

Lothian Health Services Archive Fact Sheet 1

Purpose, Organisation, Activities and Holdings

Mission Statement

To locate, collect, preserve and list all historically important National Health Service and related records, and to provide access to them in conformity with national legislation and existing guidance.



Institutional Profile

Annual Budget: derived from Lothian NHS Board for salaries, direct and indirect running costs.

Staffing: 2.5 archivists (open-ended); 1 conservator (open-ended); 1 archivist (temporary); 2 project conservators (temporary, non-LNHSB funded).

Organisational Arrangements: managed by the University of Edinburgh and located within the Collections Division of Libraries, Museums and Galleries, Information Services.

Core Activities

Information services to users (readers and remote enquiries).

Preservation and conservation.

Acquisition of archival material in conformity with the LHSA collection policy.

Listing.

Promoting use of the Archive.

Other Activities

Promoting LHSA staff training and archival professional opportunity in order to maximise the level of curatorial care bestowed on the Archive.

Advising Lothian NHS Board on archival aspects of records management, Data Protection and Freedom of Information.

Liaising with National Archives of Scotland and other Scottish NHS archives in order to maintain awareness of the Public Record status of NHS records and to develop clear, applicable guidelines to their preservation and destruction.

Caring for historically important objects deposited in LHSA, and providing advice on and information about those still on NHS curtilage.

Special Collections Reading Room supervision of readers (currently two 2-hour sessions per week).

Collection Policy

Lothian Health Services Archive primarily collects records of long-term legal, administrative, epidemiological and historical value produced by the NHS within the Lothian area, including those of predecessor bodies. In addition, non-NHS institutional records and personal papers relating to the local history of health care and the history of Scottish medicine are collected.

Holdings

Approximately 3,000 linear metres in a variety of media, mostly paper-based, including:

- 50 collections of institutional records (LHBs)
- 38 large gifted and deposited collections (GDs)
- 109 smaller GDs (known collectively as GD1)
- c130 collections of folder-based clinical case notes occupying c1,500 linear metres
- c1,400 books (LHSA reference library)
- c5,000 pamphlets (NHS and health related grey literature)
- c30,000 images (mostly still negatives, prints and x-rays)
- 279 medical instruments
- 406 artefacts
- 195 plaques
- 49 items of silverware.

In addition LHSA has a small quantity of digital assets (e.g. copies of photographs, case notes and x-rays).

August 2005

Lothian Health Services Archive Fact Sheet 2

Enquiries

LHSA supports a wide range of enquirers. The main categories are NHS, academic – further sub-divided into the University of Edinburgh, other universities and colleges - private and miscellaneous. The latter includes colleagues in institutions such as the National Archives, National Museums, the medical Royal Colleges, Local Authority archives, libraries and museums, the media and, occasionally, the police.



NHS requests usually relate to the history of departments, services, former patients (case notes, autopsies and biopsies) and staff (training and posts held subsequently). A range of biographical and institutional queries are received from undergraduates, postgraduate researchers and lecturers. Private users mainly comprise members of the public who conduct family history research. Requests for visual materials by the media, and enquiries from architects, conservation groups and companies concerning architectural plans, are also regularly received. Within these general categories, there is a myriad of subject requests, ranging from the details of a particular fact contained in one document, to very general thematic historical enquiries that embrace one or more collections. Enquirers make requests remotely by letter, telephone, email or via the website, or they visit the department and consult material directly in the Reading Room or in the Stack (i.e. repository area) itself if a large amount of material is involved.

Between 2000 and 2004 remote users' written or telephone requests were entered in an enquiries database. Quick, on-the-spot telephone/visitor enquiries were also recorded manually. Totals over the five-year period 2000-2004, arranged according to origin of enquiry, are given below (Table A) The same figures are also represented as a bar graph (B) and as overall percentages in a pie chart (C). User visits to access material in either the Reading Room or the Stack area were also recorded (Table D), along with LHSA staff access (Table E). All the enquiry and access figures are combined in the final bar graph [F], which provides a measure of total LHSA use over five years (2000-2004), arranged according to different methods of access. (See also World Wide Web Fact Sheet [7] for visits to the LHSA website during the first half of 2005.)

