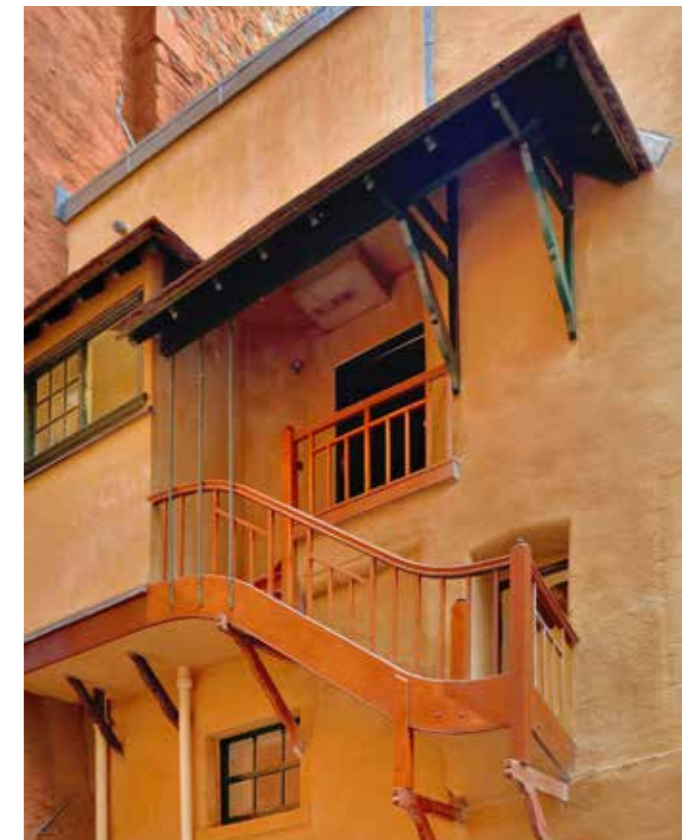
Walking away from the reception towards the south block at Victoria Terrace, you are faced by the project's most radical intervention. From here, a lift will take you to the upper floors and down to the café operating at the terrace level. The lift is backlit with LED lighting, which subtly changes colour, clearly revealing the historic material on the lift shaft's rear wall. Look up to see stonework dating from an era before running water was piped into the building; see ghostly bricked up windows and doors, the shadow of a hearth which once warmed the toes of the Victorian poor.

This conservation ethic is repeated at the lift landings. Masonry, joist holes, lath and plasterwork are deliberately left on show to commemorate the building's long history – a testament to its survival. Take the lift to its terminus at the top of the South Block and exit to a viewing platform with a glazed roof. This is our 'outlook tower' where you can survey our gables, lintels and chimney pots, and spot the gold leaf shimmer of '1587', the founding date of Baillie John McMorran's House.

Aficionados of Riddle's Court, take heart: the south facing rooms have been lovingly restored and the alterations minimal. The walls



Main image (left): Inner courtyard
Above: Seton Room



Above: The north elevation
Below: Geddes Room
All images © Dougie Barnett Photography

of the courtyard-level Library Room, in honour of the Mechanics Subscription Library that existed there in the 19th century, are now a soothing blue, the cornices, shutters and skirting boards, cream. This will be the Geddes Centre's principal space accommodating around 100 folk for large events. Three impressive crystal chandeliers glitter above your head.



Upstairs the Geddes and Seton rooms, once conjoined, are now accessed separately from the lift landing. Scottish Wall Painting conservators have restored all the painted ceilings throughout Riddle's Court. The most astonishing result is in the King James Room in the North Block, now a residential space. The renowned board and beam ceilings are vibrant, as if painted yesterday by members of the Guild of Wrights. Following the discovery of two plaster fragments depicting arabesque motifs on blue and red backgrounds, a resplendent recreation of the original scheme on the wall, between each beam, lives again.

Throughout your visit to Riddle's Court, you are reminded of the man the building now honours. Portraits of Geddes, of Anna Morton, his wife and constant support, and three precious relics of his Old Town renewal projects, the beautiful stained glass windows from the original Outlook Tower, will be on display.

Riddle's Court is embarking on a new journey; a new chapter in its long history begins – come and play your part in it when it opens in September 2017!

Russell Clegg, Learning Officer

For more information visit
www.patrickgeddescentre.org.uk and www.shbt.org.uk
Or contact SHBT on 0131 220 1232 or info@shbt.org.uk

  @SHBT @Riddlescourt



Historic Environment Scotland

DESIGNATIONS TEAM UPDATE



Redford Infantry Barracks Block, Edinburgh
Listed category A (LB49560)

Historic Environment Scotland is the lead public body for the country's historic environment. This autumn, Alex Paterson, will celebrate his first whole year in post as Chief Executive. Alex is leading the delivery of our corporate plan, *For all our Futures*, which was launched in May, and sets out our strategic direction up to 2019. Within this, the Heritage Directorate manages the cycle of identifying, understanding, documenting, designating, and managing change in the historic environment.

DESIGNATIONS TEAM

The designations team handles more than 1,000 cases each year and our projections show that this year is likely to be our busiest yet! Some of this work comes from our own internal projects. The rest is generated from external requests. Anybody can ask us to consider a building, archaeological site or landscape for designation, or ask us to review an existing designation. Our application form is available from our website. The team manages five different designations (listed buildings, scheduled monuments, battlefields, gardens and designed landscapes and historic marine protected areas), and we publish all of our decisions on our Heritage Portal. Our online Map Search is a popular method to search for heritage designations. One of our goals this year is to improve the spatial data that we hold for scheduled monuments, some of which were first scheduled over 100 years ago.

WHAT'S YOUR HERITAGE?

We were delighted with the passion and interest shown in our first ever public campaign to find out what heritage means to people in Scotland. In the first phase of the project, 200 people took part in workshops to help spark conversations in their area, and nearly 2,000 completed a survey.

Our initial report is out now. Key findings include:

- 95% believe that Scotland should look after its heritage with 89% wanting to see Scotland's heritage celebrated.
- 78% of those surveyed believe that some change should be

allowed to historic sites, 8% would prefer no change at all and 6% would like a lot of change.

- 70% of people would like to have a say in how HES decides what becomes listed or designated.

We are now working on the next stage of the project in which the survey and workshop responses will feed into our review of our historic environment policies.

PROJECTS

Partnership work with the Ministry of Defence continued this year and has highlighted the architectural wealth of some of their estate. This year, we completed a review at Redford in Edinburgh, which is one of eight military bases in Scotland due to close. The infantry barracks block, built 1911–15, is among the finest and largest buildings of its type in Scotland, while the cavalry barracks and stables, of the same date, may be the only remaining such building in Scotland. Both were changed from category B to category A.

A major new project for 2017 is our 'Thatched Buildings Designation Review'. Many of the listed building records date back 20 years or more and a review will identify those buildings which should continue to be recognised through listing. We will be meeting with local authority planning and conservation officers. This project will also give us an opportunity, for the first time in a number of years, to be in touch directly with owners of thatched properties and we look forwards to working with owners and communities to ensure that these designations are current and fit for purpose.

This review forms part of wider programme of research and assessment undertaken by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) who compiled an inventory of all the listed and unlisted thatched buildings in Scotland in 2014–15. This survey informs the scope of the current listing review.

For gardens and designed landscapes, we continue work on our 'Horticultural Review'. This project involves reviewing sites originally added to the inventory mainly for their important plant or tree collections, or for their place in Scotland's history of horticulture. This year, we are also working with the National Trust for Scotland to review four of their garden and woodland properties.

CASES

Listing casework has certainly been varied this year.

The **Sancta Maria Abbey** in East Lothian is a large monastery complex built for the Cistercian order from 1952–69 with the help of some of the resident monks. We listed it at category A as the only completely new single-build monastic abbey built in the United Kingdom in the 20th century.

In Edinburgh, the former **Longstone bus depot** (now the Lothian Regional Transport Office) dates from the same era. Built in 1955, it dates from the time when motor transport was on the rise following the decline of trams. It is now among a small number of surviving purpose-built bus depots in Scotland. Listed at category C, it remains a distinctive industrial building in this post-war suburb of Edinburgh.

In Greenock, we reviewed the **Lyle Kirk** (the former Old West Kirk) and changed the category of listing from B to A in recognition of its outstanding series of stained glass windows. Featuring the work of Morris and Co., these windows are the only collection of its type in Scotland, bringing together works from major 19th and 20th century stained glass artists of the Pre-Raphaelite and Arts and Crafts movements.

Moving away from the central belt, we listed the **North Head Memorial Tower** in Wick at category C. This square-plan tower was built in 1909 to commemorate veterans from Caithness who fought in wars from 1797 (the Battle of Camperdown) to 1902 (the Boer War). It is a rare example of a memorial that pre-dates the First World War and is not dedicated to a specific individual.

The team has also scheduled three archaeological monuments on Tiree. **Dun Beag** is a 'dun' or fortified site dating from the Iron Age (600 BC–400 AD). **Dun Mor** is a broch and also dates to the Iron Age, while the third site is the **Ringing Stone**, an older and more mysterious monument dating to the Neolithic or Early Bronze Age (3000 BC–600 BC). It consists of a large boulder with at least 53 circular or oval depressions or cup marks and is scheduled as an important example of prehistoric rock art. When struck, the stone emits a deep ringing sound and causes an echo to reverberate around the surrounding rock faces. For this reason it has been traditionally known as the 'Ringing Stone'.



Lothian Regional Transport Office, Edinburgh
Listed category C (LB52441)



North Head Memorial Tower, Wick
Listed category C (LB52451)



Ringing Stone, cup marked boulder, Tiree
Scheduled (SM13666)

GET INVOLVED

Propose a site for designation: www.historicenvironment.scot/media/3453/designations-application-form.pdf

What's Your Heritage?: www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/listing-scheduling-and-designations/what-s-your-heritage/

Search the Heritage Portal: portal.historicenvironment.scot

Tell us what you think at designations@hes.scot



Historic Environment Scotland

COLLECTIONS TEAM UPDATE

General comments or requests for information regarding the Historic Environment Scotland Archive can be addressed to:



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Please visit the HES website at: www.canmore.org.uk

The Elms, Whitehouse Loan, Edinburgh (DP256989)
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THE WILLIAM NOTMAN COLLECTION

The William Notman Collection is held by the National Record of the Historic Environment and was catalogued by the Skills for the Future Trainees in June 2016, having previously been sorted and researched by RCAHMS volunteer, John Knight.

