![ARCH logo - Archaeology for Communities in the Highlands]

Welcome to the first ARCH newsletter for 2015. It contains information about courses and workshops, and reports on some of the activities of 2014.

Courses and Activities

Ancient Craft Course in Tain

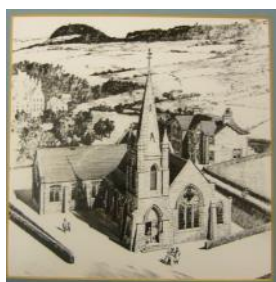The next Ancient Craft course will take place in Tain, provisionally on 14th, 21st, 28th Feb and 14th March, 10:30-3:30 at the Tain Church Hall. During the 4 day course Lynne McKeggie will teach 4 different ancient textile crafts and explore the archaeological evidence for each one: including braiding, tablet weaving, and naal binding (a kind of Viking knitting).
If you would be interested in taking part please get in touch: email l.mckeggie@hotmail.co.uk , leave a message on 0759 8187309 or book via the website. Funded by High Life Highland.

Memories and Microchips

Back by popular demand but with a new twist! Previous sessions in Strathpeffer have gathered a huge amount of material relating to the village,
In these new sessions, organised by Strathpeffer Community Centre and funded by High Life Highland, we'll continue to explore and learn about the Strath and surrounding area, but will also earn how to use internet resources including on-line maps and heritage databases. No previous computing experience needed or expected.
Fridays, 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th Feb, 10:30-12:30 at Strathpeffer Community Centre. Please book with the Community Centre on 01997 421989 or via http://www.strathpeffercommunitycentre.org.uk/

Telford in the Kyle of Sutherland Open Day and Launch

Everyone is invited to the launch of the leaflet, display and geocache on Saturday 31st January at Bonar Bridge Hall, 1-4pm. For more information about the project see page 2.

ARCH Lecture Series and Workshops

A diverse and interesting programme of talks and workshops is planned for winter and spring. They will take place on the last WEDNESDAY of the month at Dingwall Community Centre, unless stated otherwise. Times are 7:30 (doors open at 7). Suggested donation £3.

Wed. 25th Feb '**Using old maps to research local heritage'**
Susan Kruse will enthuse about the potential of old maps when researching local heritage, and in particular maps on the internet. There will also be a chance for hands-on exploration.

Mon. 2nd Mar., Invergordon Arts Centre 7:30pm **'Wartime Invergordon'**. Allan Kilpatrick of the RCHAHMS will explore wartime Invergordon, showing some of the newly discovered archive material and photos. Guaranteed to be entertaining and informative!

Wed. 25th March. **'It's all academic: recent community work across Scotland.'** Andy Heald of AOC Archaeology will explore results on projects linking academic and community work.

Wed. 29th April. '**Big Pits and Little Pits at Rosemarkie - insights into prehistoric Black Isle life and death**
Lynn Fraser reports on important excavations in Rosemarkie where Neolithic and Bronze Age pits containing some unique finds, a cremation burial and a rare corn-drying kiln were discovered, providing an insight into the Black Isle during this period.

Wed. 27th May. '**A new look at the Pagan Norse graves of Northern Scotland'**
Caroline Paterson will look at regional characteristics of the Viking graves in northern Scotland and what light the pagan graves shed on relations with the local population .

PROJECT REPORTS

Telford in the Kyle of Sutherland

Several ARCH courses and events over the last months have explored and researched the remains of the 19th century engineer, road and church builder Thomas Telford in the Kyle of Sutherland. The results will go on show on Saturday, 31st January, 1-4pm at Bonar Bridge Community Hall. A display, Telford Trail leaflet and geocaches created by participants will be launched, and there will also be old maps to explore, stalls from local heritage groups, badge making, and refreshments. Entrance is free.

'We've uncovered far more than we expected,' explained project leader Susan Kruse of ARCH . 'Thomas Telford was an extraordinary man – one of the first project managers – and his works in the Kyle of Sutherland transformed the area in the first decades of the 1800s. Many people know about his innovative iron bridge at Bonar Bridge, which sadly was destroyed in floods in 1892, but there are many more remains still surviving. The group has researched many of these, and created a trail to explore them. They have also created geocaches at two of the sites.'

The display and leaflet tell the story of what the area was like before Telford began his work for the government, what he did in the area, and what the impact of these building projects was. The current main road network in the area remains as Telford built it, although widening and straightening has occurred on many sections. A few bridges dating to the period survive, including a previously unrecorded one south of Lairg for which the group made a detailed survey. There are also a number of culverts, including a well preserved one near Little Ferry which may well be original.

Milestones were also erected along the new roads, and the group went looking for them. Strangely on the Sutherland side of the Firth the

surviving examples are in concrete, while on the Ross and Cromarty site they are stone with chiselled destinations. It is likely that these are modern replacements – and in some cases it is clear that they have been moved from their locations in the 1870s. There were also short-lived toll houses though none survive.

In addition to roads, Telford was involved in a government initiative to build churches in the Highlands and Islands. To overcome the distance most rural people had to travel to church the Government provided funds to build "Parliamentary Churches" with a manse. Telford produced a common design for all churches and manses to be built on land provided by the local landowners. Built for a population of 500 in 1827, Croick church is still in use. It cost £1426 including the manse. Seating 200 it has no balcony and is one of the smallest. The interior remains little altered. While sheltered in the churchyard, people evicted in the "Glencalvie clearances" scratched messages on the east window.

