

NEWSLETTER 33



www.acfabaseline.info

February 2012

A Belated Happy New Year to everyone.

This is a Jubilee year for us. But get your priorities right. It's ACFA's Silver Jubilee year, quite an achievement, and it would be good if we can mark it with some special occasion. The newsletters this year will contain some of our history and to that end, please send in articles, memories and photos to include over the year.

Since it's still winter, this edition has some suggested reading matter to keep you busy till we get out to the survey on Skye in March. And there's a full description of the Glen Lochay survey from Dugie to whet your appetite. This survey is the easiest of access for members and maybe Dugie's enthusiastic report will encourage some of us who haven't been out yet to take the plunge.

See you all at the February Bash - Saturday, 18th February.

WR

Glen Lochay

"Wendy, do you have plenty of drawers for Rona?" So piped up Alison Blackwood during a lull in the conversation inside a loaded 4 x 4 on its way up Glen Lochay last April.

Humour has been and continues to be an essential element in the survey of the glen. As this story of selfless commitment and endeavour unfolds, we are reminded of Libby's crannog, Margaret Alexander emphatically informing Cathy Gibson that it was her turn to be correct with the compass reading and Anne Macdonald's request during the April survey of 2010 for "a stiff one," a reference, of course, to wooden drawing boards as opposed to the "floppy ones".

Picture once again, a loaded vehicle in which its occupants are discussing methods of crossing the River Lochay. Following one suggestion in which a sheep's bladder could be put to use, one of the ladies, who shall remain nameless, innocently asked, "But what part of the sheep would you blow it up from?"



Margaret Gardiner has been a real stalwart in the glen. Her tireless generosity in providing support for the older male members of ACFA, in this case Ian Marshall, is a great example to us all.

The Survey Update

Following the passing of Bruce, Margaret Gardiner and Libby King have kindly agreed to become co-directors of the survey and they will be busy proof-reading occasional papers and organizing the forthcoming hotel stay.

Belinda Hamilton and her partner Scott Ruthven, the latter a tremendous help on our surveys, got married last September and we wish them well for the future. It is interesting to note that Catherine Ruthven, wife of the Laird of Glen Orchay, owned lands in the upper glen back in the 16th century – the Ruthvens have returned!

Progress

From Figure 1, of the red titles, all have been published with the exception of Tomochrocher which is currently undergoing the proof-reading process. The Batavaime report is also being proof-read but final publication awaits our visit to the hanging valleys on the ancient hunting forest of Mamlorn. Innischoarach Wester and Easter will be combined to form a single paper and the Duncroisks, Tirai and Tullich will be revised and published as second editions. Updating will make the form and content of these early publications conform to those of more recent ones.

The surveys in the 90s were undertaken prior to the availability of hand-held GPS systems and EDM equipment and the advent of the digital age has made it simple to create and embed into text, maps, diagrams and images of significant features, thus improving the overall presentation of the papers.

