

# Grampian information

LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION SERVICES IN PARTNERSHIP

Submission to the Cultural Commission by Grampian Information

## **Background to Grampian Information (G.I.)**

- Grampian Information evolved from Aberdeen and North of Scotland Library and Information Co-operative Service. (Founded in 1969 as an association of academic, public and special libraries.)
- G.I. was constituted in May 1993 as a collaborative Library and Information services interest group. Its membership currently comprises 60 organisations and it represents more than 100 individual members, most of whom are library and information services professionals. GI exists for the benefit of its member organisations and, through them, the wider community of information users.
- It is a not-for-profits organisation with key funding from membership fees and fundraising events.
- G.I. is an affiliation of quite disparate groups, crossing as it does, not only disciplines, but also organisations with very different social and economic functions and ethos, from the public to the private, the voluntary to the commercial.

## **Aim**

Grampian Information's primary aim for this unique cross-sectoral network, is to become the principal development agency for information services in North East Scotland, with a commitment to improve and co-ordinate information provision across all sectors.

## **Key Issues**

1. Grampian Information is closely aligned to the cultural community, via its membership, and specifically the sub-division into groups with shared professional interests, such as Local History & Archives, the oil Group and the Science Research Group. The network enjoys active involvement from members of the commercial sector e.g. the oil industry librarians as well as many other member organisations working in valuable partnerships, locally. G.I. is well placed to contribute from diverse perspectives to the cultural rights of Scottish citizens, particularly in public, academic, commercial and voluntary sector libraries/information services.

2.G.I. values the role performed by the Scottish Library Information Council in terms of co-ordination and representation of libraries. However, we also understand that the links between Archives, Museums and Libraries are part of the same complementary network of cultural and information resources. In England and Wales, there is one body, namely the Museums, Libraries and Archives (Council) "MLA" , and perhaps we should reflect this and encourage debate, not necessarily on a Scottish version of MLA, but a Scottish solution, which brings collections, professionals and users closer together.

3.G.I. also values the vital role performed by the National Library of Scotland and in particular the visionary broadening of access, irrespective of geographical region. Furthermore, we recognise the concept of cultural entitlements and suggest that we should be pushing "what's right for our users" nationally and locally. Users are not interested in artificial barriers created by the way organisations are structured, but are interested in access which recognises the conservation and protection of items and collections, as well as consistency in access and appropriate exploitation. Sadly, this protection is currently not always present even within organisations or between professions.

4.The Scottish Museums Council and the Scottish Archives Council, with the National Museums of Scotland and National Archives of Scotland also perform key tasks in promoting and delivering high-quality cultural standards and services to all. G.I. members have found it immensely helpful to have these organisations to access in-depth specialist knowledge.

5.Grampian Information has unique access to views and feedback from cross-sectoral representatives to aid the co-ordination of cultural standards and responsibilities. Its annual conference, which aims to engage the professional interest of its membership, also serves as a platform for exchanged views, aspirations and stated goals.

6. G.I. recommends to the Commission that the sustainable resourcing and funding provision must underpin cultural and creative communities in Scotland on a national basis, to ensure consistent service provision to fulfil the cultural rights of all citizens of Scotland. We are a service industry in this respect and should be seeking funding and support to improve the range and quality of services. By better accessing resources, better understanding of our heritage is possible and from it, more opportunities to celebrate and use it in a creative sense.

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**From:** Elspeth Scott [info@grampianinfo.co.uk]  
**Sent:** 04 November 2004 14:59  
**To:** info  
**Subject:** Grampian Information Submission[Scanned]

Please find attached our belated initial phase submission to the Cultural Commission.

Regards

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