



/ Oaks & Amity: White Wood for Huntly

Spring 2015

Land use, fiddle music, ancient hill forts, exploration aids, cultural health, oaks and other trees, pacifism, maternity leave, slow marathon, abandoned railways, eclipse, Venice, contemporary pilgrimage

"They looked up, after coming out of the cellar, and could only see sky. The whole roof was gone, along with the house." At a public debate, where the motion of a military free country was discussed, Caroline Wendling gave a moving speech about her personal connection to the project, *Oaks & Amity*. Caroline has been working with Deveron Arts since last year on the White Wood planting project in commemoration of relative amity and peace in Europe, a century after

the start of WWI and 70 years after the end of WWII.

The White Wood involved the planting of 700 trees and 1000 other white shrubs, bulbs and flowers. Central to this are 49 (7x7) Oak trees, established from acorns that stem from artist Joseph Beuys' *7000 Oaks* project in the city of Kassel in Germany. Beuys' ecological intervention was intended to reshape Kassel's war torn living space and encourage growth and renewal to the damaged cityscape. Beuys' philosophy of art streamlined with life has for long inspired Deveron Arts' way of working, exemplified in this project which combines art, ecology and collective peace.

Caroline, originally from Lorraine/France, was joined by over 100 volunteers for the two day planting of the wood. A community parade, including pupils from the Gordon Schools, walked with the trees from the Brander Garden to the Bin Forest, where the two hectare site is situated. Resident forester, Steve Brown led the crowd with his bagpipes, before providing a demonstration on how to plant a tree.

Each of the German oaklings was planted next to a stone, hailing from the Somme area in France

and buried deep within the Scottish soil. The White Wood symbolises peace between nations, while also commemorating Huntly's conscientious objectors, whose stories we have been gathering.

Caroline also designed 49 white linen flags, each inscribed with a peace quote, embroidered by the local and wider community, and fixed to the Oaks.

It is said that an Oak tree has a life expectancy of 900 years. It spends 300 years growing, 300 years fully maturing, and 300 years dying. The White Wood carries with it a lasting legacy and will be cared for by multiple generations.

We encourage everyone to visit the White Wood, in the Bin Forest, and take part in its development.



Picking Gorse

(a member of the pea family)

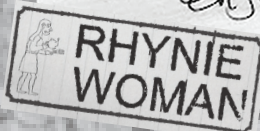
on the sides of the Tap.

make a sugar Syrup, cool, add gorse flowers, lime juice, lime skins, shredded coconut and a piece of ginger. Let it soak for two days, strain, dilute and enjoy.

