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Kyle of Lochalsh.

Preface

Dr Karen Brown, University of St Andrews

"Community Heritage" is front and centre of many new heritage strategies and visitor attractions in Scotland, yet it is largely managed by volunteers and lacks definition as a sector in its own right. Over the past two years, the Museums, Galleries and Collections Institute at the University of St Andrews has worked in partnership with a number of organisations and grassroots initiatives to better understand the community heritage landscape of Scotland – its characteristics, current needs and potentialities.

Our international conference was the culmination of a research workshops project, funded by the Royal Society of Edinburgh and led by the University of St Andrews, the National Library of Scotland and Ergadia Heritage, that sought to understand the current needs and future aspirations of the Scottish community heritage sector. In association with the newly formed Scottish Community Heritage Alliance, we consulted people at local level through a series of 12 workshops around Scotland running from 15th May to 25th October 2019. These workshops offered a grassroots participatory forum in which to share ideas about ways to safeguard community heritage in Scotland.

The conference further sought to bring Scottish reality into the light of international discourse affecting critical heritage studies today, including concepts of "authorised" heritage, intangible cultural heritage, the role of youth and intergenerational transmission of knowledge, local development agendas, and

social sustainability and well-being in the face of climate change and austerity. The aim of the conference was to contextualise community heritage in Scotland in relation to international developments such as networks of community museums, ecomuseums, heritage networks in post-conflict situations, and mobile or temporary museums, drawing on the experiences of guest speakers from Mexico, Brazil, Africa and other countries. The conference also aimed to continue in the spirit of community consultation conducted so far by offering a discursive space for participatory and constructive discussion and debate on community heritage in Scotland.

Over two days, we debated historical and theoretical positions or case studies addressing the following questions:

- What is community heritage?
- What is the relationship between nature and culture in the community heritage landscape?
- What motivates people to contribute to community heritage?
- What is the role of community heritage in community empowerment?
- What is the role of community heritage in local development?
- What steps can be taken to ensure sustainable heritage projects, or are short-term (finite) projects with fixed achievable goals a better strategy?
- What challenges does community heritage face in comparison to other heritage organisations?
- What are the values and potentialities of partnership working across community heritage groups?
- What could a bespoke national network do for community heritage in Scotland?
- What national or international models might a national network learn from or emulate?
- What is the role of community heritage in Global Challenges?
- Who should be responsible for decision-making about community heritage locally, regionally, nationally?

The majority of our short conference presentations or provocations on these themes are brought together in this e-publication. The workshops' report and full list of conference speakers can also be located on the project website: https://communityheritage.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk

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Can community museums regenerate the past? Local experiences for a decolonial reflection

Bruno Brulon Soares

Abstract

Historically, museums in the so-called West have exercised their colonial power by the appropriation of non-European cultures and communities as *museum objects*. The discourse on the decolonisation of museums that was introduced in museology at the beginning of the 1970s opened the doors to a more critical approach regarding the notions of "museum" and "heritage", unveiling their status as concepts that are culturally embedded in European tradition. In a multicultural world where museums are constantly being challenged by communities in what concerns the democratisation of representation, the involvement of minority groups in the management of museums has fundamentally changed the local realities through social experimentation with cultural heritage. In some cases, minority groups have accepted the condition of their objectified representation in order to subvert the museum, negotiating new uses and forms of this political device. In these "community museums", the disputed authority of the "curator" allows community leaders to become the very actors and narrators of their subaltern representation. But can community participation change the process of historical objectification in the museum institution? How is community action contributing to raise a decolonial consciousness in the foundations of museum practice? This presentation will explore how some contemporary appropriations of the museum in the Brazilian context may contribute to a global reflection on the social and political role of community museums.

Museums have always been responsible for the objectification of persons and social groups. As devices that are set up to communicate certain values invested in culture, museums do more than just represent communities; they are responsible for creating the communities as they are given to our knowledge. Historically, the "museum effect" has transformed communities into things, fostering the perception of social groups as objects of knowledge by domesticating cultural differences to the colonial eye.

This paper aims to reflect on the notion that, in postcolonial museums, *community heritage* is fabricated and manipulated in a constant attempt to regenerate the past and represent excluded groups in the regimes of value that wish to be defined as democratising, inclusive and polyphonic. Community heritage, then, is both the result of the social groups' fight for representation and the

product of the museum professionals and specialists to redeem their institutions and their own roles as "cultural experts" in the global market of heritage.[1]

Over the past half century, museums have expanded their multiple forms and have been re-signified throughout the postcolonial world where the dominant European model has become more and more obsolete. In the last decades of the twentieth century, the very notion of cultural heritage was enlarged from the categories of value based on the hegemonic culture of the bourgeois classes, which defined what was beautiful, unique and authentic to all classes and cultures,[2] to encompass less Eurocentric categories, including the specific knowledges and traditions from subaltern and oppressed communities.

In 1972, the Round Table of Santiago de Chile stated the notion of a "total museum" integrated to societies and at their service, enhancing the need for museums to place themselves as political agents against social inequalities and addressing specific issues posed by society in its plurality. The International Movement of New Museology, which took form within ICOFOM and MINOM over the 1980s, marked the emphasis on the museum's new approaches to the public and illuminated new possibilities for community participation in the museum's processes. Since then, several studies have explored the relations between museums and communities, and their roles in the critical process of accommodating diversity while shaping civil society.[3]

However, a deeper decolonisation of museums' practices and perspectives is still in play today in several countries where the so-called "new museums" are continually applying colonial methods to musealise persons and things. Based on Eurocentric values and concerns, museums in the twenty-first century are still reproducing the traditional hierarchy of power that performs the Western conception of opposites, between the object and the audience, heritage and society, science and popular knowledge, nature and culture, the nation State and the individual … and so on.

This paper will explore the power relations that define material and immaterial heritage in the present, based on the Brazilian context, and particularly the case study of community museums in the city of Rio de Janeiro.

Our colonial heritage

The first museum created in Brazil was the National Museum of Rio de Janeiro, an Imperial museum that was opened to the public between 1818 and 1819 and that transmitted the values of the Portuguese Empire. The history of museums in the country is embedded in the history of colonisation and the conquest of new territories.

As the present has shown, not even fire can erase our colonial past and the history of a nation built on cultural domination, indigenous genocide and slavery. While European museums discuss

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[1] Jean-Louis Tornatore, "Qu'est-ce qu'un ethnologue politisé ? Expertise et engagement en socio-anthropologie de l'activité patrimoniale", *ethnographiques.org*, 12 (2007). http://www.ethnographiques.org/2007/Tornatore. (Accessed 8 May 2015).

[2] Frédéric Maguet, "L'image des communautés dans l'espace public", in *Le patrimoine culturel immatériel. Enjeux d'une nouvelle catégorie*, ed. Chiara Bortolotto (Paris: Éditions de la Maison de sciences de l'homme, 2011), pp. 47–71.

[3] Ivan Karp, "Museums and communities: the politics of public culture", in *Museums and communities: the politics of public culture*, eds Steven Lavine; Ivan Karp; Christine Mullen Kreamer (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), pp. 1–17.

decolonisation within the key of repatriation of single objects and collections, Brazilian museums have to deal, first and foremost, with the absences, the silences and misrepresentation of our past materialised in our national archives, museums and public monuments.

Museums, in their modern conception, are themselves the material and symbolical heritage of colonial pasts and they represent undeniable bounds to a well-known "colonial agenda" that could be defined, in the terms of George Abungu, as "one of conquest, appropriation of land and resources, and domination of particular people by a foreign power."[4] Despite its historical conjecture, this definition of colonialism could easily be applied to museums in contemporary societies, which are constantly dealing with the still uncured colonial wound.

Although decolonisation is not a novelty for the museum field, the colonial wound and the ghosts that still live in our collections and institutions persist in museology and present a concrete problem for museums even today. As we have witnessed in the past few years in the museum field, new forms of colonisation behind the disputes over the values invested in heritage have been put into practice in the international arena – either in the geopolitics behind the dissemination of knowledge or in the definition of universal values for the museum institution by transnational organisations such as ICOM or UNESCO.[5]

Can community museums regenerate the past? By exploring local experiences in the Brazilian context, I dare to raise such a question, which can be seen as the core of decolonial reflection in the present, and it may also help us understand the political implications behind the notion of *community heritage*.

A *landscape* of people before the colonial gaze

In 2012, the city of Rio de Janeiro, was inscribed in UNESCO's World Heritage list as a cultural landscape "shaped by a creative fusion between nature and culture."[6] The project of inflating the value invested in the city of Rio on the eve of two global sportive events – the Football World Cup of 2014 and the Olympic Games in 2016 – was initiated by local authorities with no popular participation; instead it was the result of a proposal that came from politicians, supported by major private institutions.[7] The suggestion to subscribe to the list under the specific category of "cultural landscape" came from ICOMMOS in 2003.[8] Finally, the election of the city as "cultural landscape" posed several questions regarding the social landscape behind the universal heritage that was being invented to represent a pacific image of Brazilian nature and culture to the world.

According to this international label, the limits of the landscape defined by UNESCO were clearly the ones of tourism activity in the city. UNESCO inscribed the Rio Cultural Landscape not in its entirety but in the collection of some of its somehow privileged parts, enhancing the symbolical boundaries between the privileged areas and the urban periphery. In the criteria that determined the selection of

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[4] George Okello Abungu, "Museums: geopolitics, decolonisation, globalisation and migration", *Museum International*, 71(281–2), 2019), pp. 62–71; p. 68.

[5] B. Brulon Soares, A. Leshchenko. "Museology in Colonial Contexts: A call for Decolonisation of Museum Theory", *Icofom Study Series*, 46 (2018), pp. 61–79.

[6] UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Rio de Janeiro: Carioca Landscapes between the Mountain and the Sea*. http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1100. (Accessed on 20 May 2017).

[7] The biggest communication company in the country, Globo Organizations, the Brazilian Press Association and the Brazilian Academy of Letters, among others.

[8] ICOMMOS is the International Council on Monuments and Sites.

this so-called "cultural landscape", the people in the landscape are completely disregarded and the mere "image" as source of inspiration for foreigners – according to the European notion of "landscape" coined during the Renaissance – is considered more relevant than the society that lives in it.

A landscape is the result of a cultural encounter. Although it has been associated with an aesthetical judgement for centuries, during which the concept has been shaped in the West, understood as "beautiful" – which can be a synonym for "good" according to aristocratic taste – the landscape, in its more current anthropological sense, is the result of a few impressions of an unfamiliar observer. In other words, the landscape of Rio exported to the world in the past years ignores our social differences and the signs that we are a diffused society struggling with the consequences of our colonial history.

When, in the eighteenth century, the English bourgeoisie invented the "controlled" scenes of the landscape separating their privileged views of the countryside in which the workers were depicted as a small detail in the distance, this glaring representation was the product of a subject perspective from a certain privileged point of view.[9] The eighteen-century landowners in Europe invented the natural parks, botanical gardens and zoological gardens according to the same depiction of nature idealised in paintings. There is, of course, an ideological reason for that. The landscape, thus, has a creator and an owner.

In a first glimpse, it is fair to say that the landscape is a product of the observer's eyes. By looking at a landscape we are automatically shaping it and interpreting it through the eyes of our very own cultural background. One fundamental feature of the landscape is the fact that it is centred in an abstract point of view – that of the observer. Hence, the very idea of a landscape where people can only be seen at a distance defines power relations by establishing an ontological difference between the observers and those who are subjected to observation. The latter have no control over their own representation in the regimes of value that define a landscape and its boundaries.

Living in the landscape: communities or commodities?

How are the marginalised communities that are represented in the overly exposed landscape of Rio de Janeiro transmitted to the world? In many ways, community museums in Brazil are created to make every aspect of the landscape consumable by the foreign visitor. "Tourismification", as defined by Noel Salazar,[10] is the phenomenon that allows people and places to be consumed in cultural regimes different to their own.

In Rio, "favelas" are visited in *safari* trips, which shows that we are not very far from the human zoos that still haunt the history of museums in the colonised world. "Predatory tourism" is how the local community in Rocinha – the biggest favela in Brazil – defines its relationship with foreigners. Rocinha is the landscape inside the landscape.

While community museums are being used in different ways to raise consciousness inside the favela regarding people's identities and the social problems that are actually objects in the musealisation of the city inside the city, the "landscape" label helps to increase the predatory tourismification of this specific part of social reality. "How do the people in the landscape live?" is not a question frequently

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[9] Raymond Williams, "Plaisantes perspectives [Invention du paysage et abolition du paysan]", *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* (17–18 November 1977), pp. 29–36.

[10] Noel B. Salazar, "Imaged or imagined? Cultural representations and the 'tourismification' of peoples and places," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, XLIX (1–2), 193–4 (2009), pp. 49–71.

asked. How can they be consumed? It is telling that in social media, Rocinha is being associated with several hashtags promoting the consumption of the city – and yet there are no #beaches at Rocinha, and it was not a venue for the #OlympicGames.

In fact, the "culture of tourism" involves much more than simple travel in space. In the first place, it refers to the creation of images and imaginaries that, in general, are much more quickly assimilated than the ones created by museums. In the case of the "spectacular" city of Rio de Janeiro, the matter of authenticity in heritage is directly connected to the foreign eye. Local communities and peripheral groups have very little agency over the transmission of their own images associated with this global landscape of multiple cultures and great social inequality.

How can we define "community heritage" in such a context where cultural heritage depends on power relations and the pacification of the past in order to be transmitted? In this sense, instead of asking what has value to be in the museum (or to compose a landscape), a decolonised museology should ask who has the authority to create value and who has not – those are fundamental questions to a critical, reflexive discipline.

Community heritage for regenerating the past

Over the years, Brazilian communities faced the challenge of creating their own representations, of managing their own cultural heritage, through collective practices and new ways of social engagement in the new forms of experimental museums in which these groups are involved. Since the 1960 and 1970, with the imposition of authoritarian regimes that ruled several countries in Latin America, a wide range of indigenous organisations and popular associations reacted by presenting their claim for control over heritage.[11] This is the moment when the democratisation of the cultural field in the region was leading to a reconfiguration of the museum field, and a set of innovative practices would anticipate the European notion of New Museology, in the context of peripheral countries in what we now call the global South, but which back then was called, even by the authors of New Museology, the "Third World".

As a result, the first decades of this century have witnessed the creation everywhere in the country of several types of community museums, social museums, ecomuseums, most of them based on state funding and partial maintenance, but also on the voluntary work of activists and museum experts. In this complex scenario in which community heritage is disputed, while some community museums became an important part of the valued landscape of Rio de Janeiro, others were the very expression of resistance against the tourismification of the city and the agency of the State.

This is the case, for instance, with Museu das Remoções (Museum of Removals), which was created in 2016 as a direct response to the aggressive attempts of the removal of local inhabitants, a poor community of over 700 families, from the western zone of Rio de Janeiro, due to the building of facilities for the Olympic Games. The museum brought together the claims of a recognised association of local inhabitants of Vila Autódromo, created in 1987, to represent the small neighbourhood of fishermen that was established on the land in the early 1970s and that has fought against the State for survival on that land since then.

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[11]Maya Lorena Pérez Ruiz, "La museología participativa: ¿tercera vertiente de la museología mexicana?" *Cuicuilco*, 44, set.-dez. (2008), p. 91.

In 2012, with the urban reforms for the Olympic Games of 2016, authorities of the State, namely the governor of Rio de Janeiro, Eduardo Paes, initiated a process to bargain for the removal of the whole community from the area marked for the construction of an Olympic Park where journalists and athletes would be hosted during the global event. The community considered the terms of the negotiations unfair, and a process of violent struggle to keep their homes began, resulting in the physical removal of almost 700 families from Vila Autódromo. Today, 20 families remain, and they call themselves the "objects" of a museum of removals, an activist museum for the cause against gentrification in the State of Rio de Janeiro.

Landscape of Museum of Removals, Vila Autódromo, Rio de Janeiro, August 2019.
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The museum, formally created in May 2016, is not a State institution and the members of the community are still discussing the terms of their institutionalisation. This self-proclaimed decolonial museum, a "living museum" that fights against the State and its authoritarian methods, works to denounce removal actions of vulnerable populations by the local government of Rio de Janeiro, which still uses violence and repression to create and deliver the city prescribed by the landscape label.

Exhibition. Museum of Removals, Vila Autódromo, Rio de Janeiro, August 2019.
Copyright Bruno Brulon Soares.

Museum of Removals, Vila Autódromo, Rio de Janeiro, August 2019.
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This "activist museum" – the Museum of Removals – in Rio de Janeiro is managed entirely by the remaining members of this urban community, who tell their stories as the main heritage of a contested history of resilience in a threatened social space. With the support of activists and scientists from different fields, the ruins of a lively community became the symbol of a memory that "cannot be removed", according to the motto of the museum. By constantly regenerating their painful past in present practices, the inhabitants who have survived the attacks have to constantly renegotiate their permanence in the territory. In this museum, the past cannot *escape* the present of the *land*.

Towards a postcolonial museum?

In Rio for the past two decades, museums in favelas have been created as a result of particular claims for representation by minority groups who fight for their own identities based on a sense of belonging to a territory and for the valorisation of their own heritage. Nevertheless, as a counterpart to the sold-out city, community museums have been exploited by tourism, making every aspect of the landscape available for consumption by the foreign visitor.

As a cultural enterprise exploited by tourism as well as by local government, these community museums are sometimes the result of a political bargain to accommodate marginal populations in the landscape framework where they can be systematically consumed, giving sense to the present appropriations of the past.

Today, ecomuseums, musées de terroir, Heimatmuseums, natural parks, social museums, museus de favela, etc.[12] have redesigned social space not only in the cities of Latin America, but also in the global North, in rural and urban areas. But despite the existence of postcolonial museologies – expressed by the creation of indigenous museums, museums in ghettos and in undervalued communities, etc. – one could ask: if museums were originated as European political institutions, can they be used to give voice to minority groups in the former colonies? In other words, can museology be decolonised?

The very notion of "communities" presents problems in terms of social representation and the authority over heritage. A community museum is a product and a producer of heritage that cannot be ignored in the contemporary analysis. But the "community" is never homogenous nor harmonic, and the outside agents usually matter in the definition of those who are within its boundaries. Sometimes, the "community" – like the landscape – serves as the base to produce "territorial stigmatization", as Loic Wacquant puts it, [13] which implicates territorial isolation and the circumscription of some segments of broad society in urban marginality.

Of course, other ways to conceive heritage can be considered when we invert the landscape by looking from the peripheries to the centre, transcending the traditional definition of subjects and objects inherited from European Modernity.

With these initiatives, that are both practical and reflexive, what is born little by little from the peripheries of the museum field, is a decolonial and experimental museology with the declared purpose of contesting history by opposing the narratives produced by the State to resist domination through colonial stereotypes.[14]

By producing new narratives through non-hegemonic practices, community museums can turn the light on the very regimes that create value, instead of enhancing the value categories that generate cultural heritage bound to an unquestionable appropriation of the past. A critical, postcolonial museology may be conceived when we dare to look to our own selves in the roles we play, reproducing the past instead of questioning its myths.

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[12] Community museums created in the poorer spots of the urban landscape of Rio de Janeiro, where the most marginalised groups live, with little access to basic urban services and to cultural goods.

[13] L. J. D. Wacquant, "Territorial stigmatization in the age of advanced marginality", *Thesis Eleven*, 91 (2007), pp. 66–77.

[14] Ruiz, Maya Lorena Pérez, "La museología participativa: ¿tercera vertiente de la museología mexicana?" *Cuicuilco*, 44, set.-dez. (2008), p. 90.

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2

Bridging the gap between scientific and local knowledge through participatory community-based heritage research in Africa

Dr Elgidius B. Ichumbaki

Abstract

Participatory community-based heritage research is a spreading perspective that has taken deep root amongst groups in many continents, particularly in Australia, Europe and North America. It arises from members of the local communities who want to control (their) history-making and heritage representations. Unfortunately, many academic researchers and government agencies in Africa are yet to realise that community-based heritage research leads to full collaboration, with communities designing research plans, conducting research and engaging in interpretation and dissemination of research results. This participatory community-based heritage research strategy challenges "colonial approaches" long favoured by the researchers and government agencies who initiate projects, conduct fieldwork and finally interpret data, often without consulting "local people". In this paper, I will discuss how co-creation and developing trust among researchers and local community members can bridge the gap between "scientific" and "local" knowledges throughout Africa. I argue that "local people" know more than academics do, hence we (academics) should be ready to be challenged and learn from them (local people). This argument will be supported by three themes, namely "archaeology of trees" "musicalising heritage", and the Maasai's perceptions of the makers of the 3.66 million-year-old hominid footprints at Laetoli in north-eastern Tanzania.

