



**BUILDING
BRIDGES:
CONNECTING
SCOTLAND'S
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
COMMUNITY**

25th-26th October 2025

**NICOLSON SQUARE VENUES
25 NICOLSON SQUARE
EDINBURGH, EH8 9BX**



**HISTORIC
ENVIRONMENT
SCOTLAND**

**ÀRAINNEACHD
EACHDRAIDHEIL
ALBA**

**Society of Antiquaries
of Scotland**



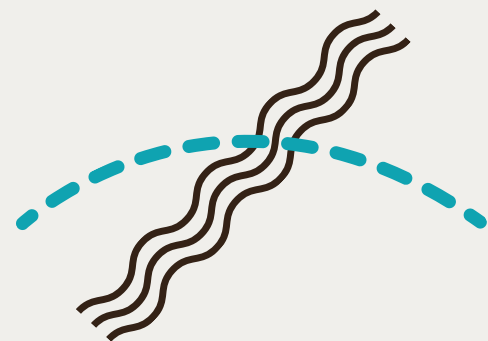
**University
of Glasgow**



CFA
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AOC
Archaeology
Group



BUILDING BRIDGES:

CONNECTING SCOTLAND'S ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMMUNITY

Saturday 25th October

9.15-9.30 Registration

9.30-9.45 **Scott McCreadie:** SAF President's Welcome

Session 1: Archaeologies of Connection

9.45-10.05 **Mhairi Maxwell:** Collapsing time: contemporary collecting with communities at National Museums Scotland 

10.05-10.25 **Rachel Hiden:** Lost and found - embracing uncertainty to better connect to diverse communities

10.25-10.45 **Emily Johnston:** Everyday Encounters with the Past: Creative Approaches to Commemorating Archaeological Heritage 

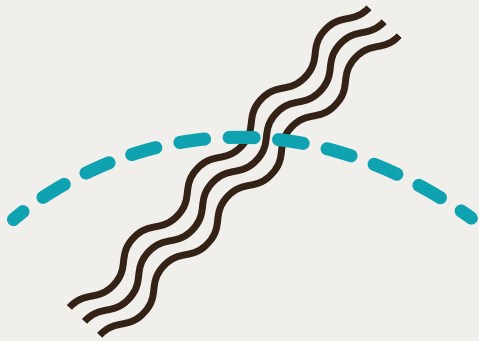
10.45-11.05 **Jane Miller:** Open Sites, Open Minds, Open Hearts: Building an Inclusive Archaeology for All

11.05-11.25 Q&A

11.25-11.45 Coffee Break

Session 2: Collective Agency

11.45-12.05 **Arianna Magyaricsová:** New Conversations with Old Collections: The A. H. Bishop Collection at the Hunterian Museum



12.05-12.25 Jess Thompson, Matt Knight, Kirsty Owen: Scotland’s Archaeological Human Remains Collections project

12.25-12.45 Mark A Hall: Cultural returns: refashioning relations to restore the mana of taonga, or towards the decolonising of the history shared between Perth Museum and the Māori of Aotearoa

12.45-13.00 Q&A

13.00-14.00 Lunch Break

14.00-15.00 Coffee & Conversations: Poster Session

Session 3: (In)Tangible Pasts

15.00-15.20 Gala Georgette: Echoes Without Borders: Sounding Heritage Across Scotland and Aotearoa

15.20-15.40 Mairi MacLean: Air an Starsainn: Where is the Centre?

15.40-16.00 Mhairi Ferrier: A Thatched House in Torlum: Exploring the Boundaries of Archaeological Practice

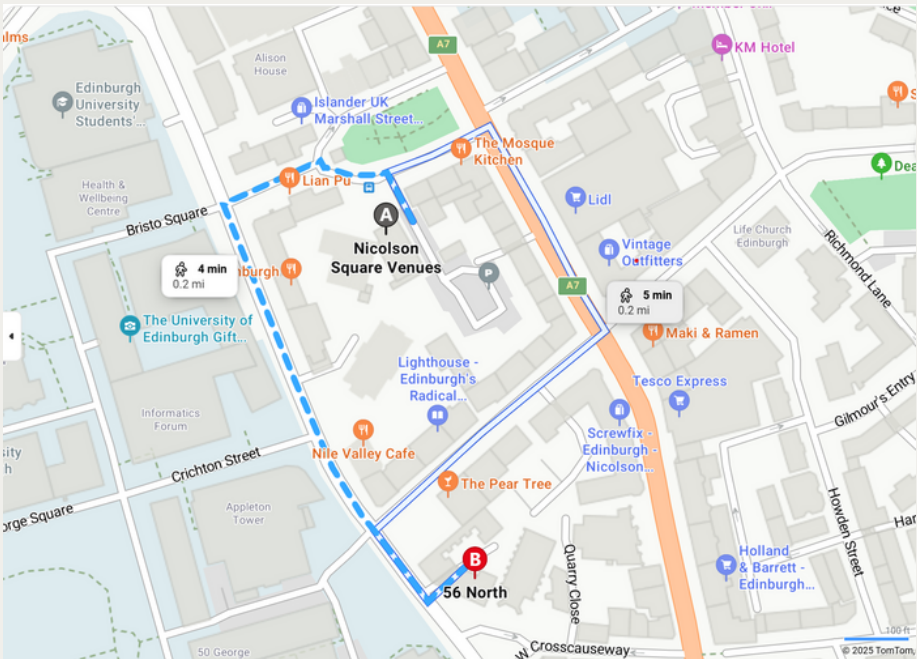
16.00-16.20 Q&A

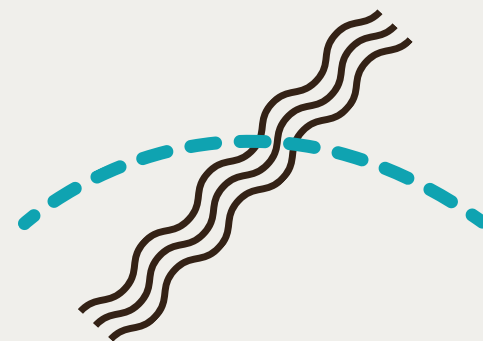
AOC Wine Reception

17.00

56 North

2 West Crosscauseway, Edinburgh, EH8 9JP





Sunday 26th October

Session 4: Place (Un)Making

9.30-9.50 Phil Gould: People, Plants, and Landscape: Creating new narratives of landscape through palaeoenvironmental and archaeological research of the past

9.50-10.10 James O'Driscoll & John Reid: Siege, Science, and Storytelling: Reconstructing Burnswark and Its Place in Roman Scotland

10.10-10.30 Raju Subedi: Protecting Scotland's Cultural Heritage in an Era of Climate Crisis

10.30-10.45 Q&A

10.45-11.05 Coffee Break

Session 5: New Horizons

11.05-11.25 Leonie Teufel: On-Site Insights: Utilising 3D scanning for archaeological site discovery and outreach

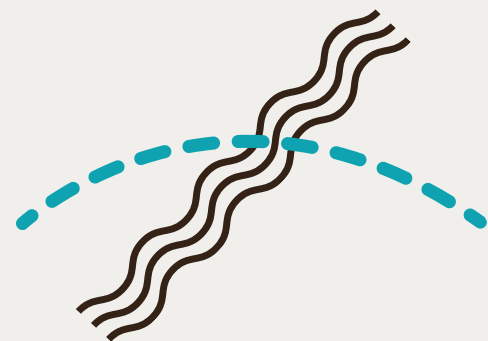
11.25-11.45 Lindsey Stirling: In Situ: Connecting People and Past through Digital Innovation

