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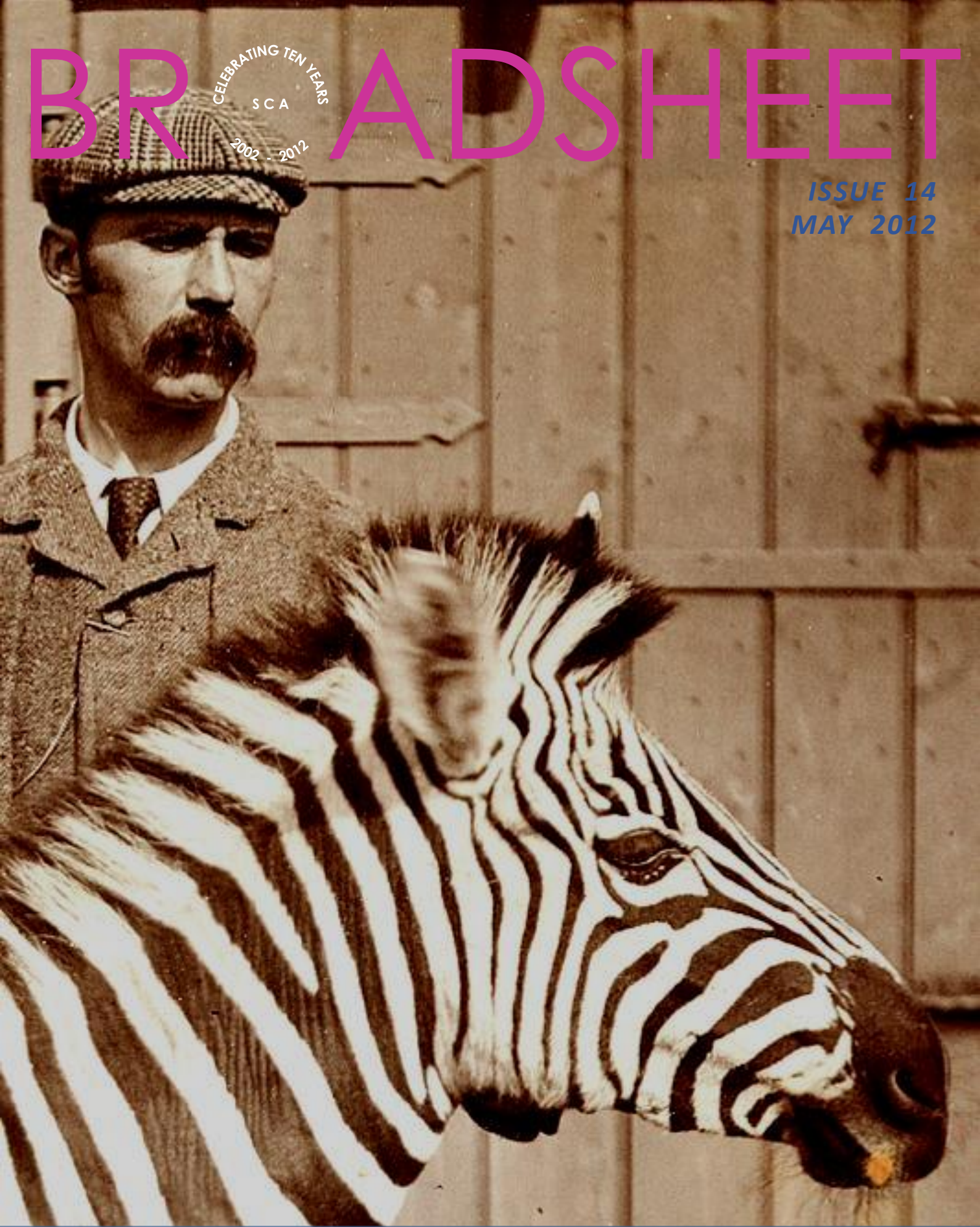
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BRADSHEET

CELEBRATING TEN YEARS
SCA
2002 - 2012

ISSUE 14
MAY 2012



E-Magazine of the

SCOTTISH COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES

WELCOME TO THE ISSUE (number 14)

What do you get when you combine feathers, wax, Rudolph Nureyev and a mountain-climbing Records Manager (not to mention the zebra!)? It may sound like an impossible riddle, but the answer is in fact quite simple—the May edition of *Broadsheet*, featuring the latest news and stories from Scotland's dynamic and varied archives and records management sector.

Although surely never in doubt, it is now official—in the words of some East Lothian children, Archives are awesome (page 10) and have been making their impact known in all manner of ways; from helping to secure Perth's city status (page 7) to preserving the papers of one of Scotland's most important medical families (page 11).

Issue 14 also has an exclusive interview (pages 3-5) with The Keeper of the Records of Scotland and Registrar General, George Mackenzie, who discusses the implementation of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011. We have even found room to feature colleagues from across the Irish Sea at the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) (page 13).

As ever, thanks for reading and enjoy the issue!