Responses to enquiries are informed by Data Protection, NHS guidelines on confidentiality and, most recently, Freedom of Information (FOI). Enquiries involving the processing of information relating to living individuals take place within the framework of the Data Protection Act (1998), which prevents unjustified disclosure of personal information to third parties. However, paragraph 9 of the Statutory Instrument 2000 no. 417 - The Data Protection (Processing of Sensitive Personal Data) Order 2000 - makes provision for records containing sensitive personal data to be disclosed for research purposes, provided the disclosure "does not support measures or decisions with respect to any particular data subject" or "does not cause, nor is likely to cause, substantial damage or substantial distress to the data subject or any other person". Researchers' applications for access to records for purposes of *bona fide* research are passed to the Director of Public Health (DPH). If access is granted the researcher must sign an undertaking that they will not disclose to any third parties any information which they learn from these records, or publish any personal identifiers.

NHS MEL 152 (1993) states that personal health records are closed for 75 years (100 years for minors). However, in recent years, medical information about deceased adults that is less than 100 years old, which is exempt under Freedom of Information as well as Data Protection, can sometimes be released to enquirers. Requests of this nature are also forwarded to the DPH. The reason for the request, and the relationship between the enquirer and the deceased subject, inform decisions to grant or refuse access.

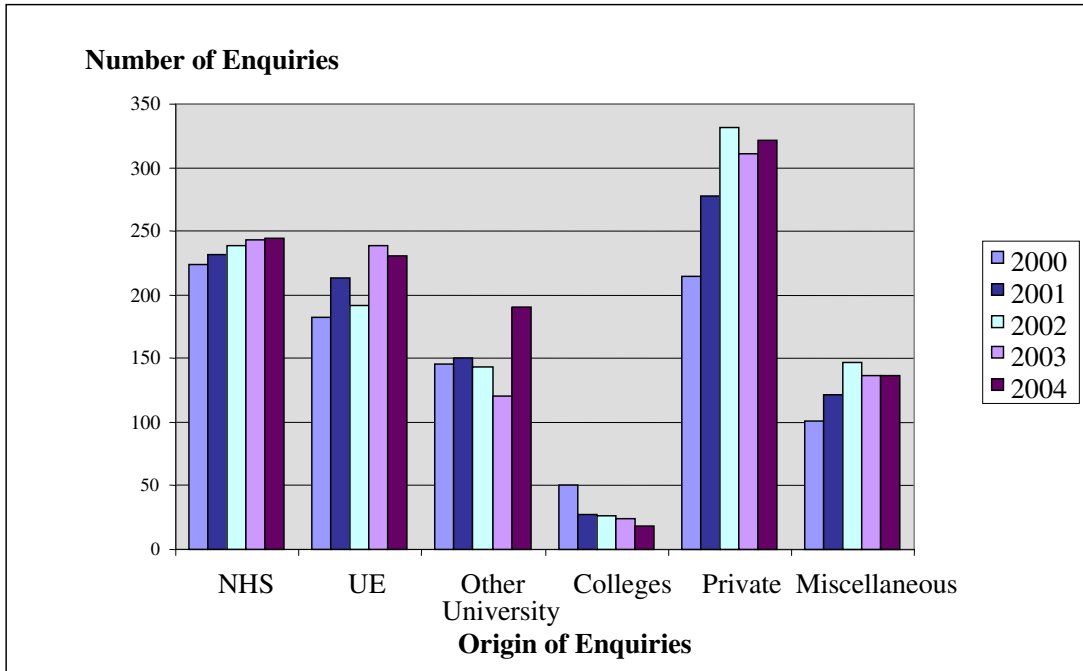
Prior to 1 January 2005 administrative records were routinely closed for thirty years. They are now accessible under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, unless an exemption is claimed. The Act gives the public a general right of access to information produced and held by Scottish public authorities, including Lothian NHS Board, subject to some exemptions. Section 38 exempts personal information covered by the Data Protection Act. The health records of deceased persons are exempt for 100 years from January 1st of the year following the last entry in them. Section 25 exempts material that is already reasonably accessible and identified as such in the publication schemes of public authorities. The majority of LHSA requests for access fall into this category. As noted in the Cataloguing Fact Sheet (6), LHSA strives to list new accessions and to improve its existing finding aids so that the majority of its collections can be included in LNHSB's own publication scheme as open and accessible information/records.

As the bulk of previous LHSA enquiries have dealt with open material or personal information, FOI legislation is unlikely to make an immediate difference to LHSA enquiries. If and when the public become more aware of their FOI rights in the future, this may not remain the case. What has changed since 1 January 2005, however, is the way remote written enquiries are now recorded and counted. The remote enquiries database has been redesigned to take account of the new criteria required in order to process an FOI request. The fields it contains are now considerably more complex than its predecessor. Given the new emphasis on the rights of individuals to access information, it was decided to make individuals, rather than the number of their enquiries, the basis for calculating annual numbers. Therefore, in 2005, an apparent reduction in enquiries is already evident (G).

