



## NEWSLETTER 45.



[www.acfabaseline.info](http://www.acfabaseline.info)

October 2015.

**Achmelvich Bay: Assynt.**

**Hermit's Castle: Folly 20C. Canmore ID 314880: NGR: NC 05208 24758.**

Educated by Lionel to recognise that field archaeology is around us from yesterday and with various Anti – Aircraft, beach defences and Starfish sites under our belts, ACFA members visiting the wilds of the North West, might consider diverting from the magnificent Clachtoll Broch and the wonderful Horizontal Mill site at Alltan'abradhan on the north side of Achmelvich Bay, to explore the headland at An Fhareid Bheag on the south side of the bay.

Here is reputedly 'Europe's smallest castle' – mysterious, bizarre and poignant. In 1950 (or 1952-53, dates vary) an aspiring young English architect from Norwich, David Scott, , reputedly escaping from family pressures and expectations, spent six months building this "*in situ poured concrete folly* " (Buildings at Risk entry). One night was spent sleeping in it and then he disappeared - I can find no trace of him associated with Norwich or on architect registers but it is a common name Internally – and never more than 2.0m wide or high there is a bed platform with storage shelves, a fire chimney and a defensive dog legged entry accessible only from the small inlet above which it stands.

An atmospheric and powerful 10 minute video of the 'castle' by the talented Glasgow artist Bobby Niven is available at: [www.bobbyniven.co.uk/work/hermits-castle](http://www.bobbyniven.co.uk/work/hermits-castle).

Welcome to the 2015 Autumn Newsletter from Richard and myself.

In this issue we have a report from Carol on the ACFA June trip to Tiree accompanied by a reminder from Wendy that the trip appears to be flowering into a proposed return for survey work in either May or June 2016 – and a further piece from Carol with notice of encouraging further funding and community work at Lambhill Stables resulting from the ACFA survey at Glenmavis.

We also have report on an excavation at the Thirlestane Cairn in West Lothian, another archival piece by Leslie Gray from early newsletter and an oldie photo competition to cheer us up.

On a sadder note, some memories from Anne Macdonald about Ann Wood whose funeral in May became a gathering of many generations of ACFA and of Robin Callander, an early though lapsed member from Edinburgh.

In the Spring issue we hope to include reports on this summer's excavations on Dunknock Hillfort at Dunning with SERF and a piece from Ewen Smith on recent developments in hominid evolution (some of us were there, so he must tread carefully).

Richard Anderson: [richardnm@btinternet.com](mailto:richardnm@btinternet.com).

Ian Marshall: [john.marshall69@btinternet.com](mailto:john.marshall69@btinternet.com).

## **ACFA goes to Tiree**



On 26<sup>th</sup> June an intrepid group of 19 long-standing members of ACFA, a dog and one very welcome newbie in the shape of Irene Dayer (half-way through the current course) foregathered in Oban to catch the 4pm ferry to Tiree. Irene is clearly in the good old dogged mould of the true ACFAist since she had damaged a leg just before the trip but came anyway, on her crutches.



The logistics of such a trip were daunting since it was necessary to restrict the number of cars to cut down costs but Wendy had made a plan which assigned those without cars to a designated driver. Needless to say, this being ACFA, it didn't exactly work and one ticket went missing – fortunately only temporarily. The ferry trip itself posed concerns to some less seasoned sailors in our midst but, despite horrendous weather forecasts, the sea was obligingly calm.

Arrived at Tíree, we sorted ourselves into cars and set off for our accommodation in Hynish at the south end of the island. The buildings at Hynish were started in 1837 and consisted of a dock, workshops and lodgings for those involved in the building of the Skerryvore Lighthouse. Tíree is famous for corncrakes, shy birds which can be heard easily but are difficult to see, and Hynish apparently is one of the best places to see them. But the only member of the party who managed to locate them was Rogie, the dog, when taking Peter on his evening walk. Bedrooms had bunk beds which we had to make ourselves. No big deal? Persuading a strange duvet into its cover is never easy and while bent double under the top bunk it felt like some sophisticated form of torture. Toilet facilities can only be described as idiosyncratic. Some rooms had wash hand basins and a shower, some had one or the other. Only one had a WC. There were two bathrooms with bath and WC and two other WCs. People who indulged in a bath were liable to have their leisurely soak interrupted by desperate souls trying the door in search of more immediate relief.

