

# ADOPT-A-MONUMENT AT CANAL COLLEGE

July 11, 2014    Cara Jones    Community Archaeology, Day of Archaeology 2014, Public Archaeology    Adopt-a-Monument, Canal College, Scottish Waterways Trust

Like last year, my 2014 Day of Archaeology was meant to be spent out and about, on location, working at the coal face (err) etc. I had planned to look at some archival material for a new outreach project I am developing as part of [Archaeology Scotland's Adopt-a-Monument](#) Scheme, but instead I am office bound tying up loose ends before I go on annual leave.

I have decided that this year's Day of Archaeology post will be on [Canal College](#) – a project I am working on today, but which has also seen the Adopt-a-Monument team out on fieldwork earlier this week. Canal College has been created by the [Scottish Waterways Trust](#) to help tackle youth unemployment in Falkirk and Edinburgh. In their own words;

*“Through the pioneering initiative, young people between 16 and 25 years of age, who have not been able to secure a job or place in further education or training, have the opportunity to gain heritage and environment skills through a wide range of practical projects outdoors on the Forth & Clyde and Union canals”*

[Canal College Press Release October 2013](#)



*Lunch time at Canal College*

Adopt-a-Monument has guided the vegetation clearance and excavation of the Falkirk Lock Flight which was in-filled in the first half of the 20th Century (function now replaced by the Falkirk Wheel). The Lock

Flights are designated as [Scheduled Monument](#) but as of yet, the Lock Flight is relatively unknown to the outside world, and are currently obscured by small woodland and dense vegetation. The work of Canal College hopes to change that. Our time with participants has allowed them to get actively involved in all aspects of an archaeology project – from photography to context sheet writing, from excavation to plane table survey, from elevation drawing to (the far less glamorous but someone has to do it) backfilling.

Why have I decided to talk about Canal College? Well this project has really invigorated me this week (the week before my much needed summer holiday!). It is truly amazing to work alongside individuals who are not only working hard to develop new opportunities for themselves, but who are taking their first steps into heritage and archaeology. Working on a project like this can perhaps remind us in the (in amongst the emailing, phonecalls, meetings – see last year's post) why we as archaeologists do outreach and engagement.

On a much more selfish note, Canal College gave me the opportunity to do some actual digging this week...for two whole days! I have not had the chance to do much excavation in the last couple of years, and as an ex-commercial archaeologist – I miss it!

You can see more photos and keep up to date on our progress on the project by looking at our [Archaeology Scotland Facebook page](#).