

# ROBIN TURNER (RCAHMS) – FALKIRK

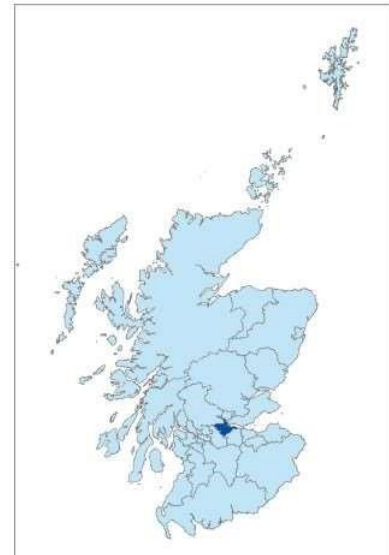
July 26, 2013 Historic Environment Scotland Buildings, Day of Archaeology 2013  
#myarchaeology, Archaeology, Bo'ness, Canmore, Dymock's Building, Falkirk, National Trust for Scotland, RCAHMS, Robin Turner, Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, Scotland, Scottish architecture



*Robin Turner (green jacket), meeting Prince Charles at Dymocks*

I'm Robin Turner, and I look after the architectural, archaeological and landscape survey parts of [RCAHMS](#), and also the recording part – getting records into the Canmore database and out to the public. I've been interested in archaeology since I was at primary school, and went on my first dig in 1969. I was hooked, and spent all my school holidays going on digs

in Britain and abroad, before going studying archaeology at university. As well as working in field archaeology (digging) I also spent almost 20 years in archaeological conservation and management with the National Trust for Scotland (NTS).



*Falkirk 'Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2011'*

One of the best things I've ever been involved in was at the small Scottish town of [Bo'ness](#), on the south side of the River Forth. It used to be a thriving industrial town but became increasingly down at heel in the later 20<sup>th</sup> century. As part of the NTS [Little Houses Improvement Scheme](#), we transformed [Dymock's Buildings](#) –a derelict group of ugly-looking buildings –into something that the town could once again be proud of, and I was responsible for ensuring that a detailed archaeological record was made of the standing buildings and also of what was under them.



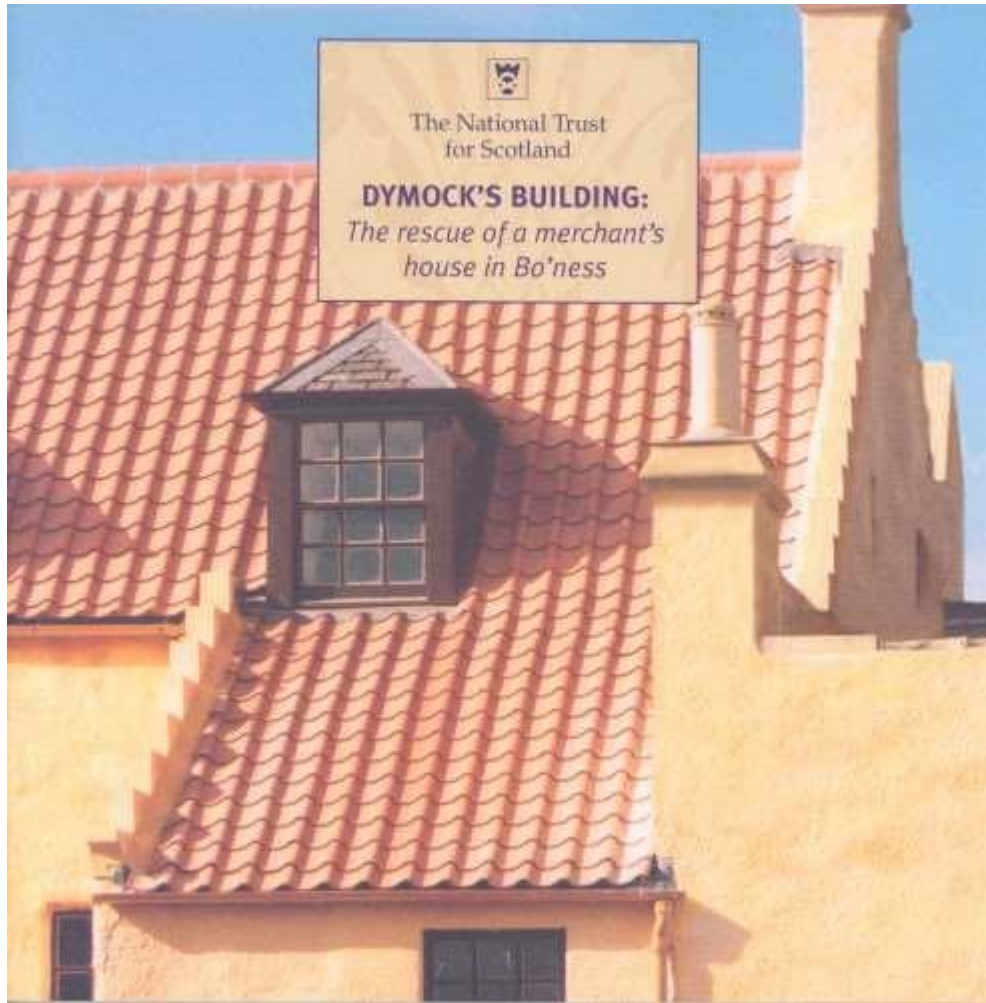
*Dymocks N Street facade before  
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*Dymocks N Street facade after  
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As well as unravelling the very complex story of the buildings, from their origins on reclaimed land in the 1650s to their 20<sup>th</sup>-century uses, we excavated beneath them and found the remains of an amazing salt pan: in the 1600s the south side of the Forth was a centre for heating seawater and making salt. The buildings are now in community use, but there is occasional public access where local people and visitors can find out about the story of the buildings. But the best bit is what our work did for the community. The buildings were transformed from being an eyesore to being something that people could admire and be proud of. The community went on to renovate the [Hippodrome](#) – one of the earliest picture houses in Britain. In part because of these initiatives, the community's civic pride has been greatly enhanced.

Archaeology is not about things: it's about people: people in the past, but people in the present too, and in the future. Through their work, archaeologists can change people's lives.



*Dymock's Building: NTS Booklet cover. Copyright The National Trust for Scotland*

This is what I've chosen for Day of Archaeology, but why not tell us your favourite archaeological sites in Scotland on Twitter using [#MyArchaeology](https://twitter.com/MyArchaeology).