

What a fantastic trip today! Glorious weather, an enjoyable ride in our hired minibus (thank you to our driver, Ian, for the smooth run there and back) and a wonderful tour led by Curator, Liz English. We began in the Museum store - an amazing Aladdin's cave with chairs, and pony traps, and farm and domestic tools and cribs and textiles and every artefact imaginable - galore! A quick lunch in a comfortable room set aside for us for the day, and then we set off on the mile-long walk across the site to the reconstructed pre-clearance township. Here Liz showed us around the tacksman's house, the weaver's house and the corn-drying kiln. Walking around the buildings, inside and out, we got a real sense of what life might have been like for the families who lived in 'our' settlement at Dalnamain. Taking a while for our eyes to adjust to the gloom, we took in the strong pervading scent of peat from the central hearth; the hard earthen floor; the thick heather thatch resting on the strong cruck frame; and the wooden box beds built for communal sleeping - 3 or 4 to a bed, each occupant slumbering in a sitting position. Outside, Hanes Schnell demonstrated thatching with heather - well over a thousand bundles of heather required to thatch the tacksman's house alone - hours of work collecting the heather and many more completing the thatching. There simply was not time to take it all in - but this was a wonderful taster and I'm sure we shall each return in our own time before too long. Thank you, Liz and Hanes, and thank you Heritage Lottery Fund for a great day out! #HeritageLotteryFund #HistorylinksMuseum #SutherlandLonghouseProject #HighlandFolkMuseum