11.45-12.05 Luke Barry: Putting the Dig in Digital: Bridging Fieldwork and Audiences Through Creative Media

12.05-12.25 Alex Crest: The Antonine Wall on Social Media: Trialling Rapid Multi-Media Review Across Dynamic Online Platforms

12.25-12.45 Q&A

12.45-13.25 Lunch Break



Session 6: Communities Old and New

13.25-13.45 Moira Piazzolli & Wendy Vencel: Linguistic Heritage and Archaeological Practice: Exploring Meaningful Engagement at Scottish Sites 

13.45-14.05 Derek Hall, Alison Beach, Darlene Brooks Hedstrom & Kimm Curran: University of St Andrews and Brandeis University Monastic Archaeology Field School (Lindores Abbey)

14.05-14.25 Edward Stewart: Connected by the Clyde: exploring the production of a research framework with and for the communities of the Clyde Valley region

14.25-14.45 Aurelian Rusu: Speaking locally to connect globally: archaeology as a bridge of interconnectivity through time and space

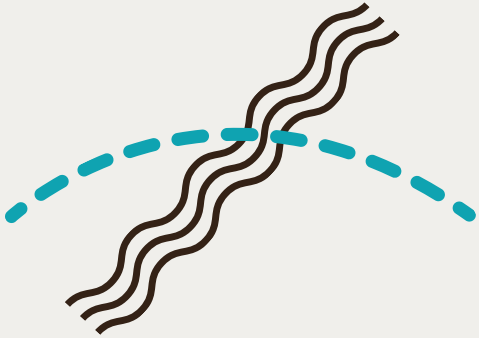
14.45-15.05 Q&A

15.05-15.25 Coffee Break

Session 7: Media of the Past

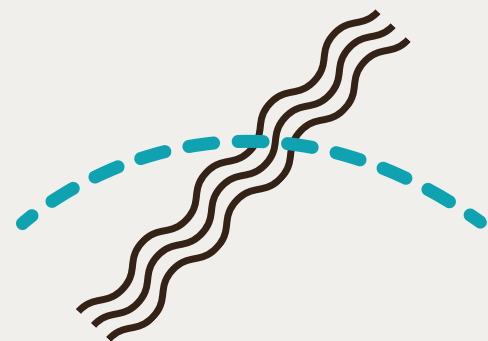
15.25-15.45 Sòlas Kenneth McDonald: ‘Clot heb or heb eithaf’: Literary Communication in Early Scotland - A Historical and Archaeological Perspective

15.45-16.05 John A Lawson, Maria Maclellan, Mettje Hunneman & Orsolya Czére: Edinburgh’s First Burghers: Revealing the Lives and Hidden Faces of Edinburgh’s Medieval Citizens through Innovative Technologies and Interdisciplinary Approaches



16.05-16.25 **Heather Christie:** Carved in Stone: A Storyteller's Guide to the Picts
16.25-16.40 Q&A

16.40-16.50 Closing



POSTERS

Poster session: 14.00-15.00 Saturday 25th
October

Unveiling hidden textile narratives in Bronze Age northern Italy: the contribution of experimental archaeology

Maria Elena Bertoli (The University of Glasgow)

Investigating the origin of slate samples obtained from St Columba's Chapel in Poltalloch

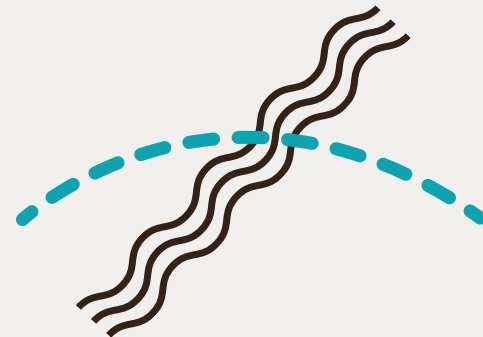
Michael Bowry (University of the West of Scotland), **Christopher Brooke** (University of Nottingham), **Jack Bishop** (University of Birmingham), **David O'Donnell** (University of the West of Scotland), **John Hughes** (University of the West of Scotland), **Ben Phoenix** (University of Birmingham), **Carl Wheldon** (University of Birmingham)

Metal Detecting in Scotland

Orla Craig (Historic Environment Scotland)

A Cultural and Natural History of Scotland's Peatlands

Isobel Harvey (The University of Glasgow)



POSTERS

Edinburgh's First Burghers: Revealing the Lives and Hidden Faces of Edinburgh's Medieval Citizens through Innovative Technologies and Interdisciplinary Approaches

John A Lawson (The City of Edinburgh Council Archaeology Service), **Maria Maclellan** (Edinburgh College of Art, The University of Edinburgh), **Mettje Hunneman** (VIDEOLAB studio), **Orsolya Czére** (The University of Aberdeen)

Trumpet-Horns of Ewana: A millennia of technologies, tools and tones

Peter Lawson (The University of Edinburgh)

Identifying Plant Mats and Basketry in Bronze Age Cist Burials in Scotland

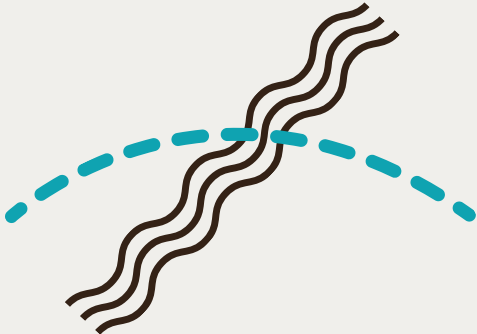
Nysa Loudon (The University of Glasgow)

From Stycas to Scandinavians: Tracking Exchange, Identity, and Power through Wealth Deposits in the Northeast Irish Sea Landscape (9th–11th C.)

Brittany Nebiolini (The University of Cambridge)

A reflection of the International Women's day 'Women in History' event 2025.

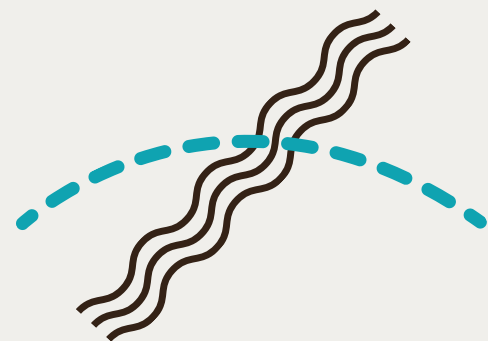
Ally Parker-Banks (The University of Glasgow)



POSTERS

A Woman’s Lot: Female Participation in Irish Monasticism in
Scotland and Continental Europe

Margaret Sheridan (The University of Edinburgh)



SESSION 1: ARCHAEOLOGIES OF CONNECTION

9.45 - 10.05:

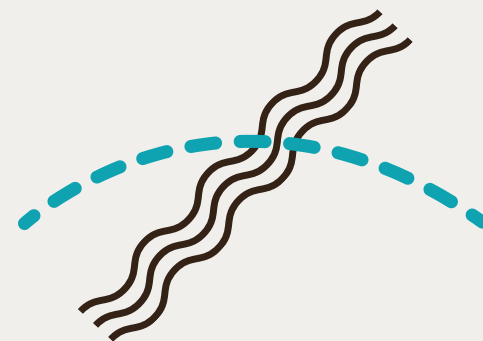
Collapsing time: contemporary collecting with communities at National Museums Scotland

Mhairi Maxwell, National Museums Scotland

Our vision at National Museums Scotland is to ‘Inspire people: addressing the challenges of our age’. As curator of modern and contemporary history (and I also hasten to add archaeology) at National Museums Scotland, I am tasked with collecting change as it happens, or soon after. Involving communities of concern in this work, from deciding what to collect, who with, and how, is critical.

