

NEWSLETTER 51

www.acfabaseline.info

Spring 2019.



Luing: February 2019. As Christine sank into the bog, the ACFA Comfort and Re-Assurance Team sprang into action.

Editors:

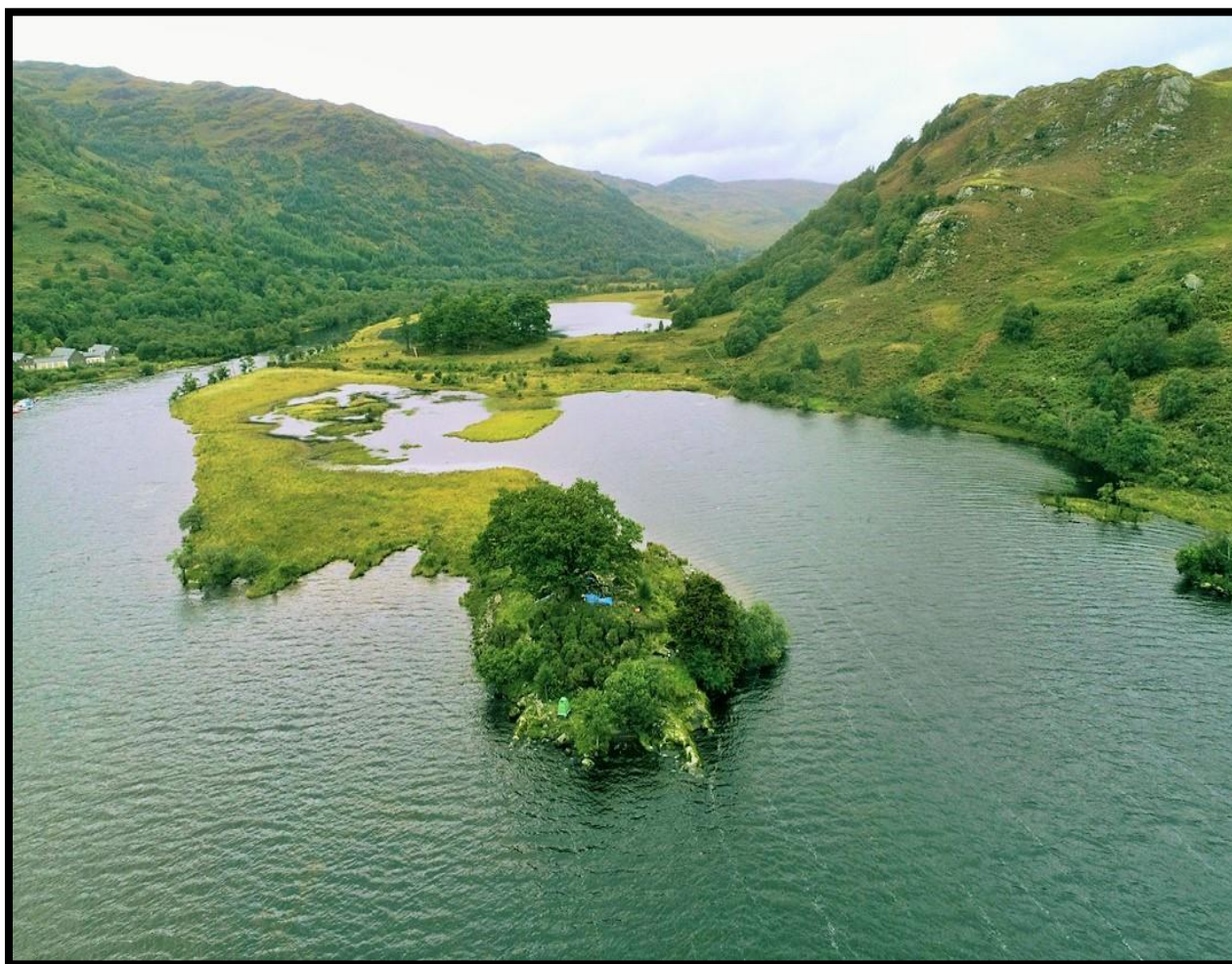
Welcome to the spring 2019 edition of the Newsletter and to our new Co- Editor Dr. Janet MacDonald who has now joined me in harness, for which much thanks.

In this edition we have an interim report from Dr Heather James on the excavation last September on Isle Eunlich at the north end of Loch Lomond; from Ed and Ailsa Smith a report on the challenging attempt to analyse the fiendishly historical complexity of the field systems on the Hynish Peninsula of Tiree; updates from the Scottish Rock Art teams on current status; another chapter from Susan Hunter's annual pilgrimages to China, Japan and all parts Xanadu; further reviews of Ewen Smith's explorations into Human Origins and announcements on the book launches of the long awaited *Raasay: The Archaeological Surveys 1995 – 2009* and the extensive researches by Helen Calcluth into the definitive history of her native 'toon' – *Kilbarchan and the Handloom Weavers*.

Editors: Ian Marshall, Dr Janet MacDonald.

Excavation on *Yle Eunlich (Island Eillich)*, Loch Lomond in 2018

Heather F James: Calluna Archaeology



Island Eillich. Loch Lomond: view from the south with excavation area under the blue tarpolin.

An excavation was carried out on behalf of Clan Macfarlane Worldwide on *Yle Eunlich (Island Eillich)*, Loch Lomond, Argyll, Scotland for three weeks in September 2018. The low remains of two rectangular structures had been identified on the summit of a tree covered knoll on a narrow promontory at the north end of the loch. Members of Clan Macfarlane Worldwide were keen to see whether this site had been important in the medieval period, perhaps acting as a stronghold for the clan chiefs, lying as it did at the northern end of their territory. One large trench investigated Structure 1 and four other smaller trenches examined deposits in the vicinity with the help of several members of ACFA, local volunteers, students from York and Glasgow and a volunteer all the way from France.



