A partnership to care for the Clyde: its environment, its people and its visitors

Clyde Breakers

FIRTH OF CLYDE FORUM NEWSLETTER

Firth of Clyde FORUM

Winter 2013/14 Issue 16

This Issue:
Historical Aspects of the Clyde

- Wreck of the Iona I
- The Fife Regatta
- SCH@RP reveal archaeological clues to the past
- Denny Tank
- The changing shape of commerce on the Clyde

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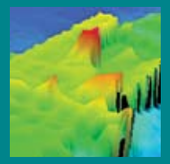

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Front cover photograph: Schooner Wreck at Newshot Creek, © Steve Liscoe

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Firth of Clyde Forum News

Welcome to the winter 2013/14 edition of Clyde Breakers!

This edition focuses on historical aspects of the Firth of Clyde, looking at how people are involved in protecting, restoring, remembering and celebrating our heritage and historical relationship with the Clyde.

In terms of Forum work over the last 9 months, as for everyone with an interest in marine affairs, the Forum has been involved in responding to Scottish Government consultations. We have responded to 'Planning Scotland's Seas' and the 'National Marine Plan' – please see our website for details.

Various projects have also moved along apace and an update on these is provided on the opposite page.

Welcome back to Fiona Mills who has returned from maternity leave and thanks go to Sarah for covering by working full-time over the past year. Sarah and Fiona are once again sharing the project work of the Forum.

Best wishes,

Isabel Glasgow
Firth of Clyde Forum Chair

Fiona Mills and Sarah Brown
Project Managers

Firth of Clyde Forum Projects

The Clyde Forum is responsible for implementing actions from the Firth of Clyde Marine Spatial Plan which was published in 2010. We are also keen to provide research for a sound evidence base and reference documents for any future regional marine plan and to support coastal planning within Local Authorities. As such various projects have been agreed by the Core Group and supported by funding partners.

Leathery sea squirt, a non-native species already present in the Firth of Clyde
© Chris Woods/MCS

UPDATE: Marine biosecurity planning - best practice guide

As part of our ongoing commitment to tackling the issue of marine Invasive Non-Native Species, the Firth of Clyde Forum has commissioned SAMS Research Services Ltd (SRSL) and Robin Payne to create a best practice guide to writing marine biosecurity plans in response to the publication of the revised Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act.

The finished product will give practical advice about developing site based biosecurity plans and provide a step by step guide which will demystify the non-native species terminology and walk people through the process of doing risk assessment, helping to set priorities for action. The aim is to create a user friendly, non-specialist guide for use by planning departments, developers, site managers and other small scale interests.

So far the team has completed a thorough survey of available data and reports on the subject and have compiled a literature review which will feed directly into the final guide.

The guide will include relevant case studies, separate boxes containing explanations of technical issues and a glossary to help the non-expert user work through the guidance step by step.

The work is funded by The Firth of Clyde Forum, Scottish Natural Heritage and Natural Resources Wales and the steering group includes the project funders as well as the Scottish Government, SEPA, Natural England, Cefas, Defra and Marine Scotland.

Sea level rise and storm surges

Many people were shocked by the amount of havoc caused along the coast when high tide coincided with storm surges around the UK this winter.

Future climate change is anticipated to cause sea level rise which could make this type of event even more problematic. This study will provide an evidence base of the known extent and associated risks of sea level rise and storm surges in the Firth of Clyde for habitats and communities. It will be used to inform development planning and strategies along the coastal strip of the Clyde. As well as a written report there will be maps to show where vulnerable areas are situated around the coastline. The case study section of the report will also analyse a section of the inner Clyde estuary from Dumbarton to Erskine Bridge on both the north and south side of the river. It will look at potential defence and managed realignment options to adapt to a rising sea level in order to protect natural and structural assets.

Stormy seas © Lorne Gill/SNH

This project is funded by Scottish Natural Heritage, Peelports-Clydeport, Glasgow & the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park and the Firth of Clyde Forum.

SEASCAPE/LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

This project has already been completed in 2013 and is available on the website at http://www.clydeforum.com/index.php/projects/seascape-landscape-assessment.

See back page for full article.

Hull being tested by Joe Mulvenna, member of museum staff.

The Scottish Maritime Museums – The Denny Tank

The Denny Ship Model Experiment Tank was the world's first commercial example of a test tank and was the starting point for many of William Denny & Brothers great innovations. The idea of a tank was first developed by William Froude who built a test tank for the Admiralty in Torquay in 1871. William Denny was impressed with this scientific technique and persuaded the firm's partners to construct a tank in which they could conduct their own experiments.