Dinner was provided by the staff and was very welcome. We had been told to bring our own alcohol and wine and spirits flowed. After dinner we sat in the lounge and talked, drank, talked .... Fred Guy produced a mysterious cardboard box which turned out to contain some pottery finds from his geography dissertation trip to Tíree in the 70's, admittedly nothing very dramatic but interesting – he salved his conscience later by donating it to the local museum.

Breakfast consisted of cereals, various, and filled rolls. It was as though someone had asked for sausage, bacon and egg without stipulating they should be altogether; so we had bacon rolls on Wednesday, egg rolls on Thursday and sausage rolls on Friday.

Duly fortified, we set off. First stop the wonderful archives with Janet Bowler the archivist. Packed into a smallish space as well as the archives were a useful library, many photographs, various artefacts, some of them collected by an airman based there who spent all his spare time combing the fields and bogs and a revolving model of a Tíree house. After discussion, expressions of appreciation to Janet and a certain amount of queueing for the smallest room, we left for Dun Mor Vaul. A fairly steep and muddy ascent was not made any easier by a howling wind which



threatened to pluck us off the rock. The dun itself showed the double walls and chambers within the walls very clearly. A suggestion from somewhere that there were cup-and-ring markings on a rocky outcrop led to an abortive search but an easier way down. A shortish walk past kelp kilns and rig led to Dun Beag Vaul, a much less impressive structure. At this point Wendy's programme offered a walk of 2 miles each way to the Ringing Stone, to see a large cup marked erratic but

given the wind and driving rain, the balance of opinion was more in favour of a rapid retreat to Tiree Lodge at Kirkapol for lunch.

After lunch, we walked up to the nearby Kirkapol chapels. The smaller one sits high on a rocky outcrop, where we managed to locate a rock slab with an incised cross in it; the larger, no more than c100 yards away has a graveyard surrounding it.

Architecturally, they are very similar and probably closely contemporary (late 14c.). Why there are two is a mystery. At this point the promise of a walk to Heanish Dun and assorted lumps and



section of ACFA.

bumps in wind and rain appealed to very few, and a large contingent went to look at the pottery instead. Next on the agenda, Happy Valley field system and megalithic monument by a happy co-incidence took us past the bottle lady. A large pile of empties outside her cottage suggested she might have had a bit of a problem but, in fact, other people emptied them for her. She then recycled them into various whimsical creations.

Now we turned for home and dinner with guests Alison Kennedy and Dr John Holliday. He gave us a talk on his great interest, Scandinavian Tiree. As elsewhere in Western Scotland, archaeological evidence is in short supply but place-names tell a story of Norse influence: not just raids, but repeated settlement for several centuries. His enthusiasm was infectious to the extent that there was talk of starting a Norse sub-





On Thursday morning, Tiree decided to demonstrate all the different types of weather it could offer, ranging from beautiful sunshine colouring the sea through shades of blue to emerald green, followed within minutes by rain, hail and violent wind which whipped

up a sandstorm on the beach beside Balephuill dunes forcing the doughty travellers either to bend double or walk backwards. Then the wind dropped and we resumed normal locomotion to reach the kelp working remains at the end of the beach. At this point, your correspondent and another member of the party decided that the charms of St Patrick's temple were insufficient to tempt us to tackle a long scramble up a steep rocky hill path and we returned to the cars where we enjoyed the spectacle of a Tireean roundup – a local farmer herding his cattle to the feed station in a land rover ; he would have had more success with a dog we decided, the cattle finding it quite easy to joust round behind him and head off in all directions kicking up their heels. The rest of the party joined us some considerable time later after inspecting the temple with its enclosure and platforms together with a rock carved cross, suggesting an eremitic site, followed by a neolithic grave. Lunch, great choice of 2 soups and umpteen kinds of sandwich though a slight shortage of seats led to a bit of cuddling up, was at the Cobbled Cow in Crossapol Rural Centre. Thereafter to Soroby graveyard and some ancient carved stones, then on to Barrapol and Sandaig where there were some original Tiree houses. Sadly a local move to repair and refurbish one as a museum fell by the wayside because of lack of funds. By this time the weather was almost benign. We looked briefly at Kilkenneth chapel, late mediaeval and roofless, though the walls still stood almost to full height.

