



Archaeology for Communities
in the Highlands

Annual Report

2014-2015



1. About ARCH

Archaeology for Communities in the Highlands (ARCH) was set up in January 2009 to provide a range of exciting and innovative community archaeology projects. It provides opportunities to encourage people with diverse interests and abilities in the Highlands to learn about, record and participate in celebrating and increasing knowledge of their local heritage. ARCH does this in a number of ways including classroom learning, practical outdoor sessions, community group project work and via a virtual community.

The charitable purposes of ARCH are to advance education, community developments, heritage and culture by working with individuals, local groups and agencies in the Highlands of Scotland, and encouraging people to learn about, record and become involved with their heritage. This report highlights the projects and activities which took place from April 2014 to end of March 2015.

Trustees

The Board of Trustees were appointed on the establishment of the organisation. Appointments and replacements are made in accordance with the Articles and Memorandum which require a minimum of three trustees and a maximum of 7 trustees.

The trustees for 2014-2015 were:

Dr Graham Clark (Chairperson)
Sue Mitchell (Company Secretary)
Malcolm Bangor-Jones
Simon Berry
Alasdair Cameron
Carolyn Samsin
Roland Spencer-Jones (appointed 16-7-2014)
Lorna Cruickshank (adviser)

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Archaeology for Communities in the Highlands (ARCH) is a registered Scottish Charity, No. SC040624, and a Company Limited by Guarantee, Company No. 353054



2. ARCH Activities 2014-2015

ARCH has been active on a number of fronts in the Highlands this year. Thanks to the many funders who have made these activities possible this year: the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Robertson Trust, E.ON Rosehall Community Fund, Historic Scotland, High Life Highland, Highland Council, Archaeology Scotland (Adopt-A-Monument), the Woodland Trust, Awards for All, the Co-operative Membership Community Fund and the Robert Kiln Trust. Sessions were delivered by Susan Kruse unless otherwise noted. Further information on these projects can be found on the ARCH website www.archhighland.org.uk.

2.1 Telford's Highland Heritage

In our 2013-14 Annual Report we recorded our successful 1st stage application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for a 3-year **Telford's Highland Heritage** project to succeed our previous *Stop, Look and Listen* project. We also noted that, despite a Development Grant for consultancy assistance to find matched funding for this project, the sum necessary had not been achieved and we had informed HLF that we intended to delay our 2nd stage application until November 2014. This 2nd stage application was duly submitted and we were very pleased to be awarded £171,000 (one-half of the total projected costs) in March 2015. Securing match funding for the rest will occupy the next financial year, as we wait for LEADER to come on stream, and seek other partners in the project.

2.2 Telford in the Kyle of Sutherland (Bonar Bridge and Ardgay)

As part of our Telford's Highland Heritage fundraising, we were awarded match funding from the Robertson Trust and the E.ON Rosehall Community Fund. They kindly allowed us to apply this funding towards a Telford project focussing on his activities in the Kyle of Sutherland. This was extremely useful, allowing us to pilot many of the activities in our Highland-wide project. Indeed the final application to HLF was shaped by lessons learned in this and other pilots run during the year.

The project was run with support of three local history societies, the Dornoch HistoryLinks museum and the Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust. Comprising lectures, sessions on the use of old maps and the Historic Environmental Record (HER), local research, walks, an information stand at the local Highland Games and surveys, the project generated good local interest. A particular high point was the standing building survey training led by Janet Hooper, where participants documented a



previously unrecorded Telford bridge south of Lairg. Malcolm Standing geo-referenced the many plans and maps the research resulted in, as well as the data from recording other features in the area. Participants created a trail leaflet to allow people to explore Telford remains in the area, and hid three geocaches at Telford sites. Research folders were also deposited in local libraries. Our Open Day was well-attended, as the picture shows.

2.3 Telford on the Sleat Peninsula (Armadale)

This short project also acted as a pilot for *Telford's Highland Heritage*. Funded by Historic Scotland and based at the Museum of the Isles on Skye, participants mapped and traced Telford's activities on the Sleat Peninsula. There was great excitement as we tried to find the route of the Telford road, with participants checking archives at the Clan Donald Centre as well as in Portree, Edinburgh, Inverness and London.



