

Ayton Heritage

Newsletter 003
August 2020

Welcome to our third newsletter. Things have been quiet since we did a lot of ivy clearance at the end of last year and in February this year. The coronavirus lockdown has limited our activities but things have been progressing behind the scenes and there is some exciting news to report - read on!

Danny Dutton.

Unfortunately, we have lost Danny as a member and trustee as he has moved away from Ayton. Danny was an invaluable member with his many skills, not least of which was his archaeological background. We will miss him but we wish Danny and Penny well in their new home in Dumfriesshire.

Current position

We are still working under the Historic Environment Scotland “Adopt a Monument” scheme run by Archaeology Scotland with Phil Richardson as our project manager. We have been advised that before we can apply for grants to carry out the preservation work on St Dionysius, we must carry out an ecological survey and obtain a report from a conservation architect detailing the work which will be required for the preservation.

We obtained quotes for this work and early this year applied to various grant giving bodies to fund it. Unfortunately, the covid lockdown started soon after and all work by these organisations came to a halt. We have heard back from some of them recently but in each case, it has been with a negative response.

Ecological Survey

The key part of this survey is to determine if bats (a protected species) are present in the ruin. It must be done between May and September so if not done this year would delay the whole project considerably.

We decided to ask three local organisations (Ayton Community Hall Association, Ayton Horticultural Society and Ayton Cow Club) to each contribute £300 to fund the survey. We are very grateful that they agreed to do so and the survey is currently underway by The Wildlife Partnership.

Conservation Architect

We are also very grateful to Richard Syred and Brian Parsons of Ayton Castle who have come to our rescue by funding this part of the project. Richard and Brian have recently created a new formal garden at the castle and are holding two open days on 18th and 19th of September for people to view it. They will have a collection for our project during the two days and will donate personally to bring the total up to the £3000 which we require. This is an extremely generous offer,

for which we are very grateful. We hope that many Ayton Heritage members will attend and make a donation. Please also spread the word amongst your family and friends. Arrangements for the visits to the gardens are not yet available but we will publicise these when known.

If you are unable to attend the open days but would like to make a donation please pass it to me and I will ensure it is added to the collection.

AGM

It is close to one year since Ayton Heritage came into existence as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO). Our constitution states that we must hold an AGM within 15 months. Details of this will be circulated to members when it is possible to hold a meeting under covid restrictions.

Please get in touch if you have any questions or comments.

Bill Black

Chairman

Ayton Heritage

Email: billblack1804@gmail.com