

Welcome to our first newsletter for 2011! It contains details of all the courses on offer until June as well as information on some current courses, our film and lecture series, touring exhibitions, a celebration of the first year for ARCH, and much more.

ARCH's 1st Anniversary

ARCH has celebrated its first year of operation! What a lot has been achieved this past year! Four Community Timeline courses, 3 Pathways into the Past courses (almost halfway along the route now!), 1 Display the Past course and another due to start in January, 2 courses along the Kyle line, oral history courses on the Black Isle and in Strathpeffer, 11 Insight/On site guided tours, open meetings in 3 communities, lectures given to groups and classrooms, and a film and lecture series launched, as was our website with heritage events and information, and much more. ARCH is also providing courses for the Boblainy Forest Archaeology Project and for the Workers' Educational Association, and we are involved in plans with other groups who are planning community archaeology projects.

There's much more planned for the coming year – see the events listing in this newsletter or the website for the first offerings. We are always happy to hear from people. Is there a course you want in your area? Can we help with your local project? Is there a mystery site or find near you that you'd like highlighted on the website? We are driven by you – so tell us what you would like!



The second part of the Heritage Along the Kyle Line course was based in Achnasheen. Researching this stretch of the line has shown the importance of the route to the communities along it over centuries.

Highland Rock Art

Susan Kruse reflects on sites still to be found...

Many people think that all the important sites have been found, and that only below ground archaeology has the potential to add to our knowledge. Wrong! There are plenty of above ground remains still to be discovered and recorded, and the Highland Council Archaeology Unit is regularly adding new sites to its HER database (many in fact supplied from ARCH!).

I can provide a personal story to illustrate. Near where I stay there are a number of marked paths. I was walking past one for the umpteenth time a few years ago about this time of year, with glorious, low raking sunshine (and no snow!), and there, right beside the path, was the fine cup and ring marked stone illustrated here. It is a beauty, with a large number of cup marks, some with rings pecked out around them, and some linked by lines. Inspired, I searched the area and found another cup marked boulder. Shortly afterwards John and Trina Wombell had a walk in the area and found another two.



In a short period of time we then had four new finds of these enigmatic stones, in an area where previously only one had been known. John has since gone on to set up a project investigating the rock art in Easter Ross and has more than doubled the known corpus in a year. John will be giving the next ARCH lecture on *Prehistoric Rock Art in the Scottish Highlands*, on **Monday 31st January, 7:30** at Dingwall Community Centre. He welcomes your input – on stones you may have seen in your area or ideas about these interesting finds. Don't miss this interesting session!

ARCH Touring Displays

ARCH exhibitions are available to view in a place near you!

- Pathways into the Past: Killearnan to Maryburgh
 - ◊ Muir of Ord Library until 18th January
 - ◊ Dingwall Library 18th Jan—late Feb.
- Pathways into the Past: Dingwall to Evanton
 - ◊ Cornerstone Cafe, Evanton until March / April.

In February displays from Community Timeline courses in Auldearn and Tomatin, and the Kyle Line course at Achnasheen will also be ready, probably initially at the village halls.

Remembering Strathpeffer

ARCH's Black Isle Heritage Memories project was very successful, generating new information about sites, buildings and features, and much excitement in the sessions. Many lessons were learned, and outlined in our booklet '*Black Isle Heritage Memories: Remembering Your Community*' (copies still available from the ARCH office). Following on from this, ARCH received funding from Generations Working Together (part of the Scottish Centre for Intergenerational Practice) to hold some sessions in Strathpeffer. Despite the weather, a number of people met before Christmas to share memories of sites and buildings in this community with its very unusual history. Using old maps, photographs (some more than a century old), a detailed sales prospectus from the mid 20th century, and memories spanning over 80 years, we have gathered information to update or add to over 60 records in the HER. Some pupils from the school have joined us, looking on in amazement at the excitement and enthusiasm in the room, and mesmerised by tales of bank deliveries and shop robberies. We will have our final session in January and expect to add even more to the tally.

Living in the Past

ARCH will be working with Brian Wilkinson, Education Officer with the Scotland's Rural Past project, exploring a croft site at Heights of Kilcoy near Tore with local school children and Young Archaeologist Clubs on 25th and 26th March. There are also places available for teachers who would like to explore how to use sites of this nature (plentiful in the Highlands!) in their classes – an ideal curriculum for excellence project. If you are a teacher and would be interested in taking part, please contact the ARCH office.



