



Evanton Wartime Remains

Over 100 people attended the Open Day on 1st June where an ARCH group unveiled its findings after 3 months of research. Based on shared memories, analysis of plans, aerial photographs photographs old and new, archive materials and other sources, and recording existing remains, the large display showed the history of the airfield and surrounding area. The group has also tracked down some of the buildings which have moved since the war. In particular 200 tons of timber huts were purchased by Gordonstoun school in Moray, and a fieldtrip showed a number still in use, as offices, classrooms, dormitories and even cricket pavilions.

Aerial photographs have also been a rich source of information, as a session with Allan Kilpatrick of the RCAHMS revealed, followed by a fieldtrip down to Edinburgh. We were able to trace changes by looking at sorties flown in 1944, 1946, 1962, 1964 and 1969. Malcolm Standring has georeferenced our maps and plans – basically creating layers which can be viewed on top of one another, allowing us to pin point with accuracy some of the features from the plans, photographs and archives.

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Can you help ARCH?

ARCH is a Scottish charity whose activities are overseen by a Board consisting of a maximum of 7 members. The Board are volunteers with a shared desire to provide opportunities for others to learn about their heritage. Each also brings personal experience and expertise. The Board meets about six times per year and although ultimately responsible for the organisation, in practice much of the role is consultative and advisory.

There are two vacancies at present on the Board. If you have an enthusiasm for ARCH's activities, perhaps as a participant in past courses or events, and who might like to consider joining the Board, we would like to hear from you! We especially would welcome offers from someone comfortable with numbers.

In these challenging times, ARCH is relying more than ever on its Friends (see p. 4). We desperately need someone who could help us organise the Friends information, sending out reminders, and keeping us up to date.

The current Chairman, Dr Graham Clark, would be delighted to talk to anyone willing to consider joining the Board or becoming a Friends organiser. Contact details are on p.4.



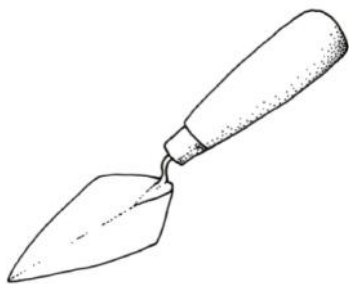
Telford's Highland Heritage

ARCH continues to be busy behind the scenes working on finding match funding for its 3 year project focussing on the remains of Thomas Telford in the Highlands. ARCH has been aided by development funding from The Heritage Lottery Fund, in particular towards budget spreadsheets and with the match funding. It will be a challenge in these times! We are aiming to submit all documents at the end of August, for a final decision from HLF in December.

Around 80 people attended Professor Roland Paxton's lecture in May where he presented a fascinating overview of Telford in the Highlands, and showed the potential of the project. As Professor Paxton said, it would be wonderful if volunteers could do a basic inventory of the Telford structures (bridges, retaining walls and mileposts) in the Highlands. 'Wouldn't this provide a marvellous data bank from which to prioritise those structures most worthy of preservation and conservation!' If you haven't written/mailed to express your interest in the project, we would be very grateful if you would do so, so we can report on interest to potential funders.

Summer excavations

There will be no ARCH excavation at Foulis this summer, but ARCH is looking at ways to go back in 2014 to explore the unresolved issues – including the nature of the mound which we now know had an episode of burning 2000 years ago. There are a few other community excavations this summer in the Highlands., The University of Aberdeen returns to Easter/Wester Rariche near Nigg in the last two weeks of July. The Cromarty Medieval Burgh Community Archaeology Project is awaiting confirmation on whether their dig between 27th July to 10th August will go ahead. Details and any more we hear about will be posted on the ARCH website events page.



Your views wanted on proposed new strategy and merger

In May Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop announced the merger between Historic Scotland and the RCAHMS, together with a **strategy for the historic environment in Scotland**.

This new strategy will be very important to the future developments of heritage provision in Scotland, and for community archaeology. [A 12-week public consultation](#) will finish at the end of July. The government wants comments and feedback on the purpose and vision of the merged body, along with the new historic environment strategy. Do you agree? What are your priorities? How would you like to see this new merged body operating?

Consultation documents are available on the Scottish Government [website](#). There are also two free workshops aimed at volunteers next month, in Glasgow 10th July and in Perth 11th July. Further details are on the ARCH website in the Events section (advance booking required).

Can ARCH help your organisation?