In this paper I will also explore how participatory practice allows us to unlock conversations across time together with communities of concern. By using our collections from the past to inspire conversations about our present, ‘boundary objects’ engage and empower communities in shaping our shared futures.

Contemporary collecting case studies discussed will include current work in progress looking at stories of LGBTQ histories, migration and climate change. Boundary objects discussed will include activism and campaign materials, materialities of waste, and objects which speak of negotiating identity and belonging.



10.05 - 10.25:

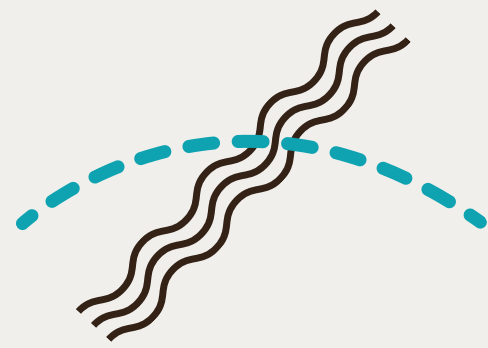
Lost and found - embracing uncertainty to better connect to diverse communities

Rachel Hiden, The Scottish Crannog Centre

It can be a challenge to help connect people to their archaeological heritage when sites and artefacts only give a fragmentary glimpse into history. It poses the question, how can we use this uncertainty to fuel interest, engagement, conversation and ownership, particularly within Scotland's diverse communities? The Scottish Crannog Centre lost its iconic Crannog reconstruction to fire in June 2021, and its journey since then provides a unique case study into developing a sense of place when a place has been lost.

Throughout this research, themes were identified that suggest that the archaeological engagement is about more than just an iconic site, highlighting how the timeless experience, shared feelings, and a sense of belonging deeply impact the individual sense of place. It points to the importance of personalised visitor engagement processes that utilise participatory practice, using constructivist learning and social identity theory to create archaeological experiences and interpretation that are welcoming and collaborative. There is particular focus on how this interacts with place building for Scotland's migrant and asylum communities and how we can integrate cultural knowledge and worth using archaeology as a platform.

The results of this research project show that an iconic site or building is not a guarantee of the environment that creates a deep-rooted sense of place, these conditions are created by a way of work that is replicable and has significant results that correlate with the most intimate and intense level of sense of place, that of feeling at home.



10.25 - 10.45:

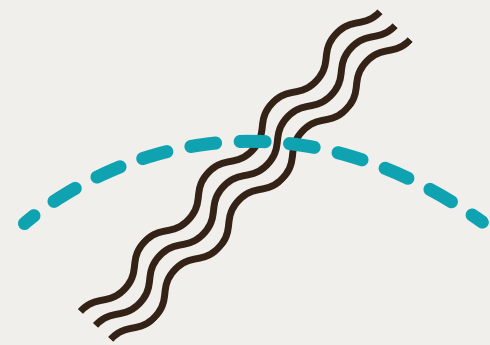
Everyday Encounters with the Past: Creative Approaches to Commemorating Archaeological Heritage

Emily Johnston, The University of Edinburgh

Development-funded archaeology represents a key area for new archaeological discoveries and can symbolise a stage for public interaction with the practice. Whilst the practice of excavation often removes the physical archaeological remains, it also creates diverse opportunities for integrating and commemorating archaeology in innovative ways which connect people with their local past.

This paper explores how archaeological remains which are uncovered through development-funded archaeology are retained or memorialised within modern landscapes, considering both those preserved through visible features and those integrated into designs or names. Through the exploration of different case studies, this paper will explore the preservation of standing stones, cairns and barrows into new housing schemes, and how naming conventions can tell the stories of archaeological remains which are no longer present. These elements, which act as ‘micro-monuments’, can provide anchors to the past, embedding archaeological narratives into everyday spaces and provide the public with encounters with their local heritage.

Through this presentation, I will show how archaeology can shape contemporary landscapes, fostering connection to the past even in rapidly changing urban contexts. Archaeology can be reimaged as a part of identity, contributing to place attachment and a sense of continuity. The examples examined here will showcase different engagement strategies through development-funded archaeology which transform how communities experience and value archaeology in their daily lives.



10.45 - 11.05:

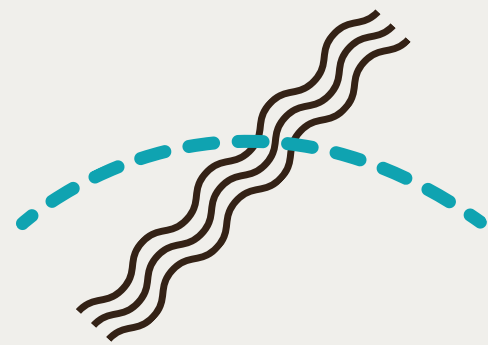
Open Sites, Open Minds, Open Hearts: Building an Inclusive Archaeology for All

Jane Miller, Archaeology Scotland

At Archaeology Scotland, inclusivity and accessibility are at the heart of everything we do, striving to create meaningful connections across time, geographies, generations and communities. Through a collaborative approach, we aim to build bridges that empower individuals - including children and young people - to explore and shape the stories, spaces and places that matter to them.

In this session, we will share case studies that illustrate our approach, including an intergenerational archaeology project that brought together young carers, a local community archaeology group and a local heritage site. We will also highlight strategies for creating inclusive environments that support neurodivergent participants, ensuring that archaeological practice is accessible, welcoming and meets the needs of all participants.

Our work demonstrates how archaeology can serve as a powerful tool for social connection, personal development, wellbeing and community resilience. This presentation will offer practical insights for organisations, groups and individuals seeking to implement inclusive practices.



SESSION 2: COLLECTIVE AGENCY

11.45- 12.05:

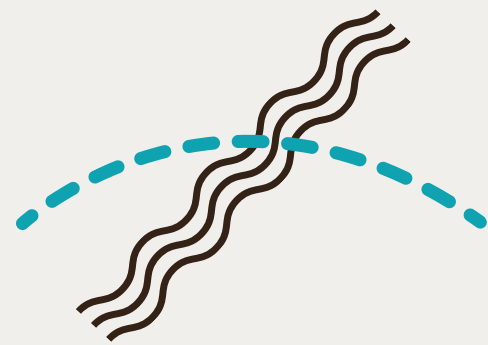
New Conversations with Old Collections: The A. H. Bishop Collection at the Hunterian Museum

Arianna Magyaricsová, The University of Glasgow

This paper explores the potential of ‘dormant’ archaeological collections to serve as sites of critical reflection, methodological innovation, and renewed relevance. Drawing on my doctoral research into the A. H. Bishop Collection at the Hunterian Museum, comprising over 23,000 lithic artefacts from Scotland, England, continental Europe, and beyond, I reframe this assemblage not as a static repository of prehistoric material, but as a dynamic resource shaped by human networks, institutional practices, and evolving frameworks of interpretation.

While museums have long been recognised as partial and hierarchical structures, the collections they hold are not inert. Objects are active participants in the construction of knowledge shaped through processes of making, use, exchange, curation, and recontextualisation. This research applies itinerary theory to foreground the movements, transitions, and entanglements of objects across time, using material analysis, stratigraphic reading of objects, and archival investigation to reconstruct their trajectories through social and institutional space.

