



Fearn Abbey

Foyers © SCRAN/Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland

Dounreay © SCRAN/James Gardiner

Fearn Abbey © SCRAN/Tain and District Museum Trust

Dornoch Map © SCRAN/National Library of Scotland

Culloden © SCRAN/The National Trust for Scotland

One of our key objectives at the Centre for History is to have as much contact as possible with the many people and organisations – in Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross particularly – who are involved with local history, family history and our heritage more generally. If, under this or any other heading, you wish to get in touch with the **UHI** Centre for **History**, please contact Rob Macpherson or James Hunter:

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UHI Centre for **History**



THE **NORTH**
HIGHLAND
COLLEGE

The **UHI Centre for History**, hosted by North Highland College, is based in Ross House, Dornoch. The centre was established as a result of a welcome and generous donation of £150,000 made to UHI by Dennis MacLeod, a Sutherland-born businessman who now lives on Canada's Vancouver Island. The centre's director, on a half-time basis, is Professor James Hunter. Its assistant director, also on a half-time basis, is Dr Rob Macpherson.



Professor Hunter, a former chairman of Highlands and Islands Enterprise and a former director of the Scottish Crofters Union, is the author of several books about the history of the Highlands and Islands. His new book, a study of the Highlands and Islands diaspora, *Scottish Exodus: Travels Among a Worldwide Clan*, has just been published.



Dr Macpherson, previously of the Institute of Historical Research in London, is a graduate of Aberdeen and Edinburgh Universities. A specialist on early modern Scotland, he has published a number of articles and book chapters and is currently working on the final volume of the *Stewart Dynasty* series, on James VI.

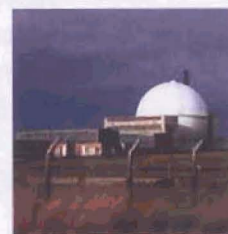
The **UHI Centre for History**'s principal remit is to develop, and find funding for, a UHI research portfolio in history. This matters. Perhaps more than most places, the Highlands and Islands have been shaped by their past. This past, it follows, is of great interest to many people in our area and beyond. It is important, therefore, that UHI engages with it. Besides, if UHI, as we intend, is to become a fully-fledged university in 2007, we need to be able to demonstrate a research capacity in a number of fields. We want history to be one of these.

As Professor Hunter took up his appointment only in February 2005, the **UHI Centre for History** is still at a very early stage of development. Already, however, some progress is being made. For example, we have – thanks to a positive response from funders – attracted the finance needed to mount a major research project on the history of the aluminium industry in the Highlands. It was here that electrolytic smelting of aluminium was pioneered – at Foyers – in the 1890s, and the industry has been a substantial factor in the Highland economy ever since.



Foyers Aluminium Works

Large-scale smelting of aluminium began in the Highlands because of the availability here of hydro power. If, or when, our project on the industry's history gets underway, we intend to follow it with a series of interlocking and overlapping projects on other aspects of energy utilisation in our area. One such project might concern the impact of the Dounreay reactor establishment, and we are now in discussion with interested parties as to where the funding for such a project might come.



Dounreay



On other fronts, we have attracted a small grant from a charitable foundation, Atlantic Philanthropies, to help with preparatory work on a series of lectures, seminars or conferences we hope to mount in connection with Scotland's Year of Highland Culture in 2007. These events will focus on the Highlands and Islands diaspora internationally – and may, if all goes according to plan, feature speakers from overseas.



Culloden

UHI's planned undergraduate Honours degree course in history is being led by Dr Karen Cullen (previously of Inverness College UHI, now of **UHI Centre for History**). The degree is planned to have its first intake of students in September 2007 and promises to have a lively mix of modules focussing at different times on Highland, Scottish, European and diaspora perspectives. In addition to the undergraduate degree, **UHI Centre for History** also is seeking to expand its postgraduate studies, particularly with students who may be interested in studying for a PhD.



Dornoch Map

Here in Dornoch, we also hope to offer a number of activities in addition to frontline research. Two evening classes entitled *Access to Scottish History, 1286 to the Present* and *Access to Scottish History, the Romans to 1286* were run from October 2005 and January 2006 respectively. These evening classes were extremely well attended – and it is hoped to run something similar in the autumn of 2006.