

AHRC Funding Awarded to James Madison Carpenter Collection Project

We are delighted to announce that the ongoing James Madison Carpenter Collection Project has been awarded funding by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). The collection contains a wealth of traditional songs, ballads, and folk plays, collected by the Harvard-trained scholar, James Madison Carpenter, mostly in the period 1929–1935. Up to now, the collection, which was largely gathered from performers in Scotland, England, and Wales, has only been accessible by visiting the Library of Congress in Washington, DC. This AHRC funding will be used to incorporate the digitised collection materials with the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library Digital Archive. The new resource will make it freely available to all, including



performers, descendants of contributors, and local communities. Led by Tom McKean and Julia Bishop, the Carpenter team will work with colleagues at the English Folk Dance and Song Society to produce the new resource and run a series of events, performances, and school projects introducing the treasures of the collection. The Carpenter Collection has been hidden for so long and this is a wonderful opportunity to return it to the communities and places where so much of it originated. It's also just in time to complement our ongoing critical edition. The funding will start in April 2017.

James Madison Carpenter

The James Madison Carpenter Collection, Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, AFC 1972/001 Photo 099

Julia Bishop

Visiting Scholar Timothy Tangherlini

Every year the Institute hosts visiting scholars, giving the students and public a chance to hear other leaders in the field. In 2017, three visitors have led ethnographic film-making workshops with our students, including independent folklorist and film-maker Dr Teri Brewer, and ethnomusicologists Dr Shihan de Silva Jayasuriya (University of London) and Professor John Baily (Goldsmiths), both of whom also publicly screened films as part of our Ethnographic Film Series.

We were also pleased to welcome back Dr Anna Kearney Guigné, who spoke to our students about the strong song connections shared by Newfoundland, Scotland, Ireland, and England. From the University of Wyoming, geologist Dr Carrick Eggleston and anthropologist Dr Sarah Strauss gave a fascinating seminar on the experimental township of Auroville, India, discussing its development from both cultural and resource/energy perspectives. From within Scotland, Dr Ella Leith led a seminar with our students and delivered an enlightening public lecture on British Sign Language storytelling.

With this internationality and multi-disciplinarity in mind, we are pleased to announce that Professor Timothy Tangherlini, leading folklorist at the University of California, Los Angeles,



will be visiting the Institute in April. As part of the second AHRC/NAFCo workshop, 27–28 April, Professor Tangherlini (left) will give a live-streamed talk on 'Fiddling with Computers: Archival and Fieldwork Challenges in Folkloristics' exploring how Digital

Humanities can contribute to research in fiddle and dance studies. He will be joined by Dr Gaila Kirdienė, from the Lithuanian Academy of Music, and the Institute's own Dr Pat Ballantyne.

The evening before, on Wednesday, 26 April, Professor Tangherlini will demonstrate his wide range of scholarly interests with the public lecture, 'Stories, Computing, and the Politics of Health Care: Folklore Perspectives on Narrative, from Paramedics to Anti-Vaxxers', which will be enriching and useful not only for our own staff and students, but also for our medical colleagues at Foresterhill.

Hosting Scottish and international scholars from outwith our university is an important way to widen our public impact and enrich public and student experience here in the North-East. We are grateful to the many scholars who have visited us this year, and we look forward to Professor Tangherlini's visit in April.

Ian Russell and Nicolas Le Bigre

The David Buchan Lecture 2017

Folk Narrative as Terror Therapy in Scotland, Appalachia, and the Wake of Disasters Worldwide

Professor Carl Lindahl

6:30pm, 16 November 2017

King's College Conference Centre

followed by a reception featuring North-East produce

book at www.abdn.ac.uk/elphinstone or 01224 272996



From the Director

Things are busy as ever here at the Institute and looking to get busier. I'll start with huge congratulations to Dr Julia Bishop for successfully guiding our James Madison Carpenter Project AHRC bid to success, and to Casey Rennie who completed her MLitt.

This March, I attended the bi-annual conference of the Société Internationale d'Ethnologie et de Folklore (SIEF) in Göttingen, where I gave a paper on the significance of the bow tent to Traveller identity, and where I was honoured to be elected to the SIEF Board. I was joined by PhD students Carley Williams, Athanasios Barmplexis, and Sheila Young, along with MLitt student Anna-Joy Thigpen Hunt, and we were pleased to see Maia Daniel, from last year's MLitt, giving her first full-length conference paper. Congratulations are due to Sheila on having two articles in press, one for *Folklore*, one for the SIEF-based journal *Cultural Analysis*.