Edinburgh-based William Notman (1809–1893) was born in Kirkcudbright, Peebleshire to John Notman and Margaret Kemp and was brought up in the Newhaven area of Edinburgh. For most of his life and career Notman lived at Northfield Cottage on Newhaven Road. His father acted as Clerk of Works to the Duke of Atholl and his cousin, another John Notman, also became an architect but emigrated to Philadelphia, USA in 1831. Both William and his cousin worked in the office of William Henry Playfair. As apprentice to Playfair, Notman appears to have worked on a considerable number of renowned Edinburgh buildings including George Heriot's Hospital, Surgeon's Hall, the Advocates Library, the Royal Scottish Academy and Donaldson's Hospital.

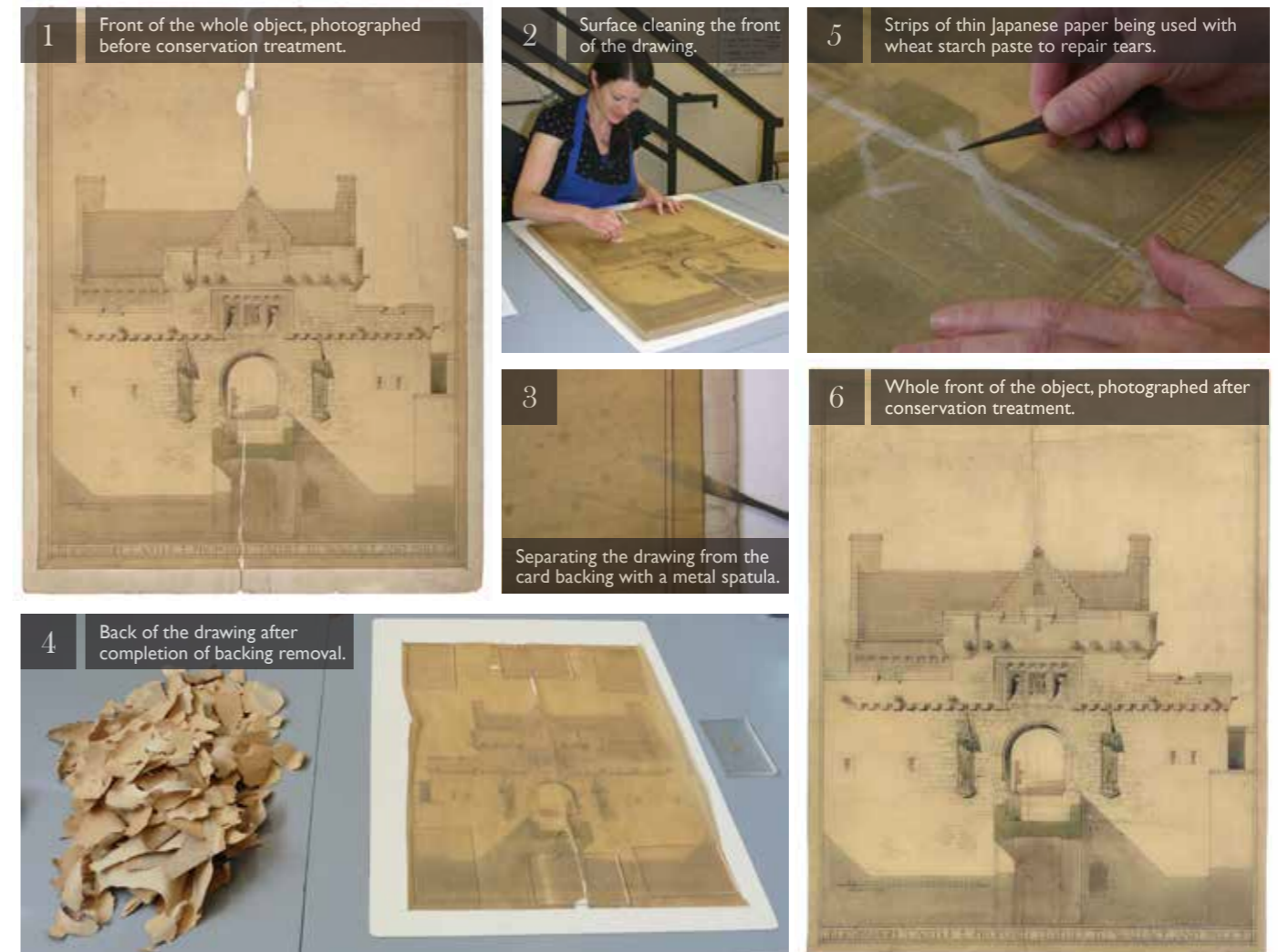
The collection contains many drawings signed by William himself as well as others relating to Dunkeld Cathedral by his father and Archibald Elliot. There are also a number of drawings and specifications signed by William Henry Playfair, George Angus, John Watherston and William Burn, as well as drawings, sketchbooks, textbooks, building specifications and letters relating to Notman's professional life, and a number of personal papers.

The drawings purporting to come from John Notman Sr's hand show a gift of draughtsmanship that he clearly passed on to his son. William's style is recognisable by its crisp lines, beautiful shading and colouring. Additionally, it is apparent that he had a propensity for calculations and accuracy as the collection contains a sizable number of full-scale detail drawings of mouldings.

Notman was prolific and varied in his solo projects. Some of the first drawings in his own name are of a series of houses at Haymarket Mills (1852), as well as the main scheme for the same site and the adjacent Caledonian Distillery (1855). He worked on several projects in Hawick and the Star Inn hotel in Moffat. He designed shops throughout Edinburgh, villas in The Grange, including The Elms at Whitehouse Loan, and also a handsome warehouse for Trotter furniture makers on Market Street, which survives in part today. The collection also holds a considerable number of plans and elevations for New Town tenements.

Unfortunately, Notman seems to have been fairly unsung at the time of his death in 1893, with neither a death notice nor obituary in *The Scotsman*. However, he has left his mark on Edinburgh, most notably the 140ft landmark chimney at Haymarket (although probably since extended) and The Elms in Whitehouse Loan, his masterpiece in the Scottish Baronial style.

Niamh Crimmins | Archive and Library Assistant



CONSERVATION OF A ROBERT LORIMER DRAWING

A recent candidate for treatment in the HES paper conservation studio, was a drawing by Robert Lorimer depicting a design for the entrance to Edinburgh Castle, flanked by statues of Wallace and Bruce.

The chief cause for concern was the very poor physical condition of the object. The main drawing in graphite with watercolour was adhered to a brittle and degraded secondary support made of card, broken vertically down the centre which was damaging the drawing with large cracks and tears. The card support was tested and found to contain acidity that can transfer to the drawing and catalyse degradation to the support. Furthermore, the drawing was on a very thin, oil impregnated paper, of a type used by architects to provide a transparent support, but which can become very discoloured and brittle. Without conservation, the extremely fragile drawing could have become more damaged and broken in half, so it could not be safely handled or accessed by staff or visitors to the HES search room (Figure 1 – DP257243).

An assessment determined a conservation treatment proposal to reduce the risk to the object by removing and discarding the secondary support, allowing the drawing itself to be repaired. This decision was made after consulting curatorial staff as removing such a support would alter the object. The backing did not bear any original inscriptions and it was deemed beneficial to the object to remove it.

Before any treatment began, a condition report noted the

identification details and condition of the object, and a photographic record made. The first stage of the treatment was to surface clean the front of the drawing of loose dirt with a latex sponge (Figure 2).

A bamboo spatula and a scalpel were used to scrape away the backing board to which the drawing was adhered, but which was beginning to separate from (Figure 3). Paper left adhered to the back of the object was removed by brushing on hot water and scraping with a metal spatula (Figure 4).

After removing the backing, the support was very vulnerable due to the severe tears. To repair these, small strips of thin, lightweight Japanese paper were adhered with wheat starch paste which has very good aging characteristics but is reversible if the treatment needs to be reviewed in the future (Figure 5). As the transparent paper responds very quickly to the moisture in the adhesive, the repairs were dried with a heated spatula.

Following the repairs, the drawing was stable, but not flat, so it was put in a humidity chamber and allowed to absorb water vapour to relax, then pressed between blotting paper under weights to remove the planar distortions.

Conservation has improved the drawing's long-term stability as well as improving its appearance and it can now be safely handled by visitors or by staff (Figure 6 – DP257238).

Elizabeth Hepher ACR | Paper Conservator

Built Environment Forum Scotland



Tolbooth Wynd, Edinburgh

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The spring consultation on the Scottish Government's changes to the planning system blossomed into a summer position statement in advance of legislation late in the autumn. BEFS has held a number of related events and across professions and sectors there seems to be a shared sense of disappointment in the proposals likely to be taken forward.

Community-led 'local place plans' are to be included in the legislation with the caveat that they will conform to the local development plan and promote appropriate development. Details of how these plans will work have yet to be worked up but it is proposed that this year's government-funded charrettes will begin to explore this. There is an emphasis on communities-of-place and interest in taking on a role in creating local place plans and acting on responsibilities entailed. But, with no new funding available, there is a lack of recognition that this approach may heighten inequalities between communities with varied capacity and agency. Should the 1,200 community councils in Scotland be able to run a charrette as a starting point? That would cost a minimum of £24million and charrettes have not yet produced anything as detailed as a local place plan.

A key argument that emerged from BEFS's event on the Scottish Government commissioned research paper, *Barriers to Community Engagement in Planning*, was that so long as the planning system is measured by speed of decision making, Scotland will not have a planning system that meaningfully engages with communities or produces great places. Heritage barely appears in this current review, in fact the environment as a whole is almost absent, but BEFS will work through the legislative process to try and prevent any protections being weakened.

In July BEFS hosted a screening of the documentary film, *Dispossession: The Great Social Housing Swindle*, in partnership with Tower Block UK. The film highlights the dramatic change in attitude to the state provision of social housing, going from 'Homes for Heroes' to 'sink estates' and examines the impact that clearance, and the ongoing threat of clearance, has on communities, with examples in London, Glasgow and Nottingham. BEFS was interested in screening the film in light of the category A-listing of Cables Wynd House and Linksvie House, Leith, as reported in the previous issue of the AHSS magazine. The public response in the local press and on social media was not positive for both aesthetic and social reasons. The press release from HES may not have helped as it included the detail

that a character from Irvine Welsh's novel *Trainspotting* was a fictional resident thereby reinforcing the connection between social housing and drug addiction.