The Editorial Team

www.scoarch.org.uk
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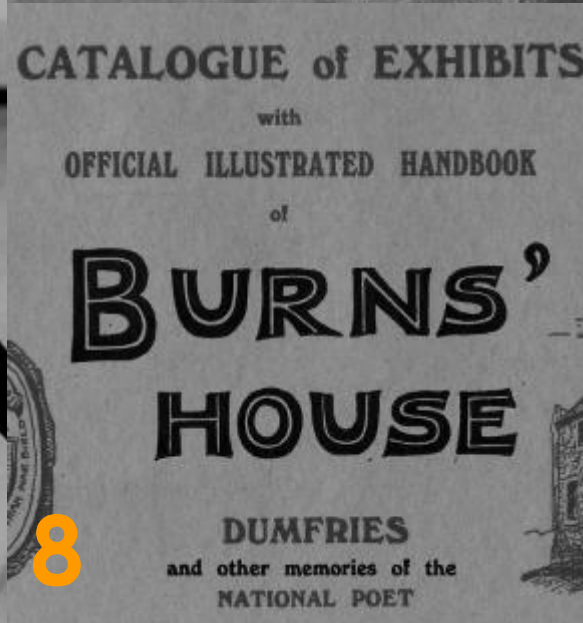
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JC EWART (WITH ZEBRA) Edinburgh University Library Special Collections c.1900 JC Ewart Collection

Edinburgh University Library Special Collections, part of the Centre for Research Collections (CRC), is delighted to report the launch of a Wellcome Trust-funded project 'Towards Dolly: Edinburgh, Roslin and the Birth of Modern Genetics'.

The project will preserve and catalogue the archival records of the Roslin Institute – who famously cloned Dolly the Sheep in 1996 – as well as the records of the University's Institute of Animal Genetics and the papers of key geneticists such as C.H Waddington (1905-1975), F.A.E Crew (1886-1973) and zoologist J.C Ewart (1851-1933) who appears in the image above. As well as revealing the fascinating human story behind the science, the records are an invaluable resource for research on the history of science and medicine.

A Project Archivist and Book Cataloguer have been appointed to catalogue the records and printed collections, which will be made available online via national networks as well as a bespoke project website. We are looking forward to making these collections more accessible for academic, historical and educational uses, as well as further expanding and developing our genetics collections for potential future projects.

'Towards Dolly' will run until 2014 and we will keep everyone posted about progress on the project blog—<http://towardsdolly.wordpress.com>

For any further information please contact the Project Archivist, Clare Button, on clare.button@ed.ac.uk

by CLARE BUTTON

Archivist, Special Collections Edinburgh University Library



'Sample Feathers', 1935 Institute for Animal Genetics Collection. Both the Ewart and Animal Genetics collections will be catalogued as part of the project.

Images courtesy of Edinburgh University Library

PUBLIC RECORDS (SCOTLAND) ACT 2011

BROADSHEET EXCLUSIVE

The Public Records (Scotland) Act received Royal Assent on 20 April 2011. This new legislation is the first in Scotland for over 70 years and is designed to improve the quality of record keeping in Public Authorities.

One year on since the Letters Patent were sealed with the Great Seal (images courtesy of National Records of Scotland Conservation Department), George Mackenzie, Keeper of the Records of Scotland, has launched a public consultation on the draft Model Records Management Plan. Broadsheet marks this crucial milestone with an exclusive interview.

Do you think that the consultative approach used in relation to the implementation of the Act could have even wider application in the archives and records management sector?

I welcome the positive way that the sector responded to our request to take part in the process. Without that we would not have been able to make as much progress as we have with implementation, which started formally with the establishment of a Stakeholder Forum. The Minister was very keen that the Act received as much stakeholder buy-in as possible and the Forum was the best way of achieving this. Having the Keeper's Model Records Management Plan and Guidance drafted in collaboration with public sector colleagues offered the best possible way of finding solutions that would meet the expectations of the community.

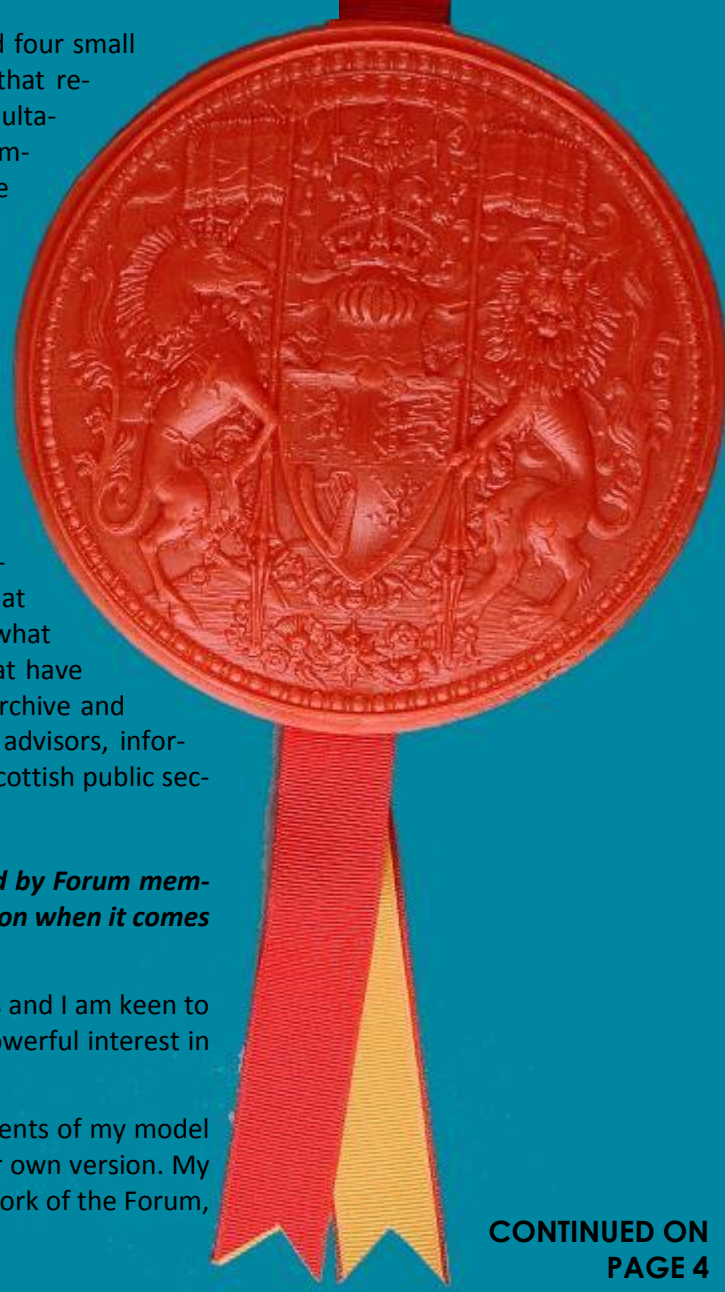
The Forum had representation from over 40 bodies and it supported four small sub-groups that were set up to consider areas of specific interest that required particular solutions to help with the implementation. The consultation further established an online discussion board hosted by the Communities of Practice website which drew comments, views and advice from the wider public sector. By the end of the consultation in December, over 80 bodies were involved.