Visiting scholars this year include Timothy Tangherlini whose pioneering work bringing big-data methods to ethnographic materials has been yielding very interesting results. While here, he'll do a public seminar on paramedic narratives and what they can teach us about the work and the crews' coping mechanisms, and take part in Ian Russell's second AHRC/NAFCo workshop, exploring ways digital tools can help explore music and memory.

In November, Professor Carl Lindahl joins us from the University of Texas, Houston, for the third David Buchan Lecture. Lindahl is a highly-regarded American folklorist who has worked in a diverse range of areas, from American folktales to narratives of disaster and hope with victims of Hurricane Katrina. For the lecture, he'll explore the contemporary power of narrative and the importance of understanding how it works in a wide range of settings, from everyday life to times of strife and stress.

In April, we're running a day-long workshop on

North-East language in which speakers and learners, campaigners, educators, policy makers, and practitioners come together to explore new and effective ways to promote, and raise the status of, North-East Scots in the media, schools, and higher education. We aim to leave the day with a 'roadmap' for progress, so please contact us if you'd like to take part.

On that front, we are pleased to have the part-time services of project co-ordinator Christina Cameron who's helping us develop a much expanded public engagement programme based around five themes: language, culture (music, song, narrative, etc.), skills and crafts, tourism, and research. We aim to expand our reach dramatically in the coming few years and I hope we'll have more to report in the near future.

In June, I'll travel to Japan with Dr Irene Watt to launch what we hope will be an ongoing cultural exchange based around Fraserburgh's Thomas Blake Glover, the nineteenth-century industrialist who was instrumental to the beginnings of such companies as Mitsubishi and Kirin Brewery Co. We are running schools workshops here and in Japan, as well as giving concerts to give audiences a sense of the culture Glover left behind when he went to Japan.

July 24–27, just after the Cullerlie Singing Weekend, we are running a symposium in celebration of our dear friend and colleague Bill Nicolaisen's influential work on Names, Narrative, and Ballads. Each morning will begin with a keynote talk on that day's theme, before opening out to individual papers for the rest of the day, visits from guest artists, as Bill would have wanted, and finish with a closing panel discussion. We are delighted to have two very special guests, Professors Simon Bronner and Cristina Bacchilega, both former students of Bill's.

Finally, this term we welcomed Frances Wilkins back from maternity leave, and confirmed Nicolas Le Bigre for a year as a part-time Teaching Fellow. It looks like a busy summer, probably good practice for next year's NAFCo and the SIEF Summer School.

Thomas A. McKean

New Undergraduate Folklore Course

Offered this year for the first time is our new undergraduate course, 'Scottish Folklore and Oral Traditions.' The aim is to introduce local and international undergraduate students to the rich traditional culture of Scotland through the disciplines of Ethnology, Folklore, and Ethnomusicology. The course includes lectures and tutorials on song, music, dance, narrative, and vernacular medicine, all while introducing the theoretical and historical basics of the disciplines to our enthusiastic students. The end of each week's class features a visit from a special guest who talks about the tradition from a practitioner's point of view.

Second-year undergraduate, Charlotta Lind, writes, 'I have very much enjoyed exploring Scottish oral traditions, especially when you understand just how widespread this tradition is and how much in common different countries and cultures have.' Sophie Macfarlane, also a second-year, says that 'the course has a good amount of work to it and the reports in each tutorial help as a revision of what has been learnt that week. All the topics link together to give a wider picture of Scottish folklore and oral traditions.'

In the meantime, Dr Tom McKean and Dr Marsaili Macleod of Gaelic Studies will run their 'Gaelic Folklore' course for the third time this autumn, examining Gaelic oral traditions, custom and belief, vernacular architecture, alongside the theory and history of the disciplines. Each course has around twenty students, and we hope they will increase student interest in the culture of the North-East and in the work of the Elphinstone Institute more broadly.

Nicolas Le Bigre



Guest storyteller, Essie Stewart

Roup at Cullerlie



Auctioneer Alan Hutcheon, centre

Folklore is not only murder ballads and folktales as some may think, but includes a wide range of genres, performances, and social interactions. Among these is farm culture, which is particularly rich in the North-East. Farms here are well known as the birthplace of Bothy songs, such as ‘The Barnyards o Delgaty’, but we may also think about farm culture in terms of the traditional knowledge and values represented by tools, machinery, and decorations.

