

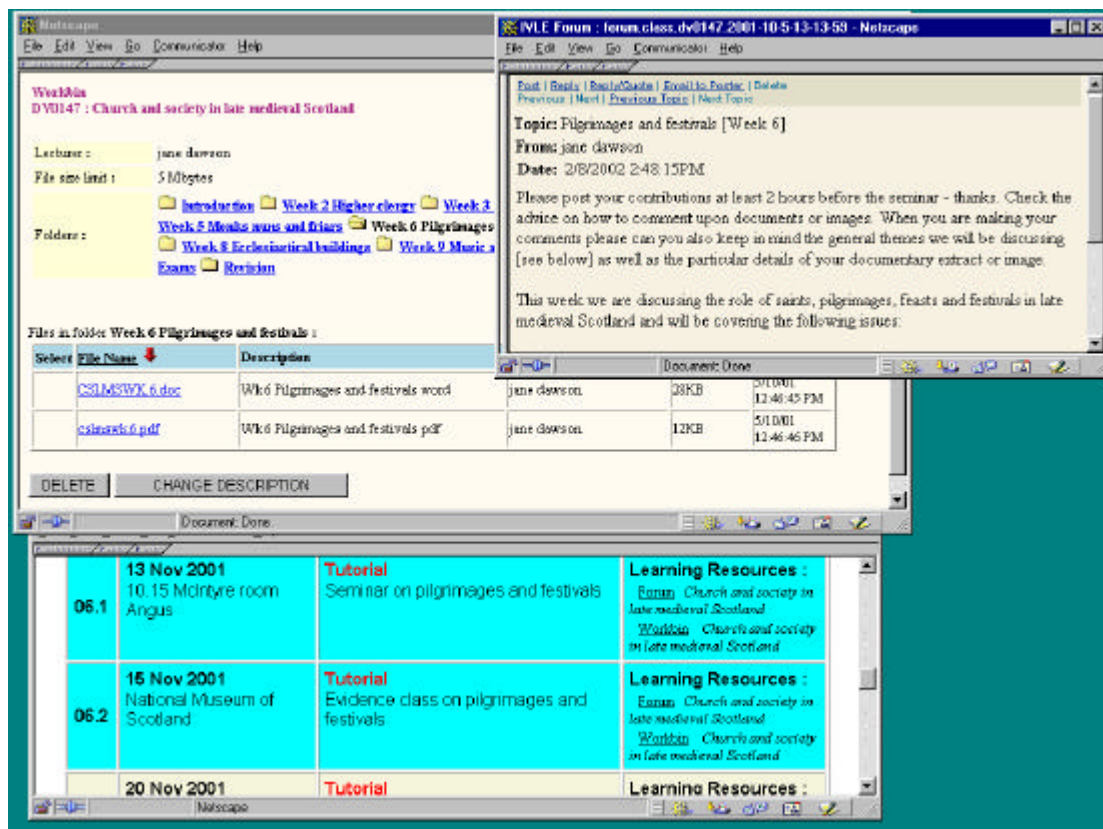
Discussion Forum and Evidence Class

In this instance a website discussion forum feeds directly into the weekly evidence class.

Any course website with a discussion or posting facility can be used in this way.

The Screen shot displays how the IVLE website allows the student to click through from the Learning Resources section of the Lecture Plan [bottom of screen shot] straight to the Discussion Forum [listed under Learning Resources and displayed in window on top right of screen shot and see below] and the Weekly Packs [in Workbin under Learning Resources and open window top right of screen shot] which contain the documentary extracts for that particular week's evidence class. The Course manager has posted the general issues which will be discussed in the evidence class as a guide to the students [open window top right of screen shot]. They are expected to post a reply by a specified deadline containing their comments upon their individually-assigned documentary extract or image [not shown in screen shot].

It has proved very important that every student is able to read all the contributions within the discussion forum because they have learnt silently from each other, following the good practice of the more experienced members of the class. When the class meet face-to-face, all the contributions are also available in hard copy and this allows the discussion to move quickly beyond the details of the individual extracts or images and examine the general issues. For revision purposes, the students much appreciated having everyone's contributions for each of the weeks readily available on the website.



Posted on the Discussion Forum by Course Manager [full text of top right hand side window in the screen shot of the IVLE website]

Topic: Pilgrimages and festivals [Week 6]

From: jane dawson

Please post your contributions at least 2 hours before the seminar - thanks. Check the advice on how to comment upon documents or images [Week 1]. When you are making your comments please can you also keep in mind the general themes we will be discussing [see below] as well as the particular details of your documentary extract or image.

