



Archaeology for Communities
in the Highlands

Remembering Hidden Tain



**A Report prepared for Tain and Easter Ross Civic Trust,
by Cait McCullagh, with members of the local community**

Acknowledgements

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Jean Cheyne	Kirstin MacKintosh
Pat Gibson	Hugh Macleod
Carol Graham	Ruth Macleod
Sylvia Harrington	David McAllister
Alistair Jupp	William McRae
Ann Littlewood	Rosemary Paterson
Richard Littlewood	Eileen Saville
David More	Douglas Scott
Evelyn More	Jamie Stone
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David MacDonald	William Forbes Urquhart
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Archaeology for Communities in the Highlands (ARCH) and the Remembering Hidden Tain Project

A comprehensive survey of Historic Tain; its archaeology and its development, has recently been undertaken, as part of Historic Scotland's Scottish Burgh Survey Series¹. First published in 2009, this scholarly synthesis has provided members of the local community to consider further research and investigation; paying particular attention to the repository of knowledge and information that rests within local resources and in the research, recollections and memories of people living in and around the burgh, today.

As part of this momentum towards a local community venture to investigate Hidden Tain, and at the behest of Tain and Easter Ross Civic Trust, supported by Highland Archaeology Services Ltd., ARCH developed and delivered a pilot oral collection and recording project, which took place in Tain Parish Church Hall at various sessions from October through to December 2012.

The pilot was undertaken in order to achieve two main aims. It was established to determine the local community members' levels of interest and engagement with the proposed project to investigate 'Hidden Tain', the feasibility of which is being scoped by Tain and Easter Ross Civic Trust, under the coordination of John Wood, Director of Highland Archaeology Services Limited. The pilot was also designed to research and record locally held knowledge, information and recollections associated with three specific areas of potential future investigation:

- Traces of Tain's past as a main centre of pilgrimage
- Traces of any early settlements on the Tain Links, and environs
- A study of changes to the High Street.

During the design of this recording and collecting pilot project, in consultation with the Civic Trust and with John Wood, it was also recognised that it is in the nature of such recording and collection that information regarding Tain and Easter Ross' archaeological and built heritage, which is additional to the above themes may also be included. The facilitation of such sessions requires a responsive, flexible approach to eliciting participants' contributions. It was noted that sometimes what appears to be a divergence from session themes, can be an opportunity to uncover vital, yet hitherto unknown information.

Thanks to funding from The European Community Highland LEADER 2007-2013 Programme, The Highland Council and The Tain Common Good Fund five facilitated group collecting and recording sessions were held in Tain Parish Church Hall on the 17th October, 7th, 21st and 28th November and on the 10th December 2012. In addition, a day long exhibition, displaying the pilot project's findings and including additional material prepared by participants in the project, was held, again at the Parish Church Hall, on the 10th December 2012.

There was an enthusiastic response to each of these events, from both those who had been born and brought up the area and from those who had chosen to live there more recently. 53 people participated in the oral history recording and collecting sessions that took place in October and November and 85 people attended the exhibition.

¹ R.D. Oram et al., 2009, **Historic Tain: Archaeology and Development**. Historic Scotland.

Following the success of the collecting and recording sessions, 91 individual records were collected. From these, 40 records of sites, buildings and features cited in the Highland Council's Historic Environment Record (HER) can now be updated with new information. 50 entirely new records have been generated for future entry into the HER.



Figures 2 & 3: Gathering to enjoy the Remembering Hidden Tain Exhibition



2.0 Location

2.1 Tain

The Easter Ross Burgh of Tain, located at NH 78018 82109 (centred), sits within a landscape that has witnessed human activity for at least 9,000 years². It is also an area that has seen numerous changes to the physical environment within living memory as the growth of the City of Inverness and, even closer at hand, the siting of an oil storage depot for North Sea crude oil and a major construction facility built by Highland Fabricators, have promoted development, at varying rates, throughout the vicinity.

Tain is situated to the north of Inverness, south, across the Dornoch Firth from the historic burgh of Dornoch and WSW of the Tarbat Peninsula. The traditionally acknowledged ‘immunity’ of the burgh is an area of coastal plateau, bounded at the neck to the NNE by Easter Fearn and to the SSW in the vicinity of Alness³. It is interesting to note that this extent was, partially, reflected in the geographic spread from which participants in the Remembering Hidden Tain Sessions were drawn; with a number of people coming from the Tarbat Peninsula and some from locations south of the modern town itself.

The place name, given as *Tene* in the 13th Century and *Thane* in 1483, is believed to have been derived from the Norse, but this is not certain⁴. An historic Gaelic name *Baile Dhubhaich*, unsurprisingly, given the locally known dedications, ‘St Duthac’s Town’, is also known⁵. More recent scholarship has suggested that it may be that the name derives from a ‘pre-Celtic’ (possibly, meaning a language preceding *goedelic* Gaelic) term for the burgh’s main river⁶, now, indeed, known as the River Tain.



Figures 4 & 5: Participants gathered from throughout the ‘Immunity’ of the burgh

² *Inter alia*: Alston, D. **Ross and Cromarty: a historical guide**. Edinburgh; Carver, M. 1998, ‘Conversion and politics on the eastern seaboard of Britain: some archaeological indicators’, in Crawford, B. E. (ed.) **Conversion and Christianity in the North Sea World**. St Andrews, pp.35-7; Crawford, B. E. 1986, ‘The Making of a Frontier: The Firthlands from the Ninth to Twelfth Centuries’, in Baldwin, J. R. (ed.) **Firthlands of Ross and Sutherland**. Edinburgh, p.33; Henshall, A. S. 1963, **The Chambered Tombs of Scotland, Vol. 1**. Edinburgh, p.356; Oram, R. D. *et al.* 2009, **Historic Tain: Archaeology and Development**. Historic Scotland, pp.14-114.

³ Oram, R. D. *et al.* 2009, **Historic Tain: Archaeology and Development**. Historic Scotland, p.6.

⁴ Watson, W. J. 1904, **Place names of Ross and Cromarty Inverness**. The Northern Counties Printing and Publishing Company, p. 32

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Mac an Tàilleir, I. 2003, "Placenames P-Z". Edinburgh: <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/gd/index.aspx> [7.01.12].

3.0 Aims and Objectives

A key aim of the Remembering Hidden Tain Sessions has been to produce a record of heritage remains of the Tain area, and make these memories accessible to the community. An overarching aim has been to gather information and knowledge in support of Tain and Easter Ross Civic Trust's hopes to launch a project of community led investigations of Hidden Tain, specifically regarding the three principle themes:

- Tain's past as a centre of pilgrimage
- The possibility of precursive settlement in the vicinity of the Links and environs
- Changes to the High Street

Additionally it was an expressed aim that the project should bring together members of the community, old and young, locally born and more recently arrived to learn about the Hidden Tain Project, to show their interest in this venture and to learn about their local archaeological and built heritage.

The objectives of this pilot project include: facilitating and recording oral recollection and knowledge sharing sessions with members of the community; creating an exhibition to share the information, knowledge and memories collected and the questions these have raised and widely publicising the project's findings in a variety of other fora including social media website pages, entries to the Highland Council Historic Environment Record and reporting on the project and its findings to the Tain and Easter Ross Civic Trust and the wider local community.

4.0 Method

4.1 Preparation

The area of study was identified as being Tain and immediate districts, within the Burgh 'Immunity' area. Copies of the four First Edition of Ordnance Survey Map sheets, at 6 inches to one mile, pertinent to the study area, were obtained from the National Library of Scotland.

The digital archives of Am Baile, the Highland Council Historic Environment Record (HER), SCRAN and the Royal Commission for Ancient and Historic Monuments, Scotland (RCAHMS) were searched for photographic images of sites, monuments, features and historic buildings in each area and a portfolio of visual prompts was compiled for each of the sessions.

4.2 Collecting and Recording Sessions

Voluntary scribes, Allan MacKenzie and Caroline Vawdrey, were identified to record the contributions as participants viewed maps and photographs. It was desired that at least two people recorded at each session; ensuring that as much information as possible might be captured as participants engaged in a relaxed and sometimes fast-flowing dialogue.

As individual sites, monuments, features and historic buildings were pinpointed and participants shared their recollections and knowledge, the facilitator asked contributors to point to the exact locations on the First Edition Map copies and then marked each with a unique number. This individual number, marked on the mapping, has been cross referenced with the typed-up record for each entry. These marked up maps are the property of the Tain and Easter Ross Civic Trust and are being kept on behalf of the community, in readiness for future display or further such collecting and recording sessions.

Sessions inevitably took their own directions, in response to the three abovementioned main themes, but it was found useful to consider four prompt areas of enquiry:

1. What buildings, sites or features in the landscape recorded on the maps no longer survive;
2. What buildings, sites or features in the landscape recorded on the maps have been altered;
3. What buildings, sites or features in the landscape have appeared after the maps were made;
4. Do people know of any traditions of buildings, sites or features which are not on the maps and for which there is no surviving evidence on the ground?

As a minimum each written entry noted the number signifying the location of the site, monument, feature or historic building, as placed on the map sheet, the contributor's sharing of information and the name of the person supplying that information. Each of the informants has given written permission for what they have contributed to be shared in this report, in further reports and publications associated with the Hidden Tain Project, on the HER and on the ARCH website.

4.3 Processing the Results

The handwritten tables of findings and the enumerated locations marked out on the map sheets were cross-checked and national grid references and, where possible, HER Numbers were allocated to each entry. Clarification was sought with original contributors regarding their contributions, both in terms of content and other details such as personal and place name spellings, etc. The final results have been produced as a table included in the body of this report, below.

An index of the digital images submitted by project contributors was also compiled and is appended to this report. A compact disk of all images is being submitted to the Tain and Easter Ross Civic Trust, the HER and is being archived with ARCH.

5.0 Themed Results and Discussion

5.1 Themes covered

The contributions collected and recorded throughout the duration of Remembering Hidden Tain might be grouped into seven main themes:

1. Tain's Cellars – The Burgh beneath our feet
2. Tain's Tunnels and Drains – The Burgh beneath our feet
3. Ecclesiastical Tain – Pilgrimages and Pastor's Places
4. Built Tain – Bee Boles and Boulders
5. Garden Tain – Rigs and Orchards
6. Maritime Tain – In Search of The Harbour
7. Buried Tain – Beyond the Bridges.

As aforementioned, dialogue in sessions flowed in diverse directions, in response to the three main topics we aimed to consider; thus the seven themes embrace not only Tain's past as a centre of pilgrimage; the possible indices for early settlement in the Links area and environs and changes to the High Street, but also additional information, to augment and contextualise these.

5.2 Tain's Cellars

Many of those who participated in the Remembering Hidden Tain Sessions had either heard about or been able to access the subterranean structures: tunnels, drainage channels and cellars that make up the burgh beneath the feet of Tain's inhabitants today.

There is much that remains to be investigated, through desk-based research and non-invasive and more interventionist archaeological methods (survey and excavation). However, the information shared by participants at the Sessions does point to some interesting concentrations of, still accessible, cellars that would merit specialist attention, in order to assess how they fit into the multi-phasing of the built environment in a town that has seen significant periods of construction in the Medieval Period and later in the Improvement Era.

William Forbes Urquhart, 'Forbie', has contributed an extremely useful plan of the High Street, indicating those buildings where he has seen or knows of cellars and other additions to the visible structures. This plan and the accompanying listing of known present and previous occupiers - a vital aid to phasing the accessibility, use and, in some cases, back-filling or blocking off of the cellars - is appended to this report and will act as a useful resource for further investigations.