Tap o' Noth



Gorse 2014



Above: Rhynie Woman top-tip for foraged cordial syrup

Right: Snapshots from the Oaks & Amity planting weekend

Below: Stuart McAdam prepares for the 2015 Slow Marathon

Front Cover: Planting photography by Ross Fraser McLean



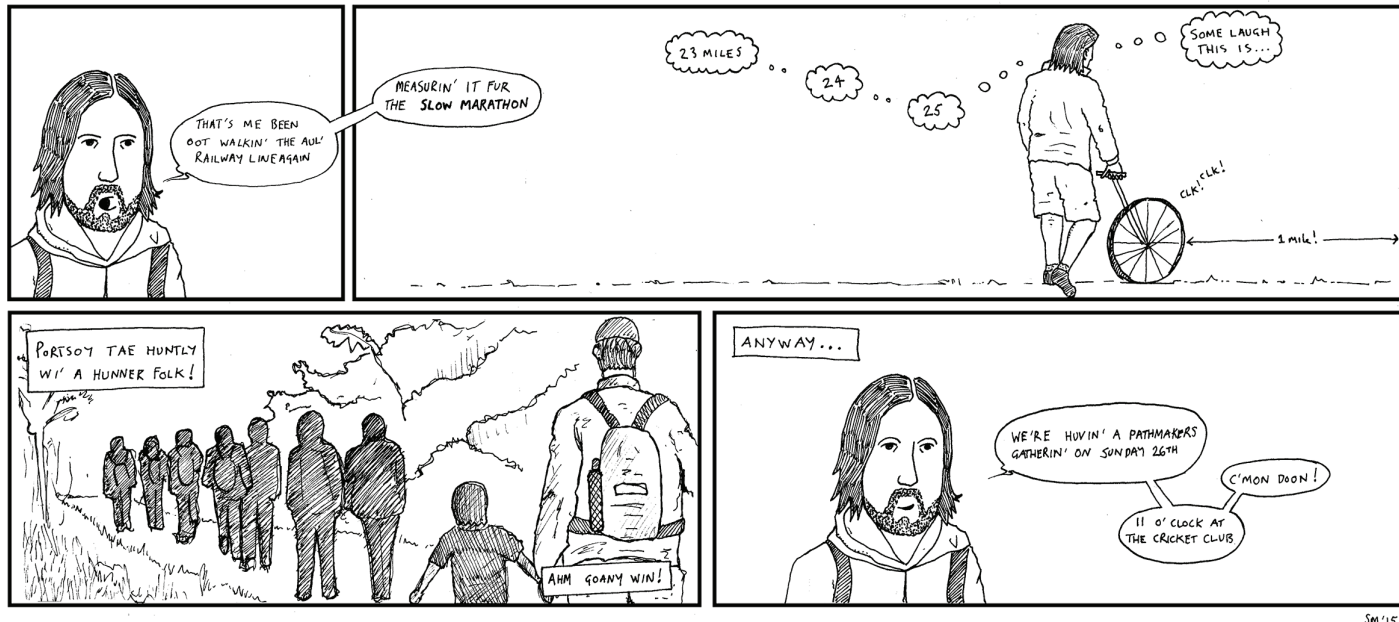
Caroline's embroidered peace flags



Steve pipes the parade along

SLOW MARATHON

2015



/ Interview with Aidan O'Rourke

RD: Tell me about the inspiration for Imprint/Abandon and the subject matter?

AO: I have always been intrigued by ruins, be it Neolithic sites or old cottages left abandoned in the last decades. I love wandering among them and imagining who lived there, who built them, and why they left. I'm from rural Argyll and spent much of my youth wandering the hills around there, looking for abandoned shielings marked on the map as a clump of stones or chambered cairns or stone circles. Whether they are 20 years or 10,000 years old they tap into the same part of my brain and make me wonder: who, why, why no more?

RD: Have you uncovered some similarities between the 'who, why, why no more's of today and 10,000 years ago, having looked at Pictish and Neolithic sites while on residency with Deveron Arts?

AO: Not really. There are so many varied reasons why people moved on. And many different people passed through here. There is very little known about the Picts and the Neolithic people. What has been great is having time to think about these things and spend time with experts on the subject. But at times, I have to remember that the reason I am in Huntly is to draw inspiration from these subjects rather than delve deeper and deeper into the history. Which is something I'd love to do. But I'm a composer! And there's music to be written.

RD: There is! How do you think a musician can contribute to the discussion around Scottish land use then?

AO: I think composers are in a relatively fortunate position in that it's possibly the most abstract of art forms. We can plant seeds of thoughts and the beauty is in leaving the rest to personal imagination. I'm a strong believer in reformation of land laws and land use, and I will write about it and indicate, that that is what it's all about, but I don't need to name and shame or point fingers. That is hopefully left to the imagination of the listener.

RD: Yes, that's where the listener gets a lot of their enjoyment. How do you go about translating concepts and experience into music though?

AO: I am terrified of a blank canvas. So a theme helps me focus on something as I write. I surround myself with photos and information and read and make notes, and then when I get down to writing that's what's in my mind. It is more like a musical meditation on the theme in hand. And it seems to work. I am also not someone who writes all the time; when ideas pop out of the sky. Very occasionally something just comes to me but mostly I need to sit and focus and settle my mind on one thing. Then the music starts to flow.