Introduction

Peter Schmidt argues that participatory community-based heritage research is a spreading perspective that has taken deep root among groups in many continents, particularly in Australia, Europe, and North America. [1] Participatory community-based heritage research arises from members of the local communities who want to control their history-making and heritage representations. Unfortunately, many academic researchers and government agencies in Africa are yet to realise that community-based heritage research must involve full collaboration with communities in order to design research plans, conduct research and engage in interpretation and dissemination of research results. A participatory community-based heritage research strategy challenges "colonial approaches" long favoured by researchers and government agencies that initiate projects, conduct fieldwork and

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[1] P. R. Schmidt, *Community-based heritage in Africa: Unveiling local initiatives* (London: Routledge, 2017).

interpret data often without consulting "local people". In this conference paper, I discuss how co-creation and developing trust among researchers and local community members can bridge the gap between "scientific" and "local" knowledges throughout Africa. I argue that both the "local people" and the academics are knowledgeable. I therefore argue, in this short paper, that academics should be ready to be challenged and learn from local people. To substantiate my argument, I draw on three themes, namely "archaeology of trees", "musicalising heritage", and local people's perceptions of the makers of the 3.66 million-year-old hominid footprints at Laetoli in north-eastern Tanzania.

The Maasai and 3.66 million-year-old hominid footprints

The first case study I want to share as evidence of how scientists have, over time, neglected the views of local people and communities, despite their interest in their history and heritage, comes from Laetoli in north-eastern Tanzania. Laetoli is a Plio-Pleistocene site within the Ngorongoro Conservation Area with remarkable evidence of habitual human bipedal locomotion dating to 3.66 million years ago (MYA). Although this site started to be investigated in the early 1900s, it was only in the mid 1970s that it became popular following the discovery of hominid footprints hypothesised to be of *Australopithecus afarensis* (Lucy). Following the significance of the footprints, which provide incontrovertible evidence of habitual bipedal locomotion, Laetoli captured the attention of researchers from across the world, the majority of whom are archaeologists, palaeontologists, geologists and conservators.

While the Leakeys and their colleagues became famous for this discovery, their local counterparts, some of whom travelled long distances to inform them (the Leakeys) about the site, remained unrecognised.[2] Investigations at the site concentrated on Laetoli's geology and the fossil evidence to understand biological evolution, as well as the area's paleo-environment. The local narratives, stories, myths and other intangible heritage which might have been linked to the site's features and material culture were not investigated. Most likely, there was no interest in these intangible aspects partly because the site and cultural material the scientists aimed to study were considered "too old" to be understood by the Maasai, the local people.

Gladly, this situation has started to change following the accidental discovery of the hominid footprints at Site S located about 150m away from the original discovery. The accidental discovery was made in 2014 as the team from the University of Dar es Salaam undertook a cultural heritage impact assessment with the view to advising the government before they constructed a state-of-the-art museum on the site. The discovery team was working with the local Maasai who were very excited with the exposed feature. The Maasai's excitement was observed in their eyes and by the way they were fitting their feet into the old footprints. Additionally, some local workers left the site to go home and inform their elders about the new discovery. Within a short time on the same day, several elders from the Maasai community visited the site and almost all tried to fit their feet into the feature. As they did so, they kept saying, "*Lakalanga*! *Lakalanga*! We finally got him." One elder Maasai, as a gesture of appreciation to the discovery team, gave them a cow which he recommended was slaughtered and cooked at the site. Indeed, a goat was slaughtered, barbequed and shared among the research team.

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[2] E. B. Ichumbaki, M. Cherin, F. T. Masao, and J. Moggi-Cecchi, "Local People's Interpretations of the Hominin Footprints at Laetoli, Tanzania", *Journal of Community Archaeology and Heritage*, 6(2), (2019), pp. 122–138.

A follow-up investigation into who *Lakalanga* was identified a long-rooted narrative of a Maasai warrior who led wars against a neighbouring community. The story maintained that the Maasai community cared for *Lakalanga* by feeding him meat so that he became too big and cumbersome to fight the enemy. Indeed, according to the local narrative, *Lakalanga* grew so fat that he left footprints whenever he walked on the ground. According to this story, therefore, the large footprints recorded at Site S belonged to *Lakalanga*, a Maasai hero.[3]

For many scientists in the field of evolutionary biological sciences such as geologists and palaeontologists, the myths and narratives of *Lakalanga* may seem irrelevant and make no contribution to the understanding and interpretation of footprints dating to 3.66 MYA. However, these narratives are pertinent especially with regards to community-based research and subsequent site sustainability. They are important, for they inform researchers of what the local communities think about the discovery and suggest what roles they might play when it comes to caring for the site. In other words, taking these narratives into consideration would make preservation of the site more interesting to the local people and hence gain their support.

Archaeology of trees

Within the perspectives of African archaeology, I discuss the lack of critical analysis of what constitutes "archaeological sites". My desire to present on this topic at the Community Heritage conference emanates from the conventional situation whereby scholars in the field of archaeology continue to see the established objects such as artefacts, ecofacts and structures as the key markers of archaeological sites. Locales with non-conventional evidence like majestic trees, hills and outcrops, which lack obvious conventional markers, are rarely considered important in history-making, except when features such as trees can be linked to significant socio-religious practices. For example, anthropologists and archaeologists, among others, have continued to perceive "monumentality" using criteria such as scale, visibility, permanence, centrality and ubiquity.[4] Such criteria replicate nineteenth-century standards used to assess "civilisations", standards that have proven to be too narrow and excluding. The concept of monumentality is flawed by its focus on permanence and other material attributes, such as stone construction. The concepts of centrality and cultural importance, however, capture how monumental trees, an integral part of the built environment, play key roles in community identity and meaning. My talk, therefore, intends to go beyond the conventional monumental structures, to focus on tree species which, over time, come to be regarded as "monumental" within some cultural settings. I am therefore making an argument that some trees are cultural monuments.

To substantiate my argument, I could make reference to many parts of the world where communities use trees as spiritual places.[5] The examples are many, for there are spiritual meanings associated with some trees and because of this association, the trees and places around them are preserved. Within the respective communities, this relationship between communities and trees is seen as an expression of local needs and responses to political, economic and territorial challenges and, thus, a practice

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[3] F. T. Masao et al, G. "New Footprints from Laetoli (Tanzania) Provide Evidence for Marked Body Size Variation in Early Hominins", *eLife* (2016).

[4] E. A. Hildebrand, "Is monumentality in the eyes of the beholder? Lessons from constructed spaces in Africa", *Azania: Archaeological Research in Africa*, 48(2), (2013), pp. 155–72.

[5] G. E. Wickens and P. Lowe. *The Baobabs: Pachycauls of Africa, Madagascar and Australia*. (New York: Springer, 2008).

intrinsic to local values. Yet we know little about how relationships between local communities and sacred trees is formulated. As monumental structures, we know little about how these phenomena came to prominence and what values they elicit in episodic, continuous and deep-time interactions. Due to time constraints, I discuss one case study from the coast of eastern Africa, an area where I have been doing research for the past ten years. Focusing on baobab trees, I discuss the interactions between local communities and sacred trees and some of the associated physiography that is regarded as sacred.

There are eight types of baobab trees around the world—six are in Madagascar, one in Australia and there is one on mainland Africa.[6] In Africa, many of the baobab trees grow in tropical areas, the majority found in sub-Saharan countries, including Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Botswana.[7] The species found in sub-Saharan Africa is *Adansonia digitata*, which, during the dry season, stores up to 100,000 litres of water inside its structure. Baobabs grow to an enormous size, and they can survive for up to three thousand years. Studies from Southern Africa indicate that while branches of the baobab trees may reach 28m in girth, they seldom exceed a height of 25m.[8] Baobabs have various uses, ranging from medicinal, cultural and social to accommodating countless animals, including humans. Well-grown baobab trees develop hollow trunks, some of which are used as storage, houses and shops. Some old baobab trees create an ecosystem that supports the life of creatures ranging from large mammals to micro-organisms. For instance, one of the hoary hollow baobab trees in Zimbabwe could provide shelter for approximately 40 people.[9]

Trees have cultural connotations, which makes them relevant in discussing issues of community heritage. They are connected to the spiritual world,[10] and some people visit baobabs for ritual and ceremonial practices. In some areas in Zambia, for instance, local people continue to pray under baobab trees, believing that their prayers for rain, good hunting, and excellent crops will be realised. Similarly, along the Limpopo River, communities believe that a younger boy washed by water in which baobab tree barks have been soaked, will grow into a big man.[11] Likewise, there is a belief that women living in areas with many baobabs will have more children than those living far away from the trees.[12] In these communities, therefore, baobabs are indeed part of their heritage.

Along the coast of eastern Africa and probably the entire Swahili coast, baobab trees are found within the same ecosystem and are very close to monumental structures. Although it is difficult to ascertain whether baobabs or majestic ruins came first at the various coastal sites, one could argue that the two – the baobabs and monumental ruins – are interlinked. At various locations along the Swahili coast, for instance, many baobab trees bear the graffiti of various names, the majority of whom are probably spiritual practitioners, travellers and visitors to the trees. Interestingly, the use of baobabs and

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[6] Wickens and Lowe, *The Baobabs.*

[7] A. C. Sanchez, P. E. Osborne, and N. Haq, "Climate change and African baobab (*Adansonia digitata*): the need for better conservation strategies", *African Journal of Ecology*, 49 (2011), pp. 234–45.

[8] E. Mashapa, et al, "Status of African baobab (*Adansonia digitata*) across Gona-rezhou National Park, Zimbabwe", *Journal of Applied Sciences and Environmental Management*, 18 (2014), pp. 139–43.

[9] F. Venter and J. Venter, *Making the most of indigenous trees* (Pretoria: Briza Publications, 1985).

[10] Wickens and Lowe, *The Baobabs.*

[11] K. Schumann, et al, "Uses, management, and population status of the baobab in eastern Burkina Faso", *Agroforestry Systems*, 85(2), (2012), pp. 263–78.

[12] Venter and Venter, *Making the most of indigenous trees.*

monumental structures are linked and interconnected.[13] Local communities' mythical and cultural attachments to trees are interlinked to one another and represented by material culture – objects and artefacts.

Objects revealing spirituality and continued interaction between local people and baobab trees and the surrounding physiography came from interviewing and holding group discussions with local people, and by conducting physical surveys as well as undertaking archaeological excavations. Nearly all the interviewed members of the local community in Bagamoyo mentioned baobab trees as markers of landscapes where spiritual practices take place. To get more insight from interviews and group discussions, locally guided physical surveys targeted the baobab trees and the surrounding landscapes. Results from the surveys recorded various objects within the landscape. These objects included local pots of different sizes and shapes, red and white pieces of cloths, and Chinese porcelains. Other artefacts recorded on the site were remains of toothpaste containers, remains of incense, various bottles, and bones of various animals such as cattle, goats and chickens. The survey team also documented fireplaces where cooking activity took place on the site as well as take-away containers made from aluminium foil. The presence of these materials confirm local people's narratives that some of the baobab trees play host to spiritual activity. They also confirm the narratives that spiritual practitioners spend nights at the baobabs, slaughter different types of animals and chickens, and regularly come to the site to hold celebrations when they are successful.

Having undertaken the surveys and recorded the cultural objects noted above, a question that remained unanswered was how long these activities had been taking place. An archaeological excavation, therefore, was undertaken to uncover objects that would help to give an idea of how long these spiritual activities had been going on. Three trenches were excavated within the physiography where spiritual activities had taken place. Two of the excavated trenches revealed intact ceramics at different levels, and all these ceramics contained material locally interpreted as spiritual medicine. Some of the ceramics were similar to those currently found at baobab trees, which people put there while conducting spiritual practices. In one trench, the research team recorded a layer of ash, indicating fire which is similar to what the communities do today. Furthermore, in another trench, the team documented an incense burner recorded elsewhere in Kilwa as a vessel used for spiritual practices.[14] Based on relative dating of the ceramic objects, it seems that spiritual practices in Bagamoyo and probably the entire Swahili coast dates back to the ninth century AD.

Results from surveys and excavations discussed above could not have been brought to light if local people had not been part and parcel of the research. They knew what the research was all about and participated in the surveys, excavated at the sites and helped to interpret the artefacts and information uncovered by the research. They were the ones who suggested where to excavate and gave reasons as to why that particular area might have potential. They were able to pick out one location near baobab trees where they said spiritual activities had been taking place for a long time. Indeed, the objects excavated confirmed what the local people maintained in their narratives. It is therefore important that researchers visiting sites should not think they are more knowledgeable than the locals. Instead, we should regard them as equal partners and be ready to learn from them.

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[13] E. B. Ichumbaki, "Monumental ruins, baobab trees and spirituality: Perceptions of values and uses of built heritage along the East African coast", PhD diss. University of Dar es Salaam and Roskilde University, 2015.

[14] N. Chittick, *Kilwa: An Islamic Trading City on the East African Coast* (Nairobi: British Institute in Eastern Africa, 1974).

Musicalising heritage

The last aspect which I address as a strategy to bridging the gap between "scientific" and "local" knowledge is through "musicalising heritage". The concept of "musicalizing heritage" is defined as a strategy of using local music to promote heritage sites and other heritage aspects, including the intangibles. Musicalising heritage conveys the relevance or value of heritage sites to the public through music and is an innovative strategy for communicating research findings. Musicalising heritage does not aim to move away from using scientific concepts rarely understood by the general public. Instead, it translates those concepts by using simple musical language easily comprehended by the young people. This innovative means of using music to raise awareness about heritage sites emanates from the fact that, for the past two centuries or so, education systems in Africa have changed from parental- to school-based training. With this pedagogical shift, children and young people are taught using school curricula that tells them very little about the culture within their own communities. Heritage research outputs, such as books and articles in international journals, cannot be accessed by local people, and even if they manage to access these publications, the content is too technical for them to understand the central arguments.

In other words, there is a gap between the scientifically produced research outputs and local knowledge or understanding of the heritage sites. As a result, local people, especially teenagers and young adults, have little awareness of the scientific interpretation of heritage sites and their associated value. With this in mind, part of my talk at the "Community Heritage" conference aimed to share a live experience from Tanzania in which the use of music to educate the youth and raise awareness has been successful. To justify this claim, Kilwa Kisiwani World Heritage Site was used as a case study. Also, "Bongo Flava" (BF) music, Tanzania's local music genre, was used as a case study to show how "musicalising heritage" can help to bridge the existing gap between "scientists" and locals.

The site of Kilwa is a World Heritage Site located along the southern coast of Tanzania. It is part of the Swahili coast of eastern Africa that possesses a unique heritage derived from the Indian Ocean trade, associated population movements, and development of a maritime-oriented society over at least two millennia.[15] That society reached its zenith in the first half of the 2nd millennium CE with the building of an urban socio-economy based on stone towns constructed from coral limestone, also known as coral rag, bonded together with lime mortar.[16] Kilwa Kisiwani is typical of stone towns in eastern Africa, and comprises mosques, graveyards, palatial residences of the rulers, imposing double-storied houses of the elite merchants, and single-storied houses, all within an urban infrastructure of town walls, streets, wells and cisterns. The stone town of Kilwa covers an area of about 100ha.

The site of Kilwa Kisiwani was declared a World Heritage Site in 1981. Regrettably, beginning early in the 2000s, the monuments in Kilwa started to collapse. Site encroachment by the local people was normal, and there was a rise in the sea level. Furthermore, lack of regular care as well as absence of

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[15] J. Fleisher, et al. "When did the Swahili become maritime?" *American Anthropologist*, 117(1), (2015): 100–115; E. Pollard and O. C. Kinyera, "The Swahili Coast and the Indian Ocean Trade Patterns in the 7th–10th Centuries CE", *Journal of Southern Africa Studies*, 43(5), (2017), pp. 927–47.

[16] E. B. Ichumbaki, "A History of Built Heritage Conservation along the Swahili Coast in Tanzania", *Journal of African Historical Review*, 42(2), (2016), pp. 43–67; E .B. Ichumbaki and E. J. Pollard, "Potsherds Coated with Lime Mortar along the East African Coast: Their Origin and Significance", *Journal of African Archaeological Review*, 32(3), (2015), pp. 443–63.

financial resources to support regular maintenance continued to affect the monuments. The site started to lose its value such that by 2004 it was included on the List of World Heritage Sites in danger.[17]

Following the site's inclusion on the World Heritage Danger List, UNESCO's World Heritage Committee called upon the international community to help the United Republic of Tanzania to restore and repair Kilwa Kisiwani. Indeed, various stakeholders from across the world, governments and other organisations, provided both financial and technical support. Over almost ten years, the site received over three million US dollars to become the most funded World Heritage Site in Africa.[18] From the perspective of the government of Tanzania, UNESCO and other agencies in Tanzania and beyond, this investment helped to restore the site and return it to its former glory. Proof of the project's success is the removal of the site from UNESCO's Danger List in 2014.

However, from the perspective of some scholars and local people, the amount of resources invested at this particular site is out of proportion to the amount of resources invested in other monuments on the island. Several local people in Kilwa have complained about the way in which the government engages them to protect the ruins of monuments in their vicinity. They also whinge about not receiving any benefit. In trying to inform various authorities about the situation, some scholars working in Kilwa have published articles to explain the situation, including the existing tension between local people and the site administration in Kilwa Kisiwani.[19]

Since the problems facing the Kilwa site are similar to what is happening at other World Heritage Sites in Africa, the article by Ichumbaki and Mapunda, published in 2017, was circulated to Tanzanian and UNESCO officials directly engaged in protecting the site. Unfortunately, none of the officials in Tanzania and beyond who received a copy of the article responded. Indeed, this silence confirmed Wynne-Jones's and Fleisher's observation that "heritage officials in Tanzania are as distant as international ones".[20] It was against this background that Ichumbaki took the initiative to translate some sections of the article into a song that could be circulated to more people, especially the young. The aim of the song was not to convey the message to officials who did not respond to the article, but to articulate major issues. It was aimed at informing and motivating the Kilwa community so that, despite being annoyed by the actions or inaction of the government, they would continue to appreciate their own cultural heritage.[21]

The song was produced, uploaded to various social media platforms and played on various radio and television stations. Within a week, the song had spread to various parts of Tanzania such that community radio across the country played it, and the song was played on public transport taking

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[17] E. B. Ichumbaki and B. B. Mapunda, "Challenges of Retaining Integrity of World Heritage Sites in Africa: A Case of the Ruins of Kilwa Kisiwani and Ruins of Songo Mnara Sites, Tanzania", *Azania: Archaeological Research in Africa*, 52(4), (2017), pp. 518–39.

[18] Ichumbaki and Mapunda, "Challenges of Retaining Integrity of World Heritage Sites in Africa: A Case of the Ruins of Kilwa Kisiwani and Ruins of Songo Mnara Sites, Tanzania".

[19] N. B. Lwoga, "Dilemma of local socio-economic perspectives on management of historic ruins in Kilwa Kisiwani World Heritage Sites", *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 24(10), (2018), pp. 1019–1037; Ichumbaki and Mapunda. "Challenges of Retaining Integrity of World Heritage Sites in Africa: A Case of the Ruins of Kilwa Kisiwani and Ruins of Songo Mnara Sites, Tanzania".

[20] S. Wynne-Jones and J. B. Fleisher, "Conservation, community archaeology, and archaeological mediation at Songo Mnara, Tanzania", *Journal of Field Archaeology*, 40 (2015), p. 114.

[21] E. B Ichumbaki and C. Lubao. "Musicalizing Heritage and Heritagizing Music for Enhancing Community Awareness of Preserving World Heritage Sites in Africa", *International Journal of Heritage Studies* (2019).

passengers to different parts of the country. It was even more popular in Kilwa Kisiwani where local people gathered to watch and discuss the video. The song motivated local people in such a way that they even held a meeting where the District Commissioner promised that local government would intervene to make sure that local people participated in protecting their heritage as well as benefitted from it. It was particularly interesting, especially from the local community point of view, to learn that the local radio in Kilwa had started a programme with the aim of popularising heritage in the Kilwa District. Fortunately, some members of the community were also invited to attend live radio shows and discuss their understanding of the site. Through these radio programmes, many local people feel as if they are now valued, compared to the past when they thought the ruins were more valued than they were.

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3

Experiences from the EU-LAC-Museums Bi-Regional Youth Exchange

Jamie Allan Brown

Abstract

The EU-LAC-MUSEUMS project seeks to research under-represented communities to stake a place in history, and to contribute to environmental sustainability and community empowerment in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean. The project is funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme. Under the theme of "Museum Education for Social Inclusion and Cohesion", the project has sought to highlight the plight of young people's daily lives, their role and identities, and encouraged engagement with their local heritage and within rural communities in Latin America and Europe. In particular, this paper reflects on the experiences of the project's Bi-Regional Youth Exchange between the indigenous communities of Costa Rica (Bourca, Rey Curré and San Vicente de Nicoya), the rural communities of Portugal (Penafiel, Barcelos and São João da Madeira) and the island community of the Isle of Skye in Scotland. The project recognised the potential for youth to transform society, and sought to empower the young people involved to become tomorrow's leaders with an awareness of their culture, heritage and identity – how it is changing and how it is understood in the context of the wider world. This paper shares the findings from the community museums, and ecomuseums involved and, crucially, offers critical reflections from the young people that participated in the 24-month programme, fostering bi-regional understanding and collaboration across the two regions and generations.