Table A

Origin of Enquiry 2000-04	Nos. 2000	Nos. 2001	Nos. 2002	Nos. 2003	Nos. 2004
NHS	224	232	239	243	244
Edinburgh University	182	213	192	239	231
Other University	191	121	144	150	146
Colleges	51	28	26	24	18
Private	215	278	332	309	321
Miscellaneous	101	122	147	137	137
Total (Excludes visits to Reading Room and Stack)	964	994	1080	1102	1097

Bar Graph B



Pie Chart C

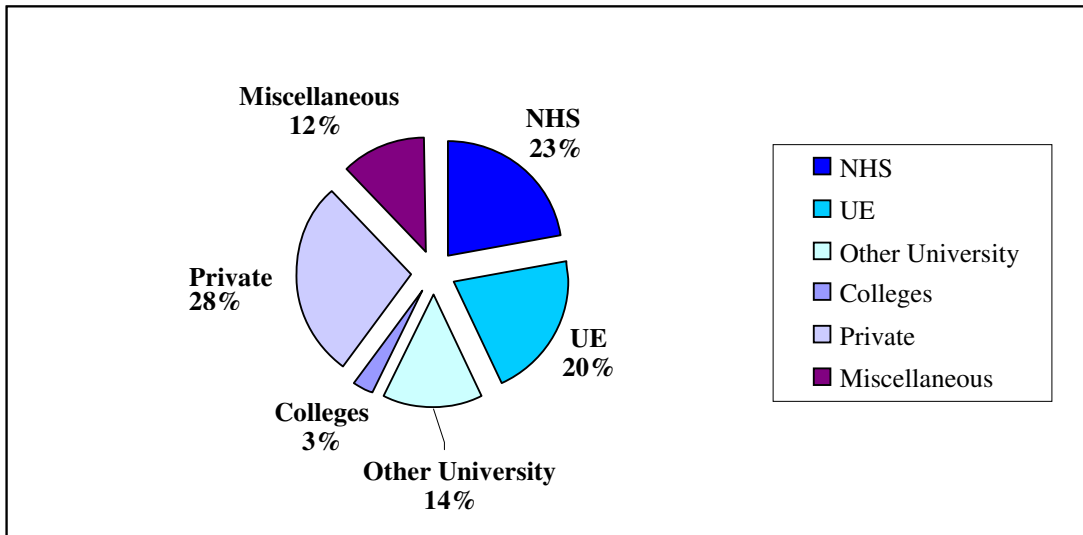


Table D

Year	Reading Room and Stack Visits 2000-04	Reading Room Productions* 2000-04	Special Access Productions 2000-04
2000	253	615	c950
2001	313	684	c450
2002	287	586	c365
2003	214	584	c240
2004	266	485	c320
Total	1333	2954	c2325

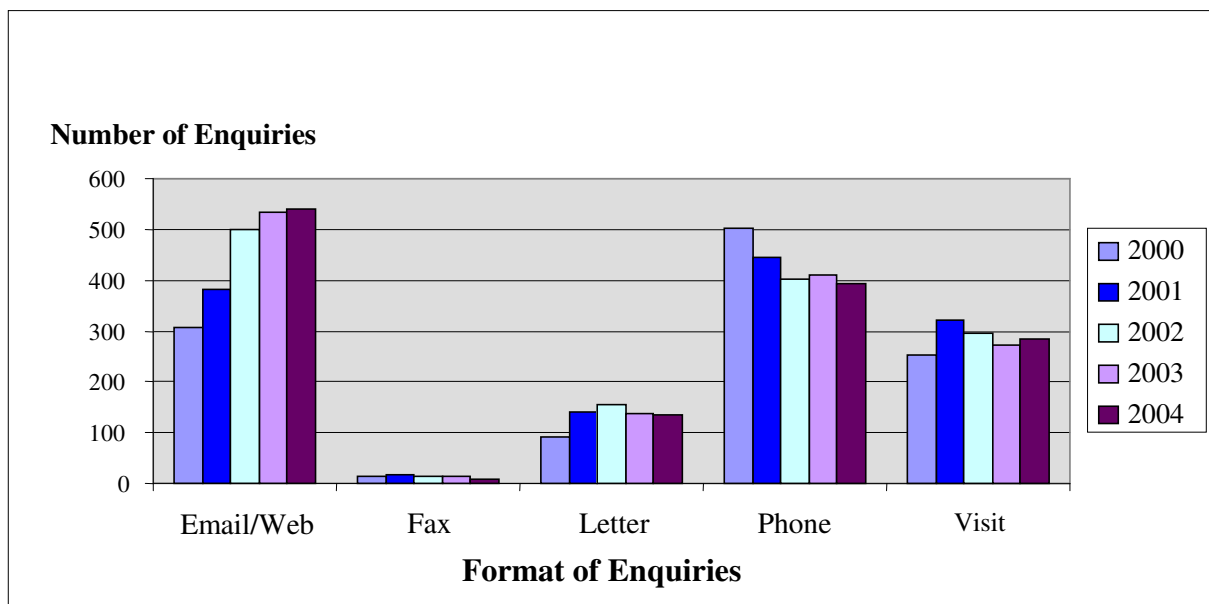
* A production can be one item, a box or a series of boxes