RD: In February you led the event Ancient

Rhynie with archaeologist Gordon Noble. When trekking up Tap O' Noth, passing standing stones and hearing the histories, was there a particular moment that inspired you musically, something to meditate on?

AO: Standing at the top wondering: why did they build this here? What was it? There was talk of it being more of a shrine than a fort and that really got to me. The effort put into that construction. And we have no idea why. That's the sort of thing that gets me writing.

RD: I see. So, you do a lot of research before settling down to compose. You mentioned working with experts; archaeologist Gordon Noble is one collaborator you have worked with here. Do you find it important to work with people from other disciplines?

AO: I love spending time with people who have interesting thoughts, renegade ideas and who question typical opinion. I come from a traditional music background, but I like to push the envelope a bit further. I have spent time with, and learned from, experts working in lots of other genres of music. Any kind of stimulating new information, not only musical, feeds into my writing. A lot of people have helped me on this residency. Particular thanks go to forester Steve Brown, historian Ron Brander, artist Gill Russell, Rhynie Woman, Gordon Noble and all of the wonderful folks at Deveron Arts!

RD: This residency will involve recording with other musicians. How do you go about inviting them into this project?

AO: I am really excited about this stage of the residency. I have a large cache of musical ideas that I wrote in Huntly. I have been sharing them with three amazing London based musicians who will come to Huntly this year to work these ideas into a new piece of music, then record it and release it

as a CD over the summer. I've also been sharing photos and my thoughts on the theme so they could sense what's been going on up here. I'm excited about the juxtaposition of what I've been doing and where they've been before bringing them to rural Aberdeenshire and immersing them in this music.



RD: We are all just as excited to hear it. One more question: you have performed all over the world, why do you think it's Scotland that still holds your musical interest?

AO: I have played in a lot of places and there's lots of places around the world that I dearly love; but I've found that it's Scotland's landscape that moves me the most.

RD: Well I think we can gladly finish on that note. We'll look forward to the CD this summer.

Interview by Rachael Disbury

Imprint/Abandon was recorded in March at a remote house near Huntly with musicians Aidan O'Rourke, composer/fiddle; John Blease, drums/percussion; Tom Rogerson, piano; Anna Meredith, electronic devices and clarinet. The CD will be launched later this year.



Aidan O'Rourke plays the tune of a March before leading the Ancient Rhynie walk

The Path Travelled



/ Ancient Rhynie

Renowned fiddle player, and BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards Musician 2014, Aidan O'Rourke came back to Huntly in February to continue his residency with Deveron Arts. In the project *Imprint/Abandon*, Aidan has been focusing on land ownership, land access, land abandonment, and the physical traces left behind.

Ancient Rhynie was a walk, talk, dance and music event, held at the end of February and led by Aidan and archaeologist Gordon Noble, from the University of Aberdeen. Fuelled by Rhynie Woman's homemade cinnamon buns and an introductory tune from the musician, a group of twenty trekked up to the ancient hill fort of Tap O' Noth. A tour around Rhynie, including the legendary Craw Stane, followed and was contextualised by Gordon's insight into Pictish history.

A fiddle music inspired discussion in Rhynie's Gordon Arms Hotel between Gordon Noble and Aidan O'Rourke, on the subject of land use, rounded off the day. Aidan's concert was joined by local musicians jamming into a ceilidh.

/ Make Do In the Kitchen

Rhynie Woman has provided a unique flavour to much of our programme so far this year. In early March *Make Do in the Kitchen* left us with full tummies and opened eyes. Using the Linden Centre Community kitchen and a pile of hoarded tins and mixed packets from the back of the cupboard, Daisy and Debbie hosted a cookery session with a twist. Through their encouragement and culinary confidence, those in attendance were motivated to get creative and 'make do' with the

array of cupboard dwellers and basic ingredients.

