



As I write this, I've just switched off from doing some online teaching with a group of our taught post-graduate students, making contributions from places as diverse as Garve, Fife, Oxford, Switzerland, Micronesia, China, the USA, Canada and New Zealand. The start of a new academic year is always an exciting time, and it's been a joy to contribute to our teaching in these first few weeks.

We also have new postgraduate researchers about to embark on doctoral research with us. In addition, while most of our activity remains online, the last six months has seen us bring in audiences for face-to face events in Dornoch for the first time since 2019.

The Centre for History is, of course, watching with concern for our students as the current economic situation worsens around us. However, we trust our pride in those students continues to shine through in this newsletter. We hope you enjoy it!

## Autumn 2022

The **UHI Centre for History** has been a proud partner of UHI since 2005 and has contributed to the University's success through our internationally renowned research and teaching in Highland, Scottish and wider world history.

We are based in the cathedral town of Dornoch in Sutherland, where our offices look out over the town and coast. You can follow our news updates on our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) channels or contact us directly via [email](#).



# Student News

## Graduations 2022

Congratulations to all our 2022 graduates! We have seen the return of in-person celebrations as graduation ceremonies have taken place across the UHI academic partner colleges from August to October.

### James Hunter Dissertation Prize

We are thrilled to announce **Caitlin**

**Jackson** (BA Hons) History as this year's winner of the James Hunter Dissertation Prize, with her

outstanding piece of work, 'Porcelain objects: What can a material analysis tell us about cultural dialogue between the East and West in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries?'



### New Postgraduate Research Student

**Pilar Girvan** joined us in October to commence PhD research on the topic 'Testing the protest paradigm: exploring everyday forms of resistance in the Highlands and Islands, c. 1780-1930'.



### Student Summer Reading Group

Our brilliant students kept busy over the summer, discussing a wide variety of historical events, figures and practices at their Student Summer Reading Group, now into its second year of running. We spoke to L9 student, **Kirstine MacLennan**, to learn more.

She explained how the idea for the reading group was born in her first year of studies: 'I had been getting increasingly worried about the summer break as I like to keep busy especially in terms of my brain and was scared I would fall back in my studies on my return due to this. With some help from one of the lecturers, the group was born.'

So far the students have covered a variety of topics, from the horrific death of Edward II of England to midwifery in the Middle Ages, and analysing Jack the Ripper through the use of modern-day policing techniques. 'It became apparent to me that at least I seemed to be drawn to the darker side of history!' Kirstine added.



# Staff News

## Reader Appointment

**Dr Jim MacPherson** has been [awarded a Readership](#) in recognition of his research on the Highlands and empire. Dr MacPherson joined UHI in 2011, and is a collaborative cultural historian of modern Britain. Speaking about his new title, Dr MacPherson said: "I'm thrilled to have been awarded a Readership and I'm looking forward to using my research to strengthen UHI's already excellent links with the region's communities. The past is never past and there's considerable power in using Highland and Island history to imagine new, more sustainable futures for the region and its peoples."

## Honorary Fellowship

We congratulate **Sue Jane Taylor**, a great friend of the Centre, who has recently been awarded a UHI Honorary Fellowship. Sue Jane studied fine art at Gray's School of Art, Aberdeen, the Slade School of Fine Art, London and Konst Academie, Stockholm, having been born and brought up on the Black Isle in the eastern Highlands, where her ancestors have lived for centuries. She is [renowned for her work](#) documenting the North Sea energy industry, continuing to capture its transition in terms of both decommissioning and renewables.

**Prof David Worthington** noted: "Sue Jane assisted us with organising what became the first ever coastal history conference in Dornoch in 2016. She was inspirational on the steering group for that, and displayed her work at the conference. We have continued to collaborate with her ever since.'

## New Administrative Assistant

**Sanna Cameron** joined the team in June and handles social media, outreach communications and day-to-day admin.

## Away Day 2022

After two and a half years of Covid disruption, we finally welcomed a record number of 12 colleagues attending in person and five more tuning in on Teams for our annual staff Away Day at the Burghfield on 12 August.

While discussions on best practice for teaching and pedagogy, community engagement and professional development in preparation for 2022-23 took centre stage, it was also a lovely opportunity to bring our amazing team together to socialise and catch up.

## Staff Success at the HISA Awards

Our staff were recognised for their excellent work at the [HISA Awards](#) in June, as seven Centre for History colleagues were nominated or highly commended in various categories, with **Dr Linsey Hunter** taking the big win with 'Best Assessment Feedback'.



# Excellent Results

## **REF2021**

The latest UK-wide assessment of research demonstrates that, since 2014, the UHI Centre for History has more than doubled the percentage of its publications rated at the highest level possible, with 97% of our research rated as world-leading, internationally excellent or internationally recognised. [The REF2021 results](#) - only our second entry in this assessment exercise - mark a very productive period of research and writing at the Centre that will continue and strengthen as our staff publish further globally significant, impactful books and other publications.

We intend to build on this success, and this will involve us increasing further the percentage of our publications rated as world-leading, sharpening our focus ever more on our research with impact, and expanding the scope and ambition of the public history that we do. The latter is key to our mission and involves us engaging productively and energetically with a variety of partners interested in history and the past both within and outside the university.