Of note among the knowledge and recollections of cellars beneath the town shared by participants are the recollections of cellars with vaulted ceilings – Remembering Hidden Tain (RHT) 1 (Hill View, 23 – 25 High Street), recalled and recorded by Anthony Watson and RHT 2 (39 High Street), recollected by Rosemary Paterson. Both properties are in reasonable proximity to each other and the visible vaulting in the cellars of each suggests structures of significance. Of further interest is the recollection that RHT 2 is one of two noteworthy multiple-storeyed cellars recalled. At RHT 2, two underground storeys are recalled and at RHT 3 (45 High Street), as many as three subterranean storeys were remembered.

Further noteworthy structural details have been both recalled and recorded by participants. Of great interest is the possible arrow slit or gun loop window that has been photographed in the cellar of RHT 34 (33,35 & 37 High Street - see Figure 6, below), in the vicinity of both the proposed castle site and of the location of the Collegiate Church; a nexus that infers the heart of a Medieval settlement.



**Figures 6 & 7: RHT 34
Possible arrow slit window and cellar wall,
taken by Kirstin MacKintosh**

Windows, this time more square in appearance, with significant depth of sill and lintel, were also recalled at RHT 41(20 Tower Street) and RHT 42 (London House, 5, 7 & 9 High Street); (see Figures 9 and 10, below), and, at RHT 39, through a ‘doorway’ close to the Kenneth Murray Memorial Monument, that led the viewer to see an underground cobbled surface and possible structure with the aforementioned window.



Figures 8 & 9: ‘Windows’ at 20 Tower Street, taken by Ruth Mcleod

These subterranean structural details certainly merit further specialist analysis. As architectural clues to the possible phasing of the High Street, believed to have been built up in the early 19th Century, they may aid in targeting specific spot investigations. It is also worth noting that what at present may appear to be a window, might actually constitute a modified doorway. Again expert analysis may be useful in aiding determination as to whether these features represent interior or exterior access ways; giving insights into not only the nature of the structures but also towards the likelihood that these might be the residual remains of once above-ground structures.

Again, it is helpful to see that both RHT 41 and RHT 42 occur in the castle-Collegiate Church nexus, along with RHT 48 (24 – 28 Tower Street); RHT 75 (8 High Street); RHT 75 (8 High Street); RHT 76 (Browns Gallery, Castle Brae) and RHT 77 (Sutherland House, Bank Street).

The large boulder ‘founds’ mentioned in Ann Littlewood’s recollection of RHT 75, might also represent a surface, or, indeed post-pads, providing secure fixings for what may have been the timber roof posts of a former super-structure here. They certainly present interesting prospects for further investigation.

This congregation of activity around what may be the settlement surrounding the former Medieval centre of Tain, is not the only information provided by participants about the hidden burgh beneath the present roadways that gave insights into, or at least targeted debate surrounding the changes that have occurred in the High Street area over time.

5.3 Tain’s Tunnels and Drains

The recollections and records of the iron ‘Doorway to the Archways’; RHT 9; 38 – 40 (see Figures 11 and 12, below), as recalled and recorded by Susannah Stone and David McAllister, lead us into an area of intrigue and controversy that highlights the surrounding area as a target for further investigation into the phasing of the creation of the ‘New Town’ of Tain in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.



Figures 10 & 11: The 'Iron Doorway' and archways, taken by David McAllister

The information provided, suggesting that this doorway accesses the town's drainage system and, possibly, additional subterranean surfaces and structures, configures interestingly with Jean Cheyne's; MacKenzie MacAndie's and David MacDonald's recollections of seeing an arched feature, possibly a bridge and, in Jean's case, also a channel of running water at RHT 35 (Maitland's, 3 & 5 Lamington Street); located in this general vicinity.

There is certainly a great deal of underground activity in this area – note also the buried tunnels and archways recalled by 'Forbie' Urquhart at RHT 10 and RHT 50, in the Lamington/Geanies Streets area. All is worthy of keen, specialist analysis, as this nexus marks the likely juncture between Medieval Tain and the developments associated with the Improvement Era.

Documentary and archival evidence, including plans and surveyors' reports, detailing irrigation and drainage throughout this area of the town has been researched by Margaret Urquhart and will provide a useful context to the participants' recollections here.

However, it is also worth noting that written historical material can throw up as much controversy, in interpretation, as can the knowledge and information gathered from local community participants. The debate over the likely location of an arched bridge -summarised in the record for RHT 36 - believed to have been built to negotiate the level change between the Old High Street and the New Town, is a good example of how readings of historical material can lead to diverse conclusions. Against the background of this debate, the contributions from the memories, knowledge and research of Remembering Hidden Tain's participants will provide useful indications as to possible targets for further archival and on the ground research and survey.

Returning from these New Town foci, towards the proposed castle site and Medieval Pilgrimage Centre, another couple of recollections from participants, concerning a tunnel, RHT 45, believed to extend from Castle Hill to the churchyard of the Collegiate Church lends tremendous interest to other bumps, hollows and possible features in this general area, as identified in the contributions shared and recorded at the Sessions.

5.4 Ecclesiastical Tain

Recollections of RHT 45, the tunnel at Castle Hill, prompted one series of memories from Sylvia Harrington, regarding a 'hollow area' in the grounds of the Collegiate Church, facing towards Castle Hill. This dip into the underlying context of the churchyard, discovered accidentally by a grass-cutter who fell into the hollow, to some considerable depth, appears to

have overlain another ‘tunnel’ like environment, again with a cobbled floor surface and, as recalled to Sylvia, another Archway visible in this underground environment.

Whilst it was not possible to elicit a great deal of explicit local knowledge about the immediate vicinity of the Collegiate Church, as such, there was sufficient residual knowledge about relict routeways, contributed by participants, to suggest that at least part of what may have been a network of pilgrimage route-ways, might be reliably reconstructed.

Both RHT 8 (Hartfield – King Street) and RHT (Kirksheaf to Loandhu, possibly Fearn Abbey), are known route-ways, partially preserved in the layout of modern roadways and partially preserved in relict paths and field boundaries, that indicate two likely pilgrimage progresses.

RHT 8 certainly aligns with the pre-modern, likely axis of Tain, centring towards the Collegiate Church and possibly lining up with a known fragment of early roadway, south of the Town, known as the King’s Causeway (Highland Council HER No. MHG8723; at NH 76280 76330). There is archival evidence for the likely repair of this early roadway in 1527, to better enable the barefoot pilgrimage of King James V⁷, suggesting that it is indeed a likely candidate for a primary cross country communication route into the ecclesiastical centre.

Even more interestingly, RHT 25, a route-way, through the vicinity of Kirksheaf, that indicates a possible communication route to Fearn Abbey, will merit further research. Investigating the vicinity around the terminus of this feature may shed light on the possibility of settlement, as well as ecclesiastical activity around the area of the Links and Tain’s other Medieval Church centre, St. Duthus’. This is particularly significant when one considers the knowledge shared about RHT 54, a relict route-way passing to the north of St Duthus’, appearing to connect around this between the Meikle Croft (possibly, on the Kirksheaf Route) and Castle Brae. Are we seeing some residual landscape marking of the progress of past travellers through Tain to a shrine at the earlier Medieval Church, or towards the Castle site, or both; even the preservation of a link between the castle and the chapel?

RHT 25 is, of itself, a helpful indicator of the persistence of a crossing of the river at the Black Bridge site. This in turn may be a helpful insight into the likelihood of an early settlement centred on the opposing riverside, in the vicinity of Plaids and Pithograty; if not a precursor to Tain, then, at least, contemporaneous with the establishment of the earliest ecclesiastical centre, focused on the likely fording / bridge crossing site on this route-way.

Here local knowledge of route-ways, walked and known over time, fills in the gaps between historic mapping; documentary sources and the archaeological and built remains, illuminating these separate fields of evidence in a new light, that may help to target future research in this area.

5.5 Built Tain

Similarly, the familiarity of Tain’s residents with their environment, walked and viewed, day in and day out, over time and through every season and new aspect of light, has turned up contributions regarding seemingly prosaic features such as garden and property walls; visible boulder founds and dips and bumps, indicating cuttings and embanking around what might be the perimeter of the proposed castle site.

⁷ **Old Statistical Account**, Vol.3, p.394; **New Statistical Account**, Vol. 14, pp.288-89. <http://stat-acc-scot.edina.ac.uk/> [7.01.12].

Richard Littlewood's observations of the antiquity and similarity in form of the 'enclosure' walls at RHT 78 (Cramond or Cramond's Brae) and those at RHT 79 (Chapel Street), where the wall appears to be associated with the indications of a possible ditch cutting, to the NNE side of the street, may be indices for the preservation of the line of the curtain enclosure and vallum of either the proposed castle site, or the ecclesiastical complex, or, indeed, both.

Certainly, when looking for candidates for non-invasive survey and, then, possible evaluation by excavation, these features may provide fruitful.

Considering the wider context and the possibility that the raised settlement area of the possible castle site and the Collegiate Church, might indicate the location of an even earlier power centre, perhaps even a late prehistoric, defended feature, it is worth looking at the possible correlations between the proposed enclosing highlighted in RHT 78 and 79 and local recollections of road collapses, such as at RHT 11 (possibly outside 25 Lamington Street). Any, known road subsidence in Tain, is worth considering as the site of possible, underlying ditching. Such sites, where even modern road make-up cannot counteract the undermining effects of earlier cuttings, may when mapped in relationship to the castle-Collegiate Church nexus, indicate the greater extent of the defended site and its boundaries.

It is also worth mentioning here that as well as being attentive to the likelihood for precedent 'high status' settlement at the proposed castle location, there are other features in Tain that might overlay previous seats of significant status. The various features described by the inhabitants and owners of Knockbreck House (see RHT 19-20, 66 & 69 – 71) certainly suggest that further research and specialist analysis of not only the subterranean features of the present structure, but also the immediate environs and context, might indicate this as a site of persistent settlement and / or significance.

Other 'fruitful' delights have also been uncovered by this process of gathering in local community knowledge and recollections of the built remains in the burgh. These include the information and recording of the 'Kirksheaf Bee Boles' (RHT 5). These 'alcoves', designed as shelters for bee-hives, carved into in the western boundary wall of the Kirksheaf may be the relict remains of a concentration of fruit cultivation in the burgh, persisting from an earlier era of orchard maintenance, that, itself, may point back towards Tain's past as an extensive ecclesiastical centre.



Figure 12: The 'Kirksheaf Bee Boles', taken by Margaret Urquhart

5.6 Garden Tain

Another example of the unique advantage of including locally founded knowledge in any assessment of the heritage environment, is MacKenzie MacAndie's intimate knowledge of the various orchard sites throughout the burgh area (see RHT 28, 31 and 85).

In the cases of RHT 28 (Manse Street, Manse House and Former Stables) and RHT 31 (Walled Garden behind the St. Duthus Hotel), these may represent the relict remains of cultivated lands associated with the ecclesiastical estates; possibly, even a pre-collegiate foundation.

The very personal childhood memory of collecting apples at these locations, in the 1940s, act as an important document of change in the immediate environment of the Old Town nexus. This is the sort of information that, when combined with scholarly research, can enable reconstructive mapping of the past environment and the ways in which it may preserve an earlier incarnation of Tain in this vicinity.

5.7 Maritime Tain

When considering how historic and, of course, the prehistoric settlements in the Tain area may have been configured, it is vital to remember that a chief means of long distance travel and the transport of goods and materials in this firthland area, was the sea.

As well as local knowledge of remains at the already known likely location of the wharfage on the River Tain, RHT 58, participants were also able to contribute recollections associated with a possible 'harbour' located in the Plaids vicinity (RHT 57), although, these may need to be treated with some caution, and, again, will merit further investigation. It may be that a project to determine the exact nature of any timber remains on the coast here will provide an ideal community based survey and reconnaissance exercise.