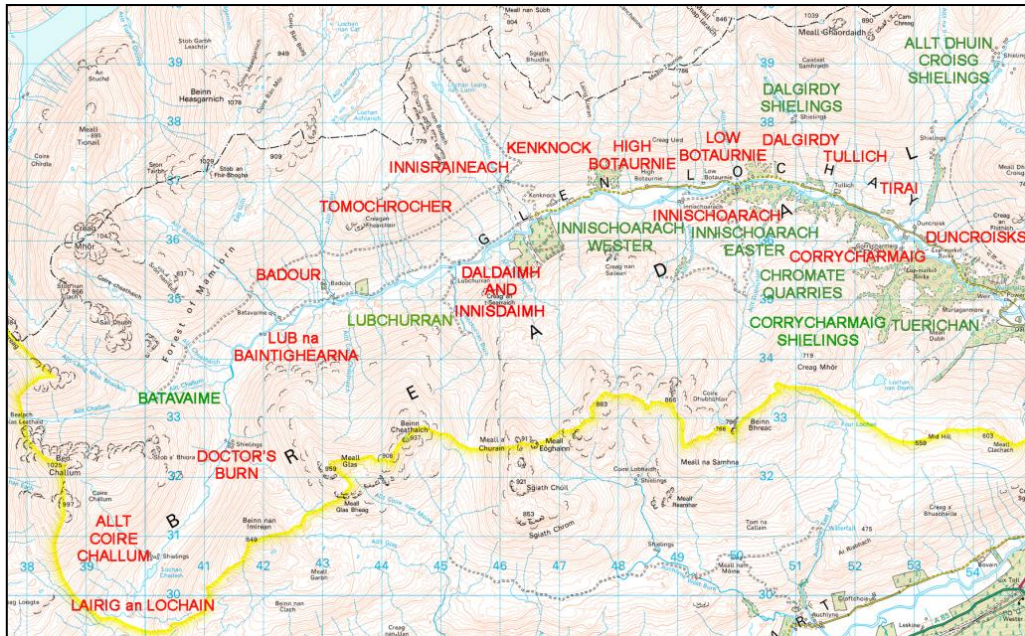


Figure 1. The survey areas of Upper Glen Lochay. Red titles indicate completed surveys and green, those areas that are nearing completion.

Some modern structures such as the threatened Duncroisk farm buildings and the few remaining huts from the Breadalbane Hydro Electric Scheme of the 1950's were also left out of the original publications. Anne and Scott Wood measured these in 2010 and the resulting drawings by Scott Wood will greatly enhance the revised papers.

Clearance cairns were also largely ignored in the early work but faithfully recorded in the later surveys and therefore it was felt that they should be included in the revisited sites. This is especially pertinent in the case of Tirai, an important undertaking that focused on the rapidly deteriorating upstanding buildings and was carried out in response to a talk by Stirlingshire Council's archaeologist, Lorna Main, to the embryonic association in 1987.

From Figure 2, we can see that the majority of the ground has been covered. In the westernmost area the three hanging valleys on the Forest of Mamlorn remain to be looked at; a small patch on

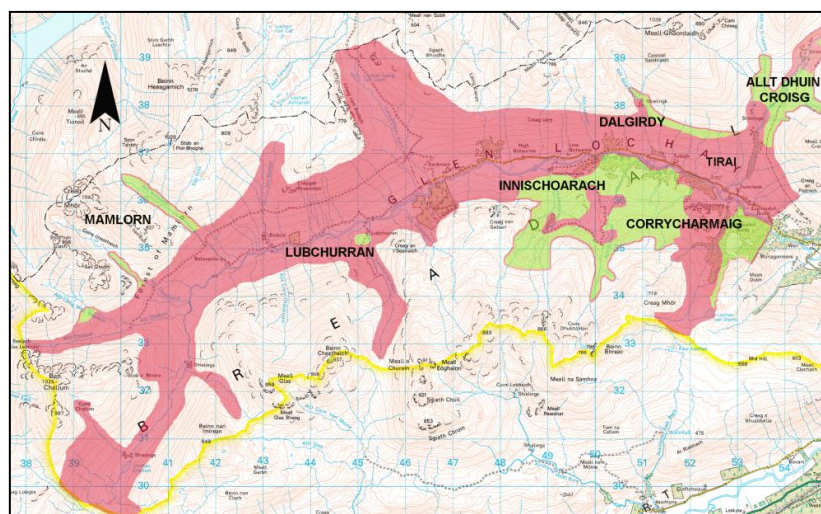


Figure 2. The pink areas represent the parts of the glen that have been walked over and surveyed. The green areas remain to be walked and surveyed. In total, the upper glen survey measures about fifty square kilometres.

Lubchurran where several small huts require drawing up; a day's work on Dalgirdy shielings will complete the remaining six or so huts and the Allt Dhùin Croisg shielings will probably need two further camping expeditions.

