

# SUMMER 2017 NEWSLETTER



**VisitScotland has confirmed that Historylinks retains its five-star visitor-attraction status into 2019!** As a result of changes in the assessment process there will be some work to be done to retain our grading, but as the amazing Historylinks team has shown time after time it is more than capable of meeting the challenge.

There are always opportunities for more input and willing volunteers can be assured of a warm welcome at any time.

## MUSKET BALL

Among the recent additions to the museum archives is a musket-ball which was discovered at the saw mill, embedded in an oak tree from Spinningdale.

Analysis of the wood rings the shot was found in date it to 1832, and it is thought was from a pistol or a musket, most likely fired by a hunter rather than anyone with warlike intent!



## FISH TALES AND OTHER STORIES



Our 2017 project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, is underway.

Recent visitors to the Museum will have spotted the ground work at the side of the Museum in preparation for a new Labrynth to be formed from painted rocks and slates. Outreach work has already started, with residents of Oversteps helping to paint some slates which will be used in the Labyrinth (*see photo left*).

Peter & Lynne have recently recorded the memories of Christina and Bella Mackay from Embo, who were fish gutters and packers in Fraserburgh, Ullapool, Wick and Great Yarmouth. Lynne has also collected other stories about Embo including 'Uncle Sandy's Story' about how Embo came about, the 1884 boat disaster in Embo and the rescue of John Ross by William Cumming off the coast of Embo.



The stories have already been taken out to the community by Lorna Jappy, a storyteller from Brora, and we have done a workshop with Dornoch Puddle Jumpers to enable them to plan the scenes from Uncle Sandy's Story that they wanted to paint onto rock.

## NEW OUTDOOR EXHIBITS

Thanks to Peter Wild, the street side of Historylinks has been enhanced by the display of a splendidly restored horse-drawn plough (without the horse!). The early 20<sup>th</sup> century single-furrow plough, which came from a local croft, is shown in its new setting.

Peter has also secured the donation of two former gas lamps (just visible behind the plough) which have been refurbished and we hope to have them installed adjacent to the double doors.



# FINANCE UPDATE

## GIFT AID:

We are delighted that the Charity has been accepted by HMRC for its GiftAid scheme, which has the potential to offer a welcome boost to our finances at a time when our grant from Highland Council has been reduced by £6,000 per annum. Gift Aid is already an option for admissions to the Museum and the take-up has exceeded our initial expectations. However, DHS membership subscriptions and donations to the Museum can also qualify, increasing your payments by 25% thanks to the HMRC rebate. More details on how **you** can easily increase the value of **your** membership and donations to the Museum will be made available shortly when subscriptions become due.

## SOLAR PANELS:

A huge vote of thanks must go to John Barnes, whose dogged persistence and refusal to take no for an answer has finally borne fruit with Ofgem's insistence that, following the repayment of the initial grant (made possible by the efforts of the Heritage Society), our Feed In Tariff payments for the output of the solar panels at Historylinks be reinstated.

## MUSEUM ADMISSIONS:

As of the 28th August, Museum admissions income is 67% up on the same time last year - this is a remarkable achievement and testament to the hard work of Lynne, Elsa and our band of volunteers.

# FORTHCOMING EVENTS

## 2017

Thursday October 17 <sup>th</sup>	7:30 pm	<b>Annual General Meeting</b> <i>Please note this date in your diary.</i>	RDGC
Saturday November 11 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 am	<b>Coffee Morning</b>	West Church Hall
Thursday November 16 <sup>th</sup>	7:30 pm	<b>Talk: by Dr Jim Mackay</b> 'The Kirkmichael Black Isle Project' - Back from the brink of destruction.	RDGC
Friday December 15 <sup>th</sup>	7:30 pm	<b>Films, Mince Pies and Festive Fun!</b> New unseen films from Historylinks, mysteries and a chance for the audience to reminisce enjoying seasonal refreshments.	Social Club

## 2018

Friday January 19 <sup>th</sup>	7:30 pm	<b>Burns Celebration - DHS style!</b> Our traditional entertainment including a full meal	Social Club
Thursday February 15 <sup>th</sup>	7:30 pm	<b>Talk: by Jim Leslie</b> 'Highland Hospitals'	RDGC
Thursday March 15 <sup>th</sup>	7:30 pm	<b>Talk: by John Macdonald</b> 'The end of steam on the Northern line'	RDGC
Thursday April 19 <sup>th</sup>	7:30 pm	<b>Talk: by Graeme Muckart</b> 'The Embo Marriage Stone' - An Heraldic and Genealogical Ramble!	RDGC
Saturday May TBA	10:30 am	<b>Coffee Morning</b>	West Church Hall

**All meetings are open to the public.**

**MEMBERSHIP** still only £10 per annum which includes unlimited free admission to museum.

With reservation for possible changes.

Please check your emails, [www.historylinks.org.uk](http://www.historylinks.org.uk) or *The Northern Times* for updates.

Along with all those who have contributed to the success of 'collective efforts' such as the Burn's Night, Film Night and Coffee Mornings during the past year, we record our thanks to the speakers who both entertained and informed us: Bruce Field, Dr. Elizabeth Ritchie, Scilla Aitchison, Dr. John Sinclair and Todd Warnock.