Structure 1 had walls up to 1.0m thick constructed of earth and stone with slightly rounded external corners and an off-centre entrance to the NE. The remains suggested that the roof had been supported on internal timber crucks sitting on bedrock or in stone settings. A possible floor layer contained medieval pottery dating to between the 14th and 16th centuries (pers. comm. George Haggarty), as well as fire-flints, iron nails and slate fragments.

Structure 1 from Drone Survey.

There was a spread of ashy material towards one end of the building and two possible post-holes were recorded, but there was no formal hearth or substantial evidence for internal divisions. Only two courses of the outer stone wall survived, and there was significant tumble in the vicinity suggesting that the walls would have been higher, although perhaps topped with turf. The building is thought to have been hip-roofed which was the style in the west of Scotland prior to the 19th century rather than to have had high gable ends. There was no evidence for any earlier structures beneath the walls of Structure 1.

Trench 2 was located on a flat area to the SE of Structure 1, next to an ancient yew tree. There were three features cut into the subsoil, but the shape and full extent of these could not be seen. The features were devoid of datable finds apart from two small fragments of slate. These features were sealed by a deposit that contained medieval pottery (14th – 16th century), a possible fire-flint and a small number of rounded white quartz pebbles.

Other significant finds included a flattened lead ball that had hit something hard and a fragment of unmarked clay pipe stem from Trench 3. There was tumble from Structure 2 and a medieval pot sherd in Trench 4 and large roof slates that had probably originated from the roof of Structure 2 in Trench 5. There were some modern finds in the upper layers that probably date to the 20th and 21st centuries, but there was no evidence that the site was occupied between the 17th and 19th centuries.

It was interesting to see that significant amounts of quartz fragments were found in all of the trenches and many of these fragments showed signs of being worked (pers. comm. Torbin Bjarke Ballin). The quartz outcrops on the knoll were clearly being worked, however, it is uncertain whether this activity was taking place in the prehistoric or medieval period.



The site was referred to as *Yle Eunlich* by Timothy Pont in the late 16th century, and as *Island Eillich* by William Roy in the early 18th century. It is possible that these were earlier forms of 'Ardleish' and a precursor to the 18th century farm of that name which lies further east. Documentary evidence indicates that in the early 16th century Ardleish was occupied by Walter of Ardleish, a close relative of Duncan Macfarlane of Arrochar, the 13th clan chief. It is said that Duncan and Walter both perished at the Battle of Pinkie in 1547. The 14th – 16th century date for occupation of *Yle Eunlich/Island Eillich* would therefore be consistent with the site being abandoned after 1547 and a new, more accessible farm being built nearby within the farm

extent.

Excavation at Site 1: Libby King, Margaret Gardiner, Ailsa and Ed Smith, Sue Furlong, Ian Marshall.

This excavation has shown that this site was not a castle like Inveruglas or Eilean I Vow, but was still an important site occupied in the 14th to 16th centuries, probably by a close relative of the clan chief. Both structures were stone built and had slate roofs, which would have differed from the lesser tenants' houses which were probably turf-walled and thatched.

Thanks go to all the volunteers who included in no particular order Ian Marshall, Libby King, Margaret Gardiner, Ailsa and Ed Smith, Katherine Scott, Fiona Jackson, Sue Furness, Kieran Kenny, Alison Blackwood, Carla Glaser, Dugie MacInnes, Dylan Millar, Katherine Price, Irene Wotherspoon and Christine McDiarmid.



Retreat route from Island Eillich before the rains cut it off.

The Hynish Boundary Project

November 2018 Field Survey Ed & Ailsa Smith

The hillside of Ben Hynish on the island of Tiree has a network of field boundaries, some of which are drawn in Figure 1:

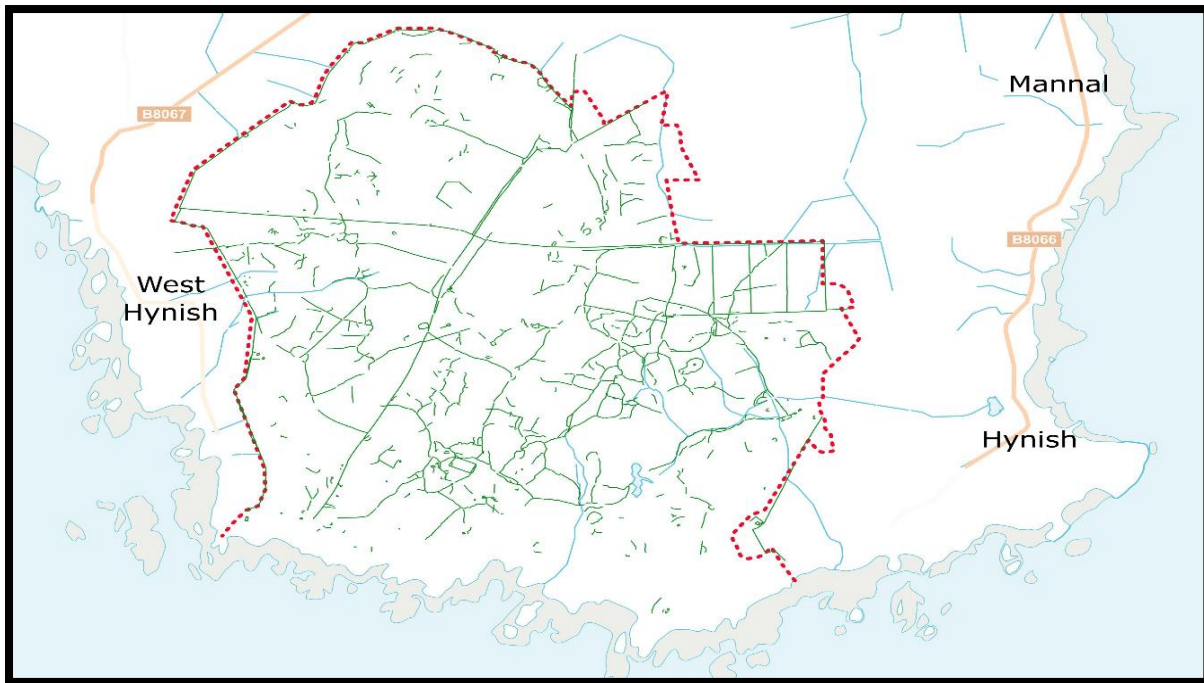
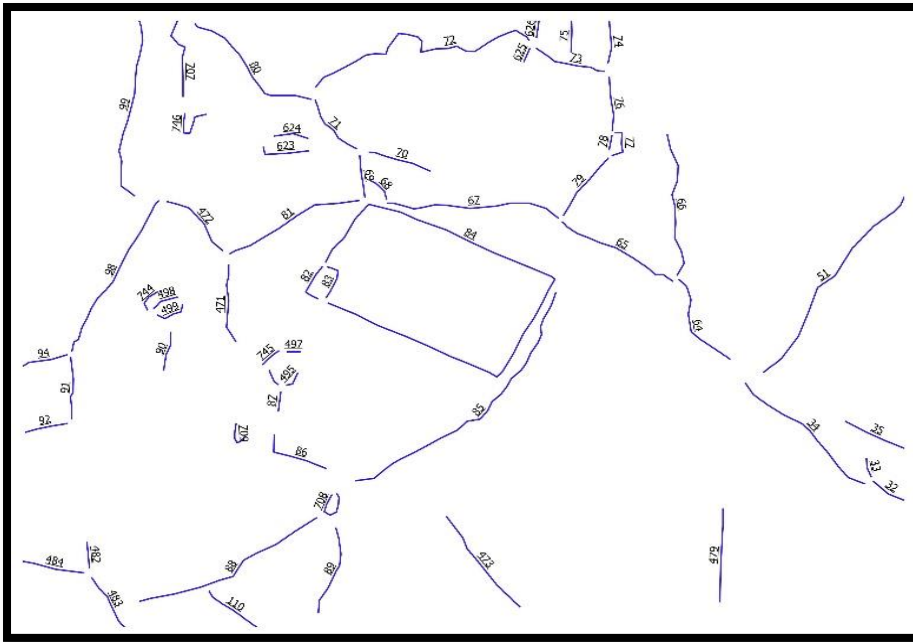