At Haugh there was a large grassy area showing traces of a series of stone circles and earthworks. It was difficult to establish the relationships of all the features and much discussion was generated, but there was general agreement that it must have been a very important area.



We then moved on to a beach overlooked by the two Boraige duns but the consensus was that there was not enough time to go over them. Apparently Euan MacKie wanted to

excavate one of these, rather than Dun Mor Vul but the landowner refused



permission because he was afraid digging might trigger wind erosion if the turf was removed. Happily Euan was offered a very rewarding consolation prize in the shape of Dun Mor Vault. We spent some time watching Tiree's world famous surf being ridden by some intrepid locals. Then we moved on to Cornaig mill. The stone mill house is ruined and apparently too dangerous to enter but the wheel and its machinery still works. This wheel is unusual in that it is breast-shot, the water hitting the wheel amidships, running neither over nor under it. Two millstones lay outside; rather surprisingly, one was sandstone which must have produced rather gritty flour.

After dinner we had a film show, with guests, archivist Janet Bowler and genealogist Duncan Grant. The films included the excavation of Dun Mor Vault with a swashbuckling Euan MacKie, and the artefacts from the wheelhouse at Drimore, South Uist, which featured a VERY young Alex Morrison. Duncan Grant's experience was very typical of island life in that he had left Tiree for many years before retiring back home. It turned out he had had a shop in the Maryhill area of Glasgow and several people remembered it. He also had a truly insular outlook which I have seen in other island inhabitants; he knew all about the east side of Tiree but regarded the west side as *terra incognita*.

Sadly discussion had to be curtailed that evening thanks to the vagaries of Caledonian Macbrayne's timetables. On Fridays the boat leaves Tiree at 9.20am and travellers must be on the pier by 8.30. Allowing 30 minutes from Hynish, 15 minutes to strip beds etc. and 30 minutes to eat breakfast, we all had to be up about 6.30. We made it, although some of us had to finish our breakfast roll and sausage actually on the boat. A smooth crossing back to Oban brought to an end a short but intensive and very enjoyable island interlude. Our thanks go to Wendy who organised it and managed to pack in lots of interesting places.

Carol Primrose.

### Coal, Cottages and Canals.

Some of you will remember that we did a survey of a deserted mining village in Bishopbriggs, East Dunbartonshire, and you may be wondering what's happened to it. It is one of only 2 such villages in this area with any traces still extant, the other being Lochfauld. Lochfauld is about half a mile west along the Forth and Clyde Canal and consequently is in Glasgow, very close to Lambhill Stables.



Lambhill Stables opened its doors in June 2011. It is a centre point for the community, providing local residents with the opportunity to take part in a range of recreational and occupational activities, and to access a range of educational resources to develop their potential as active citizens.

The history and heritage group at Lambhill became interested in following up local connections with these villages and the long and short of it is that I found myself part of a group applying for Heritage Lottery Funding. After a long wait we got word that we have been awarded £80,000 over two years. The bid included provision for a Heritage Officer and an Activities Officer; a fair number of people applied, most of them very well-qualified. The posts have now been filled by, respectively, Maggie Macbean and Michael Naconecznyj.

The aim of the project is to bring to life the forgotten stories of the communities living alongside the Forth and Clyde Canal between Jellyhill and Lambhill from the opening of the canal to the present day. We are looking for local people with family connections or memories of this area to build up an archive of data and photographs. The object is to foster awareness of the significance of the Lambhill area's contribution to the modern world and raise the self-esteem of the current residents.