The Tank was completed in 1883 and was designed to test scale models to determine the most efficient hull shape and power requirement for any particular vessel. These small-scale tests were used to predict the behaviour of full-sized hulls. Throughout its working life the Tank tested models of a variety of vessels and explored various propulsion methods, including propellers, paddles and vane wheels. Experiments were carried out on models of the Denny-Brown stabilisers and the hovercraft to gauge their feasibility.

Today the Denny Ship Model experiment Tank, a grade A listed building, is all that is left of William Denny & Brothers but it is now a superb and unique 4 star visitor attraction. Retaining all of the original features including the tank and carriage, the clay beds and Tracers office, as well as a host of displays that have been sympathetically incorporated allowing visitors to enjoy an immersive experience into one of Scotland's most innovative shipyards.

One of the most revolutionary innovations in the shipbuilding world was pioneered by William Denny & Brothers. The idea of ship stabilisers was first patented in 1898. However, it was Denny's which made a real success of the product when Sir Maurice Denny collaborated with William Wallace from Edinburgh-based Brown Brothers to develop the Denny-Brown stabiliser in the 1930s.

The stabiliser was designed to reduce the roll of ships when travelling through heavy seas. It works by using two fins which move up and down like the flaps of an aircraft wing to counteract the effect of waves on the hull. The fins are controlled by a gyroscope and are housed within the hull when not in use.

Children at claybeds preparing the mould for wax.
All images courtesy of Scottish Maritime Museum.

The first ship to be fitted with Denny-Brown stabilisers was the passenger ferry *Isle of Sark* in 1938, and they were soon fitted to naval and merchant ships world-wide. In 1955 stabilisers were fitted to Cunard's *Queen Elizabeth*, but not to *Queen Mary* because the owners thought she was too old. The result was that people were reluctant to travel on *Queen Mary* because of her instability, so she too was fitted with stabilisers in 1958. Stability was very important at this time as sea travel was facing competition from the new and emerging air travel industry, and passenger shipping companies needed their vessels to be as comfortable as possible.

In the 1960s William Denny & Brothers was at the forefront of the push to develop another innovative idea; the hovercraft. It was one of four firms collaborating with Hovercraft Development Ltd. on the design of this exciting new form of sea travel. The hovercraft was designed to travel over a smooth surface supported by a cushion of slow moving, high-pressure air ejected downwards.

After a series of tests on models in the Experiment Tank, a prototype made from plywood and sheet metal was built at Dumbarton. This vessel, known as D, managed a speed of over 18 knots during trials on Gareloch on June 22nd 1961.

The company launched a full-sized passenger carrying version, D2-002, and in 1963 this sidewall 'hoverbus' made the 820 mile journey from Dumbarton to the River Thames where it was demonstrated. This was not a great success as floating debris damaged the vessel's skirts and propellers, although it did show some promise.

This was one of the firm's last major projects before it closed its doors in 1963. The closure of William Denny & Brothers meant the end of a way of life for many. Even in 1945 the company knew that the times ahead were going to be tough, and remarked in its Centenary Booklet that "it is now clear that the price of survival will be wisdom and imagination, and the utmost effectiveness of brain and hand" and although Denny's remained innovators until the end, this was not enough.

After World War II the company struggled as the nationalisation of the railway companies and the independence of India and Burma meant the loss of several loyal customers. Shipping companies were asking for larger cargo vessels and William Denny & Brothers could not compete. In the late 1950s the yard was modernised, but the company went into voluntary liquidation before the costs of this could be recovered.

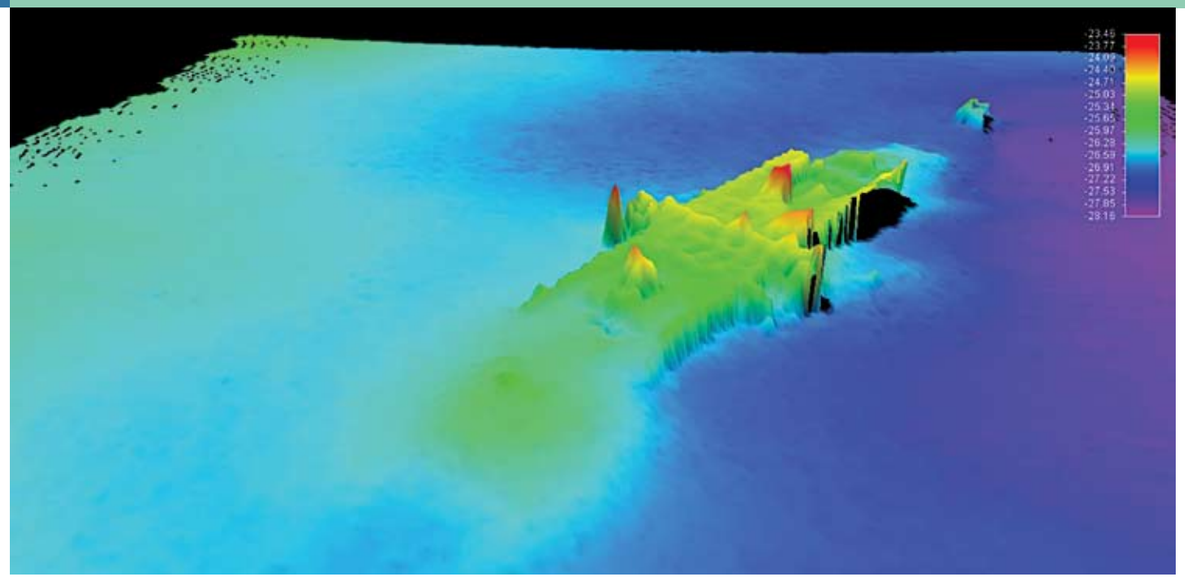
The liquidation and closure happened because the company was receiving fewer and fewer orders. In fact its last ship was built 'on spec', which meant that there was no intended buyer. This ship was Melbrook and after closure it was completed by Alexander Stephen & Sons.