Figure 1. The field boundaries on Ben Hynish are shown as green lines within the survey area bounded by a red dotted line. Contains OS data @ Crown copyright and database rights 2018

In the Hynish Boundary Project a series of surveys will record the position of these field boundaries and collect data relevant to their classification. The Geographical Information System QGIS is being used to develop a database to store this information. The aim is to produce maps in the style of those produced by the RCAHMS in their landscape surveys and to develop a descriptive typology of the field boundaries on Hynish.

This report describes the survey of November 2018, which was undertaken to further develop the techniques required in the project. The main innovation was the use of an iPad to record most of the information. Those involved in the project are Elaine Black, Hilary Fawcett, Fred Hay, John Holliday, Ailsa Smith and Edward Smith.



Before going into the field, the boundaries visible on Ordnance Survey aerial photographs, were traced as a network of blue lines and given identification numbers by the QGIS database. An example of these “Blue Line” maps is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. “Blue Line” map with numbered field boundaries. Contains OS data @ Crown copyright and database rights 2018.

The work undertaken in the survey was divided into four main tasks. The first was to navigate to the survey site using the Blue Line Map downloaded onto an iPad. In some areas, the network of lines is very dense and difficult to untangle but with an iPad it was possible to magnify the area and bring out the detail. Also, the iPad map was easier to handle in the strong winds on Tiree, than the equivalent paper maps. For the next task, the iPad app “Tap Forms” was used to record the attributes of the lines, such as their maximum height and the width at this point, as well as other details relevant to their classification and interaction. For example, estimates were made of the relative amount of turf within the walls as well as the arrangement of the stones. This classification is still being developed but an example in Figure 3 shows a “turf and stone” wall identified as line 62 lying beside a drystone dyke.

The third task in the survey was to take and record photographs which will be used to develop the classification. The example in Figure 3 shows a photograph of line 62, a “turf and stone” wall, together with the slate recording the line number and date of the photograph. The collection of photographs, assembled from the surveys, will provide detailed examples of all the class types. While an iPad was used in these three tasks, for the fourth task a waterproof paper notebook was used to record, where necessary, details of the line junctions and the landscape features near the lines.

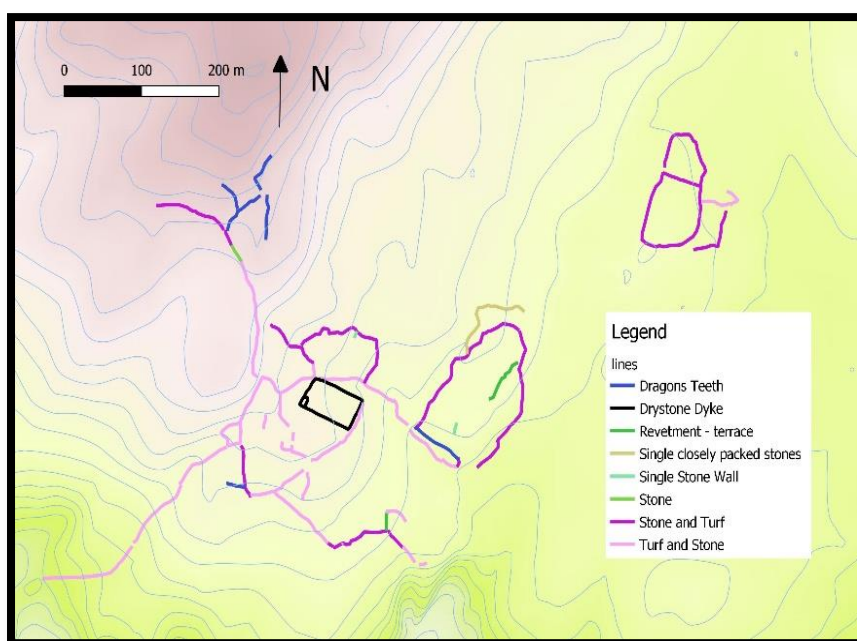


Sketches were made of the network of lines and the type of ground cover in the area, at these junctions. This included the areas of rig and furrow which lie beside some of the field boundaries.

