

Annual Report 2025-2026

Once again we have had a busy year for the Heritage Group.

After our AGM last year we had a session sharing old photographs. The school photos were particularly popular. It was a useful reminder that we should add names to the back of photos so the next generation can identify folk.

At the end of August we had a well-attended outing to the Highland Archive Centre in Inverness. We had a tour around and an opportunity to see a variety of archival material they hold about the Glen. We followed our visit with lunch at the Botanics.

As ever we have had a series of great talks during the winter months. We began in October with the first of our talks by two of our members when Fraser Mackenzie spoke to us about Cairns and Memorials on Loch Ness and Beyond, full of fascinating information, though sobering when the memorials recorded tragic incidents. This was followed in November by Jan Bell's account of The Scottish Covenanters - and Me, where Jan wove together the history of a period of persecution and warfare with family history. In February we welcomed Anne Fraser, who is Family Historian at the Highland Archive Centre, talking about The Quirks of Family History, with lots of local examples. This drew the largest audience of the year. And finally in March we had Erik Lundberg on Wardlaw Museum and Groam Cottage. Thank you to all of our speakers.

We have had three ongoing, and still ongoing, projects during the year. The Heritage Group was asked to contribute to the refurbished hall by producing material for a display wall depicting use of the hall through the years. Unfortunately, progress has been slower than planned due to other commitments and some technical issues, but we hope this will be finished before too long. Secondly as you know with the help of a group of members we indexed all the issues of the Bulletin - over 70 years worth - last year. But we have struggled to find a way to produce this information in a form that is searchable. After many conversations I think we have now come up with a way forward. And finally we have recently held a series of meetings researching former shops and commercial premises in the Glen. This has resulted in a lot of fun chat and memories. There really were a lot of different types of shops, not to mention shoemakers, tailors and mills. We need to fill in some of our numerous questions, many of which are about dates, by looking at Valuation Rolls and other sources before we can share this work. If you are interested in helping us complete this work please let me know.

Josie, Heather and I again attended the Highland Heritage Day in Dingwall in March. This brings together groups and museums from all over the Highlands. It's a great opportunity to meet others and to pick up ideas for meetings and activities.

On Saturday the Heritage Group will be providing tea and coffee at the Farmers' Market here in the hall in return for donations. Do come along and support us, there might even be some home baking.

No group exists without the continued efforts of its committee. So thank you to David Johnstone who as Treasurer keeps our books and looks after our finances. To Heather Johnstone for organizing our programme of speakers. And to Josie Mackenzie for her work as our Secretary. Thank you also to Jan Bell for providing the refreshments at our meetings.