



University of the
Highlands and Islands
Centre for History

Oilthigh na Gàidhealtachd
agus nan Eilean
Ionad Eachdraidh

Centre for History Newsletter — September 2018



Centre for History staff at our teaching away day in Lairg, in June.

As we write, it's early September, the new academic year has begun, and by the time you read this, we will have started teaching to a new round of undergraduate and postgraduate students.

It's been far too long since our last newsletter. We hope this belated one gives a late summer-y flavour of what's been happening at the Centre since autumn 2017. We've had to be brief about some key events, and, no doubt, have missed out a few others. Do let us know what you think of it though, and tell us if there's anything you feel we should be including in these updates, but aren't.

At a glance...

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New staff

The Centre for History's staff numbers (full-time and part-time) have now risen to sixteen. June 2018 saw us welcome to the team in Dornoch two completely new team members.

Full-time lecturer, Dr Philippa Woodcock begins teaching in September and is looking forward to sharing her knowledge of early modern European history with our undergraduate and postgraduate students. Find out more about Philippa's many and varied research interests at <http://bit.ly/2LtTZlx>.

Our new administrative assistant, Alison Munro, works half-time and cycles to work from Badninish, just up the road from Dornoch.

...and changing responsibilities

Three Centre for History staff have been promoted. We were delighted to see Alison MacWilliam become our Curriculum and Research Officer, while Dr Jim MacPherson and Dr Iain MacInnes each became Senior Lecturers.

Iain MacInnes has also recently been appointed Subject Network Leader (Humanities, Education and Gaelic) for three days a week, on a secondment basis until 31 August 2019. Our permanent, part-time lecturers, Dr Kathrin Zickermann, Dr Linsey Hunter, and Dr Stephen Bowman, will be covering for him and we will have the additional assistance of Dr Victoria Hodgson and Dr Amy Hayes. Both Dr Hodgson and Dr Hayes were teaching assistants for us in 2018-19, and will continue to carry out that role this year, alongside Dr Alison Chand, who also began in 2017-18, and Nicola Martin, who joins us this autumn — welcome to Nicola!

Also, after almost eight years of leading on the undergraduate programmes, Dr Iain MacInnes has passed responsibility on to Dr Elizabeth Ritchie, as named Programme Leader, part of a team now including also Dr Lucy Dean and Alison MacWilliam in recognition of the scale of this provision.

Meanwhile, after ten years of leading on the Centre's suite of masters programmes, Dr David Worthington has handed that responsibility on to Dr Iain MacInnes as of 1 August 2018.

Staff videos

With this plethora of staff it might seem a little confusing trying to remember who we all are! In order to guide you, and making the most of Dr Jim MacPherson's excellent directing and editing skills, we made some videos. In these six videos our full time academic staff introduce some of their research interests. We hope you enjoy them and find them useful when considering undergraduate study, postgraduate study, research or other possible collaborations with us.



1 - [Dr David Worthington](#) describes a return migrant from Poland to the Highlands, a case which combines his interests in Scottish migration to central Europe and in Coastal History.

2 - [Dr Iain Robertson](#) explains his background in historical geography, his focus on social protest in the Highlands and Islands, and how that links with his interests in heritage.

3 - [Dr Elizabeth Ritchie](#) tells us about her interests in the social and cultural history of the Highlands and Islands c. 1700-c. 1900, on gender, childhood and emigration

4 - [Dr Jim MacPherson](#) speaks on his interests in the public and collaborative cultural history of modern Britain, and how research on Ireland led him towards Highland history.

5 - [Dr Lucy Dean](#) talks about her work on medieval and early modern ritual, ceremony and the cycle of life, and her interests in material culture, public and community history.

6 - [Dr Iain MacInnes](#) talks about his interest in medieval Anglo-Scottish warfare, chivalry and conduct in war, as well as his more recent focus on modern depictions of medieval society.

More students

2017-18 saw us teach our biggest cohort ever of students on our undergraduate degrees. This being our first year of rolling these degrees out in a newly -validated form, staff delivered several new modules for the first time, while it has been great also to see Dr Hunter and Dr Bowman developing new upper-level modules.

