



FALLAGO ENVIRONMENT FUND



Stobs Camp Project Report January - July 2019



Executive Summary

During this period the Project team focused on key desk-based activities including updating website content, newspaper research, postcard annotation, project evaluation and development of the Internment Research Centre catalogue. Drone surveys of the PoW Camp continued and talks were given at two international conferences. Volunteers were recognised for their contribution to a national First World War Home Front database and local schoolchildren were inspired to get creative.

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.



Aims & Objectives

The aims of the **Stobs Camp Project** are to encourage both local people and the global online community to:

- Better understand Stobs Camp and the role it played in the First World War
- To value, share and commemorate Stobs and the people connected to it
- To protect Stobs Camp for future generations

Progress towards aims:

Objective 1 – to better understand Stobs Camp and the role it played in the First World War

Home Front Legacy award

On 20th February Project volunteers received an award in recognition of their work to record the buildings, or the remains of buildings, at Stobs and to locate potential structures auctioned off by the MOD in the early 1920s and late 1950s. Using archaeological techniques and the Home Front Legacy (HFL) toolkit provided by the Council for British Archaeology and Historic England volunteers had trained how to interrogate military sites.

The search for the buildings outwith the camp had led to 21 buildings around the Scottish Borders being found with a possible connection to Stobs. At Stobs itself the volunteers spent over 100 hours measuring, drawing and photographing 16 structures in the camp, including buildings in the guard camp, an officer's hut, two drying sheds, training huts, a water treatment tank, fortification trenches and the Stobs War Memorial. In groups they wrote site descriptions and assessed building conditions. They then helped to write the final reports with site sketches, scale drawings and photographs for upload to the Home Front Legacy database.

The project submitted 23 records to the database in August 2018 after starting the work early in 2017. In recognition the HFL Project awarded the Stobs Camp team a Champion's certificate for the contribution they had made. The previously unrecorded data captured by the Stobs Camp team will now contribute to the local Historic Environment Record and Discovery & Excavation in Scotland which will lead to entries in Canmore, the national database. The work the team has completed so far will help to inform the future understanding of Stobs and the role it played during the First World War. It will also support future decisions on conservation and the creation of a management plan.

Hut Search

The Project Officer and a small team of volunteers visited Cragneithan Castle, Lanarkshire to survey a potential Stobs hut. Using the toolkit provided by the Home Front Legacy initiative the team assessed the hut's condition, sketched and measured the structure and discussed the current risks and threats to its continued survival. The team concluded that it was comparable to First World War wooden huts previously visited. Although the known history of the Cragneithan hut supports a connection to Stobs no definitive evidence has been found so far. Further documentary investigation of Historic Environment Scotland records may shed more light on the hut's origins.



Project staff and volunteers with the Champion award

Model of Stobs PoW Camp

Following tours at Stobs in November 2018 pupils from Drumlanrig Primary School in Hawick made a model of the PoW Camp and cemetery. A small article appeared in The Hawick Paper and Archaeology Scotland presented Heritage Hero Awards to all the pupils involved.



Pupils from Drumlanrig Primary School with their Stobs Camp model, January 2019



Postcard and photograph annotation

Work continued on annotating the vast collection of images of Stobs. Completed images were added to our catalogue and the CALM archive at the Heritage Hub in Hawick. The catalogue now contains over 1550 images and searchable references to Stobs Camp.

Objective 2 – to value, share and commemorate Stobs and the people connected to it

Updates to the Project website

There was a concerted effort over the winter months to update the website (stobscamp.org). This included:

- the addition of progress reports
- the inclusion of a new Educational Learning Resource
- the upload of oral reminiscences and transcriptions
- investigation of a replacement Timeline tool
- a celebration of the volunteers reaching 4,000 hours on the project
- the addition of all newspaper & magazine articles published in 2018
- the creation of an Internment Research Centre (IRC) page which includes links to the Heritage Hub in Hawick and a map of First World War internment camps

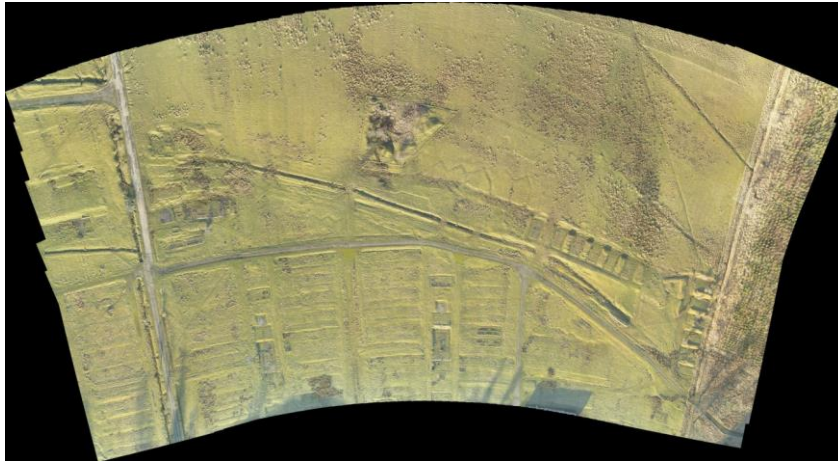


Interactive map of First World War internment camps on the Stobs Camp Project website (<http://www.stobscamp.org/irc/>)



Drone survey

Drone surveys were in progress during this period. The pilot spent time stitching images together to ensure there were no gaps in the flight plans.