As part of the designation process HES consulted the 300 households but only nine responses were received and ten people attended a drop-in event. Given the inevitably controversial nature of listing post-war social housing, the 'Scotland's Urban Past' project could have been brought in to work more closely with the residents and neighbours, and this may have resulted in a more positive narrative to counter prevailing attitudes to council housing.

Lessons could have been taken from experience in Denmark around the attempted designation of Grenhusene, Copenhagen and presented by Poul Sverriid, Director of the Forstadtmuseet (Suburban Museum) at two lectures in Scotland in 2014. The residents of Grenhusene rejected the creation of a conservation area as professionals had not worked with the community to create a shared understanding of what was significant and valued about the estate of prefabricated housing. Sverriid reflected that 20th century professional processes of designation, and selection criteria, must evolve to reflect democratic rights, cultural attitudes and economic interests.

Designations such as these raise interesting issues between listing for architectural or historical importance and the building use. The listing of Erno Goldfinger's Balfron Tower, London, has not prevented the residents being cleared and the building being turned into luxury flats, yet surely its significance is both architectural design and purpose as social housing. This question is also pertinent to Robert Adam's Register House which may be in danger of being disconnected from its designed purpose. Clearly, some historic uses cease to be necessary or desirable, but if the purpose of a building remains relevant, (libraries perhaps?), does the heritage protection system adequately reflect this? HES' research project, *What's Your Heritage?*, begins to touch on this and is an indicator that Scotland's heritage policy is evolving and will, therefore, be explored at the BEFS Congress in early 2018.

Euan Leitch | Director



For more information about BEFS please visit www.befs.org.uk or contact us: Email info@befs.org.uk Telephone 0131 220 6241

Scottish Civic Trust



The Scottish Civic Trust is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2017, and has been marking the occasion with a number of events. Our annual lecture took place in April with architect David Martin telling the story of Glasgow's Merchant City. In May and June we held three very popular events in collaboration with Glasgow City Heritage Trust on the subjects of tobacco merchants and shipbuilders, Glasgow's cinema history, and conservation areas.

A reception in the Scottish Parliament building in May, hosted by Linda Fabiani MSP, was attended by friends and supporters, past and present, who heard from a range of speakers including John Gerrard, the Trust's first Technical Director, speaking about our origins and early life. This was followed by a debate in Parliament in June at which several MSPs congratulated the Trust on its record and discussed some of the key issues around heritage, planning and placemaking.

We will be holding events in Perth, Paisley and Glasgow in the second half of the year and, on 27th November, an annual conference in Glasgow will look at 50 years of conservation areas in Scotland as 1967 was also the year of Civic Amenities Act. The conference, run in partnership with IHBC Scotland, will examine what has been achieved and lost, and what are the challenges, opportunities and lessons for the future.

We are proud of our many achievements over the last five decades which include: helping to save New Lanark from dereliction; creating and developing Doors Open Days in Scotland; managing the Buildings at Risk Register (1990 to 2011); helping to establish a network of local civic trust across Scotland; running the Scottish Civic Trust My Place Awards and My Place Photography Competition for young people; and commenting on thousands of planning applications.

Other recent activities which have kept us busy were the My Place Awards, won this year by the Botanic Cottage in Edinburgh which was nominated by the Cockburn Association. Designed by the renowned architects John Adam and James Craig (1764-5) it was reimaged and rebuilt in its new location by Simpson and Brown. The Awards and the My Place Photography Competition for young people were presented at the Lighthouse in March and an exhibition of entries to both competitions ran until May.

We issued a six-point action plan for the new administrations of Scotland's local authorities just before the May elections. The actions included, "improve training and resources on planning issues for all

councillors to inform better decision-making at planning committee level; review, safeguard and enhance Scotland's diverse heritage, particularly conservation areas, by consistent use of planning legislation and enforcement powers; and support expansion of network of urban design panels with strong community representation."

As this article is being written, Doors Open Days are taking place and, as in 2016, we are confident that there will be a programme in each one of Scotland's 32 local authority areas, even if some include just a handful of buildings. As part of our 50th birthday celebrations we are asking celebrities, politicians, artists and members of the public to nominate their favourite Scottish Door. The 50 Favourite Scottish Doors campaign, supported by Aberdeen Asset Management, culminated in a launch on 1st September at the Botanic Cottage, Edinburgh.

We are also busily promoting the 2017 Scottish Heritage Angel Awards which are funded by the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation, and complements the existing Historic England Angel Awards, and the new Heritage Angel Awards for Northern Ireland. The awards are delivered in Scotland by the Scottish Civic Trust in partnership with Historic Environment Scotland, Archaeology Scotland and the Scottish Government. The year, we have changed the categories slightly to align with the awards in the rest of the UK. Full details can be found at www.scottishheritageangelawards.org.uk

Under the direction of our Chair, Colin McLean, our committee structure has been refreshed and will now consist of strategy, fundraising, audit and finance, and technical committees, the latter dealing with national planning and policies issues including selected casework.

Finally, I am delighted to report that our building, the Tobacco Merchant's House, has a brand-new set of handrails at the front door!

John Pelan | Director



To find out more about the Scottish Civic Trust, its services and projects please visit www.scottishcivictrust.org.uk or contact us: Email sct@scottishcivictrust.org.uk Telephone 0141 221 1466

Get Involved

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteers are vital to the AHSS; contributing their expertise, time and energy to ensure the society works effectively and thrives. Without their help, the amount of work we do to study and protect Scotland's architecture would be much reduced. Just some of the positions held by volunteers are listed below to give you an idea of the range of options available. If you have some time and would like to get involved, please contact Sarah, our Development Officer, on email (nationaloffice@ahss.org.uk) or by calling 0131 557 0019.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

All members of our governing body are volunteers, including the regional group chairs, officials and sub-committee members. These roles provide the opportunity to shape how the Society is organised nationally.

PUBLICATIONS

There are a number of volunteering opportunities within our Publications Committee, including: copy-editors for the AHSS magazine, Journal editors, contributors to the magazine and book reviewers.

OUTREACH & ADMINISTRATION

We would welcome help to prepare for and support outreach events such as Doors Open Day. By assisting in the National Office, you can see how the whole charity works and gain skills.

CASES PANEL MEMBERS

Members can comment on listed building and conservation area applications in our volunteer Cases Panels that are spread across the country. The Panels support and encourage individuals and local communities to become more engaged with the planning process. Many distinguished architects, architectural and local historians have served long periods on the Cases Panels and new members have a chance to share their experiences of the built environment, to learn about its history and to shape its future. Cases Panel volunteers gain invaluable practical experience in assessing proposals for historic buildings; whilst also acquiring a wide knowledge of the heritage of historic buildings, of the countryside, towns and villages in which they sit, and the problems that affect them. Cases Panels provide excellent learning opportunities for students, particularly as no previous experience is required.



Find out more:
www.ahss.org.uk/get-involved



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Support us

...and help us speak for Scotland's buildings

The AHSS is a charitable organisation but we currently have no financial endowments. Making a donation or leaving a gift to the Society in your will are significant and meaningful ways to show your support. Donations, whatever their size, are essential in helping us to achieve our goals and a legacy can also be a valuable way of reducing inheritance-tax liability on your estate, because legacies to a registered charity are tax-free.

For more information and to discuss further, contact us on 0131 557 0019
nationaloffice@ahss.org.uk

The Society will be able to claim back 25p tax for each £1 you have donated. Membership subscriptions can be treated as Gift Aid donations. A Gift Aid declaration is incorporated into the membership form on page 30. This form should be used if you are already a member or if you are making a donation to the Society which is not a membership subscription.

giftaid it

www.ahss.org.uk/get-involved/donate

Profile: Helen Gargill Thompson

“ When and why did you join the AHSS?

I am a long-standing member of the AHSS, having joined in the 1970s. I was drawn to it because, unlike other smaller architectural societies such as The Old Glasgow Society, The New Glasgow Society and the Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society, the AHSS had a broader appeal, covering a wider range of architecture. The AHSS had been created in 1956 largely to protect Edinburgh's New Town from the planners, and when the Glasgow branch was set up I became one of its earliest members. I still serve on the committee.

Conservation is of the greatest importance to me, as it is to the AHSS. I have concerns about the quality of present day building projects, and fear that they lack solidity, unlike my own Edwardian town house which was "built to last"!

When did your interest in heritage start?

My love of conservation took a very practical form when I became Ward Committee Secretary for Glasgow's 19th ward where I live in Kirklee in the West End. These Ward Committees, the precursors of the Community Councils, liaised with Glasgow Corporation, as the City Council was then named. I objected to the planning proposal in the 60s to build houses on the site of the former Kirklee Railway station. Myself and others felt that it would be much more beneficial to the local community if the line was reopened, thus serving the area around the BBC headquarters and the University, with its large student and academic population. I remember as a child my mother using the line to travel to Central Station and taking a rather large pram with her! However, as it was not appropriate for the Ward Committee to lead the protest, the West End Society was formed, with conservation being its main purpose. In the mid-1990s its successor, the Friends of Glasgow West, was founded, and it is still a thriving group today, of which I am an active member.

In the 1840s my great grand-uncle, William Cargill, moved from Auchmithie, Angus, to seek a more prosperous life in Glasgow – an economic migrant in today's terms. He went on to become a merchant in the East Indies and in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). The family founded Burmah Oil and also had connections with Anglo Persian (Anglo Iranian) which later became BP.

I have a long family history in the West End of Glasgow and this has given me a deep knowledge and love of this part of the city and a determination to protect its heritage. My grandparents had a residence in Hillside Mansions, then Wilton Mansions, before moving to Athole Gardens. They then downsized to Mirrlees Drive, Kirklee, in 1925. It was to this residence that my family returned just before World War II broke out and I remember going to bed in the downstairs hall in the basement during air raids.

Do you have a favourite architect or building?

I am particularly interested in the West of Scotland architects notably John Rothead, William Leiper and, of course, Alexander 'Greek' Thomson. My own family home, built in 1910, contains many original features common to Glasgow homes of the period. For example, the green fireplace tiles and a painting by Stuart Park, one the 'Glasgow Boys', set in one of the fireplaces on the upper floor. A remarkable feature (and an early example of

Helen was born in Rangoon, Burma (now Yangon, Myanmar) and lived for several years in Prome Court. Her family moved back to Scotland on the outbreak of the Second World War. She was Senior Reference Librarian at Strathclyde University for many years.



