

## **North Skye Youngsters Explore Their History, Heritage and Culture**

Pupils from Portree, Staffin and Kilmuir Primary Schools have over the last year engaged in a project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Stories, Stones and Bones initiative. This was managed and run by Cleas, a local charity and arts organisation, in partnership with The Aros Centre, Staffin Community Trust and Canan Graphic Studies at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig.

The project was designed to give pupils access to sites of historical interest within the environment utilising the skills and knowledge of local historians, writers and artists.

Among other locations they visited sites of historical and paleontological significance such as Duntulm Castle and bay, An Corran, Rigg, and Brothers' Point, with Dugie Ross of Staffin Museum as their expert guide. Other local experts from the Trotternish community, Mary Ann MacDonald, Annie Nicolson, Catherine Budge, Janet Lamont and Donald MacLeod, then called in to the local schools for informal 'cèilidhs' where pupils and visitors covered a range of topics linked to the sites visited.

The project also covered creative writing and visual arts, with Lewis-born writer Donald S Murray alongside local artists Lorraine Scott Nolan and James Newton Adams delivering sessions within the schools to build up the children's imagery of what they had discovered.

All the elements of the project were brought together in a final session delivered by Balmacara-born animator Iain Craig where the children completed stop-motion animation films using simple technology. Iain was so impressed with the pupils: "This has been a lovely project to work on, and pupils certainly rose to the challenge of putting together fun, creative short stories. It was brilliant to see such variety coming through in storyboards. There is no shortage of talent in the classes I visited and I'm confident we'll see some of the young people involved producing their own films in the future."

The final pieces work, photographs and a more detailed report can be seen at [www.cleas.org.uk/stories-stones-and-bones](http://www.cleas.org.uk/stories-stones-and-bones)

## **ENDS**

### **For further information, images and interviews, please contact**

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### **About Cleas**

Cleas is a charity that engages in cultural, arts and history projects with a specific interest in the Isle of Skye. The aims are to develop and promote projects, usually in partnership, that engage the wider community in education, cultural activities, performing and visual arts, Gaelic language and skills development.

### **About the Heritage Lottery Fund**

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) aims to make a lasting difference for heritage, people and communities across the UK and help build a resilient heritage economy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported almost 36,000 projects with more than £5.9bn across the UK. [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk).

### **About the Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology**

From World Heritage Sites to ancient monuments, listed buildings to historic battlefields, cultural traditions to our myths, tales and legends, the 2017 Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology, running from 1 January to 31 December will shine a spotlight on Scotland's fascinating past, some of our greatest figures, attractions and icons, as well as our hidden gems. #HHA2017