Janet explores the gable end of the croft house



Picture the Past: Dornoch to Tain

The Picture the Past project, funded by Moray Firth Partnership and Highland Council, will have guided walks on 12th-14th February exploring some of the archaeology along the coast through the ages. Help to record your local heritage by taking pictures of these sites - cameras and photographic tips provided! Along the way we'll explore issues of coastal erosion and sea level and its effect on settlements. This project will also feature as part of BBC's Hands on History—Ancient History. Further details on p. 3 of the newsletter.

ARCH's Film and Lecture series

ARCH launched its film and lecture series in the autumn. The films, with an archaeological slant, take place on the second Friday of every month at Strathpeffer Community Centre. Films start at 7:30, but doors open at 7, so come early for a coffee or tea and a chat if you can! Our lecture series takes place on the last Monday of the month at Dingwall Community Centre at 7:30. The November meeting, a lecture by Jim Bone on aerial photography, was a victim of the weather, but will be rescheduled for the autumn. See p. 4 of this newsletter and the website for the full programme.

Walking the Stories—Knockfarril

After the successful event in Evanton in October with Bob Pegg of Walking the Stories, we'll have another walk exploring archaeology and folklore, this time focussing on the Iron Age hillfort of Knockfarril between Dingwall and Strathpeffer. We'll end at a cafe in Strathpeffer. Share stories and insights on 2nd April. See p.3 for details.

ARCH Courses and Events

All courses are low cost and free to anyone on low income—and coffees and teas are provided. Everyone is welcome on any course - no previous experience necessary. Help with childcare may be available—please contact us if you need childcare. To find out more or to book a place, please get in touch with us at info@archhighland.org.uk or 01349 868 230.

Pathways into the Past

Taking ancient routeways as a theme, these sessions will offer an introduction to landscape archaeology for all those who want to research and record their local archaeology. The next section of the route to be explored will focus on Alness, using maps, aerial photographs and other sources.

Alness Heritage Centre, Alness

Thurs, 3rd Mar-7 April, 7-9:30pm

Thurs, 26th May-23rd June, 7-9:30pm

£2.50/£1.50 optional senior rate / free low income

Pathways into the Past Walks

1. Fodderty-Tulloch Sat, 12th Mar, 10am-3pm

A 4-5km walk along an historic route from Fodderty, past Dochmaluag Tower to Tulloch Castle
 ☉ Meet at the car park of Fodderty Cemetery on the A834 (NH 5119 5936). Bring lunch & flask.

2. Around Alness Sat, 9th April, 2-4pm

Details to be arranged. Contact us for details.

Booking essential for both walks. Bring waterproofs and stout shoes. All Welcome.

Picture the Past Dornoch to Tain

People have lived along the coast from Dornoch to Tain for thousands of years. Join ARCH for guided walks exploring some of the archaeology they have left behind, and help record these sites- cameras and photographic tips provided! Free lunch provided on Saturday & Sunday—**please book ahead**. Bring waterproofs & stout shoes. Free to all.

12th Feb – Dornoch – 10.30am - 3.30pm

☉ Meet at Dornoch Library

13th Feb – Tain – 10.30am—3.30pm

☉ Meet at Duthac Centre, Tain carpark

14th Feb – Camore – 10.30am until 13.00pm.

☉ Meet at Camore Wood carpark (NH7657 8882)

Walking the Stories—Knockfarril

Join Bob Pegg of Walking the Stories and members from ARCH exploring heritage, folklore and stories about Knockfarril Iron Age hillfort on **Saturday, 2nd April**.

☉ Meet at 2pm at the hillfort or meet at Strathpeffer (car park on road up to Ardival) at 1pm for a guided walk up to the fort. Contact the ARCH office for details or directions.

Surveying Your Heritage

Learn practical survey techniques which will enable you to record archaeological features in your area. There will be two introductory sessions (**5th & 12th May**, 7-9:30pm) at the Alness Heritage Centre, then a practical outdoors session over the week-end of **14th-15th May**, 10am-4pm near Foulis Castle, Evanton. This will be followed by a third session indoors at the Alness Heritage Centre (**19th May**, 7-9:30pm) to look at the results.

Booking essential.

Indoor sessions: £2.50 / £1.50 optional senior rate / free for low income

Outdoor practical sessions: £5/£2.50 per day/free

Community Timeline Heritage Overview

Interested in your past but confused about what happened when? This short course will provide an introduction to the archaeology of the Gairloch or Invergarry areas from earliest settlers to recent remains.

