

Sound of Mull 2009 Underwater Archaeology Fieldschool 13th-24th July 2009

Fieldschool aims and objectives

Fieldschool aim:

The aim of the fieldschool is to provide participants with an opportunity to participate (under the supervision of qualified archaeologists) in an underwater archaeological monitoring survey of a 19th century shipwreck in the Sound of Mull.

Fieldschool objectives:

The objectives of the fieldschool are thus for participants;

1. To research and analyse information to help achieve the research objectives of the John Preston monitoring survey
2. To understand the importance of safety and risk analysis in all archaeological fieldwork
3. To gain experience in archaeological project management
4. To develop competency in non-intrusive (2D, 3D and geophysics) archaeological survey techniques
5. To be actively engaged in the creation, compilation and publication of archaeological data and records

Fieldschool personnel:

The Sound of Mull 2009 fieldschool will be taught by Mary Harvey, NAS Training Officer, Mark and Annabel Lawrence (Lochaline Dive Centre), with the assistance of Dr Paula Martin (IJNA editor) and Dr Colin Martin. Assistance will also be provided by additional NAS tutors.

Research Objectives:

The wreck of the John Preston (1855-1882) lies in 14-21 meters of water in the Sound of Mull. The wreck was surveyed as part of the Sound of Mull Archaeological Project over six years (1994-2000) in an effort to record the wrecks condition before it deteriorated. The research objectives of the survey work in 2009 will therefore be to relook at the condition of the wreck on the seabed, to determine whether or not deterioration has continued over the last 9 years. This work should also illustrate if any new areas of material are now exposed. New material will be recorded and added to the SOMAP site plan. If no new structure or artefacts are evident on the seabed then work will focus on the resurvey the wreck structure to test the accuracy of the 1994-2000 site plan. Information obtained will be reported to Historic Scotland and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Scotland.

Project plan / method statement:

The John Preston monitoring survey in 2009 will be undertaken over 3.5 days (7 diving operations) during slack water. The survey work is planned to include:

- Illustration and sketching
- Photography
- Videography (to be confirmed)
- 2D survey techniques including offset and/or trilateration
- Planning frame drawing
- 3D survey using Direct Survey Method

Data will be collected by using proforma sheets for each activity which will be subsequently written up to a paper archive. Participants will have the responsibility for writing up individual dive logs as well and processing any measurements and producing drawings each day.

The paper archive will be digitally scanned to create an electronic archive which will be stored and maintained on a project laptop computer. Digital photographs and video taken during the project will also be added to the archive and participants will be requested to also contribute photos taken of the site with personal equipment and allow these to be used as part of the project report. A copy of this archive will be provided to Historic Scotland and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Scotland.

Participants wishing to use the fieldschool for their NVQ Level 3 or NAS part 2 project report would be asked to take responsibility (under supervision) for one particular element of the survey. This may simply be the recording of a number of new features or may entail processing all the 3D DSM measurements obtained. They would also be requested to submit their work as part of the NAS report to be submitted to Historic Scotland in 2010.

NVQ Level 3 / NAS Part 2 Project report:

The Sound of Mull 2009 Underwater Archaeological Fieldschool has been aligned with the National Occupational Standards for Archaeological Practice (www.torc.org.uk) and the National Vocational Qualification in Archaeological Practice Level 3.

Participants wishing to use the fieldschool for evidence towards an NVQ Level 3 or for their NAS Part 2 project report should inform the NAS at least 4 weeks in advance, so that guidance notes and report criteria can be provided. Participants wishing to use the fieldschool for an NVQ Level 3 would be required to undertake some pre-project desk based research on the John Preston, to identify any sources of information on the ship, the wrecking and any subsequent salvage or archaeological investigations.

It will be possible to collect evidence towards the following NVQ Level 3 Units:

Unit 1 (AC1) Research and analyse information to achieve objectives

- Element 1.1. Identify sources and availability of information
- Element 1.2. Collect information to achieve research objectives
- Element 1.3. Analyse research information
- Element 1.4. Report results (if report generated by participant following fieldschool)

Unit 2 (AJ10) Contribute to health and safety in the workplace

- Element 2.1. Operate safely in the workplace
- Element 2.2. Respond to emergencies (via simulation/what if scenario)

Unit 3 (AK3) Develop your own resources and protect the interest of others

- Element 3.1. Develop yourself to improve your performance
- Element 3.2. Managing your own time and resources to meet your objectives

Unit 5 (AC3) Contribute to non-intrusive investigations

- Element 5.1. Prepare for operations
- Element 5.2. Observe and record measurements
- Element 5.3. Analyse and present investigation data

Unit 12 (AF3) Classify, compile and maintain data on the material remains

- Element 12.1. Agree methods for classifying and compiling data
- Element 12.2. Maintain data and records