Table E

Year	Staff Productions 2000-04
2000	c1550
2001	c1590
2002	c1653
2003	c1734
2004	c2310**
Total	c8837

** Large increase due to FOI audit

Bar Graph F

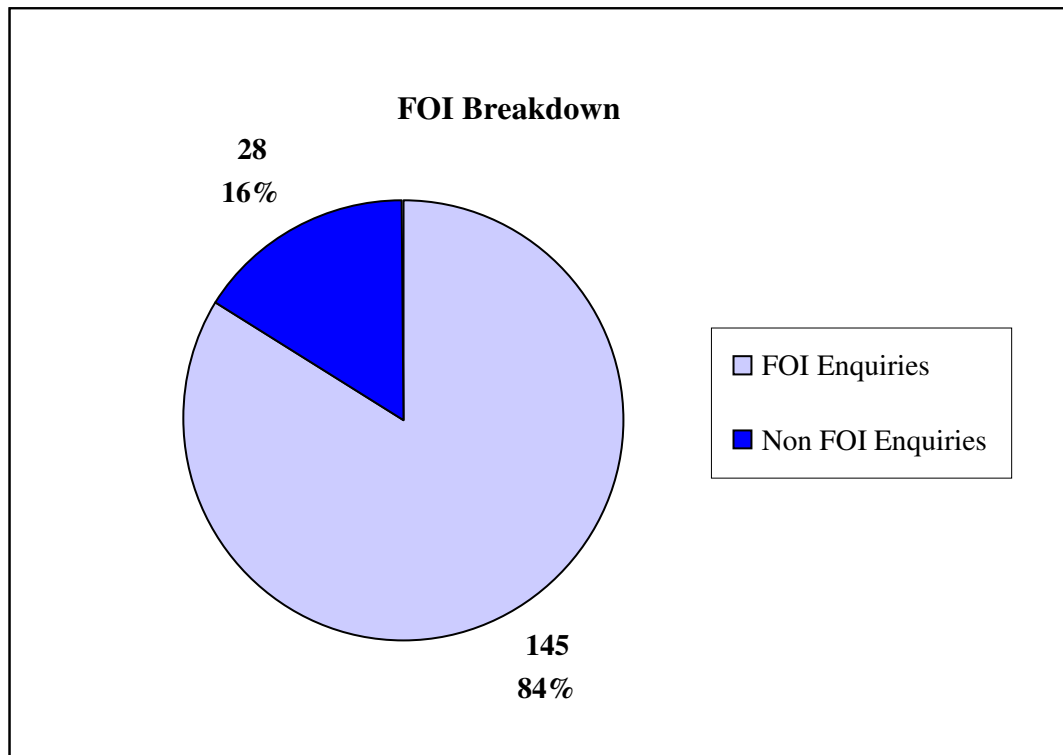


Impact of FOI Implementation G

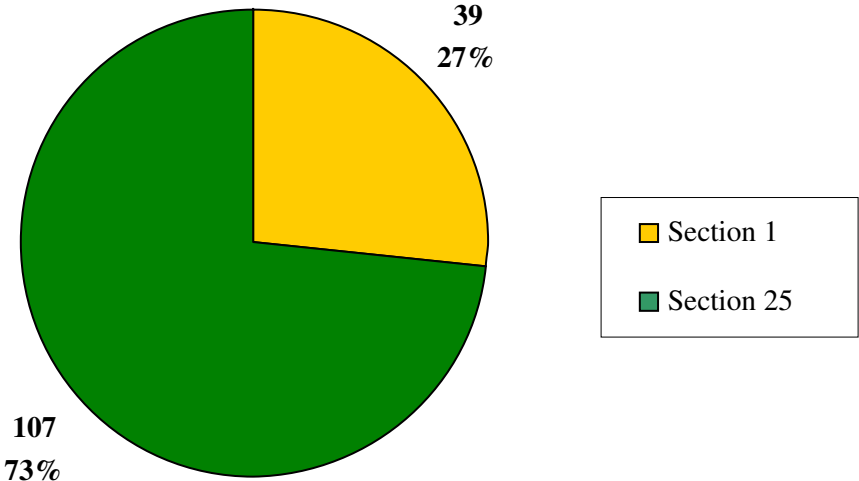
1 January to 30 June 2005	
Total logged enquiries	173
Total FOI enquiries	145
Total non-FOI enquiries	28
Total FOI enquiries	145
Total Section 1 enquiries	39
Total Section 25 enquiries	107
Total Section 25 enquiries	107
Total Section 38 enquiries	46
Total Non-Section 38 enquiries	61

N.B. Only initial contact logged (a change from previous years).

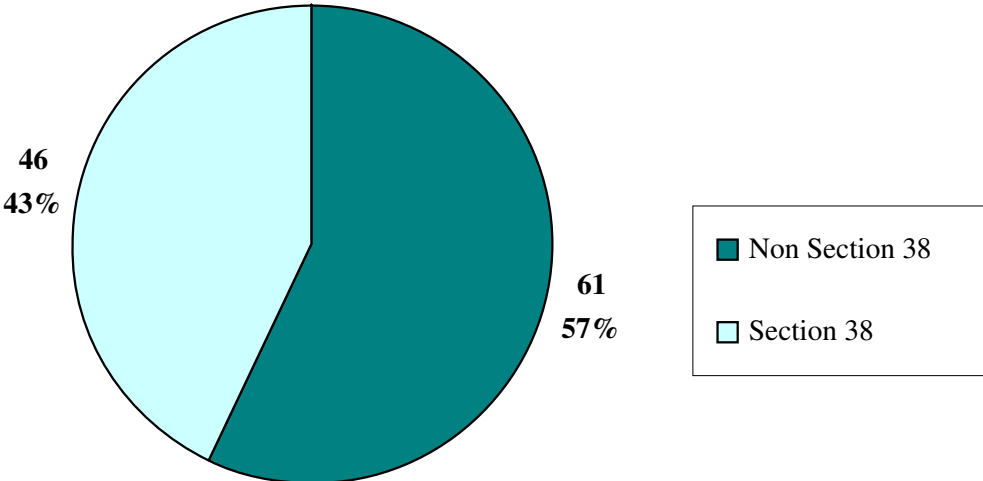
Excluded – brief telephone enquiries about holdings, opening hours, etc. (These would also be regarded as non-FOI enquiries.)



Section 1 and Section 25 Enquiries



Section 38 Analysis



August 2005

Lothian Health Services Archive Fact Sheet 3



Accessioning

Accessioning is the process whereby records, objects, etc. are received into Lothian Health Services Archive. Detailed accession records are important as they show an item's or a collection's origin, previous history and ownership (transfer, gift or deposit).

Accessions 2000-2005

Year	Number of Accessions
2000	73
2001	54
2002	63
2003	89
2004	39

The number and scope of accessions varies from year to year. They can range from a single item to entire collections of patient and administrative records of closed hospitals such as Bruntsfield, Gogarburn and the City. The collection has expanded by approximately 66% in the last five years, largely as a direct consequence of Lothian NHS Board's Acute Services Strategy.

Accessions Process

On receipt of an accession a form is filled in listing the following.

Date of receipt.

Accession number.

LHSA reference number.

Whether a LNHSB transfer, a gift, a deposit or a purchase (rare).

A brief description of the accession including covering dates and quantity and medium of the collection.

A brief archival history and the provenance of the collection.

Any special conditions of use including Data Protection, Freedom of Information, NHS confidentiality arrangements and copyright.

Contact details and signature of the depositor.

Brief details of all the accessions for particular years are summarised in a machine-readable table for easy reference.

Smaller, manageable accessions are listed immediately. Larger ones are usually shelved for future listing.

Significant new accessions over the previous year are noted on the website.

August 2005

Lothian Health Services Archive Fact Sheet 4

Conservation

What is Conservation?

