

Intangible Cultural Heritage in Scotland Newsletter

www.ichscotlandwiki.org



Weavers' town adds traditions to Wiki

At Central Library, staff from Paisley Museum heard how their knowledge of the area's material culture could be used to help build the national inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Then local history and heritage groups as well as members of several other organisations met at a Community Centre in the town for a hands-on workshop. After a brief explanation of 'what ICH is' (customs, traditional skills, knowledge and superstitions still practiced by anyone living in Scotland) Linda Gunn showed her audience how easy it was to add examples of ICH to the Wiki. No sooner had Local History Librarian, David Weir and his IT experts set up computers to demonstrate than . . . they were off!



Sma' Shot Day, Paisley

The result was several new entries to the ICH in Scotland wiki at www.ichscotlandwiki.org and the promise of several more to follow as soon as representatives could get back to tell others in the community.

Linda also asked Local Authority staff for their input on the user-friendliness of both the language and literature she and the rest of the ICH project team have been using in their attempts to communicate the project to the public. This will be taken on board in new leaflet and poster designs and will be used in the development of the wiki – the ICH in Scotland inventory - itself.

Researcher gets 'ICH'd: a Feast 4 the Senses



Linda Gunn was extremely lucky to be invited to a 'Feast 4 the Senses' at Redhall Walled Garden, a beautiful 18th-century walled garden in Edinburgh, on Saturday 19 June. This was the culminating event of a project the Edinburgh Mela had been running with Scottish Natural Heritage and women and children from several multicultural groups in the city. From March 2010, ladies from Sikh Sanjog Girls Group, Saheliya Women and Girls group and from Nari Khallyan Shango, Bengali group and Pakistani group, had been on several outdoor trips to local woodlands, rivers and farms, taking part in food foraging, tree-planting, growing vegetables and arts activities.



Mehndi:henna designs

Angela Gray, Edinburgh Mela's Engagement Officer, said the project had generated much discussion about nature and plants, just the sort of information the ICH project team hopes to see included on the ICH in Scotland Wiki under the category 'knowledge and beliefs about nature and the universe' (for example, the healing properties of certain plants).

However, the day and the 'ICH' on offer turned out to be much more varied than expected. Linda experienced the tradition of Mehndi for herself as one of the girls painted a beautiful henna design on her hand (See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mehndi>).

Researcher gets 'ICH'd: a *Feast 4 the Senses*—cont'd



ICH presentation at the 'Feast 4 the Senses' at Redhall

...Unfortunately she couldn't get as much hand-painting done as she would have liked as she was called upon to give a presentation on the ICH in Scotland project to the group, several of whom she is keeping in touch with in order to get information on different ICH categories and from different communities in Scotland included on the wiki.

After talking about what ICH means and what could be included on the wiki – for example, customs practiced in relation to Bangladeshi weddings in Scotland – Linda and the groups were given a guided tour around the Walled garden; a beautiful setting for a fantastic day and a worthwhile project.

Redhall Walled Garden, 97 Lanark Rd lies within a 6-acre estate where the Scottish Association for Mental Health offers training in horticulture, conservation, maintenance skills, ITC/admin and life skills for people with mental health problems. http://www.samh.org.uk/services.php?display=listing&service_id=6

The Edinburgh Mela 'founded in 1995 by members of the city's minority ethnic communities . . . quickly grew to attract 20,000 people each year.' 2010 Mela, 6-8 August Leith Links. <http://www.edinburgh-mela.co.uk/em/>

Navigating the future with traditional skills

Portsoy Traditional Boat Festival took place over the scorching weekend of 26-27 June. Feeling the heat even more were various craftsmen and women working hard and demonstrating their traditional skills under canvas for the hundreds of interested visitors from Scotland, the UK and further afield.



Traditional boat-builders

Basket-makers, weavers, rope-makers, traditional boat-builders and wood-turners worked all day to show that, not only are these skills still practiced, but new people and young people are learning

One organisation, Galgael, attempts to fill some of the gaps the loss of shipbuilding brought to the people of Govan in Glasgow: roots were being lost, 'values ... blurred' and many in the community were being 'left behind' but this project attempts to create 'a cultural anchor point around which local people are re-kindling skills, community and a sense of purpose.'

Young and old now come together to build traditional boats re-kindling both the work ethic for those who have never known work and with it, a sense of self respect and respect for others in the community.