This information will be combined to produce maps of the landscape, to which will be added the archaeological structures already recorded by ACFA in the Ben Hynish area. Figure 4, showing some of the information collected in the surveys, is an early step in that direction.

In the example shown in Figure 4, colour was used to emphasise the ground slope. The survey team spent most of its time on the relatively level ground around the “bean shaped” structures rather than on the steeper slopes further away.

Figure 3. A “turf and stone” wall, identified as line 62, lying beside a drystone dyke.



An exception to this was the steeply sloping ground in the North West part of the survey area, where the intriguingly named “Dragons Teeth” walls lie (Figure 5)

It’s possible that the steepness of the ground contributed to the evolution of this type of wall.

Figure 4. Linear features recorded in the November survey. Contains OS data @ Crown copyright and database rights 2018.

An attempt has been made to merge the archaeological structures, already surveyed by ACFA, with maps of the field boundaries such as Figure 4. To do this, the survey drawings must be matched to the structures visible in the aerial photographs. But this has proved to be difficult because in many cases there is not enough detail in the photographs to identify the structures. It may be possible to solve this problem by using the drone, which is available on Tiree, to provide more detailed images.



Figure 5. “Dragons Teeth” wall

In future surveys it is hoped that iPads can be used for all aspects of data collection. There are problems at present with using an iPad to annotate the “Blue Line” maps. But once this problem has been solved, all the data recorded in a survey will be “computer ready” and will not have to be transcribed by hand. Also, the process of recording the data in the field, will be less affected by the wet and windy weather occasionally experienced on Tiree.

Reports from the Scottish Rock Art Projects: Team North: Ewen Smith.

Over summer and autumn last year, we recorded and submitted for validation a dozen panels, either as ACFA North Glasgow or in collaboration with other ACFA teams. Three panels are new to Canmore, but there have also been some 15 panels which are either “lost” or in museum collections. Of those last, we are currently close to agreeing access to the Kelvingrove and Hunterian collections in store and/or on display, to enable us to photograph the panels in their collections, and augment the Canmore record (if required) with catalogue details held by those institutions.



However, the largest single accumulation of panels in our allocation (20) is in the Faifley area, and these were processed in March, with ACFA members collaborating with the ScRAP team and Kenny Brophy from the University of Glasgow, who are taking the opportunity to record them as part of a community outreach project.

In addition, along with the ScRAP home team, some ACFA members have assisted in the recording of several panels in the Menteith area.

Team West Ed Smith.

The Glasgow West Team continues to work on sites in the Clydeside Muirshiel Regional Park above Greenock. We have spent some time on an area (Figure 1) where there are four sites with rock art panels recorded on Canmore. One of these sites is at Goat Craig beside Loch Thom

<https://canmore.org.uk/site/332025/loch-thom-goat-craig>

and the others are within 10 metres. The Canmore entries suggest that this is an important site with a substantial number of rock art panels.



However, after visiting the area, Tertia Barnett decided that the marks were probably caused by weathering. Nevertheless, we recorded them and put their image on Sketchfab, including this one <https://skfb.ly/6GLGn>

At least a record has been made of a site, identified as “rock art” on Canmore but which probably is not. Visitors to the web-site or the actual site can decide for themselves.

Figure 1 Team West at the Goat Craig site. We even managed to get the photographer in the picture.

We had an enjoyable visit, to the Lake of Menteith to record some of the many panels in the area. This was organised by Tertia and Maya Hoole and involved several rock art teams. One of the sites which we recorded (Figure 2) had a fence built on it. In many ways this is regrettable, but it was still possible to see the art carved on the rock as shown on Sketchfab at <https://skfb.ly/6GLF6>



Fig: 2. Somehow the photogrammetry process removed the wire netting and most of the metal posts.

Our next site will be in Martin Glen which is recorded on Canmore at

<https://canmore.org.uk/site/41261/martin-glen>

which describes a very interesting area with the remains of a Roman fortlet and a round house. Also, R. Morris was involved in identifying this rock art panel in 1971 and he literally wrote the book on rock art (Morris, R. 1981 The prehistoric Rock Art of Southern Scotland, Oxford). We will approach this site with confidence.

Scrap Team South : Ian Marshall.



Christine McDiarmid, Janie Munro and Ken Mallard at the Craggs.

The Scottish Rock Art Project has continued in our area in bursts of activity both fulfilling and frustrating but always festive.

Rock art sites are either in the lost or the found tray: occasionally in a limbo between them. Sometimes in plain view or in sorry plight, at others just not there but with a spectral absence.



One for the Lost Tray: Cathkin Braes, Cup and Ring marked Stone.

Some have a single entry in the historical record, dashed off never to be seen again, others have 'biographies' all to themselves. Two examples from our activities over the winter:

Seen for the first and last time by who, when and exactly where unknown and so memorable even the finders attached a note to their initial record "*(Precise spot not certain)*".

Not encouraging! Perhaps they censored "Of course we were all terribly drunk at the time"

It was then visited by the O.S in 1953 accompanied by a local antiquarian J.Harrison Maxwell, who could find no trace of it. Its final disappearance was recorded when Jack Scott from the Art Gallery and Museum added in March 1954: "I believe the cup and ring marked stone near here was covered over with turf to preserve it."

And it remains "well preserved" to this day when the team spent a happy hour barrelling through briar and dithering over dykes to no avail. However, "no cloud..." we did re-find one of ACFA's own cairns last seen in our 1995 survey of Cathkin Braes directed by the late Denis Topen. A low stony mound of turf and leaf litter, c.20.0m diameter, it is the fourth in a series of similar much eroded cairns which run along the now wooded north rim of Cathkin Braes.