Conservation aims to stabilise the condition of, and limit any further damage and deterioration to, a given object whilst working ethically to provide the best treatment possible. It can be broadly divided into two interrelated categories. Interventive conservation involves treatment to address the chemical and physical effects of damage and deterioration; cleaning and tear repair, for example. Preventive conservation includes the provision of proper storage and monitoring and control of the environment; addressing light, temperature, relative humidity, atmospheric pollutants and pests. Conservation essentially seeks to ensure long-term preservation and, in the case of LHSA, to enable continued safe access to a historically, socially and medically important collection.



Core conservation activity

LHSA began to establish its conservation profile in 1999 by carrying out a National Preservation Office (NPO) Assessment Survey. This was designed to highlight areas of conservation priority within the collection and has subsequently served to provide supporting evidence for spending a significant part of the annual budget on core conservation activity. Initially, six months of a conservator's salary was made available in each financial year, with further sums for materials and for some work contracted-out to specialists. In April 2001, three years of the budget allocation was amalgamated and our first paper conservator was appointed full-time for eighteen months. During this time the following were undertaken.

A Scottish Museums Council Survey of the object collection.

A NPO Survey of the photographic collection.

A programme of preservation packaging of case notes.

The conservation treatment of architectural plans, including David Bryce's drawings for the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh (see www.lhsa.lib.ed.ac.uk/images/bryce/bryce.html).

Grant applications to the Wellcome Trust and the National Archives of Scotland to fund further conservation work on a project basis.

A range of internally-funded, but externally-executed, conservation projects. These have included the reformatting of microfilm case notes for digital preservation, the treatment of a selection of eighteenth-century documents, and the re-binding of books, such as volumes of Royal Edinburgh Hospital presscuttings.

Environmental monitoring of the LHSA repository.

The creation of a purpose-built conservation area for core and project work.

Provision of stronger and safer shelving with funding from the Lothian Primary Care NHS Trust.

After a short interval when no conservator was in post, the second period of LHSA's conservation programme commenced when a further tranche of funding enabled a new full-time paper conservation position to be created in September 2003 – a two-year post that was made open-ended in June 2005. LHSA's conservation programme resumed and work to date has included the following.

Preparation of bound volumes for commercial re-binding.
Drafting a formal LHSA preservation policy and disaster recovery plan.
Re-housing of index cards, the object collection, the glass plate negative collection and small series of case notes and correspondence.
Preparation and monitoring of externally-executed conservation projects (the reformatting of microfilm and x-rays, for example).
A comprehensive shelf survey to establish storage requirements and inform the implementation of a boxing policy for the Archive as a whole.
Submission of applications for external funding (see below).
Production of facsimiles and photographic documentation.
Exhibitions, presentations and publications.
Repository management, including shelf cleaning.
Development of the conservation work area.
Continued environmental monitoring.
Provision of handling guidance for staff and readers.

Conservation projects in LHSA

LHSA has also successfully bid for grants from the Wellcome Trust for three Research Resources in Medical History (RRMH) projects. The first RRMH project, *Preserving twentieth-century hospital case notes of University of Edinburgh clinical professors: Edwin Bramwell and Norman Dott*, ran from June 2002 for twelve months. The grant covered the salaries of a paper conservator and conservation assistant, plus materials. Approximately 10,000 case notes in the Bramwell collection and 24,000 case notes along with x-rays and glass plate negatives in the Dott collection were provided with proper storage. The project was completed on time and on budget and secured the long-term preservation of these important mid-twentieth century case notes, as well as improving safe access to them. A methodology for the preservation of folder-based clinical case notes has evolved from this project, which includes the treatment of photographic material (print and glass plate) and x-rays, as well as paper-based notes.

This methodology was then employed in the second RRMH project, *Preserving twentieth-century hospital case notes of University of Edinburgh clinical professors: James Learmonth and Derrick Dunlop*. On completion of this one-year project in March 2005, approximately 38,000 case notes had been re-housed. A third RRMH project began in July 2005. This project, titled *Preserving twentieth-century case notes of the Royal Edinburgh Hospital*, employs a project conservator and a conservation assistant for an eighteen-month period during which time approximately 26,000 case notes will be re-housed. For further information about RRMH projects carried out in LHSA see: <http://www.lhsa.lib.ed.ac.uk/projects/rrmh/rrmhbd.html> and <http://www.lhsa.lib.ed.ac.uk/projects/rrmh2/rrmhld.html>.