The resulting patch-worked banquet of unusual food combinations marked the 38th birthday of the discovery of Rhynie Man, the carved Pictish stone, found by farmers Gavin and Kevin Alston on Barflat's field near Rhynie

/ Culture a Day Keeps the Doctor Away

18 months have passed since Deveron Arts initiated the role of the Cultural Health Worker. This felt like a critical point to stop and reflect on the work Catrin Jeans has done here in Huntly. *Culture a Day Keeps the Doctor Away* was organised in collaboration with Engage Scotland to get into the nitty-gritty of defining cultural health. We asked what the concept of cultural health is, and considered what the role of the Cultural Health Worker is in response to this.

A varied group of doctors, community health workers and other medical professionals, alongside artists, writers and art workers participated in the event and shared knowledge and experiences regarding the correlation between culture and health.

The day was kicked off by Dr. Roelf Dijkhuizen, former medical director of Royal Aberdeen Infirmary, who talked about his experiences practicing medicine in varying cultural environments. Lively discussion continued in the afternoon, when participants split into groups, maintaining a constructive mix between art and health workers.

Much questioning took place about the need for a Cultural Health Worker and the definition of culture itself. The groundwork has been laid for defining

and applying a cultural health methodology, but the conversation continues.

What do you think defines cultural health?

If you have a definition, or case example, of what cultural health is, please contact our Cultural Health Worker: catrin@deveron-arts.com

/ Artworks Conversations Eclipsed

The 20th of March was marked by an array of pinhole projectors and silvery specs, as people looked up to see the rare phenomenon of a solar eclipse. Also, as part of Artworks' 10 days, 100 conversations, 1000 people initiative, staff of Deveron Arts, artists and community participants set out to discuss Joseph Beuys' 'everyone is an artist' concept. In the surroundings of the *Oaks & Amity* White Wood site, discussion took place and was momentarily eclipsed, of course, as we grabbed our own glasses to witness the moon passing between the earth and the sun.

This was an even more memorable occasion, as we said Goodbye and Goodluck to our Project Manager, Kate Sargent, who is now on maternity leave. We wish her and Yunior Aguiar all the best for their new family venture.



ARTIST PILGRIM SEEKING HELP

Do you live en route between Huntly and Venice?

Do you think you could host the artist?

Got any spare walking gear? Anthony Schrag is looking for hosts and a lightweight tent and rucksack.

Between birth and death, human beings have collective work to do on earth.

- Joseph Beuys

The Path Ahead

/ Exploration Aids

With the Scottish Land Reform Act due to be published in 2016, Deveron Arts' current programme is largely focused on issues of land use. With the aim to examine concepts of shelter and home in the rural setting, Tim Knowles will come to Huntly in late April to research his project idea, *Exploration Aids*.

This aims to consider the 'right to roam' in practice and what hurdles we literally have to overcome in the landscape, including the increasing need for habitable space.

The project will utilise a network of existing places, including bothies and secret Howffs. Many of these occur within the Scottish landscape due to political, economic and environmental intervention.

Tim aims to develop temporarily habitable sites through sculptural intervention. This will allow people to travel light and gain access to shelter and resources. The use of the Howffs and other aids will be available to all, with a spirit of hospitality, akin to bothies, at its heart.

/ Lure of the Lost: Contemporary Pilgrimage

The *Lure of the Lost* is a Contemporary Pilgrimage in which artist Anthony Schrag will walk from Huntly in Aberdeenshire to Venice in Italy. Totalling three months and 2500+km, the walk is organised by our Walking Institute; a peripatetic school that explores human pace through journey-based projects. Pilgrimages, both traditional and modern, are routes taken to seek reflection and spiritual, material or remedial reward. *Lure of the Lost* sets sight on the Venice Biennale - the most revered of biennials and a sought after destination for most artists in their career - by way of pilgrimage. Anthony's participatory practice is not the type of work that is usually selected for the Biennale. By journeying to Venice anyway, in such a physically demanding manner, questions are raised about the value of different practices in art and communities outside of the art-world.