## **National Student Survey (NSS)**

UHI students gave their university experience the seal of approval in a UK-wide survey with UHI achieving its highest ever ranking for undergraduate student satisfaction in the 2022 National Student Survey. The results place UHI fourth in Scotland for student satisfaction, above 14 other universities across Scotland. Specifically for the Centre for History, our undergraduate students gave the History BAH programme an excellent 94% overall satisfaction rate.

## **Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)**

Both UHI and the Centre for History received brilliant results in the recent UK-wide Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey, with the subject area of History at UHI scoring an overall satisfaction rate of 96%, ranking 2nd for History among participating institutions in the UK. In addition to the great results, we received some wonderful comments from our taught postgraduate students in the survey, including this gem describing the most enjoyable part of their course as: 'Learning from incredibly knowledgeable and respected academics - the staff is amazingly talented.'



# Public Engagement

## June

The Centre for History hosted a highly successful hybrid roundtable event on 9 June, '[Tourism in the Highlands: Past, Present and Future](#)'.

Dr Jim MacPherson spoke at 'The Leviathan of Highland and Emigration History: A conference in honour of Eric Richards', a special event organised by the *Northern Scotland* journal, held on 10-11 June at the Highland Archive Centre.

## August

Prof David Worthington delivered a talk for RSE's 'Curious' programme on 9 August, 'The Curious Cleric: Rev. James Fraser (1634-1709), the Scottish Highlands and Europe in the Century Before Culloden'.

Teaching Assistant Dr Tom Turpie presented a paper on the [Sacred Landscapes of Fife](#) at the 'Faith in Fife' Conference, hosted by the University of St Andrews on 20 August, while Dr Philippa Woodcock chaired a session.

Dr Elizabeth Ritchie was interviewed on *An Là* for BBC Alba to mark 150 years of the Education (Scotland) Act on 4 August. Dr Ritchie also delivered a talk on 22 August at the Grinneabhat Centre, Bragar, titled 'Blackboards in Blackhouses'.

## September

Dr Iain MacInnes gave a talk on 25 September at the St Duthac's Book and Art Festival, Tain, on 'Ross, Sutherland and the Scottish Wars of Independence, 1296-1357'.

## October

Dr Iain Robertson and Prof Marjory Harper presented their research for the [lolaire Interface project](#) at the 13 October History Talks Live event, '[The lolaire Impact](#)'.

## Hidden in Plain Sight

Centre for History staff Dr Elizabeth Ritchie and Dr Rachel Davis, in addition to Dr Darroch Bratt, who recently passed his viva for his UHI PhD studies, are working with Ullapool Museum on the '[Hidden in Plain Sight](#)'-project. The project brings to life the stories, people and landscape of Inverlael, once a significant settlement but now, following social and economic changes, taken over by nature. This two-year project that has involved the local community will also feature a radio programme bringing the site to life.

## Legacies of Slavery in Scotland

Dr Jim MacPherson's inspiring and student-centred work on UHI's MLitt British Studies programme was stated as the main reason one of our former students decided to make a generous financial gift that has supported the Historylinks Museum in Dornoch's Young Curators Club to run a thought-provoking project, '[Legacies of Slavery in Scotland](#)'.

A snippet of a handwritten letter in cursive script, with the word 'Sir' at the top left and the beginning of a sentence 'I am directed by the Magistrates and Councilors of this Burgh to write you to know...' visible. The text is written in dark ink on aged, slightly yellowed paper.

# Research and Publications

## Dr Alison Chand

Has recently published her article, 'You were on your own': pregnancy, birth and early parenthood in Britain during the first months of the Covid-19 pandemic', in vol. 50, no. 2 of *Oral History*, the journal of the [Oral History Society](#). This is part of her 'Rainbows in the Windows' - oral history project on how parents with young children have experienced the pandemic.

## Dr Lucy Dean

Gave a paper at the University of Edinburgh's Scottish History Research Seminars on 13 October on 'Negotiating age and manhood: A comparative approach to Medieval Scottish kingship'.

## Dr Iain MacInnes

Has recently obtained a Royal Society of Edinburgh research grant to fund research trips to London and Kent to investigate the later life of Katherine Beaumont, 14th-century Countess of Atholl.

## Dr Nicola Martin

Delivered a talk on 'Jacobite Nations' at the University of Aberdeen's Jacobite Colloquium in early October.

## Dr Iain Robertson

Will be contributing a chapter and a podcast on the phantasmagorical heritage of fences to a book on border straddling heritages in 2023.

## Staff Connections

**Dr Philippa Woodcock** has taken on the post of Joint Editor for *The Court Historian*, the official journal for the [Society of Court Studies](#).

**Dr Kathrin Zickermann** has joined the editorial advisory board of the Swedish journal [Historisk Tidskrift](#).

**Dr Nicola Martin** has taken on the role of trustee for the [Jacobite Studies Trust](#), a society promoting the study and understanding of the history, literature, art, music and iconography of the Jacobites.

## Dr Katy Turton

Has a new chapter out in a multi-volume, internationally produced, centenary publication on [Russia's Great War and Revolution](#).

## Dr Kathrin Zickermann

Is currently in the early stages of the publishing process with Brill Academic Publishers for her book proposal, *Complex Identities and Cultural Integration: Alexander Erskine (1598 - 1656) and Swedish service* and has completed editing vol. 53 of the *Northern Studies*, the journal for the [Scottish Society of Northern Studies](#), which was published in the autumn.

## Professor David Worthington

Will publish a book on [Rev. James Fraser](#) in early 2023.