Drone image featuring Camps C and D, February 2019

Celebration event

We held a celebration event at the Evergreen Hall, Hawick at the end of April to showcase our work to the public and congratulate the volunteers on all they had done. It was attended by around 75 people. Members of the public continue to come forward to share artefacts and information on Stobs that they have unearthed. The amount of Stobs material shows no sign of abating.



At the Evergreen Hall, Hawick, April 2019



Newspaper research

Over 670 newspaper articles on Stobs have now been researched and summarised by a team of volunteers. The majority of these are Scottish Borders newspapers with the Southern Reporter now complete. Current focus is on completing The Scotsman for the First World War years. Selected entries have been added to the website timeline.

Project Book

Plans to publish a community book began by recording over 20 conversations with volunteers and partners to gather their experiences of working on the project. The findings of the project were consolidated and interspersed with comment from the volunteers. The book is currently with the graphic designer and will be printed and distributed to all supporters early in the autumn.

Talks

During this period the Project was invited to speak at the 'Legacies of the First World War' conference in Birmingham, 22-23 March and at the 'Knockaloe, a local, national, global perspective' conference on the Isle of Man, 28-30 March. These conferences brought Stobs and the Project to a wider audience and were an excellent example of collaborative working.



Centre for WW1 Internment conference, 28th March 2019

Andy delivered talks to Borders Family History Society and Lauderdale Probus, attended prize-giving at Drumlanrig Primary School (who made the wonderful model of the camp) and took a school from Newcastle on a tour of the camp and surrounds. He will also lead a tour in September as part of Doors Open Days.

We were also contacted by a Channel 5 production company who wanted to highlight the project as an interesting historical feature to add to their programme called *Walking Britain's Lost Railways*. We were delighted to oblige as were some of the volunteers and we expect this to be aired in the autumn. Just shortly after this we were then contacted by the BBC to provide something similar as the historical feature in the BBC's *Antiques Road Trip* due to air in early 2020.

We have written the content for two Interpretation Panels and they are also with the designer. Advertising planning permission was sought for these. The first panel will be located in the former cemetery and the second panel will be installed overlooking the PoW camp.



Scottish Borders Council has now installed a brown Heritage sign at the entrance road to Stobs. This is something the volunteers very much wanted to see happen.

The exhibition that was created as a partnership between the IRC and Stobs Camp Project has travelled to several locations including Birmingham and Oldcastle, Ireland. Hereafter it will travel to: Pietermaritzburg, South Africa; Salt Lake City, USA; Saskatoon, Canada; Barbados, Eastern Caribbean and return to Newcastle by the end of 2019.

Social media

The Stobs Camp Project Twitter account now has over 700 followers.

Objective 3 – to protect Stobs Camp for future generations

Cemetery area

Although we proudly claimed to have finished the memorial by Armistice 2018 it wasn't quite to the standard that the volunteers and stonemason would have liked. We returned in early spring and summer to tidy up the mortar, clean off any mortar staining and to rebuild the stone benches that sat nearby. We also sharpened up the inscription prior to perhaps picking out the lettering in black paint at a later date. The group would also like to see the monument protected from sheep by erecting some tasteful fencing. This has yet to be sourced.



Completed bench



Project evaluation

Rob Robinson Heritage Consulting was asked to evaluate and review the Project. A questionnaire was designed and volunteers, partners and teachers were invited to take part. 29 volunteers completed the survey. The consultant's findings were that:

"The Stobs Camp Project was ambitious, aiming to deliver a wide variety of outputs in a rural community, and is set to deliver all of these with only minor alterations to two elements based on necessity and maximising value. Indeed, in many respects the Project has delivered well beyond its targets, not only in terms of volunteers involved and people trained but also in terms of tangible outputs.

Some of the most significant successes of the Project are where the project has gone the extra mile to deliver additional benefits beyond those initially identified. For example, the rebuilding of the war memorial and the centenary event, the considerable media coverage throughout the project, the school resource pack and maximising project partnerships to deliver theatrical performances and providing valuable resources for the Hawick Museum exhibitions and the Heritage Hub (Internment Research Centre), all enabling the project to reach a larger and more diverse audience.

The project is set to complete by the end of June and already there is a strong desire (by staff, partners and volunteers) to continue the Project into the future now that the appetites for Stobs heritage are whetted, volunteers are enthused and so many people have been trained."

Stobs Camp Project Team

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Links

Website

www.stobscamp.org

Internment Research Centre

<http://www.stobscamp.org/irc/>

Twitter

@stobscamp