We intend to engage local people in the project by offering practical experience of daily life a century ago such as how people got food, their hobbies and the way they made their own entertainments. Of course the lives of miners and their families will loom large but we will also investigate how the canal fitted in – the boatmen, the banksmen and the bridge keepers. We hope to involve young people from local schools to develop the stories through the medium of artistic expression: verse, drama, video, music and painting.

There will also be a certain amount of archaeological activity to be arranged with Northlight: surveying, field walking, possibly some excavation. Since the community must be involved as a condition of the grant, ACFA members would be most welcome as demonstrators and purveyors of knowledge. A crash course in local history can be arranged. Once complete, this work will be written up with financial support, possibly as an ACFA paper if the committee finds that acceptable.

This will involve a fair amount of the kind of research into the history of the area and its residents that ACFA members are already familiar with and we would be grateful for any volunteers to help out. Travelling expenses will be paid. Additionally we are already finding there is a great deal of information only available as memories which need to be recorded. For anyone interested in helping in this part of the project we can provide training in oral history techniques. A plus point is that most of it can be done inside, in the warm, out of the rain, and at times convenient to you. If you think you might be interested please contact Carol Primrose

Email: [primrose@torvean.u-net.com](mailto:primrose@torvean.u-net.com)

### Tiree Field Work Project 2016.





ACFA is in the process of planning a week of field work on Tiree in spring 2016, staying at Alan Stevenson House, Hynish as we did for our field trip last May. Possible dates are:

Tuesday 26th April – Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> May

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> June – Monday 13<sup>th</sup> June

Approximate costs: Travel to Oban + ferry fare (£20 + share of car fare) + accommodation with full board (About £50 per night) The work will involve field walking and drawing based on the Turnbull estate map of Tiree 1768. The final survey area will be chosen on the outcome of desktop work over the winter months.

If you're interested in joining the survey let us know **very soon** so we can make a provisional booking. If you can't manage a whole week it might be possible to come for fewer days. There'll be more information at the AGM in November but we have to book the accommodation now.

If you'd like to help with the desk top work over the next few months let Elaine know:

[elainemsblack@gmail.com](mailto:elainemsblack@gmail.com)

If you'd like to join the survey let Wendy know: [rainewest@btinternet.com](mailto:rainewest@btinternet.com) **NOW**

*Elaine Black, Wendy Raine, Richard Anderson.*

### **Anne Wood (1936 – 2015).**



Anne was born in Kilmarnock on the 13<sup>th</sup> of August 1936 to a family whose roots were sunk in Ayrshire and its traditions and history. She was educated at Kilmarnock Academy and went on to study for a BSc in Maths and Physics at Glasgow University. She married Bill Johnstone, whom she met at University, in 1959 but the marriage did not last long and after her son Stephen was born the couple separated and divorced. After her degree, Anne worked with the Radiology Department in Glasgow – amongst other things calibrating X-Ray machines. After her divorce and with a small child to bring up alone, Anne decided to go into teaching and spent the majority of her working years as a teacher of maths and physics, eventually taking early retirement in 1992.



Anne's father instilled in her a love of nature and of history, particularly the history of Ayrshire, and he also began for her a life-long love affair with Arran where she went at least once almost every year of her life.

Anne had a wealth of knowledge about plants and birds and she was always very generous in sharing her knowledge. She was always very patient when I would forget what something was called and would just say 'Anne, I told you before it's ....' A love of the great outdoors led on to a passion for mountain climbing and a love of mountains and wild places remained with her to the end of her life. I recall walking the West Highland Way with Anne in 2001 and as we walked through Glencoe and over the Devils Staircase to Kinlochleven she recounted her climbs over the years, naming each peak and remembering what the weather had been like. She climbed The Cuillin many times and really enjoyed the challenge of scaling rock faces, going up through chimneys etc with or without ropes.



As a person who gets vertigo standing on a chair I was lost in admiration of Anne's total fearlessness. She would get up before dawn on a winter's morning to get to the hills by daylight and, armed with a couple of marmalade pieces, climb until the light faded. When I accused her of being too lazy to make something proper for lunch she just said 'I like marmalade pieces'. However, when, in 2001, I asked if she regretted not being able to climb any more she said 'Oh no, I've done all that – thank goodness I don't have to do it again!'