When considering the possibility for early, perhaps, precursive settlement to the west of the River Tain, it may be instructive to look to locally held traditional knowledge of this area and the possibility that an active maritime connection is a residual persistence of a former important coastal settlement here.

5.8 Buried Tain

Continuing to look westwards and WNW of the modern town and the River course, towards the Morrich Mor, the local community's familiarity with a former landscape populated with post-medieval rural settlements and with walking through and recording this landscape today, has 'uncovered' another aspect of buried Tain.

David MacDonald's contributions regarding the former settlement of Pitnellies (RHT 22), garnered from an inheritance of family letters and William McRae's collection of stories from a member of the local farming community, regarding the same former settlement (RHT 63) combine wonderfully with Margaret Urquhart's intimate knowledge of the eroding soil profiles in this area, to enliven what might otherwise be considered a desolate area.

The indications of populous settlement at this coastal extent, might again be seen as indices for the likelihood of earlier settlement in these environs.

When searching for the origins and extent of Tain, it will be helpful to continue using such local knowledge to 'map' former, now lost, settlement distributions, looking for any patterning, coherence and previously unrecognised, perhaps, unexpected concentrations apart

from the now readily understood Old Town and New Town vicinities that have conjoined to form the modern town.

6.0 Community Experience and Feedback

Upon completion of the formal Remembering Hidden Tain Sessions that took place in October – November 2012, participants were asked to complete written evaluation forms, providing their feedback on participating and their thoughts on how to take the experience forward.

The overwhelming response has been that participating in the Sessions was a positive experience. For example all of those responding felt that they had gained a better understanding of their local heritage and that they felt more part of their local community.

When considering what skills and knowledge they felt they had improved through participating in the sessions, many of the respondents expressed that the Sessions had enabled them to apply their improved skills to learning more about their local heritage:

[I have learned] how to apply oral history to maps, in order to approach an explanation [of archaeological and historic remains]

[I have been inspired to] re-read history books and to look at old maps, with renewed interest

I liked the way living memory can connect with very few degrees of separation to aspects of the historical past.

This growth in local capacity and enthusiasm for learning about local heritage will surely be a sound base upon which to build future Hidden Tain projects.

Thinking specifically about re-deploying the method of inviting, collecting and recording locally held knowledge, recollections and information, following on from the success of this pilot, there were certainly numerous expressions of spoken and written indications of encouragement at the evaluation stage.

Participants recommended that, in the future, time might be given to recording interviews with individuals who might have been unable to attend the pilot Sessions, but who are invaluable repositories of local knowledge and tradition that will be useful to uncovering Hidden Tain.

Participants also requested that further group sessions might be facilitated; most agreed that there was still much to be revealed through this method. For example, when asked ‘what would you have improved about the sessions?’ three respondents voiced the feeling of the group succinctly, by simply replying:

More of them!

More time!

Having more sessions would have been interesting...

Certainly, the indications are that the exercise has already been helpful in generating possible targets for further investigation of the origins and development of the settlement of Tain. The exercise has also demonstrated that there is ample enthusiasm among the local community for further research and investigation and also for exploring together further collecting and recording oral histories regarding the archaeological and built heritage of the area.

7.0 Conclusion

As aforementioned, the Remembering Hidden Tain Sessions were designed to produce a record of the archaeological, cultural and built heritage remains of at least three specific subject areas regarding Tain's past – Tain as a centre of pilgrimage; the possible indices for early settlement in the Links area and environs and changes to the High Street - making these recollections and memories accessible to the community.

During five collection and recording sessions that took place from October through to December 2012, 50 records of sites, buildings, features and findspots cited in the Highland Council's Historic Environment Record (HER) were updated with new information. 40 new records were generated for future entry into the HER.

The information collected can be categorised as falling into seven broad-ranging themes that both embrace the projected aims and augment these with additional context. These are: Tain's Cellars; Tain's Tunnels and Drains; Ecclesiastical Tain; Built Tain; Garden Tain; Maritime Tain and Buried Tain

The pilot project has been of benefit in building up the ancient and historic environment record and local awareness of the archaeological, cultural and built heritage of the area. It has also demonstrated the tremendous potential for further community involvement in the exploration of Hidden Tain.

The local community participants are benefitting from their involvement in Remembering Hidden Tain by understanding more about their local heritage and by preserving a record of this for the future. It is believed that the new and augmented record generated by Remembering Hidden Tain includes information that will enable further, targeted investigation of the archaeological and built heritage of Hidden Tain.

The format of each session allowed people born in the community and people who had moved to the area to collaborate in new ways. Additionally, people have appreciated coming together in a social environment, where their memories are valued, and their knowledge is appreciated. Two respondents, who completed the evaluation forms circulated at the end of the sessions summed this up very well; when asked 'What did you enjoy about the sessions?' they replied:

Finding out what others know [and the] sense of community; everyone trying to find out more

Sense of community; making new friends

The indications are that any such future oral history gathering and recording, undertaken in the search for Hidden Tain, will continue to cohere a community keen to learn and participate together in uncovering their shared archaeological and built heritage.

Remembering Hidden Tain: Record of Sites and Features: 17.10.11 – 28.11.11

No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 17.10.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
1	Hill View	23-25 High Street (corner of High Street and Market Street) NH 78038 82078	Listed Building (B) 41862: 23, 25 High Street (including Hill View, Market Street) / Cellar	September 2011	Still inhabited.	There is an open area behind the house, in the garden area and there are 'natural cellars' underneath. 23-25 High Street/Hill View; access to the house is via Market Street, hence the double address! ⁸	See: MHG41193	Anthony Watson

⁸ AW gives this additional information: 'This property has an interesting story to tell - See Tain Through the Centuries by Munro, page 91. The nefarious dealings of the Murray brothers and their fellow cohorts were in a way responsible for the complete overhaul of Local Government and voting in Scotland. The caveat that voters had to have £100 worth of property before getting a vote excluded virtually all of Tain's residents ... The reform bill passed the House of Lords in June 1832, followed by the Scottish measure in July of that year - after that only £10 worth of property was required for the right to vote.

William Murray (he and his brother George, also on the council, were both bank agents with the Commercial) bought the site of 23-25 High Street in 1812 (and then another bit was taken off the area reserved for the market in 1817 when he decided he wanted a bit more ground there) I have the documents - George was in charge of the sale in the Council offices, so I don't think he declared an interest!

It might be presumed that the immediate area was levelled sometime around 1818 and the buildings on either side were left as they were with their cellars intact. I think that the cellars, separate from and at the back of the building were perhaps constructed first and then the ground in that immediate area was in-filled above them.

This building was purported to be Murray's town house. At ground floor level on the Market Street wall, there were the remains of a black range and the back door of the building is a few paces from the cellar entrance. The back gate is accessed via the stone steps on the Market Street pavement. This fits in with the upstairs/downstairs theory since at least part of the ground floor would have been kitchens and preparatory area, accessed internally by a stone staircase to the first floor (still there in use today!). The top of the building (third floor) seemed always to have been maid's rooms, again classic upstairs/ downstairs.

So the cellars here were for the storing of provisions which a man of status would have required (one wall has stone shelving as if for wine etc. Both cellars are arched and the LH one as you enter has a solid floor and is in much better condition than the RH one (under Market Street). At what point the ground floor (or originally the front part of it) became shops is as yet unclear –it is highly probable that when much of the present High Street was constructed, the intention was to create a range of commercial establishments at ground floor fronting the new street.'

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 17.10.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
2	Alternatives Accupunturist and Music Shop	39 High Street NH 78086 82049	Listed Building (B) 41866: 39, 41, 43 High Street / Cellar		Still inhabited	<p>This building is older than 23-25 High Street. There are also cellars here, but these did not appear to be vaulted. There were two storeys. The upper story cellar ceiling was supported by timber posts approximately 20cm – 30cm diameter.</p> <p>RP adds: The cellar ‘below’ this was accessed via a floor hatch in the timber floor of the upper cellar. The ceiling here was low, requiring visitors to crouch. The cellars were filled with shoes and cobbling tools. One set of the cellars were ‘kitted out’, as if for a shoe shop, with shelving, etc. The cellars were vaulted, as seen by Mrs Durham. They are now concreted over.</p>	See: MHG16474	Douglas Scott Rosemary Paterson
3	‘Taylormade Salon’	45 High Street NH 78086 82049	Shop / Cellar		Good; ‘now converted’	Two to three cellars here were used by the Wine Lodge (store). They can be accessed from the car park at the back.	None	Muriel Watson, Douglas Scott
4	Tain Silver	High Street (Bank Street – Castle Street Corner) NH 78091 82121 (approx.)	Shop / Cellar	2011	Access now blocked	There is a possible entrance to a cellar here, now blocked with concrete breeze blocks.	None	Douglas Scott
5	‘Kirkshaeaf Bee Boles’	In the Wall at MacKay’s Sawmill and Woodyard; Western Boundary Wall of the Kirkshaeaf Estate	Bee Boles		Extant	<p>These Bee Boles were recesses / stands for bee hives. The Bee Bole Society has records.</p> <p>MU gives this additional information: I have a photo of these, taken a year or so ago. They are located in a wall that runs from Kirkshaeaf Road right through to Chapel Road and bounds the western limit of the former</p>	None	Douglas Scott Margaret Urquhart

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 17.10.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
		NH 78224 82120				Mackay's saw mill site and the bowling green. They lie nearer the Kirksheaf end. The wall, however, obviously pre-dates the saw mill and probably formed the western boundary of the former Kirksheaf Estate.		
6	1 View Place, Geanies Street	The bottom of Geanies Street NH 78196 81958	Listed Building (C(S)) 41854: Geanies Street 1 and 2 View Place /Cellar		Building still occupied	The cellar here had a window, looking N towards the firth. It had a black grille.	See: MHG16371	Anthony and Muriel Watson
7	Knockbreck Street, Shandwick Street, Geanies Street, Ankerville Street	NH 78151 81857 Centred	'New Tain' (Improvem ent era, 19 th Century)		Largely extant	c.1820 Tain Town Council instituted improvements in this area of land, formerly part of the estate of MacLeod of Geanies. The land was purchased for the Burgh by Lord Ankerville.	Various	Anthony and Muriel Watson
8	King Street	NH 78042 81984 Centred	Roadway		Extant, with modern overlay	The route of the original S – N orientation of the access into the old burgh, via Hartfield to King Street. The main access was re-routed to a W – E alignment along Stafford Street at the time of the New Town improvements ⁹	None, but see: MHG54956, Possible Early Roadway from Tarradale to Tain	Anthony and Muriel Watson

⁹ The writer adds that the 'Road Through Ross; a posited early roadway from Tarradale to Tain', aligns with this access route into Tain.

