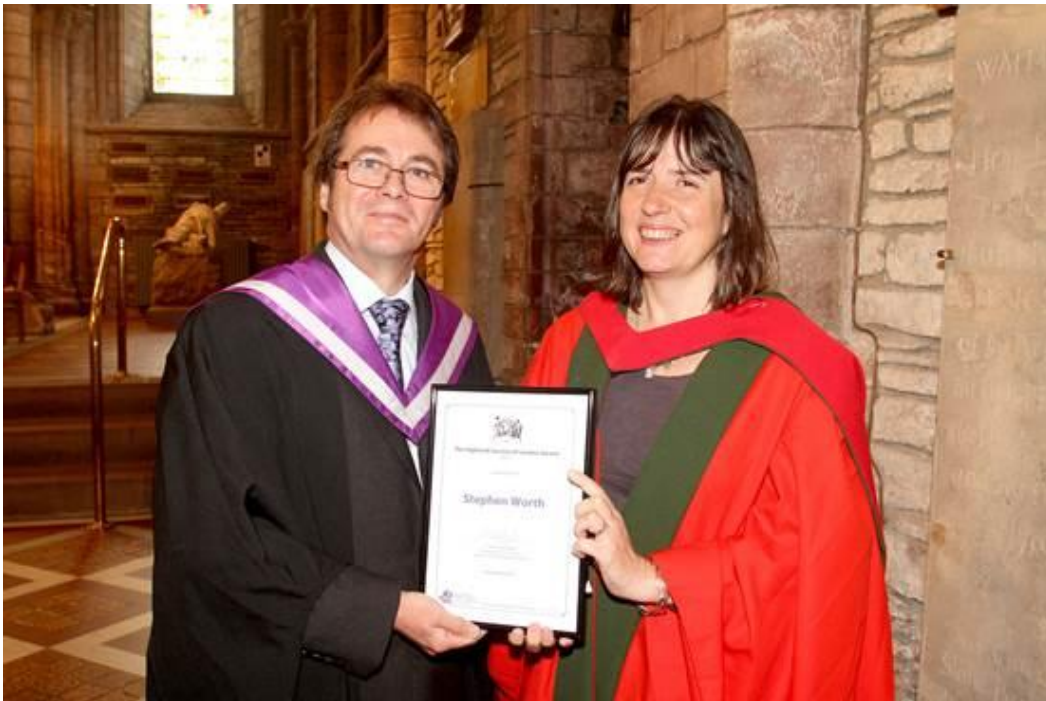


University of the Highlands and Islands

(www.uhi.ac.uk/en)

The University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) is the UK's leading integrated university encompassing both further and higher education. Based in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, UHI is a distinctive partnership of 13 independent colleges and research institutions locally based and rooted in communities, but with national and international reach, as part of a regional university structure. UHI's reputation is built on its innovative approach to learning and its distinctive research and curriculum – all enriched by the people, natural environment, economy, culture and heritage of the Highlands and Islands and its communities. With 40,000 students, the UHI curriculum portfolio across both further and higher education is designed to meet current and future local and regional needs and to attract other students to the Highlands and Islands to study.

The Highland Society of London presents an award each year for “the best undergraduate dissertation on a subject related to the culture and traditions of the Highlands”. The winner of the 2015 prize was archaeology student Stephen Worth (pictured below at his graduation ceremony on 18th September 2015, with Dr Ingrid Mainland, Curriculum Leader in Archaeology), and his dissertation focus was a township in Morayshire.



Dissertation summary:

Strathavon, at the End of Townships: What does the archaeological evidence of the Dalbheithachan Township tell us of the physical infrastructure, population and social conditions of Strathavon at the time of the Improvements?

This paper investigates the archaeological remains of the abandoned rural township of Dalbheithachan in Strathavon. It explores how the township developed, both physically and within the social fabric of the glen, and how it was ultimately abandoned in the late-19th century after the landscape was improved. From archaeological examination of Dalbheithachan, and further sites both within Strathavon and in the Cairngorm National Park, this paper was able to compare and contrast changes to construction methods from pre-Improvement through the Improvements period, 1700 – 1900.

Supported by primary source information, this paper has been able to draw together the physical remains and historical data to describe how Dalbheithachan, and the immediate area, was not swept away by the effects of the Improvements; but how an already fluid population adapted and embraced change until finally the area was absorbed into larger farming units, a process that continues today.