

Memorial Stone gets makeover

By Alison Cameron
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A SUCCESSFUL funding bid is enabling Historylinks Museum in Dornoch to restore an important landmark.

A project grant from Museum Galleries Scotland will help repair the Memorial Stone to Sheriff Hugh McCulloch which has fallen into disrepair over a number of years. His remaining family are also contributing towards the costs.

Sheriff McCulloch was a much loved and greatly respected member of the community in Dornoch who drowned in the Meikle Ferry Disaster in August 1809 when the overloaded ferry, taking people to the Tain Fair, capsized with the loss of 90 men, women and children.

Sheriff McCulloch was also a lay preacher who spoke in the open air and the memorial to him, erected by grateful local inhabitants some 100 years later, is sited where he gave his sermons in fields just outside Dornoch.

Historylinks Museum has recently become a working partner with Dornoch Academy and it was decided to undertake the restoration alongside young people from the school who are involved in the Rural Skills Programme.

The work involved is appropriate to their course, and it gives both the museum and the academy an opportunity to work together on a heritage project. It is now almost complete, although an extension of time to the end of May has had to be requested

from Museums Galleries Scotland because bad weather in January and February prevented outdoor work for several weeks. This has been granted and work should be complete to the new schedule.

Alison Davies, chairwoman of the museum committee, said: "This project has helped develop our partnership with the academy and with the individual young people who took part. They have learned more about

the broader Dornoch heritage, are familiar and comfortable being around the museum, and have formed a relationship with both our curator and the youth worker whom we took on to oversee the project."

An attractive interpretation board is also being designed to go next to the memorial stone.

More information can be found on the Historylinks Blog - <https://historylinksdornoch.wordpress.com/>

Above, Youth Leader D J MacLeod, volunteer David Mahoney and two of the helpers from Dornoch Academy work on the outside of the memorial, which is enclosed to kill off moss.

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