Future prospects

LHSA is committed to providing the best long-term care for the collection possible with continuing core and project conservation work.

August 2005

Lothian Health Services Archive Fact Sheet 5

Objects

Background

One of the secondary roles of LHSA has been to advise on the care of historically important artefacts kept on LNHS property. Since the early 1980s, as a result of hospital and service reorganisations, LHSA has accessioned a range of items that were considered to be at risk. It now has a considerable collection of over 1,000 artefacts of various kinds, although objects have never been a formal part of its collection policy as such.



The majority of these are historical surgical and scientific instruments but there is also a collection of bed plaques and donor boards as well as a number of other artefacts including clocks, silverware, textiles and a small number of works of art.

In response to the growing number of objects in the collection, a survey by the Scottish Museums Council was undertaken in March 2002 to assess the condition of the object collection and to provide recommendations for responsible long-term care. In summary, the survey report suggested that LHSA review its collection policy, provide proper documentation and storage systems and begin improving the condition of items with remedial conservation treatments as necessary.

Following the survey, LHSA began committing both funds from the core budget and staff time to address the recommendations of the survey report. This can be broken down into two main strands of activity: cataloguing and conservation.

Cataloguing of the object collection

Commencing 2003, RIE-related objects were given catalogue numbers and photographed. Valuations of a number of the more significant RIE objects in the collection were also commissioned. This information was entered into a database along with a brief description of each item. In January 2005 the database was developed with the addition of all non-RIE items.

Conservation of the object collection

Apart from the conservation of an important portrait in oils of Dr Charles Bell, treatment of the collection has been largely restricted to the provision of appropriate long-term storage, beginning in January 2004 with the small collection of particularly vulnerable textile items. These objects, ranging from an academic gown to a straight jacket, were individually wrapped in acid-free tissue and placed in custom-made, acid-free boxes. In November 2004, a three-month project to re-house the remaining objects in the collection began. The objects were ordered according to catalogue number, wrapped and padded where necessary with acid-free tissue and boxed. Clear labelling of the boxes and careful stacking has meant that the object collection is now easy to access and preserved for the long-term, whilst also making best use of available space in the repository.

August 2005

Lothian Health Services Archive Fact Sheet 6

Cataloguing

Cataloguing archive collections involves creating standardised descriptions so their contents can be easily identified and accessed by users. Such descriptions cover whole collections, series of records and individual items. In an ideal world, everything should be catalogued to item level, however, this is rarely possible in practice. Cataloguing is a time-consuming process, for which there are never enough hours in the working week! But without it, collections are rendered inaccessible.



LHSA's main finding aid, or catalogue, consists of several hundred pages of handlists arranged in seventeen binders. Eleven relate to the LHBs (NHS institutional public records) of which there are 50 collections. The GDs (gifts and deposits) consist of 38 collections, as well as a group of over 100 smaller collections (GD1s) and make up the remaining six volumes. In 2002 manually-typed LHB handlists created during the 1980s-90s were replaced with machine-readable versions. These now include significant amounts of new material listed to collection, series and item levels.

Copies are available at LHSA and also at the National Register of Archives (Scotland), West Register House, National Archives of Scotland. Since the creation of the LHSA web site in 2000, searchable collection-level international standard archive descriptions of the LHBs and GDs have also been available via the internet, enabling remote users to access summaries of our holdings for the first time. They also appear on other national web sites, such as the Archives Hub, and the Scottish Archive Network. (Further information about these can also be found on the World Wide Web Fact Sheet 7.) More recently, item level handlists have also been made available via the LHSA web site in the form of searchable PDF files.

Around 90% of all the LHBs are catalogued to item level and approximately 90% of the GDs are also catalogued, half to item and half to series levels. However, since 1999, more new records have been accessioned than any period previously. This is a direct result of reorganisation of the Lothian trusts, divisions and hospitals, which commenced in 1994 and is still on-going. The majority of these accessions now require cataloguing. The LHBs are given priority in order that they can be included in the Board's FOI Publication Scheme as information/records that are reasonably accessible. (See Fact Sheet 2 for further details.)