As Keeper, I have always valued consultation with professional colleagues, but the Public Records Act consultation has been more involved than any before. It is truly collaborative, has been a positive experience and has helped shape the Model Plan and Guidance Document. These products are currently being publicly consulted on through the Scottish Government's website (<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/02/1995>). Working closely with professional colleagues on the implementation of the Act continues to be hugely beneficial to us and, I hope, to all concerned. What we're doing is ground-breaking and seeks to change the nature of what we do in Scotland. I hope we can maintain the new connections that have been made. This extends beyond our immediate colleagues in the archive and records management professions to include record creators, policy advisors, information architects and senior managers of services across the wider Scottish public sector.

The Guidance was in part informed by sample documents submitted by Forum members. Do you regard such sharing of information as the default position when it comes to implementation of the Act?

Yes, this was one part of that positive response from Forum members and I am keen to build on it in the future. I think the whole sector has a shared and powerful interest in getting the implementation right.

I have to produce and maintain guidance to explain the various elements of my model records management plan and thereby help authorities produce their own version. My draft guidance document was developed to a large extent from the work of the Forum, though we will also be drawing on submissions to the consultation.





Scottish Ministers were keen for public authorities to avoid creating guidance from scratch if existing advice could be used or adapted for the new Act. It was important to make all scheduled authorities aware of guidance that already existed or was being developed, and of examples of good practice. The Forum, particularly the sub-group on this, proved to be an exceptionally good vehicle for giving assistance, as was the Communities of Practice online discussion board. Colleagues were keen to share their experience and knowledge of generic good practice and of in-house solutions where appropriate. We must continue this sharing. My staff will draw on it to keep the guidance up to date and fit for purpose.

Do you see the role of the Keeper under the Act as having any potential for misunderstanding and, if so, how would you guard against such misunderstanding?

We worked hard to engage with professional colleagues and others over the detail of the Act. We took great pains to allay fears and correct misunderstandings with stakeholders while the Bill was going through. This work necessarily extended to our private and voluntary sector colleagues. Many of them understandably had little detailed knowledge of the role of the Keeper of the Records of Scotland. We had a couple of extended sessions describing and debating the Bill's aims and the roles of those affected, particularly in the non-public sector. By taking the time to explain the role of the Keeper and the details of the proposals we gained the understanding of those who were initially concerned about what it would mean for them.

The Act itself is clear about roles. The Keeper is responsible for the implementation of the Act. The Act obliges named public authorities to prepare, submit and implement a records management plan approved by the Keeper, while the Keeper has to assist authorities by publishing a model plan and guidance. The Act gives the Keeper authority to scrutinise records management plans and their implementation by authorities. The Keeper is also obliged to submit an annual report to Ministers.

The way to guard against misunderstanding is to continue to engage fully with public sector colleagues, particularly in the run up to full implementation in January 2013. We will of course continue to engage with stakeholders beyond that and assist with all aspects of the Act.

As implementation proceeds differences in interpretation of the Act, the Model Plan and the Guidance may emerge. Will the Keeper offer interpretation guidance as and when issues arise?

I consider continuing engagement with stakeholders, beyond implementation, to be central to the long term success of the Act. Part of the purpose of continuing engagement is to ensure that the content of the Model Plan and Guidance Document is regularly updated, but it will also help minimise the potential for misinterpretation and misunderstanding.

Section 5 of the Act makes provision for the review of an authority's records management plan, but I cannot instigate a review of an agreed plan before five years has elapsed, unless there is evidence that it is not being properly adhered to. However, authorities are encouraged to keep their systems under review and resubmit any updated plan to me for further agreement. This will hopefully lead to useful feedback about evolving in-house records management solutions which will help keep my Guidance Document up to date. It will also however have the effect of familiarising colleagues with their obligations under the Act and the details of their own RMP. By encouraging familiarity through review and continuous assessment of RMPs we will hopefully reduce the potential for any misunderstanding or misinterpretation of what is required.