In 1978 Anne applied to do the Certificate in Field Archaeology at Glasgow University and remembered going to the Department for her interview to be confronted with a 'very grumpy man' who felt he had been overlooked in the queue. This, although she never dreamt it at the time, was to be her second husband, Scott Wood whom she married in 1997! Archaeology became for Anne the main interest in her life. After she gained her certificate in 1981, Anne spent several years, along with Gerry Hearn and Jim Mair, walking all over the Irvine Valley, eventually publishing a report in 1996. She was a member of GAS and a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and when, in 1985, Lionel Masters instigated the setting up of the Association of Certificated Field Archaeologists Anne was a founder member. She was a committee member twice, serving for one term as the secretary of ACFA.



While having an interest in all forms of archaeology, Anne was particularly interested in Mediaeval or Later Settlement and spent many happy hours tracing field systems and dykes! She embraced the new technology which ACFA acquired – first the

theodolite and later the EDM -once, that is, she had figured out how it worked; she always needed to know how it worked and wasn't satisfied just to be told how to work it! She was inextricably linked with the ACFA survey of the Isle of Raasay and walked all over the island recording all traces of earlier settlement and land use.

She became, for me, the symbol of ACFA in Raasay, tramping about with her notebook and pencil – usually with William Dougan in tow carrying the staff – meticulously noting all the features and all the field banks. When we teased her about her fixation with field banks, Anne would just say 'Field banks are important' and she was absolutely right. Along with Scott she surveyed many sites in Arran, which was a place also very dear to Scott. Anne devoted many years to history and archaeology and was a weel-kent face at excavations, surveys, conferences, outings and lectures. She was particularly proud when, just before she died, Scott was given the GAS President's Award for his services to archaeology but Scott averred that the award was as much for Anne as it was for him as she had been with him every step of the way.

Anne fought 3 battles with cancer. In the early 1980s she was diagnosed with breast cancer and had a mastectomy. This left her with lymph problems which caused her life-long pain and discomfort which she bore with stoic good humour. Anne made a good recovery from her cancer and was free of it for many years. Some 8 or 9 years ago she developed several skin cancers which required surgery and then 18 months ago came her final battle when she was diagnosed with oesophageal cancer and this in the end defeated her. All those of us who knew and cared for her, felt that Anne of all people did not deserve the struggles with cancer. The final one was in many ways the 'unkindest cut of all' as Anne's lifestyle did not make her a typical candidate for oesophageal cancer, or indeed for any of the cancers she had. Once again she tried her best to defeat it but, when she knew it was useless, she faced her end as she had faced her life with courage, tenacity and finally quiet acceptance.

We will all miss her.

Anne Macdonald

Robin Callander (2015).



We must also regretfully record the death of Robin, who was a leading member of the class of 1981 – 84. Robin was involved in many of the early surveys of ACFA particularly the settlement of Burg on Mull in 1983-84, unfortunately never published, and was a regular figure at many of the earliest field trips. He was a long standing member of The Edinburgh Field Society, of Geoff Bailey's 'Wall Nuts' and of the Society of Antiquities in Edinburgh where he was always a regular at meetings up until the last few years.

His interests embraced Scottish Vernacular Buildings to whose journal he made several contributions and to the Pentland Hills, where he identified some examples of the type known as 'star cairns', first recognised in the Cheviots (about which I have not heard much lately).

Robin was a distinctive figure with pipe and

stick, a mordant and witty companion in the field and a hospitable colleague, for a bed in Edinburgh for Rhind or Antiques lectures.

Ian Marshall.

## Cradle of Scotland Exhibition: 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2015 to 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2016.

Hunterian Museum, Glasgow:



Highly recommended exhibition of ten years of work by the University of Glasgow Strathearn Environs and Royal Forteviot Project and of particular interest as many of our active members have participated in these from its inception. An inspiring collection of artefacts and very fine

recreations of many of the elements and settlements by the archaeological artist David Simon.

Accompanied by Workshops and 10 Minute talks in the Gregory Building and Hunterian.

