



## Spring 2020 Newsletter

This issue of our newsletter is being sent in the most extraordinary of global circumstances. Thankfully we are all in good health; we hope you are too.

Like most UK employers, we closed our offices in March in response to the COVID-19 threat. For the first time ever, all our staff are now working from home. We are managing surprisingly well, and are making good use of video calls and instant messaging, also for the first time in our history, to help us stay connected. Unfortunately we had to cancel a [public event](#) at Glasgow's Kelvin Hall due to the lockdown, but we hope to reschedule it later in the year and to run it at the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh as well.

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## Scots Voices

We are currently revising our Scots School Dictionary. This dictionary is for everyone aged 8 to 18 who speaks, reads or writes Scots or would like to do so, and the growing number of pupils studying for an SQA Award in Scots Language and those studying Scots as a modern language. It will define around 6,000 Scots words and phrases, ranging from everyday terms like *glait*, *mind*, and *bairn*, to words now encountered mainly on Burns Day, e.g. *agley*, *drouthy*, and *painch*.

The dictionary, designed as an application for mobile devices, will also incorporate audio guides to pronunciation. We are keen to incorporate young voices from across Scotland to maximise the dictionary's appeal to young learners, so last week we launched our **Scots Voices** campaign to invite Scotland's 8 to 18 year olds to send their pronunciations to us by 29 May. A selection of their recordings will be incorporated in the new dictionary, which will be available as a free download for iOS and Android from early next year.

For more information, visit: <https://dsl.ac.uk/scotsvoices/>

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## New faces at SLD

Pauline Graham joined us in March as our new Managing Editor. Pauline has an extensive career in publishing, from creating factfinders and atlases to managing A-Z reference titles such as the Cambridge Encyclopedia and textbooks such as the Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language. Having an opportunity to relocate from London to Scotland, she spent 13 years with Elsevier in their Edinburgh office working across a variety of market-leading healthcare-related reference projects for medical students. She is very much looking forward to being part of the SLD team and contributing towards our development and growth. We are thrilled to have Pauline on board to help us navigate the major changes and challenges ahead.

We are also delighted to welcome Roslyn Potter as our new Social Media Manager. Roslyn is currently studying Scottish Literature at the University of Glasgow (and is very familiar with DSL as a result). She knows exactly how to harness social media to promote information and news having done so for a university radio show, which she also hosts and organises. She has great writing skills too, important in her role as editor of a literary journal, and as a copy-editing intern at the Association for Scottish Literary Studies.

Roslyn has also produced a [website](#) which focuses on Scotland's early music. We have asked Roslyn to help us reach new and larger audiences through a more engaging social media strategy.

## 45 Years with us!

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February 2020 saw the 45th anniversary of the appointment of SLD staff member Eileen Finlayson to the Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue (DOST) project. Eileen joined DOST after graduating from the University of Edinburgh. Eileen's job, as you can imagine, has changed a great deal over those 45 years. Her first seven years pre-dated the arrival of computers. It was 1982 before Eileen and her colleagues first faced the delights of MS DOS, Windows and a matrix printer.

It was all change again in 1994 when DOST's dictionary copy was sent to the Philippines for keying. Bundles of slips were shipped there in whisky boxes (they were the strongest!) and Eileen meticulously covered each box with parcel tape lest it fall into the sea - which fortunately never happened. We are told that the sound of that taping will remain for ever in the memories of those who were there – probably including Eileen herself.

In 2002, DOST was completed and Scottish Language Dictionaries was formed as the organisation with overall responsibility for DOST and its sister dictionary, the Scottish National Dictionary. Eileen continues to work for Scottish Language Dictionaries on a variety of editorial tasks and is ever adaptable to the changing requirements of the job, including the restrictions caused by the current global lockdown. Eileen's extensive knowledge of DOST is unparalleled and we are grateful for willingness to patiently explain the reasoning behind its methodology to her less experienced colleagues.

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Long may we all continue to benefit from Eileen's knowledge, skills and good humour!

## SLD on the Airwaves



Our CEO, Rhona Alcorn, makes an appearance on episode 2 of Scotland's new gardening podcast, [Grow Radio](#). Listen in to hear Rhona chatting to podcast host, Frieda Morrison, about some of the many names for Scotland's plants and flowers recorded in our dictionaries.

## What else is happening?

Please remember that you can keep in touch with Scottish Language Dictionaries through our Social Media Accounts on Facebook and Twitter by clicking on the icons below and our new Instagram account is up and running, and can be followed @scotsdictionars for daily images and updates.

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