This week we are discussing the role of saints, pilgrimages, feasts and festivals in late medieval Scotland and will be covering the following

issues:

the main feasts of the liturgical year; the Aberdeen Breviary and making the year 'Scottish'; how the festivals were celebrated; importance of Corpus Christi, especially in towns; the most popular saints; the main pilgrimage sites in Scotland; reasons for pilgrimage; economic and social effects of pilgrimage.

Sample contributions made by students on their set images/extracts [Not shown on the screen shot]

Three sample assignments

1. Detail of Fetternear banner [image]
2. Pilgrim routes to St Andrews, medieval bridge at Guardbridge [image] and information on ferries [text]
3. Extracts from Ayr Burgh Accounts showing expenditure on religious festivals [text]

1. Fetternear banner - see page 6

Comment

This is the Fetternear banner which was made c1520 for the prestigious Edinburgh merchant guild, the Confraternity of the Holy Blood in St Giles Cathedral, the burgh church of Edinburgh. It is incomplete but is the only medieval guild banner to have survived in Scotland. The Confraternity of the Holy Blood was one of many guilds in late medieval Scotland devoted to different aspects of Christ's Passion. That was a key element within late medieval religious life. The banner illustrates the crucified Christ, covered in bleeding wounds surrounded by the seven instruments of the Passion [scourge, nails, ladder, spear, reed, sponge and whipping post with cockerel]. There is a rosary running round the border of the banner.

The banner was a luxury item embroidered in coloured silks probably professionally stitched by the embroidery craft guild. The Confraternity proudly carried it in ecclesiastical processions, such as Corpus Christi, and it hung in St Giles as a symbol of their importance and devotion. The main focus of the religious guilds was their spiritual devotion but they also had many social functions, like looking after their members, their feast day 'breakfast' and arranging funerals etc. Guilds were made up of lay men and women and run by them. They were usually based in parish churches and employed chantry priests to say masses for them.

2. Pilgrim routes to St Andrews - see page 7

Pilgrim routes to St Andrews [from class notes and related to map in Atlas of Scottish History]

There were 2 ferries across the Forth

1. Earl's ferry from North Berwick to Ardrross with pilgrims' hostels at either end.
2. Queen's ferry [close to present rail bridge] and then to a hostel by the bridge at Lochleven, through Cupar and on the King's highway to St Andrews.
3. From the north there was a ferry across the Tay managed by the priory of St Andrews and a stone bridge was built at Guardbridge in 1419 [still there] by Bishop Wardlaw which marked one of the stages on the pilgrimage.

Comment

The photograph is of the bridge at Guardbridge, built by Bishop Wardlaw to improve the pilgrimage route to St Andrews from the north and west. The bridge marked a 'stage' in the pilgrimage where the pilgrims would stop and say prayers before continuing on their journey. Pilgrim routes were the best roads in Scotland in the late medieval period because people were willing to spend money in the religious cause to build bridges or create ferries or improve the road. They would also be safer and nicer to travel because there would always be pilgrims and there would be hostels to stay the night along the way. This meant that pilgrimages helped improve Scotland's transport system and economy.

3. Expenses for religious festivals in the burgh of Ayr [from class documentary extracts]

For 1536-7 Item for reddene of the calsay [cleaning the streets] on Corpus Christi eyn [eve] for honour of the sacrament 8d.

Other years: George Blayr for ringing the bells on 'Saulmess Evyn' [Hallowe'en]; making a sepulture [Easter Tomb] 5s; for the Robin Hood plays at 5 merks each year [merk = 13s 4d]

[Extracts from Ayr Burgh Accounts ed. G. Pryde [Scottish History Society 3rd ser. 28 Edinburgh, 1937 20-1; 75; 84]

Comment

The extract for 1536-7 shows that the burgh paid for cleaning the streets for Corpus Christi as a way of showing that it honoured the sacrament. Corpus Christi was the festival in which the consecrated Host was carried in procession in a monstrance around the town. It was a time of great corporate celebration with all the townspeople processing in their guilds or in order of rank and everyone wearing their best clothes. The Host

would be carried around as much of the town as possible to bring the divine presence into the different parts.

The other extracts show how much the burgh was involved in financing church activities. It paid for the man to ring the bells at Hallowe'en and for the construction of a tomb inside the church at Easter. The burgh also paid for the Robin Hood plays which were part of the tradition of morality plays or ones which criticised the state of society and the church. All these festivities were seen as religious. The burgh and not the church was paying for them and this meant they were in more control of the religious activities of the town.



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