Might the links to best-practice guidelines elsewhere be usefully developed through the medium of conferences, workshops, etc., that draw on those guidelines so that Scottish public authorities benefit to the full from the experience of others?

Engaging fully with public sector colleagues throughout the implementation period and beyond will include conferences and workshop events and meeting colleagues by request. I've spoken at several events now around the development and implementation of the Act and we have used these events to listen to and learn from colleagues' views. The Keeper's Guidance Document is the first step, if you like, in making sure that best practice guidelines already in use in the public sector are shared effectively. However, we are keen to further publicise these tools and take advice and suggestions on what else we might add to the formal Guidance Document through the medium of organised events. I'm conscious also that the guidance underpinning the Model Plan will need to be monitored to ensure it remains up-to-date and therefore fit for purpose. Meeting colleagues in a conference or workshop environment is a sensible way to do this. Whilst my staff will work to keep the Guidance Document up to date we will, of course, look to our colleagues in the sector to advise us on important records management developments.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5



Will NRS analyse the responses to the consultation so that an overview is available to public authorities and others?

Yes, this is an important part of the consultation process, and it's made clear to people responding that their answers will be made public unless they specifically withhold permission. I view the current consultation as continuing the process of joint development and I encourage colleagues to submit their views on the draft Model Plan and Guidance. Comments received will be fed into the development of the final versions of these products. Following the closing date (18 May 2012), all responses will be analysed and considered along with any other available evidence to help us finalise the Keeper's Model Plan and Guidance Document as required under the terms of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011.

Following this consultation and analysis of the responses, I propose to publish both an overview of responses and those for which permission has been given. Where respondents have given permission, responses will be made available to the public in the Scottish Government Library. Anyone interested in accessing responses can make arrangements to view them by contacting the Scottish Government Library. Responses can be copied and sent to you, but I understand the Library may charge for this service.

Might the Keeper respond to significant concerns, misinterpretation or misunderstandings that emerge from the consultation?

Yes, I will be seeking to ensure that colleagues raising concerns or those who are clearly misunderstanding or misinterpreting the draft Model Plan are provided with answers and useful clarification. All responses to the consultation will of course be given due consideration and where appropriate I will consider amending the Model Plan and Guidance Document in relation to responses. I have also indicated that, depending on the result of the consultation, I will consider reconvening the Stakeholder Forum to inform colleagues of issues raised and possible outcomes. Such a meeting might also provide a forum at which to revisit any relevant issues raised during the consultation.

Would it be the intention to set up a mechanism to ensure that there is on-going feedback from public authorities?

I'm clear we have all benefited from collaboration, not just about implementing the Act, but including the earlier review of public records legislation following the Shaw Report. Bringing together archivists, records managers, ICT experts, policy advisors and records creators from the public and non-public sectors to collectively consider the best way forward for records management in Scotland worked.

We will certainly continue to engage with the community directly and respond to feedback. I also recognise the value of the facilitator role that we played in bringing public authorities together to discuss records management issues. The important thing is to keep the collaborative momentum that we've all benefited from in getting this far. I don't have fixed views on how we can best carry this forward but I would be interested to hear the views of colleagues.

Will a statistical analysis inform any annual report on progress with implementation?

The Act requires the Keeper to prepare an annual report and submit it to Scottish Ministers by 31 March each year.

The Act is quite clear about what the annual report must contain - information about records management plans and revised records management plans agreed with the Keeper during the course of the previous year, information about any records management reviews carried out by the Keeper and details of any action notices issued by the Keeper during the year, the names of any authorities that have failed to comply with any of the requirements of an action notice together with details of the alleged failures. The report can include other information and we are considering what that might be. The main thing is to ensure the report is accessible and effective in delivering all relevant information to Ministers and at the same time publicising the importance of good record keeping.

Broadsheet would like to thank George Mackenzie, the Public Records (Scotland) Act Implementation Team and the National Records of Scotland Conservation Department.

Theft, Bribery and Drunken Gatekeepers In The City Of The Dead

GLASGOW NECROPOLIS

Wun Fung Chan is a geographer working at the University of Strathclyde. On visiting Glasgow City Archives he came across nine Necropolis Committee books containing some lively insights into Victorian landscapes of death...

What is a necropolis? Indeed, what does it take to build a city of the dead? In the case of the Glasgow Necropolis, an answer to these questions has tended to be found by those on foot; the stories of this city within a city have been learned on various walking tours and guided trails that date from William Strang's "A Companion to the Necropolis" in 1836 up to Ruth Johnston's more recent account, "Afterlives" (2007).

Reflecting on each of these beautiful guides and their emphasis on offering detailed biographic sketches of those interred, it might be concluded that the Merchants House of Glasgow achieved one of their objectives when they opened the Necropolis for business in 1833. After all, amongst the aspirations of the Merchants House to improve sanitary conditions in Glasgow and create revenue for a charitable institution, there was also a belief that each tombstone would speak with a "small voice, which is deeply instructive". In a sense, a walk around the Necropolis was intended to be an education on the successes and virtues of those no longer alive.