*Please note some dates may be subject to change – check with Hunterian Museum.*

**Cradle of Scotland: Salon des Refuses:** 21<sup>st</sup> October 2015: 3-5pm Room 320 Gregory Building.

**Conversation Session:** 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015: 5.30 – 7.00pm Hunterian Art Gallery.

**SERF Pottery Workshop:** 11<sup>th</sup> November 2015: 3 – 5pm. Room 320 Gregory Building

**SERF Lithics Workshop:** 9<sup>th</sup> December 2015: 3-5pm: Room 320 Gregory Building”

**How to build a hillfort”:** (10 min talk) 21<sup>st</sup> October 2015: Wednesday 1pm.

Dr Tessa Poller (Glasgow Univ.) Hunterian Art Gallery.

**“How to rebuild a hillfort”** (10 min talk) 28<sup>th</sup> October 2015: Wednesday 1pm:

John Sanders (Simpson and Brown Architects) Hunterian Art Gallery.

**Archaeobotany: People and Plants** (10 minute talk) 4<sup>th</sup> November 2015 Wednesday 1pm.

Dr Jennifer Miller (York Archaeological Trust) Hunterian Art Gallery.

**Unexpected finds from Castle Craig Broch** (10 minute talk) 18<sup>th</sup> November 2015. Wednesday 1pm.

Dr Heather James (York Archaeological Trust) Hunterian Art Gallery.

**“Towers of the North.....only?”** (10 minute talk) 25<sup>th</sup> November 2015: Wednesday 1pm.

Dr Tanja Romankiewicz (University of Edinburgh) Hunterian Art Gallery.

**“Whose Game is it anyway?”** (10 minute talk) 21<sup>st</sup> December 2015: Wednesday 1pm.



## Glenlochay Weekend, October 2015.

Back on the Allt Bail a' Mhuilinn burn after 20 years! As proof that nothing ACFA does ever quite dies, here is an image of us in October this year over into Glen Lyon again - mind you we were trying to get into Faraway Glenlochay. (taken just before bridge collapsed).



Susan Hunter, Alison Blackwood, Ann MacInnes, Jean Hirst, Libby King, Margaret Gardiner, Ian Marshall.

## Excavations at Thirlstane Boundary Cairn, West Lothian.



This short piece has been written with the aid of the Data Structure Report from Northlight Heritage, Report 133, written by Peta Glew (Director), edited by Heather James and assisted by Emma Stewart of the Forestry Commission. The comments in this piece are, however, those of myself, Ian Marshall, and we thank Northlight Heritage for permission to report on it. in the reaches of the Woodmuir

Plantation above West Calder, "...now inaccessible in dense afforestation.." (Canmore ID 82685).

Between February and March this year a small group of ACFA volunteers were involved in a community project commissioned by the Forestry Commission and run by Northlight Heritage to look at this locally significant cairn, high Wendy, Libby, Margaret and self along with a changing throng of local faces, met with Heather James and Peta Glew (directors) and Emma Stewart (Forestry Commission) over a series of brilliant days from sun to snow, to bump our cars up long forestry tracks to the spruce glade where the cairn lies.

Sited at the parish boundaries of West Calder and Carnwath and one of a series of boundary stones extending over a then open landscape and dating from at least the Medieval period – the remarkable presence at the cairn is a large number of inscribed and dated initialised stones (55 at the last count), with a local tradition that couples came to this remote site to carve these to record marriages and engagements. The site also carried memories of cremation deposits and war memorial crosses appearing on the site.

Recorded in the OS Name Book with frustratingly, two different descriptions, as 'a perpendicular standing stone' and as "a frustum of a cone 8 feet high.." – this kept us warm as a subject for discussion at breaks, the consensus being something like a Nardini Double Nugget with a snowflake topping.



A contour survey confirmed that two large quarry pits distorted the current visual impression of the site and two trenches, both about c.8.x 1.0m were hand dug across and down the ridge and along it to ascertain its makeup and to investigate it's 'crown' where a scatter of very large stones lay right on the bedrock at this point. The core of the latter were three large boulders laid at an angle suggesting a possible post hole

and speculatively the support for the recorded standing stone, although no candidate for this was evident in the material visible.