This leaves the largest sections, namely Innischoarach and Corrycharmaig. Initially, these will require several days walking but fortunately a Hydro Board road bisects the two farms, almost to their uppermost altitudes. Finally, the eastern green section of modern Corrycharmaig, the former farm of Tuerichan will be the last portion of the upper glen to feel the tender touch of the ACFA field archaeologist.

Bridge of Lochay Hotel, April 2011

Following the success of the previous year, we had another two days of fine weather, especially on day two when we put the finishing touches to a group of thirty or so shieling huts on the border between Innischoarach and Corrycharmaig.



The volunteers, April 2011.

Further up the hill Alison Blackwood spotted another shieling group on an area of unwalked ground. Unlike many of the groups of huts, this one is not present on any map, most likely because, unusually, there are no upstanding dry-stone foundations present.

On the third day the weather closed in and we confined ourselves to half a day on Tirai Mill and the Hydro Board and other remains on Duncroisk.

The objectives for 2012

These include the completion of:

- Lubchurran (one days survey and a day to EDM),
- the Corrycharmaig chromite quarries (see below)
- the hanging valleys on Mamlorn (a day and a half, possibly involving an overnight stay in the hotel)
- the Dalgirdy shieling (a day's work).

- the revision of Tirai in April (a two-night stay in the Bridge of Lochay Hotel, Friday 13 and Saturday 14 April)
- a two night camping expedition to the high shielings (second or third weekend in June) - see below

PROPOSED DATES FOR THE COMING YEAR

These dates are all Sundays, as usual and we meet in the Capercaillie Restaurant in Killin (01567 820355) at 9.30 for tea and scones/bacon butties etc. After a day on the hill we head for the Bridge of Lochay Hotel for tea and scones What a life!

Please contact Dugie beforehand if the forecast looks bleak – 01236 822651

Mobile 07928 356461, email>anneanddugie1@btinternet.com

Dates : 26 February, 11 March, 1 April, 13/14 April (hotel stay), 29 April, 13 May, 27 May, 8-10 June (weekend camping), 24 June. Dates may be subject to change.

Corrycharmaig Chromite Quarries

The majority of the chromite extraction sites, including an adit, a horizontal excavation, were drawn up in 2002, during the survey on Corrycharmaig. Following the discovery of letters held in the Breadalbane Muniments (estate records) written by the early geologists to the Earl of Breadalbane, it was felt that the subject merited a separate paper. This had been held in abeyance until the recent completion of the woodland projects further up the glen.

A chance remark about Corrycharmaig to geologist Professor Ray Macdonald resulted in his informing us that Dr Doug Fettes of the British Geological Society (BGS) had just completed a re-evaluation of the geology of the Corrycharmaig serpentinite, the unusual host rock to the chromite. Along with Dr Graham Smith, also of the BGS, Dr Fettes has very kindly agreed to furnish our occasional paper with a summary of his work.

The Second Great Big Camping Expedition, 2011

Unfortunately the landrover belonging to local farmer, Finlay Macaskill, was away for repair with the result that we could not be taken to the same campsite as 2010. On this occasion we were transported up the hill by tractor and trailer. This turned out for the best, however, because we set up our tents in an old fank, a site that was better sheltered and had a nearby stream for our washing and cooking needs. Our journey up to the shielings took half an hour longer but this was amply compensated for by our cosy accommodation.

On the second day we went right out on Lairig Breisleich almost to the watershed with Glen Lyon. Here the landscape is very bare and the mist gave it quite a bleak quality during our visit. The archaeology is rewarding, however. Numerous shieling huts, some unusual in character, are



Sue Hothersall, Margaret Gardiner & Libby King
on the treeless watershed with Glen Lyon.

situated on both side of the burn.

A return visit in 2012 is on the cards, probably the first or second weekend in June. Finlay has kindly agreed not only to take us up again but also to take us back down and because of this we plan to bring some luxuries with us, more wine perhaps?