Anthony, who has identified the psychological

strains of this journey as being more daunting than the physical, is hoping to be received by citizens and communities on his journey. Traditionally the pilgrim would go in search of a relic, saintly objects, in order to receive a miracle. Anthony, however, will be reversing this and proposes to carry a relic from each of his hosts to the destination of Venice. He claims: *"It could be anything (small and not heavy!), but would be a token or a gesture from those people who have hosted me along the way. It is a way to honour and value their contribution to the project, and a way of including them in the Biennale too!"*

As part of Edinburgh Art Festival, Deveron Arts has set up an event to contextualise this conversation and open it to the general public. *The Way to Venice* is a discursive event, held at St. Patrick's Church, and co-curated by Nick Wong. It will allow the audience to partake in Schrag's experience, as he Skypes in from his location en route, and discuss issues that have arisen through his journey. Barbara Steveni, from the Artists Placement Group and appointed Shadow Curator for *Lure of the Lost*, Lucy Byatt, Director at Hospitalfield Arts/ Curator for the 2015 representation of Scotland + Venice, and St Patrick's Monsignor Philip Kerr will be in conversation with Anthony. David Harding, founder of the Environmental Arts course at Glasgow School of Art, will chair the event.

Join us for a parkour-style pilgrimage from St Anthony's Chapel to Rosslyn Chapel the next day.

/ Slow Marathon

The countdown is on for the 2015 Slow Marathon. Signed up participants have been training every Wednesday evening in preparation for the 26 mile walk taking place on the 25th of April.

The Slow Marathon was devised by artist Mihret Kebede who wanted to tally up the 5,850 miles between Huntly and her home in Addis, Ethiopia. Now an annual event, Stuart McAdam has mapped the route for Deveron Arts' fourth Slow Marathon from Portsoy to Huntly, based on his *Lines Lost* project and the exploration of former railway lines.

Dates for your Diary

Slow Marathon 2015

Sat 25 & Sun 26 April
Sat: 26 mile walk, Portsoy to Huntly
Sun: Pathmaker's Gathering

WWII in Europe: 70 Years On

Fri 8 May, 1pm
Lunchtime White Wood Bulb Planting

The Walking Institute

Mon 11 May, 5-7.30pm
University of Glasgow
Presentations by Prof Tim Ingold,
Claudia Zeiske, Michael Höpfner.
Chair: Prof Dee Heddon

Lorg Coise: Footprint

Wed 20 May, 7pm
Orbs Bookshop
Book Launch with Gill Russell

What is Art?

Sat 6 - Sun 14 June
A week investigating perceptions of art

St. Anthony's Feast

Sat 13 & Sun 14 June
Start of the Contemporary Pilgrimage to Venice

Hielan' Symphony: Paul Anderson

Sat 20 June, 7.30pm
Deeside Theatre, Aboyne

Solstice Walk to the White Wood

Sun 21 June, 6pm
With Archaeologist Colin Shepherd
Meet in Huntly Square

Exploration Camp

Wed 22 & Thu 23 July
Overnight Camping and Survival
For teenagers

White Wood Cycle

Fri 26 June, 1pm
Cycle to the White Wood site for a picnic
In collaboration with Huntly Bike Week & HDDT

The Way to Venice

Thu 30 & Fri 31 July
Edinburgh Art Festival
Discursive Event and Walk
£5

Pathmaker's Gathering

Huntly Cricket Club, Sun 26 April, 11 am - 2pm

Open discussion on pilgrimages and other long distance paths

John Sparshatt, Long Distance Walkers Association

Christos Galamis, Researcher of Human Geography

Marilyn Lennon, Developing an Irish-Irish Border Walk with Ramblers Clubs

Maureen Ross, Huntly Walker on the St. Cuthbert's Way

Notices

Ask our Cultural Health Worker

This month's question is diverging from offering advice on a cultural problem and instead answering one of the many queries that arose at the *Culture a Day Keeps the Doctor Away* event. **What is the difference between the Cultural Health Worker and an audience development officer?**