2.4 Exploring Telford Archives (Inverness)



A short course funded by Historic Scotland and delivered with assistance from the Highland Archive Centre in Inverness explored archival material relating to Telford's activities in the Highlands. These included Parliamentary Commissioners reports, maps, toll house records, Caledonian Canal archives, kirk session records, and minutes of county road committees. Some people helped the Skye group in their investigations, while others

had their own specific interests. All participants remarked how they now feel comfortable in coming to the archives and undertaking future research.

2.5 Open Source GIS workshops (AIness)

The importance of maps features in many of ARCH's courses. In this course funded by Historic Scotland Malcolm Standring provided instruction on how to use a free Open Source GIS software program which allows different maps to be superimposed, and linked to relevant data. Data generated in the Telford in the Kyle of Sutherland project was used as coursework examples.

2.6 Ancient Crafts Workshops (Tain and Nairn)

Our popular Ancient Craft Workshops led by Lynne McKeggie were held in Nairn and Tain, funded by High Life Highland. These sessions explored textile crafts, and placed them in the local archaeological context.



2.7 Local History Workshops (Dingwall)

As part of the High Life Highland You Time programme, ARCH ran a short course at Dingwall Library focussing on sources for local history, using Dingwall as the example. The sessions culminated in a walk through the town, looking at sites explored in the sessions.

2.8 Feats of Clay (North Kessock)

ARCH continued its work for the North Kessock and District Local History Society exploring Bronze Age metalwork and settlement in the Moray Firth area. During 2014-15, we have been involved in organising the end-of-project open day and exhibition in September 2014, providing sessions in the local schools, and in the cataloguing and photography of Moray Firth Bronze Age finds.



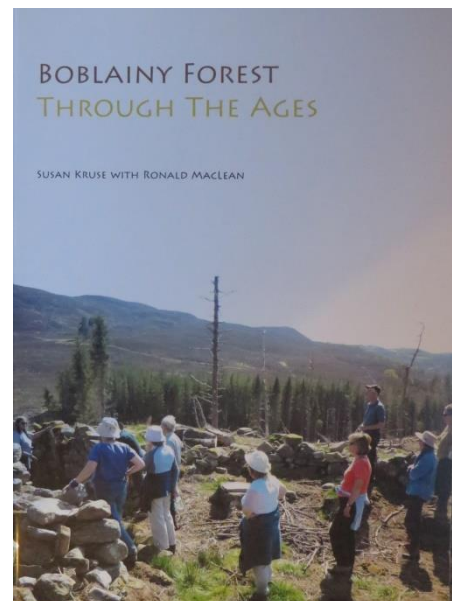
2.9 Knockbain Heritage (Munlochy)



Knockbain Community Council engaged ARCH to carry out a Knockbain Heritage project. Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the (Black Isle) Ward Discretionary Fund, this project involved sessions sharing memories, a heritage overview and local research sessions both indoor and out, focussing on this parish on the western Black Isle. Participants created a 'Walk around Munlochy Village' leaflet, and provided research for input into heritage databases and for research folders deposited locally.

2.10 Boblainy Forest Community Archaeology Project (Kiltarlity area)

Building on a previous project delivered by ARCH for Kiltarlity Community Council, this phase included a walk to forgotten settlements and to a Canadian forestry camp in the wood, the creation of entries to the heritage databases and the writing of *Boblainy Forest through the Ages* booklet (published in April 2015).



2.11 Carn Glas 'Adopt-A-Monument' (Kilcoy)

An excellent example of ARCH's ability to collaborate with other organisations is a joint project with the North Kessock and District Local History Society and the North of Scotland Archaeological Society (NOSAS) which was successfully submitted to Archaeology Scotland under the '**Adopt-a-Monument scheme**' in early 2014. The purpose is to improve the visitor experience at the important Neolithic and Bronze Age chambered cairn known as Carn Glas at Heights of Kilcoy. The project is on-going and has already involved clearance of intrusive vegetation and re-fencing, led by Graham Clark, Alasdair Cameron and Roland Spencer-Jones. Re-instatement of the monument to its 1955 excavation level and the erection of an interpretation board will be undertaken during the summer of 2015, with a launch in October 2015.

2.12 Memories and Microchips (Strathpeffer)

This short course undertaken for Strathpeffer Community Centre with funding from High Life Highland explored digital resources for Strathpeffer, combined with ARCH's well-established methodology for gathering and recording memories. A number of sites were identified, as well as the need for further work.

2.13 Ledmore and Migdale Memories (Dornoch and Bonar Bridge)

The Woodland Trust commissioned ARCH to provide sessions for people to share memories of the Ledmore and Migdale Forest. The sessions were well attended, and generated a wide range of material, showcased at an Open Day. Material was then used for further work by the Woodland Trust.