The next 30 years saw dramatic changes on the Clyde as almost all the shipbuilding firms closed. The impact of William Denny & Brothers' closure on Dumbarton was dramatic and local newspapers reported that the town looked "blitzed" once the shipyard was cleared. Commerce and leisure has stepped in to fill the gap, and a supermarket and football pitch now stand on the land once occupied by the Leven Shipyard. The Denny Tank is the last remaining part of this and stands as a monument to a company which made a huge contribution to shipbuilding technology.

Today, with the support of the Scottish Government and West Dunbartonshire Council the Scottish Maritime Museum continues to maintain and develop The Denny Ship Model Experiment Tank to ensure that future generations will be aware of the major role that William Denny & Brothers, Dumbarton and the Clyde played in the history of shipbuilding worldwide.

Article courtesy of David Mann, Scottish Maritime Museums

Cutty Sark model on display in Tracers Office.



Multibeam bathymetry of the Iona I in 2008. Clydeport data reprocessed by Wessex Archaeology © Wessex Archaeology.

The Wreck of the Blockade Runner *Iona I*, Firth of Clyde.

Lying almost 30 metres underwater, at the edge of the busy shipping lane off Gourock, is the wreck of the Clyde-built paddle steamer, *Iona I* – whose remarkable story has just been published online by Historic Scotland.

Whiteforeland Buoy in the Firth of Clyde near the position of Iona I. © Wessex Archaeology.

Originally *Iona I* was an early and famous example of the Clyde passenger steamers that, along with the railways, first facilitated mass leisure activities in the 19th century. But her historical significance is greatly enhanced by her conversion to serve as a Confederate blockade runner during the American Civil War. Of the 300 or so vessels known to have been clandestinely acquired by the Southern agents, she is one of very few that lie in British waters. Most were sunk or captured on the other side of the Atlantic. One other blockade-running paddle steamer (ironically her replacement - *Iona II*) lies off Lundy Island, North Devon, and is protected by designation under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973.

Launched in 1855 by James & George Thomson of Govan, *Iona I* achieved considerable fame as a fast and well-appointed passenger steamer operating in the Firth of Clyde from Glasgow for David Hutcheson & Company. Her turn of speed, together with a shallow draught, made her an obvious target for Confederate agents scouring the Clyde for vessels to run 'armaments in - cotton out' to Charleston and Wilmington from Bermuda and the Bahamas.

Despite Britain's declared neutrality in this war, the purchase of *Iona I* for this new role was something of an 'open secret'. As the Greenock Advertiser noted in October 1862 'The Iona Steamer':

'We understand that the fine steamer *Iona*, one of Messrs D. Hutcheson & Co.'s fleet of West Highland steamers, which has been generally acknowledged 'Queen of the Clyde', made her last trip on her route from Glasgow to Ardrishaig on Saturday last, having been purchased. It is said that Mr. Mason, the Southern Commissioner who visited Glasgow recently, had something to do with the purchase. As it is she will likely leave the Clyde, after receiving some strengthening outfit, in a short time hence… The Iona's place on the Highland route has been filled by the saloon steamer *Fairy*.'

Hours after finishing her speed trials for her new owner and Confederate sympathiser - David McNutt of St Enoch Square Glasgow - she set out on her outward passage. Off Fort Matilda, near Gourock, she was in collision with the *Chanticleer,* another new steamer also on her speed test. The captain of the Iona refused the services of a salvage tug, while both captains haggled over who was to blame – the other captain was reportedly drunk. While the squabble ensued, the ship slowly settled and sank, together with a great load of coal piled on her decks for the first leg of her outward passage to Madeira.