Basket-makers

Galgael: <http://www.galgael.org/index.aspxAspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>

ICH on the BBC: Fishing traditions

In May visitors to the Scots Language Centre website heard that the ICH in Scotland project team had been talking to people from the East Lothian fishing villages of Port Seton and Cockenzie about their customs and traditions. For example, Port Seton and Cockenzie hold a Gala Day once a year involving the whole community, particularly children from the local Primary school. Those children elected as Queen, Page, Ladies in Waiting - and pirates - get into costume and sail up and down outside the villages' two harbours in specially decorated local fishing boats.



Cockenzie Gala Day

This is another example of the living culture that the ICH project team want to see people add to the ICH in Scotland wiki and Dr Linda Gunn of the project asked visitors to the Scots Language Centre to add any examples of customs, celebrations, superstitions and skills still followed in fishing communities around Scotland to www.ichscotlandwiki.org

See [http://www.ichscotlandwiki.org/index.php?title=Cockenzie %26 Port Seton Gala](http://www.ichscotlandwiki.org/index.php?title=Cockenzie%26PortSetonGala)

One UNESCO ICH 'domain' well represented within our fishing communities is 'knowledge about nature and the universe', for example, superstitions about what things bring bad luck. This is one aspect of the project that BBC journalist Helen Needham heard all about when she visited Port Seton to hear about the ICH in Scotland project and to interview retired local fisherman, Archie Johnston.

Listeners to BBC Radio Scotland's 'Out of Doors' programme heard Archie talk about just some of many traditions and superstitions

from Cockenzie and Port Seton which can be seen now on the ICH in Scotland wiki including fishermen's Ganseys and the many birds, fish and animals (even people, like Church Ministers) that local fishermen consider bad luck! Linda told listeners how important it was that they add any customs and traditions they know about to the ICH in Scotland wiki pointing out that adding examples to the wiki is easier now than ever.

See <http://www.ichscotlandwiki.org/index.php?title=Ganseys>

Visiting Fellow from Galicia, welcomed by the ICH team



The ICH team are delighted to welcome Dr Fátima Braña from the Departamento de Análise e Intervención psicosocioeducativa, Universidade de Vigo. Fátima Braña is working within the Ronsel Project under the coordination of Iván Area in Vigo University (who visited the ICH team last year).

Fátima, an anthropologist, is visiting Edinburgh to improve her knowledge about intangible cultural heritage and the inventory being developed by the ICH in Scotland project. She will be based at Edinburgh Napier University for 8 weeks.

Wiki example of the week: Cloutie wells - It's not pretty, but does it work?



St Mary's Cloutie Well, Smithton-Culloden
© P Williams

'Cloutie' or 'Cloutie' (a rag or a cloth) wells are '... a survival of the age-old veneration of life-giving springs. Those suffering from illness hung a rag by the spring in the hope that their disease would decay along with the rag.'

Source:

www.walkhighlands.co.uk/lochness/Ormondcastle.shtml

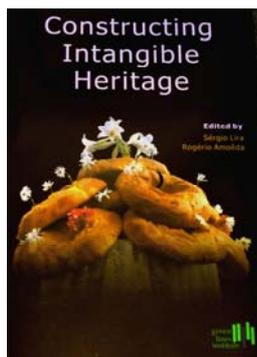
There are several Cloutie Wells still in existence. For example, the photograph above of St Mary's Cloutie Well between Smithton and Culloden was taken at the end of April 2010. Craigie Well at [Avoch](#) attracts offerings of coins as well as clouties and there is a well-known Well with hundreds of rags at Munloch (all on the Black Isle).

See image of Munloch and more info at:

www.snh.org.uk/publications/on-line/livinglandscapes/springsflushes/springs/content_page06.html

Portugal conference

At the 2010 Greenlines Institute conference on 'Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Development', held in Evora in Portugal in late June, Alison McCleery gave a well received paper on the relationships between cultural heritage and economic development in the marginal regions of the North Atlantic. Her analysis of the contemporary situation of St Pierre et Miquelon, in particular, was listened to with great interest by the many Canadians present and may lead to further collaborative work. Alistair McCleery's poster exhibition of the exploitation of literary heritage for economic development attracted much attention. The conference also saw the launch of a new book *Constructing Intangible Heritage* which contains a chapter on 'One Nation, Many Cultures' written by the ICH project team.



Wiki homepage now available in 3 languages

The team has recently been making further efforts to extend the reach of the inventory by ensuring that the landing page of the wiki are available not simply in English, but also in Scottish Gaelic and Scots. The multi-language features of the wiki are now live and can be accessed by going to the usual wiki address, where a new initial screen enables you to select any of the three languages for viewing the main homepage. This new development further emphasises the inclusive nature of the ICH inventory and aims to encourage people to add entries in any of these languages. Please contact David at d.hill2@napier.ac.uk if you have any questions or queries about this feature.