Documentary research

Research into the Breadalbane Muniments continues to make progress and a number of volunteers are to be thanked for their contribution so far. At present we are slogging through a large number of late 18th century petitions that were written by leaseholders to Lord Breadalbane. The old court books that date back to the late 16th century are also being tackled. These are very difficult to read and, as a result, in many cases it is a matter of managing only to record the names of individuals and where they lived. Little nuggets of information do appear however. People are convicted of what we would consider today trivial crimes. The use of the lowland spade to cut peat is a good example, or not repairing dykes, cutting down a few trees, keeping a goat, non-payment of small debts, or not sending thatch to Finlanrig, possibly to the castle there. Other crimes are more serious, such as theft, and there are instances of violence taking place.

1637 Court Books of the Bailery of Discher and Toyer 1627-1657; the laird pursued Jon McColean in High Botaurnie for taking of Patrik McVurrich with a knife.

1723 The Bailie fined Mungo Campbell in Killin and Duncan McNab in Innischoarach £10 Scots *for beating one another wt stafs or whips as to the disturbance of the peace in the country.*

1616 Court Books of the Bailery of Discher and Toyer 1615-1620; Neill McCansk in Duncroisk pursued Murriell Dow McCarbrie in Tirai for the receipt of twelve firlots of cheese, five firlots of butter, two plaids, thirteen ells of linen and some pounds worth of small graith (tools, possibly for a loom) allegedly stolen from him about Lammas 1614, or thereby. In taking thereof she also stole a cog of butter of the fond/fient (devilish) stouth (theft).

1619 Johne Dow McDonald Roy VcVane is convicted for muirburn in Tullich and Johne McDonchie is convicted for cutting one piece of alder on the inches of Tirai and Tullich and Johne Dow McDonald Roy VcVane is convicted of muirburn in April on Tullich (tenants were only allowed to burn in the month of March).

1635 Court Books of the Bailery of Discher and Toyer 1627-1657; Tullich - Johne Beig McGillechreist and Ewen McEan VcConell regarding three alders that they could get no cabers for. Patrik McVaine for a load of muck (manure) and cabers, and Johne McLevtane for a load of muck.

The names of nearly a thousand pre-Census individuals have been recorded, some from as early as the 15th century. From such material, a picture of the chronological changes in tenancy is being created. Common names that prevail down the centuries are MacVean, (gone from the glen by the early 19th century), Campbell, MacNaughton, MacDiarmid, MacGregor, Stewart and MacNab, (the latter clan originating in neighbouring Glen Dochart.)

Second names such as MacCarbre, once a common name along Loch Tay have apparently become extinct and others from the early records are difficult to attribute modern versions to. This is largely because they were written in Old Scots, in a phonetic form, and often with the addition of

the grandfather or grandmother's first or second name or that some had an alias. Thus we find combinations and varieties of surname such as McCentyre McEnriech, Callum VcGillechrist McVurrich Duy, Mceuen Vane alias McDiarmid. Alaster Mceissick VcDonald Glas Johnne Dow McDonald Roy VcVane and so on.

Another difficulty in unraveling family lineage, i.e. grandfathers, fathers and sons (the vast majority of entries in the muniments are male) is that they very commonly held the same first name. The most common were Donald, Duncan, Finlay, John (early versions are Jon or Johnne), Patrick and Alexander.

A way around this confusion was to give a nickname to certain individuals, often to do with the colour of their hair, for example Duncan Dow or Duy (of the black hair), Donald Vane (of the fair hair), or Patrick Roy (of the red hair). Occasionally there is a reference to an individual's height or personality such as Dougall Aird (tall, mighty or proud).

The awareness of names of former inhabitants and where they lived does impact on the physical survey work. The turf and stone remains on the ground do not merely exist in a vacuum but they become the homes, byres, barns and kilns that were once lived and worked in, and this is especially true of the several structures that we have identified and tied in with known individuals.