In 2009, Historic Scotland commissioned a survey of the wreck by Wessex Archaeology, the results of which have been recently published online (see http://orapweb.rcahms.gov.uk/wp/00/WP000733.pdf). These investigations benefited significantly from high-resolution 'multibeam' sonar surveys carried out previously by Clydeport, as part of the harbour authority's monitoring surveys of the Clyde channel. At the time, these survey images, showing the vessel lying partly intact on the seabed, helped the divers to orientate themselves in low visibility. Graham Scott, the team's project leader said:

'The central 25 metres of the wreck is the best preserved part. Here the vessel survives up to upper deck height, with boilers, crankshafts, partial remains of one of the paddlewheels and the engines surviving in situ. Elsewhere the vessel is less well preserved and does not survive to deck height or is partially buried in the sand. Surrounding the structure, there are piles of coal.'

Philip Robertson, Historic Scotland's marine archaeology expert, explained what he has learned from the survey:

"The wrecks of many hundreds of ships from the 19th and 20th centuries lie on the seabed around Scotland's coasts, but examples such as *Iona I* provide a particularly significant reminder of the type of advanced ship design and marine engineering that propelled the Clyde to world-wide steamship building pre-eminence in the mid-19th century.

It appears that important features of the *Iona I* are relatively well preserved, but that, in common with metal wrecks worldwide, much of the metal structure is deteriorating. The survey report also brings together historical accounts of the loss of the ship and the memories of local divers and others who have taken an interest in the wreck since she was discovered.

This is valuable work in itself, but the results of the survey will also help us to decide whether the wreck may be of national importance and thereby merit statutory protection as an Historic Marine Protected Area under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010. Before taking forward any proposal for statutory protection of *Iona I*, we would consult with all parties who might be affected by the proposal.'

Article courtesy of Philip Robertson, Historic Scotland

Builders model of the Iona I. © CSG CIC Glasgow Museums Collection

Volunteers survey the remains of Erskine Crannog during a SCHARP training day. © SCAPE

Archaeological clues to the Clyde's busy past

Much of the heritage that lines the banks of the Clyde is about connections; from the small ferry terminals at either side of the river at Erskine, to the harbours and shipyards which connected Glasgow to the world.

Standing beneath the soaring, elegant lines of the Erskine Bridge in September with a group of new volunteers on a Scotland's Coastal Heritage at Risk (SCHARP) training day, we were surrounded by evidence of the role the Firth of Clyde played in linking communities across the water and connecting the area to the outside world throughout its history.

Erskine Crannog, just one of a number of these remarkable sites located in the Clyde estuary, may form some of the earliest evidence of the importance of the river for trade. It lies at the edge of the low water, revealed for only a short time between tides. We'd timed our visit to coincide with the low tide which allowed us to see the remains of the site. The spread of stone is punctuated by large structural timbers, some of which formed the vertical supports on which the wooden platform and buildings were constructed. Many of the timbers have tool marks and signs of working, evidence of prehistoric tools and building techniques. Radiocarbon dating of samples taken from this site during investigations in the 1980s showed that after it was built around 350BC, it was maintained and then occupied for over 500 years, until around 200AD. It's thought that this site, along with other marine crannogs in the Firth of Clyde, might have been positioned to take advantage of trade networks around the river and acted as a staging post for trade and transport up the river, where goods were transferred from smaller river boats to larger coastal vessels. If you go down to the Clyde below the Erskine Bridge at low tide, you too can see the remains of this two millennia year old crannog – check our Sites at Risk Map (http://scharp.co.uk/sites-at-risk/8335/) for more information about it.

A pile of stones and timber posts at the water's edge on the south side of the bridge has also been recorded as a crannog, with a stone causeway accessing it from the bank. But closer investigation reveals that this is actually evidence of the Clyde's importance in a much later period. The pile of stones is all that remains of the base of a navigation beacon. Its twin sits on the north side of the bridge, in much better condition, with its beacon intact. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey (1863) map shows both beacons with their causeways, demarcating the edge of the navigable channel for the shipping that plied the river.

From where we're standing, we've got a clear view across the river to the northwest, where Bowling Harbour forms the west end of the Forth and Clyde Canal. Completed in 1790, the canal linked the two firths on the east and west coasts, allowing coal, timber, clay and sand to be transported easily by water across the country without the need for a hazardous journey around the north coast.

Just a short distance upriver, around Newshot Island the muddy foreshore has become a ships graveyard. At the mouth of Newshot Creek is a group of four schooners, destroyed in a fire caused when workmen used a red-hot bar to bore holes during the construction of a timber wharf at Kingston Dock, central Glasgow, in June 1914. The four schooners (Dashwood, Navigator, Volant, and Warsash) were burnt out in the fire and later towed here and dumped. Just upstream is another group of boats, and yet more lie to the west at Park Quay. These two areas of timbers are the remains of punts that worked with dredgers to clear mud from the channel of the Clyde.