Do you have a good idea for a project, but need help with planning or delivery? ARCH can provide courses, walks, skills training or even provide advice on how to apply for funding. If you have an idea you want to explore, contact the ARCH office (details p. 4)

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Members of the group as well as pupils from Kiltarn Primary P7 and Dingwall Academy have also been exploring the remains on the ground. A diverse number survive: hangars which are clearly visible from the A9, nissen huts used for a range of purposes, pillboxes for defence, and workshops such as the present Blytheswood retail shop. Elsewhere there are only concrete foundations left, but fortunately the survival of aerial photographs and plans allow us to trace some of these buildings.

Unexpected finds include three unrecorded pillboxes, including a (now upside down) Pickett-Hamilton fort (right) which could be raised and lowered, and a Norcon pillbox, said by one commentator to be possibly the most dangerous, cheap and nasty of all the pillbox designs.



All of these activities are helping to provide a detailed picture of the airfield, from its pre World War II beginnings as a naval maintenance camp. No buildings survive of this camp, although we have located some foundations. Fortunately pictures in the Alness Heritage Centre and Invergordon Archive help to show what would have been there. Then in 1937 a massive building programme began, and the airfield was transferred to the RAF, becoming a training camp for bombing and gunnery. Many of the buildings in the Industrial Estate and Newton Road North area were constructed at this time. Then in 1943 and 1944 another large building programme was started, resulting in a number of workshops, hangars and accommodation in the area near Skiach services and north of the old A9. After the war displaced persons were briefly housed in the camp learning English. The final phase was another short one as the U.S. used the base in 1955-6 as one of its four western European bases to launch spy balloons to the Soviet Union.

During June the group has pulled this material together to produce a small leaflet. Over the summer project officer Susan Kruse will create a booklet of the results, together with binders of resources which will be offered to Dingwall and Alness Libraries, Cornerstone Cafe in Evanton and Alness Heritage Centre. Over 130 sites have been recorded, some new ones and others updated. This information is destined for the Highland Council's database of all known heritage – the Historic Environment Record, as well as the Scotland-wide database of heritage held by the RCAHMS in Edinburgh.

Altogether the project has shown beyond a doubt the potential of members of the community sharing memories, utilising the wonderful photographic and archive information available, and recording what still survives – and is very much at threat.

The Evanton Wartime Remains project is led by Susan Kruse of ARCH. It is funded by the European Community Highland LEADER 2007-2013 Programme, Kiltarn Community Council's Novar Windfarm funding (supported by RWE npower renewables), The Highland Council, the Co-operative Membership Community Fund and the Robert Kiln Trust.

During Highland Archaeology Fortnight there will be an Open Day, guided walks and a lecture. Further details will be in the HAF programme and the next ARCH newsletter.



Allan Kilpatrick of the RCAHMS puzzles over the possible remains of Battle HQ with Alan Kinghorn and Susan Kruse

In search of Highland Home Industries and Isabella Mackenzie

In 2010 ARCH ran the very successful Black Isle Heritage Memories Project. The Tore group continued afterwards, producing an impressive display with the North Kessock & District Local History Society. This in turn was featured on a radio 4 programme ... and since then the queries have been coming in!

Alyne Jones hopes that people who can help her with her quest to find out more about the work of the Scottish Home Industries. She has an early account of its first worker in the Highlands and Outer Isles, Isabella E.A. Burton Mackenzie of Kilcoy, who wrote a pleading letter to the national press in 1914 about the plight of the women and children in the Outer Isles after their menfolk had so heroically gone to war. Would the readers of the newspaper send orders to her at Kilcoy Castle for knitted stockings, etc?

Little is known of her early life in Kilcoy, or what happened to Isabella between 1914 and her death in Glasgow in 1958. Did she live in the Highlands in obscurity? Does anyone remember her pioneering work for the Scottish Home Industries Board? Isabella is commemorated on a memorial stone in the old woodland cemetery near Kilcoy Castle.

If you have any information, please contact; alyne@vanishingscotland.com



*Highland Home Industries, Srtathpeffer 1900-1910
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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, contact the ARCH office or fill in the form below..

Name :	
Address :	
Email :	
Phone :	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gift aid : Please tick if you are happy for your details to be used to allow ARCH to reclaim gift aid
<p>I would also be happy to help ARCH by :</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Offering practical help at ARCH events (e.g. stewarding, setting-up, etc.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Helping to organise fund-raising activities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Contributing to fund-raising activities (e.g. baking, hosting, providing a talk or presentation, etc.)</p> <p>Please tell us how you would like to help:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Offering skills (e.g. crafts, admin, design, etc.)</p> <p>Please specify</p> <p><i>Please make cheques payable to 'Archaeology for Communities in the Highlands'</i></p>	

Forms should be returned to the address to the left