

Volunteers will put their work on show during special event in Dornoch

Wood's history revealed

THE history of a Highland woodland — including wartime Canadian foresters, loch-side church services and the remains of Andrew Carnegie's lost log cabin — has been uncovered by volunteers who have captured local voices and stories in a series of audio-visual presentations.

Three sound slides based on the social history of the Woodland Trust Scotland's Ledmore & Migdale Woods near Spinningdale have been produced.

They will be shown at a public event at Dornoch Social Club tomorrow at 3pm.

Each sound slide features beautiful photography and the voices of local people sharing their memories and knowledge of a particular theme:

■ The Canadian Forestry Corps looks at the impact on local people of Canadian foresters recruited to help extract timber in the area during World War II. The sound slide calls on the memories of Blossom Gow who grew



Members of the Canadian Forestry Corps working in the woods during World War II.

up in Clashmore, and Hamish Matheson who as a small boy had the excitement of a Canadian camp across the road from the family croft.

■ Worship in the Woods looks back to a time before the Great Disruption of 1843, when local people broke away from the established church and held their

services outdoors on the shore of Loch Migdale. The Reverend Alexander Murray and Gavin Ross of Migdale Stores share their insights into the period informed

by memories passed down through their families, and two young Mod gold medallists sing a Gaelic psalm on the loch shore.

■ The Carnegie Log Cabin follows Margaret Thomson, great grand-daughter of Andrew Carnegie, as she searches for the site of the family's log cabin in the lovely Fairy Glen at Spinningdale. Echoes of parties and picnics from years gone by intertwine with the sound of the tumbling burn, and the quest is rewarded with proof-positive of the cabin's lost location.

The sound slides have been produced by seven volunteer interns working alongside site manager, Eleanor Garty, and a team of heritage interpretation professionals, led by Verity Walker of Black Isle-based Interpretation.

The volunteers studied information that was gathered earlier this year during sessions held in Bonar Bridge and Dornoch in association with Archaeology for Communities in the Highlands (ARCH) and chose a topic that

interested them. They were given training in photography by John MacPherson of Light Touch Photography and audio recording by Anne Marie Goldie.

Volunteer Gavin Ward from Tain said: "It's been a fascinating and rewarding experience. As a graphic designer I'm interested in communicating through visual imagery, but this internship has opened up a whole new approach to me, and fed my growing interest in local history."

Site manager Eleanor Garty said: "The project has uncovered much more fascinating material than could be included in the short presentations, so we will be lodging the full recordings in local archives, where they can be accessed by the public."

For catering purposes, those wishing to attend tomorrow are asked to RSVP to Juliet 07810 027556 or ledmoremigdale@woodlandtrust.org.uk.

Parking at the hall is limited and reserved for those who need easy access.