© Colin Caves, Collins Gallery

recycling!) is the beautiful wooden panelling in the hall and dining room created from the dismantled Austrian Pavilion at the Great Exhibition of 1901 in Kelvingrove.

My favourite buildings are a rather eclectic mix! Glasgow Cathedral is one, as is St Andrew's in the Square in the Calton area of Glasgow. I find the design of the interior of this former church intriguing: one would have expected the city burghers to have been influenced by Calvin, but it contains some very elaborate features.

I also admire the Palladian style of Dumfries House in Ayrshire and have enjoyed several visits there. However, a trip I made with a group from the National Trust for Scotland to Mellerstain House in Gordon, Berwickshire made a strong impression. I particularly admired the comparatively low ceilings of the house, unusual for a Georgian property, which gives it a cosy feel.

Mellerstain has a fascinating architectural history. The two wings of the house were built in 1725 by William Adam and it was only towards the end of the 18th century that the middle part of the house was completed by Robert Adam, William Adam's son. The wings of the house are straight and perpendicular to the central section, whereas in other Georgian properties the wings form a curve. The house was owned by the Baillie family who purchased it in 1642 and later, in the early 18th century, through marriage, by the Earl and Countess of Haddington. The Baillie name has been preserved. In the very informative guidebook produced by The Mellerstain Trust, John George Baillie-Hamilton, the present Earl of Haddington, recounts a memory of growing up there, hearing birdsong on awakening in the early mornings and looking up at the stars in the clear sky above the house at night and declaring that there was nowhere else on earth that he wished to be. The house is now owned by the aforementioned Mellerstain Trust, a charity set up in 1987 to maintain the house and gardens, and I thoroughly support its further development as an amenity for public benefit. ■

Helen Gargill Thompson remains an active member of the AHSS and Friends of Glasgow West as well as The National Trust for Scotland and her lifelong interest in conservation, particularly of the West End of Glasgow, continues. She is always willing to pass on her knowledge to others and it was a pleasure to meet with such an interesting lady.

Janette Stewart,

in conversation with Helen Gargill Thompson, July 2017

Dumfries & Galloway ACTIVITIES

The monuments in the region, our railway heritage, and Baronial architecture in Ayrshire, have provided an interesting and varied agenda for our group.

In March **Alistair Penman**, a local archaeologist, gave a well-illustrated talk entitled: 'A Monumental Essay'. Alistair drew on his extensive local knowledge to identify and describe a wide range of monuments from standing stones to Covenanters' graves. His essay left members with an increased appreciation of the wealth and originality of monuments across Dumfries and Galloway.

In April, we were delighted to welcome an exiled Gallovidian, **Angus Rex**, to talk about 'The forgotten railways of Galloway'. Angus, who is also President of the Galloway Association of Glasgow, was born and brought up in Portpatrick. His extensive knowledge of the railway system made for an absorbing talk. He pointed out how the "Paddy Line" of *The 39 Steps* book and film fame, was the one railway that crossed the whole of the region but serviced comparatively few of the main towns. It was, of course, designed primarily to transport goods and soldiers from and to Northern Ireland. Angus showed a range of illustrations of the region's railway heritage and noted

that comparatively little had been listed.

On a glorious summer's day, 31 members crossed the border into Ayrshire to visit **Newark and Glenapp castles**. We are immensely grateful to Mrs Fiona Walker for allowing us to visit Newark and for her expert commentary on the house and grounds. The combination of a late-16th century tower house, a mid-19th century baronial mansion and an early-20th century extension make for a fascinating house. The richly plastered and finely furnished interiors make a delightful contrast with stone vaulted room at the base of the tower house. After Newark we drove down the coast for tea at Glenapp Castle. The castle was designed by David Bryce and built in 1870-76. Whilst the cream tea in the elegant dining room was a major attraction, members, suitably refreshed, then enjoyed the grounds, the views to Ailsa Craig and the complex and asymmetrical design. All agreed it was a perfect day.

In the autumn we look forward to welcoming **Mary Miers** and to visiting the gardens of **Dumfries House** and **Auchinleck House**.

Andy McNab | Chair
andy_j_mcnab@hotmail.com



Members man the ramparts.



Glenapp Castle



Newark Castle

Wigtown houses, restored



Before restoration

CASEWORK

PLANNING LISTS

At long last the weekly lists are following a uniform pattern. However, very few applications in conservation areas are advertised as such, so knowledge of conservation boundaries is essential. So far only five out of 36 conservation areas have Character Appraisals and only five have Article 4 Directions. As Dumfries and Galloway is a large area, it is difficult for the short-staffed planning department to give the necessary time needed to carry out further appraisals. As AHSS cases panels have members with considerable professional skills, it might be possible for us to help with carrying out further appraisals. However, we are now sent lists of application decisions which saves time as previously these had to be looked up individually.

WINDOWS

Unsuitable replacement windows continue to be a problem. In most towns and villages original windows are being lost and are being replaced with cheap UPVC which are of unsuitable proportions. As most of the area's village streets consist of terraced houses and cottages (for example, Lochmaben), the uniformity is being lost. There are good plastic windows which follow the traditional proportions and styles of original timber windows. Perhaps the unthinkable has to be faced that if the plastic

product can be produced to the exacting standards, appearance and proportion of traditional wooden windows, these would perhaps be more easily enforced.

WIGTOWN

The houses pictured above have been derelict shells for years. Recently, Dumfries and Galloway Housing Partnership applied to turn them back into affordable housing. The plans were fine but UPVC windows were specified. We objected and, to our delight, the new windows are timber, double-glazed, sliding sash and case. Also at the rear the windows are single-paned, sash and case with a conservation roof light in the attic. The Galloway Preservation Society are hoping to enter this for the Scottish Heritage Angel Awards.

MOAT BRAE HOUSE, DUMFRIES

This Walter Newall-designed house in the centre of Dumfries has, at last, obtained the funding to continue with the project to turn it into a literary centre for children. Because of the connection with J M Barrie, who took inspiration for Peter Pan when playing in the garden as a boy, it has been possible to restore this important house back to its full glory. As it was originally a private house, extensions are needed to provide disabled access and create extra rooms for education. The house itself has been beautifully restored, without alteration,

to its original form. The new additions are perhaps controversial but are ephemeral and consist of a new level entrance and lift shaft largely in glass. What is important is that the house has been rescued from demolition and now, hopefully, has a secure future.

Patricia Woodley | Cases Panel Convener
Woodley212@btinternet.com



Lochmaben



Lochmaben



Walking tour of Edinburgh's New Town, led by Tom Parnell © Mario Cariello



The main gateway at the Royal Infirmary site, Lauriston Place (Edinburgh) – the right-hand cottage, but not attached lodge/gate on the left, will be retained.

Forth & Borders ACTIVITIES

Our **36th AGM** fell later than usual this year, on 1st June 2017, and was held in the familiar setting of St Andrew's and St George's West, George Street. It was followed by an insightful presentation on the history of bell ringing in Scotland by the church's current Tower Captain, Simon Aves, and his predecessor, Mike Clay. A beautiful working wooden model of a bell was demonstrated by our speakers. We then had a rare opportunity to explore the belfry of the church and see much of the careful conservation work that had been explained to us by Mike earlier.

The summer programme began on 11th May with a walk around **Edinburgh's New Town** led by committee member, Tom Parnell. We were fortunate to see many buildings picturesquely lit by the setting sun, as Tom highlighted architectural development across 250 years: from James Craig's original 1767 plan to what could have been and what has been lost.

Fundraising for the **Royal High School** campaign continued the following month, with our highly successful concert on the 8th June. Members of the audience had made their way from the polling stations, through a tumultuous downpour that

evening to Stockbridge Parish Church to enjoyed a performance by world-class pianists, Malcolm Martineau and Steven Osborne, alongside eminent soprano, Lorna Anderson.

The following week we had our **Summer Party** at the Morris and Steedman designed Avisfield House in Cramond. Many thanks again to Kit and Louise Campbell for their warm hospitality, and also to Peter and Mhairi Taylor who gave us an 'all areas' access to their incredible eco-house, Foxfield, designed by Professor Lindsay Johnston.

Most recently we had our sunny **Dean Valley Walk** on the 18th July. Andrew Kerr led us along the Water of Leith from Stockbridge, explaining the designed landscape of the Dean Valley within the context of the proposed Dean Valley Regeneration Project.

As I write this update on our activities for the summer, another two events lie ahead: our **Haddington Trip** on the 30th July (featuring visits to Amisfield Walled Garden, Colstoun House, Lennoxlove and the John Gray Centre); and the **Perth Day Trip** on the 2nd September.

Mario Cariello | Forth & Borders Group Convenor



Working wooden model of a bell, St Andrew's and St George's West, Edinburgh.

Fundraising concert at Stockbridge Parish Church in aid of the the Royal High School campaign. There was a great turnout, despite the rain! © Mario Cariello



CASEWORK

This is probably my last task as outgoing Convenor, as I handed over that role to Mathew Reilly at the end of June after exactly one year. The previous heavy caseload has continued, and the outstanding efforts of cases panel members have meant that we have been able to comment on many more modest issues as well as the 'big' cases.

The **Royal High School** continues to be a focus of campaigning for our Forth & Borders Group and at national level. I spoke alongside four others at a well-attended public meeting in March, and also at the public hearing at the end of August, which saw councillors refuse the latest application. Elsewhere in Edinburgh, we have objected to the unsympathetic conversion of the **George Cinema in Portobello** to flats, and wish the community campaign for reuse well. The A-listed **Royal Infirmary on Lauriston Place**, having lost its earlier Adam buildings to the rear as part of the Quartermile development, is now proposed to be largely stripped internally, and have significant portions of the Bryce core and other later additions demolished. The B-listed gate lodge would be another casualty, all to be replaced with 1960s-style square modern glass boxes

that would envelop the building, particularly to the rear. It remains to be seen whether Edinburgh planners and councillors have the confidence in their own policies to resist this travesty.