In 1993, Tom and Anne Reid set up the Cullerlie Farm Park and Heritage Centre to depict daily farm life through the tools and equipment needed to work the farm. After Tom’s death in 2003, and Anne’s in 2006, the collection went largely unattended and the old machinery began to be covered with picturesque moss. To honour Tom and Anne’s love for this heritage, the family sought to bring new life to

the collection through the hands of the many buyers present.

We saw this as a wonderful opportunity to be immersed in North-East culture and experience this rare event. We were kindly offered a lift by Ian and Norma Russell and, while there we conducted fieldwork through video and photography, and – most importantly – by talking to the many onlookers and buyers. We discovered that there were antique dealers, a new crofter looking for equipment, and many others interested in the assortment of items.

The rich folklore of the North-East is represented and performed through events such as this roup, demonstrating the importance continued fieldwork, participating in and understanding these distinctive events.

Liz Kent and Vera Nikitina

The Traditional Singing Weekend at Cullerlie, 21–23 July 2017.

Dissertation on Aberdeen Football Club

My MLitt dissertation, ‘Aberdeen Football Club: Standing Free in North-East Scotland’, examines the match-day experiences of football fans through ethnographic research undertaken at and around Pittodrie Stadium. Unlike existing research on sectarianism, I wanted to focus on the majority of fans who just go to enjoy a game of football on a Saturday afternoon next to the North Sea.

Much of my research examined the effects of the team’s location on fan identity, ranging from Aberdeen fans’ reputation for being non-sectarian to the pride they take in their ability to withstand the harsh winds from the North Sea. Some of these reflections of local identity were humorous, as in the flying of a hawk for home games to ward off the abnormally large Aberdonian seagulls that will steal your Pittodrie Pie if you are not careful, and the reclaiming of the ‘sheep shagger’ insult as a badge of honour as fans proclaim ‘the sheep are on fire’.



My favourite part of doing research was, by far, the home win against Celtic FC that I attended. The 2–1 win against the leaders of the SPL at the time was like no other. The atmosphere of the stadium can be described as addictive euphoria for the football fan.

Doing my Master’s at the Elphinstone Institute was terrific. The taught courses and field schools provided the skills, and mindset, that allowed me to explore a small part of what makes North-East Scotland unique, and to produce a dissertation which reflects my experiences within the folk group of Aberdeen FC fans.

Casey Rennie

Casey Rennie (above) graduated with commendation in November 2016

What's On: Lectures, Film Series, and Other Events

26 April 2017, 9:30am–5:00pm

Yer Ain Tongue, Linklater Rooms, King's College

26 April 2017, 6:30pm (MacRobert MR051)
Stories, Computing, and the Politics of Health
Care: Folklore Perspectives on Narrative from
Paramedics to Anti-Vaxxers

Timothy Tangherlini

The Institute at the May Festival

Saturday, 27 May 2017

12:00–1:00pm James Madison Carpenter
Collection Workshop

2:30–4:00pm Celebrating Evolving
Tradition

Sunday, 28 May 2017

11:15–11:45am Polish-Scottish Group
Performance (bookshop
marquee)

3:00–4:30pm Celebrating North-East
Writing

All events are in the Multimedia Room,
King's College Conference Centre
(unless noted otherwise)

21–23 July 2017 (Cullerlie Farm Park)

The Traditional Singing Weekend at Cullerlie

24–27 July 2017 (Craig Suite, SDR Library)

W. F. H. Nicolaisen Symposium

16 November 2017, 6:30pm (King's College CC)

The David Buchan Lecture

Folk Narrative as Terror Therapy in Scotland,
Appalachia, and the Wake of Disasters World-
wide

Carl Lindahl

Polish-Scottish Song and Story Group

For workshop, performance, and practice
schedule see: [www.abdn.ac.uk/elphinstone/
public-engagement/polish-scottish-schedule](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/elphinstone/public-engagement/polish-scottish-schedule)

Ethnographic Film Series

Ethnographic Films are screened on the first Tuesday of each month, 3 October, 7 November 2017, 6 February, and 6 March 2018, at 7:30pm in MR051, MacRobert Building (unless otherwise stated). Please check our website for a list of film screenings, www.abdn.ac.uk/elphinstone/public-engagement/filmseries

Public Lecture Series

Public Lectures are on the last Tuesday of the month, 26 September, 31 October, 28 November 2017, 30 January, 27 February, and 27 March 2018, at 7:30pm in MR051, MacRobert Building (unless otherwise noted). Please check our website for a list of lectures, www.abdn.ac.uk/elphinstone/public-engagement/lectures

Yer Ain Tongue, 26 April

Yer ain Tongue is a special day-long workshop on promoting Doric and North-East Scots open to all with an interest in the language. Speakers and learners, campaigners, educators, policy makers, and practitioners will help shape a programme to enhance the status of the language in the media, business, schools, the arts, and the home.

