

Welcome to our third newsletter for 2015. It contains information about ARCH summer courses, an extra ARCH lecture for the end of June, opportunities for summer fieldwork, and future events.

Two new ARCH projects starting in June

Invergordon in World War I

Invergordon was a key naval site during World War I, used by both the British and American troops. The impact on the town was huge, resulting in a large building programme to accommodate repair yards and troops. Unusually, detailed wartime plans survive from this time, together with a number of photographs taken by someone associated with the military. High quality aerial photographs from the 1930s also survive.



ARCH will begin a new project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, which will allow people to use these sources together with local memories and other photographs to map wartime Invergordon. We will determine what buildings still exist (and there are a fair number), what has been demolished or changed, and then create a wartime trail. Activities will include sessions to share stories, examine the plans and photographs, and undertake walks through the town, recording what remains. Schools will also be involved. The group will then produce a walk leaflet sharing what has been discovered.

The free weekly sessions begin on Thursday, 25th June, 7-9:30pm, at Invergordon Museum running for 8 weeks. We'll start by sharing memories of Invergordon buildings and sites. Do join us – come for as many sessions as you can!



Remembering the Strathpeffer Area

In the past ARCH has run short courses looking at the heritage in Strathpeffer. The numbers of interested people and sites identified kept growing – and there was interest in also looking at Jamestown and the Heights between Dingwall and Strathpeffer.

A new project organised by Strathpeffer Community Centre and ARCH, and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Mackenzie New York Villa Trust, will build on the previous work and provide enough time and resources to explore these interesting communities. There will be opportunities to share memories of what survives, or has changed or has been lost. We will also have walks in all three areas, and will produce a walk leaflet. Later in the autumn there will also be a creative writing course which will use material discovered during the sessions, and



a chance to help create a walk leaflet.

The first sessions will be on Tuesday, 30th June, 10:30-1pm, at Strathpeffer Community Centre, and we will continue through the summer. Contact ARCH if you would like to be put on the mailing list to find out about the activities. The sessions are free and open to everyone, whether you know about the local heritage or are just interested in finding out more.

ARCH Lecture on Treasure Trove

Wednesday, 24th June, at Dingwall Community Centre at 7:30pm (doors open 7pm).

Treasure Trove in Scotland applies to all objects, not just those of precious metal.

Natasha Ferguson of the

Treasure Trove Scotland unit will speak on

Treasure Trove in Scotland: recent discoveries from the Highlands.

What happens when you discover an artefact Scotland? Natasha will give an overview of Treasure Trove in Scotland and its work to ensure archaeological objects are

preserved for the benefit of the nation in museums across the country. The talk will also highlight recent discoveries from the Highlands. Open to all (suggested donation £3).



More Summer ARCH Activities

We are currently finalising plans for several workshops including working with the Cromarty Medieval Burgh Project on piecing together pots (the ultimate jigsaw!), and hoping to arrange some photography and drawing workshops. We are also awaiting the outcome of funding applications to investigate wartime remains in the Kyle of Sutherland. If you receive a postal version of the newsletter, and would like to be informed of these summer activities, please get in touch, indicating which you might be interested in. Others will receive information by email or can check the ARCH website.

Are you interested in recording rock art?

A proposed project to encourage people to investigate and record rock art in Scotland is asking for feedback. As regular ARCH readers know, this is one of our keen interests! If you might want to help record rock art, Tertia Barnett who is helping develop the project, would like you to complete a short questionnaire by clicking on this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9M3M2RF>. Responses by 20th June please.

Looking for querns

Quern stones have not got the attention they deserve! This unglamorous artefact was essential for survival, from prehistoric times onwards, needed to grind grain. In prehistoric times

saddle querns such as this one pictured from a Neolithic cairn at Kilcoy were used.

They were replaced by rotary querns in the Iron Age, and this type continued into the 20th century.

Excavations at sites like High Pasture Cave on Skye have shown that quern stones also had religious significance in prehistoric times, carefully deposited in caches at key ritual sites, probably with symbolism relating to fertility.

