

# SEPTEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

## HERITAGE HUB EXTENSION OPENING DATE!

**Saturday 21st September will see the opening of the new Heritage Hub extension to the public - a major milestone achieved!**

To celebrate, we are having a special event during the day of Highland Dancing with a piper, children's tartan design competition, quizzes and more. All are welcome to the daytime activities, it should be fun!

However, at 5pm we extend a special warm welcome to all our DHS members and committee members to come along for an informal reception, to thank everyone for their generous support and to have a leisurely look around the many new exhibits with refreshments provided.

We do hope that you can join us and look forward to seeing you there.

**OPENING OF  
HISTORYLINKS  
HERITAGE HUB**

**SATURDAY**

**September 21st  
10.30am onwards**

## NEW XMAS CARD ON SALE NOW

Our new Christmas Card is available now from the Museum reception or our online shop.

Based on a superb painting by Peter Wild, the 6" square cards are printed on 100% recycled card.

Available in packs of five they cost just £4 or purchase two packs or more for **£3.50** each!

Available **NOW** while stocks last.

*Proceeds help with Museum running costs.*



## NEW VOLUNTEERS

While you are in the Museum you may meet one of our fabulous new front of house volunteers.

Mary Jane and Isla are both 'alumni' of our Young Curators Club and along with Pola will be curating their own textile exhibition for next season! We also welcome Tara Northen (a marketing specialist) and Kate Robinson, who brings a wealth of local knowledge, to the reception desk.



MJ Currie



Tara Northen



Isla Swanson



Kate Robinson



Pola Traczyk

# HERITAGE HUB EXTENSION PROJECT

Well, it's been a long journey, but a project which started in April 2017 with an expression of interest to the Scottish Land Fund finally comes to fruition on Saturday 21st September 2024 when the Historylinks Heritage Hub will open its doors to members, volunteers and the general public for the first time.



The construction project finally started in October 2023 and after a delay to allow archaeology investigations to be undertaken (more of this in the future) the main contractor (GMR Henderson, Wick) took control of the site on 22nd November.



Aerial view of the site during the Archaeological excavation work

Work continued over the winter and despite the bad weather in January delaying the work by May 4th 2024 we were ready to reopen the existing Museum to the public following an extensive refurbishment of the reception area.

This included a new '**Shops Then & Now**' display curated by our own Museum Assistant, Caroline Seymour, and the installation of three new cabinets to create a Civic Regalia display in the former video room. These cabinets have allowed us to put on display for the first time the Provost's Robes and Chain of Office and the original 1628 Charles I charter making Dornoch a Royal Burgh. They also proved space for our Curator, Lynne Mahoney, to

curate an enhanced **Golf Room** exhibit which tells the story of Dornoch's amazing golf heritage and its famous sons Donald and Alec Ross.

However, it was a further 12 weeks before the completion certificate for the building was awarded by Highland Council on Friday 2nd August. During this time staff and volunteers were working flat out to plan and implement the transformation of the shell of the new building to create: a meeting room with kitchen, two new storerooms (including much-needed additional archive storage space), an office, additional toilets as well as about 50% more space for new exhibitions!

The new display space has been augmented by the installation of three new museum-grade cabinets to host new exhibitions on '**Made in Dornoch**' (an idea from volunteer Heather Martin), '**Childhood in Dornoch**' and '**Tartan Fantastic**' which will feature the two superb outfits shown on the right.



We are hoping to have some panels from the Great Highland Tapestry on display soon, but for the opening we will have the beautiful natural history tapestry on display (left), created by local stitchers as part of Nature Scot's project '*Species on the Edge*'.





However, pride of place in the new exhibition must go to the extraordinary replica railway carriage (*above*) designed and created by David Mahoney. The railway carriage is complete with a bench seat using specially sourced materials to recreate the atmosphere of an old Highland Railways carriage as used on the Dornoch Light Railway.

The space provides the ideal location to sit and watch the extraordinary film of the history of the railway as narrated by, amongst others, long-standing members Jimmy Melville & George Munro.

Other new items on display are a spinning wheel, wool winder and a fleece in a local crafts display (see left) and a targe made by Hugh Ferguson of Highland Armourers on Station Square (*right*), along with some tools that he would have used in his workshop which have been donated by Peter Wild.