The EU-LAC-MUSEUMS project coordinated by the University of St Andrews, seeks to carry out a comparative analysis of small and medium-sized rural museums and their communities across the regions of Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and to develop associated history and theory. The basis of the project is that community museums allow under-represented communities to stake a place in history, and to contribute to environmental sustainability and community empowerment.

To achieve the European Union's goal of "fostering inclusive, innovative and reflective societies" the EU-LAC-MUSEUMS project has sought to research state-of-the-art and community empowerment initiatives in museums, programmes such as the "Our Vision of Change" by *La Red de Museos Comunitarios de América* network directed by EU-LAC-MUSEUMS Advisory Board Member Teresa Morales and Cuauhtémoc Camarena Ocampo, the *Ecomuseo Anfiteatro Morenico di Ivrea* youth employment programme coordinated by Giuliano Canavese, and the youth empowerment programmes of the *favela* museums of Brazil, facilitated by ICOM Brazil and supported by Bruno Brulon

Soares. The EU-LAC-MUSEUMS project moves beyond these initiatives to implement and evaluate its own Bi-Regional Youth Exchange between Europe and Latin America.

The premise of the Bi-Regional Youth Exchange is that young people participate in European, Latin American and Caribbean societies under unequal regional circumstances and expectations.[1] The Bi-Regional Youth Exchange has sought to involve young people aged between 15 and 18, from geographically rural communities, different socio-economic situations, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds from museum communities in Costa Rica (Bourca, Rey Curré and San Vicente), Scotland (Isle of Skye) and Portugal (Penafiel, Barcelos and São João da Madeira).

Through a tailored recruitment process, young people were enlisted according to their proven commitment and contribution to volunteering, local heritage and community museum projects, and the programme focused on raising their awareness of their culture and their identity, how it is changing, and how it is understood in the context of the wider world. Involving over 90 young people from Costa Rica (11 selected for travel), 6 from Portugal and 6 from Scotland, the youth programme took into account the long-standing migration movements, both regionally and bi-regionally, that each community faces.

In consultation with the young people and their parents, schools and communities, the Bi-Regional Youth Exchange had three main aims:

1. to empower each young person to learn more about their own community, language, identity, heritage and culture, and look for the similarities with the other communities involved;
2. to foster confidence in each young person to take an active role in their respective communities;
3. to encourage each young person to reflect and document their journey of taking part in the youth exchange.

In Scotland, the rural island community of Staffin, Isle of Skye, was selected to take part in the programme after being identified by University of St Andrews researchers for its unique landscape, significant local intangible and tangible cultural heritage and because it is home to Scotland's first ecomuseum.[2]

Following an initial rigorous application process, for which each young person produced a video, young people from the local high school took part in assessed group work, completed a comprehensive written application and attended a personalised interview with the St Andrews team, a local teacher and an ecomuseum representative. This process ensured the right committed candidates were selected for the Bi-Regional Youth Exchange. At each stage of the coordination, delivery and planning, each young person, their families, their high school teacher and community leaders were involved and consulted in the programme's decisions-making process. In doing so, the EU-LAC-MUSEUMS project recognised and respected the rights, voices, choices and contributions of the young people and their families. This promoted and fostered a sense of ownership of the programme for all those involved.

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[1] CELAC-EU Youth Day held in Quito, Ecuador, reported that youth unemployment is at 22.8% in Europe, and 18.7% in Latin America; see https://www.youthforum.org/youth-forum-addresses-european-latin-american-and-caribbean-leaders-decent-employment. (Accessed November 2019).

[2] Skye Ecomuseum; see http://www.skyecomuseum.co.uk. (Accessed November 2019).

The young people eventually selected were representative of the population across the island, bilingual in both Scottish Gaelic and English, active within their community through volunteering, and had self-identified their need to increase their confidence and self-development. They also exemplified youth community participation in the desire to make a difference to both their community and the wider world. All six young people involved in the Scottish programme have made positive progress, going into higher education, further education, training, voluntary work or employment as defined by the Scottish Government's agency, Education Scotland. [3]

To encourage critical self-reflection, each young person contributed to an online blog documenting their participation in the physical workshops and exchanges in Costa Rica and Scotland.

Charlotte Beckey initially self-identified as lacking in confidence and uncertain about her future. Speaking at the EU-LAC-MUSEUMS evaluation workshop and video interview in Portree, September 2018, Charlotte described her experience of being part of the Bourca community:

> The community of Boruca will always be with me. There were so many warm-hearted people that welcomed us into their way of life, guiding us through their land, the chance to make traditional masks and learning about the Brunka language from elders. I know I have come out of this exchange as a much stronger and more independent person and understand how important it is to keep our culture, our Gaelic language alive! I feel like now I can do anything!![4]

Mairead Pentland felt she lacked confidence in her personal and school life and in direction; she was also uncertain about her future. Mairead has since become an empowered young person within her Isle of Skye community. Since the EU-LAC and LAC-EU exchange visits, she has actively sought opportunities to improve her capacities and has found a passion for social anthropology and for championing the Isle of Skye's heritage. Mairead now studies Social Anthropology at the University of Manchester. Speaking at a conference she stated:

> I don't think I would be where I am today if it wasn't for the EU-LAC-MUSEUMS project … Going over to Costa Rica gave me the confidence to take every opportunity and to make new friends. I learned from the Costa Rican community to take pride in my identity and that I can connect with people across the world despite the language and culture barriers. It allowed me to appreciate the beauty of Skye and its culture that surrounds me and encouraged me to go on and study social anthropology at university.[5]

Scottish Gaelic high school teacher Ruairidh MacVicar describes Jonathan Smith's progression: "the change in Jonathan is unbelievable. He so much more confident in his studies and himself". During the recruitment process, Jonathan described himself as shy but committed to local heritage, self-identifying as lacking in confidence but wanting an opportunity to share "the way of life here on Skye". During the workshops and exchange visits, Jonathan engaged with and practised new skills through the opportunities that were offered by the project. He now studies Art History and Celtic Civilisations at the University of Edinburgh. At a conference presentation, Johnathan stated:

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[3] Education Scotland, "Positive and sustained destinations" (2016); see http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/learningandteaching/thecurriculum/whatcanlearnersexpect/positiveandsustaineddestinations.asp/.

[4] Charlotte Beckey, Young Person from Skye, speaking at the evaluation in Portree, September 2018.

[5] Mairead Pentland's presentation, "Scottish Experiences from the Bi-Regional Youth Exchange" (EU-LAC-MUSEUMS: Itinerant Identities: Museum Communities/Community Museums, Bridgetown, Barbados, 8 November 2018).

> Though many miles lie between them and us, we all are brought together through our shared passion for music, dance, art and community spirit. The exchange changed me as a person in so many ways. It made me proud of my island background, improved my confidence and gave me skills which will stay with me forever … I want to stay in Skye, really make a difference to the island, challenge tourism and retain our way of life for both locals and visitors, like the way the Bourca community does.[6]

At the start of the programme, Andrew Whitehead self-identified as lacking in confidence and nervous about public speaking. However, after sharing experiences and activities with the community of Rey Curré, speaking at a conference, Andrew stated:

> I feel this exchange has changed me in so many ways. These changes have all been good. It has made me more confident. Before, I wasn't really someone who liked to speak in front of an audience, but now I can speak to my whole school and community. The experience has also changed the way I look at things. Before the exchange I didn't really pay attention to my surroundings, our nature, our landscape, the world challenges around me. Now after being part of the programme it has made me think further about my community and our way of life. The young people and community of Rey Curré are the best people I have ever met.[7]

Andrew is now a student at the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) where he is studying Business Management through distance learning, thus allowing Andrew to stay on the island while achieving a degree. Led by his interest in heritage, the landscape and wildlife, Andrew intends to stay on the island to combat the issues arising from over-tourism while promoting rural life.

In her blog entries, Ciorstan Towers identified a need to improve her communication and Scottish Gaelic language skills. During the workshops and exchange visits, Ciorstan engaged with and practised new skills through the opportunities that were offered by the project, in particular, public speaking, and she availed of the additional support offered by Sìne Ghilleasbuig at the Comunn na Gàidhlig (CnaG).[8] Ciorstan is now studying mathematics at the University of Aberdeen. She wrote on her blog:

> The trip changed me in many ways. Before, I would have described myself as a relatively shy, quiet and introverted person, and I'll be the first to admit that my communication skills and confidence are something I struggled with. This exchange really brought me out my shell and exposed a fun side of my personality that some people don't see. I feel more confident about myself, my dreams and aspirations for the future and my understanding the ways in which we can sustain our community for the future.[9]

Hallie Shinnie self-identified as lacking in tangible experience and direction to support her education and future working life. Hallie appropriated the programme's EU-LAC exchange to discover both her personality and future ambitions. As of August 2019, Hallie had completed her final year at Portree

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[6] Jonathan Smith's presentation, "Scottish Experiences from the Bi-Regional Youth Exchange" (EU-LAC-MUSEUMS: Itinerant Identities: Museum Communities/Community Museums, Bridgetown, Barbados, 8 November 2018).

[7] Andrew Whitehead's presentation, "Scottish Experiences from the Bi-Regional Youth Exchange" (EU-LAC-MUSEUMS: Itinerant Identities: Museum Communities/Community Museums, Bridgetown, Barbados, 8 November 2018).

[8] Sìne Ghilleasbuig's interview on the Bi-Regional Youth Exchange documentary: https://eulacmuseums.net/index.php/partnership-2/youth-exchange-3.

[9] Ciorstan Towers, Young Person from Skye, speaking at the evaluation in Portree, September 2018.

High School, she was applying for further education courses and seeking local employment to live within the Isle of Skye community. Hallie stated on her blog:

> The youth exchange did change me, all for the good. I'm more confident now. I feel I can be myself and no care what other people think. I feel inside I want to try to help people in all aspects of life. I really would like to learn Spanish in more depth now. Realising there is far more out there in the world really does make you become an open-minded person, and to try new things. I'll forever hold the memories in my heart.[10]

The programme believes in the potential for youth to transform society, to empower young people to become tomorrow's leaders with an awareness of their culture, heritage and their identity, and how it is changing and understood in the context of the wider world. In the course of the project the young people became "young researchers", probing the histories, identities and heritage of their communities and families. Societal challenges can only be overcome by beginning with individual lives – our young people in particular – and only by building positive and sustainable relationships and mutual understanding between our regions can meaningful change come about.

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[10] EU-LAC-MUSEUMS: Òigridh Air Iomlaid na Alba –Blog; see https://eulacmuseumsyouthscotland.wordpress.com/2017/09/10/my-life-changing-experience-in-costa-rica/.

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4

Where is community heritage? Towards understanding diasporic community heritages

Joanna Rodgers

Abstract

Scholars have increasingly questioned assumptions surrounding "community heritage", [1] predominantly critiquing the "simplistic and romantic idea of community".[2] These efforts have been supported by the development of concepts such as "unofficial heritage" and "heritage from below",[3] which emphasise the counter-hegemonic potential of heritage work by people outside official heritage institutions. However, the relationship between place and community heritage has received less attention: discussions about where community heritage is enacted, engaged with and negotiated often remain limited to the experiences of local residents. This is problematic, since community heritage does not always correlate easily with residency. For example, members of a diaspora often feel a powerful, affective sense of connection with place-based heritages, although many may never have lived in these places. This can be observed in localities across Scotland, where diaspora tourism (or personal heritage tourism) is ubiquitous. Such diaspora tourism can both create and sustain "heritage communities", defined by the Faro Convention (2005) not by residency but as "people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage".[4]

In this paper, I show how the diaspora of the Scottish island of Tiree can be considered a distinctive heritage community, creating and performing heritages which intersect with, and influence, those in the island. Using a multi-sited ethnographic approach to "follow" community heritage across multiple locations, I trace the blurred boundaries between diasporic and resident heritage communities. My findings indicate that community heritage "in place" is simultaneously entangled with, and sustained by, community heritage "of place". By widening our perspective to include non-residents, new understandings of who might participate in community heritage are brought to the fore. This

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[1] Elizabeth Crooke, "The Politics of Community Heritage: Motivations, Authority and Control", *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 16(1–2), (2010), pp. 16–29; Emma Waterton and Laurajane Smith, "The Recognition and Misrecognition of Community Heritage", *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 16(1–2), (2010), pp. 4–15.

[2] Waterton and Smith, "The Recognition and Misrecognition of Community Heritage", p. 5.

[3] Rodney Harrison, "What Is Heritage?", in *Understanding the Politics of Heritage*, ed. Rodney Harrison (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2010), pp. 5–42; Iain Robertson, *Heritage from Below* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012).

[4] The Faro Convention (2005) https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/ rms/0900001680083746. (Accessed 28 August 2019).

contributes to ongoing debates around what community heritage means in an increasingly mobile world.

Introduction

It's November 2017 and I'm in Partick Burgh Hall in Glasgow at the Tiree Association Annual Gathering Concert, which takes place in the city each autumn. Around me, people are hugging and exchanging news with comfortable familiarity. I stand near the back, as there are not enough seats for everyone who has shown up – I count around 160 people. To my right a small laptop computer camera records the events on stage and streams them live to a Facebook page. I see later that the video has over 3,000 views and over 30 comments from people watching around the world – from Minnesota, South Carolina, Ottawa & across the UK, as well as in Tiree itself. The hosts welcome us in Gaelic, greet those watching on Facebook and tell us that this concert is the 117th Annual Gathering of the Tiree Association. Throughout the evening, performers are introduced by referencing their family or social connections to Tiree, and many of them share stories about the composers of the traditional songs or tunes they perform.

Tiree Association, Poster for the 117th Tiree Association Annual Gathering, 2017.

I attended this event as a participant observer as part of my PhD research – a multi-sited ethnographic study of heritage and diaspora tourism to the Inner Hebridean island of Tiree, which measures around 12 by 5 miles and has approximately 650 full-time residents. My research focuses on two "Tiree Homecoming" weeks for people with connections to the island, which were organised by islanders in 2006 and 2016. Through in-depth interviews and participant observation in person and in social media spaces, I explore the values, meanings and experiences associated with heritage and diaspora tourism for both visitors and island residents. During my first research visit to the island in April 2017, it became clear that the Tiree Association was an important organisation both in Tiree itself and for people with

island connections living on the Scottish mainland. In November that year, I decided to attend the Annual Gathering to observe how people with Tiree ancestry living outwith the island engage with their cultural heritage.
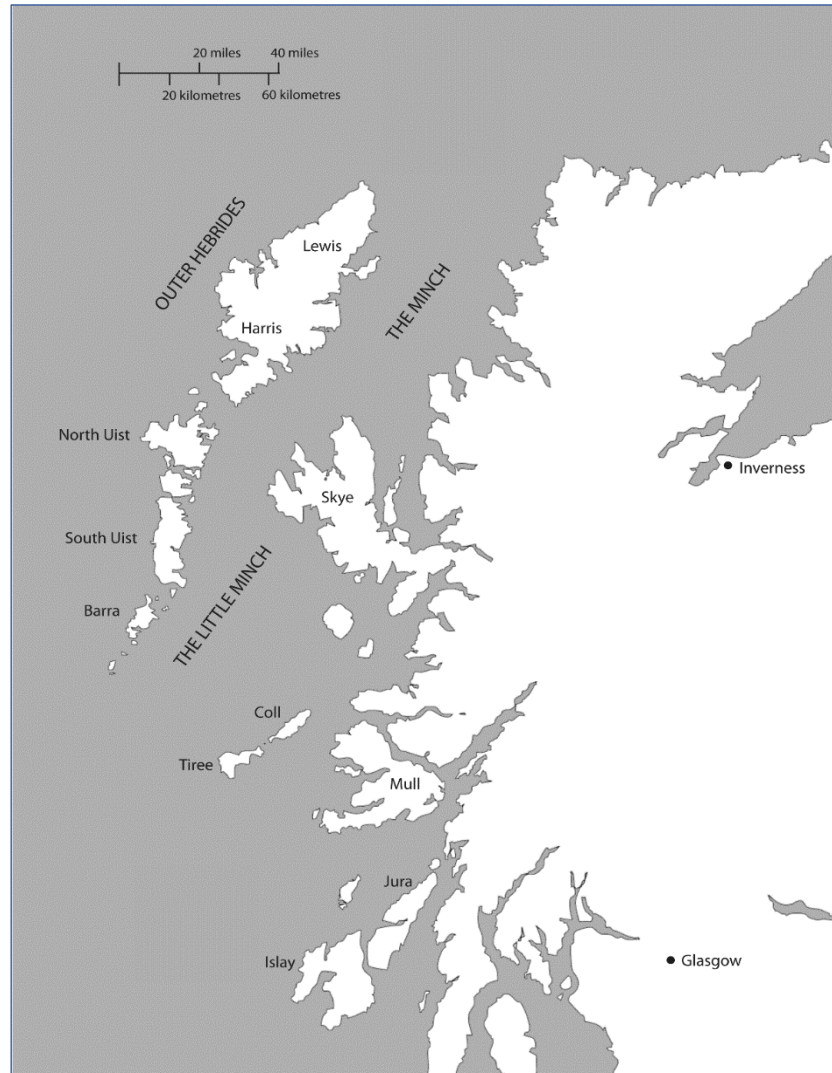
Colin Woodcock, Map showing Tiree off the west coast of Scotland.
Used with the permission of the author.

The Tiree Association was established in 1900 to offer financial and social support to the hundreds of people from the island who emigrated to Glasgow for work, many of whom would have spoken English as a second language, if they spoke it at all, and who shared a distinctive Gaelic culture that marked them out as different from Lowland Scots. The Association itself compares this experience with emigrating overseas: "like those immigrating to foreign lands, Gaels in Glasgow would often come together in a spirit of companionship".[5] Today, these cultural differences are much less visible and, from the outside at least, appear to be relatively minor. Yet for the mainlanders who attend Tiree

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[5] Tiree Association, "The History of the Tiree Association", http://tireeassociation.co.uk/the-history-of-the-tiree-association/. (Accessed 1 November 2019).

Association events and those overseas who join in on Facebook, their connection to the island is an important and actively maintained part of their cultural heritage and identity. They are part of what might be described as an "imagined community",[6] which some call the "Tiree diaspora" – a community that encompasses not only islanders and others in Scotland with Tiree connections, but also a worldwide network of people who, in the common parlance of my respondents, "belong to Tiree". At the concert, I was surprised to see island residents, and later found out that they travelled to Glasgow specifically to attend the concert. There were many more I didn't recognise, and a friend from the island told me: "lots belong to Tiree but don't stay there anymore".

Community, place and the Authorised Heritage Discourse

The concept of community heritage has attracted intense scrutiny in recent years,[7] with scholars particularly challenging the "simplistic and romantic idea of community".[8] However, the relationship between place and community heritage has received less attention: discussions about where community heritage is enacted, engaged with and negotiated often remains limited to the experiences of local residents. This is problematic, since community heritage does not always correlate easily with residency. Recognition of this fact is enshrined in the Faro Convention (2005), which identifies a "heritage community" not by residency of a local area but as "people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage".[9] In other words, there is not "an automatic fixity to what might be understood as 'local'".[10] Yet in practice, discussions about *where* community heritage is enacted, engaged with and negotiated often remains limited to the experiences of local residents.

This tendency is closely linked to the Authorised Heritage Discourse (AHD), as Laurajane Smith points out, "a dominant assumption in the heritage literature is that geographical proximity to a heritage site equates with close cultural links, while geographic distance is perceived to reduce cultural affiliation".[11] The operation of the AHD can be identified in the dominant portrayals of diaspora tourism to Scotland. The economic dimensions of the practice are emphasised by focusing on residents' "instrumental use of a diasporic past for economic purposes".[12] The authenticity of diaspora tourists' heritage is called into question by recent research, which insists that people with Scottish ancestry living elsewhere have a different cultural heritage to that of residents, a heritage that "is constructed in quite distinctive ways in diaspora communities because of temporal and spatial separation".[13] Smith draws our attention to the effect of such characterisations, pointing out that "the tendency to classify visitors to sites as

[6] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 2006).

[7] Waterton and Smith, "The Recognition and Misrecognition of Community Heritage"; Crooke, "The Politics of Community Heritage: Motivations, Authority and Control".

[8] Waterton and Smith, "The Recognition and Misrecognition of Community Heritage", p. 5.

[9] The Faro Convention (2005) https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/rms/0900001680083746

[10] Iain Robertson, *Heritage from Below* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), p. 18.

[11] Laurajane Smith, *Uses of Heritage* (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 72.

[12] Laurence Gouriévidis, "Heritage, Transnational Memory and the Re-Diasporisation of Scotland", *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 22(4), (2016), p. 287.