The Newshot Creek group of punts includes one of the steel dredgers that worked with them. Each punt could carry about 10 tons, and originally around 350 worked the Clyde from 1870 onwards. Although numbers decreased with new developments, some were still in use in the early 1960's. These two groups of remains are the only known surviving examples of the fleet which once toiled to dredge the river channel, keeping it clear for the ships which plied the Clyde linking it to the world beyond the firth.

Smaller scale connections within the Firth of Clyde are evidenced by the remains of the Erskine ferry, connecting communities directly across the water. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map shows the line of the ferry route between two piers jutting out into the river, and the ferry infrastructure can still be seen on the ground on both banks. On the south side, we can see the stone jetty, sea wall and the mole enclosing the waters of the harbour; across the river on the north bank this is mirrored by a slipway and a line of wooden posts. Maybe you remember queuing to catch the ferry here?

These are just a taste of the great variety of historical and archaeological sites recorded along the Clyde that open windows into the distant past and the past of living memory. Many of these sites are in poor condition, and there may be more to discover. If you would like to get involved as a citizen archaeologist of the coast to help visit and record the condition of heritage sites around the Firth of Clyde, we'd love to hear from you. You can explore what's already been recorded in your local area on the Sites at Risk Map on our website at www.scharp.co.uk. If you'd like to arrange a training day in your area, or have a good idea for a project on a threatened coastal site, email us at info@scharp.co.uk.

Article supplied by Elinor Graham, SCH@RP

Remains of a schooner at Newshot Creek. © Steve Liscoe

The 19th century navigation beacon on St Patrick's Stone beneath the soaring lines of the Erskine Bridge. © SCAPE

The Scotland's Coastal Heritage at Risk Project (SCHARP) supports a network of volunteer citizen archaeologists in Scotland to monitor record and submit information about their local coastal heritage. SCHARP also helps guide, develop and fund community projects at threatened coastal heritage sites. SCHARP is aimed at everyone who lives by, visits and enjoys Scotland's long and beautiful coast. No specialist knowledge is required and the project provides all the training and support people need to join in.

The 3 year project which runs until 2015 was developed by the SCAPE Trust with funding and support from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic Scotland, The Crown Estate and the University of St Andrews.

Above: *Latifa* and *Astor* sailing. Opposite page: *Ayrshire Lass* sailing, stern of *Kentra*. *Photos courtesy of Marc Turner.*

The Fife Regatta June 2013

In June of this year the Clyde welcomed back the fourth Fife Regatta, a week long celebration of yachts of all sizes designed by the legendary William Fife family from Fairlie, Ayrshire. Three generations of the family were involved in designing and building yachts on the beach at Fairlie, however it was William Fife III who created arguably the finest yachts in the world at the beginning of the 20th century, commissioned by famous millionaires from around the world.

One of the competitors at this year's event was the 100ft schooner *Astor*, built in 1923 for Sir Alexander McCormick, a Scottish surgeon living in Sydney. She had taken line honours in three Sydney-Hobart races and by returning to the Clyde in 2013 marked her first time in Scottish waters in over 90 years. The Fife dynasty not only designed large elegant yachts, equally their designs for smaller yachts are just as special. *Ayrshire Lass* (built 1887) is one such example, a 24ft gaff cutter which was sailed regularly on the Clyde in the Gareloch. She has been beautifully restored complete with a charcoal stove for heating water.

Competitors for the 2013 event came from Italy, France, USA and Sweden, such is the appeal to sail these fine yachts but also to meet up and learn more of the Fairlie yard's history and its creations. *Kentra*, the 102 ft gaff rigged ketch was launched and commissioned especially for the event after being laid up undercover for 7 years. She shared her 90th birthday with the American owned *Astor*. Both yachts have circumnavigated the globe.

The regatta took the fleet from their home in Fairlie to Largs, Rothesay, Tighnabruaich and Portavadie providing spectacular scenery, Scottish weather and legendary hospitality in all ports. Spectators were able to witness the close racing from many vantage points both on land and by following the fleet.

The yard at Fairlie may be long gone and all that remains is a memorial to the Fife family's accomplishments, however for as long as these yachts continue to be owned and loved by passionate owners, determined to retain their original features, we shall be able to share in the quality and craftsmanship of the Clyde yard, famous around the world. The distinguishing trademark of a Fife yacht is the gold dragon emblem on the yacht's bow, a brand of both an artist and boat builder. Who can fail to be moved by the power and artistry of their hull shapes, their exquisitely curved stems or their voluminous sails?

For further details on this year's event and with images of all the yachts please check www.fiferegatta.com.