Perhaps most obviously different in feel for undergraduate students in 2017-18 was a new strand of modules training them in different approaches to history: 'What is History?', 'Historians and History' and 'Public History'. Student feedback about each has been extremely helpful and it's always exciting to teach in new areas.

88% overall satisfaction!

We were gratified that History and Scottish History scored so highly in the 2018 National Student Survey, at three points above the UHI average in that element. While students made helpful, critical assessments both there, in our end-of-semester module surveys and elsewhere, it was a joy to receive the following kind of comments via the NSS:

'I have thoroughly enjoyed the course. The module set-up works really well and the assessment strategy has been both challenging and varied. All of the lecturers bring something different to the learning experience and I think they are an asset to the UHI. The learning resources available, especially the online resources, are absolutely fantastic.'

'Staff are enthusiastic in their teaching within modules, this helps students to engage as they can see how much the staff are enjoying the teaching thus allowing us the opportunity to engage more and gain a better sense of enjoyment from the content.'

At taught postgraduate level, student numbers also proved buoyant. An important new addition in 2017-18 was the module 'Rivers Ports and Coasts in European History', which ran as part of the first-year's rollout of our cross-disciplinary Mitt Coastal and Maritime Societies and Cultures, on which we collaborate with the university's Archaeology Institute and Institute of Northern Studies.

Brenda Grant wins dissertation prize

This year's winner of our Professor James Hunter Dissertation Prize for undergraduate students was 2018 graduate of West Highland College UHI, Brenda Grant, for her work *A Woman's Fight: The Glasgow Rent Strike 1915'* Well done to Brenda! We were all tremendously impressed (though not surprised) at the quality of the research and writing that went into the dissertation.



MLitt History of the Highlands & Islands

MLitt History of the Highlands and Islands students, Helen Barton and Neil Bruce, spoke on their research into Highland childhood at the Eighteenth Century Scottish Studies Society conference in Glasgow earlier this year, as part of the panel: 'Information & Improvement: The Old Statistical Account and the County Agricultural Surveys'. Congratulations to both of them, on their hard work and success. Helen was supported by the Student Development Fund to attend and present at the conference. She and Neil are now finalising a blog version for the [Statistical Accounts](#) website.



Helen Barton and Neil Bruce, presenting at the Eighteenth Century Scottish Studies Society conference.

Research and student publications

Neil Bruce's application to the Student Development Fund supported a two-week field trip to South Uist and Benbecula, to undertake research at Stòras Uibhist in the archive of the Gordon/Cathcart 'Long Island' estate, with this research forming the basis of a journal article he's developing. This builds on a piece recently published in *History Scotland*.

Dr Elizabeth Ritchie is currently co-writing an article with Neil and another MLitt student, Kenneth MacLean, on eighteenth-century childhood in the Highlands, which has emerged, similarly, from her MLitt module on gender and the family in the region.

We were heartily impressed to see this [article](#), *Women at Work: Innkeeping in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland 1790–1840* by our MLitt History of the Highlands and Islands graduate, Canada-based Theresa Mackay, in the latest issue of the *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*!

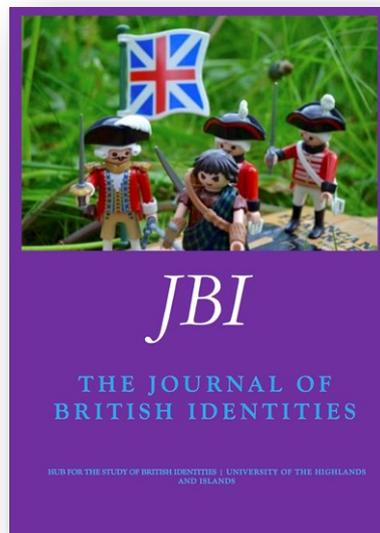


Another graduate of that programme, and current PhD student, Graham Hannaford, published an open access [piece](#) in the *Journal of the Sydney Society for Scottish History*, entitled *The 1845 New Poor Law for Scotland: A Fundamental Change*.