In **Rutland Square**, another completely unsuitable development was rushed through as a delegated planning matter with most objections disregarded. A single townhouse is to be converted into nine flats, mainly two per floor; meaning that the main drawing room is a single flat. The awful attic dormer to the front was rejected, with planners quite rightly indicating that the pre-listing carbuncles on some other addresses in the square were not justification for ignoring all planning policies. However, many other policies were ignored: a basement staircase is to be ripped out, the rear gains an almost full-width dormer, and the interior is badly subdivided – all justified under the "conservation gain" of conversion from an office with some minor reversible interior partitions.

In good news, another 1960s-style demolition of a villa on **Barnton Avenue** for a modern block of flats was withdrawn after significant opposition. But it is hardly surprising that developers will seize on flexibility in the application of planning policy to see what they might get away with.

Elsewhere, councils seem more confident in following their own policies, and we hope for better outcomes. In Fife, the charming but derelict C-listed **Denbeath Miner's Welfare Institute** is likely to be demolished due to structural issues which, while not insurmountable, would necessitate such extensive intervention as to be largely a reconstruction. Our objections to the initial demolition have resulted in more extensive structural investigations. While the loss of any good building is lamentable, I fear this one may not prove practical to save.

Numerous structurally-sound buildings are under threat in Peebles, where the **March Street Mill** site is proposed for an unsympathetic housing development. Although the gate lodge is proposed for retention, the fine early-20th century office range, which neatly bridges the transition between the public residential street and the private industrial mill site, was to be demolished. As a result of widespread opposition, particularly to the loss of allotments on the site, plans are currently being reconsidered, and we will continue to scrutinise the revised proposals and press for the retention of architecturally significant elements on the site.

Alastair Disley | Convenor



Ardmeallie House, Aberchirder



Ardmeallie from the air © Crown Copyright: Historic Environment Scotland



Pitfour Estate, Buchan

North East ACTIVITIES

Experience has shown that holding our AGM at an interesting venue boosts attendance, and so in proved at our first visit this year to **Ardmeallie House, Aberchirder**, near Turriff. The AGM itself was held in the charming old gunhouse, and afternoon tea was generously provided in the dining room. However, first we were given a tour by Ardmeallie's owner, Mrs Mary Burnett-Stuart, and her son, Jack. The house, built in the mid-18th century, has a distinctive 'Janus-face' style, with austere harling and a projecting octagonal entrance tower to the north, while the southern façade, with its Corinthian-columned porch, was stripped of its render and updated in around 1825, with windows updated and neat wings added by Marshall Mackenzie in 1900. The interior woodwork had been painted in less 'enlightened' times, and Jack's grandmother took on the task of stripping it when the family first moved there, prompting sighs of sympathy from members who have faced such travails in their own historic properties. Ardmeallie's extensive walled garden was an added bonus for our members, and we were told about its carefully-managed evolution. The many 'rooms' are separated by yew and holly hedges and contain a rose garden,

arboretum, fruit and vegetables, with, it seemed, a statue or sculpture around every corner. At the heart of it all stands an unusual two-storied summer-house in a Gothic style.

Our June visit saw us back in Buchan, this time examining the old and the new. We began on **Pitfour Estate**, once known as the 'Blenheim of the North' because of its scale and pretension. Owned from 1700 by the Ferguson family, it benefitted from its first three lairds' wise agricultural improvements and aesthetic appreciation. At its height, it extended to 30,000 acres and, from 1809, architect John Smith was engaged to rebuild the existing house. This he did in extraordinary style, creating a Greek Revival mansion with 'calendar' proportions: 52 rooms, 365 windows, and so on. The surrounding policies were on a similar scale, including a lake of 50 acres. The estate's own gasworks lit the house, not least at the ever more lavish parties, and the house had a staff of over one hundred. But by the time of the fifth laird, as early as the 1820s, things were on the slide, and he indulged his love of horses by not only creating a race-track on the estate, complete with observatory, but also by gambling, an interest shared by his wife. The sixth and final laird



Pitfour Estate

was unable to rescue the estate from its debts and decay, and it was sold in 1926, with the house completely demolished, and composite farms sold off piecemeal.

The once-manicured policies became overgrown and were forgotten for decades until the Watson family bought the lake and its surroundings, which border their own farmland. On a beautiful June day, we met Alan and Ann Watson at the lake, and drove around it with them, stopping at various points of interest and learning from the considerable research they have done on the area. Since their tenure began, the lake has been thoroughly dredged and is now breathtakingly picturesque, frequently home to dozens of swans and a keen fishing association. The Watsons have created miles of well-mown footpaths, now enjoyed by the general public, and many features on the lakeside are being steadily repaired, including bridges, boathouse and a most picturesque folly. Near the original house is the site of a sunken garden, with some brave rhododendrons still clinging on. Perhaps most fascinating of all (and more problematic from a maintenance point of view) is the Temple of Theseus, built in imitation of the Temple of Zeus in Athens. It is not clear what its original use

was – opinions vary from cold-water bath to alligator pit! – but it is a grand temple indeed, with flat pitched roof, surrounded by a single row of columns, and what was very finely detailed wooden entablature. It is now somewhat dilapidated, and our architects had a fine time inventing a fantasy scheme of renovation for the Watsons.

Our second visit of the day brought us well into the 21st century as we arrived at the recently-built dairy at **Middleton of Rora**. Bruce and Jane Mackie showed us the vast building, which recently won a 'Distinction' in the Aberdeenshire Design Awards – the first agricultural building to do so. The dairy's designer is a Netherlands-based specialist agricultural architect who is also a vet and therefore well-placed to produce a building designed to ensure maximum comfort and health for the 200 or more herd. The cows are bedded on sand for comfort and hygiene, have plenty of space and light, and, as happy cows do, now produce more milk than they ever had previously.

The roof is stepped twice in two planes, resulting in nine different levels which flow into each other. This softens the shed's profile in the landscape, while cleverly handling the gradient of the land



The award-winning dairy at Middleton of Rora



Middleton of Rora

as it slopes down to the River Ugie. Like many farming businesses, the Mackies are embracing sustainability, with extensive natural ventilation and solar panels fixed facing east and west rather than south, spreading production throughout the day to match electricity demand. Inside, we were intrigued by the robotic milking procedure, where cows approach the 'robots' at will and are washed, milked and fed in a totally automated way. The robotic remit even extends to 'housework', with another device scuttling along to tidy up spilled feedstuff. The Mackies have recently diversified into yogurt production, and showed us their hi-tech, highly sterile production unit, before kindly providing each visitor with a pot to take home. We finished the afternoon with tea at Ednie House, near Middleton, reflecting that though our visit spanned six miles, all three venues used to be well within the huge estate of Pitfour.

Amanda Booth | Events Convener

CASEWORK

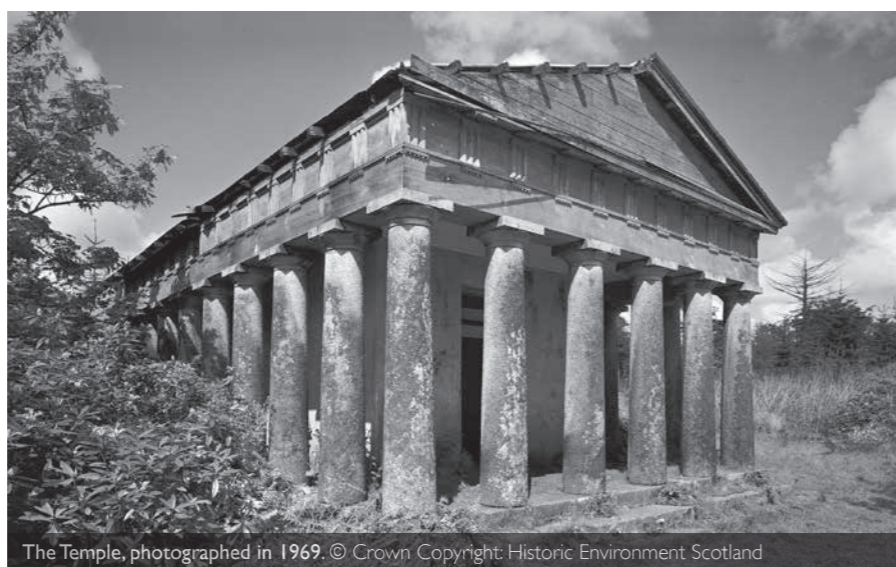
As members of the Society will remember from the annual meeting held in Aberdeen last autumn, there is great interest in how our historic buildings are treated in this part of Scotland. Our visit to the Wischowskis' at **Bishops Gate** demonstrated how a seeming hopeless case can be transformed into a comfortable house that honours its own past, and its place in a specific area (an especially tender corner of Old Aberdeen) while conforming to the best modern ideas of conservation practice and also with pleasing artistry. More recently, on the North-East Group visit to the great landscape garden of **Pitfour**, the near-derelict miniature Temple of Theseus had our hosts and members in lively discussion about how best to secure its future. The verdict was to avoid, at all costs, enlarging it into a house, or kiosk for sweets, or any such new use, but rather to employ the simple measures of conservation and repair to columns and roof, and to leave it whole but otherwise unchanged.

It is rare for the North-East Group, or any of the parts of the AHSS, to have such a direct opportunity to influence plans. But we do have the procedures open to us through observations to local authorities through the Listed Building Consent processes of planning. These are formal, sometimes tedious, and require a good deal of time in assessment. The AHSS is rarely praised for its efforts, and often overruled by elected members of the various planning committees, but sometimes there are successes. On all occasions, there is the opportunity to state the case for conservative repair, appropriate enhancement, and to truly "Speak for Scotland's Buildings".

Over the last few months we have resurrected our Cases Panel as a subcommittee to do this more effectively in the northeast. We meet with an agenda of those buildings in the city and shire of Aberdeen, and Moray, which will be considered by the planners in the coming month. The times for getting any observations in are often tight, and local authorities are punctilious to a degree in observing such deadlines. Since these are public declarations, we have a duty to be sensible, succinct, but sufficiently forceful to get our message across: as all who have tried this know, it is not an easy task! The first difficulty is in coming to a decision. The



Pitfour's Temple of Theseus



The Temple, photographed in 1969. © Crown Copyright: Historic Environment Scotland

documentation presented with planning applications is very often deficient, and all sorts of ploys are produced to avoid the issue, such as "I didn't know the building was listed", and to these we usually allude. Even when all is clear, there must be agreement in the Cases Panel, not necessarily unanimous, but still agreement. As Colin McWilliam (Secretary of the Scottish Georgian Group and a major influence) taught us all those years ago "ya-boo to you" is neither allowed nor sufficient.