At some point in the future it may also be possible to present a rough estimate of the sizes of population at certain periods in the history of the glen.

And in the end

The end of the upper glen survey is in sight. It has been a long haul but its success is due to the commitment and effort given by everyone who has taken part. It is a surprisingly large number. A big thank you to all.

Dugie MacInnes

From the bookshed February 2012.

I've been thinking about detective stories which involve real archaeologists. This was triggered by reading Ann Cleeves' *Red Bones*. Two students conducting a dig on Whalsay (in Shetland) discover a skull and some bones. Hattie, in charge of the dig, is a very serious archaeologist with a theory that a mediaeval merchant's house stood on that spot and sends the bones for dating. The other student is one of a type not commonly found on archaeological digs – a 'rich good-time girl'. Some of the bones are indeed mediaeval but some date from the time of the Second World War. This discovery leads to an accidental murder followed by the deliberate murder of Hattie. Lurking in the background are treachery, theft, deceit, envy and one, possibly two, earlier murders. A minor character in the book is the real Val Turner, Regional Archaeologist for Shetland, also credited with advising the author on the archaeological aspects of the book. The book is densely plotted with well-drawn characters though I have to say I found the author's explorations of their multifarious depressions, obsessions and tragedies did not add to my enjoyment. Val Turner's persona in the book exhibits none of these characteristics, I'm happy to point out.

Now to a professional archaeologist who wrote whodunnits, Glyn Daniel (1914 – 86), Fellow of St John's College, Cambridge and Disney Professor of Archaeology there. His primary interest was

in Neolithic chambered tombs but he also wrote on archaeological history and thought and edited *Antiquity*. In addition, he was a populariser - the host of a very successful television show *Animal, Vegetable, Mineral* - (television personality of the year in 1955, an archaeologist, forsooth) - and edited the *Ancient Peoples and Places* series. He listed his recreations as travel, swimming, food and wine.

The two latter interests were very evident in his first detective story, ***The Cambridge Murders***. This was published in 1945 but must have been written before the war. It exhibits great *joie de vivre* with considerable emphasis on food and drink, e.g. on food :

'he ... ate a chicken and mushroom omelette ... it was very good and so were the Petits Pois a la francaise. He finished the meal with some camembert and Bath Olivers. The claret went perfectly with the camembert.' P107.

And on drink:

'It is ... a time only for beer. It is a little too early for sherry and one's palate should never be spoiled before dinner with the rough and more violent drinks made with whisky and gin or other spirits.' P137.

His detective is Sir Richard Cherrington – an eminent if eccentric archaeologist with a passion for food, wine and detective novels – something of a self-portrait perhaps. In this novel Daniel has clearly been much influenced by writers such as Michael Innes and Edmund Crispin with the same kind of background, stock characters and self-indulgent in-jokes, but it has a nice complex plot and lots of red herrings. The denouement is clumsy, the murderer not being sufficiently integrated with the plot, but overall it's very entertaining.

Welcome Death (1954) has a very different tone. The post-war world in which Sir Richard finds himself offers little scope for gourmet drinking and dining and the carefree outlook of students in pre-war Cambridge is not mirrored in the people of a Welsh village arranging a celebration to welcome home returning servicemen which is the setting for this story. The murderess is a nasty piece of work – a war profiteer, bully and lecher and the establishment of his character takes up a fair amount of the book, leaving little space for the others to be developed. There are some clues and red herrings but less artfully contrived than in the previous book and the identity of the murderer remains fairly obvious in spite of them.

The author Glyn Daniel spent the war years with the RAF photo reconnaissance unit in India and SE Asia analysing photographs of territory affected by enemy action reaching the rank of Wing Commander. This sounds a less traumatic war experience than that of many combatants; nonetheless, this second novel seems to mirror the war-weariness of both civilians and military personnel in the years immediately afterwards.

And finally, I present a professional archaeologist who didn't write whodunnits (but who married an amateur archaeologist who did); he was largely the inspiration for several novels set in the Middle East.