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 17.10.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
9	Kenneth Murray Monument, High Street, Tain	NH 78097 82063	Listed Building (B) 41871: High Street Kenneth Murray Monument / Subterranean Feature	1990s		<p>There was an entrance here, in the Rose Garden Arches, to an underground passage / cellar. This was possibly used during WWII. There used to be a terrible stench from this.</p> <p>MU adds: "There are 4 blocked up arches visible from the Rose Garden - 3 large ones and a smaller one towards the eastern end of the bridge. The Murray Monument was built in front of the middle of these 3 arches, a yard or so in from the wall. There is some kind of connecting structure which is now completely bricked up. The only access point now is a small iron doorway in the smaller arch to give access, for maintenance, to the sewer which runs under Maitlands building under the High Street and under the Rose Garden following the line of the Eastern Auldmatach Burn. The Burgh Surveyor reports of the 1940s confirm that the arches were assigned for use as air raid shelters during WW2."</p> <p>See also, RHT 38 and RHT 39</p>	See: MHG16492	Douglas Scott Margaret Urquhart
10	'Winkies' Car Park / Car Park of R. MacLeod & Son	14 LAMINGTON STREET	Ramp leading to underground entrance		Extant	<p>An underground entrance can be found here.</p> <p>MU has contributed additional information¹⁰.</p>	None	Douglas Scott Margaret Urquhart

¹⁰ MU adds: 'A single arched bridge was built either at the end of 18th or beginning of 19th Century when Geanies Street was made. My husband [William Forbes Urquhart] now 84 years old, lived, when a child, in the left hand (western) part of the R Macleod premises, which was then just a house. His family occupied the ground and upper floors. He remembers seeing this arch but could only get in for 2 or 3 yards as it was bricked up beyond this point. When "Winkie" Macleod's car park was developed/improved the area in front of the arch was completely built up and it is now blocked off. The Hood family occupied the basement part below the house and it was accessed from the back of the building. Forbie remembers being shown a trap door in their living room floor but as far as he can remember no-one actually ventured into the space below.

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 17.10.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
11	Blythwood Care, 25 Lamington Street	25 Lamington Street NH 78147 82005	Shop / Site of road collapse			The road collapsed outside the building entrance here, possibly in 1969, at around the time when the new Tain Academy opened. WFU & MU suggest that the collapse may have been further along the street. WFU owned a business occupying No. 21 – 27 Lamington Street, at the time.	None	Pat Gibson Wm. Forbes Urquhart

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 7.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
12	Hut Circles to the East of Kirksheaf Farm, near to Duel Hill	NH 79285 81897	Three Hut Circles	Circa Mid-Twentieth Century	Visible circular features, with embanked surrounds	SS says that these hut circles were contained in a small enclosed area that she visited with one Guthrie Neilson. The diameter of each circle was between 2m – 5m, ‘big enough to get into, but still small’	None	Susannah Stone
13	Blarleath	NH 77605 83042	Proposed site of a Girth Cross, as indicated in Oram, R. et al. 2009, p.6		No visible feature	The contributor proposed that location of a girth cross, as depicted in the Scottish Burgh Survey, is actually incorrect ¹¹ .	None, but IVO St Mary’s Well: MHG8678	Margaret Urquhart
14	Red Burn	NH 72795 83442	Site of a Girth Cross, as indicated in Oram, R. et		This location coincides with a chambered cairn on the course of the Red Burn, Edderton Hill	This is a likely location of one of the Girth Crosses depicted in the Scottish Burgh Survey; the water course is known by its Gaelic Name ‘Ault Dearg’, or ‘Allt Dearg’. MU adds, further: “The Cairn of Aulderg, Paul MacTyre’s Hill and (St) Catherine’s Cross are all generally accepted	None, but IVO Red Burn Chambered Cairn: MHG8647	Margaret Urquhart, Alistair Jupp

¹¹ MU adds: Given the size of the symbol used and the small scale of the map it is difficult to know exactly what location is meant, but the cross marked on this map immediately NW of Tain does not lie anywhere near a known “court place” or a “girth cross”.

It is extremely unlikely there would be 2 crosses so close together and none marking the NE limits. If the site of St Mary’s Well was intended, that had nothing to do with the girth limits. The well was one of five points used to delimit the parliamentary constituency boundary on the Boundary Commission’s map of 1832.

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 7.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
						locations for the NW, NE & SE quadrant Girth Crosses (of which there would only be four not five) marking the extent of the Immunity of Tain.”		
15	Girth Cross Site, near the location of Paul MacTyre’s Court Hill	NH 79762 82597 (approx.) IVO Wester Pithogarty	Site of a Girth Cross, as indicated in Oram, R. et al. 2009, p.6		No visible feature	This is a likely location of one of the Girth Crosses depicted in the Scottish Burgh Survey. Paul MacTyre’s Court Hill has long since disappeared due to coastal erosion.	None	Margaret Urquhart
16	Mound at Catherine’s Cross	NH 82917 80795 (approx.)	Site of a Girth Cross, as indicated in Oram, R. et al. 2009, p.6 / Small mound	The mound was photographed sometime in the late Twentieth Century	A small mound visible in historic mapping and seen on the ground.	This is a likely location of one of the Girth Crosses depicted in the Scottish Burgh Survey. There is a well close by (as can be seen on the 1 st Edition, 6 inches to the mile map). MU adds that she has a digital photograph taken at the site that shows a small rise that could possibly mark the exact site of the cross.	None, but see: Photographic survey at St Catherine's Cross, Fearn: EHG3119	Margaret Urquhart
17	Lochan a’ Chlaidheimh	NH 73782 77909	Possible site of a Girth Cross, as indicated in Oram, R. et al. 2009, p.6		No visible feature	This is a possible location of one of the Girth Crosses depicted in the Scottish Burgh Survey.	None	Alistair Jupp
18	Bearn a’ Chlaidheim	NH 73167 77710	Possible site of a Girth Cross, as		No visible feature	This is a possible location of one of the Girth Crosses depicted in the Scottish Burgh	None	Alistair Jupp

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 7.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
			indicated in Oram, R. et al. 2009, p.6			Survey. This place is known locally as 'Bearnshleay', also known as 'The Hill of the Sword'. MU adds: "it is the hill, Bearn a Chlaidheimh (Barnschlay, Hill of the Sword) that is mentioned in the accounts of Perambulations, never the lochan.		Margaret Urquhart
19	Knockbreck Walled Garden	NH 78778 81261	Listed Building (C(S)) 14973: Knockbreck Walled Garden	Current	See comments.	The wall survives in various states of disrepair. The western wall is surmounted by beech trees believed to be of 200+ years antiquity. The eastern wall remains at considerable height and is ditched. At the northern extent of the eastern wall is a stony 'hummock'. There are no visible remains of the northern wall.	MHG16063	Susannah Stone
20	Knockbreck, previous features and foundations.	NH 78778 81261	Listed Building (C(S)) 14973: Knockbreck Walled Garden	2011	See comments	SS states that at the northern extent of the eastern wall is a stony 'hummock'. AJ adds: 'The east wall of the grounds is a bank faced with stones and the ditch is on the inside. The structure she mentioned appears to be a repaired part of the bank, about halfway along. It has a	None, but IVO MHG16063	Susannah Stone Alistair Jupp

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 7.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
						different structure and appears to have slumped inwards looking like an inward facing turret. The house has evidence of an earlier structure with re-used stones relieving the newer windows of the western - rear - wall.'		
21	The Hill Road and The Moss Road	NH 76445 82067	A relict 'peat road', preserved in a pathway	Current	Partially preserved as a pathway	<p>The modern road travels westwards and then becomes a pathway, preserved and extending 500m (approx.) from NH 76445 82067. The Burgh people had peat cutting rights on the Hill of Tain.</p> <p>MU adds: This route way was known as "The Hill Road".</p> <p>The lower part was later named "Moss Road" probably when it was built upon. One stretch of it was at one point called "The Avenue" – a narrow strip between the northern bounds of Quarryhill and Ardlarich on one side and the southern bounds of Tarlogie Wood on the other."</p>	None	MacKenzie MacAndie, Margaret Urquhart
22	Pitnellies	NH 83123 82722	Farmhouse	Known from 1 st Edition, 6 inches to the mile mapping	No longer visible	DM has letters sent to relatives in Canada in the 19 th Century speaking of a constant battle with inundations from the sea. This land is now part of the	None, but IVO MHG18739 Tain Airfield	David MacDonald

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 7.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
						<p>reclaimed land underlying the WWII Airfield.</p> <p>MU also contributes: “long-shore drift has long been causing erosion of the NW facing shore of the Mhorrich More area, the eroded material being carried north eastwards and deposited on the NE facing shore of the Mhorrich¹².</p> <p>My husband [now 84 years of age] can remember jumping off sandy banks that were several yards further out than the present shoreline and even in the time I have lived in Tain the bank along the beach has been moved back quite a bit.</p> <p>This process has probably been going on for centuries. There are a number of tree trunks lying off the shore at the Plaids which were uncovered a number of years ago and are</p>		Margaret Urquhart

¹² MU adds the following: In the 1888 newspaper account of the town’s Perambulations, it is mentioned that one of the sites of the Girth Crosses, Paul McTyre’s Hill, was “now submerged by the encroachments of the sea”; and later – “The great encroachments by the sea, and which are still going on, were remarked by the perambulators: ‘A rate of nearly 2 ft a year...from there to Poulninich, another court place. Here at the NE side of the Mhorrich More (MM), the land is being added to...many...expressed astonishment at the large extent of the MM which after Poul naboddach was passed, stretched eastward for miles with a perfectly level surface, overgrown with stunted grass & moss but being much injured by turf cutting.’

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 7.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
						still visible. These are not sawn logs but still have their stumps. I also have digital photos of these.” See also RHT 63.		
23	Hangman’s Rig	NH 78309 81953 – NH 78145 87106	Arable Land		This strip of land is still visible and has not been built upon	MM may be a descendent of a ‘McKandie’ who is mentioned in McGill as being ‘The Hangman’. MM was told by a relative that this land was an 8m wide strip given to the hangman by the Burghers and then referred to locally as ‘The Hangman’s Rig’ ¹³ .	None	MacKenzie MacAndie, Margaret Urquhart
24	Gallow Hill SAME AS RHT 61	NH 781702 82535	Gibbet Remains / Flagpole and associated remains	c.1970	Remains visible	MM notes that when he was ‘a bairn, the square foundation posts for what was then believed to be a gibbet could still be seen on top of this hill.’ MU adds: ‘my husband, thinks that these may be the remains of bench type seats, which were built around the flag pole on top of Gallow Hill.’ At the same time a swing (one	None	MacKenzie MacAndie Margaret Urquhart

¹³ MU adds: the documentary reference given is (No. 1272) in MacGill’s “Old Ross-shire and Scotland” Vol II, from the Burgh Account Account book, dated 1746, is as follows – “Cash paid Wm McKandie, hangman, 10s 7d do., do., 4s ...do., do., 1s 8d....”