Recent cases have included **Union Terrace Gardens**, where the obvious and simple solution remains resolutely avoided in favour of useless bling. The need to improve access (via lifts and escalators) and provide services (such as lavatories, cafés, exhibition areas and security) could have been satisfied by using the space underneath

Union Terrace's roadway. Current plans, however, squeeze out valuable green space (it is, after all, supposed to be garden!), and some of the most memorable views, such as the Edward VIII corner, will be blocked by sandwich bar-like façades.

All scales of planning applications have been presented including: numerous replacement windows; gantries and other engineering works to the Joint Station at Aberdeen; much needed emergency repairs to a languishing Episcopalian former-church in Elgin; old Manses with bi-fold doors ruining old granite gables; and a scheme to turn a near perfect old Georgian town house into a pub.

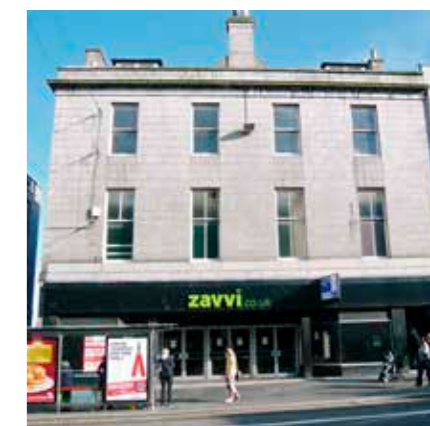
However, Moray Council's quite extraordinary decision to grant planning permission for a new path through **Mortlach kirkyard** in Duftown deserves

Mortlach Parish Church, Duftown.
Image by Teddie Bridget Proctor licensed under CC BY-ND 2.0

special mention. This is the site from which the See of Aberdeen is supposed to have derived, and is redolent (if not bristling) with associations and allusion, as well as archaeological promise. The path will disrupt the ancient grave stones, the ground below and the kirkyard wall. So why, there of all places, would authorities choose to build a wheelchair path between one distant car-parking place and entry to the Kirk? Although the path will improve access to the well-used kirk, the plan seems to involve the most destruction for the least benefit. Could another route not have been found?

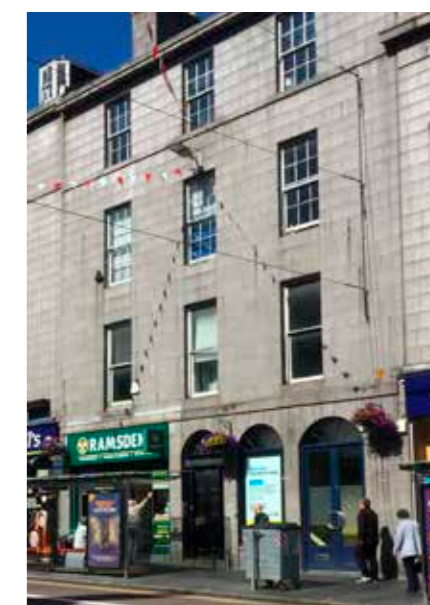
One of the familiar landmarks of Union Street was the **old Boots store**, a four-bay Trustee-style block from the 1830s with three stories above the street, and at least as many below where the back of the feu abuts The Green. The block has undergone

many iterations, most significantly in the 1930s when the equally famous Boots, or Back Wynd, Steps (an Aberdonian equivalent to the Waverley Steps) were incorporated. Now it is proposed to house the Nationwide Bank. The Cases Panel were content with its new use but could see no justification for the slick glass, shiny metal and very broad store frontage. We decided to object, proposing that the planners call, instead, for a replacement in the style of the original for which there is some evidence on the adjacent façade of the building, and some surviving early examples across the street. Wise heads in the Panel had raised the issue of whether we could make this argument, given that a firm understanding of the historic frontage was missing. However, by then the statutory time for observations had run out. Subsequent consultation with both elected council members and officials,



Above: the old Boots store with the Back Wynd Steps to the left.

Below: an example of traditional, arched shop fronts on Union Street, Aberdeen.



suggests planners *would* find it acceptable to call for restorative work in a traditional style to be undertaken. Further advice on how that can be best achieved is now needed, and the North-East Group have been invited by the Council to prepare an informal report about matter. It would seem to be an opportune moment to contribute as earlier in the year an award of £2.4m was announced for a Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme, aimed at repairing and improving the buildings lining Union Street.

We are fortunate that members of the Cases Panel include a lawyer, a recently retired GP, and practicing architects, and our deliberations are also available to our committee online while being considered and reviewed in meetings later.

Bill Brogden | Cases Convenor
w.brogden@tiscali.co.uk



St Collumbkille's Church, Rutherglen



Rutherglen Town Hall



Briglands



June Baxter's Garden, St Andrews



The Queen Mother Building, University of Dundee



The Duke of Fife with AHSS members, Kinnaird Castle



Kinnaird Castle

Strathclyde ACTIVITIES

AGM

As always, we started the spring season with our AGM. As an addition to the business side of the day, we always try to find some venue of architectural interest that will, hopefully, attract more than might otherwise be enthused by the thought of an AGM. This year was no exception; our host venue was **St Collumbkille's Roman Catholic Church** in Rutherglen, a fine example of Gillespie, Kidd and Coia's work from the 1930s. Our own Treasurer, Hamish Macbeth, has been closely involved with recent restoration works on the church, and gave us an insightful tour of the building. Lunch in the Town Hall across the road – a Scots baronial building by Charles Wilson, dating from the 1860s – was followed by a leisurely walk along the Main Street, also led by Hamish. The old Parish Church with its Kirk Port, the Mercat Cross (not a medieval one – it dates to c.1926) and the Edwardian Baroque post office and library were among the highlights.

SUMMER EVENTS

Our first study day of the summer was a visit to **St Andrews**, stopping off at **Briglands** on the way there: an early project of the architect, Sir Robert Lorimer. Our hosts were Fred and Briony Multon, who have lived in the house for nearly 40 years. Unfortunately, due to a mix-up of dates (I hold my hand up as culprit!), they were not able to be there themselves but very generously agreed to have the house opened for us anyway. The house – originally Georgian and remodelled by Lorimer from 1899 – along with the Multon's eclectic

collections, and the beautiful and extensive gardens, were a welcome and most enjoyable break in our journey.

Lunch at the country house hotel, **Rufflets** (built 1924 by Donald Mills), was followed by a walk around St Andrews led by Euan McCulloch. Our tour spanned the centuries from mediaeval St Andrews to the 19th century 'New Town': 15th century St Leonard's Chapel; Trinity Church (it's earliest fragments dating to the same period); St Salvator's College and Chapel; 16th century St Mary's College; and the 19th century developments of Howard Place and Abbotsford Crescent. In addition to these architectural riches, we had the great pleasure of visiting **June Baxter's** delightful garden, its unexpected and apparently never-ending extent hiding behind an elegant South Street façade.

July's trip provide us with a day of contrasts. Our first visit – after a very quick glimpse of the new V&A at Dundee's riverside – was to the **University of Dundee's Queen Mother Building**, the new "home of computing at the University". Alan Newell, Emeritus Professor of Computing, showed us around the building and described the consultative process between the architect, Karen Pickering of PagePark, and the end-

users: staff, students and researchers. Not a "nerdy" or "geeky" building was one of the main wishes to come out of these discussions! Certainly, the brilliant white circular walls, which are the main external features and are reminiscent of Art Deco seaside pavilions, give the building a playful, attractive appearance not expected, perhaps, in a building housing computing research. Professor Newell also gave us an insight into some of the research done here, particularly in the field of supporting disabled and older people's access to IT.

In the afternoon, we travelled on to **Kinnaird Castle** near Brechin, the home of the Carnegie family since 1401. The present building represents a palimpsest of the work of James Playfair, David Bryce and 20th century post-fire remodelling. His Grace the Duke of Fife, whose home this is, guided us around the house, outside and inside, and gave an informative and entertaining history of the various branches of his family. Although some of Bryce's 'French chateau' style has survived externally, the High Victorian interiors gave way, after the 1921 fire, to a much simpler, pared-back style deemed to be more suited to the interwar taste. A sole, florid newel finial from the original staircase gave us a sense of what was lost. The two-storey height library was

simply roofed over and left unrestored after the fire and with its bare stone walls seemed to be, perhaps, an unintentional throw-back to the original tower-house which stood on the site. Pragmatically, this is now used as a badminton court and indoor cricket field! A day of contrasts both in architectural styles and weather; where bright sunshine – allowing a stroll round the outside of Kinnaird – alternated with driving rain, and offering an extremely interesting and enjoyable couple of visits.

GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

The Cases Panel report includes more detail about the refused planning application to build student residences in Sauchiehall Street, almost up against the southern façade of Mackintosh's School of Art. The campaign against this insensitive development did give the Society the opportunity to raise our public profile; following a letter from the Strathclyde Group to the *Herald* expressing concern about the proposal, the paper also published a short interview with myself after the refusal. While nobody would wish to see more applications of this kind, they do offer us the chance to get our message out to the public.

Iain Wotherspoon | Chairman
iainspoon@supanet.com

CASEWORK

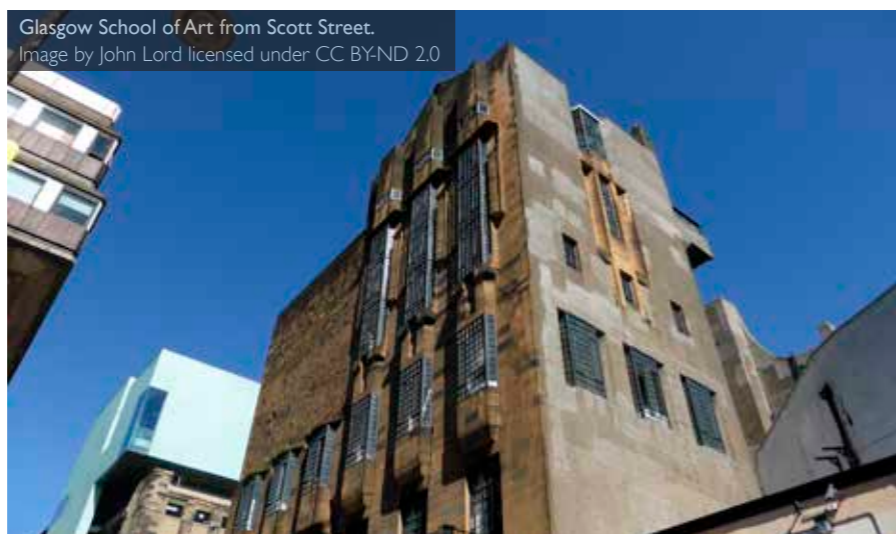
New Local Plans, and new methods of implementing existing ones, are continuing to reflect and shape the drift of change in conservation. They also address the impact of austerity on the maintenance and development of heritage.

