

Telford's Highland Heritage

Would you be interested in finding out more about one of the most influential men in the Highlands?



ARCH is developing plans for a new 3-year project based on Thomas Telford (1757-1834) and we'd like to know what you think of them. Is Thomas Telford, and the Caledonian Canal, his many roads, bridges, settlements and churches a subject that you'd like to find out more about? Are there some interesting sites in your area that you'd like to research?

You can let us know through our website survey or by phone, email or letter.

We've had lots of positive feedback on our 3-year Stop, Look and Listen programme, and so we will be running our next project along similar lines - making sure that the classes are a friendly and relaxed way to learn, so that everyone feels they can be involved without a need for previous archaeology or history experience. To help us to investigate Telford we'll be using a whole mix of research techniques from studying old maps to online

searches, photography to field surveys. There'll also be trips to archives and museums, 'Reading the Landscape' walks, Q GIS and digital mapping workshops, fieldwalking, finds analysis, marketing heritage workshops and experimental archaeology.

We're interested in focussing on Thomas Telford because he had such a major impact on the Highlands in the early 1800s. He was a civil engineer, architect and stone mason who worked throughout the UK and in Europe. He had a profound impact on the Highlands, responsible for almost 1000 miles of new roads, over 100 bridges of iron and stone, canals both large and small, many piers, harbours, tollhouses, milestones, churches, manses and even towns. The Highlands after his work was a very different place, with at long last the basis for transport between many previously remote areas of the Highlands.

Looking at Telford's work will give a great opportunity to get a real feel for the Highlands in the late 1700s, how people lived, what was important to them, and what buildings and transport networks already existed. Some of his work, such as the Caledonian Canal, is better known and studied, but there are many others which are little known, so there would be lots to investigate through ARCH classes. Already a Community Timelines

course in Evanton has submitted information and photographs about previously unrecorded milestones on Telford's roads, and participants on a course in Tomatin recorded the remains of a tollhouse, so you can see that there will be lots of opportunities for discovery across the Highlands.



Whilst some of Telford's buildings are still in use today, others are decaying, at risk, or have been destroyed, so studying, recording and publicising results will both add to what is known about them and help to protect those still standing. Throughout the project we would promote the local Telford heritage through displays, digital outputs, tourist leaflets and binders of information. All the information gathered would culminate in a book of Telford's Highland Heritage.

So let us know - good plan? bad plan? Does the thought of Telford get you enthusiastic or wanting to snooze? We're keen to know, and will use your feedback when applying for funding.

Adopt-a-Monument near you : The next ARCH lecture

On Monday 26 November, Cara Jones of Archaeology Scotland will be coming to Dingwall Community Centre to talk about their Adopt a Monument scheme, which works with local communities to conserve and promote their local heritage. The scheme covers monuments of any age and focusses on helping volunteers to improve sites which they are passionate about. The Adopt a Monument Team assists groups in applying for funding and offers training in archaeological fieldwork and conservation. There are Adopt-A-Monument projects focusing on the multi-

period site of Mulchaich on the Black Isle, relocating the Heights of Fodderty cup and ring marked stone to a wheelchair accessible site at the Neil Gunn Monument, and recording wartime remains at Fearn.

Come and join us to find out more about these and other projects, and how the scheme might be able to help you to conserve your favourite monument. **The talk will start at 7.30pm (doors open at 7.00). A £3.00 donation is suggested.** Copies of ARCH's Community Timeline and ways into the Past books will also be available.



Foulis mystery deepens

When the excavators at the Foulis mound were rubbing their aching backs and puzzled heads as they looked at a patch of burnt ground, their nostrils filled with the smell of burning, they could never have imagined the whiff that assailed them had travelled across nearly 2000 years, concealed within earthen darkness and now released by their patient trowelling.

There must have been times, when the sight of another bare patch of earth or rubble of stones would have made the diggers feel like giving up, or even to question whether this was really such a good choice of site to dig. But their efforts have certainly proven worth it.

The small pieces of bone and charcoal that were sent for radio carbon dating have turned up an incredible result. All four pieces are remarkably close in age, with dates between 31 and 147 AD - that's Iron Age.

As Lachlan and Lynne McKeggie, the 2012 Delve dig supervisors commented, "We could never have imagined such an early date for this site. The view before the two years of excavation was that it might be a motte, the site of the former Foulis Castle. We were more inclined to think of it as a gathering, or meeting point. More like a Viking Thing, as no evidence of buildings had been revealed by the excavation work in season 1.

But this new evidence makes the site much earlier than envisaged, and has made the puzzle even greater.



"We're fairly confident that the mound has been shaped by people and this area of heavy burning at the top of the mound contains a lot of animal bone, implying repeated cooking and dumping or perhaps one very large fire."



All the bone finds were found lying very close together, suggesting that the area has been undisturbed for nearly 2000 years. The charcoal wood remains are slightly earlier



than the bone, but as radio carbon dating shows when an organism died, this may represent the fact that the wood was seasoned for a while, and could even have been part of a structure. At this stage we can only speculate as to whether the site was used a number of times over a short period, or whether the excavation has revealed the result of a large fire burning old timbers and the cooking fresh meat.

There is evidence at other Iron Age sites, such as Birnie in Moray, of a final and deliberate clearing away of a building being accompanied by a farewell celebration, cooking and eating. Only more excavation can give us the chance of finding out if that is what happened at Foulis.

Excavation might also help us to answer some of the many other questions about the site. We don't know what happened between the Iron Age and the 1870s, seventeen hundred years later when it appears on a map. When was the mound shaped, what was the purpose of this shaping, what did people do here?

