

Welcome to the summer edition of the ARCH newsletter! Having been awarded a full-time PhD studentship with the University of Edinburgh, Cait will be giving up her role as a 'Stop, Look and Listen' Project Officer this month. However, we are glad to report that Cait will continue to be part of ARCH as a Director, contributing to various events and activities over the next three years - and we hope beyond! Without Cait, ARCH would not be where it is today and huge thanks are due to her for all her hard work.

A new project officer will be starting in September. Cathy MacIver is originally from Culloden and is currently finishing an MPhil in Professional Archaeology at Glasgow University. She is looking forward to the challenges of her new role: 'I had always planned on returning to the Highlands; preferably to work in archaeology or a related discipline and the ARCH position gave me the opportunity sooner than expected! I am looking forward to starting at ARCH as the position gives me the chance to get involved with some really interesting and exciting projects while continuing with my interest and work with communities and cultural heritage.'

Fiona, our administrator, after all the hard work of getting ARCH up and running during the first 6 months of the Stop, Look and Listen Project is also moving on. We thank her for all her hard work—and will especially miss her enthusiasm and sense of humour. We are looking forward to working with Bernadette George from Struy, who will take up her post this month.



Pathways into the Past

After 6 weeks of learning about the resources available to those wanting to research their local area, groups in Muir of Ord and Maryburgh came together to try out practical survey skills. After first recording the halls in which we met (!), we had two days out looking at the landscape passed through by the route-way which has formed the focus of the course. The first day was spent looking at where the route forded the river Conon, and its relationship to Logiebride cemetery. The next day was spent in the Broadwood at Brahan, looking at a stretch of roadway which survives as a double embanked feature. Having spent the previous day creating a plan of part of Logiebride cemetery, this allowed us to look at adding the vertical dimension to the plan view! It is amazing what can be achieved with a plane table, dumpy level and lengths of string!



Heritage Along the Kyle Line

The first group researching heritage along the Kyle Line explored the landscape between Kyle of Lochalsh and Strathcarron. In part funded by ScotRail, one session was even held on the train, as we all craned to see sites whizzing by, or more distant vistas across Loch Carron. Members of the group each took a section of the line, and investigated what is known for the area, selecting key sites for a small display, which will initially be placed at the Friends of the Kyle Line museum on Kyle station, then in Plockton and Lochcarron libraries, before returning to the museum. The results will be joined together with future classes along the line, and will lead to a leaflet and audio commentary. As some members remarked, we all now look out the window of the train with a completely different eyes!



ARCH hits the spot!

'I heard about ARCH from some friends and thought "Aha, here is my chance to meet some real archaeologists and bore them with my theories". After I had emailed a particularly tolerant member a few times and received very understanding treatment, I realised that they didn't think I was mad or obsessed. So I kept at it: more, wilder theories which culminated in said ARCH member telling me about a cartoon in an archaeological journal. A guest at a party is facing an intruder in a balaclava brandishing guns and dynamite. She says "Oh thank goodness, I thought you said you were a theorist", I understood in a flash what archaeology is all about. Or did I? I had learned to keep my mouth shut and listen and know my BC's from my BP's. I found out about classes and signed up for them and will sign up for more. I learned about context, assemblages, chunking and diggers crescent, about the HER, RCAHMS and much more. I learned that if a thing wasn't fully understood, like a computer not wanting to talk to a printer, it was probably "ritual"! I am still learning and thanks to ARCH have a channel open to the past and how it can be revealed to us in ever more detail. The best thing is that ARCH has given me the confidence to go out and look at the landscape afresh with the ability to find new things. Things that I have found myself, that will help to flesh out the past for others in the future. THANKS ARCH, from a promiscuous member.

Mark Stevens

Mark has just been a participant on the Community Timelines course in Evanton:

Community Timelines: Exploring Your Local Heritage

The first two Community Timeline courses in Evanton and Golspie have just drawn to a close. After six weeks learning about their local heritage, members of each class went on to research one or more sites, buildings or inds from their area. Some of the finds are of national importance - a Pictish pin from Golspie with a human head at the top, and rich cist burials from the Evanton area. Some are new discoveries such as a fine cup and ring marked stone and ironworking site near Evanton. And some are perhaps a bit more unusual, such as the public conveniences in Golspie! Altogether it has been exciting and rewarding! The results have been put together into displays and binders, which can be seen at the Cornerstone Café and Dunrobin Castle over the summer, before they move on to other local venues.



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