These, if indeed prehistoric in origin, would have been highly visible features from the lower Clyde Valley and possibly associated with the even larger lost 'Queen Mary's Cairn' behind them which probably lay under the two radio masts clearly visible on the summit plateau of the Cathkin range and includes the causewayed earthwork on the golf course. The rich antiquarian record for the area still invites further archaeological enquiry.

One for the 'out tray' then, but in ScRAP the lost are not destined for Room 101 but will always remain open – it was ,after all, a '**cup and ring marked stone**' and it's probably still there!

Something hidden .Go and find it.

Go and look beyond the Ranges

Something lost behind the Ranges. Lost

-and waiting for you. Go.

(“The Explorer”: Kipling).

One for the Found Tray: Cup marked slab from North Mains Barrow, Perthshire.



Now in the Scottish Museum of Rural Life at Kitchside outside East Kilbride, so not one requiring a search party, but briefly labelled with what and from where without further elaboration.

A massive slab whose biography could certainly be made more of.

The excavations at North Mains, Strathallan in Perthshire by Gordon Barclay in advance of a proposed extension to the airfield, were among the most significant in Scotland in the late 1970's.

The complex consisted of a Class II Henge, two ring ditched round houses and an extremely large ditched barrow, 40.0m in diameter and 5.5 m high. The cup marked slab was associated with the barrow into which a 'treasure' shaft by subjects unknown had already been driven sometime previous to the first 'excavation' in 1957 by the landowner Sir William Maxwell and accomplice when: *"They used a tractor with caterpillar wheels and a wire hawser and so lifted out a huge cover slab, 5 feet by 6 feet from the centre of the Cairn."*

Its under surface had 20-30 cup-markings."

{Sites of the third millennium bc to the first millennium ad at North Mains, Strathallan, Perthshire.

Gordon J Barclay et al PSAS 113 1983 p 199}

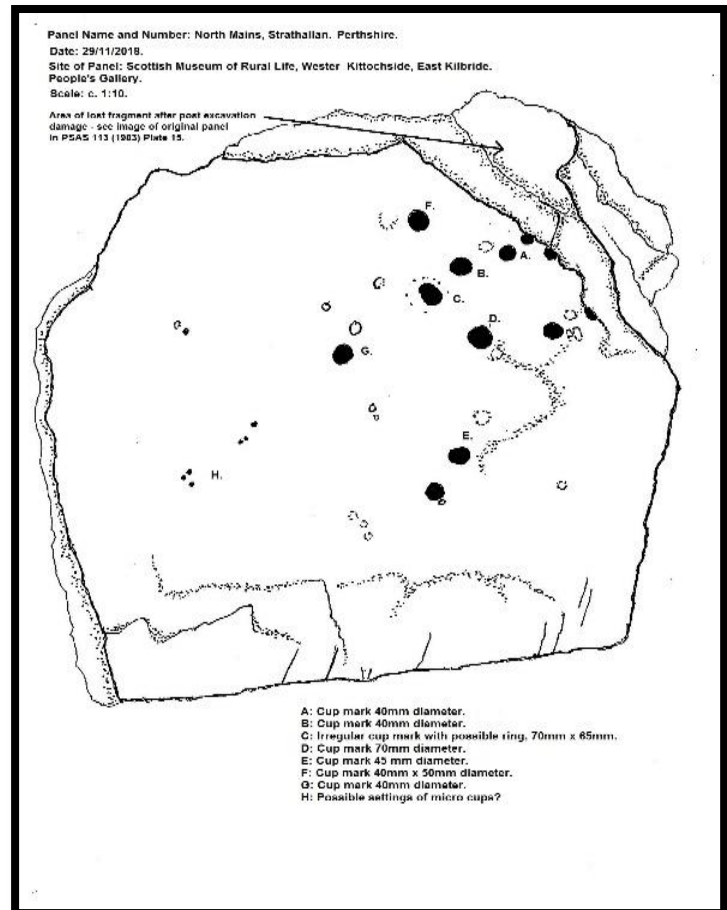
Our slab had apparently been found in the very first unrecorded disturbance but was then unceremoniously left exposed after the 1957 excavation at the edge of the pit, and there it lay until Barclay's excavations commenced in 1978 - thus any relationship between the slab, the burial and the mound was destroyed.

Its unlucky history continued with the end of the 1978 – 79 excavations when it was again left exposed and some months later was severely damaged by either the deliberate or natural shearing away of the upper edge and, as will be seen by comparing our sketch plan with an image taken when it was on the mound, a 'dice setting' of four large cup marks and outliers, have now vanished.

It was then finally taken away by the SDD to safer surroundings and ended its wanderings here.

The mystery must now remain as to the original site or function of the slab. It is recorded as having been found in the cairn 'face down' and its smooth rear surface suggests that it may have been carefully lifted by the barrow builders from another site and used as a cist cover. The nearest rock art cluster being east of Comrie five miles to the west of North Mains.

The biography of this stone and the excavation has another association, revealed a few years ago in an interview with the major Scottish poet and writer Kathleen Jamie, when she revealed that after

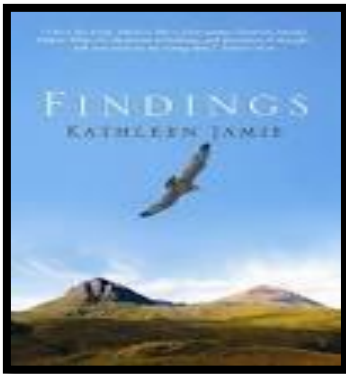


Sketch Plan of the North Mains Slab.

leaving school in 1979, she had spent the summer before college as a volunteer on the Strathallan dig.

When asked *“What did you find”*, she answered: *“Possibilities. They were greater in the world than I had been led to believe. That happened through poetry and writing on the dig. There was more in writing and more in the landscape than I had realised.”* *“So the two connected?”*

“Yes. It’s taken me a long time to recognise that”.



This literary and archaeological icon can now be seen in the People’s Gallery at Kitchside. There is a children’s area all about bees and honey adjacent with a sound loop of bees which every three minutes breaks into a mad buzzing dance, which was the cue for all the team working on the slab to launch into the North Mains slab dance – Margaret Gardiner has the video as security against any future harassment.

