

IN THEIR HANDS: Q&A

What's it like being an archaeologist? Archaeologist Lynne McKeggie helps us find out.

WHAT'S THE MOST INTERESTING THING YOU'VE UNCOVERED? HOW OLD WAS IT?

I have excavated all sorts from 5000-year-old flint tools to 200-year-old stables. All of them interesting, because as you uncover it, you're thinking about the people who made it and used it in the past. I'd love to find a Viking brooch - they are so beautiful, but very rare!

WHAT WAS THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF BECOMING AN ARCHAEOLOGIST?

Working out which area to focus on, and what I wanted to do. I wasn't sure if I wanted to do scientific analysis, community projects or museum work. I've ended up doing quite a few different things all at once, as I work with museums, communities and developers in my job now.

DO YOU GET TO TRAVEL FOR YOUR JOB? WHAT'S THE BEST PLACE YOU'VE BEEN?

Our company specialises in Highland Archaeology, so I travel all over the North of Scotland. Wherever I go I like to stop by on some of the really nice sites that we have like brochs and ancient burial cairns. Dun Carloway broch on Lewis is one of my favourites - it's so impressive and has a spectacular view.

WHY DID YOU WANT TO BE AN ARCHAEOLOGIST?

I always loved scrambling around on ruins whenever we went on holiday, trying to work out what they were used for and how they would have looked in the past. I feel like there are more questions still to answer in archaeology, and that excites me!

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST STRUCTURE YOU'VE EVER WORKED ON?

On one of the first sites I worked on we excavated an Iron Age roundhouse that was 20 metres wide! It gave it a floor area larger than the average bungalow, which is just incredible for a wooden structure built around 2000 years ago. It showed me that the people in the Iron Age were capable of making really sophisticated buildings and wanted to show off!

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CAREERS WITH ARCHAEOLOGY...

If you're inspired to pursue a career in the field of archaeology, there are a range of different jobs and specialisms, including in these areas:

Archaeologist, Building inspection and conservation, Curation, Museum education, Research, Teaching

