

SHERIFFSIDE 2014



Rampart Scotland: A Guide

Background

Rampart Scotland was set up in 2010 to offer a refreshing approach to training in archaeology through a well established research plan. The programme is designed to enable learning, discovery and enjoyment in field archaeology skills under the guidance of professionals who are passionate about archaeology.

Run by Murray Cook and David Connolly the ongoing research and training programme into banked enclosures – known in the literature as Hillforts. between them Murray and David have over 50 years of experience and 50 publications in Scottish archaeology!

After brochs, hillforts are the iconic monuments of the Scottish Iron Age, and yet very few of them have been dated and so there is no overarching model for their development. The absence of such a model is directly connected to a lack of modern excavation: topographic survey evidence alone is not sufficient to characterise the monuments, with intrusive archaeology the best way to gather more evidence.

In the past four years we have excavated and dated three sites: White Castle, Tamnafalloch and Sheriffside. This builds on Murray's earlier work on the Hillforts of Strathdon in Aberdeenshire, which dated eight sites and resulted in 10 publications.

Sheriffside Enclosure

The 2014 season will return to Sheriffside, near Gifford, East Lothian which has the largest defensive ditch in East Lothian (nearly m deep and over 9m wide) and which was levelled in antiquity and only rediscovered in 1981.

The site was occupied between c 600 BC and AD 500 and was used through the Roman occupation of Southern Scotland, including the Barbarian Conspiracy of AD 367, in which the lands of Roman Britain were overrun by the wilder tribes of the north and west.

The initial investigations have shown earlier hut platforms and a sequence of palisades and ditches, with this major season of work, we intend to strip a 20 x 20 m area to start the process of understanding this complicated site.

Each programme focuses on excavation, recording and sampling of the hillfort with tutorials available in survey, GIS and fieldwork – additional courses in finds illustration will also be available nearer the time.

We try to develop individual training programmes with each participant depending on their interests: ie you might want to be more involved in survey, or just carry out excavation, perhaps you want to learn more about planning or data entry, the choice is yours, although the opportunity will be there to try everything.

The site will be provided with both a large tent for shelter and lunches as well as a toilet. All tools are provided, though you are more than welcome to bring any personal equipment you wish.

Transport to and From Site

Book your travel tickets well in advance. This means you may benefit from any special offers available on flights, trains and buses. Do not leave this to the last minute as you might find there are no seats available on the day that you need to travel or the prices have gone up.

Travel insurance is vital if you are going any further than a local dig. Shop around for the best deal but make sure it covers your particular needs.

Remember the essentials, and leave plenty time to acquire them if you need to:

- 1) Passport
- 2) Money
- 3) Travel Insurance

David and Murray are both qualified mini-bus drivers and will pick you up and drop you off at the start and end of the project, as well as take you to and from site.

We aim to pick everyone up on the first day of the project and drop you off on the last day. Our phone numbers – should you need them are:

David 07876528498 and 01620 861643 **Murray** 07929848145

The Accommodation is at **Alison Cargill House, Whittingehame, East Lothian, EH41 4QA** – and David's House is a 5 minute walk away - Old Schoolrooms, Luggate Burn, East Lothian EH 41 4QA.



Alison Cargill House

The project is based out of Alison Cargill House, which is a heated chalet with bunks.

Rooms are shared but organised on a single sex basis (4-5 people per room). There is a large garden and communal area all set in a fabulous rural East Lothian setting

All cooking and cleaning is shared in a fully equipped kitchen. However, washing and clothes drying facilities are basic and by hand.

There are 3 toilets and shower rooms.

Beds, pillows and sheets are provided but you must bring a sleeping bag.

Wireless internet access is within a five minute walk of the accommodation at David and Maggie's house which you are very welcome to use, and there is plenty space to use the internet privately in the garden, kitchen and living room.

Murray stays in Alison Cargill House and helps to coordinate the evenings.

Transport is provided to the local village to pick up other supplies and also visit the fabulous pub with outside beer garden - this is in addition to the other trips.

Although you are insured while on site, remember that your own travel insurance will be required elsewhere.

Food

We all share in the cooking and cleaning and a rota will be established. We can cater for vegetarians.

Clothing

The Scottish weather can be rather changeable and while we're in the height of summer the weather will vary from glorious sunshine to horizontal rain and from hot to cold; all in one day!

On-site work gear should be comfortable yet robust and remember your clothes will get dirty so do not wear your best outfit. Cargo pants or combat trousers take a lot of punishment and have lots of useful pockets. In addition, a sturdy pair of boots is essential and you may even be asked for ones with steel toe caps. Always remember to break in your boots in advance of the project to avoid the discomfort of blisters.

Therefore you need to bring a range of clothes to suit the variable climate: a hat, gloves, waterproof coat, waterproof trousers, boots, shorts, and sun tan lotion. Wet wipes and a water bottle are also useful.

Don't go overboard on the packing as you will live to regret it. Travel light if possible and give some considerable thought to the items that you want to take. Firstly, lay your clothes on your bed and pick two sets for work wear and two sets to relax in (one of which you can wear on the way there). Pack a week's worth of socks and underwear. Whatever the weather take long sleeved tops as they provide most protection in all conditions.

