

Can you help to identify archive photos?

Historic Environment Scotland (HES) has asked the public to help identify over 5,000 archive images which are now available online for the first time.

In 2019-20, over 170,000 archive items from the HES archives were digitised, with the images now being added to Canmore – the online catalogue of HES archives.

The new online records include digitised copies of photographic negatives and printed photographs from the Scottish Development Department (SDD) which was formed in 1962. The archives showcase rural and urban Scotland in the 1970s and 1980s, from crofts in the Highlands and farms in Orkney to large estates in Fife and tenements in Glasgow.



St Andrew's House across to the Old Town 1985

The collection gives a rare insight into what life was like throughout Scotland at that time with pub interiors, fashion trends and interior design choices all documented. There are also extensive records of Glasgow and Edinburgh and nearby locales, as well as Scotland's new towns. Over 5,000 images of locations and building exterior and interiors are currently unidentified as part of this collection, and HES need help in identifying as many as possible with the help of the public.

Also digitised this year were prints relating to significant archaeological digs including images of excavations at historic sites such as Skara Brae in Orkney and Edinburgh Castle.



St Andrew's House Regent Road 1985

Approximately 14,000 prints were also digitised from personal research and work by prominent archaeologists such as Dr Euan Mackie, Roger Mercer and Vere Gordon Childe, with the oldest image dating from around 1927.

Lesley Ferguson, Head of Archives at HES, said: “These archives give a unique perspective on civic planning in the 20th century including the development and growth of Scotland’s new towns, while the images of excavations showcase the sites that helped archaeologists unlock the secrets of Scotland’s past – from the Neolithic to the Middle Ages.

“Unfortunately, we don’t know where some of these historic photographs were taken and that’s why we are asking for the public’s help. Perhaps there’s a photo of your street, or your local pub, or even the flat you lived in as a student. Help us discover more of Scotland’s past by visiting Canmore and letting us know if you recognise any of the places documented in these archives.”

Over 1 million archives documenting Scotland’s archaeological sites, buildings, industry and maritime heritage are currently available on Canmore.

Lesley continues: “By digitising our archives, we’re able to make them available to even more people. Digitisation helps us make heritage accessible to all as well as ensuring the long-term preservation of these important documents and photographs.”

To provide HES with details or locations of its archives, please email archives@hes.scot or get in touch via [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)

For Canmore, visit: <https://canmore.org.uk/>

To view a range of unidentified images from the Scottish Development Department archives, visit: <https://canmore.org.uk/gallery/1096464>

To view highlights from the Scottish Development Department archives, visit: <https://canmore.org.uk/gallery/1096465>

To view Dr Euan Mackie’s archives,

visit: <https://canmore.org.uk/collection/1180450>



Waverley Lodge Queen's Crescent Waverley Park