Other sites submitted, validated and now on the ScRAP Data Manager:

Brownmuir Plantation: Picketlaw Wall: Comrigs (all Eaglesham) and Cathkin Braes .

Still processing: Carlin Crag: North Mains Barrow (Scottish Museum of Rural Life, West Kitchside)

Assigned for 2019: Cathcart Castle Golf Course: Deaconsbank Golf Course: Fereneze Hills/Harelaw Reservoir: Johnston/Craigston Wood: Patterson Quarry and Rouken Glen.

Our Chinese adventure: Susan Hunter.

During Easter 2018 we started our Chinese adventure visiting the usual places, Tiananmen Square, the Forbidden City, Temple of Heaven, the Summer Palace and the Hutongs of Beijing which are the original dwelling over the centuries of the Chinese people and their families. The Hutongs are one storey wooden buildings arranged around a small courtyard where fruit and vegetables are grown and other domestic chores carried out. The Hutongs are built-in enclosed communal areas, divided by alleys. Within the Hutongs there are wash-houses and public toilets for the community.

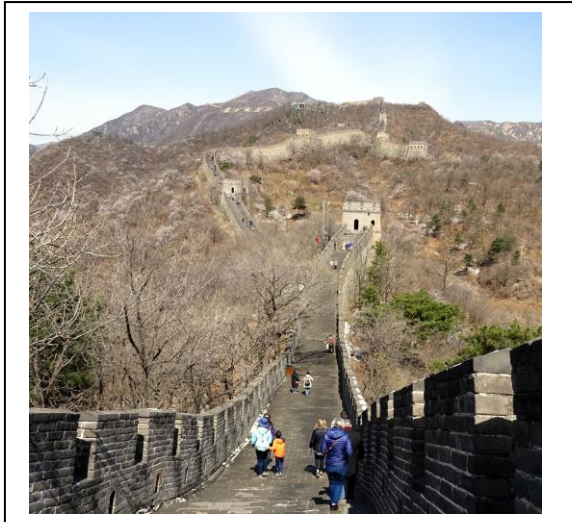


We visited the Ming tombs on the southern slopes of the Tianshu Mountains; unfortunately it had been snowing and was a bit chilly. The site of these tombs were chosen because of their proximity to the mountains and nearby lakes, according to the geomantic principles of *fengshi*. A processional way leads to these tombs on either side of which there are large stone monumental sculptures of human figures and mystical and exotic beasts. The site was originally chosen by the Yongle Emperor, as part of relocating the Ming capital to Beijing. Although there are thirteen Ming Emperors buried in the area of the mountains we were only able to visit the Changling memorial hall and the various archways and pavilions around the tumulus which has never been excavated.



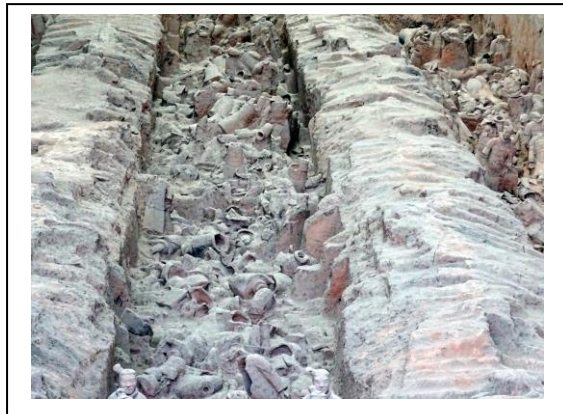
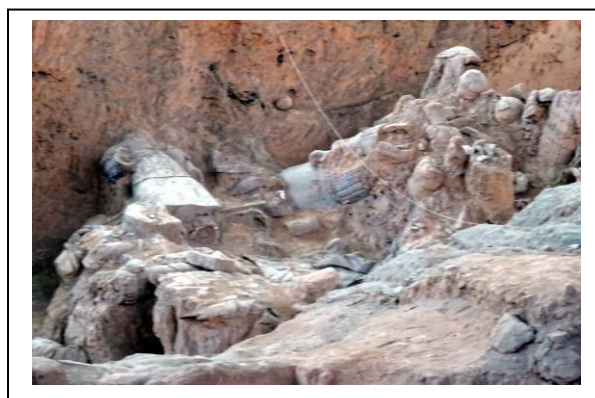
The Great Wall of China was on the itinerary, which can be accessed from different locations travelling from Beijing. We were taken to the Mutianyu section which had been greatly consolidated. It was a clear day with blue skies and wonderful views over the mountains which showed the zigzagging path of the Wall and the watch towers every few hundred metres over the mountains. To get to the Wall you went up in a chair-lift and for younger visitors (under 50) the downward ride was by a chute in a bob-sleigh. The wall is over 20,000km in length and stretches

from china's northeast coast to the north-western deserts bordering the central Asia. The Wall was first built in the reign of the first emperor Qin Shihuang (246-221 BC). Parts of the Wall have now degraded to lumps of sandstone looking like small flat topped pyramids. On our way out to the Hanging Monastery later in the trip we saw the remnants of the wall in the area of Datong.



Our next stop was Xian (Western Peace) to see the Terracotta Warriors with a collection of ten thousand life-size statues of the Chinese army made over two thousand years ago. Xian is situated on the site of Zianyang, the former capital of China's first dynasty, the Qin (221-207 BC). Although Xian is famous for the tomb of the first emperor Quin Shi Huangdi and his army other tombs are found in the area. Arriving from the airport you pass Han tombs, there is also the Neolithic settlement in the suburbs of Banpo.