Focusing on Bishop as a collector embedded within industrial, antiquarian, and civic networks, the paper interrogates how his collecting practices, and the curatorial systems that succeeded them, shaped the nature, visibility, and interpretation of the collection. In doing so, I demonstrate how theoretically grounded engagement with historical collections can generate new forms of archaeological insight and contribute to wider conversations about interpretive authority, institutional practice, and regional research.



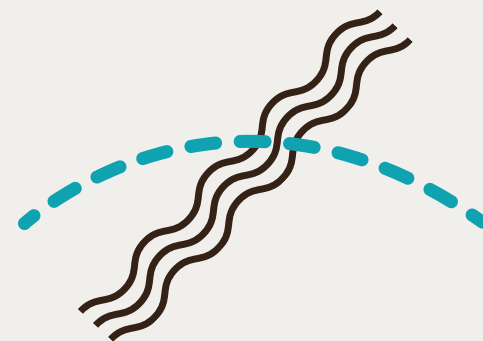
12.05 - 12.25:

Scotland's Archaeological Human Remains Collections project

**Jess Thompson, National Museums Scotland; Matt Knight,
National Museums Scotland; Kirsty Owen: Historic Environment
Scotland**

Archaeological human remains provide a first-hand intimate connection with people who lived and died in the country we now call Scotland. The application of scientific techniques such as ancient DNA and isotopic analysis, as well as imaging techniques like 3D modelling and facial reconstruction, allow us close insights into aspects of past lives and identities, such as what people may have looked like, when they may have moved from one region to another, and who they were related to. Through these methods, archaeological human remains in Scottish museums contribute to high-impact collaborative research and innovative national and international narratives about the human past in Scotland and the wider world.

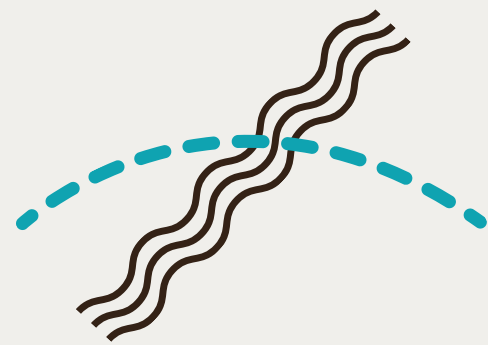
As more human remains are uncovered and research interest grows, so does the need to expand storage capacity and enhance the ethical care of these important collections. In 2024, Scotland's Archaeological Human Remains Collection (SAHRC) project was initiated, led by National Museums Scotland and Historic Environment Scotland and involving partners from across the UK heritage sector. In collaboration, we aim to address critical issues facing the sector, encompassing the trajectory of human remains from their excavation to curation and analysis. Of key importance is the need for clear processes by which human remains enter museum collections following excavation. When human remains are retained, they require specialist curatorial care. This presentation will outline some of the ways we are striving to achieve this, including the development of curatorial guidelines and national research frameworks.



12.25 - 12.45:

Cultural returns: refashioning relations to restore the mana of taonga, or towards the decolonising of the history shared between Perth Museum and the Māori of Aotearoa
Mark A Hall, Perth Museum (Culture Perth & Kinross)

This paper is about cultural relations, the colonial era participation of Perth Museum's predecessor body, the Literary and antiquarian Society of Perth. One colonial son of Perth, David Ramsay, collected widely in the Pacific, sending his assembled collection back to the Perth Society for inclusion in their museum. I will focus on a sub-set of these objects – the Māori taonga or treasures. We will explore the changing nature of a dialogue and its current phase, which has revitalised relations between Scotland and Aotearoa, Scots and Māori and Perth Museum and Te Papa Tongarewa (the National Museum of New Zealand), through the restoration of the mana or prestige of the taonga cared for in Perth Museum.



SESSION 3: (IN)TANGIBLE PASTS

15.00 - 15.20:

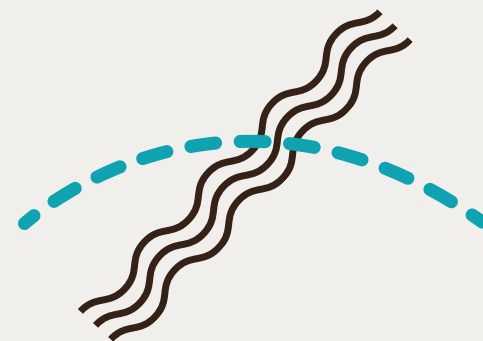
Echoes Without Borders: Sounding Heritage Across Scotland and Aotearoa

Gala Georgette, The University of Glasgow

What might it mean to hear archaeology across borders? Sound is central to how all beings experience and remember place. While archaeological narratives often privilege visual representation, such as maps, plans, photographs, listening reveals the sensory and affective dimensions of heritage. Deep listening foregrounds temporal depth, attuning to overlapping ecologies, migration histories, and colonial interruptions. It makes audible the continuities and disjunctions that shape settler-colonial landscapes.

This sound performance invites participants to explore Scotland's landscapes in dialogue with those of Aotearoa New Zealand through environmental field recordings gathered during my research. Using a digital keyboard loaded with samples – water, wind, birds, footsteps, and silence – listeners compose evolving soundscapes that layer geographically and culturally distinct acoustic textures. Participants are invited to play, layer, and listen, creating new acoustic relationships between places.

Placing Scottish and New Zealand field recordings side by side allows us to consider how global and local heritage are entangled. Both landscapes are shaped by colonial legacies that continue to shape conservation efforts and land management priorities. We will trace resonances between distinct environments while acknowledging the cultural frameworks, Māori and Gaelic among them, that shape how these landscapes are understood and valued. In listening across borders, we not only hear the shared histories, but also imagine new ways of relating to land, memory, and each other.



15.20 - 15.40:

Air an Starsainn: Where is the Centre?

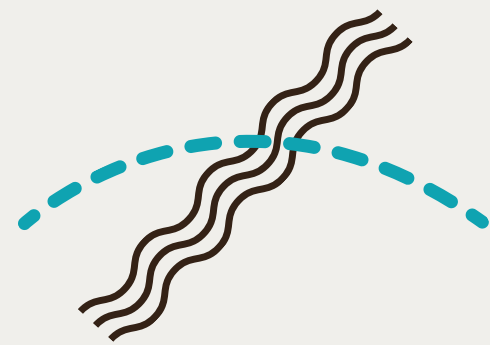
Mairi MacLean, Comann Dualchas Innse Gall

Comann Dualchas Innse Gall (CDIG) was set up in 2018 by representees of Western Isles Comainn Eachdraidh to provide a voice for the community heritage sector and to foster inter-island collaboration.

The community heritage sector in the Western Isles is frequently approached by off island researchers who bring with them narratives based in ideas of remoteness, isolation and liminality. This includes those looking at the present as much as those studying the past, and these narratives impact how the local community heritage groups are perceived.

This talk aims to encourage others to consider the concept of remoteness, what it means, and its historical origins. Further, what are the ramifications of such rhetoric on the modern understanding of Hebridean life throughout time? Does this reflect the lived reality of the modern or the historical (or even the prehistoric) Hebridean?

This talk examines the 'remote island' concept, its roots in European colonialism, and its interplay with perceptions of the Hebridean Gael - modern, historic, and in archaeological interpretation. It discusses the ways remoteness has affected our understanding of Hebridean archaeology as well as interactions between researchers and Hebridean communities. Further, this talk will discuss approaches that can be taken to counteract the impact of these ideas of remoteness with ongoing community work and support of Hebridean Comainn Eachdraidh.