Reading

There will be a big pile of books at the dig but if you want to get some general reading ahead of the project then try Dennis Harding's *Iron Age in Northern Britain* or Ian Armit's *Celtic Scotland*. A kindle or similar would be useful as well. - there is no TV.. so be prepared for a relaxing break with chatting and reading as your main past-times.

Fees and Payment

The fee is £695 and this covers all food, accommodation, tuition, pick up and drop off, transport to and from site and all field trips. If you want to provide your own accommodation or are happy to stay in a tent there are a limited number of reduced fee places at £500.

We ask for a £200 deposit to secure a position which is non-refundable after the 1st May of the year of the project.

We are happy to take Paypal, cash, cheques and bank transfers.

Age Ranges and Experience

We are happy to work with anyone 17 or over on the first day of the dig, although under 17 years olds are welcome to come is supervised by their parents. With regard to levels of experience, all we ask is that your enthusiastic and want to come!

Questions

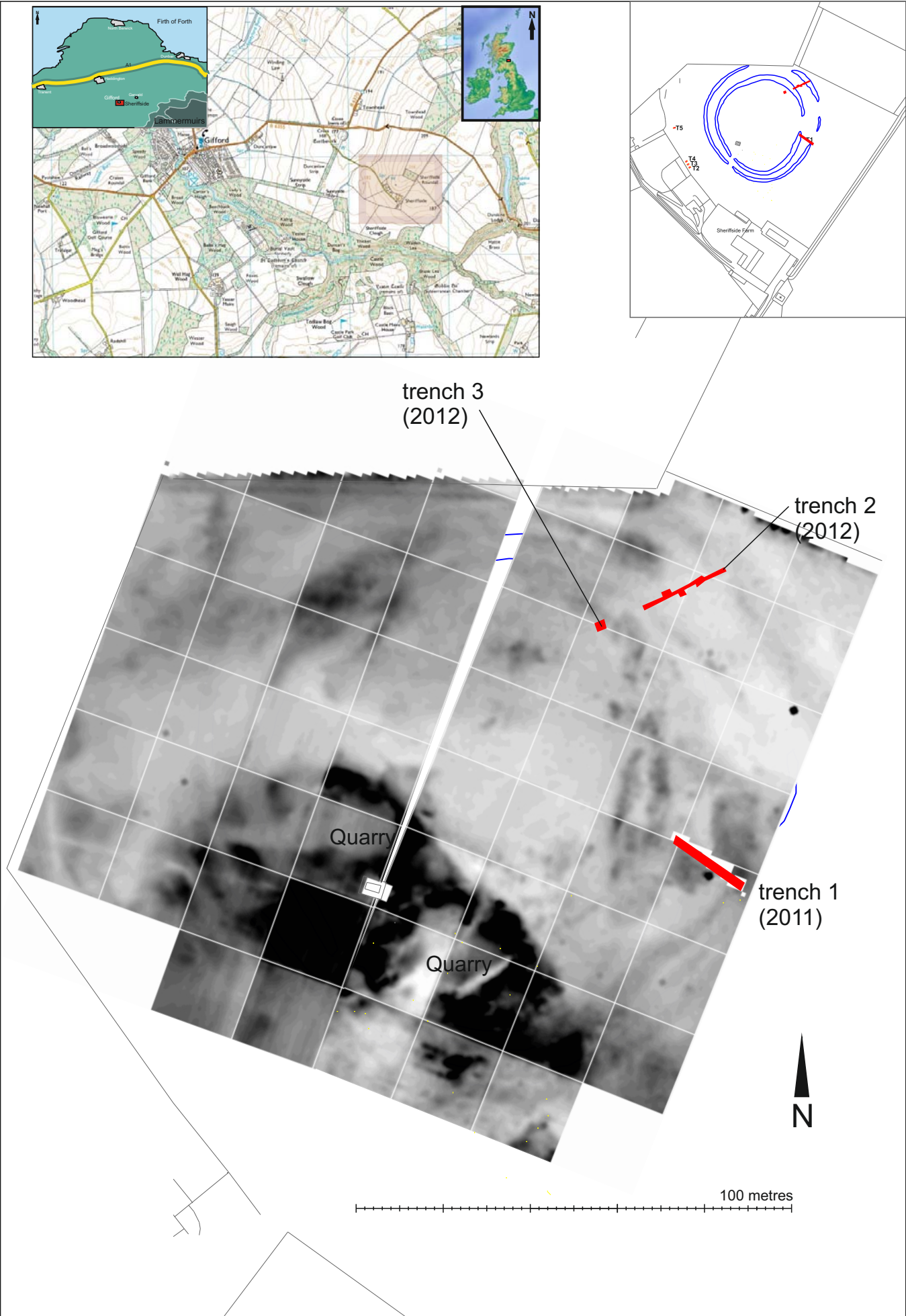
There are no stupid questions – only questions.....so just let us know if you need more information!

Murray and David

A guide can also be downloaded here: **Dig Survivor: Preparing for your first project**

<http://www.bajr.org/BAJRGuides/31.%20Dig%20Survivor%20-%20BAJR/31DigSurvivor.pdf>





Location of trenches and geophysical survey results



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