Invergarry Community Hall

Tues, 15th Mar-5th April, 10am-1pm

Gairloch Community Centre Annex

Weds, 16th Mar-6th April 2-5pm

£3 / £1.50 optional senior rate / free low income

Community Timeline Focus on Your Past

A chance to research sites, buildings or finds in either the Gairloch or Invergarry areas, contributing to the creation of a Community Timeline display. New members welcome.

Invergarry Community Hall

Tues, 26th Apr-24th May, 10am-1pm

Gairloch Community Centre Annex

Weds, 27th Apr-25th May 2-5pm

£3 / £1.50 optional senior rate / free low income

The final sessions in the Community Timeline *Focus on Your Past* courses will take place in Tomatin (12th Jan-2nd Feb, 7-9pm at Strathdearn Village Hall) and Auldearn (13th Jan-3rd Feb, 10:30-12:30; Dunbar Hall) where community displays will be created. New members welcome!

Heritage Along the Kyle Line: Lochluichart to Dingwall

The final section of the Kyle line, from Lochluichart to Dingwall, will be the focus of this 8 week course looking at evidence of the heritage along the line. We will try to arrange some research time on the train during the course.

Dingwall Community Centre
Mon, 25th Apr-13th June 2:30-4:30pm

£2 / £1 optional for seniors / free to low income

If you will be travelling by train on the Kyle Line to and from classes, contact us to arrange passes.

Display the Past: Culbin Sands

Learn how to research and display finds from Culbin Sands, one of the richest coastal sites in Scotland, that has seen human activity for over 8000 years. Get hands on experience including artefact handling, recording, and installing a temporary display. Limited spaces.

Nairn Museum
Weds, 19th Jan-9th Mar 10am-12:30pm

£2.50 / £1.50 optional senior rate / free low income

Boblainy Forest Archaeology Project

ARCH continues to provide courses for this interesting project. Four oral history sessions will take place 17th Jan—7th Feb, 7:15-9:45 at Kiltarlity Village Hall where people are invited to share memories or ask questions. These sessions will be followed by a course looking at researching and surveying the Boblainy Forest landscape, with practical surveying sessions, and then a final course to pull together the year's work. Contact us if you would like to find out about these courses.

Discovering Culloden's Heritage Inside & Out

ARCH will provide this course for the WEA, focussing on how to find out about Culloden's local heritage, with indoor and outdoor sessions. Includes a trip to the archives and museum. £2 / session.

Culloden Library
Thurs. 24th Feb-31st March, 12:30-2:30pm

ARCH:
Education Centre
Castle Street www.archhighland.org.uk
Dingwall info@archhighland.org.uk
IV15 9HU **01349 868230**

ARCH Lecture Series

All lectures will be in Dingwall Community Centre at 7:30pm and will be followed by coffees and teas. Suggested donation of £3 per lecture.

31st January: ***Prehistoric Rock Art in the Scottish Highlands***

John Wombell will look at examples of rock art from around the Highlands and elsewhere in Britain, and consider what this most enigmatic phenomenon can tell us about prehistoric people.

28th Feb: ***Historic Landscapes of the Highlands***

Allan Kilpatrick from the RCAHMS will explain how the landscapes of the Highlands have come into being and how the history of the Highlands can be explored by looking at its landscape.

28th March: ***Birsay - political and religious power centre in Orkney. A retrospective look at 75 years' investigation***

Prof. Chris Morris will look back at over 75 years' work on the Brough of Birsay, a notable Pictish and Norse site on Orkney, drawing together archive and unpublished work of Dr Raleigh Radford, and excavations and surveys which have taken place over the years, including many by himself.

25th April: ***The Excavation of Caird's Cave, Rosemarkie***

Simon Gunn will describe a community dig at Caird's Cave, Rosemarkie last year which investigated the history of the cave where Dr William MacLean excavated almost 100 years ago.

30th May: ***Mapping Made Easy***

Cathy MacIver of ARCH will provide a simple and accessible introduction to digital mapping and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) for archaeologists, by exploring a variety of interesting case studies taken from all over Britain.

ARCH Film Series

Join us at Strathpeffer Community Centre at 7:30pm (doors open at 7pm). Suggested donation of £4 per film.

Friday, 14th January: **Bonekickers**

Cult television program focussing (sort of) on the adventures of an archaeological unit.

Friday, 11th February: **The Mummy**

Pyramids, unsuspecting archaeologists, a curse and a mummy come back from the dead...

Friday, 11th March: **Rob Roy**

Highlanders, droving, scenery – was this what the Highlands were like?!