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 7.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
						<p>of those long ones that could accommodate several children and swung from side to side instead of back & forth) and a roundabout were installed at the foot of the hill and he remembers a big opening ceremony c1935/36.</p> <p>The gibbet from 200 years before was possibly a fairly temporary affair. The last hanging was in 1762 and one of the expenses in the Burgh accounts for that year is for “erecting a new gibbet” suggesting they were perhaps only erected for a particular execution and not a permanent feature.’</p> <p>See also RHT 61</p>		
25	Tain to Loandhu Road, Via Kirksheaf	NH 78644 818282 – NH 81408 78905	Relict Roadway	Partially preserved as a pathway and hollow way	Partially preserved, also visible as field boundaries	MM, RL and JC state that the road or track was from Tain to Fearn via Kirksheaf, across the moor through Bogbain Farm, crossed the Loandhu Road at Loandhu Lodge - straight across from Midoxgate. The route would have been severed when the railway line was built. This was the old road to Fearn. Parts of this route are still in use.	None	Jean Cheyne MacKenzie MacAndie, Richard Littlewood

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 7.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
						MM suggests that this road would have link to Fearn Abbey as it is a very old route. JC affirms this adding that on the north wall of Fearn Abbey there is a blocked off door called the King's Door through which King James IV would enter on his visits to Fearn Abbey. Carved above in the stonework is a shield with Lion Rampant.		
26	Catherine's Cross to Chapel Hill Road	?NH 81216 8052 - ?NH 79401 82312	Relict Roadway	Possibly Partially preserved in field boundaries and paths	Possibly Partially preserved in field boundaries and paths	MU points to Sangster's plan of 1750 as a possible source for this route-way that can be traced on more recent mapping.	None	Margaret Urquhart
27	Property Wall of the Manse, Manse Street	NH 77840 82160	Listed Building (B) 41887: Manse Street, Manse House and Former Stables	Current	Extant	The contributor notes that the walling around the garden here may pre-date the 18 th century construction of the manse here. The Manse was the home of the Minister of the Collegiate Church.	MHG16071	Richard Littlewood
28	Small Building, possible Stable Block	NH 77840 82160	Listed Building (B) 41887: Manse Street, Manse House and Former Stables	Current	Extant	Boulder founds on this building, which projects into Manse Street, suggest an early construction date. The walled garden here contained a substantial orchard.	MHG16071	Richard Littlewood, William McRae, MacKenzie MacAndie

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 7.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
29	Row of Cottages	NH 77727 82551	Row of Cottages, possibly associated with Brewery	?Early Twentieth Century	No longer Visible	SS notes that there used to be a row of cottages at this location. The Brewery was owned by her husband's family.	MHG32317	Susannah Stone
30	The Italian Garden / water course of the Middle Auldmatach	NH 78141 82197	Garden / Ditch / River Course	Current	Shape still visible	AJ mentioned a curious gully shape between the Bank and the Collegiate Church Cemetery, which he recalls being told was called the Italian Garden. MU says this is the line of an old burn called the Middle Auldmatach (Auldnacardich) which ran down part of Scotsburn Road, through what is now the site of Scotsburn Court and the Health Centre, behind what is now the St Duthus Mason's Lodge and the Old Town Hall and through the British Linen Bank (now Bank of Scotland) garden.	None, but IVO MHG8700	Alistair Jupp Margaret Urquhart
31	Walled Garden / Orchard behind the St Duthus Hotel	NH 77910 82250	Possibly a property associated with the Collegiate Church – manse or ecclesiastical lands.	Known from 1 st Edition, 6 inches to the mile mapping, last seen Mid-Twentieth Century	Still visible	MM notes that the wall here is 5m in height and that it may be likely that the founs pre-date the 18 th Century House / Hotel Construction. He remembers a well -established orchard at this site in the mid-twentieth century.	None, but IVO MHG36834	MacKenzie MacAndie

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 7.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
32	The St Duthus Hotel	NH 77910 82250	Possible early manse location in 'Old Tayne'	As above	Still visible	RL says that large boulder founds are visible in the back wall here. MU has given additional information ¹⁴	MHG36834	Richard Littlewood Margaret Urquhart

¹⁴ MUadds: "I took a walk around the western and central areas of Tain after the meeting and noted that a lot of the older buildings seem to have boulder founds of varying sizes.

From a charter dated 1604 (MacGill, Vol 1, No. 938) there is mention of a 'St Stephen's Manse'. One of the properties being granted in the charter is described as follows:- The Ward [enclosed field] in the north of Tayne called St Stephen's biggings between the common lane to E and common way to W, St Stephen's Manse to S and common green to N (which according to MacGill seemed to be properties to NW of the British Linen Bank – now the Bank of Scotland – the "common green lying N of the present Chapel Street").

If MacGill is right in his assumptions, this is consistent with the triangular shaped site between Chapel Street and Tower Street which is now occupied by a row of houses and the present St Duthus Hotel. So if St Stephen's Manse lay south of this that would tie in with the site of the alleged "oldest building in Tain" at the foot of Quarry Lane. However, there is no mention of a manse on the actual site being granted in the charter, to substantiate the possibility of the site of the present St Duthus Hotel being once occupied by a manse.

The St Duthus Hotel has a stone mantelpiece carved with the letters "JM" and "MMC" separated by a heart and the date 1730. JM probably stands for John Manson who was first treasurer for the Council and later a bailie and had property in the area. The letters, etc., possibly commemorate his marriage. I think it was probably built by him or possibly his father before him, who was a merchant."

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 21.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
34	Formerly T & G Smart's Electrical Shop; Also known as 'Donnie Shivas' Electrical Shop	33, 35 & 37 High Street, Tain NH 78070 82060	Listed Building (B) 41865: 33, 35, 37 High Street / Cellar	2011	Still inhabited	<p>There is an arrow slit window visible in the wall fabric of this cellar (see photographs). At one time the window sill was used to store electrical cables.</p> <p>WFU remembers seeing a gate on the outside, in the wall next to the passageway that leads through from the High Street to the car parks behind.</p> <p>MM remembers that one of MacKay's lorries fell into road subsidence directly in front of this property in the 1960s</p>	MHG16469	<p>Kirstin MacKintosh (photographs)</p> <p>Wm. Forbes Urquhart</p> <p>MacKenzie MacAndie</p>
35	"Maitland's formerly the Co-op" The property has most recently been Maitland's Bar (although this business closed 2011). It was formerly the Co-op. There is a current Co-op elsewhere in the street so this could cause confusion.	Co-Operative, 3 & 5 Lamington Street, Tain NH 78095 82038	Listed Building (C(S)) 41879: 3, 5 Lamington Street (Co-Operative) / Cellar	1960s	Still inhabited	<p>The informants remember that the street above ground was visible through a 'skylight' in the roof of the cellar.</p> <p>MU adds that grilles can be seen peeping above pavement level in old photos of the "Maitlands" building (originally known as Lamington Place).</p> <p>DMD and MM remember seeing what appeared to be a hump-backed bridge underground, looking along the tunnel of the cellar. MM, remembers seeing this through a basement hatch, when working there in the 1960s</p>	MHG41215	<p>Wm. Forbes Urquhart</p> <p>Margaret Urquhart</p> <p>David MacDonald, MacKenzie MacAndie</p>

Remembering Hidden Tain: Record of Sites and Features: 17.10.11 – 28.11.11

No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 21.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
						JC remembers this feature being of sandstone construction and remembers seeing clear running water tumbling under or through the feature ¹⁵ . Some of the participants present at the session believe it is possible that this feature may have been a culvert, part of the drainage system running under the town. See RHT 36. DMA mentions that there is still an unpleasant smell here.		Jean Cheyne David MacAllister

¹⁵ JC contributed the following: “When undergoing improvements or alterations to the interior of what was the Co-op building at that time, a deep channel of tumbling water became exposed. In my estimation the roadway had not fallen in. This was revealed in some way due to the alterations and a "double sliding hatch" on the floor of the Co-op, which brought this feature to light. The location is behind the double blue doors of the building adjoining the Wool Shop.

Mackenzie MacAndie was working at the Co-op at this time [c.1970] and he has verified that I was correct in my memory.

This water fell from a considerable height, through a little arched bridge then down the deep gulley and under the road. There could not have been a cellar below this section of the building and seemingly there are no cellars below the Wool Shop.

To see the beautiful little arched sandstone bridge it was necessary to kneel down then look up and under the building to the rear. I considered this to be a small footbridge.

The public toilets at that time were positioned across the road on top of the concrete block in the Rose Garden and by the top of the Cunard Steps. They may well have drained into this system although the water under the Co-op was more like a drainage burn than a sewer.

The girls in the Wool Shop mentioned that they very often hear tumbling water below ground as they walked up the slope from the King Street lower car park to the upper car park at the rear of the building.”

Remembering Hidden Tain: Record of Sites and Features: 17.10.11 – 28.11.11

No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 21.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
36	Bridge (dated to 1789- 1790)	Either NH 78095 82038 at the location of RHT 35 Or NH 78192 81979, at the junction of Lamington, Geanies and High Streets	Single Arched Bridge	See RHT 35		The reference to this feature is a documentary source, mentioned by HM. HM believes that it may have been constructed to connect the old town High Street with the new town at the beginning of Lamington Street. He adds that this is the interpretation put, rightly or wrongly, on OSA Ross & Cromarty p.396 and MacGill 1248 and 1250 by the Burgh Survey at figure 14 MU added a cautionary note to this reading, suggesting the alternative being an extension of the bridge at the foot of Geanies Street in 1811/12 ¹⁶ .	None	Hamish Mackenzie Margaret Urquhart

¹⁶ MU has contributed the following regarding her reading of the location of the proposed bridge: “although it has usually been assumed that the bridge being referred to in Macleod of Geanies’ letter of 1789 (MacGill No. 1248) was a bridge over the Eastern Auldmatlach, at the current Rose Garden site, this does not seem possible for the following reasons :

- (1) - it seems unlikely that such a bridge did not already exist & MacGill No.1172 suggests that it did;
- (2) - it says “an arch” – there are 4 altogether at the Rose Garden site;
- (3) - the measurements given are for a much smaller structure than exists at the Rose Garden – even the smallest arch is bigger, whereas [my husband, Forbie Urquhart] remembers the mouth of the arch at the foot of Geanies Street being roughly 4 ft x 4½ft, being the dimensions quoted;
- (4) – to bring Geanies Street in to the level and line of the High Street would require some raising structure.

The problem is the use of the term “Auld Matach”. This term was used for all the main burns in early documents and means “foul/dirty burn” and possibly became a term for any dirty open drain/sewer as well as the 3 original main burns. I think the bridge at the foot of Geanies Street was later extended c1811/12 to allow better access to the site of the new church (now the Duthac Centre).”

Remembering Hidden Tain: Record of Sites and Features: 17.10.11 – 28.11.11

No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 21.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
37	'Manhole Cover'	Rose Garden, IVO the Kenneth Murray Monument NH 78106 82065	A metal utilities cover, access to the town sewerage system	Extant	Extant	Opposite RHT 35 and on the High Street side of the gardens, this utility access is believed to access the town drainage system. DMA mentions unpleasant smell still present here. Running water is still heard here today.	None, but IVO MHG16492, the Murray Memorial Monument	David McAllister
38	'Doorway to the Archways'	Rose Garden, IVO the Kenneth Murray Monument NH 78097 82063	A metal doorway in the wall to the east of the Murray Memorial Monument	Extant	Extant	Referred to as a 'doorway into the archways', this doorway is believed to access the town's drainage system. DMA has provided photographs and narrative of works in 2009. See also RHT 9 and RHT 39.	None, but IVO MHG16492, the Murray Memorial Monument	David McAllister
39	'Doorway'	Rose Garden, IVO the Kenneth Murray Monument NH 78097 82063	A relict, cast iron 'doorway' in the 'arches' to the west of the Murray Memorial Monument	c.2000 - 2001	Believed to be extant	SS was able to ease herself into a hole created during construction works on the High Street and having edged in up to her shoulders was able to see a small door, inside which was a further doorway, surrounded with dressed stone at the lintel, threshold and jambs. Through this 'doorway' a cobbled surface (possible street pavement) was visible, comprised of dressed cobbles 12cm x 8cm (approx.). To the east of the 'doorway' the contributor believes that they could see a small, square-ish window, with deep sill and lintel.	None, but IVO MHG16492, the Murray Memorial Monument	Susannah Stone Richard Littlewood

Remembering Hidden Tain: Record of Sites and Features: 17.10.11 – 28.11.11

No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 21.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
						DMA has photographs of a 'stripped wall' at this location There may also be some photographs of this location available online, according to SH.		David McAllister, Sylvania Harrington
40	'Steps to Sewer'	Directly opposite the steps to the Former Town Hall, Tower Street, Tain	Access to the town's drainage / sewerage system	c.1998	Believed to be extant	SS saw a large dressed slab stone steps down into the sewerage system, during the water main renewal undertaken by the North of Scotland Water Authority in 1998. SS has photographs taken during her visit. MU has copies of the plans of the sewerage system, and, possibly, photographs too. See also RHT 9 and RHT 38.	IVO MHG16708 Also: EHG297, Tain Water Main Renewal	Susannah Stone Margaret Urquhart
41	Currently MacKenzie and Cormack, Solicitors. Next to Bank of Scotland	20 Tower Street, Tain NH 77980 82160	Cellar	2011	Ruinous, but extant	Photographs provided by RM show a cellar with a gridded window, surmounted by a multi-coloured glass 'skylight' and another window similar to that described as part of RHT 39.	MHG22765	Ruth McLeod (Photographs), Jean Cheyne, Wm. Forbes Urquhart
42	'London House'	? 5, 7 & 9 High Street, Tain NH 77993 82101	Cellar	??	Unaltered for very many years and now used as a shop store	This cellar features windows similar to those described in RHT 39 and RHT 41. There appears to be a 'hollow' in the pavement above this feature. There are also skylights in the roof of this cellar.	MHG16438	Ann Littlewood Richard Littlewood David MacDonald

