

## Kiltearn Old Kirk Project

There has been a good start to Evanton Community Trust's Kiltearn Old Kirk project with Susan Kruse of ARCH providing the first sessions on researching information about the old kirk. A surprising amount has been discovered from looking at archive and other sources. There was a church at Kiltearn from



at least 1227, and references to previous thatched churches before the present one was built in 1790. Today the church and old manse with steading are fairly

isolated, but in the 1500s there was a hamlet there with ale house, mill and crofts. We've managed to find the names of many ministers and are compiling a detailed timeline. Work on looking at papers in Foulis Castle continue.

Attention has now turned towards recording **gravestone inscriptions**. We've taken advice from Historic Environment Scotland and Highland Family History Society (whose member John Durham gave us a talk about recording), and have guidelines on how to record inscriptions without damaging stones. Work will continue over the next months: our next sessions are Monday, 1st May 10-1 and 2-5; Thursday, 11th May 10-1; and Saturday 20th May 2-5. Do join us if you can!

In May there will also be sessions run by Anne Fraser of Highland Archive Centre on tracing **family history**, on Monday evenings 8th, 15th and 22nd May, 7-9pm in Evanton. On Tues 30th May the session will be at the Highland Archive Centre 2-4pm. Free but booking necessary.

And in June there will be the chance to do a **standing building survey** of the Old Kirk. Indoor sessions on 14th and 15th June 6:30-8:30pm at the Church Hall, with recording sessions on the weekends of 17th and 24th June. Learn how to 'read' an old building, and record by photography and sketching. Again, please book.

For further information, booking, or to be put on the mailing list, contact Susan on 077888 35466 or [info@archhighland.org.uk](mailto:info@archhighland.org.uk)

## ARCH Lecture Series

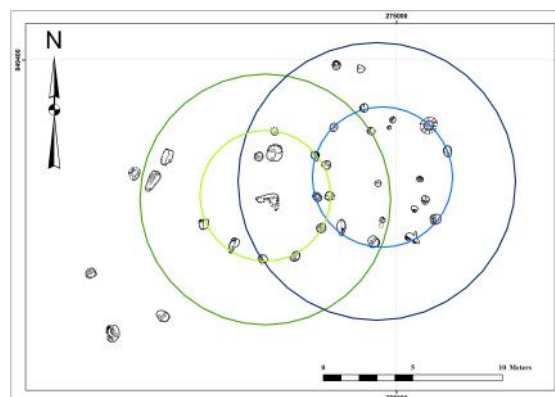
All talks take place at Dingwall Community Centre, 7:30pm (doors open 7pm). Suggested donation £3



26<sup>th</sup> April: '**Highland Vernacular Buildings**' Malcolm Bangor-Jones provides an introduction to vernacular buildings as they developed with changes in economy and society and with new construction techniques and materials.



31<sup>st</sup> May: '**Excavations at Dun Deardail: the analysis of a north-western vitrified fort**' Martin Cook describes the first two seasons of excavation at the spectacular vitrified hill fort of Dun Deardail in Lochaber.



28<sup>th</sup> June: '**Discoveries at Tornagrain**' Lachlan McKeggie will cover the main findings excavations at this prehistoric site near Inverness, including post-excavation results.

## Telford in Badenoch & Strathspey

A course investigating the impact of Thomas Telford in Badenoch & Strathspey took place November 2016 to March 2017 at Grantown Museum, led by Susan Kruse, with funding from Historic Environment Scotland. The course attracted people from various parts of this large region. In addition, there was a session to look at resources held in



Inverness Library. We were also fortunate that historian George Dixon from Stirling came up for several sessions, sharing his years of research with the group.

In January 2017 the focus switched to researching the topic, using sources identified in the autumn 2016 workshops as well as books and other sources. As information was discovered from these sources, the group built up a binder of resources, and focussed on three main areas: 1) what was the area like before Telford, 2) what did Telford do (roads, bridges, manses), and 3) what was the impact of his work. Some participants chose areas of interest to research further, helping us to investigate different aspects of this large region. A young volunteer also helped to georeference our plans, helping us to overlay 19th century plans on 1st edition and modern OS maps.



In addition, we had a minibus fieldtrip to investigate some of the sites identified in the course of the investigation. Some members undertook field trips outwith the class times, including investigating remains of milestones, or photographing bridges along one of Telford's roads. A volunteer also investigated some of the

archive material in London and Edinburgh, including the field notebooks of an inspector working in the area.

In our final sessions we created a travelling display. The binders of resources were sent to Grantown Museum and Grantown, Aviemore and Kingussie libraries. The display makes its first appearance on 29th April 2017 at Kingussie Heritage Day, and can be



borrowed from Grantown Museum.

In addition, 67 records (53 new), 119 photos and 9 documents were sent to the Historic Environment Record (HER), and when accessioned, will then be forwarded to Canmore.

