



K i r k m i c h a e l T r u s t

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Community newsletter September 2016

Kirkmichael's walls start to climb towards the sky – and the roof is next!

Great progress this summer! Anyone who has passed Kirkmichael recently will notice that the **blue protective sheeting** which once protected the fragile gables has gone – and the building suddenly looks much bigger and taller. The skilled LTM Ltd team – which includes several **local apprentices** being trained in traditional



building skills - has been gently mortaring, straightening and consolidating the walls.

Recycled old slates, carefully selected to match the surviving original Ballachulish/Easdale slate, are awaiting installation. These will be used in diminishing courses ranging from 'Duchesses' (24" x 12") and 'Countesses' (20" x 10") right down to wee 'undersized' (10" x 6") to make the new roof look more steeply angled than it really is, traditional in the Highlands. Even

broken slate will be recycled as a Grant-Dunbar Mausoleum base layer, to prevent weed regrowth.



In **July and August** we finally saw **works commence** on site, planned a guided walk of Ltearn and Alness visited **Caithness Horizons** to view their collection of Pictish Stones, **assisted expert photography team John Borland and Zoe Ballantine** from Historic Environment Scotland (thank you both!) in photographing, recording and assessing the current condition of **all the medieval Resolis Stones identified to date** and issued a **mid-project outputs report** which shows we are ahead of most public engagement targets to date. Visitors also enjoyed our **Naturally Kirkmichael event** held jointly with **RSPB and Butterfly Conservation Highland** (thanks again, folks!): among the more unusual wildlife identified was this beautiful **Yellow-Shouldered Thorn moth** (enjoy more event pix on www.facebook.com/KirkmichaelTrust) photographed by Andrew Dowsett.

Please support our **Building Conservation Day**, a two-site **celebration of traditional building skills** on **Saturday 17th Sept**. This starts at Kirkmichael itself from **12 noon until 14.30** with LTM demonstrations of **lime-burning** (fantastic spectacle, lots of hissing and sizzling!) and stone conservation. Our day then continues **15.00 – 18.00** at the big **Resolis Primary School Country Show** (NB £5 entry charge to school funds includes a dance in the evening). Our relocated marquee will offer **'ask the expert'** on building conservation matters, further demonstrations and displays of conservation work, **free giveaways** of Historic Environment Scotland Conservation advice packs and free Kirkmichael Creative **make & take crafts**.



Find us too in the superb new 2016 **Highland Archaeology Festival events programme** (1st – 14th October, see www.highlandarchaeologyfestival.org/calendar.asp, www.kirkmichael.info and www.facebook.com/KirkmichaelTrust). This will include **bookable free training courses in building conservation techniques** such as limeburning, stone masonry techniques and metalworking (final dates to be confirmed, please **call or email Verity now on 01381 620575/verity@interpretaction.com** if you are interested and haven't already been in touch) - she will let you know as these are finalised.

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