Steve Buchanan at the Canberra Highland Gathering.

Graham also (along with another student of ours 'down under', Steve Buchanan, shown below) attended the Canberra Highland Gathering again in September 2017, and spread the word about our degrees.



Journal news

JBI—The Journal of British Identities

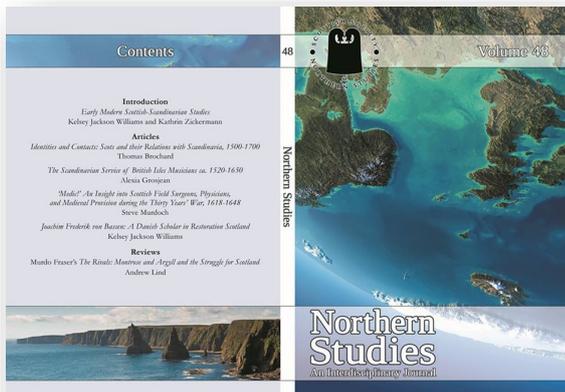
Big congratulations to Dr Jim MacPherson, who edited the first issue of the *Journal of British Identities*, an open access, peer-reviewed, cross-disciplinary journal, which went online last September: <https://jbi.scholasticahq.com> Watch out for an upcoming special issue of JBI on 'Borders, Boundaries and Brexit'.

Northern Scotland Journal

2017-18 saw a *Northern Scotland* special issue, Volume 9, featuring articles on slavery and Scotland from the 2015 'Landscapes and Lifescapes' conference: <http://eupublishing.com/toc/nor/9/1>. The journal will shortly move to two issues per year. Jim MacPherson is a co-editor and Iain MacInnes reviews editor.

Got an article to submit?

If you're interested in submitting a potential article to either of the above journals, please get in touch via the contact addresses provided on the respective websites.



Northern Studies

Dr Kathrin Zickermann of the Centre was busy earlier in the year co-editing this special edition of *Northern Studies* (a very different journal from *Northern Scotland*) focussing on Scottish-Scandinavian relations in the early modern period, and containing contributions by Thomas Brochard, Alexia Grosjean, and Steve Murdoch, among others. See <https://ssns.org.uk/>

Visualising the Iolaire

As many of you will know, Dr Iain Robertson has been working with the University of Abertay and Lewis's Comunn Eachdraidh (historical societies) to create a modern digital memorial to the men who drowned on this vessel in sight of Stornoway, at the beginning of 1919. With Dr Iain Donald of Abertay, he will be talking about the *Visualising the Iolaire* project at a free day-long event in Balallan on Lewis, on 28th September. Find out more and book your place [here](#).



Memorial to the men who died on the Iolaire, Lewis. Image courtesy of Anne Burgess.

Fulbright visitor from Oregon

This spring, the Centre hosted in Dornoch, [Dr Julie Brown](#), a scholar of coastal and maritime literature from Clatsop Community College in Oregon, USA. Funded by the Fulbright Specialist Programme, Julie provided great quotes such as those opposite! More to the point, she gave seminars, school workshops, public lectures, film screenings (in Balintore, [Dornoch](#) and Inverness) and student mentoring, in the field of public history, as well as on coastal and maritime culture and literature of the sea, this providing a great opportunity for our PGT students on our online MLitt Coastal and Maritime Societies and Cultures. She and Dr Worthington were interviewed (on Dornoch Beach) for BBC Radio Scotland's 'Out of Doors' programme. Future collaborations are being planned, so watch this space.



Dr Brown speaking at Balintore, Easter Ross in March.

I can't tell you how impressed I am by your fine faculty at UHI.

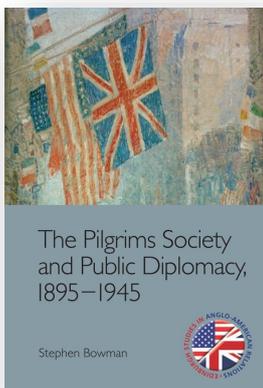
Everywhere I travelled, people spoke with great enthusiasm about UHI and the difference it is making in people's lives.