Remembering Hidden Tain: Record of Sites and Features: 17.10.11 – 28.11.11

No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 21.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
43	Royal Bank of Scotland, High Street, Tain Coloured Glass Skylight	Royal Bank of Scotland, High Street, Tain NH 78020 82080	Skylight, indicating Cellar	1957	?Ruinous, but extant	MM remembers looking through squares of glass on the street outside the RBS, and seeing indoor lights and a real fire within, through the glass.	MHG22848	MacKenzie MacAndie
44	Lamington Street Cellars	Opposite 1 View Place, Geanies Street, Tain IVO NH 78196 81958	One of a series of cellars along Lamington Street	?	?Ruinous, but extant	WFU can locate the addresses of known cellars including at this site and at 'Winkies', the Post Office, and at 'Ladbrokes'.	MHG16371	Wm. Forbes Urquhart
45	Castle Hill 'Tunnel'	Castle Hill, Cramond Brae, Tain NH 78091 82121	Listed Building (C(S)) 41847: Cramond Brae Castlehill (Formerly St Ronan's)/ Cellar	?1969	Backfilled	JC informs that there was a tunnel extending from the fireplace in the front room that extended in a NW direction towards the Castle. SS related that 'Donnie MacPhee' claims he entered a tunnel that extended down beneath Castle Brae and that he came up at a terminus near the Collegiate Church. She also mentioned that he said he might have seen sconces. SS says that 'Doft the Butcher' also mentioned going down a tunnel here.	MHG8696	Jean Cheyne Susannah Stone
46	Hollow ground in the Churchyard	St. Duthac's Collegiate Church & churchyard, Castle Brae, Tain NH 78020 82190	A hollow area extending below ground			SH relates what she had heard about a grass cutter falling into a hollow whilst in the grounds of the Collegiate Church. "He was working on a summer job late 1970's to early 1980's. His brother now lives in Invergordon.	MHG8689	Sylvia Harrington

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 21.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
						<p>The depth to which he fell underground was significant enough for him to fear that he might be unable to pull himself back above ground.</p> <p>He thought he'd fallen into a crypt but described his environment as being a tunnel, possibly cobbled, certainly made of stone, with an archway before him.</p>		
47	Arch beneath the wall of St. Duthus's Church, Castle Brae, Tain	St. Duthus's Church, Castle Brae, Tain NH 78040 82170	An archway cavity	1950s – 1960s	Extant	MM remembers this archway cavity being very visible and looking into the area 'under' the building, quite clearly.	MHG8684	MacKenzie MacAndie
48	Cellars beneath Campbell's Optician	24-28 Tower Street, Tain NH 77996 82143	Listed Building (B) 41919: 24-28 (even) Tower Street/ Cellar	1930s- 1940s		There used to be a cellar accessed from this shop via a very steep staircase. It is notable that this feature is IVO the Collegiate Church area.	MHG41166	Wm. Forbes Urquhart
49	Cellars beneath 'Gregor McLeod's'	4, 6 & 8 Lamington Street, Tain NH 78152 82028	Listed Building (C(S)) 41880: 4, 6, 8 Lamington Street / Cellar	2011	Extant	<p>WFU lived here at one time. Here there was a cellar, beneath the cellar, similar to RHT 2. There is a hatch access from the front room that extends 1.5m.</p> <p>See also RHT 10 and RHT 50.</p>	MHG41213	Wm. Forbes Urquhart

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 21.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
50	Geanies Street Tunnel	Junction of High Street and Geanies Street NH 78182 81973	A tunnel extending S-SW		Bricked up	WFU remembers seeing along a 'tunnel' extending from the High Street along Geanies Street about 5m S-SW. This was at the 'Arch' mentioned in RHT 10 and now no longer visible.	None	Wm. Forbes Urquhart
51	Glasstorm Glass Studio Excavation Site	2 Chapel Street Tain, Ross-Shire IV19 1EL	Findspot of large wooden slates and possible human remains	2006	No longer visible	JC reported that she had heard from one Dr 'Hugh MacLeod' that he viewed large wooden tiles and skeletons at the site of excavations here. The tiles he believed would indicate that there had once been a prestigious building here.	EHG1463, 1 Chapel Street, Tain	Jean Cheyne
52	Cellar Grille: J. Cloakey's House, also Jessie MacLean's & G. MacLeod's	Lamington Street NH 78159 82018	Cellar, with Grille			SS reported seeing a grille / grid in this cellar; possibly similar to those recorded in RHT 39 and RHT 41	None, but IVO MHG22825	Susannah Stone

Remembering Hidden Tain: Record of Sites and Features: 17.10.11 – 28.11.11

No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 28.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
53	Buildings visible IVO St. Duthus Chapel	NH 78550 82220	Two buildings	Visible on an aquatinted engraving published in 1828	No longer visible	<p>RL says that he has noted a concentration of stone at the likely location of the building depicted on 'The Town of Tain' Drawn on the spot by J. Clerk and Engraved by Rob.t Havell, London: Published by Smith, Elder & C.o 65, Cornhill, 1828.</p> <p>MU suggests that the two buildings visible on the 1828 engraving are not actually positioned behind the chapel ruin but, allowing for perspective, are somewhere further west, probably the buildings shown on Chapel Road on the 1832 map</p> <p>MM and WFU inform that this area is has been used as an area of waste ground onto which sawmill dust had been dumped and onto which site rubble from the 1960s, but also possibly earlier had also been cleared.</p>	None but the features are IVO MHG8582	<p>Richard Littlewood</p> <p>Margaret Urquhart</p> <p>MacKenzie MacAndie, Wm. Forbes Urquhart</p>
54	Road passing N of St Duthus Chapel, The Links	NH 78545 82279 Centred	Linear Feature	Visible on the Great Reform Act Plan of Tain, 1832		<p>MU has identified this feature on the Great Reform Act Plan of Tain, 1832 (Map 68).</p> <p>The route-way appears to connect the Meikle Croft site, running NNW and then S to connect with what is now the Castle Brae route-way.</p>	None but the feature is IVO MHG8582	Margaret Urquhart

Remembering Hidden Tain: Record of Sites and Features: 17.10.11 – 28.11.11

No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 28.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
55	Pithogarty	NH 80200 82000 Centred	Place-name	An unroofed building is depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (Ross-shire and Cromartyshire 1881, sheet xlii), but it is not shown on the current edition of the OS 1:10000 map (1980)	No longer visible	HM, quoted from his reading of Taylor, William (1882), <i>Researches into the History of Tain: Earlier and Later</i> , Tain: Alexander Ross, pages 14 to 15. "Taylor cites an old tradition that the town (of Tain) was once situated on the Fendom, and says that whilst this need not be taken too literally we can assume that some part of the Fendom was dotted pretty thickly with small farm houses, so as to form a village. He supports this thesis by recalling that Pithogarty probably means priest's town or the minister's abode." ¹⁷	See: MHG20902	Hamish Mackenzie
56	The Black Bridge' & other possible abutments	NH 78958 82222	River crossing	Visible on an aquatinted engraving published in 1828	No longer visible	RL & MU suggest that the bridge shown on the engraving: 'The Town of Tain' Drawn on the spot by J. Clerk and Engraved by Rob.t Havell, London: Published by Smith, Elder & C.o 65, Cornhill, 1828, was probably located quite near to where the "Black Bridge" ¹⁸ is	IVO MHG8671	Richard Littlewood, Margaret Urquhart

¹⁷ The writer believes that this certainly concurs with Watson, William J. (1904), *Place names of Ross and Cromarty*, Inverness: The Northern Counties Printing and Publishing Company, p. 34, who proposes the origin: *Bail' an t-sagairt*.

¹⁸ The "Black Bridge" is the bridge that carries the road that runs through Kirksheaf Farm and the golf Course to the Plaids.

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 28.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
						today if not on the exact same spot. MM has searched the river banks and has not discovered any other likely abutments.		MacKenzie MacAndie
57	Plaids	NH 78889 82554 Centred Also NH 78953 826686	Possible harbour area	N/A	N/A	SS mentioned that part of the hereditary rights of the inheritors of Plaids - first mentioned as a property, she believes in the 15 th Century – was, granted to Innes of Tain, proprietor of Tain, the right to collect dues at the Port of Tain. MU offers the following, considering the documentary evidence from MacGill Vol 1, p14 – that Alexander Innes of Plaids, the hereditary bailie of Tain, gained a decree in 1556 against Nicholas Ross, Provost of Tain & Abbot of Fearn, which found him “entitled to the unlaws, or fines, and escheats, or forfeits of the courts of Tain” and also given is a list of other entitlements but no mention of collecting dues at the port of Tain. WMD reported that he had heard from his history teacher, Ronald Cameron, when at school, that it was possible to	None	Susannah Stone Margaret Urquhart William MacDonald

Remembering Hidden Tain: Record of Sites and Features: 17.10.11 – 28.11.11

No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 28.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
						<p>walk across the Firth to Portmahomack 200 – 300 years ago; that the waters here, in many places are only at 1m depth.</p> <p>HM quotes Taylor, William (1882), Researches into the History of Tain: Earlier and Later, Tain: Alexander Ross, p.8 - as citing an old tradition that long ago the Dornoch Firth was so limited in breadth "that at one place - was it at the Gizzen Briggs? - it could be, and sometimes was bridged at low water by a plank thrown across".</p> <p>RL reminded all that the First Statistical Account - Tain, County of Ross and Cromarty. Account of 1791-99, volume 3, p.390 - mentions the shallowness of the banks at the Gizzen Briggs, giving an account of a Swedish Vessel running aground here in c.1780s.¹⁹</p> <p>AJ says that he has observed vertical and horizontal timber remains eroding out of the sand</p>		<p>Hamish Mackenzie</p> <p>Richard Littlewood</p> <p>Alistair Jupp</p>

¹⁹ The writer offers the following: Watson, William J. (1904), Place names of Ross and Cromarty, Inverness: The Northern Counties Printing and Publishing Company, p.34, proposes the place-name derives from the Norse for 'flat-lands'. This certainly corresponds to the carse-like nature of the territory to which WMD is referring.

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 28.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
						dunes here – possible quay remains? SS mentions that she remembers her Father-in-Law battling to keep the effects of sand wind blow creating an eroding coastline here, by placing timber posts in rows along the shore here.		Susannah Stone
58	Tain Harbour, wharfage	NH 78638 82324 (approx.)	Timber remains visible in eroding banks of the Tain	2011	Still visible	HM quoted from Graham, A (1892-1979) and Gordon, A. 1987 Old harbours in northern and western Scotland, Proc Soc Antiq Scot, 117, 265-352, p.286 ²⁰ AJ attests that there are still	MHG8672	Hamish Mackenzie Alistair Jupp

²⁰ 'It was noted in 1793 that access to Tain was obstructed by an offshore sandbank, exposed at low tide but traversed by a channel which needed expert pilotage (SAS, Tain, V3, 390), and in 1837 that the only available harbour consisted of the tidal sands of the firth itself (NSAS, Tain, V14, 283).

