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Stobs Camp Project Quarter 3 Report October - December 2018

Executive Summary

During this period the project team focused on re-building the memorial stone in the former PoW cemetery ahead of its unveiling on Armistice Sunday. November was a busy month with the launch of the Internment Research Centre at Hawick's Heritage Hub and the opening of Hawick Museum's War Memorial Room. The Hut Search Team surveyed a possible Stobs building at Makerstoun and drone surveys of the PoW Camp began. Three talks to local history societies were given and local primary schools had guided tours at Stobs. Altogether 504 volunteer hours were recorded over the quarter.

Introduction & Background

Stobs Camp was a military training camp prior to the First World War but then became an internment camp for German civilians and military and naval prisoners. It is internationally important as so much of it remains upstanding or visible. The local community and other stakeholders are keen to see the site properly recorded and receive adequate recognition.

The Stobs Camp Project is a community project being led by Archaeology Scotland (AS) co-operating with Historic Environment Scotland, Scottish Borders Council Archaeology Service, Live Borders Museums and Archives, Hawick Archaeological Society, Hawick Callants Club, Project Hawick, Borders Family History Society, University of Aston, Edinburgh Napier University, landowners and other organisations (including Youth Borders and Voice Of My Own), individual volunteers and local schools.



Progress towards HES grant outcomes:

Outcome 2 – Management and maintenance of the historic environment is improved

Memorial stone

Work continued on the reinstatement of the PoW memorial and stone steps in the former cemetery at Stobs. Under the supervision of a commissioned stonemason volunteers began building the two-and-a-half metre-high memorial based on a photograph taken during the First World War (Fig.1). The team aimed to match each course with the original stones where possible. Scaffolding was used to ensure the site was safe at all times and to minimise the amount of lifting required (Fig.2). When the original memorial was demolished in the early 1960s the central inscription had been lost so a handful of volunteers learnt how to carve a new plaque (Fig.3). This work undertaken by the volunteers also meets Outcome 7 (*Conservation and/or archaeological skills are enhanced*).

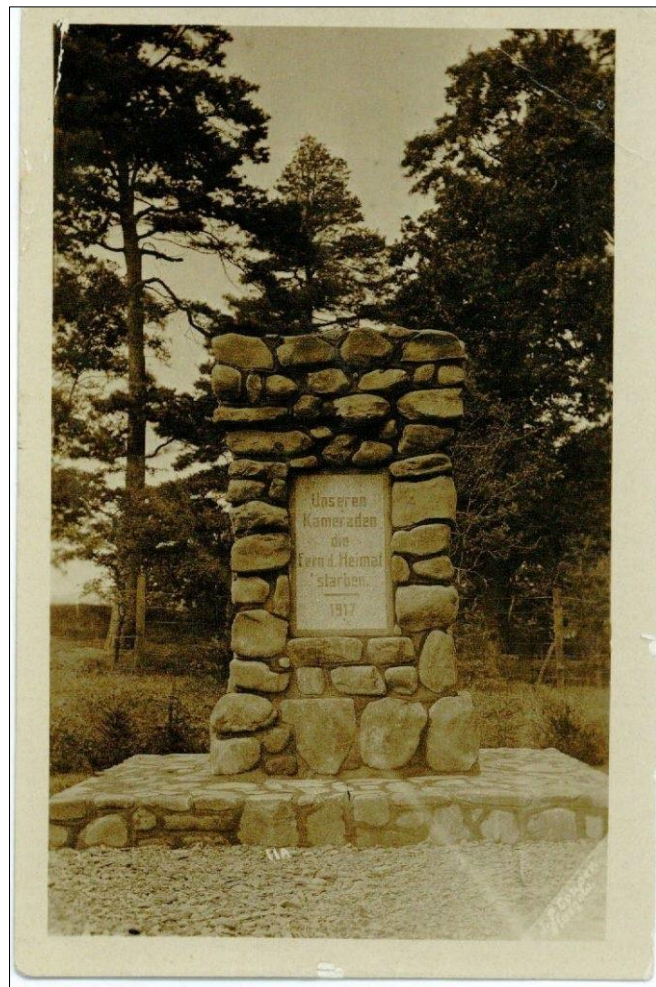


Fig.1. Memorial stone in the former cemetery, image taken during the First World War