15.40 - 16.00:

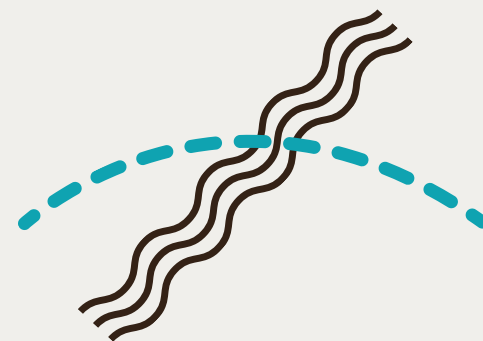
A Thatched House in Torlum: Exploring the Boundaries of Archaeological Practice

Mhairi Ferrier, The University of the Highlands and Islands

Torlum, a township located in the Isle of Benbecula in the Outer Hebrides, was once occupied by families living in thatched stone houses. In Uist (covering from Berneray to Eriskay), some thatched houses remained occupied until the 1970s. Now, mostly, physically only the stone walls remain as a reminder of a past way of life. However, the stories of these houses and family connections remain vivid in the minds of many in the community. As Jones and Russell have explained, ‘the use of oral memory in archaeological research offers us rich potential. It provides a means to understand how people in the past and the present experienced historical landscapes...’

Utilising a case study of a day field working in Torlum, during which family history, photographs and cultural history of the township were shared, a different approach for archaeological research into Uist’s thatched houses can be considered. A researcher’s approach can be shaped by these emotional connections to archaeological sites. This paper will explore the benefits of using this emotionally engaged approach, exploring the blurring of the boundaries of archaeology by incorporating other disciplines such as history, ethnology and digital heritage.

By adopting this more immersive approach, a more culturally aware and comprehensive understanding of thatched houses can be achieved. It will be considered whether such an approach could be applied to other projects in which historical, community and archaeological narratives do not align, especially in modern archaeological sites in which occupation of the dwelling is in living memory.



SESSION 4: PLACE (UN)MAKING

9:30 - 9.50:

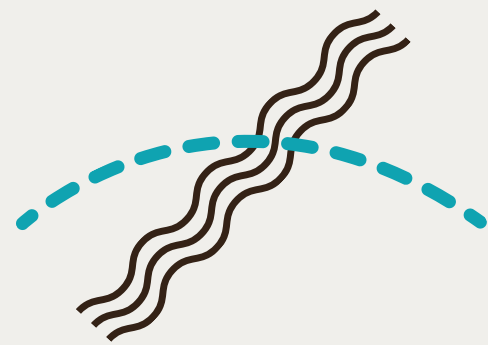
People, Plants, and Landscape: Creating new narratives of landscape through palaeoenvironmental and archaeological research of the past

Phil Gould, The University of Glasgow

Palaeoenvironmental study can be an informative way of understanding past landscapes, particularly of peatland and the ecosystems people have been a part of within rural landscapes in Scotland.

The case study at Glen Devon, Perth and Kinross, aims to show how a combination of new palaeoenvironmental data and previously published archaeological and historical records can be used to build new narratives from old stories of landscapes. People form an integral part of the landscape, and the relationships between people, ecology and landscape form an important factor in the future management and conservation of nature, soil and water management, ecosystems, culture and community in place. The combination of these data sets can show how land use and land management have changed landscape in the past, and how they might change landscape in the future, using localised models built from the landscape itself.

Palaeoenvironmental study can be used alongside more traditional explorations of the past, to offer a new perspective to the narratives and histories of landscape, using old stories to imaging more resilient futures for Scotland's landscapes.



9.50 - 10.10:

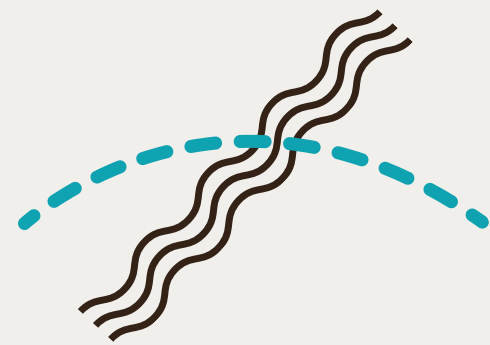
Siege, Science, and Storytelling: Reconstructing Burnswark and Its Place in Roman Scotland

James O'Driscoll, The University of Glasgow; John Reid, Trimontium Trust

Burnswark Hillfort, located on the northwestern frontier of the Roman Empire in southern Scotland, remains one of the most contested and compelling sites in Roman-British archaeology. Long debated as either a Roman military training ground or the scene of an indigenous siege, Burnswark is now the focus of a transformative new project that re-examines the site through a fusion of cutting-edge remote sensing, advanced GIS, 3D modelling, and high-resolution scientific dating.

By integrating approaches from environmental science, soil geochemistry, geoarchaeology, history, and cultural studies, the project shifts the narrative focus from Roman aggression to the indigenous communities who once inhabited this hilltop. Our research reveals detailed settlement layouts, reconstructs site chronologies, and explores the social, economic, and political lives of Burnswark's inhabitants during a time of imperial expansion. Crucially, this work represents one of the first comprehensive scientific investigations of a British Iron Age community potentially destroyed by Rome.

The interdisciplinary collaboration also underscores the importance of community engagement, heritage storytelling, and digital reconstruction in democratizing access to archaeological knowledge. Through this case study, we demonstrate how technological innovation and multidisciplinary partnerships can reframe entrenched narratives and contribute to more inclusive, evidence-based understandings of Scotland's ancient past and its relevance today.



10.10 - 10.30:

Vanishing Histories: Protecting Scotland's Cultural Heritage in an Era of Climate Crisis

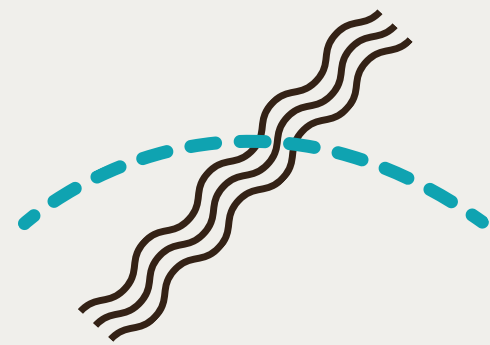
Raju Subedi, Robert Gordon University

According to the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022, action is required, and research priority has been given to risks to cultural heritage (Sniffer, 2022).

Scotland's vernacular architecture—rooted in local materials, climatic adaptation, and cultural traditions—embodies centuries of place-based knowledge. Yet, these historic structures are increasingly threatened by the accelerating impacts of climate change, including coastal erosion, flooding, and extreme weather.

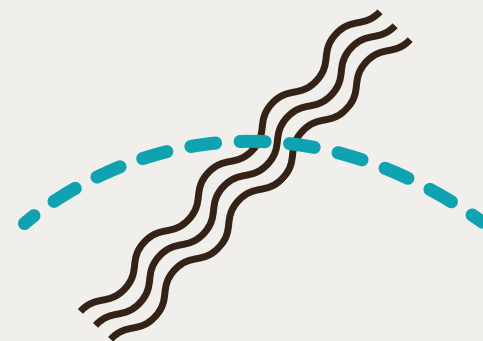
This paper investigates how the climate crisis jeopardises the physical integrity and cultural significance of Scotland's vernacular-built heritage, particularly in rural and island communities such as Orkney, the Hebrides, and Caithness. It explores the limitations of conventional conservation approaches in addressing the dynamic vulnerabilities of these buildings and advocates for climate-adaptive strategies grounded in the principles of vernacular resilience. By integrating architectural analysis, community-based heritage practices, and climate science, the presentation emphasises that safeguarding vernacular architecture is not merely about preserving the past but also about sustaining cultural identity and environmental stewardship in a changing world.