Special guests, including media representatives, politicians, and scholars from the University will give short talks on key topics, followed by practical workshops exploring new and effective ways forward in language promotion. The aim is to leave the day with a 'roadmap' towards future progress.

26 April 2017, 9:30am–5:00pm, Linklater Rooms, King's College

E-mail northeastculture@abdn.ac.uk to reserve a place



W. F. H. Nicolaisen Memorial Symposium

The Institute will host a symposium from 24–27 July 2017 in memory of much-missed Emeritus Professor W. F. H. Nicolaisen (1927–2016). The conference of international scholars will be opened by the renowned folklorist, and onetime Nicolaisen student, Professor Simon Bronner, and feature a keynote from another former student, Professor Cristina Bacchilega of the University of Manoa, Hawai'i. The following three days will be devoted to three key themes in Nicolaisen's work: Names, Narrative, and the Ballad and will demonstrate his enormous international influence in the fields of Onomastics and Folklore.



North Atlantic Fiddle Convention
Aberdeen, 11–15 July 2018

Postscript

The Institute relies on outside financial support to make many of its activities possible. If you would like to help, or join the Friends of the Elphinstone Institute, volunteer, or have suggestions, please contact the Administrator.

Who's Who at the Institute

Staff

Dr Thomas A. McKean, Director, *Ethnology and Folklore, ballads, custom and belief, Gaelic tradition, J. M. Carpenter Project*

Dr Frances Wilkins, Lecturer, *Ethnomusicology and Ethnology, sacred singing in coastal communities, Scottish fiddle traditions in northern Canada*

Professor Emeritus Ian Russell, *Ethnology, Folklore, and Ethnomusicology, oral traditions, including singing, music-making, drama and speech*

Dr Colin Milton, Associate Director, Hon., *Scottish literature and Folklore, especially of the North-East*

Nicolas Le Bigre, Teaching Fellow, archives

Alison Sharman, Administrator

Christina Cameron, Project Co-ordinator

Patron

Very Rev. Iain Torrance, Pro-Chancellor

Honorary Research Fellows

Dr David Atkinson, *J. M. Carpenter Project*

Dr Julia C. Bishop, *J. M. Carpenter Project*

Research Students

Athanasios (Sakis) Barmplexis, PhD student, *contemporary shamanism in Scotland*

Kristin Borgehed, PhD student, North Studentship, *an ethnographic study of northern cultural performance*

Les Donaldson, PhD student, *The Seven Incorporated Trades of Aberdeen*

Ronnie Gibson, PhD student, *the relationships between contemporary and eighteenth-century fiddle traditions*

Nicolas Le Bigre, PhD student, *narratives of immigrant experience*

Hazel Macfarlane, PhD student, *retirement and volunteering in museum contexts*

Máire Ní Bhaoill, PhD student, *traditional singing among children in Ireland*

Roderick Nicol, PhD student, *legends and mythology of Piper Alpha*

Lorna Summers, PhD student, *boatbuilding on the Moray coast*

Carley Williams, PhD student, *safeguarding intangible cultural heritage (ICH) in Scotland*

Sheila Young, PhD student, *women's pre-nuptial rituals in northern Scotland*

Research Associates

Paul Anderson, *North-East fiddle styles and repertoires*

Dr Pat Ballantyne, *Scottish step-dance traditions*

Sheena Blackhall, *creative writing in Scots*

Dr Elaine Bradtke, *J. M. Carpenter Project*

Dr Katherine Campbell, *Scots fiddle, instrumental and song traditions*

Evelyn Hood, *Scottish traditions of dance*

Dr David Northcroft, *education in the North-East*

Dr Robert Young Walsler, *maritime musical traditions, J. M. Carpenter Project*

Dr Irene Watt, *lullabies and project work*

Les Wheeler, *Scots language, education*