That said the documents housed in the Glasgow Archive provide a rich opportunity to ascertain another, equally intimate, reflection on the building of necropolis. Here the records within the collection demonstrate that as meaningful as the tombs and monuments may be, equally important to the development of this rarely considered form of urbanism was the erection of an ever evolving infrastructure. On the 30 July 1836, the Necropolis Committee reported that most of the work on the roads, drains and walls was complete, but this was a far more dynamic process than might initially be imagined. The wall of the Necropolis was an outcome of removing tenants from a row of houses along what was known as Kirk Lane. Other "dilapidated" houses occupied by "stealth" were also taken down and a temporary enclosing wall was made up of "broken glass" left over from the demolition. Later, the precise demarcation of the Necropolis wall was to prove to be a key issue in a longstanding dispute with an adjacent landowner, Hugh Tennent.

In addition to the physical structure of the Necropolis, the archive also indicates something of the culture of mourning in the 19th century. James Stevens Curl, a cemetery historian, has carefully documented what he called a "Victorian celebration of death", but what the collection in the Glasgow Archive demonstrates is the establishment of such a culture for mourning was a constant struggle. Within the minutes of the nine Necropolis Committee books there are reports of intruders, rumours of bribery, inebriated gatekeepers, theft, accidents and deaths of workers and animals, as well as the selling of plots of burial land without official record.

A photograph or two may go some way towards illustrating the richness of life and death in this city of the dead. But, equally, there is little doubt that an examination of the archive provokes and inspires other understandings of the landscapes that surround us.

By WUN FUNG CHAN



PERTH: THE FAIR CITY

Archives in Action

The 14 March 2012 proved a busy day in the Council Archive as the media sought interviews from the archivist about the background to Perth's successful bid to have HM the Queen restore its historical status as a city. The King James VI Golden Charter to Perth of 1600 which makes reference to the place as a "free city and regal and royal burgh" was the main star.

Despite reports to the contrary its various custodians over the last 400 years have been well aware of the charter's existence and it hasn't just been "discovered". However, it certainly came under closer scrutiny as Perth and Kinross Council questioned why it wasn't entitled to describe Perth as a city, especially as the grant of this status to Stirling and Inverness set the precedent of a city existing within a larger administrative unit. A meeting of the council in 2005 called by Provost Bob Scott and held in the old City Chambers re-asserted its belief that Perth was still a city and the 1600 charter and various other persuasive items from the Council Archive were displayed for the elected members and invited media. These included various Acts of Parliament referring to the City of Perth, the matriculated coat of arms of the City and Royal Burgh of Perth and, of course, extracts from Sir Walter Scott's *Fair Maid of Perth* (Edinburgh, 1828) in which he makes numerous references to Perth as the Fair City.

The campaign was taken up by Provost John Hulbert, who recognised that the only way to settle the issue was to receive the consent of the Queen. The Diamond Jubilee presented the ideal opportunity to have Perth's city status restored, although reports that only one place in the UK would be honoured did



Illuminated initial from precept of sasine conform to the charter of King James VI, 13 February 1601

© Perth and Kinross Council Archive

come as a setback. Provost Hulbert used the occasion of the Perth 800 Conference in 2010 - *Perth: a Place in History* - to urge a more than willing audience to get behind the campaign. The outcome has been that along with Chelmsford in England and St Asaphs in Wales, Perth has been named as a city in honour of the Diamond Jubilee. The support the council received from the Lord Lieutenant, the parliamentary representatives, the local press, and Perth's movers and shakers has been crucial in the successful outcome of the campaign. The vox pops on the telly also suggest that most of Perth's citizens are quite chuffed as well.

The Council Archive staff like to think that the evidence they were able to provide for the bid document also played a significant part in the successful outcome and we are happy to give the charter another airing when the Queen visits in the summer.

COMMENT

Provost John Hulbert

One of the important criteria for Perth's City Status was historical precedent. We claimed that Perth was a city (up until 1975), and that it had been the capital of Scotland. However, there was no document to prove it, and many were sceptical of the claim.

Steve Connelly's work was hugely important in amassing the evidence to prove Perth's capital lineage, beginning with the establishment of the Kingdom of Scotland in around 843 in nearby Scone, then capital of Scotland in the first centuries of the second millennium, loss of capital status after the murder of James I in 1437, but official second city of Scotland until 1975. Steve's work on this and on Perth's charters, particularly the King William Charter of 1210, and the Golden Charter of 1600 has been invaluable.

By STEVE CONNELLY

Archivist, Perth and Kinross Council

Councillor Hulbert is the Provost and the Convener of Perth and Kinross Council

THE NATIONAL BURNS COLLECTION:

An online catalogue and the digitisation of Robert Burns material

The National Burns Collection (NBC) comprises manuscripts, books, relics, art and memorabilia. These items provide a fascinating insight into the life and work of Scotland's National Bard, Robert Burns. As part of the Museum Galleries Scotland (MGS) project, Enhancing Access: Robert Burns, I have responsibility for delivering the redevelopment of the NBC website (www.burnsscotland.com) and the digitisation of material across the partnership. This 12 month project is already past the half way mark and in the next few months the new site will launch.

The current website represents the first port of call for many people wanting to learn more about the organisation, however it is in dire need of some TLC. Working in collaboration with a web developer, I strongly believe the new site will deliver a much more dynamic resource for the end user. By maximising access to NBC collections, the project aims to inspire interest in the casual visitor and deepening the understanding of those already familiar with Burns.

Along with the redevelopment of the NBC site, the project also involves the digitisation of material. This itself provides its own challenges as keeping track of what needs to be updated, created, and catalogued can be tricky. In terms of both significance and number of objects, the NBC is the largest distributed collection of material relating to Robert Burns in the world. There are already over 2000 items available on the site, but soon hundreds more will be made available for users.