Catrin answers: In my experience, the role of the Cultural Health Worker is more sensitive to the concerns of the community outwith the arts organisation. Increasing participant numbers for the arts organisation is a by-product rather than an aim of the Cultural Health Worker. The Cultural Health Worker's role focuses on qualitative relationships through an increased opportunity to develop intimacy with individuals, whereby they can engage and motivate outwith the group scenario.



We had a response from last editions dilemma: Annie Lamb wrote in to say, "Glancing through the Deveron Express I read that Huntly could do with a 'wider selection of fresh coffee' and, right on cue, Orb's Community Bookshop (Huntly Heritage & Bookshop Community) has put in a Coffee Corner".

Our Guests

Ronnie Bowie, Munro bagger
Roelf Dijkhuizen, Medical Director
Jane & David Easton, Nepal trekkers
Deirdre Heddou, Glasgow University
John Perkins, Mountaineer
Rev Sarah, Huntly Episcopalian Church
Gordon Noble, Archaeologist
David Stevenson, Queen Mary Uni
Ben Twist, Creative Carbon Scotland
Atholl Hill, Artist & Designer

Shop

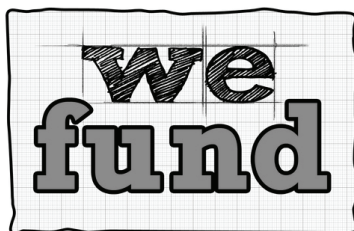
Stuart McAdam
Lines Lost
£10

Illustrated Artist's Map with
text by railway historian David Spaven

Gill Russell
Lorg Coise: Footprint
£10

The Hielan' Ways: fourteen thematic
maps with texts

Support the Contemporary Pilgrimage



Anthony's Schrag's pilgrimage
from Huntly to Venice will go live
on WeFund in early May. Keep
an eye out and support Anthony
in his three month journey to the
Biennale.

Congrats!

**Congratulations to artists and friends
of Deveron Arts who will be showing at
the 56th Biennale de Venezia this year.**

Senzeni Marasela will take part in the
Johannesburg Pavilion. Senzeni's practice
addresses the subjugated female figure, with
emphasis on South African culture. She plans to
approach people, while embodying her alter-ego,
Theodorah Hlongwane, and talk to them in isiXhosa

Celia-Yunior will be representing Cuba at
the Biennale. Celia González and Yunior Aguiar's
practice operates within the gaps of institutional
structures and social convention.



People Talk

Welcome

Joss Allen, Project Manager
Rachael Disbury, Shadow Curator Intern
Alice Maselnikova, Project Intern

Goodbye

Lindsay McMillan, Project Intern

Good luck!

Kate Sargent, Project Manager
(maternity)

FRIDAY LUNCHES

On the last Friday of the month
our doors open for lunch at 1pm.

Everybody is welcome to meet
us for a hearty meal from the
garden. Come and hear what we
and our artists are up to! £1.50

Contact Us:

Deveron Arts
The Studio
Brander Building
The Square, Huntly
AB54 8BR, Scotland

T: 01466 794494
E: info@deveron-arts.com
www.deveron-arts.com

Follow us:
on facebook and twitter

Deveron Arts works with the context and identity of the town of Huntly in Aberdeenshire. Here, the town is the venue, research base, studio, gallery and stage for artists of all fields and from all over the world. Engaging local people and the community in topics of both local + global concern, Deveron Arts works through a 50/50 motto, bringing together artistic and social relationships in a world wide network that extends throughout and beyond Huntly's geo-boundaries.