



# Secretary's Report

## Diana Murray

The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS) welcomes the formal endorsement of its status as one of Scotland's National Collections in *Scotland's Culture*, the Scottish Executive's response to the Cultural Commission's Report.

This places RCAHMS alongside the National Museums, the National Library, the National Galleries, and the National Archives. With encouragement from the Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport these organisations are now exploring ways of strengthening and extending the partnership working that already exists between them.

Also announced in *Scotland's Culture* is the forthcoming Culture Bill under which RCAHMS will be required to alter its status and governance. It is intended that the functions, traditions and reputation of RCAHMS will be carried through this change and that the Bill will recognise a long-term commitment by Scottish government to the unique contribution that RCAHMS makes to Scottish cultural life, providing for the built heritage what the other National Collections provide for the moveable heritage. In other words: collecting, illustrating and enabling understanding of the ever-changing landscape of Scotland.

This year also saw the introduction of the Charities and Trustee

# Partnersh

Investment (Scotland) Act 2005. Although there was some concern that the charitable status of the National Collections, including RCAHMS, might be lost under this Act, a joint representation to the Scottish Parliament ensured that this status was retained.

In January 2006 RCAHMS was awarded academic analogue status by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), one of only eight bodies to be awarded this status and the only one in Scotland. The status recognises the level and standard of the research carried out by RCAHMS. Although this allows RCAHMS to take the lead in applications to AHRC funding programmes, it is likely that RCAHMS will normally seek to apply in partnership with others.

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Successful applications in partnership with others have already resulted in the Basil Spence Research Project (Warwick University), a collaborative doctoral award on the aerial photography of cropmarks (Glasgow University), and in March 2006 RCAHMS was notified of the success of two further AHRC collaborative doctoral awards. The first, on Scottish interiors and their designers, c.1880–1960, is with the University of Edinburgh, and the second on Cumbernauld New Town and mid twentieth century urbanism, is with the University of Strathclyde and Edinburgh College of Art.

RCAHMS continues to work closely with its long standing partners, including Historic Scotland. An important development this year has been our contribution to the Antonine Wall Nomination for World Heritage Status, led by Historic Scotland, which is the subject of one of the short pieces in this Review. This is only one of several partnership projects that RCAHMS is working on with Historic Scotland. Others include the work on archaeological archives, the Historic Land-use Assessment Project and the database of 20th century defensive sites that was completed this year as a tool for Historic Scotland to make

# Partnership Working



an informed assessment for the selection of the most significant sites for management and preservation.

PASTMAP, the online service providing information on Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and the data recorded by RCAHMS, has been in service for some time and was jointly developed by RCAHMS and Historic Scotland. This year, the service was extended, under an initiative instigated by the Local Authority archaeologists, to initially include information from four of the Sites and Monuments Records. A Statement of Co-operation between RCAHMS and the Scottish Sites and Monuments Records was also launched this year which sets out the distinctive roles of the national and local records and the ways in which co-operation can be developed.

## SWISH continues to develop and is reaping rewards for both organisations in the sharing of development ideas, technology and costs

The SWISH – Shared Web Information Systems for Heritage – partnership with our colleagues in the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) continues to develop and is reaping rewards for both organisations in the sharing of development ideas, technology and costs.

RCAHMS has worked with partners on publication, for example books published this year included *Architecture of Scottish Government* in partnership with Dundee University Press; *Controversy on the Clyde Archaeologists, Fakes and Forgers: The Excavation of Dumbuck Crannog* by Alex Hale and Rob Sands; and the new edition of the *Ancient Britain Map* prepared by RCAHMS, RCAHMW and English Heritage, and published by Ordnance Survey. We continue to work closely with the Council for Scottish Archaeology on the production of *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* and on the enhancement of the bibliographical element of our Canmore database.

Also on the partnership theme, we are, as always, grateful to our volunteers who give us their time, energy and expertise to assist in our work on a regular basis and who contribute significantly to the life of RCAHMS.