Inspired by this visit, I am hoping to host a conference in Astoria, Oregon a year from October, exploring further the cultural links between the Scottish Highlands and the Pacific Northwest.

**Dr Julie Brown,
Fulbright scholar 2018**

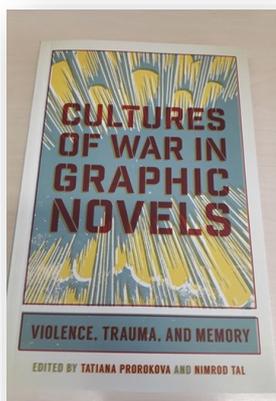
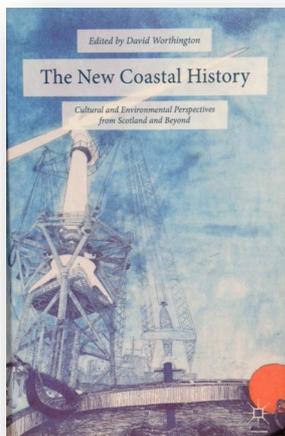
Staff publications

Many Centre staff have published peer-reviewed articles, chapters and edited volumes this year, and have given public lectures, attended workshops and conferences both nationally and internationally (in countries as diverse as Austria, Poland, Norway and soon, Australia and China). Have a look at their individual staff pages on our website to find out more.



Worthy of special mention publication-wise is Dr Stephen Bowman's Edinburgh University Press [book](#), *The Pilgrims Society and Public Diplomacy, 1895-1945*. Congratulations to Stephen!

Dr Worthington's [New Coastal History](#) edited volume was also published last October by Palgrave.



"A Clash of Arms to be Eternally Remembered"
— Dr Iain MacInnes's opening chapter in the new edited volume *Cultures of War in Graphic Novels*.

Forthcoming book by James Hunter

We are extremely excited to learn and follow the research of our Emeritus Professor James Hunter, for a forthcoming book, *Insurrection: Hunger, Riot, Repression and Fightback in Scotland's Famine Winter, 1846-47*. When blight wiped out Scotland's 1846 potato crop, the country, especially the north,

experienced a crisis. A relief effort came too late to assist in the Hebrides and on the west coast of the Highland mainland, and hunger, starvation and death ensued. Meanwhile, towns and villages from Aberdeen to Wick and Thurso, rose up in protest at food prices. These dramatic events finally have their historian, and we're excited to be able to inform you that the book will be published by Birlinn in the second half of 2019.

Speaking of Professor Hunter, he has had another extremely busy year in terms of public events and debates relating to community land ownership. As one example of the impact his work continues to have, it was moving to have it confirmed recently how highly Gaelic rock group, Runrig - as they embarked on their two farewell shows this August - have always regarded his work. We experienced a lump in the throat as we overheard former lead singer Donnie Munro, on BBC Radio Scotland (and, we are told, at both last shows in Stirling) referencing Professor Hunter's 1976 book *The Making of the Crofting Community*, as a key context for, and influence on, the approach of the band in their earlier days.

Cake time!

Mark Stirling, our third year history student, spent a busy August 'in hospital' this summer - a visit which ended with a farewell cake!



Thanks to the UHI Centre for History, I took part in a three-week placement at Dr Gray's staff library in Elgin which provided me with first-hand knowledge of the working environment within a busy medical library.

The staff at Dr Grays were fantastic. They made me feel I was part of the team and immersed me in their day to day work immediately, setting a timetable of activities and research. One of the main highlights was a three-day placement to Aberdeen where I visited NHS Grampian libraries at Cornhill and Aberdeen Royal Infirmary and met with the NHS Grampian archivist.

