

**P135 Wick Society Museum Photographs**  
**RECORDS' IDENTITY STATEMENT**

Reference number: P135

Alternative reference number:

Title: Wick Society Museum Photographs

Dates of creation: c.1971

Level of description: Fonds

Extent: 7 photographs

Format: Paper

**RECORDS' CONTEXT**

Name of creators: Wick Society Museum Photographs

Administrative history: The Wick Society was founded in 1971. by three people who were concerned about the redevelopment of Wick and the way that the demolition of old buildings was affecting the character of the town. At first they met in Wick Assembly Rooms and in 1974 opened a small museum in the Carnegie Library.

As membership grew so did the influence of the Society until in 1979 the Caithness District Council made an offer of empty buildings in Bank Row for the creation of a Heritage Centre. The Society wanted to call the venture 'The Wick Society Museum' but was persuaded by the Council to accept 'Wick Heritage Centre' because 'it would attract more Grant funding'.

The Society accepted the offer in 1980 and the facility opened the first displays to the public in 1981. The Centre gradually expanded as more items became available for display. The Council took responsibility for the exterior of the buildings and the extensive terraced gardens at the rear of the Centre whilst the Society accepted responsibility for the interior work. Although the Society and the Council often differed about the best ways to preserve the town's heritage a unique co-operation was achieved and the Heritage Centre grew in influence and

effectiveness.

In the early days very few items were accepted except as 'on loan' and a signed receipt was issued. A disclaimer card was on show to inform individuals and their families that the Society would do their best to protect these loans they could not give an absolute guarantee as to their safety.

Some items with strong local connections were purchased at auction. On the 4 February 2002 the Wick Society bought the land and buildings to the East of the Heritage Centre with a view to further development.

On the 7 January 2004 the Wick Society became a Company Limited by Guarantee and the Wick Heritage Centre became The Wick Heritage Museum. These steps were necessary to meet present funding opportunities and future development requirements. The Members approved these significant changes and the appointment of a Board of Directors to oversee the daily demands of an ever-growing facility and to plan for the future success of the Museum.

Protracted negotiations have almost concluded with the Highland Council for the Society to purchase the ownership of the properties at a nominal price. This will enable the Museum to meet one of the main requirements of a Museum seeking Accreditation of the Scottish Museums Council. At all stages of these changes expert advice has been obtained.

The Society continues to work closely with the Scottish Museums Council to meet the other criteria. The services of a fully qualified Curatorial Advisor has been negotiated and work has commenced to bring the collections into the SMC accreditation standards. Significant work must be done to negotiate the status of many exhibits from 'on loan' into 'ownership of the Society'. This is one of the key requirements of the accreditation application process.

The Society acknowledges the support of The Highland Council. Caithness and

Sutherland Enterprise (CASE), CED, Seabridge Consultants, and many local businesses for financial and practical support.

As we face a challenging and exciting future can we request your support and on-going interest? Together, we can make a difference! We are committed to 'preserving and promoting Wick's proud heritage' for the inspiration of future generations.

On the 28 August 2009 The Lord-Lieutenent of Caithness, Miss Anne Dunnett, presented The Wick Society with the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second conferred the award on The Wick Society on the 2 June 2009 for outstanding voluntary work in the community as 'A museum which serves as an educational resource for local residents researching the history of the town and its past fishing industry.'

Custodial history:

## **RECORDS' CONTENT**

Description: Black and white photographs of the Wick Society Museum display in Wick library

Appraisal:

Accruals:

## **RECORDS' CONDITION OF ACCESS AND USE**

Access: open

Closed until:

Access conditions: Available within the Archive searchroom

Copying: Copying permitted within standard Copyright Act parameters

Finding aids: Available in Archive searchroom

## **ALLIED MATERIALS**

Related material:

Publication:

Notes:

Copyright with Northern Studios, Wick  
(contact details printed on back of  
photographs)

Date of catalogue:

October 2011

<b>Ref.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dates</b>
<b>P135</b>	<b>Wick Society Museum Photographs</b>	<b>c.1971</b>
P135/1	Black and white photographs of the Wick Society Museum display in Wick library [7 photographs]	c.1971