Article courtesy of Carolyn Elder, Largs Yacht Haven

The changing shape of commerce on the Clyde

Finnieston's quays and warehouses of the past played a large part in the trading history of Glasgow. If any reader can confirm the date of this photo, please contact the Firth of Clyde Forum. All photos © Peel Ports Clydeport

Glasgow's situation on the Clyde led to the city becoming a hub of trade and later shipbuilding. By the seventeenth century there was trade in commodities such as tobacco and sugar. However, the river through Glasgow was originally far too shallow for ocean-going vessels, and in 1668 Glasgow merchants established a port further west at the village of Newark, later renamed Port Glasgow, to facilitate their transatlantic trade.

Acts of Parliament established the Cumbrae Lighthouse Trust in 1756 and a similar trust in Glasgow in 1759, under which Glasgow town councillors had the powers 'to cleanse, scour, straighten and improve' the Clyde between Glasgow Bridge and Dumbuck. The Cumbrae Lighthouse Trust had similar powers and responsibilities from Dumbarton to Cumbrae, and built the original lighthouses on Cumbrae, at Cloch Point and at Toward Point. Thus began the work of establishing harbours and jetties, creating and maintaining a navigable channel, and providing lighthouses, beacons and buoys to aid navigation in what was, and remains, a narrow channel with a number of bends. The cost of these services was met through the collection of fees by the trusts from river users. Over the next 200 years, until the formation of the Clyde Port Authority in 1966, the trusts continued to manage the Clyde, and developed to become the Clyde Navigation Trust, the Clyde Lighthouses Trust and the Greenock Harbour Trust.

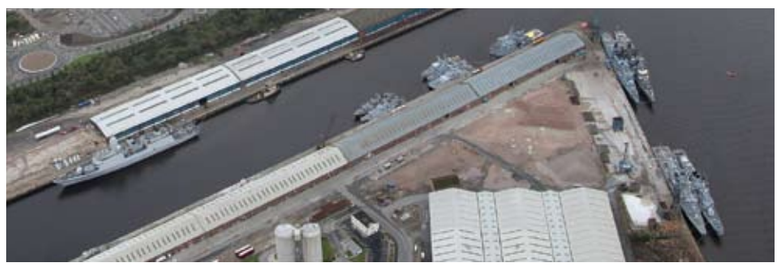
In 1768 John Golborne advised narrowing the river and increasing the scour by the construction of rubble jetties and the dredging of sandbanks and shoals. A particular problem was the division of the river into two shallow channels near Dumbarton. After a report by James Watt in 1769, a jetty was constructed at Longhaugh Point to block off the southern channel, and a few years later in 1773 the Lang Dyke was built. It still forms the south side of the navigable channel today.

In the mid-19th century engineers took on much greater dredging of the Clyde, removing millions of cubic feet of silt to deepen and widen the channel. In addition to dredging, a massive volcanic plug in the river near Renfrew, known as Elderslie Rock, had to be removed, and this was not completed until 1886, increasing the depth of the river to around 9 metres.

The deepening of the channel meant that the Clyde finally became navigable for the largest vessels of that era all the way up to Glasgow. Shipbuilding became established, and the Clyde gained a reputation for being the best location for shipbuilding in the British Empire, and grew to become the world's pre-eminent shipbuilding centre. "Clydebuilt" became an industry benchmark of quality, and the river's shipyards were given contracts for prestigious ocean-going liners as well as warships, including the Queen Mary and in later years the Queen Elizabeth 2, built in Clydebank.

The Clyde Port Authority was created as a self-governing public trust port by an Act of Parliament on January 1, 1966, merging the interests of the Clyde Navigation Trust, the Greenock Harbour Trust and the Clyde Lighthouses Trust. The new authority had the status of a Statutory Harbour Authority, with responsibility to provide harbour facilities and navigable channels, a Competent Harbour Authority, with the responsibility to define pilotage requirements and to authorise pilotage, and a Local Lighthouse Authority, operating lighthouses and aids to navigation across its 450 square mile jurisdiction, extending from the Albert Bridge in Glasgow to a line between Corrygills Point on the Isle of Arran and Gailes on the Ayrshire Coast.

The Clyde Port Authority was privatised in 1992, after which, following a management buyout, it became Clydeport, with facilities at Glasgow, Greenock, and Ardrossan (acquired in 1968), together with the Hunterston terminal, opened by British Steel in 1979, and taken over by Clydeport in 1993.



Naval vessels berthed at King George V dock.

Dolomite unloading at King George V quay at the end of the last century.

Cruise ship berthed at Ocean Terminal Greenock – modern day.