All 55 visible carved stones were plotted and recorded, they varied from love tokens to initialled graffiti and their quality from impressive to cursory. This area was widely exploited in the post – medieval period for mineral and quarrying activity and so there would have been a wide range of

skilled to enthusiastic potential carvers. Initial local research has indicated some probable names and the bulk of the visible dates seem to range from AD 1852 – 1929, with some recent ‘outliers’.

The Thirlstane, with its evocative Scottish meanings from thralldom and bondage to marriage and engagement pledges (same thing might say some?) and its carved initials can be paralleled at other sites from the Giant’s Graves and King’s Caves on Arran, to the Wemyss Caves in Fife. A further local tradition is that the site had connections to the travelling community and we can think of the recent developments in the recording and scheduling of such sites as seen in Argyll and Cowal projects.



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The final act has been to impressively reconstruct the cairn with the aid of the Master Stone Dyker, Bruce Curtis, incorporating many of the best carvings and this can be visited at NS 9750 5793 if you fancy an energetic and atmospheric walk into a part of the country that I bet few of you knew existed.



Sisterly lunch at the Thirlstanes.



***“Oh for goodness sake, she’s got those Foie Gras and Truffle Oil ciabattas again”.***

**Excerpts from ACFA  
Newsletter 4: from ‘Cairn  
Spotting at Bent’s Farm’**



*“On the weekend of the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> November 1990, 21 ACFA members participated in a survey of Bent’s Farm near Barrhill, Ayrshire. The survey was sponsored by HBM and came to ACFA at the suggestion of Clyde Region. Earlier in the year, during ploughing by the Forestry Commission, the supervising forestry officer discovered what was considered to be previously undiscovered archaeological*

*sites. Planting was delayed until the area had been surveyed.*

*Now most of us have become well acquainted with clearance cairns. Some have even been heard to confess, after the fifth Macallan, that they find them quite interesting... Bent’s Farm added a new twist – the plough-smashed clearance cairn. The plough-smashed clearance cairn was the most common find at Bent’s Farm – approximately 40 of the things. Traditionalists had to be content with 11 undamaged versions.*

*But enough of this – it’s all in the survey report. What you really want to hear about is the gossip – isn’t it? OK, here goes.*

*Who, in the first hour, fell headlong into a stream?*

*Who surpassed this by ending up waist deep in one of those green patches?*

*Who turned up in natty luminous hats?*

*Who forgot his camera (but kept very quiet about it) and then almost lost his voice?*

*Who cracked his sump and had to be towed home?*

*Who was Murray, and why was he hanging about on the Sunday?*

*Don’t know, then you should have been there!*

*PS: Garbage in, Garbage out: Reports and ‘Spell Check’.*

*Here prompted by the results received when preparing this report for Bent’s Farm and using ‘spell-check’, a list of some ACFA members and lecturers:*

*Sue Brazen, Robin Cylinder, Margaret Crank, William Dudgeon, John Dinghy, David Goddess, Reliant Golightly, Giro Horns, Jim Myrhh., Iran Marshall, Halloween Maxwell, Naughty Russell, Betty Rainy, Philip Scrubber, Dennis Tiepin, and Lineal Masters.*

*Lecturers were: Lawrence Chappie, Yawn Macaw, Dorothy Lust and John Berate.*

***Lastly Gravy.***

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

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*Registered Scottish Charity number: SC 007099*

