



## NEWSLETTER No.17 - Summer 2019

### TARBERT - OUR CASTLE OF KINGS

Our dig is completed, but for some backfilling and removal of excess stone. If you would like any stone for your garden projects, it is free - just contact us to discuss.

The dig has exceeded our objectives, with more volunteers and young people involved than planned. Finds of medieval pottery, etc., and the discovery of a never before recorded main entrance from the west, with dressed stone reveals showing an opening some 3m wide, door check and portcullis slot. This entrance must have been imposing; approached by a ramp, with the older castle on the right, and King Robert the Bruce's tower on the left. There would be an archway over, with a compartment above to allow the portcullis to be raised.



*Above: Entrance excavation, showing door check and portcullis slot*

The weather was great, and, apart from having to abandon the site one day at lunchtime due to midges, every programmed day saw enthusiastic, if sometimes very heavy, work by volunteers and our professional archaeologist Roddy Regan. Kilmartin Museum's education team managed large groups of young people from schools in Kintyre and Knapdale and great weekend organised by Tarbert Guides. Return visits will be made to schools in a feedback program by the education team.

**We wish to record our thanks to ALL those involved, including funders, and I think we can say it was enjoyed by everyone who took part.**

Roddy will now be taking some time to prepare, study, and seek, where required, expert advice on finds and features discovered and their significance in the castle's story. The final report will be published early next year, and will be available to download through our website.

Tarbert Castle Trust (TCT) will also assess how to best interpret results for visitors, and Tarbert & Skipness Community Trust (TSCT) directors have agreed that, where possible, finds will be displayed at "*Tarbert Life*" - the village's fascinating new heritage centre.

#### **WHAT NEXT?**

**Those who took part, and others, are asking if we will do more exploration, and I think this is a certainty in future years if funding can be achieved.**

We've received a grant from the Tree Council for more tree planting, and Rural Skills pupils from Tarbert Academy will assist with this in the autumn.

We're continuing to monitor the numbers accessing the site, with more than 6000 visitors during the dig, most interested in what we were doing and asking numerous questions.

**Meantime, due to 100% commitment during the last two months, a great deal of work is required on the orchard, woodland, and the site generally, and we need all the volunteer help we can muster.**

Our next volunteer work party will be the first Saturday in August (Saturday 3 Aug), but meantime, if you can help, there is strimming and cutting back growth that can be tackled anytime. **E-mail or phone to discuss - [sonamarg@btinternet.com](mailto:sonamarg@btinternet.com) or 01880 820643**