They're all questions that only further excavation attempt to answer. ARCH is looking for some funding to help us re-visit the mound next year, and try to unravel some more of the mysteries of this fascinating site.

Let us know if this is of interest!



Foulis book launch

Find out more about the mystery of Foulis and the joy of excavation at the launch of the *Delve into the Past* book on

Thursday 13 December in Evanton Cornerstone Cafe at 7.00pm.

Lachlan and Lynne McKeggie will be talking about *Delve*. There'll be mulled wine and mince pies, tea, coffee and home baking - the perfect way to enjoy speculating on what two seasons of excavation mean, and what might be done next.



Past inspires new ARCH chairman to look to the future

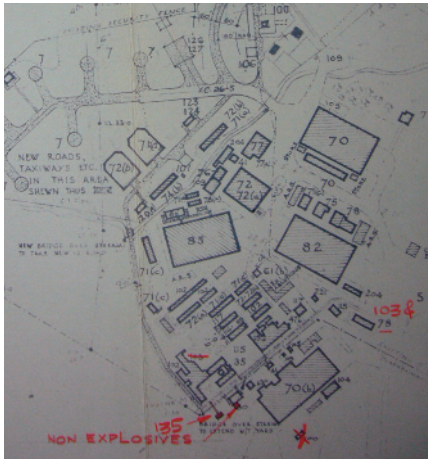
As Archaeology for Communities in the Highlands (ARCH) looks forward to planning new projects, we are delighted to welcome Graham Clark as our new chairman.

There is much to be planned and developed to keep ARCH active across the Highlands, and as outgoing ARCH chair, Cait McCullagh says, "I am pleased to be able to pass on the chairmanship into the very capable hands of Graham Clark, a noted local historian and active member of North Kessock and District Local History Society. Graham's commitment to understanding and making more widely known the, sometimes hidden, treasures of Highland archaeology and history will be a great asset as he steers the board of ARCH into this next exciting phase of future development."

Graham will be overseeing ARCH's new funding bids and expanding the 'Friends' group, by which people can support ARCH through donations and offers of voluntary skills. As Graham said, "In retirement, I have indulged my interests in the local history and archaeology of the Black Isle and have published a book and several articles. I am enthusiastic to keep on learning more about my local heritage and I want to encourage everyone else to get interested in theirs."



Evanton wartime remains



ARCH project officer, Susan Kruse has just started ARCH's new project which looks at 20th century wartime remains, funded by the European Community Highland LEADER 2007-2013 Programme, Kiltarn Community Councils Novar Windfarm funding (supported by RWE npower renewables), The Highland Council, The Co-operative Membership Community Fund and the Robert Kiln Trust.

The first task is compiling a list of all known remains in the Highlands. Then, in the New Year the focus will shift to the community of Evanton, gathering

memories of wartime remains, and recording through photographs and GPS surviving structures. This one year project will be a pilot to explore ways for the community to record its wartime remains, with the hope to run similar courses across the Highlands in the future.

At Evanton there was an airfield and accommodation camp spread over a wide area, with many preserved remains. Most are situated in the industrial estate and little known at present. But in addition to the structures there are the invaluable memories of the people who either worked at the camps and airfield, or who were told about them by their parents. Allan Kilpatrick of the RCAHMS, who has researched many of the wartime sites in Scotland, says that it is now critical to gather local knowledge and information before it is too late.

We've a wealth of 20th century wartime remains all across the Highlands, including airfields with

specialist buildings, accommodation camps, sawmills (used by Canadians during the war), POW and displaced person's camps, road blocks, shelters, pillbox defences, munitions stores, power stations and sea defences.



It has only recently been widely appreciated that these are an important part of our heritage and sadly many of the structures are fast disappearing, including two of the sites at Evanton, which have been bulldozed in the last couple of years.

The Evanton classes will start in February.

To find out more, or let Susan know that you are interested, so that she can keep you up to date, get in touch using any of the contact methods on the final page of the newsletter.



Living the High Life with ARCH

Early next year ARCH project officers, Susan Kruse and Lachlan and Lynne McKeggie, will be leading several short courses for High Life Highland.



Susan always enjoys sharing the in the new discoveries and insights that appear when members of a community get together, so she's delighted that she will be working over at Ardersier helping the community to **explore their past**.

The courses will be similar to the Community Timeline sessions so popular in the Stop, Look and Listen project. The first part, Ardersier Heritage Overview, will take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 19th February to 5th March, 6:30-9:30pm.

The second part will provide opportunities to research aspects of Ardersier's past, and will take place on Saturdays 9th - 30th March, to coincide with library opening times.

All courses will take place at The Old School Hall in Ardersier.

Have your say on the future of Scottish Archaeology

The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland will be merging with Historic Scotland in the next few years.

To help to plan what services the new organisation should offer the RCAHMS would like to know what you think of the work the Royal Commission carries out at the moment, and what you would be keen to see the new organisation do in the future.

It's an online survey, which you can find at: <http://www.rcahms.gov.uk/news/online-survey>

All responses must be submitted by Friday 23rd November



Lynne is passionate about **textiles**, and what they can tell us about past lives and fashions. At these workshops, to be held in Dingwall, you'll be able to join her in exploring techniques and trying out some of them to create your own textile samples.



Lachlan will be sharing his love of **photography as a recording tool** and teaching participants some of the techniques, including 'photosynth'.

It isn't musical photographs - but Lachlan sings its praises, so keep an eye out for one of his classes, so that you can go along and discover why. This is a great way to combine walking in the landscapes, and recording what you see. Courses will take place in the Alness, Invergordon and Tain areas.



Keep an eye on the ARCH website and newsletters for full dates and details.

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