

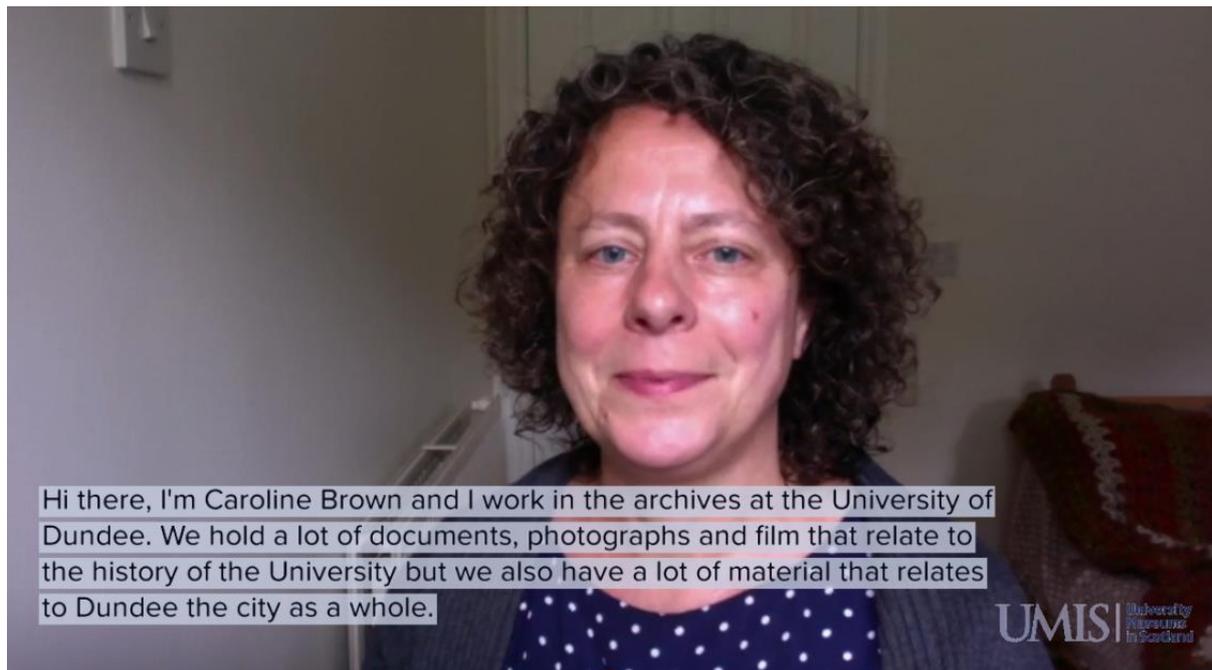
Capturing Lives in Scotland's Communities

Week 2: Activities Video Transcript

Hi everyone! Our activities this week focus on trying to convey different ideas and stories through photographs. Photography is something I know many of you enjoy doing.

In the previous video, Marga talked about photographs as being an important tool for recording what our lives are like for people in the future. She also told us about the importance of photographs being able to tell a story.

In the next video clip, Caroline Brown, archivist from the University of Dundee, tells us why photographs are often kept in archives.



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I think the oldest thing we have in the archives is a piece of papyrus from Ancient Egypt, dating from A.D. 99. We have a lot of material from the 16th and 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th and 21st centuries.

I think if you put the documents and films and photographs that we have end to end it comes to about 2 miles worth of material and that's material that tells you about the history of Dundee, the history of the people that lived in Dundee and the organisations: businesses, factories, transport, whaling, hospitals, asylums.

Everything is documented in the archives. I think its so important that we remember our history and that we look back to see what happened in the past. It can really help us understand where we are today. It can help us make decisions.

They can help us plan for the future and certainly in terms of our archives we have a lot of individuals come who are interested in their family history or local history or the history of Scotland as a whole and from their research into our collections they can actually get a real sense of who they are.

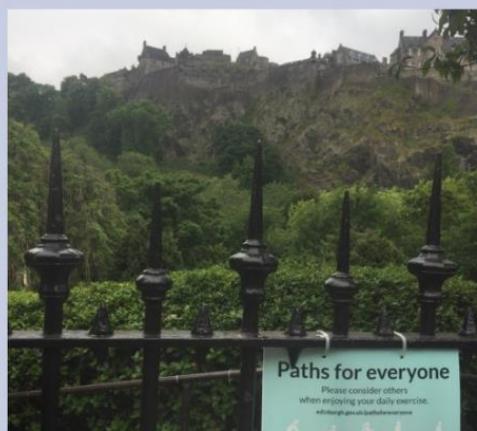
So archives are to a certain extent about helping you preserve your memories and helping you form an identity or feel part of a community. I just love working in the archives because its not just about past, its about the present and its about the future.

This week's activities

The first thing I want you to do is take a photograph which you think tells a story about life in 2020.

This could be to do with the technology that we use today, it could be to do with climate change or it could be related to the current COVID-19 situation.

Something that might be good to think about including in your photos is an element of juxtaposition or contrasting two things together which we might not expect.



For example, in this photo, I wanted to contrast the sign, which has only been there since March, with the castle that has been there for hundreds of years

Secondly, one of the things that we talked about last week was what is unique about living in your area. Can you take a photo which will show us something about the area in which you live? It could be a favourite place that you like going to. Or a landmark in your local area that everyone knows. For example, I took this picture in Princes Street Gardens, a well-known park in Edinburgh.



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I liked how we can see the beauty of the nature in the park but also the two people practicing social distancing.

Thirdly, this year we have spent a lot more time inside than we are used to so one way of telling a story is to take a picture from inside looking out.

Can you take a picture looking out a window from where you live and see if there's anything you can do in terms of composition and format to make it more interesting?



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This example is from VisitScotland's #WindowOnScotland campaign. Not everyone looks out onto a beach like this though! One thing to think about is whether you want to include the window frame or not - would it detract or add to your image?

If you like you can play around with the editing settings on your phones to use different filters. How does using different filters change the mood of the photo?

Finally, another form of photography that we can experiment with is making a collage of different screen shots (this again speaks to the fact that we've all spent much more time than usual on our devices this year!)



The key to a good screenshot collage is again contrasting two surprising elements beside each other as we can see in this example from photopedagogy.com

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When he was nominated for a World Press Photo Award for these photographs, it sparked a lot of controversy about the nature of photography. This is one of the things we can discuss in our sessions this week.

In summary, can you take:

- a) A photograph that tells a story about life in 2020?
- b) A photograph that shows us what is unique about where you live?
- c) A photograph from inside, looking out?
- d) experiment with taking screenshots on your phone or computer and putting them together into a collage.

Credited with work by:

Uriel Soberanes – “untitled image” · Markus Spiske – “Fridays for future - global climate strike on the European elections (May 24 2019)” · Fabrizio Verrecchia – “City view from window frame” - <https://www.photopedagogy.com/screenshots.html> - Michael Wolf 'A Series of Unfortunate Events' - VisitScotland