Fig.2. The memorial rebuild in progress, October 2018



Fig.3. A volunteer carving the new memorial inscription, November 2018

On Sunday 11 November 2018, after four hundred volunteer hours, the Stobs Camp Project unveiled the re-instated memorial to remember the German civilians, soldiers and sailors who had died at Stobs during the First World War. Speakers at the Armistice ceremony included Colonel Jean-Bernard Lacroix, Minister and Security Co-ordinator at the German Embassy in London, Margaret Elliott, Deputy Lieutenant of Roxburgh, Ettrick and Lauderdale and the Reverend Michael Scouler. The Hawick Saxhorn Band played two pieces of short music and a poem written by a pupil from Hawick High School was read out by one of the Project volunteers. Colonel Lacroix read out the names of the German prisoners who had died and this was followed by a two-minute silence (Fig.4).



Following the Armistice ceremony the Project received an overwhelming response to the new memorial. This included a 2-page article in The Hawick Paper. A film of the event is available on the website <http://www.stobscamp.org/unveiling-of-stobs-memorial-armistice-day-2018/>



Fig.4. Margaret Elliott, D.L. and Colonel Jean-Bernard Lacroix unveiling the memorial, 11 November 2018

Outcome 6 – Economic activity undertaken in and around the historic environment will be increased

Launch of Internment Research Centre

On 3 November the Internment Research Centre was launched at the Heritage Hub in Hawick. The centre is open to everyone interested in past and present internment throughout the world. Its resources offer fascinating insights into the home front experience, military history, minorities in



wartime and family history. We have been a partner to this project with Aston University, the Heritage Hub and the Centre's advisory board, primarily contributing resources for the archive and the services of our Digital Archivist. Speakers at the launch included leading scholars on First World War internment in the UK and Regensburg, Germany who were introduced by Jens-Peter Voss, German Consul General from Edinburgh.

Hawick Museum War Memorial Room

On the same day Hawick Museum launched their permanent War Memorial Room which includes artefacts from Stobs Camp. The newly refurbished room tells the stories of Hawick's people in Britain's wars – from the Napoleonic to recent conflicts. We have worked closely with the museum curator to develop the content for an interactive display on Stobs (Fig.5). It includes drone footage of the site, a tour of the camp, oral reminiscences and artefacts from Stobs. The temporary exhibition "Behind the Wire – Civilian Internment in the British Empire 1914-1919" was also launched and will be at the museum until March 2019 before it begins a tour of museums across Europe. The Stobs Camp Project supplied images and advice to the exhibition's development team.

Both these events and Armistice meant many visitors to Hawick needing accommodation and sustenance which it is estimated contributed around £5000 to the local economy.



Fig.5. The Stobs interactive display at Hawick Museum's War Memorial Room



Outcome 11 – Existing and new audiences have opportunities to access and learn about the historic environment.

Postcard and photograph annotation

Throughout the autumn and winter months work continued on annotating the vast collection of images of Stobs. By December over 550 postcards had been added to our catalogue and the CALM archive at the Heritage Hub in Hawick.

Updates to the Project website

Selected images were added to the timeline on the project website (stobscamp.org) alongside newspaper stories and biographies supplied by the Borders Family History Society. Our Digital Archivist is also working on collating information from Garrison Arrests and Poor Law records. Development and content of the website timeline continues.

Heritage Hero Awards & Youth Engagement

Our young volunteers continue to work towards the Gold Award and are also volunteering on other projects around the local area. Drumlanrig Primary School, who have toured the Camp, began a new project in December to build a scale model of the PoW Camp.