[13] Derek Bryce, Samantha Murdy, and Matthew Alexander, "Diaspora, Authenticity and the Imagined Past", *Annals of Tourism Research*, 66 (2017), p. 52.

'tourists' is an integral element of the AHD, and renders the emotional and physical experiences of heritage performances as culturally illegitimate or inauthentic".[14]

If we approached community heritage without these geographical assumptions, by rejecting a binary conceptual division between the heritages of "the diaspora" and "the community", our understanding of community heritage might look very different. In the remainder of this paper I will briefly outline some findings from my research both in and beyond Tiree to argue that such binary interpretations severely limit our understanding of how people experience, engage with and make meaning from their pasts.

Diaspora tourists, island residents and heritage work

Let's return to the Tiree Association concert in Glasgow for a moment. The first song of the night is *A' Choille Ghruamach*, a Gaelic poem written by John MacLean, a poet from Caolas, Tiree, who emigrated to Canada in 1819. The poem translates into English as "The Gloomy Forest" and was written to warn islanders that emigration was a struggle. It is well known in the island and in parts of Canada.[15] I watch as the audience join in singing the chorus in Gaelic. Afterwards, the singer shares with the audience how the poem shaped how he saw America when he travelled there, viewing it through the lens of Tiree's heritage:

> I was out in America one time and I thought what a difficult existence to stamp out in America in huge woods and what a difficult thing it must have been to write this song and send it back to his brother in Tiree.

This song, the stories that accompanied it and the participation of the audience in singing along or watching on Facebook are all powerful expressions of community heritage. One of the Tiree Association's main aims is "To assist in the preservation of records, literature and traditions relating to Tiree".[16] The Association works towards this goal by organising regular events such as the Annual Gathering and Burns Supper in Glasgow, as well as commissioning projects like *The Tiree Songbook*, which I watched being launched as a double-disc CD in the Kelvingrove Museum a few days after the Gathering in November 2017. The CD contains detailed information about each of the songs and tunes featured, many of which are drawn from *Na Baird Thirisdeach*, a collection of poetry by Tiree bards from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries, collected and published in 1932 by Reverend Hector Cameron.[17] In 2017, *The Tiree Songbook* won the Community Project of the Year Award at the Scots Trad Music Awards, and was described as "a perfect example of a community project, connecting a Gaelic island and global diaspora community with its precious song heritage".[18]

Projects such as *The Tiree Songbook*, and events such as the Annual Gathering Concert are examples of "heritage work", as described by Denis Byrne, Rodney Harrison and others. Byrne reminds us that

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[14] Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, p. 73.

[15] Robert Douglas Dunbar, "The Secular Poetry of John MacLean, 'Bard Thighearna Chola", 'Am Bard MacGilleain'", PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2006.

[16] Tiree Association, "Constitution", http://tireeassociation.co.uk/constitution/. (Accessed 1 November 2019).

[17] Dachaigh airson Stòras na Gàidhlig, "Metadata for text 58", https://dasg.ac.uk/corpus/textmeta.php?text=58&uT=y. (Accessed 1 November 2019).

[18] Scots Trad Music Awards, "MG ALBA Scots Trad Music Awards 2017: The Tiree Songbook", https://projects.handsupfortrad.scot/scotstradmusicawards/mg-alba-scots-trad-music-awards-2017-the-tiree-songbook/. (Accessed 1 November 2019).

"people are engaged, as we heritage professionals are, in the self-conscious, reflexive business of producing their heritage",[19] while Harrison emphasises that "heritage is not always something imposed from above but can be something that people create and use actively to maintain the connections between themselves and other places and things".[20] This way of engaging with the past might also be described as "heritage as social action"[21] or "heritage from below".[22]

These "unofficial forms of heritage"[23] can be observed both in and beyond the island. A few months after attending the Tiree Association Annual Gathering Concert in November 2017 concert, I moved to live in Tiree for five months to carry out more participant observation and interview both residents and diaspora tourists. My first interview in Tiree was with John, a founder of the community heritage centre, An Iodhlann, who began by telling me that An Iodhlann's Board are conscious of what he called "our diaspora".[24] John emphasised the legacy of A' Bhuain (the Tiree Homecoming), telling me "I'm so interested in cultural and geographical ties that make the community stronger, and A' Bhuain is by far the most successful one I've ever been involved in".[25]

I could see evidence of this in my interviews with island residents. I asked residents about the highlights of A' Bhuain 2016, and was repeatedly told about the Balephuil Fishing Disaster commemoration event which took place during the week. The Balephuil Fishing Disaster (known in Gaelic as *Fuadach Bhail' a'Phuill[26]*) happened in 1856 when a fleet of fishermen from Tiree were caught in a storm in which nine men lost their lives. Around 20 men survived but were traumatised by the loss of their friends and family members. The collective memory of this disaster had been all but lost on the island, although there was some documentary evidence and oral history records in the island's archives. Although she had visited the island only once, a Canadian diaspora tourist asked the organising committee of A' Bhuain if she could organise an information and commemoration event during the Homecoming week. She worked alongside residents to organise an event that was attended by over 100 people, including visitors and islanders. It included an informational talk about the disaster and a remembrance event at the site where the fishermen left the island – known in Gaelic as Port Mòr, the big port or harbour. This site was also marked for the first time with a plaque that offered detailed information about the men who were involved, based on extensive research carried out by the Canadian descendent of one of the men who died. This contribution to the community heritage landscape of Tiree was recognised and valued by islanders.

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[19] Denis Bryne, "Heritage Conservation as Social Action", in *The Heritage Reader*, eds Rodney Harrison, J Jameson, and J Schofield (Routledge: London, 2008), p. 163.

[20] Rodney Harrison, "Heritage as Social Action", in *Understanding Heritage in Practice*, ed. Susie West (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), p. 245.

[21] Harrison, "What Is Heritage?", in *Understanding the Politics of Heritage*.

[22] Robertson, *Heritage from Below.*

[23] Harrison, "What Is Heritage?", p. 8.

[24] John Holliday, Interview with J. Rodgers, Tiree, 12 April 2017.

[25] John Holliday, Interview with J. Rodgers*,* Tiree, 14 April, 2017.

[26] Ian Smith, "The Balephuil Fishing Disaster", in *The Secret Island* (The Islands Book Trust, 2014), p. 143.

Commemoration Plaque at Port Mòr, Balephuil. July 2019. Copyright Joanna Rodgers.

While the islanders deliberately placed their links with Tiree's diaspora at the centre of A' Bhuain, I slowly began to understand that an awareness of, and connection to, "our diaspora" was embedded in a wide range of heritage projects in Tiree. The community heritage landscape in Tiree is diverse, and there were several projects taking place beyond An Iodhlann during my fieldwork, organised by various community groups. As I watched them unfold, I repeatedly observed how heritage projects in Tiree were influenced and shaped by a perception that the island's community stretched far beyond its shores.

One striking example of this was a project carried out by the Tiree Maritime Trust in the summer of 2018. A sub-group of the Maritime Trust had been awarded Heritage Lottery Funding to carry out an oral history project with local school children, exploring the maritime heritage of the island. The goal was to interview both residents and visitors and make a film based on oral histories. The organisers kindly allowed me to observe their meetings and to accompany them when making the film with the children. This project appeared to have little to do with diaspora tourism, but I hoped it might reveal how the island's heritage was understood, explained and communicated to the next generation of island residents, and to audiences beyond the island, as the film was also put on social media. Instead, the project became an example of how Tiree's heritage is inextricably linked to the island's diaspora and is understood by residents in this context.

The children interviewed residents and visitors to Tiree to make a short film called "Song of the Sea", which reflected on the island's maritime heritage. In the final film, a diaspora tourist from Canada is interviewed on Gott Bay beach, standing in front of *The Daisy*, the boat her father had built before he emigrated in the 1920s. The boat was later acquired and restored by the Maritime Trust who value it as an important part of the island's heritage. It is sailed every year in the Tiree Regatta. Visibly emotional, the visitor explains what it means to see *The Daisy* being used by the community in Tiree. She says: "it just brings back such good memories of my dad and how proud he was to have come from Tiree, and he inspired us to … I don't know, he always thought of Tiree as his home."[27]

Taken together, these findings suggest that Tiree's community heritage is expressed and performed both in and beyond the island – not as separate heritage tourism initiatives for diaspora tourists but as an integrated part of the heritage landscape, which is valued by both residents and members of the island's diaspora. The heritage work carried out in Tiree by residents both draws upon, and influences engagements with, heritage by those living outwith the island. In other words, manifestations and expressions of heritage in Tiree have been shaped by, and incorporated, a heritage community that reaches far beyond the island's shores.

Final thoughts

Whether their stories of emigration are commemorated or mourned, or their later achievements overseas celebrated, no local area in Scotland has been unmarked by emigration. This heritage is often commodified: perceptions of visitors engaging with their ancestral heritages can be reduced to stereotypes when the diaspora is seen only as an economic resource or as a potential audience for community heritage initiatives generated by residents. What I found in Tiree was a way of "doing" community heritage that acknowledges and embraces the island's diaspora as part of Tiree's heritage community.

The Tiree Association describes its Annual Gathering in Glasgow as "an opportunity to celebrate the community spirit of *Tir Mo Chridhe, Tir An Eorna*"[28] – land of my heart, land of barley. To island residents and members of the diaspora, this community is not restricted only to those who live in Tiree. The fact that these people who "belong to Tiree" *are* now in Glasgow or in Canada or in Sydney is seen as part of the island's story, part of the community heritage that travels with people. As heritage scholars, perhaps we should follow their lead and be open to finding community heritage in unexpected places.

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[27] Tiree Maritime Trust, "Song of the Sea, Tiree's Maritime Heritage", http://www.tireemaritimetrust.org.uk/general/song-of-the-sea-tirees-maritime-heritage/?fbclid=IwAR0xMnv2rh5Qbhh4b-AZEVNiV4FBQuFJLNPNLI6DzcpH89wfJo0EGtbBfcc. (Accessed 1 November 2019).

[28] Tiree Association, "The History of the Tiree Association", http://tireeassociation.co.uk/the-history-of-the-tiree-association/. (Accessed 1 November 2019).

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5

Sustaining "sense of place" and heritage landscapes

Peter Davis[1]

Abstract

The UK organisation Common Ground pioneered the concept of local distinctiveness, "that elusive particularity", the rich local heritage that often we take for granted. Common Ground argue that these features of our cultural and natural landscapes – the commonplace, the everyday heritage elements in the places we inhabit – are important in providing a sense of place and supporting local identity. They argue that "every place is its own living museum" with its own "cultural touchstones" that make it unique. The idea of "place as museum" – exploring, identifying, valuing and celebrating the heritage (culture, nature, intangible) within a defined territory is a central tenet of ecomuseum philosophy and practice. Equally important to the concept is community empowerment – local people decide what heritage features of "their place" are important and take responsibility for their safeguarding. Peter Davis explains the origins of the ecomuseum, and describes how it has become a global phenomenon, giving examples that show how a malleable concept has led to many diverse forms of heritage projects that utilise the term "ecomuseum".

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What do local communities value most about their environment, those features of nature and culture for which they share some form of communal ownership and responsibility? What is it about our local environment that provides a feeling of belonging, a sense of place, the knowledge that we inhabit a landscape with distinct characteristics? These questions lie at the heart of this article, which poses questions about how community museums and ecomuseums might help to sustain sense of place and cultural landscapes.

Place

Terms such as "belonging", "sense of place", "identity" and "community" entwine with ideas about place. Unsurprisingly, place, and the more elusive "sense of place" have been a research focus in several disciplines, especially cultural geography, and are currently of growing interest in museum and

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heritage studies. Recent multi-authored publications indicate the growing link made between museum activities and concepts of place and cultural landscapes.[2] Questions about space and place have long been of interest to human geographers, the scholars Yi-Fu Tuan, Edward Relph and Anne Buttimer regarded as pioneers in using experiential perspectives to reflect on place and "sense of place". All three authors emphasise that place provides "a world of meaning" and it is this "world of meaning" that ecomuseums and community museums also seek to capture.[3]

The terms place, heritage, identity, cultural identity and community are all dynamic concepts; it is also apparent that the factors that provide a sense of identity, whether it be our self, national or community identity, are many and complicated, and they also are subject to change. With all these variables how can we begin to understand what are the most significant features of our community, our place, our territory? Although physical surroundings (landscapes, habitats, buildings) are important, place is much more complex; it is a web of understanding between people and the environment, between people and their neighbours, between people and their history. Place has to be permeable to new ideas, new practices and new peoples. Cultural identity demands that in a changing world we try to hold on to what is important from the past and adopt the best features of the new.

All localities possess physical attributes, each with associated meanings (historical, symbolic, and spiritual) that are important to the local community. Just how important those physical features are, even how prevalent they are, is a function of the community itself. In places where people work in their immediate surroundings, their activities create the character of the place, features that over time result in the accumulated detail of the landscape that gives it local distinctiveness. Until very recently most people worked close to home, in agriculture, forestry, mining or cottage industries that utilised local natural resources. However, it is important to recognise that "local distinctiveness" as a concept does not apply only to small rural settlements. It can also be identified in an industrial town or the suburbs of a major city. Every place has special features that can be recognised, valued, protected and celebrated.

In the UK, the organisation Common Ground has done much to draw attention to local distinctiveness, the phenomenon that Clifford and King refer to as "that elusive particularity, so often valued as 'background noise' ... the richness we take for granted". They suggest that it is "as much about the commonplace as about the rare, about the everyday as much as the endangered, and about the ordinary as much as the spectacular," features of the cultural landscape that we often pay scant regard. Community museums and ecomuseums value this "small heritage" the subtle distinctions and detail of the cultural landscape, the difference and richness of places that we appreciate even more when we are in danger of losing them.[4] As yet, no official mechanisms have evolved to protect the smaller, but no less significant features of the cultural landscape that Hugues de Varine names as "living heritage". We are in danger of losing "Apples, bricks, sheep and gates, all of which have had generations of careful guided evolution creating qualities related to conditions of locality and need, no longer show the differentiation that whispers ... where you are".[5]

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[2] Raffaella Riva, *Ecomuseums and cultural landscapes: state of the art and future prospects* (Milan: Maggioli Editore, 2017); A. Mac Devitt (ed.) *Museums and Cultural Landscapes*. Special issue of *Museum International*, 69(1–2), (2017).

[3] P. Hubbard et al., *Key Thinkers on Space and Place* (London: Sage, 2004).

[4] S. Clifford and A. King, *Local Distinctiveness: Place Particularity and Identity* (London: Common Ground, 1993).

[5] Clifford and King, *Local Distinctiveness*.

Capturing, celebrating and conserving local distinctiveness demands that community museums and ecomuseums cherish features of the cultural landscape that provide a link to the past, acknowledging their special relevance. Tangible evidence of the living environments of the past – an old oak tree, a coppiced woodland that has long been a feature of the local landscape, the timeless quality of a local river, an ancient orchard, traditional breeds of livestock – take on special significance. Also meaningful are those tangible features left behind by our ancestors – everything from stone circles, standing stones and archaeological monuments, castles and country houses to dry-stone walls, shepherd's enclosures, abandoned factories and agricultural buildings – elements of the built environment that attach us to the past. Equally important is intangible cultural heritage, elements of which also contribute in a major way to local distinctiveness – dialects, customs, folk tales and musical traditions, for example. Ecomuseums and community museums serve to conserve and interpret all these elements of the environment in order to establish the thread of continuity to the past and foster a sense of belonging.

If museums are going to achieve these aims they must accept that the museum extends beyond the physical barrier of its walls and that museums must empower the local community. While "outreach" is now a feature of most museums, the second attribute, community empowerment, or "inreach", is still to be put into practice in any meaningful way. Empowerment and responsibility go hand in hand if communities are to shape and define the significance of their heritage, their local environment, their place. The new philosophies and inclusive processes needed to empower local communities can be delivered by community museums and ecomuseums, providing them not only with a mechanism for rescuing an artefact, a habitat or a way of life from loss or destruction, but also with a means of expressing a deep conviction to preserve and deepen a sense of place.

Ecomuseums and community museums are of special interest because local people – not curators, experts or politicians – are responsible for identifying the heritage that they feel is most important. They can then utilise their heritage to construct the identities of communities, and interpret objects sites, places, events, history and the lives of individuals to reflect their own values. It is also significant that most ecomuseums and community museums support their communities, building cultural, natural, social and economic capital.[6]

Cultural landscapes

Elements of the cultural landscape of a place are cherished, conserved and interpreted to aid the sustainable development of local society; the link between heritage, identity, development and sustainability is a strong one. In 1992, UNESCO recognised cultural landscapes ("the combined works of nature and man") as a new category of "World Heritage", resulting in a growing awareness of the "organically evolved landscapes".[7] Two forms are recognised: fossil, and continuing landscapes. As noted above, it is "continuing landscapes" that ecomuseums and community museums seek to conserve. The cultural landscapes that they cherish have great significance for local people. Although local cultural landscapes are not of World Heritage Site status they still meet the criteria set by UNESCO, i.e. retain an active role in contemporary society closely associated with the traditional way

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[6] G. Corsane, et al, "Ecomuseum performance in Piemonte and Liguria, Italy: the significance of capital", *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 13(3) (2007), pp. 223–39.

[7] UNESCO, *Cultural Landscapes* (2006). http://whc.unesco.org/en/culturallandscapes. (Accessed November 2019.)

of life and in which an evolutionary process is still in progress. As Lowenthal expressed it, "even the most modest locales embody profound meaning for folk indigenous to or otherwise familiar with them".[8] These "modest locales" are the focus not only for ecomuseums and community museums, but are targeted by the European Landscape Convention (2000), which "applies to ordinary landscapes no less than to outstanding ones [because] every landscape forms the setting for the lives of the population concerned".[9]

A holistic approach to the interpretation of the cultural landscape of a defined territory is central to the ecomuseum/community museum concept. The implication of the "fragmented site" approach used by these museums suggests as many different aspects of heritage as possible are interpreted and that interconnections between the sites – and between culture and nature – are fully explained. It also implies that the whole story is available to every visitor irrespective of his or her age or educational background, and that the holistic principle applies to the "consumer" as well as the resource. The holistic approach requires the removal of barriers between academic disciplines; stories and themes that are developed should interweave specialist knowledge. If all these criteria are met, then visitors to ecomuseums and community museums can fully experience the special nature of individual places and understand the complexities that underlie cultural landscapes.

The fragmented nature of ecomuseum sites and the mechanisms used by community museums give them tremendous potential to promote holistic interpretation. Many ecomuseums have achieved this with considerable flair. For example, a tourist in the Cévennes National Park can begin to "read" the landscape by visiting ecomuseum sites to gain knowledge of its geology, climate, vegetation and animal species and how people have modified the landscape. Introducing activities such as viticulture, sheep farming, silk manufacture, chestnut harvesting and other past and present industries enables visitors to understand the interactions that have resulted in a spectacular and unique landscape. Visiting heritage sites and local museums scattered throughout the national park provides a holistic view as these sites themselves offer different specialised interpretations. Tourists understand the landscape as they pass from one site to another.

Seixal Museum (Portugal) is also a special place because of its proximity to major rivers and the sea; everything about the region links in some way to the maritime world. Its suite of sites (including tide mills, shipyards, cork factories, gunpowder works, Roman sites and a small palace) are all interpreted in relation to the sea and maritime trade, while sailing on its restored vessels enables the visitor to experience the estuarine and river environment first-hand. In Eastern Europe the link between "Greenways" and ecomuseum development is also interesting; the natural routes or corridors of communication enable visitors to explore protected natural and cultural heritage on foot, horse or bicycle.

The intangible nature of the cultural landscape is very important to community museums, many of which are devoted to rural crafts, agriculture, industrial processes or maritime history. They document intangible heritage (oral traditions, festivals, beliefs, music, dance, folklore) in addition to sites and objects. The interpretation of such resources, while achievable using traditional techniques (labels or guided tours), is made more meaningful and enjoyable by observing craftsmen, "living history" events and listening to live music. Many community museums make full use of such skills and some employ

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[8] D. Lowenthal, "Cultural Landscapes", *UNESCO Courier*, 50(9), (1997), pp. 18–20.

[9] Council of Europe, *The European Convention* (2010). http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/176.htm. (Accessed November 2019.)

people full-time during the tourist season to enable better interpretation and provide an all-round experience.