The climate crisis is emerging as one of the most significant threats to cultural heritage in the 21st century. In Scotland, the increasing frequency of storms, rising sea levels, and changing moisture regimes are causing physical damage to historic buildings, while also endangering the intangible cultural practices embedded within



them. Nowhere is this more evident than in the country’s vernacular architecture—structures shaped over centuries by local materials, climatic conditions, and community knowledge. These buildings, from stone-built crofts to turf-roofed blockhouses, reflect deep-rooted relationships between people and place. Yet, they are frequently overlooked in national conservation strategies, leaving them highly vulnerable to environmental change.

This paper focuses on the impact of climate change on Scotland’s vernacular architectural heritage, examining both the physical degradation of these structures and the cultural erosion that follows. Through case studies from the Orkney Islands, the Western Isles, and Caithness, it explores the inadequacies of existing conservation frameworks. It proposes adaptive, community-based strategies that merge traditional practices with contemporary climate science. In doing so, the paper argues for a paradigm shift—from static preservation to dynamic resilience—in how we value, protect, and sustain vernacular heritage in a warming world.



SESSION 5: NEW HORIZONS

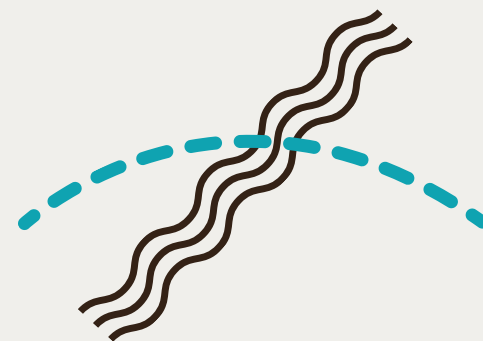
11.05-11.25:

On-Site Insights: Utilising 3D scanning for archaeological site discovery and outreach

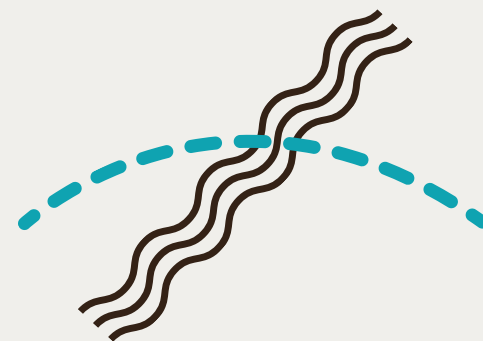
Leonie Teufel, AOC Archaeology Group

Photogrammetry, LiDAR and laser scans have all been used to great effect to record archaeology in recent years. With new technology iPhones and drones can now be used as technique to almost instantly create detailed and interactive 3D models. Though they have some limitations and the quality isn't as good as laser scanning or traditional photogrammetry it allows real time interaction with the data and can be very helpful in analysing and understanding sites as you go as a fieldworker.

These products can be used to understand the alignment and shape of negative features as well as understanding upstanding features and can be useful to create quick records of different stages of the excavation feeding into site diaries. Artefacts can be recorded in situ with the phone LiDAR scan and can be used in tandem with traditional photography as a reference for reporting and analyses prior to lifting fragile artefacts. These models are also an interactive way of sharing archaeological sites with the public making them more accessible to a wider audience. AOC has created a website- "In Situ"- where 3D models are combined with text and additional photos to share the fascinating archaeology we have uncovered. It is designed to be interactive and easy to use.



We aim to be able to make our findings available to a wide audience and include varied types of archaeology on the website. Sites that will be discussed where we have utilised the phone LiDAR scans for onsite records include: Colinsburgh, St Columba's Cave, Elgin South, Portgordon, Meigle (also shared on social media platforms and sketchfab), and Cowans Close. Sites that have been presented on In Situ: St Columba's Cave, Edinburgh's Gasworks, The Cairns Distillery, and Tacksman's House.

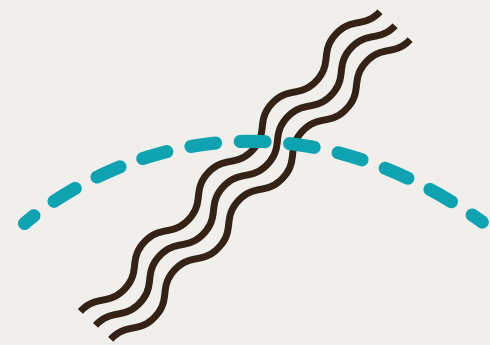


11.25-11.45:

In Situ: Connecting People and Past through Digital Innovation

Lindsey Stirling, AOC Archaeology Group

The In Situ website (insitu.org.uk) was launched with the aim of bringing to life the fascinating and varied discoveries of commercial archaeology which often get lost in the pages of unpublished technical reports. With the recent demand for development projects to demonstrate public benefit, the In Situ platform has been a crucial part of disseminating archaeological discoveries to a wide range of people in a format that is both engaging and informative. Interactivity is at the heart of In Situ, with a strong focus on digital technology allowing the stories to bring heritage to life through 3D models, videos, interactive mapping and graphics. Using examples from the website, this paper will discuss the types of stories that can be told, the digital technology behind them and the benefits of incorporating these features into archaeological projects.



11.45-12.05:

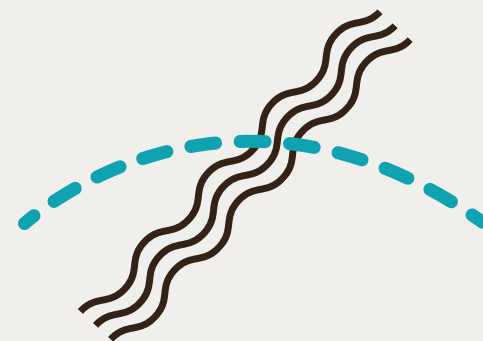
Putting the Dig in Digital: Bridging Fieldwork and Audiences Through Creative Media

Luke Barry, Rubicon Archaeology

In an era where digital communication dominates, archaeology faces both a challenge and an opportunity to engage wider and more diverse audiences. This paper explores the evolving role of digital media in archaeological outreach, focusing on how creative storytelling through film, social media, and multimedia content can effectively “put the dig in digital.” Drawing from my experience producing documentaries, social media campaigns, and podcasts for Rubicon Archaeology, including major infrastructure projects in Germany, Ireland, England and of course, Scotland, I argue that digital media offers unique tools to bridge the gap between archaeological fieldwork and public engagement.

The paper discusses practical approaches to transforming complex archaeological data and excavation narratives into accessible, compelling content that resonates with both specialist and non-specialist audiences. It highlights strategies for integrating multimedia storytelling into project workflows, emphasizing collaboration between archaeologists and digital content creators. By showcasing studies from recent road infrastructure projects, this presentation illustrates how digital platforms can foster inclusivity, enhance transparency, and build community connections around archaeology. Ultimately, “putting the dig in digital” challenges traditional models of archaeological communication by shifting from static reports to dynamic, participatory storytelling. This approach aligns with the conference’s theme of “Building Bridges” by connecting archaeologists, heritage professionals, and the public through innovative digital dialogue.

The paper invites reflection on the future of archaeology’s public presence and encourages practitioners to embrace digital storytelling as a vital component of contemporary archaeological practice. “Putting the Dig in Digital” is not just about promoting your project locally—it’s about sharing it with the world.