Binders of resources with further information have been deposited in the Bonar Bridge Library and the Kyle of Sutherland Heritage Society, and the Telford trail leaflets will be available from a number of local sites. More information can be found on the ARCH website in the Courses section. The project was funded by The Robertson Trust and the E.ON Rosehall Community Fund managed by Foundation Scotland.

And more Telford ...

While people in Sutherland were investigating remains there, another course looked at the **Telford remains on the Sleat peninsula** on Skye.

These include a number of small bridges (larger ones have generally been rebuilt) and slipways at key harbours. Much time was also spent trying to determine the route of the original Telford road between Broadford and Kintail, leading members of the group to archives in Portree, Inverness and even London.

Another group met for four sessions at the Highland Archive Centre in Inverness, **exploring archives** relating to Telford's activities in the Highlands. Maps, plans, parliamentary reports, committee minutes and much more were explored for areas throughout the Highlands Thanks to all the archive staff for their help.

Researching Telford remains has shown the importance that maps can play, though the difficulty remains sometimes of comparing maps of different periods. A course run by Malcolm Standring showed how to use the free **OpenSource QGIS** package to georeferenced maps and integrate with data, using data from the Kyle of Sutherland Telford project as an example.

These three courses were funded by Historic Scotland. More information about each can be found on the ARCH website.

Knockbain Heritage

In the autumn participants on the Knockbain Heritage project researched areas of interest, and in particular sites around Munlochy, producing a walks leaflet launched on a snowy December day. Copies can be obtained locally in shops, the hotel and other venues. Information about over 100 sites was submitted to the Highland HER, and binders of resources given to Fortrose Library and the Munlochy Hall. More information is on the ARCH website. There will also be a chance to find out more at the North Kessock and District Local History Society meeting on 5th February, 7:30pm at the Outdoor Bowling Clubhouse, Ferry Brae, North Kessock. Funding was provided by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Highland Council Ward Discretionary Fund.

Focus on Finds

In November and December Susan Kruse held short workshops for museum volunteers and people interested in finds at Avoch, Brora, Ullapool, Fort William and Gairloch. The sessions provided an overview of Highland Archaeology as told by finds, information about Treasure Trove, practical sessions on photography and writing for displays, and the use of heritage databases and on-line maps. "I thoroughly enjoyed this course. Very well explained and plenty of time to explore different sites. Fascinating!" "Excellent overview re chronology of archaeology...vital grounding for a beginner" The courses were funded as part of the Highland and Moray Skills Development Programme grant aided by Museums Galleries Scotland and also funded by the Highland Council.
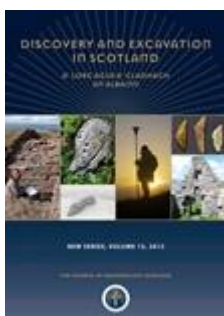
ARCH Friends

If you've thought about become a Friend of ARCH please fill in the form to the right and send it to us. ARCH relies on Friends and lecture donations to help pay for office space, insurance, postage on newsletters, HAF walks, and the other mundane but important matters which allow us to continue. We value your help and support!

Discovery & Excavation in Scotland (DES): how to submit information

Monday, 9 Feb, 11am-1pm, Strathpeffer Community Centre
New discoveries are made yearly, including many by ARCH participants. While we encourage people to submit information to the HER and Canmore, it is also important to submit to a yearly publication DES, which alerts people to new discoveries. In this workshop hosted by NOSAS and delivered by Lachlan McKeggie on behalf of Archaeology Scotland, you will learn how to use their new online form. Free, and no need to book.

Future Projects

ARCH has submitted its 2nd round Heritage Lottery Fund application for a three year Telford project, and will be preparing match funding applications. If all is successful we hope to start after the summer.

In the meantime , we are exploring a range of other projects including investigating quernstones, wartime remains in Invergordon and Bonar Bridge, and a project focussing on experimental archaeology. If you have any ideas, we'd love to hear from you.

NEW ADDRESS & PHONE
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Friends of ARCH

If you enjoy what ARCH provides, please consider becoming a 'Friend of ARCH'. The Friends are a group of supporters who help ARCH in many diverse ways – by assisting at events, by offering specific skills or just by donating a small financial contribution to sustain ARCH's work. Friends of ARCH are requested to give an annual donation of £10 (or more if you wish). There is an annual Friends' invitational event, a presentation or a visit. To become a Friend—or to renew -contact the ARCH office or fill in the form below.

Name :

Address :

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☐ Gift aid : Please tick if you are happy for your details to be used to allow ARCH to reclaim gift aid

I would also be happy to help ARCH by :

☐ Offering practical help at ARCH events (e.g. stewarding, setting-up, etc.)

☐ Helping to organise fund-raising activities

☐ Contributing to fund-raising activities (e.g. baking, hosting, providing a talk or presentation, etc.

Please tell us how you would like to help:

....

Offering skills (e.g. crafts, admin, design, etc.)
Please specify ....

Please make cheques payable to 'Archaeology for Communities in the Highlands'

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