ARCH is developing a project to record querns in the Highlands, to complement one which has been running in Moray. We hope to look at types of stones used, and attempt to separate prehistoric and modern finds. If you are interested in participating, or know of a quern, perhaps in a rockery or built into a dyke, please contact us!



Cromarty Medieval Burgh Dig

The Cromarty Medieval Burgh project is getting ready to open for its summer season, running from 29th June—4th July (primarily for schools) and then 11th-27th July. The settlement of Cromarty has shifted over the years, with the result that the medieval remains are accessible. A community excavation over the past two years has uncovered a series of buildings and already a huge number of finds, some exotic and some from ordinary life, from medieval and later occupation.



The community dig is an excellent one, with opportunities for everyone aged 6 or older. No previous experience is necessary, and there is plenty of supervision on-site from archaeologists happy to pass on skills. Volunteers can also help with on-site planning, photography, surveying and artefact cleaning and processing. This summer there will also hands-on activities for children.

Further details are on their website www.medievalcromarty.org. It is important to contact the team to schedule dates to attend, either via the website or by calling 01381 600726 before your visit.

Investigating Bronze Age Caithness

An exciting project organised by Castletown Heritage Society is looking for evidence of Bronze Age Caithness. It will use cutting-edge technology to identify and select features for investigation. Targeted archaeological survey and excavation will be carried out by volunteers under the guidance of archaeologists from AOC Archaeology Group. Training will be central to the project's aims, with participants learning new skills or building on previous experience. The survey and excavations will be informed by airborne laser scan data (LiDAR), which has revealed hundreds of features. There will also be a number of evening events and crafts workshops – from prehistoric pottery

to ancient foods. The first summer school week, from 22nd to 27th June, will focus on examining LiDAR surveys and other mapping sources. People can come for the full week or only selected days. Full details, with booking information, are available from www.aocarchaeology.com/bronzeagecaithness or by contacting the Castletown Heritage Society.

Surveying a CFC camp

A small group from ARCH and North of Scotland Archaeology Society (NoSAS) have been investigating remains of a Canadian Forestry Camp near Loch Migdale. Local memories shared during sessions run by ARCH for the Woodland Trust last year identified the location of the camp, but the sawmill was less certain. However, an unusual shaped concrete foundation, clearly for supporting a heavy structure, together with the pond and its lade were found, as well as two other concrete foundations. No remains of the sawmill itself survive. It was probably two story, and would have been dismantled after the war.



Undulating patterns in the grass have turned out to be the remains of the sleepers for a comprehensive light rail network for moving timber through the site. Aerial photos also confirm this track system, and substantial clearing. This is one of three Canadian Forestry Camps in the area, responsible for cutting wood for the war effort. Now that we know what to look for, we can turn to investigating the others.

ARCH Friends Event

Every year ARCH organises a special trip for its Friends. This year's Friends event will be a visit to Ardross, with a tour of the castle gardens, the church and reconstructed round house. Details will be sent out shortly to all Friends.



Inverness YAC investigates...

Susan Kruse, volunteer leader with the Young Archaeologists Club, reports on an interesting project the YAC is undertaking.

The Inverness has been exploring some enigmatic dykes situated at the Heights of Docharty near Dingwall. Are they prehistoric or modern? What were they used for?

Over several months this year YAC members undertook a desk-based assessment to find out what was previously known and then looked at rock art and a chambered cairn in the area. Then on one of our unseasonable days in April they recorded some of the dykes and, led by Lynne and Lachlan McKeggie, made two trenches across one dyke to determine its nature and to obtain dating samples.

We were all surprised to discover that the dyke was made of turf, not stone. The builders had carefully laid clay on the ground surface before building their dyke—a method requiring a fair amount of hauling of clay to the site. Some samples were taken, and the YAC will fundraise now to get some C-14 dates.

ARCH

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Friends of ARCH

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

Name :

Address :

Email :

Phone :

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

I would also be happy to help ARCH by :

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

Helping to organise fund-raising activities

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

Please tell us how you would like to help:

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

Please specify

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

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