

John Murray Archive

A blog by the National Library of Scotland's writer in residence, uncovering secrets and revelations from one of its most coveted archives, is proving to be an online hit.

Taking advantage of 21st century technology to share his story, playwright Peter Arnott has been sharing the fascinating tale of his work in the John Murray Archive to an internet audience.

The blog, entitled 'Playwright in the Cages', is named after Peter's first experience of the library's prestigious John Murray Archive which was previously stored in a secure area of the library known as "the cage". His blog includes entries on a range of subjects from the first Afghan War to the personal letters of acclaimed poets such as Byron.

Peter Arnott said: "The blog is a very exciting experiment and provides an insight into my journey through a myriad of documents and items and the personalities contained within.

"The John Murray archive offers an extremely unique perspective on what people thought and talked about over the span of two and a half centuries. My blog documents the most entertaining and enlightening things that I have discovered. I hope the blog highlights what a fascinating experience researching the archive has proved to be."

The John Murray archive is a treasure trove of over 200 years of publishing history and contains stories of travel, adventure and passion. It also houses literature created by world-famous figures including Byron and his lover Caroline Lamb, Austen, Coleridge and Darwin as well as descriptions of early polar explorations which were documented by John Murray.

Emma Faragher, Education & Outreach Officer at the National Library of Scotland, added: "We have been receiving tremendous feedback on the blog – it really is wonderful that such a

prolific playwright as Peter has taken the time to share his tales of exploring one of the most exciting publishers' archives in the world. The blog is playing a real part in highlighting how incredible and intriguing this archive is, by making it more accessible and hopefully encouraging people to find out more or pay our John Murray Archive exhibition a visit."

Peter Arnott's literary career began in 1985 and he has penned a number of prestigious plays, including "The Breathing House" which won Best Play at the TMA Awards in 2003.

To check out the blog visit <http://playwrightincages.blogspot.com> – for further information on the John Murray Archive visit www.nls.uk/jma/