For example, at the Bellingham Community Museum in Northumberland, England, you can listen to local people talk about their work in agriculture and mining, see their ancestors hard at work in stunningly detailed photographs, and then work out how they used the many tools on display. The film of a blacksmith at work is a result of the donation to the museum by the family of the local village blacksmith of his entire forge – tools, hearth and bellows, and even a bottle of his favourite tipple – to the museum. Ecomuseums may not only interpret cultural landscapes, but also play an active role in their restoration. At the Cortemilia ecomuseum in northern Italy, restoration of the terraced hillsides became the focus for action and a symbol for the project. Murtas and Davis recall that at the start of the ecomuseum process:

> Even the predominant feature in the local cultural landscape, the terraced hillsides, seemed to have been erased from memory, lost to sight. Despite this the ecomuseum team chose the terraced landscape as the key theme not only because it is at risk, but also because it gives a sense of continuity in time and space; it links people and place; it is inclusive and not exclusive. In many ways the terraces are like a territorial skeleton, supporting human activities and dreams; it is a good example of a sustainable approach towards local and available resources; it was built by the community and not by an architect or an engineer; it has no signature; it is in harmony with nature, following its laws and not forcing them. From the beginning it was very clear that conservation, maintenance and rebuilding of the terraced landscape would never happen without a revolution in local perception about their place. For that reason the project had at its core the contemporary interpretation of the values linked to the terraced landscape, with the well-being of the local community being the most important goal.[10]

Many other community museums and ecomuseums share the goals of conserving heritage elements and relating them to contemporary life and values; in other words, conservation and restoration are not being carried out for their own sake, but for the purpose of sustaining lives, identities and aspirations, linking people to place. Although not all of these museums attempt to preserve landscape elements on such a large scale, some concentrating on individual buildings within a complex historical landscape, many of them ensure the survival of archaeological, historical or natural features. A few, such as The Santa Cruz ecomuseum in Brazil, place more emphasis on intangible elements (music, dance, legends) within the cultural landscape. Large, single-site ecomuseums such as those of Alsace and Pays du Rennes occupy a somewhat anomalous position with regard to interpreting their cultural landscapes. Both have adopted the policy common to many open-air museums and community museums of dismantling and re-erecting buildings on their sites. Smaller community museums also take this approach; the volunteer-run Rural Life Centre at Tilford (UK), has re-erected buildings that include a cricket pavilion, a granary, a pre-fab house and non-conformist chapel, creating an attractive environment that welcomes visitors to educational events, music festivals and seasonal fairs to experience the depth and variety of their local heritage.

The philosophies and practices of community museums and ecomuseums sustain a complex notion of place and territory whose components (physical, environmental, social, cultural and economic) recognise the role of local actors. They embrace definitions of "cultural landscape" that recognise both

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[10] D. Murtas and P. Davis, "The role of the Ecomuseo Dei Terrazzamenti E Della Vita (Cortemilia, Italy) in community development", *Museums and Society*, 7(3), (2009), pp. 150–86.

the values of the natural–physical environment and the central role of people within that geographical space. This same approach is revealed in the European Landscape Convention, which defines landscape as "an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors".[11] The ideas of landscape and territory that are central to ecomuseum and community museum practices support not only a physical reality but also a personal subjectivity; the dichotomy between place as a physical entity and place as a conceptualisation of identity.[12] In the light of these definitions of landscape, it seems reasonable to conclude that ecomuseums and community museums have a capacity to conserve and enhance cultural landscapes that has yet to be fully explored. One of the key aspects of the European Landscape Convention is to raise awareness of the variety of cultural landscapes; this is a central tenet of ecomuseum and community museum practice.

Linking nature and culture; sustainable practices

The presence of "nature" in the majority of ecomuseums and community museums relates only to the raw materials and potential power that the environment provides. Water supplies that drive mill wheels, the woodlands that supply the raw material for charcoal, or mineral resources such as coal or metal-bearing ores feature in many of those that discuss industrial processes. Rarely are broader aspects of nature and the environment discussed. Although the world faces continuing environmental problems such as habitat destruction, climate change, soil erosion, pollution and the loss of biodiversity, these rarely feature on ecomuseum and community museum agendas; even describing local habitats and commonly seen species of plants and animals is rare.

It is not surprising that the few ecomuseums which highlight the natural wealth of an area are linked to areas protected for their landscape and biodiversity. Those ecomuseums in Europe that are within or adjacent to "Man and the Biosphere Reserves" are particularly important examples of good practice. UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programmes (MAB) share many similarities with ecomuseums; this worldwide network of sites takes a holistic approach that combines natural and cultural conservation within a framework of community participation. They were established to promote sustainability and reduce the loss of biodiversity. However, other features of heritage significance, such as archaeological sites, buildings (including small museums) and landscape features, are found within their boundaries. The integration of natural and cultural site conservation and interpretation requires the appreciation of the relationship between nature and culture, and the ability of managers to negotiate with a variety of stakeholders. Whereas Part 1 of the European Landscape Convention focuses on the appearance of the cultural landscape, the MAB Programme's remit is primarily on an area's wildlife and its relationship to the landscape and the people that live there. UNESCO (2002) states the MAB initiative was "established to promote and demonstrate a balanced relationship between humans and the biosphere".[13] These "living landscapes" are "those places that retain the imprint of traditional uses of

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[11] Council of Europe, 2010.

[12] A. Escobar, "Culture sits in place: reflections on globalisation and subaltern strategies in localisation", *Political Geography*, 20 (2001), pp. 139–74.

[13] UNESCO, *Statutory Framework for the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. Adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its Twenty-eighth session* (2002). http://www.ddbra.ro/media// The%20Statutory%20Framework%20of%20the%20World%20Network%20of%20Biosphere%20Reserves(3).pdf

the land, conserve the natural environment, preserve historic landmarks, and tell stories of the past".[14] Such landscapes have also attracted interest from the World Conservation Union (IUCN), which has separated all protected landscapes into categories of management. Its Category V landscapes are "where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant ecological, biological, cultural and scenic value: and where safeguarding the integrity of this interaction is vital to protecting and sustaining the area and its associated nature conservation and other values".[15] Such areas are frequently of high scenic value and attract tourists; consequently MAB managers have the huge responsibility of managing areas for the benefit of wildlife and visitors, in cooperation with local stakeholders, to achieve sustainable solutions. Breen argues that "heritage conservation and investigation with sustainable community involvement can result in employment creation, an increase in heritage tourism, educational opportunities, enhancement of landscape and aesthetic value and the promotion of environmental awareness. Investment of conservation strategies enhances and stimulates the traditional skills base and regenerates community".[16] It is such an approach that some ecomuseums have adopted when working alone, or have carried out within the umbrella of a MAB reserve.

Ekomuseum Kristianstads Vattenrike is arguably the best example of the strong relationship that can be forged between a MAB and ecomuseum practices. Located in Skåne, the southernmost of Sweden's provinces, the values and interest of the cultural landscape are a result of the long-term cultivation of the land. There are also areas that are remote, relatively undisturbed and of high biodiversity. Working in partnership with the MAB office, the ecomuseum brings together numerous visitor sites that interpret the local wetlands and the threats they face. In France, the Cévennes Biosphere Reserve and National Park encompasses the limestone "causses", the granite massifs of Aigoual and of Mont Lozère and the schist mountains of the Cévennes with varied habitats, including forests, Mediterranean scrub and high altitude grasslands. This biodiversity is dependent on human activity, and the biosphere reserve supports rural activities, providing grants to farmers to encourage traditional management regimes, maintain old breeds such as Aubrac cattle, restore farm buildings and chestnut groves, and label local produce. More than one million people visit the area each year and the rich network of ecomuseums and rural museums not only provides environmental interpretation for them but also manages their activities temporally and spatially.

Although it is evident that working within global conservation systems promoted by UNESCO or IUCN has some advantages in terms of conserving natural and cultural heritage resources, there are alternative approaches. "Authorised" designation and management frequently means social injustice as restrictions are imposed on communities who have rarely been involved in the decision-making processes about designation and management. Yet, as Barrow and Pathak have shown: "In the emphasis on 'official' protected areas, one aspect has been consistently overlooked, or not understood, namely that rural people conserve vast areas of land and biodiversity for their own needs,

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[14] B. Barrett and M. Taylor, "Three models for managing living landscapes", *CRM: The Journal of Heritage Stewardship*, 4(2), (2007), pp. 50–65.

[15] IUCN, *Category V – Protected Landscape/Seascape* (2010). http://www.iucn.org/about/work/programmes/pa/pa_products/wcpa_categoryv/. (Accessed November 2019.)

[16] C. Breen, "Advocacy, international development and World Heritage Sites in sub-Saharan Africa", *World Archaeology*, 39(3), (2007), pp. 355–370.

whether utilitarian, cultural or spiritual."[17] They refer to such places as "Community-Conserved Areas" (CCAs); although many such areas are small in extent and cannot conserve biodiversity or cultural assets by themselves, they nevertheless have important attributes. They form an important link between people, their landscapes and the wider ecosystem; such ecological connections also sustain local cultures and the livelihoods of communities. The notion of the "protected landscape" approach to conservation has obvious synergies to the concept of biocultural diversity conservation. [18] Biocultural diversity is defined as comprising "the diversity of life in all of its manifestations – biological, cultural and linguistic – which are interrelated (and likely co-evolved) within a complex socio-ecological adaptive system". This highlights the importance of recreating the broken link between culture and nature that underlies many of the social and environmental problems that face humanity. These alternative views and processes of promoting the conservation of cultural and natural resources are consistent with the demands of ecomuseum and community museum philosophies and practices. However, it is very apparent that both forms of museum should be able to do more than they currently do; many do not emphasise the links between nature and culture, or promote the realisation that they are indivisible.

The alternative approaches to conserving natural and cultural environments all search for sustainable solutions. Biocultural conservationists identify indigenous peoples and local communities as key elements in the process of sustainable development as they utilise traditional knowledge systems and make wise use of resources. The concept of "wise" or "sustainable" use, once limited to making careful use of naturally renewable resources such as timber or fish stocks, is now widely applied to other aspects of our environment. The grandeur of natural landscapes and the complexities of culture are increasingly valued; while capitalising on them we also seek to endow them with a sense of permanence. In many ways the ecomuseum and community museum, with their intended purposes of saving the natural and cultural heritage of an area using techniques that help to boost the local economy, should provide a model of sustainability, a theme echoed by Sutter and Teather.[19] The intention of these museums is to sustain not only the environmental or cultural heritage, but also local communities and their ways of life.

Ecomuseums and community museums have frequently originated where communities, culture and nature are under threat. The threats come from loss of employment, from the decline of traditional industries, from emigration and resultant depopulation; the consequences are loss of cultural identity and sense of place. Archabal is of the opinion that this situation is further compounded by globalisation, as communications media lead to the homogenisation of communities and "the loss of the particular and local".[20] She suggests that communities need to ensure that their languages, traditions, and material culture remain distinctive in a world becoming increasingly accessible and where images and ideas permeate cultural boundaries more than ever before. As places where

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[17] E. Barrow and N. Pathak, "Conserving 'unprotected' protected areas – communities can and do conserve landscapes of all sorts", in J. Brown et al. (eds), *The Protected Landscape Approach; Linking Nature, Culture and Community* (Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK: IUCN, 2005), pp. 65–80.

[18] L. Maffi and E. Woodley, *Biocultural Diversity Conservation: A Global Sourcebook* (London and Washington DC: Earthspan, 2010).

[19] Glenn C. Sutter and Lynne Teather, "Getting to the core: can ecomuseums foster cultures of sustainability?", in Raffaella Riva (ed.) *Ecomuseums and cultural landscapes: state of the art and future prospects* (Milan: Maggioli Editore, 2017), pp. 53–59.

[20] N. Archabal, "Museums and sustainable communities", *Museum News* (Sept–Oct 1998), pp. 31–33.

memories and cultures are conserved, museums have an important role to play. Ecomuseums and community museums have the potential to play an even greater role in sustaining communities because they transgress "normal" museum roles and administrative boundaries. Because they are able to encompass historic places, sacred sites, hold archival collections and act as places for community dialogue, some have demonstrated that they can assist local communities. For example, no one can doubt that the ecomuseum in Santa Cruz, Rio de Janeiro, is playing an essential role in community sustainability. Demonstrating and celebrating the individuality of communities undoubtedly leads to a heightened perception of identity from which the community gains strength, leading to sustainability. Archabal notes, "When people feel a part of a story, they have a stake in the future."[21]

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6

The Cateran Ecomuseum: a Museum of Rapid Transition[1]

Clare Cooper

Abstract

The Cateran Ecomuseum is an outstanding new cultural destination in Scotland's Tay Country.

A museum without walls set in the beautiful and dramatic landscapes of Cateran Country, all of the Ecomuseum sites are outside. Designed to reveal the hidden history of Cateran Country by the community who live here, it tells the story of its people, places and landscapes from pre-history to the present day. Situated on the 500-million-year-old Highland Boundary Fault – the great geological feature that divides the Scottish Highlands from the Lowlands – the Cateran Ecomuseum's human history stretches back through six millennia, with sites identified from Neolithic times. There are Pictish Stones to excite your curiosity, unknown stories from the legends of King Arthur and the Irish Giant Finn mac Cumhaill, contemporary histories of the Scottish Traveller Community, important events linked to the great Jacobite rebellions, and fables of the Caterans themselves, the Highland clan warriors who came to be associated with cattle raiding.

You can discover the history of Scotland's berry capital, Blairgowrie, and visit the site of its Victorian textile mills, walk a part of the Highland Boundary Fault in Alyth, and enjoy its well-preserved old town centre. A hike along the Cateran Trail, one of Scotland's great long-distance footpaths will take you across magical Glenshee to the small villages of Kirkmichael and Glenisla, offering you spectacular views through huge landscapes sculpted by glaciation and traversed by old drove roads and ancient rights of way.

You can visit and enjoy Ecomuseum sites through a series of itineraries that have been locally designed for walkers, cyclists and those visiting by car. Visit www.cateranecomuseum.co.uk to find out more.

In this paper, Clare speaks about the genesis of the Cateran Ecomuseum and what has been achieved during its pilot phase, and outlines plans for the next stage of its development as Scotland's first "Museum of Rapid Transition".

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[1] This title has been inspired by Andrew Simms' call to action on this issue, which you can read here: https://www.rapidtransition.org/commentaries/museum-of-rapid-transition-museums-in-a-world-facing-existential-crisis/

Background

The Cateran Ecomuseum is an ambitious new initiative for Eastern Perthshire and Western Angus. It is a museum without walls; all the Ecomuseum sites are outside.

Designed to reveal the hidden heritage of 1,000 square kilometres of this little known part of Scotland by the community who live there, the Cateran Ecomuseum tells the story of its people, places and landscapes across 6,000 years of human history and 400 million years of geological history.
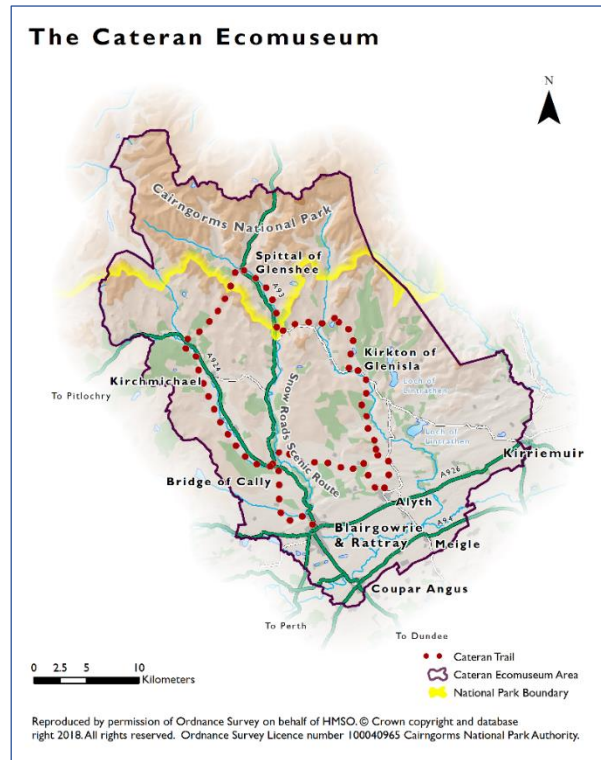
Its **vision** is to enable holistic, democratic and sustainable involvement with culture, history and heritage.

Its **mission** is to:

- engage in activities to develop public understanding and engagement with the arts, culture, history, natural and cultural heritage of the Community Council areas of Alyth, Blairgowrie & Rattray, Coupar Angus and Bendochy, Kirriemuir Landward West, Meigle and Mount Blair, through the establishment, development and maintenance of The Cateran Ecomuseum
- support individuals and organisations involved in the establishment, development and maintenance of The Cateran Ecomuseum

Originating in France in the 1970s, ecomuseums focus on the identity of a place with the term "éco" being a shortened form for "écologie". Still a relatively new concept, there are around 300 worldwide and only one other in Scotland, on Skye.

Set in specific landscapes, they offer:

- a unique mechanism for community engagement with heritage – empowering people to manage their own heritage by taking an active role in preserving the objects, sites and cultural practices they value;

- a frame for a much more holistic interpretation of cultural heritage, quite different to the focus on specific items and objects, performed by traditional museums whose collections are sited inside a building;

- an unusual focus for the development of sustainable cultural tourism, increasing their area's attractiveness as a location in which to live, visit, work and invest.

Collaboratively, stakeholders agree the heritage to be included as Ecomuseum sites and create plans for Ecomuseum experiences, ensuring the preservation of heritage, enhancing its visibility, and enhancing the contribution it makes to community development and sustainability.

Context

There are two "audiences" for the Cateran Ecomuseum, with distinctive but overlapping interests and expectations: the people who live and work locally, and visitors to the area.

For the people who live and work in the area, the Ecomuseum provides a unique mechanism for engaging them in learning from and preserving their tangible and intangible natural and cultural heritage and developing their identity and sense of place.

For visitors travelling to the area, the Ecomuseum provides an unusual cultural destination for them to experience the places, artefacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past through the area's cultural, historic and natural resources.

Having raised £174,000 of finance from a broad range of sources for a pilot phase, which resulted in new digital and printed content for 16 itineraries covering 79 points of interest and a launch programme, scheduled for November 2019, the Cateran Ecomuseum is now preparing for a second phase of evolution.

Two design frameworks to help structure this evolution are planned. Both are aimed at deepening engagement with the Ecomuseum's natural and cultural heritage while balancing the interest and expectations of the two sets of audiences. Both aim to fulfil its vision and mission by helping to create and amplify the enabling conditions for ecological, social and economic flourishing.

Framework 1: The Ecomuseum as an active agent is building community resilience

As we now all know, the set of challenges we are facing on our planet is unprecedented:

- **Global heating** – with major implications for survival of life as we know it;

- **A broken economic model** – fuelling this climate crisis and resulting in resource scarcity, social injustice, mental ill health and cultural inequity, with poor nations affected more than rich;

- **Mass extinction of plants and animals** driven by humans, which is collapsing biodiversity and threatening the food webs we depend on.

Yet, to many, we appear to live in a time in which fundamental change seems impossible. Some commentators have said that it is easier to imagine the end of the world than a change to our current economic system, for example.

As we wrestle our way through these challenging times, museums matter. Vitally, they are physical manifestations of civilisations' collective memories, inventories of the traces left in us by the past and, importantly, they challenge our lack of belief in the possibility of change.

In fact, they provide tangible evidence of its inevitability.

Museums give the lie to the myth of permanence. They are filled with objects and documents – in the case of the Cateran Ecomuseum, traces of people, places and landscapes – that show how change happens, including the possibility of rapid transitions, whether in response to cultural, political or environmental factors, or war, technology or demography.

That being so, museums are well placed to be active agents in helping us find ways to build our resilience and respond to the enormous challenges we face. By understanding that their "collections" hold an inventory of how societies have achieved rapid transitions in the past, they may begin to codify for us the ingredients, or broad design criteria, for successful future rapid transitions in the direction of dramatically reducing our ecological footprints in order to avoid triggering irreversible and worsening damage.

In short, museums hold civilisation's stories of how we have found and made a home in our world. Now that we are wrecking that home, all museums have a unique role to play in helping us understand the dynamics of change and in working out how to take actions that regenerate and renew that home.

In the light of this context, the first framework proposes to ask the following questions:

- What is the public role for museums in a world where climate breakdown requires rapid economic transition and lifestyles changes in order for us to live within ecological boundaries and limit global heating?
- Can museums help us engage with what has come before so that we might better understand what we are and what we are capable of in the face of the crises we face?
- Could museums help us make the leap to a more liveable world?

The Ecomuseum and its partners in this next stage will invite local people to come together around these urgent and challenging questions and explore new answers to them. Through their participation, new resources, events and activities will be created that will inspire and empower local people and visitors to prepare themselves for the inevitable changes ahead and enable the rapid transition we need.

The programme will draw on the 6,000 years of human history in the area and its 400 million year-old geological history to curate an inventory of how past generations have gone through rapid transition in the face of new challenges and how communities adapted to change and found ways to flourish.

With the help of local historians, heritage groups, archaeologists, geologists, farmers, artists and crafts people, community groups and civic leaders, examples from oral history, histories of people, places and events, cultural traditions, skills and knowledge, stories, archives, historic buildings, archaeological sites, natural and designed landscapes and natural heritage, including habitats, species and geology will be curated which:

- illustrate how people learned to sustain themselves by working in harmony with the natural world; and

- illuminate how barriers can be, and have been, overcome in the past through community mobilisation, innovation and experimentation, charismatic leadership, the state and combinations of them all.