However, the Casework Panel has also observed that strong support continues from councils facing cutbacks for conserving and maintaining their conservation areas and listed buildings. Although the Panel doesn't always agree with the way some guidelines are applied, we support the general consensus on appropriate styling and materials.

The planning process was particularly well illustrated by the decisions taken on the demolition and redevelopment of an important site in an urban conservation area in central Glasgow. Bordered by the southern aspect of the Glasgow School of Art (GSA), Scott Street, Dalhousie Street and Sauchiehall Street, the site, with the exception of the cinema, will be open and cleared. Due to its high profile, and the extensive publicity it received in the press, this case will be well-known but some aspects may still be of interest.

The proposal for student housing on the site seemed appropriate and, as presented, appeared to have been well-researched. The developers had been aware of the specific criteria that they would be required to observe in undertaking the project: the site was in an urban conservation area, it juxtaposed a listed building, its typography was characterised by a steep hill and it was a historic site. Officially, the submitted design had ticked all the right boxes and yet it prompted serious rejection. Not by the planners, who approved, but by amenity societies, the general public and the press. One very concerned objector was Professor Tom Inns, the Director of the GSA.

This case, as one would expect, was very specialised and identified the main fault as a lack of understanding of the way light works on interiors. Loss of light, Inns argued, caused by the specified bulk of the new building, would deny the GSA the full potential of its teaching role. He interpreted from the various ways light entered the GSA, that CR Mackintosh had recognised the creative influence and aesthetic input of light, that the experience of moving through a building interacted with the effect of changing light levels, and that the angles of light that changed direction throughout the



course of a day - an interesting contribution. In addition to the loss of light, another unacceptable factor was the scale of the new building. Seen from the lower levels of the hill, its massing would not only have obscured a vital view of the GSA, but would have reduced the quality of the Garnethill Conservation Area. We supported the refusal of the application on all counts.

Another outcome to a GSA case which met with our approval, concerned the reconstruction of the library after the fire. As the designer of a building seldom actually builds it, it seemed that the recreation of Mackintosh's library, as closely as possible to the original, was the only possible solution. We welcome the restoration work which is now underway. The serious consideration given at one point to the use of a contemporary idiom, seemed to the Panel a misplaced gamble with a masterpiece.

An overview of current cases often reveals a trend in design forms. Either through the pressures of need or simple fashion we have noticed an increase of applications for rooftop extensions. Often a feature in an original design, they are now appearing as a way of extending a building. Once again, a GSA application provides a prime example. It involves the adaptive reuse of an existing building by adding a rooftop extension. **Stow College**, a 1930s building in Cowcaddens quite near the M8, is to be the next development to extend the Art School facilities. According to one presentation, the equivalent of three stories will be added in the form of a "serrated copper roof extension which will be studded with large windows". We have reservations. The result could look top heavy outwith a close-up perspective. Coordinating the unit scale of an addition with the original building is central to

adaptive reuse, particularly at rooftop level. In the Stow College extension as illustrated, we think that there is a change of unit scale that could affect the visual balance and give too much emphasis to the extension. More contentious is the proposed mural "to adorn the exterior". What appears to be the use of a naturalistic image of a large three-quarter length human form can only be too reminiscent of a billboard advertisement. But perhaps that was the intention!

Crucial to the successful outcome of the hundreds of cases that the Society looks at is the basic need to reconcile the old with the new. At present, most applicants seek specialised advice before submitting an application, so the panel finds it can pass most cases "no comment".

The main threat, as we see it, could be loss of conviction in the importance to our environment of the survival of historic architecture. This requires confidence in taking the long view and, of course, in providing investment. We hope one economy reported recently, and which will inevitably reduced efficiency, will not be followed by others. The economy referred to is yet another saving on staff salaries. Instead of funding a Quality Officer in every council administration, the government is reducing the number of posts to one for five or six councils. The officials claim that this situation will encourage communication and allow one council to learn from another. They would say that, wouldn't they?

So, a role continues for the stalwart AHSS Cases Panels to maintain vigilant. The Strathclyde Group still meets to discuss cases every Wednesday at 6pm in the meeting room of 42 Miller Street in Glasgow. We welcome anyone, with some knowledge and a strong commitment, to join us.

Audrey Gardner | Cases Panel Convener

Tayside & East Fife CASEWORK

NORTH EAST FIFE

The year began with a public exhibition of London architects Flanagan Lawrence's plans for an £8 million **Music School for the University of St Andrews**. The new building will form a courtyard with the Bute Medical School Building, a site presently occupied by temporary cabins and a carpark. It is heartening to see good modern design complementing traditional architecture.

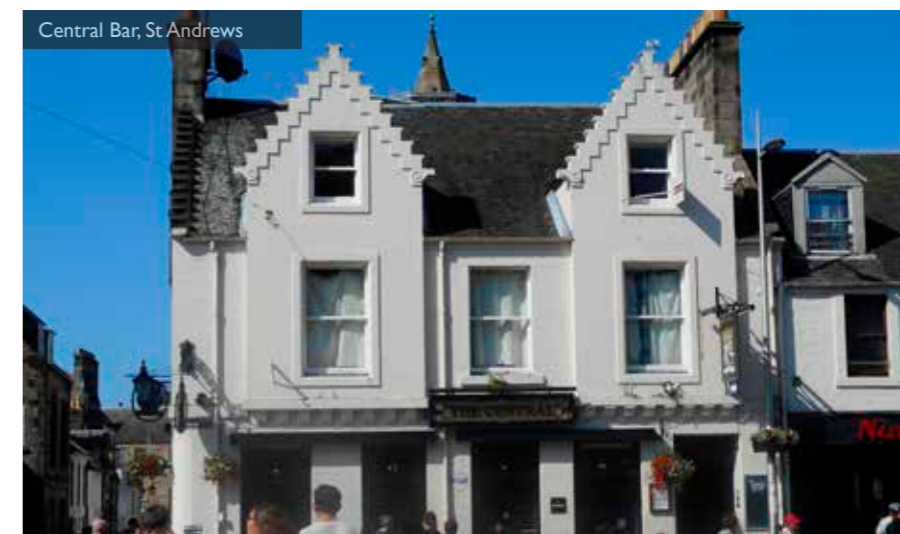
Less welcome was an application for a utilitarian single-storey flat-roofed extension within the old garden wall at **4 Louden's Close, St Andrews**. This is one of the least altered closes in town, preserved by St Andrews Preservation Trust which first bought properties there in 1939. The plans involved breaching the gable of circa 1800 with a through-and-through modern fireplace. Historic Environment Scotland also opposed the scale, design and choice of materials. Mercifully, the plans were withdrawn.

It's always pleasing to report the rescue of a building from the Buildings at Risk Register. **222 High Street, Leslie**, a category C-listed early-19th century terrace house, has been derelict for 20 years. Fife Council issued a compulsory purchase order in 2014 and the house has now been sold to a restoring purchaser.

Once more in St Andrews, **Upper Step Rock House** at 2 Gillespie Terrace is a fine villa of 1849 by local architect, George Ray. An additional storey was to be added onto the roof - the least altered roofscape on the Scores. The application has been withdrawn.

17 George Street, Cellardyke, is a charming category B-listed small house within the Conservation Area. Here, the owners wished to install a double-width cat-slide dormer on the front and, on the garden side, a wide UPVC patio door with a cabrio window in the roof. (A cabrio window is a Velux window cum balcony). We objected to these alterations as they would ruin the proportions of the existing structure. However, the plans were approved but without the fancy cabrio window. The patio door was allowed as long as it was of timber construction!

In Pittenweem, **28 Mid Shore** also involve replacement windows. Here, the owner



Blebo Stables near Pitscottie



wanted to enlarge them, making them taller. Our view was that the scale and proportions of a little house were of the greatest importance. Nevertheless, the plans were passed. Doors and larger windows were to be simply white painted timber, walls to be smooth finished lime render with rainwater goods of cast iron. Eventually, no one will even remember!

Back in St Andrews, this time our concern was simply what colour to paint the bar frontage of the **Central Bar, 77 Market Street**. At present, this corbelled and crowstepped building at the corner of College Street is painted a cream colour. The Greene King Pub Company wanted to have the ground floor painted dark green which would obscure the articulation and detailing of the façade. However, Fife Planning Department agreed with our Panel that dark green was an inappropriate colour for the ground floor of the Central Bar. A paler stone colour will probably be chosen instead.

The most recent application chosen for comment is at **Blebo Stables near Pitscottie**. Although category C-listed, together with Blebo House and its lodge the group of buildings are B-listed. The stables are mid-19th century but were remodelled in 1903 by James Findlay, architect of the baronial additions to Blebo House. The plan is to create three new windows on the main frontage, copying one existing window. No details are offered for the window rybats which ought to be in matching stone to the fine ashlar façade. The existing small panes are to be replaced with bigger ones. The building has great character and the Cases Panel believe the present glazing pattern more appropriate to its period. Oversized dormers are also proposed for what is essentially a single-storey structure which, again, we feel is inappropriate.

Peter Davidson | Cases Secretary
pp.davidson@btinternet.com

My Favourite Building:

Bridge of Dun, Angus
MARTIN ROBERTSON



Scottish bridges are presently in the news, with the opening of Queensferry Crossing, and with negotiations continuing about funding the refurbishment of the Union Chain Bridge over the Tweed ahead of its bicentenary in 2020. Scotland is a land of many rivers and, of necessity, many bridges so they play a very significant role in our heritage.

