

Glasgow Orkney and Shetland Literary and Scientific Association

Overview

The members of this group (and/or their parents) were originally from Orkney and Shetland, and had since settled in Glasgow. This society is a type of nineteenth-century county association. In the stricter sense, county associations were groups whose members (or whose parents) were former residents of counties across Scotland who had moved to Glasgow. This type of group incorporated elements of a benevolent society in that they could offer a combination of accommodation, advice, referrals, and general assistance to newcomers in the city when they arrived, while also offering aid to widows, unemployed members, or members undergoing financial hardship. In addition, they might offer to provide for the education of their members' children, or money to support their higher education.

Formed in 1862, the Glasgow Orkney and Shetland Association (to use its current title) is still running. This is an uncommon case of a literary society founded in the nineteenth century that continues to meet (a number of Burns clubs have survived, but they are, arguably a special type of literary society). In addition, it has the further distinction of having the largest known and most complete collection of materials available on any nineteenth-century Glasgow literary society that we have come across. In 2015, the records and the majority of the books from the association's library were deposited in the [Shetland Archives](#) in Lerwick, where they are currently housed.

The history of the Association has already been the subject of a book by Jerry Eunson and Olivia D. Scott. The book provides an overview of the history of the Association, and covers the years from its founding until 1962, when the authors discuss its then current state and reflect on the Association's centenary. A more in-depth case study was done on this society by Lauren Weiss in 2017. It also covers the association's history, but focuses on the group's 'literary' history, that is, the role of reading, and the production and consumption of their own manuscript magazines in the fulfilment of its objects and aims. Only the records between 1862 and 1914 were covered.

Date of Existence

9 November 1862-present

Source of Information

1. Papers of Glasgow Orkney and Shetland Literary and Scientific Association (almost complete records and remaining library books from association library; includes minutes, manuscript magazines, typescript magazines, copies of papers given to society, financial records, membership records, annual reports, printed year books, scrapbook, and photographs) (SA, D58);
2. Eunson, Jerry and Scott, Olivia D., *The Glasgow Orkney and Shetland Literary and Scientific Association, 1862-1962* ([Glasgow]: [The Association], 1962) (ML, Mitchell (GC) 367 EUN);
3. Glasgow Orkney & Shetland Literary & Scientific Association Year Book. 1942-1966 (ML, Mitchell (GC) 367 669976) (for full holdings, apply to staff);
4. Smith, Brian, 'Significant archive donation', *Unkans, The newsletter of the Shetland Heritage and Culture Community*, 48 (February 2015), 2 <http://www.shetland-museum.org.uk/downloads/data/unkans/Unkans_no48.pdf> [accessed 7 May 2015].;
5. Weiss, Lauren, 'The Literary Clubs and Societies of Glasgow during the Long Nineteenth Century: A City's History of Reading through its Communal Reading Practices and Productions' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Stirling, 2017): [The Literary Clubs and Societies of Glasgow during the Long Nineteenth Century](#)

Repository

Mitchell Library (ML)

Shetland Archives (SA)

Reference Number

(See Source of Information)

Additional Notes

See Glasgow Orcadian Literary and Scientific Society.

See also entry for [Ultima Thule; later changed to The Manuscript Magazines of the](#)

Glasgow Orkney and Shetland Literary and Scientific Association; later changed to The Pole Star on our sister website, *Literary Bonds*.