These examples will be used as source material for the co-creation of a live programme of music, poetry, crafting, story and song and new digital resources, the overall aim of which will be to bring people together to build community resilience and rehearse radical change.

By providing creative grounds for social reinvention around the focus of past achievements, local people and visitors will have the chance to consider how we might remake and renew the human story into one that prioritises the values of stewardship and care, well-being and ecological harmony and grows our collective capacity to rapidly transition to a more liveable world.

Framework 2: The Ecomuseum as a platform for developing Regenerative Tourism

Mass international tourism, based on an industrial operating model, is now falling far short of its promise and, as it continues to grow, is at risk of doing more harm than good.

While this model has been successful and has supported amazing growth, it is now producing diminishing returns for providers and host communities, overcrowding destinations, placing excessive pressure on scarce resources of land, water and energy, failing to take sufficient responsibility for managing and minimising its waste, or preserving the environmental and cultural resources on which it depends.

Its application of industrial practices has commoditised unique places into homogenised "products" and viewed guests as targets to be exploited.

In Scotland, as in the rest of the world, there are a growing number of examples of the negative impact of this industrial operating model – over-tourism being one of the most recognisable, with the challenges faced by the communities along the NC 500, on the Island of Skye and in Edinburgh during the Festivals being the most cited.

What is needed is a form of tourism that delivers tangible and equitable benefit to host communities and enables all those involved to flourish.

This is where the concept of *Regenerative Tourism* becomes relevant. Its principles enable greater engagement and passion to be experienced by both guest and host, a commitment to stewarding the natural resources on which tourism depends, a closer match between what the community wants to share and what the visitor values, and greater involvement from across the community that leads to greater creativity, collaboration and resilience.

In essence, it is based on a fresh understanding that tourism is about more than money and that the visitor economy in general and the destination in particular is not an industrial production line but a living, networked system embedded in and dependent on a natural system called Nature.

Understood and enabled through this new framework, tourism can become a vital regenerative force in communities, enabling all participants (guest, hosts, employees, business owner-managers,

residents) to thrive – not just in a material, financial sense but also emotionally, mentally, physically and spiritually.

Partners Growbiz, the new Cateran Ecomuseum, and leading proponent of *Regenerative Tourism* Anna Pollock will host a programme of workshops and other activities aimed at opening up the concept and piloting the new approach in the Ecomuseum area.

Building on the work begun in 2019 by the Angus Tourism Co-operative and Murton Trust in Angus and aimed at community stakeholders, tourism and other interested businesses in the Ecomuseum area, the programme has been designed in three phases:

1. Introduction to the concept of *Regenerative Tourism*, how it differs from existing green/sustainable tourism practices and how it can be put into practice using examples from elsewhere in the world.
2. Opportunities to reflect on the relevance of this approach in our own lives, our places of work and businesses and our "host community".
3. Opportunities to connect with other communities already on this road and collectively design new activities, including new visitor experiences and new ways of marketing the visitor experience we offer, that model and promote the Regenerative Tourism approach.

7

From wildflower to power: what is the role of community heritage in community empowerment?

Jasmine Montgomery Wilkie

Abstract

When defining "community heritage", it is important to consider what is commonly understood by the term, and how this definition affects our present-day understanding.

It has been recognised in current academic discourse, most notably by authors such as Laurajane Smith, that dialogue pertaining to heritage has traditionally been dominated by material culture and "expert" opinion. In so doing, this has ignored swathes of intangible cultural heritage (ICH), more commonly associated with indigenous people, undermining their unique understanding of their environment. While ICH is now recognised and protected under the 2003 UNESCO Convention, Smith has argued that this historic understanding of what community heritage should or must consist of has had a knock-on effect on our present-day understanding of the term.

Efforts are being made to redress this representation, however. One model, which encapsulates the entirety of an environment (both tangible and intangible heritage) is the ecomuseum. Although ecomuseums remain under-represented in the United Kingdom, they continue to prove their worth as facilitators of community empowerment, strengthening identity and stimulating the local economy through related tourism and employment opportunities.

A pertinent example of an ecomuseum challenging the traditionally held definition of community heritage is *Druim nan Linntean,* the *Skye Ecomuseum.* As the *Skye Ecomuseum* moves into its second phase of development, this paper will use it as a case study in defining community heritage and in evidencing its role as a facilitator of community empowerment.

Sprig of Silverweed, October 2019. Photo: Jasmine Montgomery Wilkie.

I took this photograph in October 2019 in Glasphein, Staffin, on the Isle of Skye in Scotland. Glasphein is an active crofting community, with tenants using their land for a variety of purposes, from agricultural to holiday home lets. Glasphein forms part of the 23 townships of Staffin, which are nestled amid the Trotternish Ridge, an active inland landslip with many distinctive and internationally significant geological features.

In the centre of the photograph, I am holding a sprig of silverweed plucked from this croft in Glasphein. A common wildflower, silverweed is found throughout the United Kingdom in a variety of habitats, but has a particularly significant meaning in the highlands of Scotland. Silverweed in Scottish Gaelic is *Brisgean beannaichte an Earraich, seachdamh aran a' Ghaidheil* – Blessed Silverweed in Spring, the Seventh Bread of the Gael.

This definition was provided to me by Roddy MacLean, course leader of *Àrainneachd, Cànan is Dualchas*, which translates loosely as *Gaelic in the Environment*. A five-day course held in the townships of Staffin since 2013, it focuses on "the strong links between the [Gaelic] language and the Scottish environment", with emphasis placed heavily on traditional use of flora and fauna in the local landscape, as well as on the folkloric associations of the Gaelic language with nature.[1] The intimate knowledge of the environment that Mr MacLean imparts, creates a truly immersive experience for course attendees. The rich tapestry of the extraordinary landscape and outstanding natural beauty of this area is interwoven with the traditional working practices and perspectives of the Gael, creating a

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[1] *Àrainneachd, Cànan is Dualchas*, https://acisd.wordpress.com/. Last accessed 18 October 2019.

depth of understanding that cannot always be acquired solely through academic study or literature. Using authentic local voices is a key component in enriching community heritage, instilling local pride, and consolidating awareness and respect for an environment and way of life. This is a clear example of the importance of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH).

But why is this type of insight not more widely disseminated? Certainly, UNESCO has demonstrated the importance of community voice. In *Identifying and Inventorying Intangible Cultural Heritage*, UNESCO states that:

> Since communities are the ones who create intangible cultural heritage and keep it alive, they have a privileged place in safeguarding it. The communities that practise intangible cultural heritage are better placed than anyone else to identify and safeguard it.[2]

While this is undoubtedly correct, what opportunities are there for individuals to meaningfully contribute and help to safeguard their own unique practices? Laurajane Smith has argued that our views of what heritage should or must consist of are shaped by Western discourse that is dictated to the public by "experts" and professionals. She has described this narrative as the "authorised heritage discourse", stating that:

> The authorized discourse is also a professional discourse that privileges expert values and knowledge about the past and its material manifestations and dominates and regulates professional heritage practices.[3]

This discourse, she argues, disregards the practices of ICH, and the "knowledge-bearers" of this information. If a deeper understanding and appreciation of ICH could lead to greater acceptance of what heritage can encompass, which models might be used to challenge this discourse, thus encouraging people to contribute their insights?

One model stimulating meaningful community engagement is the ecomuseum. Encapsulating the entirety of an environment, the ecomuseum model serves to ensure more authentic representation of a site, its people and its objects through three key tenets: in-situ interpretation, an empowered community involved in the delivery of the ecomuseum mission, and minimal "expert" opinion and influence over what is presented. Ecomuseums have demonstrated their worth as facilitators of community empowerment since their conception in the 1970s, evidenced by Peter Davis in *Ecomuseums: A Sense of Place*, yet remain under-represented in the United Kingdom to this day. An interesting and pertinent case study is that of the *Skye Ecomuseum*, founded in 2008 by *Urras an Taobh Sear*, the *Staffin Community Trust*.

The *Skye Ecomuseum*, formerly known as *Ceumannan*, or *Footsteps*, was the first ecomuseum to open in the United Kingdom. Marketed as a "museum without walls", it is an antenna of 13 sites throughout Staffin offering its visitors authentic cultural, historical and natural engagement with the local environment via interpretation panels, walks in the landscape and educational and community activities.[4] Events run by the development have rendered strong socio-economic and socially-cohesive

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[2] UNESCO, *Identifying and Inventorying Intangible Cultural Heritage*, https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/01856EN.pdf. Last accessed 10 August 2019, p. 5.

[3] L. Smith, *Uses of Heritage* (London & New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2006), p. 4.

[4] Urras an Taobh Sear/Staffin Community Trust, *Skye Ecomuseum*, http://www.skyecomuseum.co.uk/default.php. Last accessed 18 October 2019.

benefits for the area: a photography festival generated income for the community halls, hosting exhibitions and employing local people as guides, and an educational programme *A'Lorg ar Lorgan (Discovering our Footsteps)* which helped local school children to see their landscape through new eyes. In fact, this awakening appeared to happen throughout the generations, as Donald MacDonald, former chairman and co-founder of the *Ecomuseum*, wrote in the *Gaelic Arts Strategic Development Forum Evaluation Report:*

> It [the photography festival] opened people's eyes in terms of the opportunities that our culture and heritage gives us.[5]

These examples demonstrate the plethora of positive outcomes that meaningful involvement brought to the area. At the moment, community involvement is particularly important, owing to the year-on-year increase in visitor numbers that the Isle of Skye has experienced since 2010. [6] The Skye Ecomuseum sites have been particularly affected by this boom, owing in part to their use in popular culture, and their geological significance, with many falling under the protected category of Sites of Specific Scientific Interest. To give context for the dramatic spike in visitor footfall, *An Stòr*, or the *Old Man of Storr*, an iconic rock pinnacle that forms part of the Trotternish Ridge and is included as one of the ecomuseum sites, saw 32,506 visitors in 2008. In 2018, that figure had risen to 205,501 visitors.[7]

With this increased footfall came some associated challenges. While exploration is the means of interaction with ecomuseum sites, visitors have been witnessed troubling sheep on local crofting land, paths have broken down, and many visitors have been failing to interact with local people or facilities in the area. There was real desire from the local community and from *Urras an Taobh Sear* for visitors to understand that Staffin is an active and living community, and for the human story of these landscapes to feature. New strategies were thus required to build better relationships between both parties and to reap mutual benefit.

In 2016, after successful applications to many notable funding bodies, including the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the development was bolstered by an award of more than £500,000. This enabled the appointment of a full-time, paid member of staff, and a full re-branding of the development, including a new website and name. A community vote selected Ceumannan's new title – *Druim nan Linntean*, the *Ridge of Ages*, and audience consultation was effectuated to better inform the wants of visitors and locals alike.

New interpretation panels could also be designed and created as a result of this funding injection. It was noted by the ecomuseum that while there are millions of photographs circulating of these iconic sites, local people and stories often fail to feature in them. As I experienced in Roddy MacLean's course, our understanding of an environment can be profoundly shaped by folklore, traditional working practices, songs and stories. Thus, in these new interpretation panels, photographs of local people herding and shearing sheep and working at the diatomite mine, along with work from local poets are

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[5] Scottish Cultural Enterprise, 2007, *GASD Programme Evaluation Study Final Report*, http://www.gasd2.designiscentral.com/files/Reports/GASD.%20Evaluation.Final.Report.pdf. Last accessed 15 July 2019, p. 9.

[6] L. Glen, "Skye Tourism Operators to Conduct Year-Long Survey", *The Press and Journal*, 2019. https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/islands/1682962/skye-tourism-operators-to-conduct-year-long-survey/. Last accessed 18 July 2019.

[7] Storr Annual User Numbers Summary. Figures provided by D. Kennedy (unpublished source).

now juxtaposed beside upgraded walking routes and modern photographs from Scottish artists. In an interview with myself, Angus Murray, Programme Manager for *Druim nan Linntean*, described the reasoning:

> The idea is [...] to promote, even just in a subtle way, that there are people living in these locations, and that this is a community of human beings that are making their livelihood in this community. So, to have people on the signage, in whatever shape or form, is really important, because [...] we could possibly influence the visitors [...] to retain a positive attitude in how they [...] treat the place [...]. Visitors need to be stopping, need to be talking to people, and need to be seeing the place away from just [...] a series of photo opportunities.[8]

It is hoped that this tactic will not only encourage more respectful engagement with the environment but will also build cohesion between visitors and locals, encouraging them to form connections and stimulating interest in the local community and way of life. Not only should this instil a sense of pride among local people, it should also render knock-on economic benefit for the area.

Aside from this, the scope for community involvement continues – setting up a local history society was discussed in July 2019, and archaeological and nature talks and walks are delivered as part of the activities programme. Equipping local people with skills and knowledge about their area enables them to better inform visitors, renders them able to act as a "local guide", and, perhaps most importantly, reiterates that their voice and contribution is valued.

Blessed Silverweed in Spring, the Seventh Bread of the Gael, has served here as a strong example of the importance of intangible cultural heritage in valuing and stimulating a deeper understanding of the heritage of a community. Sìne Ghilleasbuig has described heritage as being about "doing time somewhere", utilising all the senses to fully immerse oneself in the culture of a particular environment.[9] Through learning the Gaelic definition of silverweed and its historic uses, I could begin to appreciate the resourcefulness of a people experiencing true hardship and famine. Aside from this, I also learned a useful transferrable skill – that there are six other tastier options that I should try before baking my bread with silverweed.

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[8] Interview, Angus Murray and the author, 25 July 2019.

[9] S. Gillespie, "Soillseachadh an Stòir", in *The Storr Unfolding Landscape*, ed. Angus Farquhar (Glasgow: Scottish Arts Council, 2005), pp. 102–103.
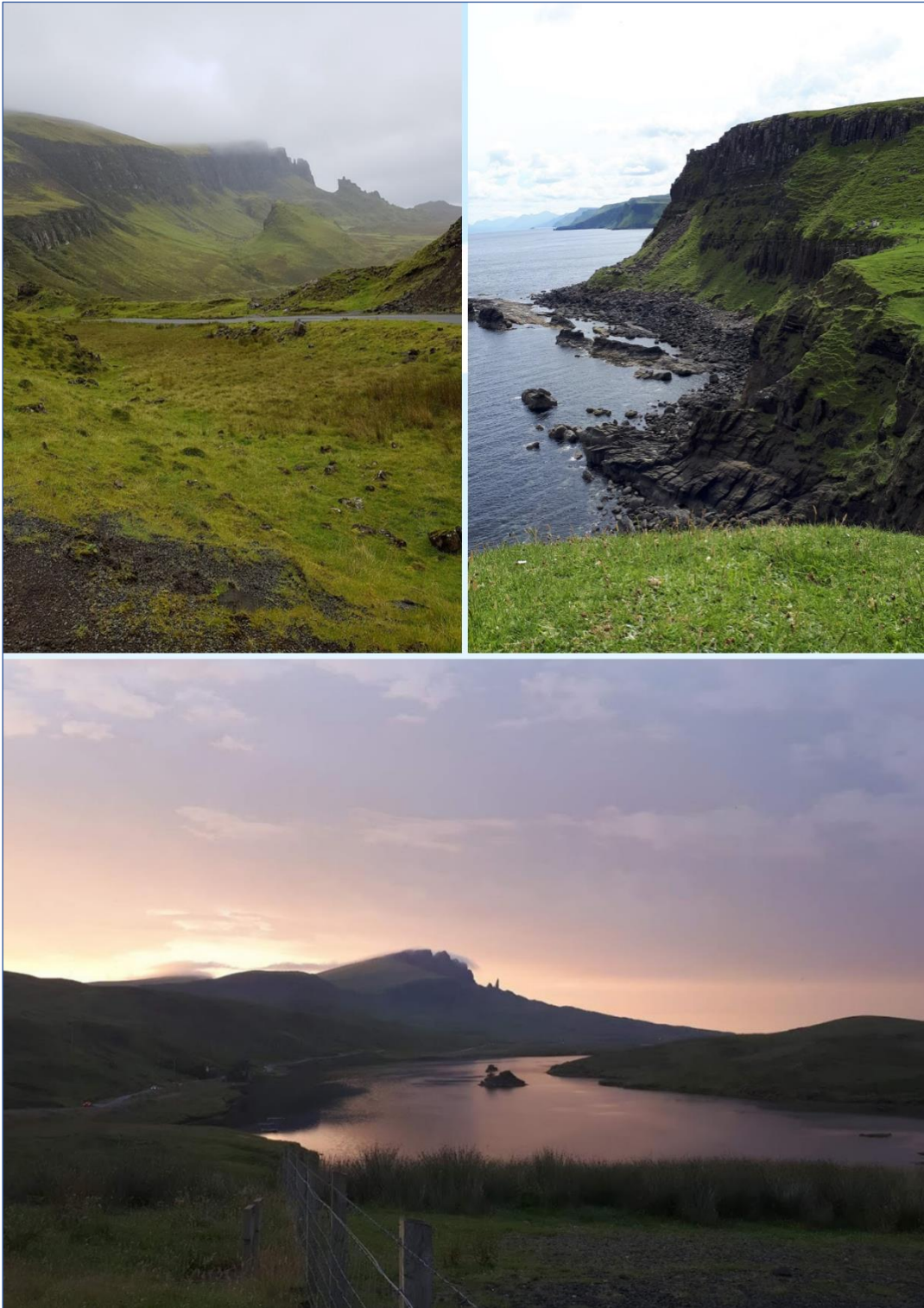
Druim nan Linntean Sites, July 2019. All photos: Jasmine Montgomery Wilkie.

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8

Modern collections and resources for Community Heritage Studies in the National Library of Scotland

Jennifer Giles

Abstract

This paper introduces the wide range of publicly available collections that the National Library of Scotland holds, such as local magazines, booklets and event programmes from across Scotland, as well as the latest academic research journals and government publications from the UK and Ireland.

The Library's status as a legal deposit library means that the national collection now numbers in excess of 29 million items, dating back to 1710, so there is much of relevance to community and local history researchers on all topics. Significant collections have been digitised, such as Post Office directories and maps, and are available on the Library's website. In addition, the Library also purchases online subscription packages to newspapers and journals that are available to remote users via the website; Jennifer explains how to access them.

The National Library of Scotland has often been thought of as being solely for academics and professional researchers, and our building in Edinburgh, where our physical collections are kept, has a somewhat austere and forbidding appearance, but this hides a box of treasure for everyone to explore and enjoy.

It is Scotland's largest library and is also the world's leading centre for the study of Scotland and the Scots. With collections of over 31 million items, this is a permanent public collection that is free and open for all to use, though registration is required to use some resources. The collections cover all formats, such as manuscripts, printed books, pamphlets, journals, ephemera, maps, music, film and sound, and material can be in print or digital formats.
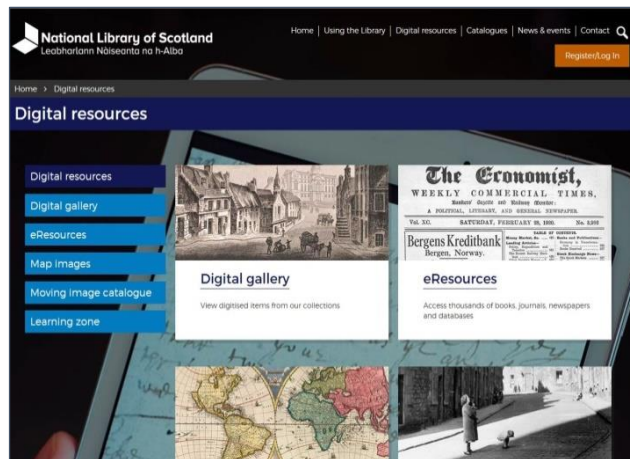
This paper looks at the Library's history to explain the vast range of published collections and resources that are of potential use to researchers in the wide-ranging community heritage and local studies fields, and dips into the collections to show that there is much more to be found in the modern collections than some might expect – that there is indeed something to support all areas of interest.

History of the Library

The Library's origins lie within the Faculty of Advocates, which was founded in Edinburgh in 1689. In 1710, the principle of legal deposit was established, whereby a copy of every work published was to be deposited in various libraries, one of which was the Faculty of Advocates Library. Successive legislation continued this entitlement, but by 1925 the Faculty decided to hand this collection and the ongoing legal deposit privilege to the nation. Thus, the National Library of Scotland was born in 1925, but with the inheritance of vast collections dating back centuries, thanks to the collecting policies and practice of the Advocates.

Legal Deposit continues today and is worth an estimated £6 million annually.[1] This is a huge benefit to the nation, and results in a collection that is unparalleled and that no one could ever afford to create otherwise.

