Welcome to the Winter 2020 edition of the volunteer newsletter

I would like to start this issue by wishing you and your families a Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year.

Whilst the HES volunteering programme has been paused this year for everyone’s safety, we still greatly appreciate the contribution from each and every volunteer and we’d like to reassure you that plans are being put in place that will hopefully allow us to welcome you back as soon as it is safe to do so, and as long as you are happy to return.

The previous issue of the volunteer newsletter was released just before the excitement of Volunteers Week, and this issue will be released following the exciting launch of the Make Your Mark Campaign (MYM) on 4 December 2020.

The MYM campaign aims to increase the number and diversity of volunteers within the heritage sector and is something Historic Environment Scotland is extremely pleased to be a partner in. As an organisation that has benefitted greatly from the outstanding effort of volunteers, we are enthusiastic for what MYM will bring and there’s more information later in the Newsletter.

Finally, I hope you and your families are safe and well and I look forward to what next year will bring.

Alex Paterson
Chief Executive
Historic Environment Scotland

The Make Your Mark Campaign

The Make Your Mark in Volunteering Campaign launched on 4 December and aims to increase the Numbers and Diversity of Volunteers within the Heritage sector. The goal is to encourage the Heritage Sector to take the lead on inclusive volunteering. Organisations that sign up for the campaign will benefit from shared learning, best practice, collaboration, and a shared recruitment campaign.

For more information on the Make Your Mark Campaign visit
www.makeyourmark.scot
Make Your Mark in Volunteering
Rochelle McDonald, Front of House Officer at The Engine Shed, discusses Make Your Mark

Make your Mark is a sector-led campaign that has been developed to increase the diversity and numbers of people volunteering within the Heritage sector.

The Heritage sector is taking the lead on inclusive volunteering for all by sharing the wealth of experience it has gained over the last decade to share with all heritage partners who wish to sign up, giving good practical advice showcasing successful case studies, and increasing recruitment reach by joining forces and connecting heritage Volunteer Coordinators nationwide.

Right now there are underrepresented groups who we know would be a great resource to the Heritage Sector, would really add value, and who themselves will get great benefit and self-reward for their efforts. This will offer our heritage visitors a better sense of community and culture and give our volunteers the opportunity to contribute in representing the diversity of Scotland’s population.

As a Volunteer Coordinator for HES, I will find this really useful as not everyone who wishes to volunteer will be right for certain volunteering roles (sometimes the shoe doesn’t fit), so to be able to signpost volunteers to roles that will benefit them and hopefully help them grow in confidence and gain the skills to add value will greatly benefit themselves and the volunteering role they find themselves in.

Activity on Equality and Inclusion in HES: an update from Equalities Manager Celia Sweeney

This is just a short update on where we are at the moment in terms of reviewing our priority actions for the next four years. We are analysing the feedback from our public survey and will be exploring and seeking approval to focus on activity to improve the diversity of our Board, Employees and Volunteers. This aspiration won’t be new to you as it is something that a number of heritage organisations have identified as important.

This year in particular the impact of Covid-19 has highlighted significant social inequalities where minority groups, young people and people with disabilities have experienced a disproportionate impact from the effects of Covid-19. Loneliness and isolation has contributed to a significant rise in mental health challenges for young and old with the impact that social distancing and lack of face-to-face contact has had on wellbeing. We know that people volunteer for all sorts of reasons, one of which is the social aspect of getting together with others to participate in something of interest as well as the opportunity it presents to share knowledge and skills with others. We are keen to encourage people back to volunteering with HES when it is safe to do so and we want to be able to promote the benefits of volunteering to and the contribution it makes towards health and wellbeing for all.
Volunteering at Craignethan Castle
Phil Manners, one of our Volunteer Guides, tells us all about his role at Craignethan Castle

I’m English and had a very limited knowledge of Scottish history! However, every day is a learning day and so I performed some research about the castle, its history, inhabitants and some background Scottish historical facts.

Having passed the interview stage, I and my new colleagues were given an introductory tour and notes about the castle, so we set about familiarising ourselves with the location. Finally, we were now ready and eager to be let loose on the unsuspecting public.

My first few tours were slightly nerve wracking in case I didn’t know the answer to questions. The great thing about working in the team here, is that we were all in the same boat. We shared our experiences and knowledge which allowed us to “polish” our presentations and add some anecdotes.

Also, walking around the castle we would see new things which led us to find out more about the buildings. Even now, there always seems something new to discover.

Like most HES properties, Craignethan is “tucked away” so it is always interesting to find out how visitors discovered us and where they came from. Whilst we get a number of local people, the vast majority have never visited before. On warm sunny days the outer courtyard is full of families having a picnic and enjoying the surroundings.

Craignethan offers something for everyone!

If you’d like to share a story about your volunteering experience with HES, let us know through the contact details on the back page.

SCRAN Online Image Database
www.scran.ac.uk is now free to access, and showcases images, sounds and videos of Scottish culture and history.

In particular we have over 40,000 images from The Scotsman newspaper, and the caption information is sometimes a little lacking. So we need your help!

Go to http://www.scran.ac.uk/s/scotsman and if, while browsing, you see an image that you can add information to, click the “Correct or Add info” button on the right. Make sure you’re logged in—subscriptions are now free.

Here’s your starter for 10: can you name any members of the Scottish Basketball team from 1954?
Castle Word Search
Can you find all ten of the hidden Historic Environment Scotland Castles?

C: Corgarff
R: Craignethan
U: Urquhart
T: Tantallon
A: Caerlaverock
B: Aberdour
D: Dirleton
B: Blackness
a: Dumbarton
D: Doune

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