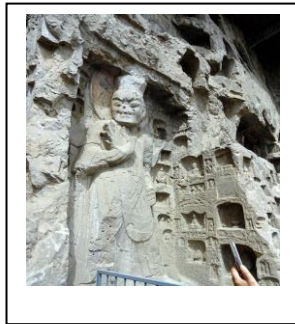
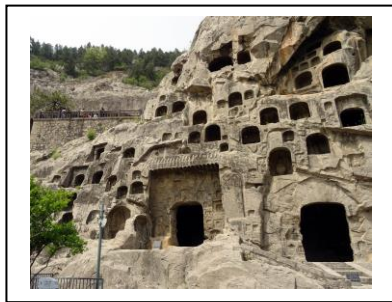
Quin Shi Huangdi's rule standardized a single system of weights, measurements including the official script. Everything was under state control. The defensive wall on the borders of the empire were consolidated and unified in the first Great Wall of China. The tomb mound has never been excavated although the surrounding area has been the subject of excavation. The tomb site was known from the Han dynasty (206 BCE-220 AD) due to the historical records of Sima Qian. Sima describes a vast subterranean complex constructed by 700 thousand conscript labourers from across the newly formed empire. However he made no mention of a terracotta army interred alongside the emperor. The terracotta warriors were first discovered in 1974 by a local farmer. Today four excavated pits of warriors have been excavated, one of which was empty. The first pit opened and on display today is covered by an aircraft hanger and within the pit hundreds of reassembled warriors and horses stand in columns facing the front, however the outer figures face either to the left or right as if protecting the columns. Between the columns are earth walls of the buildings that used to house them. The wooden roof beams which once covered the army have long decayed although impressions of the wood are visible on top of the mud brick. At the end other end of the hanger is an area where the conservators are working on the reconstruction of the army from newly excavated sections. Between these two sections on the right side of the pit are excavated trenches so that you can see the crushed parts of the army awaiting conservation.



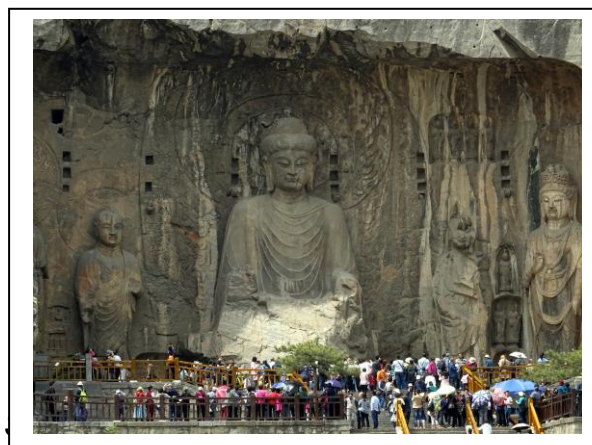
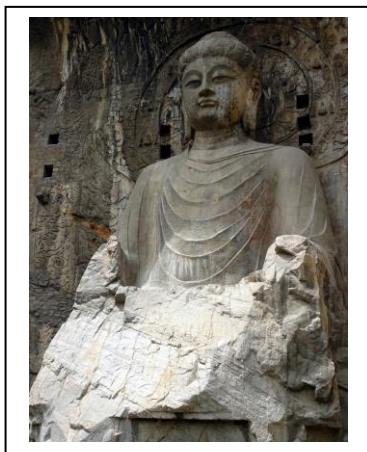
The construction of the warriors includes eight different facial types incorporated into a diverse range of ethnicities from across the Qin Empire. The remainder of their bodies combine distinctive parts of modular arrangements. Seals impressed on some part of the warriors identifying their makers match those used on excavated elements of the palace drainage system. Many types of figural types are seen including infantrymen, archers, crossbowmen and senior military officers. The intricate detail of their armour, dress, horse fittings and even real weapons provide an invaluable source of evidence on the military organization of the Qin, and the technologies which allowed them to unify an empire through conquest. Further excavations have found figures of singers, acrobats, strongmen and animals. Adjacent to the tomb mound in another pit two bronze wheeled vehicles pulled by four horses have been found, these are now in their own museum. They are not identical; one is more like a working cart while the other would appear to be a chariot possibly of the Emperor. It was very dark and crowded in this museum. Also included are reconstructed figures found in the pits installed in their own cabinets so that the public can see up close the work of the workmen. We also visited a second pit which was partly excavated; this was labelled as the command centre, although ongoing excavation will reveal more information.



By bullet train to our next destination, now just the three of us, to the Luoyang Grottos. The Luoyang Grottos are one of the three finest existing examples of Chinese Buddhist art in China. The grottos are comprised of over two thousand cave temples incorporating over ten thousand votive images. The images are carved into the living rock faces that cover one kilometre stretch of the Yi River. They date from the Northern Wei (386-535 AD) to the Tang dynasty and cover a range of intimate images of single figures, commissioned by lay devotees, to monumental sculptures commissioned by emperors and empresses. The earliest extant sculptures are in the Guyang Cave (5th century) depicting the historical Buddha Sakyanmuni flanked by Bodhisattvas (Bodhisattvas is the Sanskrit term for anyone who has generated Bodhicitta, a spontaneous wish and compassionate mind to attain buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings).



The Northern Wei sculptures at Luoyang deliberately reflect Chinese styles of dress and physiognomy. The largest grotto known as the Fengtian Temple was commissioned by members of the imperial family. This temple is on an open platform surrounded on three sides by limestone cliffs. You ascend steep stone steps and approach the massive seated Vairocana Buddha which gazes over the river. The symmetry of the Buddha's face and the balanced symmetrical folds of his robe are iconographic markers of his state of deep, cosmic meditation. To his left and right stand Kasyapa and Anada, two of the historic Buddha Sakyamuni's leading disciples. The Fengtian Temple was commissioned by Emperor Tang Gaozong (628-83, r. 648-83) and paid for by Empress Wu Zetian (625-705, r. 684-705). She went on to be the only woman to rule China. She identified herself as an incarnation of the Bodhisattva Maitrya, commissioning various images of the Bodhisattva at Luoyang during her reign. The donors of the sculptures saw these as a legacy that would earn them Karmic merit to ensure favourable rebirths, and perhaps salvation through enlightenment achieved in one of the many Mahayana Buddhist paradises. We crossed the Yi River to get a magnificent view of the Fengtian Temple before taking a slow train back to the start of the grottoes.