Nonetheless, harbour works of a kind must once have existed at Tain, as in 1604 the Convention of Royal Burghs was approached for help in repairing the 'herberis and shore', described as ruinous (Marwick 1870, 2, 180), and this language suggests at least a stretch of built wharfage on the waterfront. Bishop Leslie marked Tain on his map in the 1570s (Brown 1893,114), as did Roy in 1747 and Collins on his chart (Collins 1776). Ferry traffic converging on Tain, also well served by roads from the south, resorted mainly to the Meikle Ferry, landing at the Ness of Portnecoulter, four miles to the west.

An older course of the River Tain is shown on the OS 1:2500 map of 1975 as an ox-bow south-east of the mound from the summit of which Saint Duthus's Chapel looks eastwards across an area of the delta which has been drained and re-made in many forms in recent times, the left bank more recently than the right.

Both river banks have stretches of timber revetment of various ages, the most substantial being a line of 30 large upright timbers, with cross pieces, which could be the framework of a left bank quay, situated about 40 yd (36.5 m) north-east of the Chapel mound, near the downstream angle of the ox-bow.'

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 28.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
						timbers visible along the banks of the Tain – here has seen timber revetments and again vertical and horizontal timbering. MU cautions that some of these structures may represent attempts at altering/straightening the course of the river – see RHT 59). She also added further information, regarding the shallowness of waters in the immediate vicinity from her documentary and archival research ²¹ .		Margaret Urquhart

²¹ On the subject of a possible port or harbour at Tain, MacGill has nothing at all to say and none of the documents he examines allude to such in spite of one section of Vol 1 being devoted to “Industries, Commerce, Communications”. The following extracts from MacGill would seem to suggest that no harbour worthy of the name was to be found at Tain: No. 969 – **1709** – from a letter from William Ross, Meikle Allan, to a Mr John Chrystie, Edinburgh – “the Master of the ship you have fraughted scruples sailing.....there is a bar.....he is misinformed....the ness of Dornoch comes over two thirds of ye firth and the ness of Tain squints out to meet it but there is a wide channel betwixt....of many fathoms depth....he may sail.....above ye point of Tarbat and anchor off the Kirk of Tarbat, where there is a harbour, but not for a ship of his burden....in six hours I will be aboard...pilot who....uses the passage every week....two or three open boats as bouys at shelves to the south side which is all the hazard, then he has 4 miles to the pool of Ardmore where he will lie in a bason....six fathoms of water within a stone cast of the house.....” and in **1764** – “at Tain & Nigg vessels are still beached”.

This is not to say that small boats did not manage to tie up at Tain at High Tide, perhaps along the river banks.

Towards the end of the 19th Century (possibly), a small fleet of schooners of about 80 tons plied round our coasts from Tain. E.g. the “**St. Duthus**” sailed regularly to the Baltic, bringing back sawn timber, much in the form of pitch pine. However, it is unlikely they could possibly have sailed in close to Tain but would have beached and carts would have gone across the flats to unload the cargoes.

If some kind of wharfs or quays did exist they would only have been used by shallow draft vessels.

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 28.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
59	River Tain Straightening	IVO NH 78638 82324	?Timber revetment and similar		Still visible	MU suggests that some of the visible timber facing evident on the banks of the River Tain may also represent attempts at water management; strengthening of the river banks to prevent further shifts in the river course as well as straightening measures. She has access to maps in the museum archive that plot changes or proposed changes. She also offered information from her archival research ²² .	None	Margaret Urquhart
60	Dolphins at The Links	NH 78223 82518	?Quay fixtures	1960s		MM remembers seeing cast iron dolphin fixtures on top of the concrete wall at The Links. SS also remembers these.	None, but IVO MHG22827	MacKenzie MacAndie Susannah Stone
61	Gallow Hill SAME AS RHT 24	NH 78084 82545	?Remains of Gibbet / Setting for Flagpole	2011	Remains only	WMD has heard that there are the remains of a Gallows / Gibbet still visible here.	MHG31270	William MacDonald

²² From the Ross-shire Journal - **5/1/1923** – “A small vessel is now based on the shelving beach at Tain loading sawn timber for dispatch on account of Messrs A B Munro and Son. It is many years since a steamer loaded or discharged here, though a small sailing vessel did so some years ago. It is said that trade by sea in timber and coal may be revived. In old times Tain was a regular seaport, the small vessels of those days loading and discharging on the beach into carts at low tide.”

From the Ross-shire Journal - **4/4/1923** – “Tain Unemployment Schemes – for the piling of the river embankment at the suspension bridge, forming a soil embankment to prevent flooding of low lying ground at Plaids Farm, for building a sea wall to prevent erosion...have all been approved by the Government for a grant of 60 per cent of wages to unemployed men. Tenders for the contract, to be executed by Mr John Macrae, Kildary, have been accepted.” **23/4/1923** – “Tain Town Council has received permission from the Unemployment Grants committee to proceed with embanking work near the mouth of the local river for strengthening the foundations of the suspension bridge and protecting the lands at Kirksheaf at an estimated cost of £300. Sixty per cent of the cost of labour will be met by the grant.”

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 28.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
						<p>MM notes caution when interpreting remains here as it is also in the vicinity of the site of a flagpole erected in the 1950s by the Fire Brigade.</p> <p>MU adds the following: ‘in 1945 the Burgh Surveyor’s monthly reports record the erection of a [new] flagstaff on the Links. A replacement for the new flagstaff installed in 1886/7 which itself was replacing an even earlier one.’</p>		<p>MacKenzie MacAndie</p> <p>Margaret Urquhart</p>
62	Angel Hill	NH 78313 82312	Former site of commencement of boundary perambulations	N/A	Truncated by railway cutting.	MU knows of documentary references to this being, at one time, the place from where the burgh boundary perambulations commenced ²³ .	None	Margaret Urquhart
63	Morrish Mor, specifically IVO Pithogarty and Pitnellies, Inverraithie; buried settlements	NH 79572 82800 & NH 83123 82722	Buried settlements at Pitnellis and Inverraithie		No longer visible	<p>SS heard from her late husband that there had been a settlement at Pitnellies, which was completely buried by windblown sand.</p> <p>MU has investigated soil profiles in the dunes in the area and can confirm signs of settlement, and adds: that the</p>	None	<p>Susannah Stone</p> <p>Margaret Urquhart</p>

²³ The writer proposes that the Watson’s proposal that this place-name derives from *Cnoc nan aingeal* and may indicate ‘knoll of fires’ (1904, Place names of Ross and Cromarty, Inverness: The Northern Counties Printing and Publishing Company, p.34), could mark this spot as being held in traditional memory as a beacon hill.

Remembering Hidden Tain: Record of Sites and Features: 17.10.11 – 28.11.11

No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 28.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
						<p>New Statistical Account of 1845 mentions that the Morrish More was "recently overblown with sand".</p> <p>She adds: 'There is evidence in the Sand dunes exposed along the shore of soil profiles suggesting earlier cultivation.</p> <p>The remains of a kiln buried in a sand dune edging on to Tain beach, which had been revealed by erosion, was partially excavated in 1974 by Laurie M Maclagan Wedderburn on behalf of the museum, via George Hamilton. He concluded it was a Medieval Grain drying kiln. The kiln has now disappeared.'</p> <p>WM relates what he has heard from a friend, one Tennent Munro, who now farms at Balcherry on the Fendom, about Tennent Munro's ancestors: the Denoons [this is the same family as David MacDonald has mentioned in RHT 22].</p> <p>In the late Nineteenth Century, this family moved from a single story house to a new build two story at Pitnellies but during a storm the new house seemed to</p>		William McRae

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 28.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
						<p>move and shake so much that they abandoned it and moved back to the old one. The new house fell into disrepair and all that can be seen now is the shape in the grass.</p> <p>Tennent Munro has told WM that the storm was the same night as the Tay Bridge Disaster in 1879.</p> <p>MU has given additional information from archival research and her study of a letter (dated 16th Feb 1669) in possession of Tain and District Museum, which is from one MacCulloch to his brother Hugh of Inverethie²⁴.</p> <p>Having looked at Sangster's map again, it would seem that Inverethie was located adjacent to and N of Balcherry.</p> <p>RL contributes that 'the family of MacCulloch of Plaids is mentioned as an important local family for over 300 years from</p>		Richard Littlewood

²⁴ The contents of the letter suggest that Hugh is the main landholder/tenant (in 1663 "lands of Inverethie" are mentioned as part of a list of lands being deponed to George Mackenzie of Tarbat, so possibly sold or sublet to Hugh), and his brother is a tenant on part of his estate which seems to include "Balamithie" (?) and Pitnellies. There is mention of Hugh's "tenents of Inverethie".

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 28.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
						<p>1400 to 1700. They were baillies of Tain during the era of pilgrimages and at least one was Abbot of Fearn Abbey.</p> <p>However for a family of such importance there is no big house at the Plaids but a few houses and fields some of which look old.</p> <p>The next farm along is called Pithogarty which I am told is Pictish for "Priests Glebe".</p> <p>This information tends to lend some weight to the earlier location of the local community being around the Plaids or under the sea due to coastal erosion.²⁵</p>		
64	Tanged flint projectile	NH 79800 83100	Findspot			Found by MU and now in the care of NMS.	MHG34454 ²⁶	Margaret Urquhart

²⁵ The writer adds that Watson recounts the following: ‘Inverraithie – Now practically obsolete; in a Retour of 1652 appears as ‘within the liberty of Tain and having salmon fishing and stells’ ‘The tradition is that the Town of Tain was once built much nearer than it is at present to the mouth of the river, on land that has, in great part been swept away by the sea, but that was called in old charters and is sometimes remembered still as Inver-Eathie...Alt àthaidh...also the old name of the Tain River... probably based on àth, a ford.’ (1904, Place names of Ross and Cromarty, Inverness: The Northern Counties Printing and Publishing Company, p.34).

²⁶ The following is given on the Highland Council HER”NH 798 831 Exceptional tanged flint projectile point found on the beach at Tain in April 1998 by Margaret Urquhart. Length 77mm; breadth 16mm; thickness 5mm; weight 5g. White external colour, ?porcelain? quality, and in perfect condition except for slight modern nicks along the lateral edges. Probably recently eroded by the sea from shelly sand deposits at rear of beach. This artefact is the only example known from Scotland of a Scandinavian Neolithic class B tanged point, and its presence at Tain is enigmatic.’ Saville, A. 1998, NMS”. Note that the grid reference given on the HER differs from the location pointed out by MU at the RHT Session

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 28.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
65	Inver Channel Sluice, Morrich More	NH 84378 82048	Sluice works	2011		<p>WM contributed that a sluice gate, part of the water management for the Plaids area, was shown to Tennent Munro 'when he was a small boy [he's in his mid 60's now] at this location. Now, although he knows where banking is across the area he has never been able to find the sluice again.'</p> <p>Tennent Munro has confirmed to WM that it worked by the incoming tide coming past Inver pushing the gate closed and that when the tide went out the water draining off the Fendom pushed the sluice gate open again.</p> <p>Thus, the sea was stopped from coming into the land protected by the dam but the land was allowed to continue to drain when the tide went out due to the sluice gates then being open.</p>	None	William McRae
66	Knockbreck House	NH 78664 81225	Listed Building (B) 14972: Knockbreck House and Gate Piers / Cellar with possible gun-loop window			<p>SS contributed that she had heard from her late husband that the house may possibly have been built on the location of a former 'castle'.</p> <p>Recently, whilst a new plumbing system was being installed, what appeared to be an underground cupboard space</p>	MHG45418	Susannah Stone

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 28.11.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
						was identified. Closer inspection, appeared to reveal the feature as a possible arrow slit or gun loop window.		

