

Work in Print

A celebration of Kelso's contribution to 500 years of printing in Scotland

Work in Print exhibition

Over 500 people visited the Work in Print exhibition which was held in Kelso Town House as part of the St James Fair weekend. A celebration of Kelso's contribution to 500 years of printing in Scotland, it was a partnership exhibition in the true sense of the word. The exhibition combined work from Friends of Kelso Museum, the Heritage Hub, Kelso and District Amenity Society, Kelso Graphics, Kelso Library and the Local Studies Librarian, SBC Library and Information Services.

After 1508, printing spread slowly across Scotland, with Kelso leading the way for the central Borders towns. In 1782, James Palmer printed two religious books at Kelso. A copy of one of these, *Dissertation on the Foederal Transactions between God and his church* was on display at the exhibition. Palmer also printed the Kelso Chronicle which was the first provincial newspaper in the Scottish Borders and only the second in Scotland, copies of early and later editions were on show.

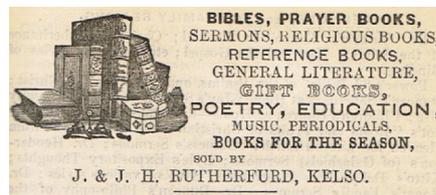
Another aspect of this fascinating exhibition was exhibits from the Kelso Archive, a unique collection of papers providing an insight into life in Kelso in the eighteenth century. In 2002, a fundraising partnership between the local community, the Heritage Lottery Fund, Scottish Borders Council, Kelso Common Good Fund and the National Fund for Acquisitions saved the collection from being sold to Yale University.

The words Kelso and printing can not be expressed without mention of Sir Walter Scott and Ballantyne, the printer who in 1802 produced the first two volumes of Scott's compilation of ballads, the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*

"The imprint Kelso was read with wonder and connoisseurs were astonished at the handsome printing which so obscure a town has produced"

Sir Walter Scott on the first two volumes printed in Kelso by Ballantyne

Rutherford the Kelso printers who for many years produced such excellent reference titles such as *Southern Counties Register*, the *Border Almanac* and many *Border maps* and information were represented by a display of books and facsimile copies from their many publications. Some of the illustrations put modern day clipart to shame.



Rutherford advertisement from *Border Almanac* 1868
Copy held at Hawick Library

Compiled by Dr John Perkins from Warrington in 1993, *The Kelso: Calendar*, details the history of printing in Kelso and provides a list of books with the Kelso imprint. This was reproduced and updated for the exhibition and now is a unique guide to Kelso and its valuable contribution to Scottish Printing.

Kelso Graphics played a leading role in this exhibition donating material and displays from their collections; providing a unique insight in to modern day printing techniques in Kelso. Other exhibits were provided by Smails of Innerleithen and Stitchill Marigold Press. Archive books and newspapers were provided by the Local Studies Librarian, and the Heritage Hub at Hawick. Excerpts from the *Kelso Mail* 200 years ago were reproduced and enjoyed by visitors.

There was something for all ages at this exhibition: Jane Gaze, Borders artist held children's workshops supported by Friends of Kelso Museum and Scottish Borders Council Cultural Co-ordinator Programme which provided an opportunity for youngsters to learn more about printing techniques, and a prize giving ceremony was held for the winners of the *Work in Print Design a Book Cover*, the prizes were donated by Friends of Kelso Museum and Kelso and District Amenity Society