The principle is simple: a copy of every work published in the UK and Ireland can be requested from the publisher, free of charge, and given to each of six libraries – the British Library, the Bodleian Library in Oxford, Cambridge University Library, the National Library of Scotland, the National Library of Wales, and Trinity College in Dublin (by means of reciprocal legislation). These collections form the national published archive, which is simply a permanent collection of what has been published in the UK and Ireland.

The legislation defines the term "publication" as "the issue of copies of the work to the public".[2] In practice this means that we are able to collect a very broad range of materials, which goes way beyond what many think of as "publications".

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[1] You can find out more about legal deposit at https://www.nls.uk/about-us/legal-deposit.

[2] See the definition of "publication" in the Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003, chapter 28, section 14: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/28/section/14.

No criteria are defined, so items just need to be available by some means or other, whether through a bookshop, via a society, or even produced for use at events. Therefore, publications can be large or small, free or priced and don't need to have an ISBN (International Standard Book Number). They can be on any topic at all and can reflect any type of content, whether it is the latest academic research or a collection of oral reminiscences.

It follows, too, that they can be published by anyone and everyone, so will of course include commercial publishers, but they could also be groups and societies, or even individuals – anyone can be a publisher. Self-publishing is an important and increasing part of the publishing mix too.

There is no selection or discrimination, either in terms of the content, creator or publisher. They all belong in the national published archive and will be kept permanently and available to all. There are a small number of genre types, such as crossword puzzle books, where collecting is selective, but even these are represented in our collections. This is where the joy of discovery comes in and explains why there is something for everyone.

Scotland's memory

Despite the best efforts of the legal deposit libraries, we don't always receive everything we are entitled to. However, at the National Library of Scotland we aim to collect Scottish publications as comprehensively as possible in order to fulfil our remit to *be the guardian of the published and recorded memory of Scotland for current and future generations*, as our strategy states.[3]

This is a huge task, but it has been a priority for a long time and is something that is underpinned and aided by the wonderful benefits of legal deposit. Moreover, we purchase overseas items of Scottish interest to ensure that we really are as comprehensive as possible, and donations are always welcome too. We are responsible for the Scottish collection within the national published archive, and aim for this to be as complete as possible.

As you would expect, we have large and significant collections of older books and pamphlets, but this collecting continues today and will tomorrow too. Thus we have local and community publications of all sorts, from all around Scotland and from a wide range of publishers, for example:

- societies, political parties, historical societies, third sector organisations, tourist organisations, churches, local authorities, sports clubs, youth groups, charities, museums, schools and individuals, to name but a few;
- think tanks, universities and research bodies;
- pressure, protest and campaign groups;
- governments, parliaments and government-funded bodies such as Historic Environment Scotland and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency.

Formats are varied also; for example:

- newsletters, pamphlets, leaflets, posters and flyers;
- theatre and football programmes;

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[3] National Library of Scotland's 2015–2020 Strategy. Available at: https://www.nls.uk/media/1194639/2015-strategy-2.pdf.

- election flyers and political leaflets;
- research reports and "grey literature";
- property sale brochures and guide books;
- commemorative booklets;
- tourist leaflets, travel guides and maps;
- programmes/diaries of events;
- print or digital formats.

Subjects are endless, for example:

- places;
- people and reminiscence;
- local industries;
- archaeological research;
- genealogy;
- local and national events, e.g. WWI;
- all of Scotland's languages.

Many have not been produced as works of research but as information tools, guides or records of events, but the end result is often rich local information that can tell us so much about the people, places and topics of concern and interest at the time of writing. Others will be conscious works of research, perhaps as the result of local projects or of commissioned research. They are all here, but it is up to you to "join the dots" and put the stories together.

We have items like these from all over Scotland, but as legal deposit covers the whole of the UK and Ireland, we will have some similar local publications from these areas too, though we do not attempt to be comprehensive. This means that you can see items relating to your own locality and compare them with those from other Scottish communities and beyond, who will often share the same interests and concerns.

Access and online content

We only keep one copy of everything, but we keep it forever so that it is always here. That means we don't loan items, for the simple reason that they might disappear and be lost to everyone.

Therefore, you do have to visit our premises in Edinburgh to see our physical collections, but there will be a lot to see when you do!

Additionally, you can browse our catalogue before you visit to find out not only what you can see when you visit, but also to find out what exists.[4] Providing they are in our collections, the catalogue will give you information about the publications of other groups or individuals working on your subject, or in your locality, thus opening up new avenues of research.

However, we also have collections that you can access from outside our buildings and, indeed, from within your own home.

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[4] National Library of Scotland catalogues: https://www.nls.uk/catalogues.

The Digital Gallery contains items in the Library's collections that have been selected and digitised in order to widen access to them and to improve search capabilities.[5] It currently contains 106 curated collections, and this is continually being expanded. There is a wide range of topics and formats, and it includes some of our rarest treasures, such as the last letter of Mary Queen of Scots.

Many collections are of potential interest for historical, geographical or genealogical research. For example, all the Scottish History Society publications are digitised, and they include lots of local research content and often original manuscripts from around Scotland, published in these volumes for the first time. All of Scotland's Post Office Directories have been digitised up to those published in 1911, and we are hoping to increase this next year.

Every book published in Gaelic before 1900 that we hold has been digitised, as well as the contents of some of our Gaelic special collections, such as 610 books of Highland folklore and Celtic interest collected by John Francis Campbell of Islay. Many of An Comunn Gàidhealach's publications have been digitised, in recognition of their long and distinguished role in the preservation of the Gaelic language and culture, and we hope to add their music publications next year.

Over two million maps have been digitised and are freely available on our website, including most of our Scottish maps.[6] These include older map collections, such as the Roy Military Survey of Scotland 1747–1755 as well as Ordnance Survey maps from c. 1850 to c. 1950, depending on the scale and place. Various smart tools have been developed to make them easy to use and to interpret changes. For example, one can display the same map sheets for different dates side by side, or by overlaying them to compare the same places at different dates, and thus see the changes.

The Moving Image Archive holds over 46,000 films, some of which are available to view online.[7] Many are catalogued in considerable detail, naming people, places and events, so it is possible to find out about the content within the films using the catalogue. The archive includes both commercial and amateur films and much of the content is local and personal in nature, making it very relevant to all local studies.

These are only a few of our digitised collections, but all can be accessed from your own computer, without any registration required.

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[5] Digital Gallery at the National Library of Scotland: https://digital.nls.uk/gallery/.

[6] Digitised maps at the National Library of Scotland: https://maps.nls.uk/.

[7] Moving Image Archive: https://movingimage-onsite.nls.uk/.

The Library currently purchases 120 commercial databases to expand the material that we are able to make available to users outwith Library premises.[8]

There is a huge range of content, from science to social sciences, and of formats, such as newspapers and government publications. There are simply thousands of full-text journals available in one database or another, with research across every subject. Newspapers are a valuable source of local information, and there are currently 13 online collections.

History, biography and genealogy is the largest set with over 62 different collections. Of considerable interest to community and local heritage researchers is likely to be *EUP Journals Online*. This is a database providing access to the full text of over 40 journal titles published by Edinburgh University Press, who publish many titles of Scottish interest.

Some community groups establish themselves as small businesses, so it may be useful to know that there are 16 business databases providing a range of supporting information, such as company profiles and market research data.

A few resources are only available in the Library, but the majority can be accessed from outwith the Library after a simple online registration process requiring a Scottish home address.

The future of our collections

As part of our legal deposit collecting, all UK web domain websites are archived annually by the legal deposit libraries in the UK Web Archive.[9] They are kept forever, like little slices of history, enabling comparisons of sites from one year to the next. There are currently over 10 million websites being collected in this way each year. As befits legal deposit, they simply need to exist and we will try to collect them, so there is no selection or discrimination involved. This is a shared activity with the other legal deposit libraries, and is undertaken by an annual website crawl, automatically picking up those with a dot.uk web address. However, many Scottish organisations use a dot.com or a dot.org web address, so curators have identified as many as possible and these are also included in the annual crawl. Additionally, we try to collect public-facing Facebook and Twitter pages.

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[8] Purchased databases via the E-Resources page: https://auth.nls.uk/eresources/.

[9] UK Web Archive: https://auth.nls.uk/eresources/browse/subject/118.

For example, we have identified as many Scottish historical societies and community development trusts as we can to ensure they are included. As with all legal deposit work, this process of ongoing identification of new material is proactive; two specific areas of collecting at time of writing are Scottish political party and election candidates for the 2019 General Election, and also sites linked to Extinction Rebellion. Both of these sets of websites and pages will provide rich content for researchers in the future.

Some of these websites are accessible from outwith the Library, but most have to be viewed on Library premises, due to legal deposit regulations.

This article has outlined the range of collection content that the National Library has to offer researchers interested in community and local heritage. Much of this is published outwith conventional publication routes by organisations, groups and individuals who may be very like yourselves. Circulation is often very local, which makes them hard for us to find out about, so information is very welcome. Please tell us about your own research outputs, publications and websites so that we can ensure they are in the national published archive where they belong.[10]

In a sense, the national collection could be considered to be a type of aggregated resource, a sort of coming together of local and community heritage works and publications from across Scotland, the UK and Ireland to form a large national resource within the wider collection.

The National Library is Scotland's national public library, funded by the taxpayer, with published collections that are as wide and comprehensive as possible from across the UK and Ireland, kept forever, something for everyone, free to use, and open to all.

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[10] Please contact Jennifer Giles (j.giles@nls.uk) or enquiries@nls.uk.

9

Community heritage and the Special Collections Division, University of St Andrews Library

Sean Rippington

Abstract

The Special Collections Division of the University of St Andrews Library has a history of providing help, advice, and sometimes a home to community archives in North East Fife, including those of local businesses, schools, societies and other associations.

Notable recent examples include the *Cupar: Hidden Burgh* project which ran from 2018–2019, in which records held in Special Collections relating to the Fife town of Cupar were catalogued and used in collaboration with local residents.[1] And in 2015, Special Collections took the records of the recently closed Tullis Russell paper mill, from Glenrothes in Fife; these were then catalogued in 2017 and continue to be used in community outreach events.[2]

Special Collections staff also provide advice in professional and personal capacities to the local community and the wider public through connections with organisations such as the Scottish Council on Archives.[3] For example, in a personal capacity I've recently helped to create an online archive for a local football club, Tayport FC,[4] and created a free online guide and list of resources for digital community archives wishing to take practical steps in digital preservation and sustainability.[5]

Dr Karen Brown very kindly invited me to talk at the International Conference on Community Heritage at the University of St Andrews on 8 November 2019. She proposed that I give an overview of the community heritage work done by the Special Collections team here.

When I spoke to my colleagues about the talk, several of them wondered if anything we did could be described as community heritage. We don't have a member of staff dedicated to community heritage work, nor a specific budget line dedicated to it. However, after chatting a little more we concluded that

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[1] Cupar: Hidden Burgh, 22 June 2018. Available at: https://news.st-andrews.ac.uk/archive/hidden-burgh-restoring-cupars-place-at-the-heart-of-fife/.

[2] Tullis Russell Collection: Project Update, 13 January 2017. Available at: https://standrewsrarebooks.wordpress.com/2017/01/13/tullis-russell-collection-project-update/.

[3] Scottish Council on Archives. Available at: https://www.scottisharchives.org.uk/.

[4] Tayport FC. Available at: https://tayportfcarchive.com/.

[5] S. Rippington, "Sustainability for Digital Community". Available at: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rHDKAvNR_S6GBadY15f3uP2NpY8zG0CgP8dYdWYi2sA/edit?usp=sharing.

we *do* engage in a lot of community heritage work – it's just that it may not always be framed that way. So in the end I was able to give my ten-minute talk, summarised and occasionally expanded in the text below.

However, one question came up at the conference that gave me pause for thought: can "community heritage" be simply a collection of physical materials about or from a community? Or must it be a process, engaged with or ideally led by a community?

In the talk, I tended to focus more on the former and less on the latter. But I do think we do both – or at least, we hold many collections that were created entirely or predominantly by members of the communities they relate to. And, of course, the university and its staff are inextricably linked to many communities in North East Fife; in that sense, much of what we do is engaged with our wider community, even when we aren't thinking about it.

What do we mean by Special Collections?

Describing collections as being "special" is pretty loaded, and for many people quite confusing! Typically, "special collections" are library materials that are unique and distinctive. In the St Andrews context it describes a division within the library that manages

- archives (subdivided in to corporate archives or "muniments", and manuscripts)
- rare books
- photographs

The university also has museum collections, and lending library collections; though these collections are "special", they are not managed by the Special Collections Division of the Library.

Archives

The archives consist of the corporate records of the university (the "muniments") and manuscripts. The Muniments collection dates back to 1215 and consists of material created by the university in the course of its business, including title deeds, minutes, accounts, matriculation and graduation records, staff and student records, maps and plans, correspondence and administrative files.

The manuscripts collection consists of archive material not generated by the university. Many relate to our local area of North East Fife, including records of churches and burghs, local estates, schools, societies and sports, including, of course, golf, businesses and personal papers.

Rare Books

Books are managed by Special Collections if they are classified as "rare" according to criteria such as

- age
- important or collectable first editions/seminal works
- scarcity in other research libraries
- market value
- physical and intrinsic characteristics
- condition

We have over 200,000 books from the fifteenth century onwards classified as Rare Books. These include gifts of entire libraries, bequests of several books, and over 50 named collections which range from the personal libraries of former principals to subject-based collections focusing on children's and photographically illustrated books.

Photographs

We have about one million photographic items, including

- negatives on glass and film of varying sizes
- lantern slides
- prints ranging in vintage from salt paper to modern processes, postcards, transparencies

This represents an internationally significant collection dating back to the earliest days of photography, when significant contributions to the advancement of the new medium were made by prominent members of the university.

What is our commitment to community heritage?

We have statements in our University Strategy and Library Strategy that could be understood as institutional commitments to community heritage work.[6]

The University Strategy states that we will "nurture a culture of civic engagement and volunteering in our staff and students" and "develop our cultural assets and activities in ways that engage our community while also supporting the core mission of the University."

The Library Strategy states that we will "extend the benefits of Library collections and services to local communities as far as possible, and fully embrace our public service responsibilities in alignment with the University Strategy."

So we work with the understanding that both our parent department and parent institution see community heritage work as worthwhile and in alignment with relevant strategies.

What does this look like?

If the University and the Library are committed to supporting community heritage (loosely defined), what does that look like in practice? I think our activities fall in to four different areas:

(1) Collecting in areas relating to community heritage, including taking community collections on deposit

(2) Making our services accessible to community groups

(3) Outreach and engagement

(4) Working with professional bodies and personal volunteer commitments

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[6] University of St Andrews Social Responsibility Strategy. Available at: https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/about/governance/university-strategy/university-social-responsibility/.

(1) Collecting in areas relating to community heritage, including taking community collections on deposit

The Special Collections division manages many collections about specific communities, which are often made by those communities and deposited here with the appropriate consent. In the archives, these include

- records of local businesses such as Gillespie and Scott, local architects, and the Tullis Russell paper mill.[7]
- records relating to golf.[8]
- archives of local schools, the main deposit being from Madras College in St Andrews.[9]
- church records, many on deposit and some by permission of the Keeper of the Records of Scotland.[10]
- records of local clubs and societies, e.g. fraternal societies.[11]
- St Andrews Collection: programmes for events in the town, accounts, local maps, notices of sports and pastimes, etc.[12]

The Rare Books collections includes:

- Hay Fleming Collection – consisting of 13,000 books deposited at the University by the town, and managed on the town's behalf.[13]
- St Andrews Collection – books relating to the town and University. It contains many items of local historical interest and association, including books and pamphlets of all kinds and on all subjects by University and townspeople, as well as ephemeral items relating to student life.[14]

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[7] Manuscript collections: Business records. Available at: https://libguides.st-andrews.ac.uk/specialcollections/manuscripts/businessrecords.

[8] Manuscript collections: Golf. Available at: https://libguides.st-andrews.ac.uk/specialcollections/manuscripts/golf.

[9] Manscript collections: Schools. Available at: https://libguides.st-andrews.ac.uk/specialcollections/manuscripts/schools.

[10] Manuscript collections: Church records. Available at: https://libguides.st-andrews.ac.uk/specialcollections/manuscripts/churchrecords.

[11] Manuscript collections: Papers of societies and other associations. Available at: https://libguides.st-andrews.ac.uk/specialcollections/manuscripts/societies.

[12] Manuscript collections: St Andrews collection. Available at: https://libguides.st-andrews.ac.uk/specialcollections/manuscripts/standrewscollection.

[13] Hay Fleming Collection. Available at: https://libguides.st-andrews.ac.uk/specialcollections/rarebooks/hayfleming.

[14] TSt Andrews Collection. Available at: https://libguides.st-andrews.ac.uk/specialcollections/rarebooks/standrews.

The Photography collections includes collections relating to:

- Scottish topography, i.e. collections relating to the Scottish landscape.[15]
- Scottish contemporary and social documentary.[16]
- Scottish and local culture.[17]

(2) Accessibility

We operate a reading room in the centre of St Andrews that anyone can use to see our collections, including members of the public.

However, there are some caveats:

- reading room visits are by appointment only

- visitors must register with some form of photo ID

- you have to be able to visit the reading room if you want to view materials in person.

Very occasionally materials cannot be viewed in the reading room for conservation reasons. Where possible we can digitise materials on request for a fee. We have already digitised a substantial number of items, available to view for free on our website.

Over the course of 2019 we've substantially improved our website and online catalogues with respect to user experience and accessibility standards.[18]

(3) Outreach and engagement

Many Special Collections staff take part in outreach and engagement work on an ad hoc basis. This includes delivering training and workshops (e.g. on collections care), visits to and from local school groups (related to their heritage, curriculum, or for fun), working with local volunteers, and talking about our work and our collections at relevant community groups (e.g. local history groups).

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[15] Scottish topography. Available at: https://libguides.st-andrews.ac.uk/specialcollections/photographic/scottishtopography.

[16] Scottish contemporary and social documentary. Available at: https://libguides.st-andrews.ac.uk/specialcollections/photographic/Scottishcontemporaryandsocialdocumentary.

[17] Scottish and local culture. Available at: https://libguides.st-andrews.ac.uk/specialcollections/photographic/scottishandlocalculture.

[18] For a comparison, see the website of Special Collections, University of St Andrews, November 2018, preserved on Wayback Machine: https://web.archive.org/web/20181111232035/https:/www.st-andrews.ac.uk/library/specialcollections/. Current Special Collections website: https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/library/special-collections/. Last accessed November 2019.

University of St Andrews staff delivering a training workshop as part of the Cupar Burgh Project, 2019. Copyright University of St Andrews Library.
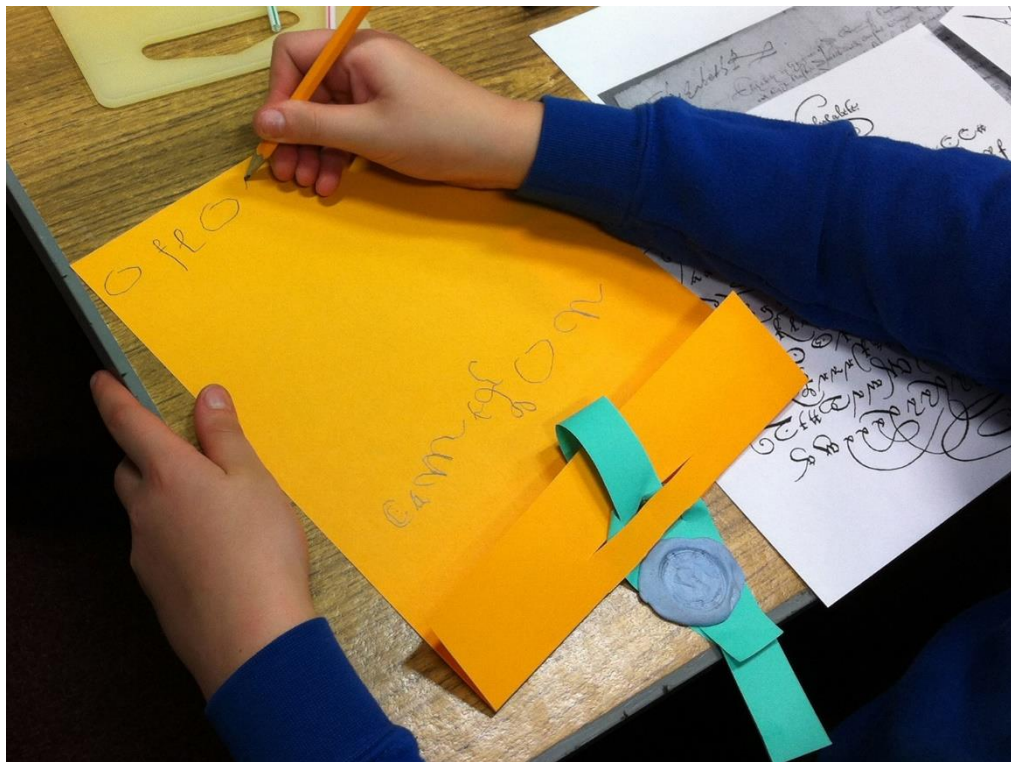
School children learning palaeography and creating their own charters. Copyright University of St Andrews Library.

