

Local builders enjoy masonry masterclass

LOCAL builders were given the chance to improve their stonemasonry skills through a specialist masterclass.

The banker masonry course was open to apprentices, builders and those with practical experience of the trade.

The masterclass was attended by eight people who were introduced to various techniques which were explored through talks, demonstrations and workshops.

The participants were introduced to banker masonry and the tools used and received guidance on cutting and shaping stones including boning a block, shaping and profiling mouldings. They also discussed masonry construction and the use of stone mouldings.

The masterclass led by Brendan Teesdale, Master Mason was held at Muncaster Castle and funded by the Whitehaven Townscape Heritage Initiative.

Councillor Michael McVeigh, Heritage Champion at Copeland Borough Council, said: "I enjoyed having a chat with the good people taking the opportunity to skill up.

"Each and every one said it was a worthwhile experience and one they will use in the future, be it in their own property or in the workplace, as the three apprentices working at Muncaster Castle pointed out."

Iona Frost-Pennington, owner of Muncaster Castle, said: "I am delighted that the THI has been able to run restoration courses and I have very much enjoyed having them at Muncaster.

"It is so important that these restoration skills are not lost. Trying to find local people with the right skills to work on the Castle and other important listed buildings is very difficult.

"The course participants have learnt a great deal, being very enthusiastic and have found the stone carving course very interesting and worthwhile. I would really like to thank the THI for organising these courses."

The Townscape Heritage Initiative is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (£660,000); Britain's Energy Coast (a legacy project using funding from the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority) (£395,000) Copeland Borough Council (£250,000) and the Copeland Area Committee of Cumbria County Council (£50,000).



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