Clydeport floated on the stock exchange in 1994, subsequently becoming part of Peel Holdings in January 2003. Peel, until then primarily a property group, had owned the Manchester Ship Canal since 1987, but its Peel Ports division became a major ports operator in 2005 when it also acquired the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company, with interests including Liverpool, Heysham, and the Medway Ports. Peel Ports also has port facilities in both Dublin and Belfast and operates its own shipping line, as well as marine fabrication and repair facilities. The Peel Ports Group is thus more than a network of strategically situated ports; rather it is the logistics partner for its major customers.

Clydeport, now branded Peel Ports Clydeport, continues to cater for a wide range of marine commerce. The King George V dock, close to Glasgow's Braehead Shopping Centre, handles a variety of bulk cargoes including cement, aggregates, salt and grain; other cargoes include turbines for the wind farms that now provide a significant proportion of Scotland's energy. Greenock Ocean Terminal has the Clyde's container terminal, with regular services to British, Irish and European ports, and also handles timber, pulp and paper. The Clyde may no longer have a passenger fleet to take Glaswegians in their thousands "doon the watter," but Greenock now welcomes 80,000 cruise passengers each year, generating considerable revenue for west of Scotland businesses and winning cruise industry awards in the process. Hunterston is one of Britain's top deep water terminals for bulk cargoes, and specialises in the import of coal for use in power generation across the UK, with facilities for despatch by rail, road and sea. Observers who bemoan the apparent lack of activity on the Clyde in the 21st century may be unaware of the huge quantity of cargo that, with modern technology, passes through the ports on the Clyde, with large vessels turned round within a few hours, and information systems enabling customers to track their freight containers throughout the journey from source to destination.

Article courtesy of Roger Horne, Peel Ports Clydeport

Aerial Photograph looking over Erskine Bridge (Crown Copyright RCAHMS)

Source to Sea

Connected with the Clyde

Have you ever thought of a river system being like the arteries and life ways of a country? Could our firths and rivers provide vital life-support to the whole country? If looked at in this way, then the Clyde would surely be one of the main arteries of Scotland.

The Clyde system spreads far and wide, both geographically and historically. The interconnections between the Clyde and people have a history which is millennia older than 'Scotland' itself. Stretching for over 170km – from the source in the South Lanarkshire hills, through the Firth and out to the open sea. Over the past 4000 years this waterway has made its mark on the land and we have made our marks on it – It is these interconnections that form the heart of an exciting new programme of research we are calling 'Source to Sea'.

Examples of interconnections between people and the Clyde range from people walking their dogs around Dumbarton Rock to the origins of the Faslane Naval base and the accompanying peace camp; from fishing fleets to harbour constructions and dredging the Clyde to enable bigger ships to travel up to Glasgow. Further back in the past are the castles that were built to control the waterways of the Firth, Roman forts and prehistoric tribal centres, and evidence of early forms of river travel.

So how do we continue to understand, share and celebrate the many different connections with the Clyde today? One way is to create a multi-partnered research programme that looks at our interconnections, investigates them collaboratively and shares them collectively. And that's what the Source to Sea programme aims to undertake over the next 5 years.

The Source to Sea research programme is being developed by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS), and will start in 2014.

Over the last year or so, a series of engagement workshops, consultations and meetings have been undertaken with a very broad spectrum of people. These ranged from academic research seminars and field visits, to archive and data assessments, and included several talks and presentations. This wide-ranging consultation process has brought out a huge range of topics, ideas and suggestions of our many different forms of connections with the Clyde. These ideas have been gathered together and have been used to define what topics people – from a wide variety of places, disciplines, and ways of life – feel are important to be included in a national programme of research.

These ideas have been analysed and grouped into three main themes. Within the themes fit a huge range of topics, which can be grouped into research 'strands', and within each of them are ideas for specific projects.

Themes

Theme 1 – Connecting with the past

Strands: Dynamic landscapes, Settlement, Sustenance, Economy and Industry, Connect or Disconnect and the Wider World.

Projects within this theme will be able to demonstrate both continuity and change.

Theme 2 – Personal connections

Strands: Emotions, Fun, Inspiration, Spiritual and Perceptual.

The aim of all projects in this theme should be to explore the individuals and groups of people who have connected with and currently connect to the river.

Theme 3 – Connecting with the future

Strands: Future, Power and Politics.

Projects within this theme aim to anticipate our potential future connections with the river.

Aerial Photograph of Dumbarton and the Firth of Clyde (Crown Copyright RCAHMS)

These themes and strands are based around three main aims of the Source to Sea programme:

- To further our knowledge of the changing relationships between people and the River Clyde
- To engage with a broad spectrum of individuals, groups and communities through participatory research
- To create future scenarios for human-river connections, based on past and present evidence, with a view to encouraging participation, policy development and resilience

Outputs

In terms of outputs and outcomes the programme aims to create a transformative model that researches a major river system that can be applied to other rivers, across Scotland and beyond. It aims to deliver a body of legacy outputs that could take the form of:

- a book and digital publication on Clyde connections: past and present
- policy guidance through human-river research papers
- a travelling exhibition which moves from source to sea down the River Clyde.