In 2019, some funding for a Cupar Burgh project allowed us to have a presence at less obvious community events, including a stall at the Fife County show.[19]

University of St Andrews Library staff at the Fife County Show, 2019.
Copyright University of St Andrews Library.

We also carry out online outreach and engagement, predominantly through our blog and social media.[20] Our blog in particular allows us to draw attention to our community-related collections, and to show how communities of interest can feature across several collections. For example, we have published posts about LGBT issues and women's suffrage.[21]

(4) Professional bodies and personal volunteer commitments

Most staff will be given some time to work with external bodies, e.g. Rare Books in Scotland (RBiS),[22] the Scottish Council on Archives (SCA),[23] Document Scotland,[24] The Institute of Conservation (ICON),[25] and OnFife (Fife Cultural Trust),[26] amongst others.

Personally, I was able to deliver some digital preservation training for community archives via the Scottish Council on Archives, based on my volunteer work with a local soccer club. In turn, I was able

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[19] Cupar Burgh project. Available at: https://news.st-andrews.ac.uk/archive/hidden-burgh-restoring-cupars-place-at-the-heart-of-fife/.

[20] Special Collections blog: http://special-collections.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/.

[21] "LGBT History Month in the Library" (blog post, 22 February 2019): http://special-collections.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/2019/02/22/lgbt-history-month-in-the-library/; "Votes for Women 2018: Part 1 – Background to the Women's Movement" (blog post, 5 February 2018): http://special-collections.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/2018/02/05/votes-for-women-2018-part-i-background-to-the-womens-movement/.

[22] Rare Books in Scotland: https://www.nls.uk/about-us/working-with-others/rare-books-in-scotland.

[23] Scottish Council on Archives: https://www.scottisharchives.org.uk/.

[24] Document Scotland: http://www.documentscotland.com/.

[25] The Institute of Conservation: https://icon.org.uk/.

[26] OnFife (Fife Cultural Trust): https://onfife.com/#.

to write this up as publicly available Google Doc containing links to further resources about digital preservation and sustainability.[27]

Final thoughts

Our work continues, so I'm not sure that I have a conclusion, but perhaps instead a few final thoughts:

- Much of the work described above is dependent on our staffing levels being maintained. It's harder to find time for community heritage work when you are struggling to meet other core demands. This is a difficult thing for any archive service to promise over the long term.

- Some work mentioned above is completely dependent on external funding. In recent times, this has included major community heritage projects such as the "Hidden burgh: restoring Cupar's place at the heart of Fife" project, made possible by a £34,289 grant from the Archives Revealed scheme, which is supported by The National Archives, The Pilgrim Trust, the Wolfson Foundation and the Foyle Foundation.[28]

- Much of our community heritage support has taken the form of providing storage space and managing access to community collections. It's going to be harder to offer this kind of service in the future as we begin to use up our available storage, so we may have to look at other kinds of support.

- The ad hoc nature of much of the work described above, and the lack of a full-time coordinator, means that community work is not always as joined up as we would like – between the different collection areas within Special Collections, with different departments of the university, or with external organisations. It would be great to find ways to improve this in the future.

- I'm not sure that we (or many others) have settled on what digital support for community heritage might look like. Anecdotally, many community heritage projects struggle to make their digital work sustainable in the long term, and it might be that advice and training in this area would be welcome. Making some of the university's IT infrastructure available might also be welcome (e.g. hosting websites or providing digital storage) where funding allows.

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[27] S. Rippington, "Sustainability for Digital Community", https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rHDKAvNR_S6GBadY15f3uP2NpY8zG0CgP8dYdWYi2sA/edit?usp=sharing.

[28] "Hidden burgh: restoring Cupar's place at the heart of Fife", 6 December 2018. Available at: http://special-collections.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/2018/12/06/hidden-burgh-restoring-cupars-place-at-the-heart-of-fife/.

10

Small museum networks in Japan and their role for members and communities[1]

Kenji Saotome

Abstract

In the 1990s, the collapse of the bubble economy in Japan left a huge burden on the national and regional finances, and sudden changes in social conditions emerged. As the level of administrative and financial strength dropped remarkably, local people also started looking harshly at public services, including those of museums. In response to this, people involved in the museum sector began discussing how museums can contribute to contemporary society. However, financial conditions of the national government and local governments have become more restrictive, and many museums have difficulty organising quality projects, while they are conducting various collaborative activities in their efforts to find solutions for revitalisation.

Such a trend is especially noticeable in smaller museums that have closer ties with the communities they belong to, or with the administration and the assembly; for this reason, there are a lot of issues museum staff have to sort out. Because of the situation, a number of discussions have taken place in recent years about small-scale museums, and museum staff at these small-scale museums have created partnerships.

Under these circumstances, the Small Museum Network of Japan, which has been holding an Annual General Conference since 2010 and has been exchanging information via mailing list, started to offer opportunities to talk about the issues and prospects that small-scale museums can share with the members and the communities. It also establishes various initiatives, such as establishing a space called "Give and Take", where participating museums can bring in things that they do not need, or they can give advice and support to museums on the verge of being closed down due to tight financial conditions.

This paper will discuss the role of small museum networks in Japan for members and communities they belong to.

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[1] This paper was mainly based on the Japanese report "Management of Small Museums" (Kenji Saotome), in *Future of Japanese Museums – Deepening of "Dialogue and Collaboration" and Diversifying Museum Management* (Osaka Museum of Natural History Research) published on 27th March 2017.

Introduction

Small museums, especially those run by cities, towns and villages, are likely to have weaker financial bases than large museums. Accordingly, there are often issues to address such as failure to establish a system of organisational operations, difficulties in ensuring consistency and securing, stabilising and developing human resources due to the designated manager system that has recently been introduced, and the non-regular employment of staff in directly managed museums, which has often made operations difficult, especially when there is business expansion during budget cuts.

At the same time, there are an increasing number of activities in which small museums can contribute to communities in order to meet the ever more diverse and advanced needs for studying and revitalising organisational operations. Particularly in recent years, active networks have been built in the same communities and between museums of the same kind, which have been enhancing these complementary relationships.

This paper looks at the activities and the short history of small museums in Japan, especially networking. It also considers the definition of small museums, and goes on to discuss the roles, issues, and prospects common amongst small museums.

Small domestic and overseas museums and their networks

Within the International Council of Museums (ICOM), the current International Committee for Regional Museums (ICR), originally established as the Committee for Local Museums in the early 1950s mainly by the curators of small museums who were developing community-based activities along with university researchers, has developed vigorous activities such as the convening of annual meetings and international conferences, and the publication of newsletters.[2] Also, the Small Museum Association (SMA), established in the US in 1984, held its 35th annual conference for three days in 2019.[3] In addition, the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) has published many publications on small museums and has been making efforts to improve exhibitions, educational techniques and the financing abilities of small museum staff. Furthermore, the AASLH small museum committee has prepared a practical list of "small museum toolboxes" and built an online community, as well as expand the networks between small museum staff.[4]

In Japan, the Japanese Council of Art Museums established the Small Museum Working Group (SWG) in 1995, renaming itself as the Small Museum Research Committee in 2004, and has been engaged in various activities. The committee "aims to construct networks to share the knowledge and techniques for museums who recognise themselves as 'small' in terms of building scale and budget or the number of collections and staff, in order to deepen interactions and resolve various issues".[5] In addition, the "Summit Conference for Small-scale Museums", an Annual General Conference for small museums mainly in the Kansai Region that has been held every year since 2010 by the Small Museum Network of Japan, has sought the concept of a community-based museum, as well as develop a variety of

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[2] International Committee for Regional Museums (ICR), The International Council of Museums (ICOM): http://network.icom.museum/icr. (Accessed 18 November 2019.)

[3] Small Museum Association: https://smallmuseum.org. (Accessed 18 November 2019.)

[4] American Association for State and Local History (AASLH): https://www.aaslh.org. (Accessed on 18 November 2019.)

[5] The Japanese Council of Art Museums, Small Museums Network: http://www.zenbi.jp/data_list.php?g=103. (Accessed 18 November 2019.)

activities such as the adoption of the "Sasayama Declaration" in 2014, which describes the potential of small museums.[6] There was no specialised organisation for museums of history and folklore in the past, but 2012 saw the establishment of the Japanese Liaison Council of History and Folk Museums, based on the experience of failing to carry out prompt rescue activities by mutual cooperation at the time of the Great East Japan Earthquake.[7] Given the fact that a majority of member museums are run by cities, towns and villages, the council is like an aggregation of small museums of history and folklore.

At the same time, the Japanese Association of Museums featured an article on "The realities and issues of small museums" in *Museum Research*, published in September 2010, which discussed the tight financial conditions, operations by a small number of staff members, and citizen participation from various perspectives, and shared the issues of small museums.[8] The July 2016 edition of *Museum Research* also featured a rather more upbeat article on "Small museums" once again, which described small museums that were engaged in community-based activities, and the significance of the network for them.[9]

This is how small museums, the roles their networks play, and their challenges are attracting attention at home and abroad. So, what are small museums like?

Definition of a "small museum"

On the website of the Japanese Association of Museums, a small museum is defined as a museum with less than five full-time employees (five to nine full-time employees is defined as a medium museum, and more than nine full-time employees is a large museum).[10] However, there are a variety of perspectives that may define "smallness", such as the scale of the budget, size of the exhibition room, the number of visitors, objects exhibited and objects collected, etc. Actually, the term "small museum" has not been defined clearly.

On the other hand, the small museum committee of the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) has defined a "small museum" as follows:

> "If you think you're small, you're small." We welcome any and all interested in our mission of making America's small museums the very best they can be.[11]

As mentioned above, the Small Museum Research Committee of the Japanese Council of Art Museums has also said that "museums that recognise themselves as [small] in terms of building size and budget, or the number of collections and staff" are member museums.[12]

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[6] The Japanese Council of Art Museums, Small Museums Network.

[7] Japanese Liaison Council of History and Folk Museums: https://www.rekimin.com. (Accessed 18 November 2019.)

[8] Japanese Association of Museums, *Museum Research*, Vol. 45, Issue 9 (Tokyo: Japanese Association of Museums, 2010).

[9] Japanese Association of Museums, *Museum Research*, Vol. 51, Issue 7 (Tokyo: Japanese Association of Museums, 2016).

[10] Japanese Association of Museums, "The online version of museum self-inspection system": https://www.j-muse.or.jp/jikotenken/t2/Result.cgi

[11] AASLH, Small Museums Community: https://aaslh.org/resources/affinity-communities/smallmuseums/. (Accessed 18 November 2019.)

[12] The Japanese Council of Art Museums, Small Museums Network.

Given the above facts, the definition of the term "small museum" varies widely and is unclear, and "smallness" is likely to depend on the impressions the museums themselves or others have, but basically, given the variety and potential of the term, it can be said that a strict definition is unnecessary. However, if it is difficult to define a "small museum" without elements that determine feelings of anxiety due to the fact that they are a "small museum"; the elements may be the relatively small "budget scale" and the accompanying chronic shortage of staff. There is an undeniable possibility that the instability of employment may increase personal anxieties for the future and form the self-image of "difficulties for the small museum."

Roles common among small museums

While many small museums do not have characteristics like those of large museums that hold mega exhibitions attracting huge audiences, they are continuing face-to-face and community-based activities consistently and attracting support from local residents. This seems to be because museums have been established by cities, towns and villages – the municipalities most familiar to local residents – and deal with the themes most familiar to them. People feel that they can drop into the museums and communicate with the curators. Another reason seems to be because it is easy for small museums to develop activities in response to the realities and needs of the regions, based on local needs and communication with local residents, and because these small organisations can be more flexible.

In addition, some small museums that have succeeded in promoting their features at exhibitions and events have gained support not only from local residents, but also from many other people.

Such small museums have the potential to contribute further to the regions in which they are situated and to a wider range of regions with the power of more than one museum if they can grasp their strengths and weaknesses and construct a network to complement each other's weaknesses. Some successful cases have been observed. Though many small museums are marginalised in the world of museums, their number is large, so it is easy to construct networks between museums of the same scale or the same kind inside and outside the regions.

For example, the Small Museum Network of Japan, which has been holding a "Summit Conference for Small-scale Museums," an Annual General Conference for small museums, since 2010 and has been exchanging information via computer-mediated communication tools, started to offer opportunities to talk about the issues and prospects shared by small museums.[13]

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[13] Saotome Kenji, "Collaboration among Small Museums in Japan" in *Museum Collections Make Connections*, (Chinese Association of Museums, 2016), p. 186.

3rd Summit Conference for Small-scale Museums
at the Suita City Museum (FY2011).

4th Summit Conference for Small-scale Museums
at Yao City Shionjiyama Tumulus Study Center (FY2012).

5th Summit Conference for Small-scale Museums
at the Sasayama Children's Museum (FY2013).

It also takes various initiatives such as establishing a space called "Give and Take", where participating museums can bring in things that they do not need any more or give advice and support museums on the verge of being closed down due to tight financial conditions.[14]

Currently, there are approximately 350 individual members who participate in the network of their own free will; they do not necessarily represent any particular museum. There are neither participation fees nor membership fees, no budget, and no chairperson. Also, staff members from large museums and ordinary people with an interest in the issues of small museums are also welcomed. So this networking of small museums is a rather grassroots movement of curators, educators, volunteers and supporters working at or with small museums.

An example of what has been discussed via computer-mediated communication tools includes a curator of the Bat Museum (Nara prefecture) giving advice to the director-general of the Sasayama Children's Museum (Hyogo prefecture) on how to release bats living in an attic of the museum, which used to be an old wooden school building. Meanwhile, many members have recently been quite active in sharing objects and workshops with other museums, to which members of the network belong. This case indicates that members of the network have begun contributing to their communities by utilising their own resources as well as the resources of other small museums.

And so staff members of small museums often try to network with other museums in order to complement each other. In this case, it needs to be emphasised that complementing each other does not necessarily mean that curators of small museums are inferior to those of large museums. In fact, in most cases, curators of small museums are as well trained and have the same skills as curators at large museums. Curators of large museums usually try to advance through specialisation and sub-division, whereas curators of small museums often have to be multi-talented as they have many tasks to do spread among a smaller number of staff members. Gaining specific knowledge/skills takes a lot of time and uses up human resources; small museum curators and staff do not have time or resources to spare. That is the reason why curators of small museums can benefit from getting together and complementing each other.

Incidentally, it is said that a lot of Japanese people changed their values after the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011 and came to feel strongly the importance of relationships and bonds between people and lives. As they fundamentally review traditional daily life, lifestyles and attitudes, mutual support between regional communities is becoming increasingly important. However, some cases were observed where people faced with overwhelmingly strong earthquakes, tsunamis and the nuclear accident, felt the smallness of their power and remained silent. Under such circumstances, small museums and their networks have played a variety of roles through specific activities like restoring festivals and looking back on records as a device to record the local history, culture and nature, or as a device to connect them. Case examples where museums utilised networks, involved local people, and acted in cooperation with citizens helped many Japanese people rediscover the role of small museums in local communities.

Challenges common among small museums

Small museums face a lot of common challenges. In Japan, during the period of rapid economic growth, in response to the review of local areas and regions under concepts developed in the 1970s of "local

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[14] Saotome, "Collaboration among Small Museums in Japan", p. 186.

areas" and "central areas", and as a reflection of the increased popularity of regionalism, small museums run by cities, towns and villages have been constructed one after another in parallel with the ones run by prefectures in a top-down manner since early 1980s.[15] Such movements contributed to the refinement of specific fields, but there were insufficient objectives and principles such as "community-based museums that walk with the citizens", which has come to be heard frequently regarding today's regional museums. They were also said to be nothing like community-based practices, and as local government finances were increasingly tight, they came under criticism by citizens and the media as a symbol of "public building-oriented administration".[16] In particular, some small museums faced a decline in the number of visitors due to the increasingly diverse needs of citizens and an increase in the number of competitor facilities, including private museums and museums whose name recognition and ability to attract visitors were not high in the first place. They also came under scrutiny by the government and citizens from the perspective of the theory that placed importance on statistics such as the number of visitors. Based on this experience, new museum models appeared, including the third generation theory centring on a participation style, and small museums run by cities, towns and villages fell into the hands of citizens as bottom-up type "public museums" for the first time.[17]

In addition, some museums have been forced to close or merge with other museums in recent years. They have been forced to reduce their personnel and downscale or abolish their business and facilities due to budget cuts resulting from administrative and financial reforms in cities, towns and villages, and the great merger of municipalities in the Heisei era (1989–2019). This is how small museums and their staff have faced increasingly hard times.

For instance, there are cases where small museums have to manage a greater number of tasks with fewer personnel after staff reduction; many museums consequently have no time to construct networks with the outside world. In addition, there is a gap between the ideal and the real. For example, they are sometimes ordered by the government to increase the number of "charge-free workers" (i.e. volunteers) while they recognise the importance of citizen-participation-type operations for the development of a sustainable and sound community. Although they are aware of the dilemma, they are actually forced to depend partly on the goodwill of citizen volunteers due to their poor financial base. There are also other cases where volunteers who become citizen service providers have insufficient service consciousness, skill and experience in exhibitions and education, and museum staff who deal with them are often left confused and exhausted. Furthermore, discussions about understanding the ways of museum volunteers are fundamentally insufficient.

If this goes on, more museums and staff are expected to be exhausted in the future, so it is necessary to consider the balance between "responses to requests by the government and the community" and "operations appropriate for the capability of a small museum". The problem may lie in the one-sided requests to small museums for business expansion, etc. that arise from a lack of understanding by the public administrations, assemblies and citizens (taxpayers), and insufficient effort on the part of some small museums to become part of the community to which citizens belong. Some of the challenges above may be solved by taking the needs of citizens and the challenges of the community and

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[15] Tomoyuki Nakano, "Regional Museum", *Museology Dictionary* (Yuzankaku, 2011), p. 219

[16] Tomoyuki Nakano, "Theory on Regional Museum", *Museology Dictionary* (Yuzankaku, 2011), p. 220.

[17] Nakano, "Regional Museum".

developing trust with small museums. However, what is required now is not "too much effort" but less effort so as not to be exhausted.

Many small museums are based on a sense of community, and work with local objects and people while operating from a poor financial base. It is not too much to say that most of today's small museums established by cities, towns and villages in Japan aim to be "community museums" in terms of their objectives and principles. Though small museums are still facing hard times, the concepts of participation-type museums and user-centred museums are becoming popular. Small museums are also aware of the variety of users and are taking specific steps to meet the various needs of their community by utilising local objects and information. Also, some museums have taken on the roles of "community development" and "community revitalisation" against the background of an exhausted local economy. The network of small museums that can complement each other's human resources, objects, knowledge, experience and techniques has become increasingly active as one of the measures to meet diverse needs without becoming exhausted.

Conclusion

As mentioned above, one of the major characteristics of small museums is to develop community-based activities as local museums. In that sense, small museums are required to function as a base for local people to form an identity, and for the discovery and resolution of local challenges, excavation of local resources, and development of local human resources. Small museums protect the objects and information that endorse a community's identity; local people also participate in adding value to tangible and intangible cultural heritage utilising their own knowledge, experience and techniques. This enables the conversion of individual "wisdom" and "experience" into the regional object of "collective intelligence" as well as the succession of "techniques", facilitating developments that meet the realities and needs of communities. It is also necessary for small museums to gather and generate a great momentum in order to promote the above. One museum cannot do a lot of things, but "visualising" what each museum can do and marshalling the human resources and objects they *do* have by compiling them into a database, may enable the mutual utilisation of resources and the development of flexible activities unique to small museums in a bottom-up manner.

In the future, in terms of regional museum theories such as the "Akita Theory" and "community-oriented museums" that have been discussed since the 1970s, it will be necessary to consider the meaning and positioning of varied and modern "small regional museum" models and their networks today, a time when the principles and practices of small museums are increasingly varied and wide-ranging. And in terms of practice, it will be necessary to make efforts to deepen relationships with communities while continuing to value the connections between small museums.

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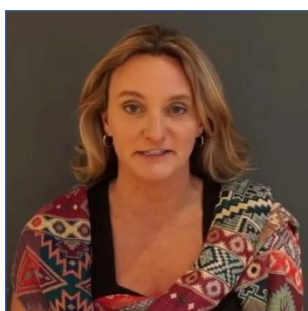
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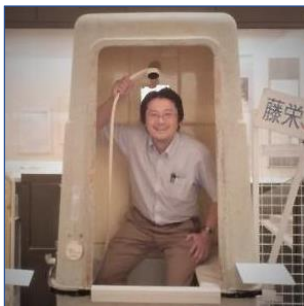
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