2.14 Focus on Finds (Avoch, Brora, Ullapool, Gairloch and Fort William)

Sessions were held at museums in Fort William, Ullapool, Gairloch, Brora and Rosemarkie, arranged by Highland Council Independent Museums Officer Lorna Cruickshank, and funded by the Highland & Moray Skills Development Programme. Museum volunteers and other interested people explored Highland heritage through finds, and learned skills such as photography, map work or writing labels.



2.15 Highland Family Heritage Festival (Dingwall)



In April 2014 we held a **Highland Family Heritage Festival** at Dingwall Academy, with funding assistance from the Highland Council Culture Fund, Awards for All, the Co-operative Membership Fund and the Robert Kiln Trust, and organisation by Monika Maleska-Ritchie. These biennial ARCH festivals aimed at families celebrate Highland community archaeology by providing an opportunity for the public to engage with the culture of the Highlands, meet with representatives of the various heritage organisations and learn about their numerous projects and crafts through hands-on workshops, craft demonstrations, stalls, displays, book marketplaces and talks. There was keen demand for it to be a regular event.



2.16 Highland Archaeology Festival activities

As usual ARCH arranged a number of guided walks during the festival in October, this year to Ardersier, Stoneyfield, Invergordon, Heights of Fodderty, Spinningdale and Munloch, visiting sites ranging from the Neolithic to World War II. We also had a stall at the two-day Festival featuring our work, and Susan Kruse presented a short paper to the seminar.



2.17 Other community outreach activities

- talks to local schools (Dingwall Primary, Tore Primary, North Kessock Primary). Lachlan McKeggie also ran an activity day for Dingwall Academy to Knockfarrel Iron Age hillfort.
- talks to local societies (Dingwall History Society, Inverness and Black Isle University of the Third Age).
- a programme of ARCH lectures held monthly in Dingwall.
- talks at conferences (eg the Highland Archaeology Festival in October 2014 and the Scottish Community Heritage Conference held in Crieff in November 2014).
- notifications of events via the ARCH web-site (www.archhighland.org.uk), Facebook pages, e-mail alerts, press releases and regular newsletters (almost 200 by post and over 700 by email). The website events page is heavily used by Archaeology Scotland in their 'Out and About' e-newsletter.

We register all participants who attend ARCH courses, workshops, field trips, surveys, lectures and walks. In 2014-15 these totalled 1049 (although there are participants who registered for multiple events). It is difficult to assess the numbers who attended unregistered talks at conferences or who visited display boards at festivals, but conservative estimates based on visual observations suggest that these are at least as many again, making it probable that ARCH activities attracted over 2000 people throughout the year. This total does not include the considerable number of people who did not actually participate in an event during 2014-15, but will have made a connection with ARCH electronically or via our paper-based information and marketing activities and our publications.

3. Friends of ARCH

ARCH has 47 Friends, who provide financial assistance or offers of help at events. In 2014-2015 the annual Friends trip was to the Highland Archive Centre in Inverness where staff showed Friends a behind-the-scenes tour and insight into its activities. ARCH is very grateful for everyone who supports us as a Friend. We have no yearly membership fees, and keep all our events free, donation-only or at a nominal price so that finance is not a barrier to participation.

4. Financial Report

ARCH's activities continue to be project-funded, and therefore most income is restricted for specific activities and projects. However, ARCH continues to generate unrestricted funds via donations from our lectures, book sales, our Friends and other events. These are used to provide cash flow where funders pay in arrears, and will increasingly be needed for overheads. A copy of the annual accounts is available separately to anyone who wishes to see them.

5. Other Activities

ARCH Project Officer Susan Kruse was invited to become a member of the Scottish Strategic Archaeology Committee, representing the interests of community archaeology. Over the year the Committee has been working on Scotland's new Archaeology Strategy, to be launched in September 2015.

6. The Future

ARCH continues to pursue the final funding for the Telford's Highland Heritage project. We are also fundraising for a number of projects including World War I remains in Invergordon, wartime remains in the Kyle of Sutherland, a multi-period exploration of Strathpeffer (with Strathpeffer Community Centre) and Ardross, and investigation and recording of Highland quern stones. We actively encourage individuals and groups to get in touch with ideas of projects they would like to take forward, and we expect 2015-2016 to be as busy as this current year.