- 8th October 2015:** RLHF: *Excavations by GUARD Archaeology* Bob Will (Guard Archaeology).
- 15th October 2015:** GAS Lecture: *Dunragit* Warren Baillie, GUARD Archaeology.
- 31st October 2015:** Scottish Place Name Society Day Conference: Burgh Hall, The Cross, High Street, Linlithgow.
- 3rd November 2015:** FMSG: Teviot Lecture Theatre:  
*Recent Work at Moncrieffe and Moredun.* Martin Cooke.  
*Moments in Time and Space: nine years of exploring the hillforts of Eastern Strathearn*  
 Dr Tessa Poller (University of Glasgow)
- 7th November:** ACFA AGM: GCVS Albany Centre, Woodlands Suite, 44 Ashley Street, Glasgow G3 6DS.
- 9th November 2015:** SAScot. *The Forth Road Bridge: The World Heritage Journey*. Dr Miles Oglethorpe (HES).
- 12th November 2015:** RLHF: *Glenlochay: 25 Years On And None the Wiser*, Dugie MacInnes (ACFA).
- 16-19th November 2015:** Dalrymple Lectures: *Social Evolution.*  
 John C. Barrett, Emeritus Professor of Archaeology, University of Sheffield.
- 1st December 2015:** FSMG:  
*Craig Phadraig:* Mary Peteranna.  
*Atlantic Roundhouses and the later prehistoric settlement of the Moray Firth.* Candy Hatherley.
- 10th December 2015:** RLHF: *An engraved landscape: rock carvings in the Libyan Sahara.*  
 Tertia Barnett (University of Edinburgh).
- 14th December 2015:** SAScot.: *100 Years Young: The RIAS Festival of Architecture.* Neil Baxter (RIAS).
- 17th December 2015:** GAS Members Night:  
*Carmahome to Kilpatrick: ACFA Surveys on Arran 1993-2015.* Ian Marshall (ACFA).  
*Water Management of Roman Sites in Scotland:* Ross Wallace, Glasgow University.
- 11th January 2016:** SAScot: *The Bronze Age Neolithic.* Professor Alex Gibson (University of Bradford).
- 21st January 2016:** GAS: *Waterloo 2015 and Operation Nightingale.* Dr Tony Pollard (Glasgow University).
- 1st February 2016:** SAScot: *6000 Years of Architecture, Innovation & Design*
- 11th February 2016:** RLHF: *Waterloo Uncovered: The Archaeology of Europe's most famous battle.*  
 Dr Tony Pollard (Glasgow University).
- 18th February 2016:** GAS:  
*A Founder's Workshop from the Bronze Age? Excavations in the Shadow of Hunterston.*  
 Thomas Rees (Rathmell Archaeology). \*\*\* **Joint Lecture with The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.**
- 10th March 2016:** RLHF: *Art and Architecture in Neolithic Orkney: the view from the Ness of Brodgar.*  
 Antonia Thomas (University of the Highlands and Islands).
- 14th March 2016:** SAScot: *Living and Dying at Auldhame, East Lothian.* Dr Anne Crone (AOC Archaeology).
- 17th March 2016:** GAS:  
*Broken Sword: The Excavation of a Ritual Deposit of Bronze Age Metalwork on the Isle of Coll.*  
 Natasha Ferguson and Trevor Cowie (National Museums of Scotland).
- 11th April 2016:** SAScot: *Celts: Art and Identity.* Dr Fraser Hunter (NMS).
- 18th April 2016:** RLHF: *Renfrewshire Surveyors and Estate Plans in the 18th C.*  
 John Moore (Subject Librarian, University of Glasgow)
- 21st April 2016:** GAS: AGM (start 7.15pm)  
*Scotland's Earliest Silver (AD400-800): Phase Three of the Glenmorangie Research Project 2015-2017.*  
 Alice Blackwell (National Museums of Scotland).
- 6th-8th May 2016:** SAScot: Rhind Lectures: *Antiquaries, archaeologists and the invention of the Historic Town.*  
 Professor Rosy Sweet (University of Leicester).
- 12th May 2016:** RLHF: Member's Night and Forum.

**GAS:** Glasgow Archaeological Society. All lectures (except the Dalrymple Series) are held in the Boyd Orr Lecture Theatre, University Avenue, The University of Glasgow at 7.30pm and are free of charge.

**RLHF:** Renfrewshire Local History Forum: All meetings are in the Shawl Gallery, Paisley Museum and Art Galleries at 7.30pm.

**FMSG:** First Millennia Studies Group: Edinburgh University.

**SScot:** Society of Antiquaries Scotland. Edinburgh: Auditorium, National Museum of Scotland.