There are about 2,000 listed bridges in Scotland, ranging in age from the medieval Old Bridge in Dumfries, to the Forth Road Bridge opened in 1964. They are constructed in many ways; of stone, brick, wrought and cast iron, steel, concrete, and in various combinations, as well as the one remaining all-timber railway trestle at Aultnaslanach on the mainline south of Inverness. Some have vital townscape importance, such as the North Bridge in Edinburgh, Perth and Ayr Bridges. Some are important in engineering terms, for example Craigellachie (major cast-iron span, 1814), the Forth Bridge (first major all steel bridge, 1890), Ballochmyle Viaduct (widest masonry span in the world when built, 1848), Glenfinnan Viaduct (first major concrete bridge in Britain, 1898), Laigh Milton Viaduct (world's first multi-span railway bridge, 1812), Union Chain Bridge (world's oldest major metal suspension bridge, 1820), and the Tay Railway Bridge (possibly the largest wrought iron structure in the world, 1887). Some were designed by Scottish engineers and architects famed throughout the world; Thomas Telford, James Miller, John Rennie the Elder, William and Robert Adam, William Arrol and Robert McAlpine. Finally, there are those with historic and romantic connections; Sterling Bridge, Brig o' Doon at Alloway, and Clachan Bridge, the 'Bridge over the Atlantic'. Think of Scotland without them all; it would be a diminished place.

The bridge I have chosen as my favourite is Bridge of Dun. It is a handsome sandstone ashlar construction of three wide segmental arches standing in an open landscape and crossing the River South Esk just above the point where it joins Montrose Basin. The provenance is certain as it carries an inscription on the south-east obelisk which records, 'This bridge was founded on the 7th June 1785 and finished on the 27th January 1787 by Alexander Stevens.'

What makes this bridge so unusual and attractive is the decoration that has been added to take it beyond the strictly utilitarian; the kind of feature one would expect in a designed landscape. The long ramped approaches on either side are divided into three compartments, the outermost with a segmental flood arch, the

innermost with sunk double crosses with trefoil heads. Obelisks decorate the top of each approach and short quatrefoil spired pillars the bottom. The obelisks will have been inspired by Wade's Bridge at Aberfeldy, designed by William Adam in 1733, but the trefoils, quatrefoils, and the prow-shaped refuges carried on free-standing quatrefoil columns rising from bull-faced cutwaters, are very unusual features and were possibly inspired by the quirky neo-Gothic designs of Batty Langley (1696-1751).

Before 1787 the traveller from Arbroath to Stonehaven and Aberdeen via Montrose had to go around by Brechin Bridge, some seven miles upstream on the South Esk, or risk the ferry at Montrose. Brechin Bridge was medieval in origin and needed a major rebuild by Alexander Stevens in 1786. At the same time Bridge of Dun provided a shorter route around Montrose Basin, a saving of about nine miles. The more obvious place for a bridge on the coast road was at Montrose itself, where the river was dangerously tidal. Stevens turned his attention to this, building Montrose Bridge, all in timber, which opened ten years later in 1796. This meant that Bridge of Dun became largely redundant, apart from carrying local traffic and providing a better approach to William Adam's House of Dun.

We don't know much about Alexander Stevens (c.1730-1796) but his surviving bridges show that he was a more than competent engineer-builder. His obituary in the *Gentleman's Magazine* records that he had "in the course of the last forty years erected more stone bridges... than any man in these kingdoms... The North of England and Scotland exhibit numberless works of his execution." Other handsome surviving bridges known to be by him include Drygrange Bridge over the Tweed, (1779) and Bridge of Ae, (1782) both out of use and little altered, while among those still in heavy use are Ayr New Bridge and particularly Stockbridge in Edinburgh, but these have had to suffer for the additional traffic they now carry.

We must help foster public appreciation of these wonderful artefacts, among which the Bridge of Dun is a stylish reminder of the enduring qualities of 18th century design, and of the largely unsung heritage of the Scottish mason-builders. Telford himself began as an apprentice mason, and there are many others. Do go and see my favourite bridge, and on the way there give a thought to the many other listed ones you may cross - one of them could become your favourite! ■

Events Programme 2017-18

More events will be added throughout the year and some details may be subject to change. For the latest events and information visit www.ahss.org.uk/events

NATIONAL EVENTS

Saturday 28th October, 11am
61st Annual General Meeting
The Engine Shed, Stirling
For more information read the enclosed booking form or visit www.ahss.org.uk/agm2017

Friday 4th–Monday 7th May 2018
National Study Tour:
Galloway and Kirkcudbright
For more information read the enclosed booking form or visit www.ahss.org.uk/studytour2018

DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY

Wednesday 11th October, 11.30am
Dumfries House Gardens and Auchinleck House

Saturday 9th December, 12.30pm
Christmas lunch (£17.50)
The Willow Tree, Palnackie

For more information and to book your place contact:
andy_j_mcnab@hotmail.com

FORTH & BORDERS

All lectures take place at 6.30pm at St Andrew's and St George's West Church, 13 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 2PA. Admission: £5 (£2.50 students). Non-members welcome. Members may attend six lectures for £25.

Monday 2nd October
Edinburgh's Unbuilt 'Opera House', 1960-1975
This talk, by Dr Alistair Fair, examines the infamous proposals of 1960-1975 for a major new theatre in central Edinburgh that were a regular fixture in the local press.

Monday 6th November
British architects, landscape designers and gardeners in Russia
This lecture, by Dr Patricia Andrew, will focus on the legacy of British (particularly Scottish) architects, garden designers and engineers in Russia. This is a joint event with *Scotland's Garden and Landscape Heritage*.

Monday 4th December
Training the City: Built Heritage Legacy of a Railway Battle
Tom Parnell's talk looks at railways in Edinburgh, particularly the dash for Leith in the later 19th century, examining what might have been, what was lost and what legacy survives today.

Wednesday 13th December, 7-9pm
Christmas Party at Riddle's Court
Members (and potential members!) are warmly invited to join us at the newly refurbished Patrick Geddes Centre for Learning in Edinburgh for some food and festivities. Tickets are £15 and can be ordered using the form enclosed with this magazine or by contacting caroline.mcfarlane@gmail.com

Monday 5th February 2018
Heroines of the Canongate: Urban Reform in Edwardian Old Town
Dr Elizabeth Darling offers us a different perspective on urban reform in the Old Town, highlighting the many women working around the same time as Patrick Geddes, and the change they effected in environments in and around the Canongate.

Monday 12th March
William Adam and Formal Landscape Design in Scotland 1720-1745
Louisa Humm's lecture investigates how Adam's garden designs related to contemporary and earlier fashions in Scotland and England. Featured estates include Newliston and Blair Crambeth.

Monday 9th April
The Collapse of Holyrood Abbey Church in 1768
Dr Dimitris Theodossopoulos's talk sheds light onto the collapse of Holyrood Abbey Church, following the puzzling substitution of decaying roof trusses with masonry walls in 1760.

NORTH EAST

We hope to arrange more visits in 2018. Please check the AHSS website for more information.

Amanda Booth, Events Convener
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Email: ajb@amandabooth.co.uk
Please make cheques payable to "AHSS"

Saturday 23rd September
Visit to Craigston Castle, Turriff
Please note that this event was cancelled due to the sad death of the owner.

Saturday 28th October, 2pm
Visit to Kingcausie House, Maryculter (£12 including tea)
The house originates from the 16th century and features extensive baronial extensions. By kind permission of Mr and Mrs Henry Irvine-Fortescue.

Thursday 23rd November, 12.30pm
Lunch at Advocates Library, Aberdeen, (£30 including two course buffet lunch and wine.)
With talk by Mr William Paton, on the life and work of James Byers of Tonley, 18th-century artist, art dealer and architect.

STRATHCLYDE

All lectures are at Adelaides, 209 Bath Street, Glasgow. Tea and coffee from 7pm with lectures starting at 7.30pm. Admission £4 (students free), season ticket for all five lectures: £16. For further information visit www.ahss.org.uk/events or contact Audrey Gardner: 0141 339 1205.

Thursday 26th October, 7.30pm
Mackintosh's Willow Tea Rooms
John Sanders of Simpson and Brown Architects gives a fascinating insight into the ongoing restoration project.

Thursday 30th November, 7.30pm
Glasgow Necropolis
Nigel Willis of the Friends of the Necropolis takes us on a virtual tour of the burial place of those that turned Glasgow into "The Second City of the British Empire".

Thursday 25th January 2018, 7.30pm
Glasgow's Cinema Experiment
Gordon Barr and Gary Painter explore the city's full and rich cinema heritage, from 'back-court' theatres to the finest Art Deco super-cinemas.

Thursday 22nd February, 7.30pm
The Enigma of Sir John James Burnet
Niall Murphy, Deputy Director of the Glasgow City Heritage Trust discusses the career and buildings of Glasgow's third architect with an international reputation: JJ Burnet. Despite a talent equal to Thomson and Mackintosh, and an even more stellar career, Burnet remains something of an unknown.

Thursday 29th March, 7.30pm
Glasgow's Traditional Shopfronts
Iain Wotherspoon, Chairman of the AHSS Strathclyde Group will illustrate some of our finest (and most under-rated) streetscape assets: our Victorian and Edwardian shopfronts.

TAYSIDE & EAST FIFE

Tuesdays from February 2018, 6-9pm
Dundee Conservation Lectures
Two talks are organised for each evening and are free to attend. Jointly organised and hosted by the University of Dundee. For more information visit www.ahss.org.uk/events.

At A Glance. . .

OCTOBER

- 02 F&B Edinburgh's Unbuilt Opera House
- 11 D&G Dumfries House Gardens and Auchinleck House
- 26 ST Willow Tea Rooms restoration talk
- 28 NE Kingcausie House visit
- 28 NAT AGM at The Engine Shed

NOVEMBER

- 06 F&B British architects, landscape designers and gardeners in Russia talk
- 23 NE Lunch and talk by William Paton at Advocates Library
- 30 ST Glasgow Necropolis talk

DECEMBER

- 04 F&B Railways in Edinburgh talk
- 09 D&G Christmas Lunch
- 13 F&B Christmas Party at Riddle's Court

JANUARY

- 25 ST Glasgow's cinemas talk

FEBRUARY

- 05 F&B Heroines of the Canongate talk
- 22 ST Sir John James Burnet talk

MARCH

- 12 F&B William Adam talk
- 29 ST Glasgow's traditional shopfronts talk

APRIL

- 09 F&B Holyrood Abbey Church talk

MAY

- 04 NAT Study Tour: Galloway and Kirkcudbright (4th-7th May)



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