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## LOCAL ACTRESS BRINGS SCOTLAND'S HERITAGE TO LIFE AS DRUM RESIDENT DOPPLEGANGER

- **Actress Eve Reynolds has helped bring history to life as part of National Trust for Scotland's new education programme *Timesliders* in North East**
- **Eve was enlisted after being spotted at her waitress job for her uncanny resemblance to historical Irvine family member Anna**
- **Banchory Devenick resident will feature as Anna Irvine in the Trust's education programme *Timesliders* at Drum Castle**

An actress from Banchory Devenick, Aberdeenshire with an uncanny resemblance to a member of Drum Castle's Irvine family has helped the National Trust for Scotland engage young people with their local heritage.

Eve Reynolds, 19, who was spotted locally due to her striking similarity to Anna Irvine, brought the historical figure to life as part of the Trust's *Timesliders* education programme. Eve portrayed Anna in different activities for the 12 schools who took part, that were developed to encourage an interest in the castle's 700 years of history and Scotland's wider heritage through storytelling.

The *Timesliders* programme at Drum was developed through an innovative community partnership that employed co-production methods, alongside teachers and pupils from Drumoak Primary and Culter Primary Schools. This helped to ensure the programme was relevant to their learning and curriculum and suitable for the primary three to four age group, while fostering long term links between the local community, Drum Castle and the wider work of the Trust.

*Timesliders* features fictional heroes, Kyla and Eden, as they travel throughout Scotland's past, present and future to try to stop their adversaries from rewriting history. By using a combination of audio stories, live theatre shows in schools and interactive learning activities at Drum Castle, *Timesliders* aims to engage pupils through storytelling, using time travel to get them excited about Scotland's heritage.

National Trust for Scotland's Senior Heritage Learning Advisor, Sarah Cowie, developed the programme alongside Schools Co-ordinator Katie Mackenzie, the team at Drum Castle, and Creative Consultant Ben Humphrey. Sarah said:

"We met Eve earlier in the year and couldn't believe the similarities between her and Anna Irvine. It was by sheer luck and coincidence that Eve happened to be a talented actress, so we knew we had to get her involved in some capacity. Thankfully we were

able to use Eve's talents to portray Anna, who had been trapped inside a portrait in Drum's drawing room, where the pupils had to find clues to help release her."

Eve, who is the Vice President of the Treading the Boards Musical Society at the University of Aberdeen, said: "Growing up I spent a lot of time at National Trust for Scotland places going for walks with my family and our dog Baxter, but I always had a soft spot for Drum Castle. It always felt like we were walking through centuries worth of history so having the opportunity to recreate some of Drum's fascinating stories as Anna Irvine has been an honour. It was lovely getting to work with all the dedicated Trust staff and finding out more about Anna and her time in the castle. Filming at Drum was truly an incredible experience and it makes me so happy to know that the children attending *Timesliders* are enjoying it."

Teachers and pupils helped feed into the content and resources for the programme, using important milestones in the castle's history as inspiration for maths, literacy and problem-solving activities, while the pupils helped identify some of the key features of the site that they found interesting. The sessions were led by former teacher Katie Mackenzie, the Trust's new School Co-ordinator, who taught across various schools in Aberdeen over the last 19 years.

Sarah added: "The development of *Timesliders* at Drum follows a successful pilot at Pollok House in 2023, which was followed by an evaluation of the programme with feedback from teachers and pupils. This has guided the development of the programme at Drum, with the community partnership helping to ensure it is relevant to the local area, the castle and the wider conservation work of the Trust.

"The workshops and visits to Drum have immersed the pupils in the history of the castle and instilled a sense of belonging to the site and the wider work of the Trust. This in turn makes *Timesliders* relevant to their local environment, enhancing the pupils' learning and contributing to the outcomes within the school curriculum. Collaborating with the local teachers and pupils has been invaluable in helping us develop an engaging, exciting and informative education programme.

"By working in this way, we're tailoring the content and resources for *Timesliders*, by linking their learning to the castle, the 700 years of its history and its woodlands right on their doorstep. The pupils will also learn about the outdoors and be able to take part in a competition to name one of the ancient oak trees in the Old Wood of Drum. We hope the experience will instil a curiosity for our cultural and natural heritage within the pupils that will develop as they get older and encourage them to bring their families for a visit.

"It's thanks to the continued generosity of our members and supporters that we can create fun, innovative education programmes such as *Timesliders*, and through this support we're able to provide schools with transport to help remove financial barriers that may have stopped schools visiting in the past. By doing this we're widening access and enjoyment of our places while also helping to grow the next cohort of

conservationists, who can carry on our vital work to protect Scotland's nature, beauty and heritage for future generations."

Bookings for next year's Timesliders programme open in October 2025. Following the initial series of events, the programme will be refreshed, based on further feedback from our partner schools.

Projects like *Timesliders* support the National Trust for Scotland's vision to care for, share and protect Scotland's natural and cultural heritage, as outlined in its strategy launched in 2022, and contributes to its engagement objectives to provide access and enjoyment for everyone and be a learning organisation.

## **ENDS**

**Images:** <https://www.flickr.com/gp/133918740@N04/V52qD9XuyY>

## **About the National Trust for Scotland**

Established in 1931, the National Trust for Scotland is Scotland's largest conservation charity and cares for, shares and speaks up for Scotland's magnificent heritage.

Over the last 90 years the Trust has pioneered public access to and shared ownership of some of the most magnificent buildings, collections and landscapes in Scotland. It cares for more than 100 sites, from ancient houses to battlefields, castles, mills, gardens, coastlines, islands, mountain ranges and the plants and animals which depend upon them.

In March 2022 the National Trust for Scotland launched *Nature, Beauty & Heritage for Everyone*, its ten-year strategy which sets out the ambitions of the charity over the coming decade. From speaking up for Scotland's heritage which doesn't have a voice, to improving the lives and wellbeing of people across the country, and responding to the climate and biodiversity crisis, the Trust will build on its work in recent years to grow its impact and conserve and restore more of Scotland's heritage, as it moves towards its centenary in 2031.

For more information on the National Trust for Scotland visit [www.nts.org.uk](http://www.nts.org.uk). The National Trust for Scotland is a charity registered in Scotland, Charity Number SC 007410.