On a personal level, having recently completed the Information Management and Preservation course at the University of Glasgow, it's great to be able to put the theoretical and practical skills into use. One of the most rewarding aspects is working with professionals across disciplines to deliver a valuable resource for both the general public and academics alike. From establishing social media initiatives, to cataloguing and digitising material, this project has enabled me to explore both traditional and contemporary archival techniques.

It is hoped that the impact of the project will be wide ranging. The redeveloped site will give fresh impetus to our partnerships, whilst creating a stimulating resource that utilises parts of the collection for new audiences to explore. The project also provides a timely reminder of the importance of collaboration and open access, not just across archival institutions, but the heritage community and beyond.

You can find out more by visiting the Project Blog at www.burnsscotland.wordpress.com and please keep a look out for the launch of the brand new NBC website in the coming months.

By CHRISTOPHER FRYER

Project Officer – Robert Burns, Dumfries & Galloway Council

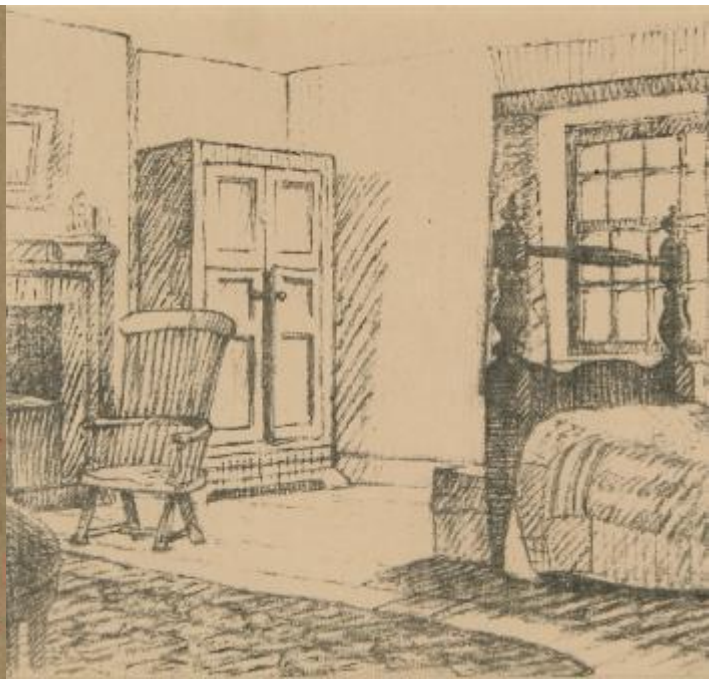
Above: Postcard depicting Burns and Highland Mary. **Below left:** Cover of the Illustrated Handbook for Burns House. **Right:** Sketch of the interior of Burns House, Dumfries. Images courtesy of Dumfries Museum & Camera Obscura

CATALOGUE of EXHIBITS

with
OFFICIAL ILLUSTRATED HANDBOOK
of

BURNS' HOUSE

DUMFRIES
and other memories of the
NATIONAL POET



Continuing *Broadsheet's* series of Favourite Items, Vice-Chair of the SCA, Patricia Whatley, discusses one of the world's greatest photographic legacies—the Michael Peto collection at the University of Dundee.

In 1939 Michael Peto, accompanied by his wife-to-be, Ilona, and her young family, fled Nazi-occupied Budapest to London, two weeks before the border closed. Previously involved in the Hungarian craft movement, Peto taught himself photography, encouraged by his close friend, the artist Josef Herman. One of the lesser-known Hungarian photographers of the twentieth century, which contains Capa and Brassai, Peto brought to photo-journalism a dedication to the human form through the use of natural lighting and surroundings together with a personal viewpoint.

His photographs feature people. They include the Hungarian political scene in the immediate post-war era, circa 8,000 negatives produced during a five month tour of Save the Children Fund overseas establishments in India, Africa and Tibet and many personalities from politics and the arts during the 1950s and 1960s along with a fine coverage of the London ballet 'rehearsal' scene of the period, during which Rudolph Nureyev (pictured) arrived.

Peto was official photographer to Prospect Productions, based in Oxford, featuring top actors including John Bailey, Eleanor Bron, Timothy Dalton, Derek Jacobi, Ian McKellen and Timothy West. He took some of the only surviving photographs of CS Lewis and his wife Joy and unique shots of Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor, during the recording of *Under Milk Wood* (broadcast in 1954). Colin Jones, photographer, a former ballet dancer at the Royal Ballet, says 'Most of the photographers were concentrating on making the dancers look absolutely fabulous, but Michael wanted to go backstage and photograph the difficulties, the struggles, the sweat. He wanted to see what it was really like, not just the glamorous side. He inspired me to become a photographer.'

His collection, totalling almost 130,000 negatives and prints, was donated to the University of Dundee by his stepson Michael Fodor - one of the young children who escaped from Hungary with Peto - following his death on Christmas Day 1970. Since then essential preservation work has been carried out on the collection, 20,000 images have been digitised and a book and touring exhibition 'Now These Days are Gone' featuring photographs of the Beatles, has been produced. However, much remains to be done and a strategy to develop the collection is currently underway. The strategy will be launched next month, providing opportunities to preserve the collection for future generations and to raise awareness of Michael Peto's significant contribution to photojournalism.