The other main collections are case notes, photographs, objects and the printed reference collection. The case notes have been listed to series level as a result of the externally-funded *Finding the Right Clinical Notes* project, which ran from January 2000 to July 2002. However, there are no item level finding aids to them, which would enable individual patients to be identified. The *Scottish Cultural Resource Access Network* project, also externally funded, has enabled us to mount c.1,500 digitised and captioned photographic images on their web site. (See Fact Sheet 7 for details of these and other non-NHS funded projects.) These make up a small percentage of LHSA-held photographs (c30,000 still images). Apart from an incomplete and outmoded manual card index, there are no other finding aids as such. Descriptions of LHSA objects and the most frequently used books, official publications, pamphlets and grey literature which comprise the reference sections are recorded in databases, which serve as finding aids for LHSA staff rather than users as such.

To summarise, more than 25 years of archival labour have gone into producing a variety of LHSA finding aids. The development of web-based versions has improved access. However, more work will be required to improve our descriptions, extend coverage throughout the entire Archive and also take full advantage of new web-based search technologies.

August 2005

Lothian Health Services Archive Fact Sheet 7

World Wide Web

Over the past few years LHSA's presence on the world wide web has increased, due to in-house web development and involvement in archival networking projects. The benefits of this have been two-fold: as well as giving archive staff an opportunity to develop the listing process, this allows us to widen access by providing remote users with more detailed information about our holdings. During the first half of 2005, the site averaged c3,750 visits per month.



The LHSA web site

LHSA's web site (<http://www.lhsa.lib.ed.ac.uk/>) is hosted by Edinburgh University Library and was developed with the assistance of their Systems team. There are seven main sections: *Contact Us*, *Finding Aids*, *FAQs*, *History of Health*, *Images and Texts of Health*, *Special Projects and Services*, and *Links*. The first two sections give information on how to contact and visit us, the legislative framework in which we function, and lists of the collections we hold with more detailed top-level descriptions; these are probably the most frequently accessed. The other sections give further detail about the Archive, such as externally-funded projects, historical information on health-related topics, and some digitised examples of items from our collections – for example, a selection of silent films on healthcare.

The site is continually developing: most recently pages in the *Contact Us* section were revised to take into account new Freedom of Information legislation. Planned future developments include extensive revision of the finding aids section to include more detailed information at a lower level to bring it more in line with accepted archival standards of description, and additions to the *History* and *Images* sections. Comments or suggestions are always welcomed.

Finding the Right Clinical Notes: improving research access to personal health records in Scotland 1600-1994

This Research Support Libraries Programme-funded project (£92,199) ran from January 2000 to July 2002 (<http://www.clinicalnotes.ac.uk>). It resulted in the creation of a web-mounted database containing descriptions of series of case notes. Surviving case notes were identified by a survey of 29 repositories throughout Scotland and featured libraries and museums as well as archives and hospitals. Case notes can be searched for according to medical subject area (Medical Subject Headings [MESH] and Library of Congress subject headings), institutional or personal name, holding repository, free text and combinations of these options.

Archives Hub

From June 2001 to May 2002 LHSA took part in the Joint Information Systems Committee-funded Higher Education Archives Hub project (£11,573). The Hub presents collection-level descriptions from mainly higher education archives in the UK in a single searchable interface (<http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk>). LHSA's work involved substantial revision of existing top-level finding aids, breaking them down into "sub-fonds", for example grouping together management papers, finance, nursing

and patient records within each collection. These descriptions were then converted using the Hub's own template into Encoded Archival Descriptions (EAD), a type of mark-up language which displays the records on the web in a standardised structure.

The project has now ended but new descriptions are still submitted to keep our Hub entries up-to-date, and it is hoped that in the future there may be an opportunity to develop descriptions to series and item levels as described above.

Scottish Cultural Resources Access Network (SCRAN)

During 1998-1999 LHSA was involved in two projects as part of SCRAN, which resulted in c1,500 digitised images being made available to subscribers via the website (<http://www.scran.ac.uk>). "The Edinburgh Medical Community 1750-1950" (£26,011) focused on the work of the medical community in Edinburgh during these two centuries, while "Edinburgh Scheme for Tuberculosis 1880-1930" (£2,550) dealt with the prevention and treatment of the disease. LHSA receives yearly royalties from SCRAN as a result of use of these images.

Scottish Archive Network (SCAN)

The Scottish Archive Network is a project run by the National Archive of Scotland with funding and support from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Genealogical Society of Utah (<http://www.scan.org.uk>). It has a number of strands including virtual exhibitions, access to digitised Scottish wills, a Knowledge Base and an online catalogue. LHSA has contributed collection-level descriptions of all its collections to the catalogue, which are available on the site along with descriptions from a number of other Scottish archives. Plans are underway to extend the project to include lower-level descriptions in line with similar projects in the rest of the UK.

August 2005