The results reveal a different picture from elsewhere in the Highlands investigated so far. Unlike other areas there was a network of roads before Telford began his work, albeit few able to take carriages. The military roads of Wade and Caulfeild are well known (though more complicated than many think due to enhancements and repairs over the years). Telford also became involved in substantially repairing and upgrading key military roads in the area.

But additionally there were a number of estate roads, some later becoming adopted by the county. As a result, Telford's work in the area to some degree filled in gaps. Unlike more remote areas in the Highlands, Telford did not construct any Parliamentary churches, but he did build two manses, both surviving to this day.



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## Highland Archaeology Festival 2017

Once again, ARCH will be organising HAF 2017 on behalf of Highland Council. We will shortly be contacting local heritage groups, museums and organisations, inviting them to offer an event for the fortnight. If you are involved in a group, or would like to make suggestions or offer an event, please get in touch with us! This year we would like to expand our list of self-guided trails. If there is one available near you—either in paper or electronic form, please contact us, so we can add it to the list.

HAF is registered as a History, Heritage & Archaeology event for 2017 this year.



## Community Excavations

If you've ever wanted to try your hand at digging, or want more practice, there are a number of opportunities this year.



This month the National Trust for Scotland at Inverewe will investigate a Bronze Age round-house at Tournaig in Wester Ross on 24th-28th April, with a number of other special events nearby. See the [NTS website](#) or phone 01445 712952.

From 22nd May, Clyne Heritage will excavate an inn at Wilkhouse in southeast Sutherland in partnership with Guard and University of Glasgow for a fortnight. Contact Nick Lindsay by [email](#) or on 01408 621338.

Historic Assynt will be excavating Clachtoll Broch in an extended season from July to September. Exact dates are still to be fixed, but contact [Gordon Sleight](#) to express interest or to get on the mailing list.

## Conferences

A number of interesting conferences are planned for the next couple of months. The programme for Kingussie Heritage on 29th April looks exciting. Further afield the Rhind lectures in Edinburgh on 19-21 May will focus on Sacred Heritage: Archaeology, Identity and Medieval Beliefs. Both of these events are free. Details of these and other conferences and events can be found on the ARCH [website](#).

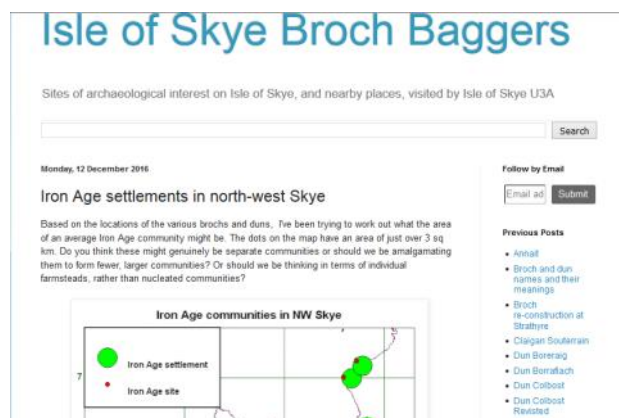
## Sharing the results of investigations: Blogs

Many of us are involved in researching and recording aspects of Highland heritage, from taking a couple of photos to large research projects. There are a number of ways to share this information.

Submissions to the Highland HER (Historical Environment Record) are always recommended, since this ensures a lasting record, and one which is used in future planning applications. See [her.highland.gov.uk](http://her.highland.gov.uk) for details on how to contribute.

Some groups and projects are also making good use of blogs on the internet. They are ideal for informing others worldwide about daily activities on digs, and many community excavations now include this feature.

But they are also a good idea to publicise results of outings or research. The U3A Isle of Skye Archaeology Group regularly visits sites, and posts pictures and research. Although they call themselves [Isle of Skye Broch Baggers](#), their interests are not just restricted to brochs.



[NoSAS](#) also has a growing list of blogs, devoted to a range of topics, and sometimes, as in the case of Rosemarkie Man, producing one of the first detailed accounts.

Blogs can also be a way to highlight ongoing projects. For example, as part of the [Strathpeffer Station project](#) ARCH contributed to a series of posts highlighting research and progress on renovations.

Blogs also offer the facility for people to send back comments, making it a more informal and interactive way to share results.

Funding for our two projects reported in our last newsletter (Highland Querns of the Moray Firth and Experimental Archaeology) is taking more time than hoped for. We currently are awaiting results of funding applications. For our querns project, we have approached the Highland LEADER programme, which will put a real strain on ARCH's cashflow. If you have considered become a Friend of ARCH, now would be a good time!



### ARCH 2017 Friends Outing

This year's special outing for Friends will visit Wardlaw Mausoleum and other sites around Kirkhill. Arrangements are being finalised (probably to take place in June). These outings are ARCH's way of saying thank you to our Friends—and provide an enjoyable day out.



### Historic Map Workshops

ARCH held three well-attended historic map workshops in Fort William, Lybster and Dingwall in February and March, with funding from Historic Environment Scotland. Focussing primarily on the National Library of Scotland website [maps.nls.uk](http://maps.nls.uk), they showed the wealth of information to be gleaned from old maps.



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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:

.....

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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