This would not have been possible without the fantastic support of you, our members, all our fabulous staff & volunteers and the following funders, to whom we are extremely grateful.

<p><b>HERITAGE FUND</b></p>	<p>Supported by the <b>DORNOCH</b> Common Good Fund <i>Le taic bho</i> Maoin Mathas Coitcheann <b>DHÒRNAICH</b></p>	<p><b>W</b> Garfield Weston FOUNDATION</p>	<p><b>Coastal Communities Fund</b></p>
	<p>THE GORDON &amp; ENA BAXTER FOUNDATION</p>	<p><b>f</b> FOYLE FOUNDATION</p>	<p>THE HUGH FRASER FOUNDATION</p>

Thanks to all our funders for their support of our project

<p><b>Schroder</b> CHARITY TRUST</p>	<p>The Highland Council Comhairle na Gaidhealtachd</p>	<p>Museums Galleries Scotland Supporting Scotland's Museums</p>	<p><b>HIE</b></p>
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# DHS EVENTS CALENDAR 2024/25

*All talks are held in Royal Dornoch Golf Club starting at 7.30pm with free admission.  
There will be a raffle & all of the Club bar facilities will be available.*

<b>Thursday October 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Talk</b>	<b>Royal Dornoch Golf Club</b>	<b>7.30 pm</b>
<p><b>'Scotland beneath the surface' by Bruce Keith</b> Following his successful talks on 'Signposts' &amp; 'Bridges' we welcome back Bruce Keith to head underground for his talk on 'Scotland beneath the surface'.</p>			
<b>Thursday October 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>AGM</b>	<b>Museum Community Room</b>	<b>7.30 pm</b>
<p><b>Annual General Meeting of the Dornoch Heritage SCIO (aka Historylinks Museum).</b> <b>Invitations to follow with Agenda - RSVP to allow us to gauge numbers to cater for.</b></p>			
<b>Thursday November 7<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Talk</b>	<b>Royal Dornoch Golf Club</b>	<b>7.30 pm</b>
<p><b>'The Battle of Littleferry' by Major General P.C. Marriott CB CBE</b> The eagerly awaited talk on the Battle of Littleferry which took place a few miles from Dornoch the day before the Battle of Culloden. Littleferry resident Patrick Marriott will use all his military experience to illustrate this talk.</p>			
<b>Saturday November 9<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Coffee Morning</b>	<b>West Church Hall</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>
<p>Baking, preserves and all the usual sales tables plus Christmas Gifts on sale. <b>FREE entry but donations appreciated</b></p>			
<b>Saturday December 13<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Festive Heritage Film Night</b>	<b>Dornoch Social Club</b>	<b>7.30 pm</b>
<p>A selection of heritage films with a chance to reminisce with friends. Mince Pies and refreshments available! <b>Entry £5 on the door</b></p>			
<b>Friday January 24<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>A Taste of Burns</b>	<b>Dornoch Social Club</b>	<b>7.30 pm</b>
<p>Our traditional entertainment and dinner. <b>Tickets £20</b> - but they're limited so book early by contacting the Museum on (01862) 811275.</p>			
<b>Thursday February 13<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Talk</b>	<b>Royal Dornoch Golf Club</b>	<b>7.30 pm</b>
<p><b>'Reflections on Dalnamain' by Anne Coombs</b> Our very own Anne Coombs looks back on the work of the Historylinks Dalnamain project completed during Covid and reflects on some of the findings and further research done post-project.</p>			
<b>Thursday March 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Talk</b>	<b>Royal Dornoch Golf Club</b>	<b>7.30 pm</b>
<p><b>'The long and winding history of the A9' by Jim Millar</b> Caithness author James Millar, known for his numerous books on local history (e.g. <i>Caithness: A fresh Look at the County</i>) will deliver a talk on the evolution of the Highland drove roads into the A9 trunk road we know today.</p>			
<b>Thursday April 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Talk</b>	<b>Royal Dornoch Golf Club</b>	<b>7.30 pm</b>
<p><b>'Tartan' by Dr Mairi MacPherson</b> A talk to complement the Tartan Fantastic exhibition in the new Historylinks Heritage Hub extension to the museum. <i>More information to follow.</i></p>			