

Curator's Report 19th March 2020

Building and Grounds

Some of the snagging works have been carried out recently, including the cracks in the ground floor screed. There are still outstanding snagging items and we need to continue to chase Simpsons about this.

Administration

The museum closed on 19th March due to the Coronavirus pandemic. In the interim, I intend to focus on collections work, preparing for Accreditation and improving our online engagement.

I have not had time to set up the Office 365 system but will do it as a priority so that Susan can work from home if necessary.

The majority of our website content has now been completed, though the section on the collections still needs work. A new leaflet was prepared with help from Jim Buchanan and Jeanette Whittaker. This was distributed at BLEAT but further distribution has been halted until the museum reopens.

It is likely that our quality assurance visit from Visit Scotland will be not be scheduled for the near future. Susan has had a discussion with Alan Mackenzie about what is required and I will liaise with her on this. The grading will be affected by the status of the café, which remains uncertain at this point.

Collections

No progress has been made on moving the several large objects from the old museum to the new one. Once the good weather is here we really need to get on with this.

The accessions backlog is a priority for the next few weeks. I hope to be able to deal with the archive backlog to some extent, as well as the objects.

The library needs to be audited and documentation updated on Adlib. There is also a need to appraise the library collection to remove duplicates. In particular, we have a lot of Gaelic bibles, some of which it would be advisable to dispose of.

Interpretation and Displays

See the minutes of the Interpretation Team meeting on 28th Feb for updates.

Education and Training

I recently attended a workshop on Caring for Community Archives at National Library of Scotland in Glasgow. There was a useful information session on types of storage for oral archives and conservation issues. I delivered a presentation on how we used sound and moving image in our new displays and there were other interesting sessions from community groups on using their oral archives for outreach.

I also attended a wonderful one day conference at National Museums Scotland entitled Museums and Contemporary Craft. There were a number of presentations from museums who have worked with makers to create objects inspired by their collection. The benefits for both parties were explored.

Funding

MGS have settled the claim for the LIO post and Bòrd na Gaidhlig have prepaid a sum for the workshop that Roddy Maclean was to run in May. Unfortunately the latter will have to be cancelled but we have already had an email from BnG to say that funding can be carried forward.

Miscellaneous

The Museums and Heritage Awards, Scottish Civic Trust and the Art Fund have all been in contact to say that they are delaying the announcement of awards this year. No doubt they will be in touch at a future date.

Karen Buchanan (Curator)