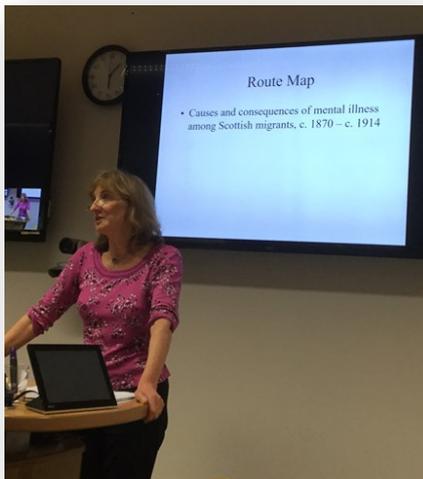
I would like to thank Dr Dean, Dr Worthington and Mrs Peta Broadfoot for setting up this placement.

Seminars and lecture programme

We had a full programme of lectures and seminars this year, including from our visiting professor, John MacKenzie, and from Drs Dean and MacInnes. Video recordings have been placed on YouTube for all of these.

Below is another of our visiting professors at the Centre, Marjory Harper, in action, delivering her truly excellent Inverness lecture for us from December 2017 on twentieth century Scottish emigrants and immigrants.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=moD1tBD-js0>



Scots in Poland

Dr David Worthington took part in several workshops at the National Museum of Scotland this year focusing on Scotland's commercial diaspora, and featuring his own expertise on Poland. This included a successful and enjoyable afternoon and evening at the 'Trading Places' panel discussion last October. It was great to see three Level 8 Perth College UHI students who made the special effort to attend in Edinburgh. Thank you for coming along.

While in Edinburgh, David recorded a two-part video interview with Neil Ogilvy from the 'ELREC Routes to Roots' project, on the history of Scottish migration to Poland.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wllE3kVhziQ>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z1ksd2pHHQw>

Our next seminar is in Dornoch on Wednesday 26 September at 5.30pm. Dr Victoria Hodgson will be speaking on *The Cult of Saints in Medieval Scotland: the Cistercian liturgical evidence*. All welcome!

James I/Charterhouse project update

Much has been going on as regards this project. Watch Dr Lucy Dean and Professor Richard Oram (University of Stirling) discuss the maps and documents surrounding it [here](#). Most recently, they spoke about *A New Brand of Kingship in Scotland? James I and the Carthusian Charterhouse at Perth* at the National Trust for Scotland's Bannockburn site.



Postgraduate research day

We had another highly successful Postgraduate Research Day in Dornoch in June, our biggest ever, chaired once again by Jim MacPherson. Our PhD students did us proud again, in displaying an extraordinarily impressive range of research on the Highlands and Islands, a contribution that is crucial in helping develop and strengthen the Centre's position. They have also been giving papers at major gatherings, such as at the International Conference of Historical Geographers, where ESF-funded student, Linda Ross, presented alongside Dr Linsey Hunter and Dr Iain Robertson.

Meanwhile, Wade Cormack (centre) received his doctorate in Inverness this summer. Dr David Worthington and Dr Elizabeth Ritchie were there to celebrate with him. Congratulations Dr Cormack!





Contact the Centre for History

For further information about our undergraduate, postgraduate and research programmes, or for additional details about any of the above articles, please contact us:

Tel: 01847 889621
Email: history@uhi.ac.uk
Web: www.history.uhi.ac.uk



Follow us on social media

The Centre for History is very active in social networking and many of our staff have their own twitter following. The following sites are all run by staff—why not take a look?



Facebook

UHI Centre for History main page @UHIHistory
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/UHI-Centre-for-History/137321449670658?fref=ts>

UHI Centre for History group
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/91416853553/>

Northern Scotland @NorthernScotEUP
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Northern-Scotland/454289977980405>

Moray Firth History @MorayFirth
www.facebook.com/MorayFirthHistory

Firths and Fjords: A Coastal History Page
<https://www.facebook.com/FirthsandFjords/>

Scottish-Polish Historical Links @ScottishPolish
www.facebook.com/ScotlandPoland?fref=ts

Blogs

HistoryLinksDornoch blog
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Hub for the Study of British Identities @UHI BritStudies
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Centre for Scotland's Land Futures Blog
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