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 10.12.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
67	Kate Malcolm's Well	Lairgs of Tain NH 72620 79702	Feature Name Recorded By Hand on a Copy of the OS 1 st Edition 6 Inches to the Mile Map for the Area	N/A	N/A	<p>The contributors have inherited a copy of the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map onto which the words 'Kate Malcolm's Well' has been written in, in pencil, at the given location. There are further pencilled in annotations on this map copy. Neither DM nor EM know who authored these pencilled in notes.</p> <p>MU knows that there are still many settlement remains here and may have photographs to share.</p> <p>See also RHT 88, Lairgs of Tain, Township</p>	None, but IVO MHG8633, Lairgs of Tain 2, Farmstead / Township	David and Evelyn More Margaret Urquhart
68	Court Hill, Torran nam Buachaille and / or Knocnabochill (Tornabuachill)	Court Hill, Torran nam Buachaille NH 76146 77283 (Centred)	Place Name and Documented Assembly Site and Possible Court Hill	N/A	N/A	<p>MU relates from a newspaper account of 1888, documenting the route of the last known Perambulations of the Burgh's Marches: "The account tells us that 'the more usual route including Barnschlay was by-passed completely and the road passing close to Mineralbank was followed from Culpleasant to Clashnacomerich. The account then refers to the "noted march and Girth Cross called Knocnabochill" (Tornabuachill).</p>	None, but overlooks MHG54956, Possible Early Roadway Tarradale to Tain	Margaret Urquhart

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No.	Site or feature name	Location	Type	Date last seen	Condition	Comments: Recorded 10.12.11, some additions and clarifications by correspondence	HER No:	Informant
						<p>Perambulations of the marches (boundaries) were undertaken to safeguard the town's right to the lands and the Girth or Immunity of Tain, within which the town had certain privileges especially as regards the buying and selling of goods.</p> <p>Just how far back this custom goes is uncertain. The first documentary evidence appears in a charter by James VI in 1588."</p>		
69	Knockbreck House, Enclosure Ditch and Embankment	NH 79483 80372	Enclosure Wall with Underlying Ditch	2011	Visible when dug	<p>JS, the owner of the property, has located an approximately 6m wide ditch underlies the SSW side of the enclosure surrounding the grounds of the house.</p> <p>The ditch appears to run ENE – WSW. The wall revets and rises up from the ENE face of the ditch embankment, the ditch appearing to be constructed within the interior of the present enclosure.</p>	MHG45418	Jamie Stone
70	Knockbreck House, Ditch Feature	NH 78586 81258	Boundary Enclosure Embanked Feature and Possible Underlying Ditch	2011	Visible when dug	<p>JS has identified an embanked feature along the NNE side of the enclosure surrounding the grounds of the house. Here a single embanked ditch is evident running ENE – WSW. This may be a landscaping or drainage feature.</p>	Part of MHG45418, but un-recorded	Jamie Stone

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71	Knockbreck House, Mound	NH 78663 81228	Mounded area underlying the House	Visible	Extant	JS notes that Knockbreck House sits upon a slight mound. The area drains well.	Part of MHG45418, but un-recorded	Jamie Stone
72	Knockbreck House, Well	NH 78661 81221	Well and Decorated Well Fixtures	Visible	Extant	Believed by JS to be approximately 1.8m deep and to date from the 1770s – 1780s, that is pre-dating the house, this well is surmounted by a fine stonework head, topped by a cast iron railing enclosing a metal urn. The hand pumping mechanism remains.	Part of MHG45418, but un-recorded	Jamie Stone
73	Moulinard House	Moulinard House NH 77240 79750	House	Visible	Extant	JS believes that this property is of similar origins to Knockbreck; an important House of the Improvement Era (Early Nineteenth Century).	MHG17485	Jamie Stone
74	Tainfield	Tainfield Farmstead NH 77864 78290	Site with Garden Enclosure	Visible	Ruinous	JS suggests that the planting in the garden enclosure and environs of this settlement indicate that the Farmstead may have been pre-dated by something more substantial here.	MHG48724	Jamie Stone
75	Gows Bakery, 8 High Street, Tain	8 High Street, Tain, IV19 1AE / Cellars NH 78023 82103	Baker's Storage Cellars	Now incorporated in a modern day art gallery, RHT 76	Building still in use as a shop	AL remembers that the cellars under this building were reached by stairs from the above-ground shop. She also remembers that the atmosphere here was very dry	None	Ann Littlewood

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						<p>and was used in the 1960s by the bakery above as a place for storing flour.</p> <p>There were large boulder founds²⁷ visible in the cellar, at the time, and, again pursuant to the dryness of the atmosphere here, these were used as surfaces upon which to lay the paper bags used by the bakery.</p>		
76	Brown's Gallery Castle Brae	Brown's Gallery Castle Brae IV19 1AJ / Bakehouse NH 78045 82119	Bakehouse	Yes, but as part of present day gallery	Building still in use, as an art Gallery	AL says that the building here was formerly a bake house and that the cellars here were used as bakery storage.	None	Ann Littlewood
77	Alistair Rhind Funeral Directors Sutherland House, Bank Street/ Formerly Strachans	Sutherland House, Bank Street, Tain, IV19 1AQ / Cellars NH 78079 82087	Cellars used by Bakery	1960s	Building still inhabited	AL mentions that the cellars here were used by the Bakery Shop and Bake house in the 1960s.	None	Ann Littlewood
78	Cramond Brae / Cramond's Brae	Cramond Brae NH 78179 82187 (Centred)	Old walls, possible delineation of the 'Barbican' / Curtain of Tain Castle Site	2011	Visible	<p>RL relates that he has observed the antiquity of the wall enclosing the possible castle site here.</p> <p>He also notes the proximity of this site to the excavations at</p>	Related to MHG8699, Tain Castle	Richard Littlewood

²⁷ The writer suggests that some of the boulders described may also have been post pads.

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						Chapel Street, RHT 51, where wooden tiles were seen apparently being recovered from the trenches – all is viewed as being part of a suite of evidence for the Castle having been situated in this area.		
79	Chapel Street, Walls and Cutting	Chapel Street NH 78033 822131 (Centred)	Old walls, possible delineation of the 'Barbican' / Enclosing Curtain of Tain Castle Site	2011	Visible	RL sees that the walls of the garden and church ground enclosure at this location are connected in style and form to the walls at Cramond Brae. The visible cutting to the NNE side of the Street may also denote a ditching and embanking of the wider Castle Site. The significance of this eminence may thus pre-date the foundation of the Collegiate Church.	Related to MHG8699, Tain Castle and MHG31333 St Duthus Church Graveyard	Richard Littlewood
80	Pend Archway Entrance to Castle Brae	High Street NH 78016 82119	Site of a Pend Archway Entrance			MU relates that this was the site of a pend archway entrance to the Castle Brae Vennel.	None, but IVO MHG8667	Margaret Urquhart
81	Croft Roy	Croft Roy, Chapel Street, Tain NH 78156 82119	House	2011	Still inhabited	MU recalls that there was another building next to the present house, also of the same period (continued overleaf).	MHG8697	Margaret Urquhart

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						She relates that this is possibly one of the oldest buildings in Tain ²⁸ . See also RHT 25.		
82	Low Street	Chapel Street NH 78123 82147	Place Name	N/A	N/A	MU relates that this part of Chapel Street had at one time been known as Low Street.	None	Margaret Urquhart
83	Back Street	Queen Street and part of Manse Street NH 77982 82020	Place Name	N/A	N/A	MU relates that c.1812 this street was referred to as Back Street. The present name presumably commemorates Queen Victoria.	None	Margaret Urquhart
84	Dog Street	NH 78060 82000	Place Name	N/A	N/A	MU relates that c.1812 this street was referred to as Dog Street, probably a short street on the E side of King Street which was more or less in line with Queen Street. The site is now largely occupied by Gladstone Buildings.	None, IVO MHG41161	Margaret Urquhart
85	Station Road, Orchard / Part of Craig Holmes' Nurseries	West of Station Road NH 78182 82313	Orchard	1940s	No longer visible	MM remembers a substantial orchard here in the 1940s.	None	MacKenzie MacAndie

²⁸ The writer suggests that it is also notable that this building sits adjacent to the route-way proposed by some of the project's contributors as a relict pilgrimage progression between Tain and Fearn, via Kirksheaf, RHT 25. Here the place name Croft Roy may be of significance.

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						WFU contributes that this orchard was part of Craig Holmes' Nurseries which stretched from Station Road to more than half way to Shore Road.		Wm. Forbes Urquhart
86	Springfield Orchard	Listed Building (B) 41893: Morangie Road and 1, 2, 3 and 4 Springfield NH 77522 82485	Possible Orchard Site	Depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (Ross-shire and Cromartyshire 1881, sheet xlii).	The gardens here are extant	DMA notes the symbology on the First Edition Map suggests a single orchard layout – with trees depicted as delineating a rectangular, walled cultivated area with an enclosing path and bisected by a central path that provides access to the central of three roofed properties running NNW to SSE.	MHG16597	David McAllister
87	Vine Place	Vine Place IV19 1EF NH 77881 82246	House	Extant	Still inhabited	ES has the Title Deeds for No's 1 and 2 Vine Place. The properties were owned in 1928 by the Rev John MacBeath who appears to have owned a variety of properties around the Town.	None	Eileen Saville
88	Lairgs of Tain	Lairgs of Tain, Township NH 72620 79702	Deserted Township	2011	Remains still Visible	See also RHT 67, Kate Malcolm's Well. CG has researched the archival material for this area and has, in effect, been able to 're-populate' the glen, one of the inhabitants of which was a 'knitter of stockings'. As aforementioned, MU relates that the remains of farmsteads and associated	None, but IVO MHG8633, Lairgs of Tain 2, Farmstead / Township	Carol Graham Margaret Urquhart

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						buildings are still visible here. CG submitted her research results to the 'Scotways Project'.		
89	Rose Cottage and Well	Rose Cottage, Rose Street, IV19 1EG NH 77839 82242	House and Well	Extant	Still inhabited	CM relates that Rose Cottage had, in the nineteenth Century been known as Lord Caithness' Croft. She believes that this house is of a similar age to that recorded as RHT 90. There is a well in the back garden of Rose Cottage that is visible on 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (Ross-shire and Cromartyshire 1881, sheet xlii).	None	Carol MacDonald
90	Rose Street, House	Rose Street, House NH 77839 82241	House	Extant	Still inhabited	CM believes that this property is of the same age as Rose Cottage, RHT 89.	None	Carol MacDonald
91	Golf Club, Tain	NH 78670 82180	Report of Flood	Extant	Still Used	WFU recalls that on the occasion of the Club Prize-giving in 1954, when "high tide and extra water from either high rainfall or melting snow, caused the Tain River bank to burst about half-way down the 18th fairway, resulting in the clubhouse being surrounded by water right up to about 5 feet from the top of the mound on which it stands, and to about 15 yards from the (SE) entrance to the cemetery. The cars in the car park had	MHG22668	Wm. Forbes Urquhart

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						<p>water up to the steering wheel... [T]he water eventually subsided next day. I think stone, rubble, etc. from the quarry was dumped in haste, trying to beat the next tide.</p> <p>The basement of the clubhouse was under water and it took a long time to dry out".</p>		

Written transcription at the sessions was undertaken by Allan MacKenzie and Caroline Vawdrey. All of the sites were geo-referenced, based on the locations identified by participants, by Cait McCullagh, who also cross-referenced the information given with the known record at the Highland Council Historic Environment Record and added some additional references.