

Mummified cat discovered underneath church floorboards

A CONGREGATION in Sutherland have discovered a mummified cat under the floorboards – believed to be from the Disruption period when the Free Church was formed in 1843.

The moggy was uncovered a few feet in front of the old pulpit by Rev Dr Colin Dow, from Glasgow City Free Church, who was helping out with renovation work at Dornoch Free Church during his holidays.

Because the building was originally built in 1844, experts believe the cat could date back to the Disruption.

The Dornoch church building is undergoing a £400,000 renovation project which will see it transformed into a multi-purpose facility for the community.

Dornoch Free Church Treasurer, Mark Robinson, explained the unusual tale: "We never turn down an extra pair of hands, so when a minister from Glasgow volunteered for a day's work we thought he could help tear up the floorboards at the front of the church.

"Little did we expect him to find a fully mummified cat, literally yards in front of the



The remains of the cat.

pulpit. Structurally speaking, the building has been virtually untouched since first erected in 1844, so some folk are saying it could be a Disruption cat, but obviously I'm none the wiser.

"There is certainly no truth in the rumour that it had a tag around its neck with the name 'Lucky' on it!"

Phase one of the renovation work is expected

to be finished by the end of this year and will see a large multi-purpose area, foyer, kitchen, toilets and a meeting room created on the ground floor of the building.

In addition, the structural work for the new first floor sanctuary will be completed as well as the installation of a lift shaft.

Sunday services at 11.30am and 6pm are being held in Dornoch Academy in the interim period.

It is hoped that the second stage of the work can start next year.

Fundraising efforts have been successful so far, and Mr Robinson continued: "We now only require a further £10,000 to cover the cost of the first phase of the work, which is great.

"The congregation are immensely grateful to the people of Dornoch and friends near and far as well as a number of Trust funds and other Free Church congregations who have given so generously to the project.

"Of course, donations are still very much welcome and we would be delighted to hear from anyone who can help."