

Archaeology Fieldtrip around East Lothian

Dr Henry (Indiana) Jones Jr once said, “If you wanna be a good archaeologist you gotta get out of the library!”, which is exactly what some of our first year archaeology students did recently.

The School of History, Classics and Archaeology is lucky enough to have a wealth of archaeological sites on its doorstep. A group of first year archaeology students led by Dr Guillaume Robin (Archaeology Teaching Director) and Dr Tanja Romankiewicz (Lecturer in Prehistoric and Roman Archaeology) recently toured East Lothian, taking in a range of sites covering thousands of years.

The group first visited Chesters Hill Fort, an Iron Age hill fort, probably built in the first millennium BC, and which was occupied into the Roman occupation of Britain in the early centuries of the first millennium AD. The site has never been excavated but the remains of several houses are still visible.



Professor Ian Ralston (baseball cap at left) describes Doon Hill, to students

Next on the itinerary was Doon Hill, an Early Neolithic settlement site (c. 3700 BC). In the 1960s the site was

excavated but was thought to be Early Medieval! Further research and new radiocarbon dating have recently demonstrated its Neolithic date. A special guest joined the group at Doon Hill, Professor Ian Ralston (Abercromby Emeritus Professor of Archaeology). Professor Ralston – an expert in hillforts – has a history with Doon Hill, having first excavated there a schoolboy and returned to it following his retirement, being instrumental in uncovering the evidence of the true date of the site.



Archaeologists assemble!

And last, but definitely not least, was a trip to Tantallon Castle, a grand Medieval castle built on a sea cliff edge. Built in the mid-14th century, it was besieged several times over the centuries, finally by Oliver's Cromwell's invasion of Scotland in 1651. It's a popular filming location, featuring in everything from sci-fi movie 'Under the Skin', starring Scarlett Johansson, to 'Kuch Kuch Hota Hai', a Bollywood romantic comedy.

You can find out more about our archaeology degrees, Drs Robin and Romankiewicz, as well as Professor Ralston's work at the links below.

- Undergraduate Archaeology degrees at the University of Edinburgh
- Dr Guillaume Robin's staff profile
- Dr Tanja Romankiewicz's staff profile
- Professor Ian Ralston's staff profile
- Site visited – Historic Environment Scotland
- Atlas of Hillforts of Britain and Ireland – Ian Ralston