For further information contact Patricia Whatley, University Archivist, University of Dundee, Dundee DD1 4HN, p.e.whatley@dundee.ac.uk

www.dundee.ac.uk/petocollection



ARCHIVES ARE AWESOME!

The John Gray Centre, East Lothian's much anticipated new Archive & Local History Centre, opened to the public on 30 March. The building also houses a museum and Haddington branch library.

"This place is awesome", "sooo cool" and "The John Gray Centre is absolutely and utterly tremendous" are just some of the comments that have been left by school children and visitors.

Opening day closely followed by the Easter weekend brought over 400 visitors through our doors to events designed both to promote the Archive and Local History Centre and engage with new audiences. *Histories Mystories*, devised by Queen Margaret University theatre company and performed by school children brought characters and stories from the archives to life. *Animating John Gray* was a project whereby secondary school children found out about John Gray's life and produced animations about him, sometimes with a little artis-

tic license. To find out who John Gray was see the results on YouTube - www.youtube.com/museumservice.

Special events aside, since opening nearly 3 weeks ago the Archive and Local History Centre has seen a steady stream of visitors. Some are readers who regularly used the old service and are impressed by the new facilities and increased access to the archive collections. Others have discovered us via publicity and our fabulous new website www.johngraycentre.org which brings together archive, museum, local history and archaeology collections under one searchable portal.

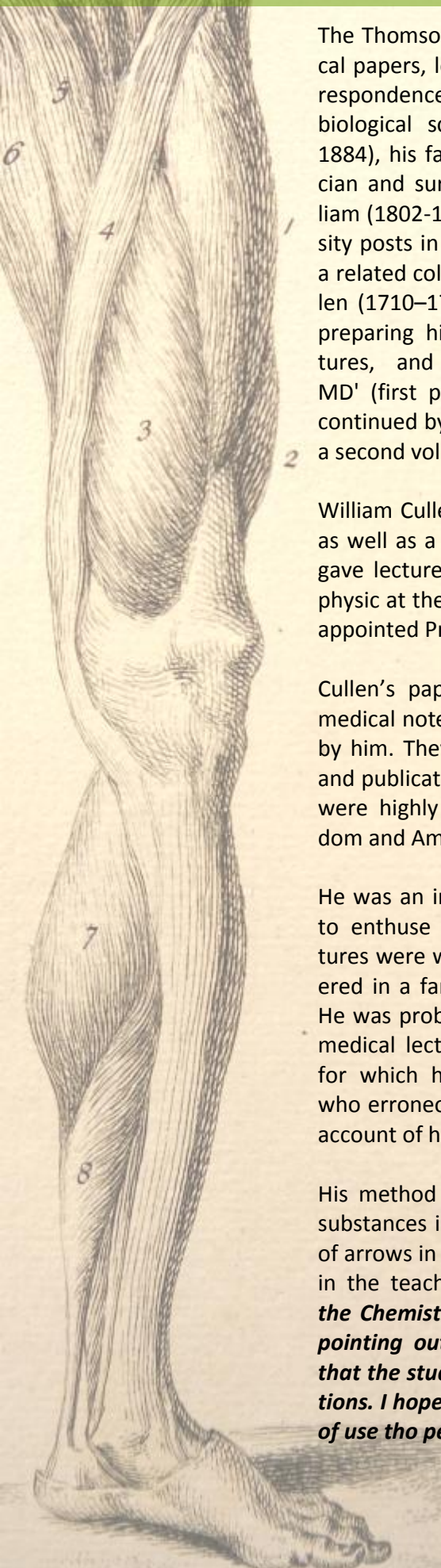
Archive productions are steady but we still have work to do promoting our collections. The return of our official records from the National Records of Scotland (hopefully later this year) will provide a great platform for this. Watch this space!

By RUTH FYFE

Archivist, East Lothian Council



The children who performed *Histories Mystories* in the John Gray Centre



The Thomson Family papers comprise medical papers, lecture notes, drawings and correspondence of an eminent medical family: biological scientist Allen Thomson (1809-1884), his father John (1765-1846), a physician and surgeon and his half brother William (1802-1852). All three men held university posts in Glasgow or Edinburgh. There is a related collection of papers of William Cullen (1710-1790), used by John Thomson in preparing his 'An account of the life, lectures, and writings of William Cullen, MD' (first published 1832). This work was continued by Allen Thomson, who published a second volume of the work in 1859.

William Cullen was a chemist and physician, as well as a noted teacher of medicine. He gave lectures in the theory and practice of physic at the University of Glasgow, and was appointed Professor of Medicine in 1751.

Cullen's papers include drafts of lectures, medical notes, and letters sent and received by him. They are significant as his teaching and publications on the practice of medicine were highly influential in the United Kingdom and America.

He was an inspiring teacher with the ability to enthuse and interest students. His lectures were well constructed, vivid and delivered in a familiar style, usually from notes. He was probably the first teacher to deliver medical lectures in English - an innovation for which he was criticised by colleagues who erroneously rumoured that this was on account of his poor knowledge of Latin.

His method of showing the relationship of substances in chemical reactions by the use of arrows in diagrams was an important step in the teaching of chemistry. As he notes, *the Chemists have given long lists without pointing out connexion or dependence so that the student has only very confused notions. I hope the view we have given will be of use tho perhaps not absolutely perfect.*

The University of Glasgow Library was awarded a grant from the Wellcome Trust to conserve and make these papers available to the public.