Max Mallowan (MM) began as apprentice to Leonard Woolley at Ur where he met Agatha Christie (AC) in 1930. They were married later that year in Scotland. Woolley was unwilling to have Agatha on site at Ur so MM joined RC Thompson at Nineveh. In 1932 he became field director of

expeditions run by the British Museum and the British School of Archaeology at Iraq (some funded partly by AC), especially at Tell Arpachiya where AC became involved in the work, recording, cleaning and matching pottery fragments and as expedition photographer. International politics forced them to move to Syria where they worked on Chagar Bazar and Tell Brak.

During the war AC returned to England while MM joined the RAF Volunteer Reserve based in North Africa, like Daniel rising to Wing Commander. During this period AC wrote ***Come, Tell Me How You Live*** about life on the digs. She described it as 'small beer, a very little book, full of everyday doings and happenings' but it is a fascinating counterbalance to the academic tomes with its account of the hazards of making a home in areas with terrible roads, torrential flooding, no telephones, no electricity and no plumbing. After the war, MM became Director of the British School in Iraq, when he resumed the long abandoned work at Nimrud. As always, AC went too.

A number of the novels written by AC are suffused with the experiences she had with MM on his digs. These obviously provided settings, such as Petra in ***Appointment with Death***, but the whole history of the period fascinated her. ***Death Comes as the End*** is set in ancient Egypt and is based on several letters discovered in a tomb in Thebes in 1921. Archaeological method is conscripted by Poirot In ***Death on the Nile***:

'In the course of an excavation, when something comes up out of the ground, everything is cleared away very carefully all around it... That is what I have been seeking to do—clear away the extraneous matter so that we can see the truth—the naked shining truth.'

while life on a dig is recalled in ***They Came to Baghdad***

'Unexpectedly, she found the life quite enchanting... Helping with camera work, appreciating the skill and delicacy of the pick men--enjoying the songs and laughter of the little boys who ran to empty their baskets of earth on the dump.'

Several of the people she met during these years also appear, thinly disguised. The character of Louise Leidner in ***Murder in Mesopotamia*** is obviously based on Katharine Woolley, while ***They Came to Baghdad*** features Rupert Crofton Lee, a character inspired by Mortimer Wheeler.

MM was knighted in 1968 while AC was bedamed in 1971, making them one of very few married couples each holding that honour in their own right.

Carol Primrose

CALLING ACFA MEMBERS!

Surveys

ACFA members are encouraged to undertake field survey, not just at a landscape level but also on a smaller scale for perhaps just one building or feature. These can be sent to RCAMHS and kept as a collection of ACFA Site Reports in addition to the Occasional Papers.

Contact the Committee if you are thinking of proceeding. There are many people who will be happy to advise if required. So, if you have come across an old farmstead or a kiln or a WW2 air raid shelter or any unusual feature in your walks, consider rallying a few of the members, drawing it up and writing a short report.

ACFA does of course promote the larger scale survey where a team of volunteers labour over many weeks / months / years. The costs of printing can be considerable depending on the size of the final report but the Committee will assist survey directors in applying for grants and also advise on a combination of in-house printing and electronic publishing.

Ancient Trees – Some interesting links



The Fortingall Yew

In 1995, ACFA's Occasional Paper No. 3 was produced, edited by Ian Marshall. Its subject? Garscadden Wood*, an archaeological field survey made at the request of Dr Dickson, senior lecturer in Botany at Glasgow University whose interest lay in the ancient woodlands around Glasgow. Since then there has been little activity on the tree front in ACFA, but over the last two decades or so there has been a growing interest generally in ancient trees, culminating last year in the Woodland Trust's Ancient Tree Forum (www.ancient-tree-forum.org.uk) where information about the identification, mapping and care of such ancient subjects can be found. Last year a national ancient tree hunt began and regional Heritage Tree Trails were devised. The Scottish Borders TreeTrail is one such venture and there are some quite spectacular trees on it, for example the Covin Sweet Chestnut, in Bemersyde, planted in the 12th century by Petrus de Haga, founder of the Haig family. But none reaches the age of the Fortingall Yew, in Perthshire, reputed to be at least 3000 years old and maybe even 5000 years, the oldest living in Great Britain.