Project reporting

The Project has been asked to submit a 3,000-word article for the annual Hawick Archaeological Society journal. This will cover project activity from 2016-2018. An update on fieldwork activity was also submitted to Discovery and Excavation in Scotland (DES) for the 2018 publication.

Learning Resources

In collaboration with the Aston University project learning resources for Primary age children is underway and a further community resource is also under construction.

General Public

The anniversary of Armistice was a media event across the UK and our activities at Stobs Camp were brought to the attention of the BBC who came and recorded a short piece which went out on BBC Radio Scotland and Reporting Scotland on several occasions over that weekend. This, and the press coverage, led to a spike in visits to both the AS website and stobscamp.org showing people from all over the world has engaged in some way.

Outcome 12 – Communities are empowered to take an active role in understanding and enhancing the historic environment

Hut Search Group

On 4 October the Hut Search Group visited Makerstoun Village Hall to survey a potential Stobs hut (Fig.6). The building was opened as a village hall in July 1927. In addition, a new Nissen Hut was identified at Cauldmill by a librarian from Hawick Library. Plans are being made to return in the spring to conduct a building survey.



Fig.6. Makerstoun Village Hall, October 2018

Genealogical research

Researchers at the Borders Family History Society continue to look for connections to prisoners, internees and British soldiers' families. During this quarter they have been researching over one hundred Kings Own Scottish Borderers who were believed to have been at Stobs. They were subsequently drowned when their ship, the Royal Edward, sunk in the Aegean in August 1915.

Drone survey

Flight plans for a drone survey have now been plotted and flying began in October (Fig.7). The survey will include a 3D scan of the PoW Camp, close recording of the upstanding buildings and some high-level filming of the Barns Moss firing range.



Fig.7. Early render of Drying Hut at the entrance to the PoW Camp



Newspaper research

Almost 500 newspaper articles on Stobs Camp have been researched and summarised by a team of volunteers. The majority of these are Scottish Borders newspapers but The Scotsman has also been included. Selected entries have been added to the website timeline. Research continues with a particular focus on the First World War years.

Social media

The Stobs Camp Project Twitter account now has 665 followers has made over 1000 posts with 675 likes and hundreds of retweets.

Outcome 13 – People and communities enjoy the historic environment

Theatrical performance

The Stobs Camp Project commissioned the Borders Youth Theatre (BYT) to stage an evening performance of 'Delving Deep' at Hawick High School in early November (Fig.8). Delving Deep is a contemporary multimedia performance inspired by local poetry written during the First World War, exploring the impact of war on the lives of young people. BYT ran daytime workshops for the pupils of Hawick High and gave a stunning and moving performance for the general public in the evening. A spokesperson from the school said that following the performance some of the pupils had enquired about joining the theatre group. BYT subsequently repeated the workshops and performance at Eyemouth High School.



Fig.8. Marching across the battlefield, a scene from Delving Deep, picture courtesy of Kat Gollock



Tours at Stobs

The Project Officer led illustrated tours at Stobs during this period. These were for 40+ children from Tweedbank Primary School (22 October) and 150+ pupils from Drumlanrig Primary School (14 and 21 November). Each tour focused on the history of the camp prior to, and during, the First World War and visited key areas including the British Guard camp and the former PoW cemetery. The tour culminated in a stunning view of the PoW Camp.

Talks

During this quarter the Project Officer was invited by the Ancrum & District Heritage Society, the Selkirkshire Antiquarians and Maxton Meets to speak about the past, present and future of Stobs.

Outcome 14 – Collaboration across the sector is enhanced.

Our work with the Internment Research Centre (<http://www.stobscamp.org/irc/>), Hawick Museum War Room and Borders Youth Theatre, as mentioned above, have meant much collaboration with actors, artists, film-makers and academics to ensure the success and widest reach of the events mentioned above.

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