12.05-12.25:

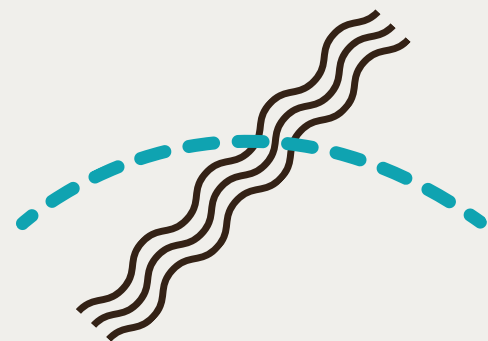
The Antonine Wall on Social Media: Trialling Rapid Multi-Media Review Across Dynamic Online Platforms

Alex Crest, The University of Edinburgh; Historic Environment Scotland

The Antonine Wall, a UNESCO World Heritage Site spans 37 miles across the Central Belt of Scotland. On social media, the wall is regularly mobilised in different frames and contexts by individuals, private organisations and practitioners. By conducting a presence based rapid multimedia review, the research examines how the Wall's social, political, and economic values develop through the specific architectures of these platforms.

The analysis uncovers a range of community-machine interactions, illuminating the dynamics of contemporary social media and the World Heritage site. The study also identifies challenges in managing these social media interactions, such as routes of monitoring, implications for community-based work and sustainable curation. Ultimately, the findings highlight the current state of how social media shapes the historic environment, offering strategic recommendations for working with these platforms to promote community well being more effectively.

The paper calls for a more nuanced understanding of how online technologies can support the sustainable management of the historic environment, and how to understand social media from a user perspective.



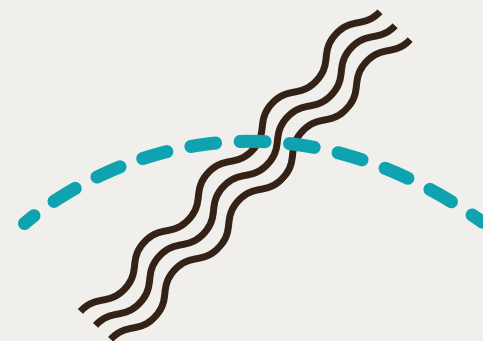
SESSION 6: COMMUNITIES OLD AND NEW

13.25-13.45:

Linguistic Heritage and Archaeological Practice: Exploring Meaningful Engagement at Scottish Sites

Moira Piazzoli, The University of Glasgow; Wendy Vencel,
North Carolina State University

We propose to investigate how minority languages are integrated in archaeological research and public engagement practices in Scotland. Our two case studies are heritage projects based in Nis (Ness, Isle of Lewis) and at Dunnottar Castle (Aberdeenshire) – areas characterised by very different but equally dynamic linguistic histories. In this paper we will therefore suggest ways to place these sites in their past and present linguistic landscapes, highlighting the importance of mixed-media interpretation methods to engage different audiences with local heritage. Sociolinguists traditionally consider Nis as a Gaelic stronghold. However, the future of Gaelic as a viable community language in the area is now uncertain due to both historical factors and more recent demographic shifts. In this context, Gaelic-medium research and interpretation of sites in the Ness area are both integral to preservation and a promising means of cultural revitalisation, but they need to respond to varying levels of fluency, literacy and linguistic confidence. Dunnottar Castle is one of the most visited castle sites in all of Scotland. However, it does not include interpretive material in Scottish Gaelic for the general public, despite continued efforts to revitalise Scottish Gaelic in the region and interest in restoring other minority languages such as Doric Scots. The juxtaposition of these two sites will allow us to engage in a discourse on best practice for the future implementation of Scottish Gaelic and other local endangered languages at cultural heritage sites.

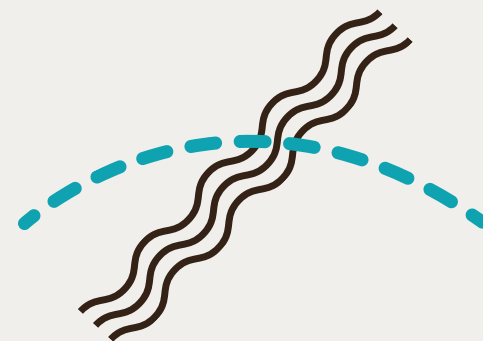


13.45-14.05:

University of St Andrews and Brandeis University Monastic Archaeology Field School (Lindores Abbey)

Derek Hall, Self-employed Archaeologist; Alison Beach, The University of St Andrews; Darlene Brooks Hedstrom, Brandeis University; Kimm Curran, Self-employed Heritage Consultant

Running on site at Lindores Abbey in Fife since May 2024, this field school is operated by a project team from the Universities of St Andrews and Brandeis in Massachusetts, USA, and independent archaeologists from the commercial sector. The project is structured around providing community involvement in local heritage, enhancing tourism, and supporting wider engagement with local businesses, the heritage sector more broadly, as well as local schools. These include, but are not limited to: Lindores Abbey, Lindores Abbey Distillery, Newburgh Heritage Centre, the Abernethy Museum, Newburgh and Dunbog Primary Schools, and Newburgh Nursery. The project team carries out excavation, assessment, recording, and sampling in June of each year with students from the Global St Andrews Summer school (a team of 15, plus supervisors). All the work carried out is based on a project research design approved by Historic Environment Scotland as part of Scheduled Monument Consent. This presentation will review the success of the project over its first two years and consider the benefits of team collaboration across the public sector and working in tandem with a local business.

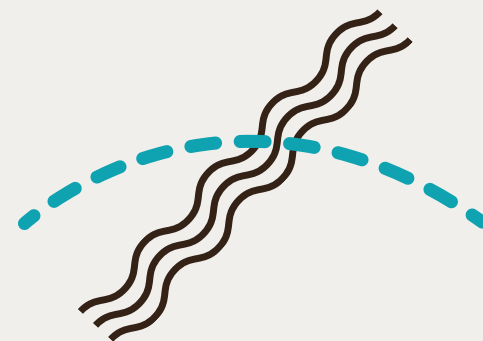


14.05-14.25:

Connected by the Clyde: exploring the production of a research framework with and for the communities of the Clyde Valley region

Edward Stewart, Archaeology Scotland

The Clyde Valley is home to over 1/3 of Scotland population and many of its most deprived communities across 8 council regions. The region is also home to a diverse array of archaeological sites and landscapes which have received less research and investment than other parts of Scotland. The Clyde Valley Archaeological Research Framework aims to deliver for the diverse communities of the Clyde, and the archaeological community, through developing a framework with the communities of the region. This is being done through an expansive programme of pop-up public engagement events, targeted archaeological research projects with ‘hard-to-reach’ heritage audiences, and partnerships across and beyond the archaeology sector. Through approaches including co-design, co-production and rapid ethnography, we seek to record, recognise and value the contributions of those we engage with in developing CVARF. We aim to produce a framework which is delivered with and for our communities and to showcase the value of archaeology in supporting health and wellbeing, community building, development and placemaking

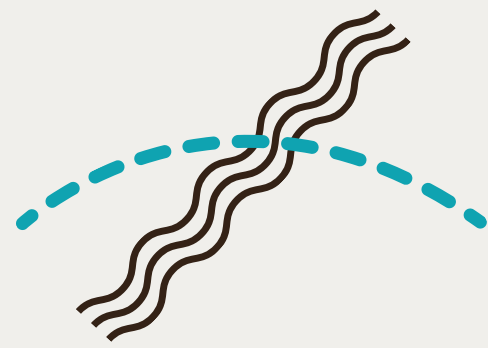


14.25-14.45:

Speaking locally to connect globally: archaeology as a bridge of interconnectivity through time and space

Aurelian Rusu, Independent Researcher

Archaeology excites and intrigues people all over the world. The reaction of a local community to an archaeological project varies according to the impact it has on it. Our paper examines the variation in concordance to the type of the archaeological project, from an academic research one to a development type. A part of the variation rests on the shoulders of archaeologists, on how they communicate their work to the people, on how they involve the local community, be that before the excavation starts, during the works or when publishing the results. Our paper examines those stages and types of interaction and finds that the more accessible the information, the more engaged the community is. The more archaeology unravels the past communities it researches to the present one, the more connected people feel towards the past ones and to archaeology itself. Since archaeology operates at a global level, by creating stories of the past and sharing those from one region and community to another, then its main function to act as a bridge of interconnectivity through time and space is achieved.