With my interest awakened by this information, in November 2011 I attended the Scottish Woodland History Conference in Perth. This annual conference arose out of the Native Woodland History Discussion Group (www.nwdg.org.uk) set up in the 1990s by Professor Chris Smout and Dr Fiona Watson. Its first conference in 1995 was recorded in the publication **Scottish Woodland History**, and there is a reference in chapter 6 to ACFA's survey of Garscadden Wood. The 2011 conference proved to be a stimulating mixture of rural history, community politics, ecology and woodland archaeology. Subjects included: the Forests of Birse; Improvement woodland in Morayshire; and Woodland rights and custom before 1700. The organisation also runs a yearly field trip over three days in April, last year in Sutherland and this year from 25th – 28th April in Galloway.



Rowan –An Teampuill, Rona – summer



Rowan –An Teampuill, Rona - winter

* Garscadden Wood (pge 80-83) in **Scottish Woodland History** edited by T. C. Smout 1997
Scottish Cultural Press. W Raine

Name the Archaeologist



No 1



No 2



No 3



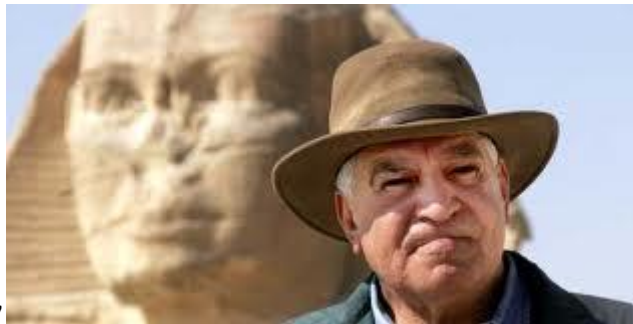
No 4



No 5



No 6



No 7

Answers on back page.

Dates for the Diary

18th February : ACFA February Bash

19th – 24th March : ACFA Survey Achnahannaid, Skye

13th-14th April : ACFA Glen Lochay Residential , Killin

13 - 15 April 2012 : *The Rhind Lectures: 'On the Windy Edge of Nothing: Vikings in the North Atlantic World Ecological and Social Journeys'* Professor Kevin Edwards, University of Aberdeen, Society of Antiquaries of Scotland

18th - 21st May : Archaeology Scotland Summer School to Eastern Dumfriesshire

26th May: Archaeology Research in Progress Conference (AS/SAS jointly), Aberdeen.

ACFA AGM : Saturday 27th October 2012

ACFA Anniversary Field Trip : September/ October 2012. Watch this space



'Hey girls, I'm 1.5 on the base line'

Winner of the ACFA photo competition Humour Category 2011 Dorothy Gormlie

* * *

Title page photo : Crossing the Lochay. Photo by Dugie MacInnes

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Submissions - It would be appreciated if submissions were sent in Word format. Please note that the Editor reserves the right to shorten and generally edit articles, as required.

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Answers to quiz: 1.Carenza Lewis of Time Team and Cambridge University. 2. Gordon Childe of Edinburgh University, Skara Brae and Maeshowe fame. 3. Indiana Jones 4.Lord Carnarvon and Howard Carter of Valley of the Kings and Tutankhamun 5.Mortimer Wheeler of grid system of excavation and Maiden Castle, 1954 British TV Personality of the Year. 6. Sir Arthur Evans, archaeologist at Minoan Knossos, Crete. 7. Zahi Hawass, Egyptian Minister of Antiquities, Nile archaeologist and name behind men's clothing line including Indiana Jones style hats.