The collection includes manuscript ink and printed papers, bound volumes, notebooks, pamphlets, tracings, applied seals, photographic material, watercolours and graphite drawings.

Mechanical damage has led to surface dirt, loss of size, running tears, loss of text and missing areas, folds and creases, damaging repairs, with poor housing and storage prior to being received by the University. Chemical damage has contributed to paper brittleness and ink failure, water damage and discolouration.

A full conservation survey was carried out and has informed remedial treatment by means of mechanical cleaning, iron gall ink and aqueous treatment where appropriate, and repairing items to be returned into improved storage.

As the project nears completion, in one year more than 11,000 items have been cleaned, stabilised and re-housed, ready for consultation in the Special Collections reading room.

For more information please visit <http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/specialcollections/collectionsa-z/thomsonfamilypapers/>

By LOU ROBERTSON ACR

“As the project nears completion, in one year more than 11,000 items have been cleaned, stabilised and re-housed, ready for consultation...”

In cooperation with the Information Management department, the team at Strathclyde Police cover all aspects of records management, including the development, implementation and management of policy for retention schedules; fileplans and information sharing; advise on process and systems development; and provide practical services including scanning, storage, shared drive and e-mail systems administration. The team also liaise with Glasgow City Archives, which holds the archive collection.

Describe Records Management in three words.

My colleague suggested 'No, No, No' because we spend so much time saying 'No, you can't do that...'

Why Records?

I trained as an Archivist/Records Manager on a course that covered both subjects, but my practical training and experience was on business records and more modern records. I think there was a natural progression to records management from that initial interest. I particularly like being involved in the development of processes and systems that, once implemented, help support the organisation, where the benefits to the user are evident.

What projects are you working on at the moment?

We have our ongoing work, including the rollout of a fileplan and related software to manage access to network shares and e-mails, as well as compliance with the Manual of Police Information (MOPI). The two big pieces of work currently developing

are the introduction of the Public Records (Scotland) Act, 2011 and the Police Reform, which will amalgamate the existing units and agencies into a single force for Scotland. It's still too early to tell how that will affect us, but we do know that it will require significant work on records and information throughout Scotland—the next few years will be a tremendously challenging and exciting time professionally.

What do you feel are the main challenges currently faced by the sector?

Digital preservation, especially datasets where we need to preserve without losing the ability to interact with the data.

Keeping up with new formats and systems, whether it be updates to operating systems, cloud computing, social media and whatever is next; our core principles are continually challenged because things that were once impossible are now possible and we have to continually think whether we need to change what we do. Society is now predisposed to believe that all information is available forever; managing expectations against need, risk and value is a greater challenge than ever.

Losing traditional skills and knowledge from the profession and a subsequent failure to properly deal with collections and deliver services as a result is another major concern.

If you had an unlimited budget what would you do?

Provide one-to-one training for users in every record creation process. If the people that create and collate information are accurate and use a process properly it is far easier to manage the resultant data and far better information is available for end users.

I would also provide saturation media coverage to try to dispel some of the misconceptions about data, information, records and archives in general. Getting the facts out would be relatively cheap; bribing the population to watch it would be the costly part!

What has been the highlight of your career so far?

Setting up the records management programme and the records/archive centres at Livingston for the wind-up of the New Town and the transition through local government reorganisation to West Lothian Council. Many records were lost at reorganisation in 1975 in that area, including many valuable archives, so we worked hard to ensure that it didn't happen again. It was a fabulous opportunity to learn new skills and, although with hindsight there are things that I would have done differently, I am still proud of what we achieved.

I'm still hoping for more (positive) highlights to come!



AND FINALLY...

The new Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI), featured in Issue 2 (April 2011) of *Broadsheet*, is situated in Belfast's Titanic Quarter. The cutting edge facilities not only stand close to the original site of the shipyard where the doomed vessel was constructed, but housed within the collections is a variety of original material.

The centenary commemorations surrounding the sinking of the RMS Titanic were truly global. The media has been awash with movies, documentaries, reconstructions and books. However, for Northern Ireland, it holds a special significance. Not only was Belfast the birthplace of the most famous ship in history, but it marks an opportunity to remind the rest of the world that Northern Ireland is more than just 'The Troubles'. Belfast was the home of the biggest shipyard, ropeworks and mill in the world. Nothing illustrates this more than the recently opened £93m Titanic Belfast which towers like a modern Colossus across the Belfast harbour.

To mark the Titanic anniversary, the PRONI made its own personal contribution by hosting a number of related events. These included a presentation by the author and broadcaster Dr Nick Barratt. The talk, entitled *Lost Voices from the Titanic*, deconstructed many of the myths and included extracts from conversations and eyewitness accounts from survivors.

In partnership with the Belfast Titanic Company, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and Music Theatre for Youth, PRONI hosted a magical evening on 12 April that featured music and dance, including a piano performance by concert pianist, Una Hunt. This was very new territory for PRONI, and indeed many archival institutions, however its success reinforces our commitment to playing a greater role within the community.

PRONI have also been exhibiting an original Harland & Wolff Board minute book which records commiserations to the nine employees, including the ship's designer Thomas Andrews, who lost their lives. *All at Sea: Maritime Records at PRONI*, featured original material from within the records including the business archives of Harland & Wolff.

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