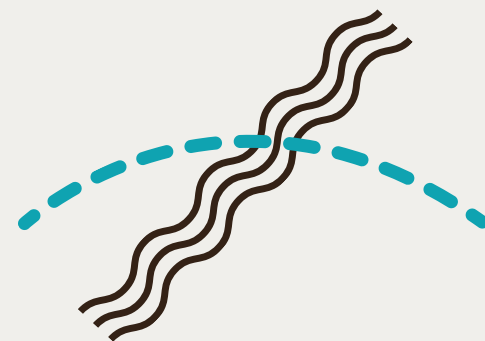
SESSION 7: MEDIA OF THE PAST

15.25-15.45:

‘Clot heb or heb eithaf’: Literary Communication in Early Scotland - A Historical and Archaeological Perspective
Sòlas Kenneth McDonald, The University of Oxford

This paper will examine the value of interdisciplinary work in exploring the rich literary heritage of Early Medieval Scotland (c. 500-850). Beginning with an understanding of the geographical and socio-political layout of this area, encompassing the Picts, the Gaels of Dál Riata, and various Brittonic kingdoms, I shall show how these groups were not isolated but continually interacting. I shall then show how this can be implicated on a literary level, viewing cross-cultural literary communication from an interdisciplinary perspective that encompasses archaeology and historical literary studies. I shall examine evidence for literary production in Early Scotland, including sites at Portmahomack and Dunadd, artistic depictions of books, and the case for unique forms of Pictish literacy preserved in their stone carvings. I shall then draw these together to show evidence for cross-cultural literary transmission by combining this evidence with literary studies, using the cross-fertilisation of heroic poetry as an example. By combining the historical, art-historical, archaeological, and literary.

I hope to demonstrate two things: first, the value of taking an interdisciplinary approach and the information that can be gleaned for all disciplines, and secondly, how this method enhances our appreciation and understanding of Early Medieval Scotland. A period that is often difficult to assess and under-valued in historical research, this approach highlights how combining information from different fields, including the archaeological, can help to reveal a rich and communicative cultural landscape in Early Scotland.



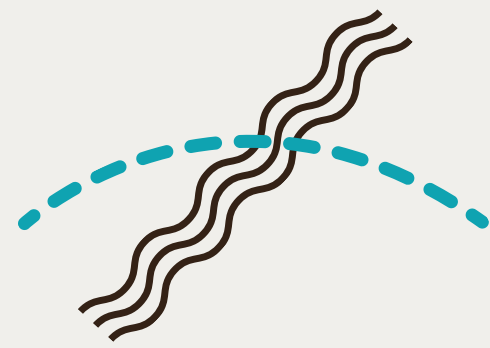
15.45-16.05:

Edinburgh's First Burghers: Revealing the Lives and Hidden Faces of Edinburgh's Medieval Citizens through Innovative Technologies and Interdisciplinary Approaches

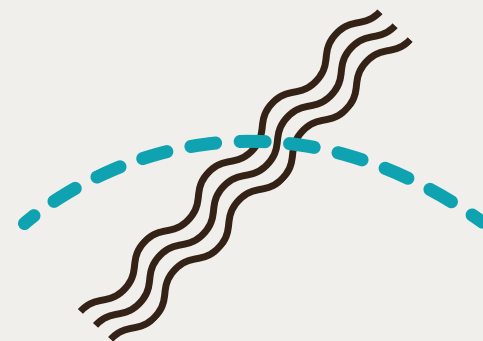
John A Lawson, The City of Edinburgh Council Archaeology Service; Maria MacLennan, Edinburgh College of Art, The University of Edinburgh; Mettje Hunneman, VIDEOLABs Studio; Orsolya Czére, The University of Aberdeen

This presentation showcases the results of an innovative multidisciplinary collaboration brought together to celebrate the 900th anniversaries of both St Giles' Cathedral and Edinburgh. The 'Edinburgh's First Burghers' project utilises new scientific and visual art techniques to explore and investigate 115 medieval burials excavated by The City of Edinburgh Council Archaeological Service (CECAS) in 1981.

Focusing on burials from the foundation of the Cathedral in the 12th century AD, the project also examined two 15th-century pilgrims and a unique group of women interred in the 15th-16th century Lady Chapel. The project bridges longstanding disciplinary gaps between art, archaeology, and the life sciences: marrying new archaeological research by CECAS, together with innovative biomolecular approaches by The Francis Crick Institute (ancient DNA), isotopic analysis by The University of Aberdeen, and new and emergent technologies (3D scanning, haptic touch, artificial intelligence) to create informed facial depictions, produced jointly by The Universities of Dundee and Edinburgh. Central to the project is a high-profile public exhibition at St Giles' Cathedral. The exhibition combines these results with new dynamic visual projections and innovative lighting displays, produced by VIDEOLAB Studio, showcasing the remains of five medieval 'Edinburghers' throughout the cathedral.



This presentation will showcase how these multidisciplinary approaches and the use of digital media and creative storytelling has helped to provide new insights into the foundation of the burgh and church, and the lives of medieval Edinburgh's first inhabitants; restoring visibility and identity to these individuals and making archaeological knowledge accessible to new and diverse audiences.



16.05-16.25:

Carved in Stone: A Storyteller's Guide to the Picts

Heather Christie, ArchaeoPlays

One of the most immersive and reactive forms of storytelling takes place around a table. Tabletop roleplaying games (e.g. Dungeons & Dragons) are a well-established style of cooperative storytelling in which participants create and portray a character, and experience their world or time period through their eyes. These worlds can be fantasy, sci-fi, or delve into our own rich past.

‘Carved in Stone’ is an illustrated encyclopaedia of the Picts in late 7th century AD, serving as a source of inspiration for tabletop roleplaying games, storytellers, and anyone interested in Scotland’s past. It covers everything we know (and many things we don’t!) about the enigmatic people who lived in central, northern and northwestern Scotland during this period. In over 160 pages, the incredibly comprehensive guide touches on ogham, Pictish symbols, the weather, languages, kingdoms, faith, hierarchies, cuisine, fashion, medicine, skills, and more. ‘Carved in Stone’ has been designed to address misconceptions about the past, encourage critical thinking, and spotlight contemporary archaeological research proving that Scotland has been a multicultural, multilingual and socially diverse country for millennia.

Led by Stout Stroat’s Brian Tyrrell and ArchaeoPlays’ Dr Heather Christie FSAScot, and supported through the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland's Dig It! project, this resource is a culmination of four years of collaboration between game designers, writers, archaeologists and a diverse group of artists. This paper will present ‘Carved in Stone’ and how it can be used to engage new audiences and the challenges that in turn poses for using archaeological data for storytelling.