Your connections

In developing our ideas for this research project, we would be delighted to hear about how you are connected with the Firth of Clyde – from bridges to boat-building; from fishing to ferries; from harbours to holidays. Your input will help us know better how to work with people with a wide variety of interests to discover how we have been connected with the Clyde in the past, our relationship with the river in the present, and how we might be connected in the future. Do you have a special place on the Clyde where you like to go? A place that you'd like to know more about? A story about a place or an activity related to the river? If so, we'd love to hear from you.

Article courtesy of Alex Hale, RCAHMS

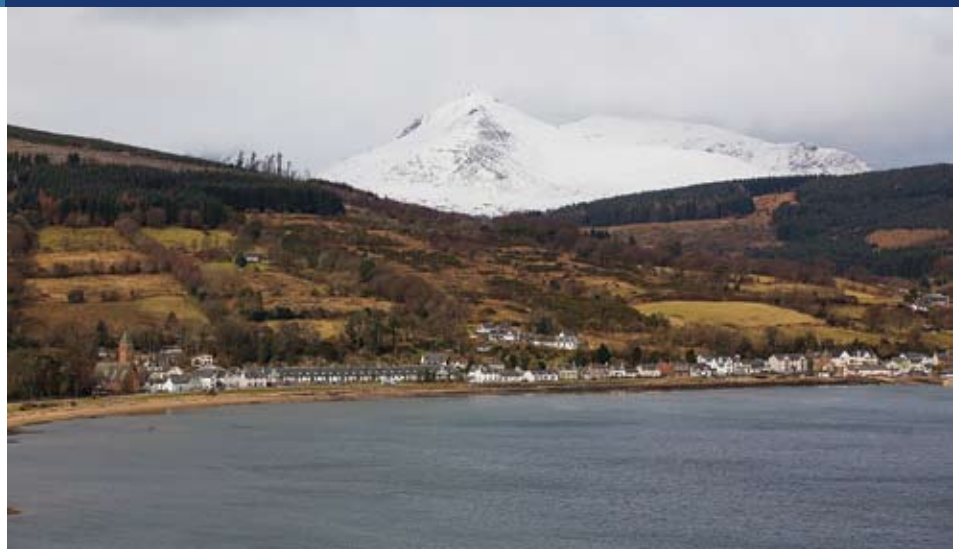
For more information contact: alex.hale@rcahms.gov.uk

Twitter: #ClydeConnections

Pinterest board 'Connected with the Clyde, Scotland'

Aerial photograph of Newark Castle, Port Glasgow (Crown Copyright RCAHMS)

Seascape Assessment



Coastal settlement at Lamlash Bay backing onto farm land and then extensively forested hills, © Peter Sandground

The Seascape of the Firth of Clyde

General policy number 14 in the consultation draft of the National Marine Plan concerns Landscape/Seascape and states that 'Marine Planning and decision making authorities should ensure that development and use of the marine environment take seascape, landscape and visual impacts into account'. But how can this be done?

Seascapes are landscapes with views of the coast or sea and are an important part of the setting for coastal communities and enjoyment by both local people and visitors to the area. In 2012 the Firth of Clyde Forum commissioned an Assessment of the Seascape/Landscape of the Firth of Clyde – the first study of its kind to look at opportunities and restraints for many different types of development in a specific area. The resulting report identifies those themes that characterise the whole of the Firth of Clyde and then drills down to 13 Seascape Areas to give more detail of specific features and structures along with their sensitivity to various developments. These Seascape Areas are selected due to their connectivity from the point of view of the sea as opposed to the land. The report also maps those coastal areas in the Firth of Clyde that can be considered to be influenced by qualities of remoteness, isolation and seclusion as well as those areas influenced by designed landscape and derelict areas.

Why not find the section where you work or live and see what the report has to say about the local Seascape? Visit the Firth of Clyde Forum website on www.clydeforum.com and go to the projects section.

The deeply indented Gourock Bay where the settlement is characterised by its lack of commercial coastal development and its fine promenades and esplanades, © Peter Sandground

Firth of Clyde FORUM

Tell Us What You Think...

Clyde Breakers is your newsletter; tell us what you think of this issue and what you would like to see in the future. If you would like to receive an electronic version of Clyde Breakers rather than a printed copy, please send your email address to us. Many thanks to those of you who contributed to this edition.

If you would like to become involved in the Forum and its work, contact us at the address below.

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The Firth of Clyde Forum has a broad membership base with representatives from industry, local authorities, community groups and charities. The opinions expressed by members within this issue are not necessarily the opinions of the Forum or its Core Group.

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All of nature for all of Scotland

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PEEL PORTS GROUP