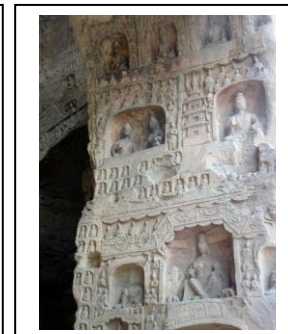
After a hairy drive from Luoyang Grottos we visited the Shaolin Temple in the Songshan Mountain founded in the 5th century under the Northern Wei and stretching back fifteen centuries. Kung Fu training takes place in this temple and is linked to Chan Buddhism, better known to the West through its Japanese inheritor Zen. Chan and Zen lineages trace their origins back to a semi mythic founder, Bodhidharma (putatively active ca.6th century AD). Bodhidharma's hagiography tells us he was born a prince in South Asia, travelled to China to spread his school of Buddhism, finding his first disciple and eventual patriarchal successor at Shaolin in AD536. Near the temple is the Pagoda Forest where hundreds of pagoda-shaped stupas (Buddhist reliquaries) house the cremated remains of the monastery's previous abbots. They date from the early Tang dynasty to recent times.



Bullet train to Taiyuan and Pingyao. The old town of Pingyao is a listed World Heritage Site, like all the sites mentioned above and below and was our favourite town. This gave great insight to the architectural styles of Imperial China with its ancient city wall along with ancient Ming and Qing Streets. We stayed in a traditional Chinese courtyard house which was delightful. The traditional food here was amazing and we would have loved to have stayed here longer. First recorded in c.800 BC and has been the seat of local government since at least the Quin. By the 16th century it was a regional financial hub and in the late 19th century it was considered to be the financial centre of the Quin Empire. Here we visited the wall, a temple within the wall and the high-light was the First and Second Banks of China. There seemed to be some dispute about where the Silk Road started in China according to our guides, Luoyang, Taiyuan, Pingyao and Datong. However I would say that Pingyao having the First and Second Banks in China is a good candidate. These banks are next door to each other and arranged in a courtyard style with rooms leading off. Rooms were set aside for customers coming from a distance giving them accommodation during their visit. The rooms were spacious and included furniture, bedding, and stoves etc for their comfort. The bank had quite a complex of rooms just off the street. We also visited the Zenguo Temple and Shuanglin Temple on the outskirts of the town. In the first we watched students making paintings and sculpturing the statues of the Buddhas.

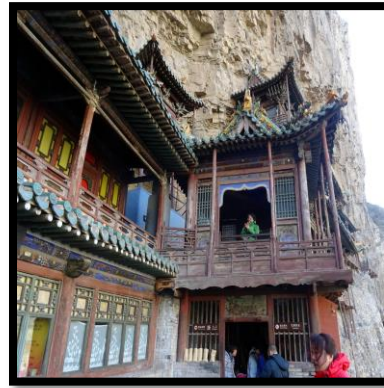
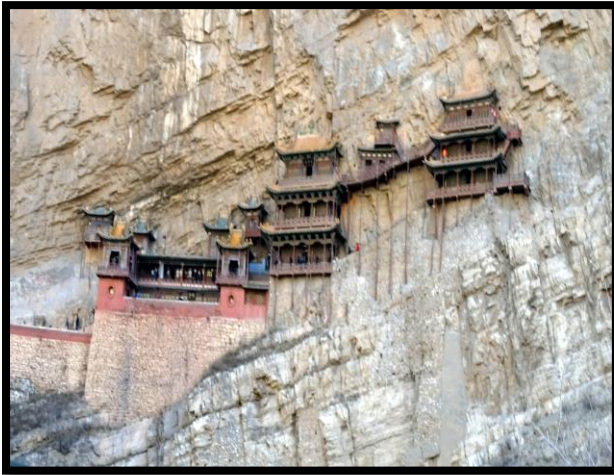


Our next destination was Dutong and two highlights awaited us the second famous Buddhist Caves in China, the Yungong Caves (formerly Wuzhoushan Grottos) and the Hanging Monastery. Firstly we visited the Yungong Ancient Buddhist Temple Grottos an example of rock-cut architecture considered a masterpiece of early Buddhist cave art. The caves would have been very colourful when first decorated as remnants of colour can still be seen the larger enclosed caves.

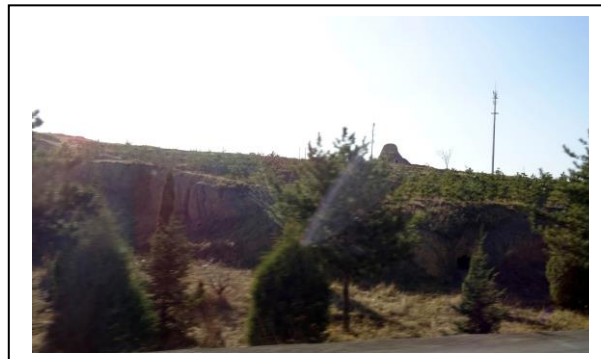


The figures in the large caves are extremely large with smaller figures running up the sides of the walls and over the ceiling. There are 53 major caves along with 51,000 niches housing the same number of Buddha statues. Additionally there are 1,000 minor caves and a Ming dynasty fort can be seen on the hill above the grottoes.

The next part of the adventure took us off to The Hanging Temple/Monastery or Xuankong. This temple/monastery is built high up on the edge of a sheer precipice, 246m above the ground. It was built more than 1,500 years ago. It is noted as the only Chinese temple which incorporates three traditional religions Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism. The structure is kept in place with oak crossbeams fitted into holes chiselled into the cliffs. The main supportive structure is hidden behind the rocks. The temple/monastery's wooden walkways and steps to the upper area are very narrow just over 0.5m wide. The structure is brightly coloured and was listed in *Time* magazine as one of the world's top ten most odd dangerous buildings. My daughter is of the opinion that we were very lucky to be able to visit this building as in the future because of the number of tourists visiting the area, it will only be an attraction viewed from below



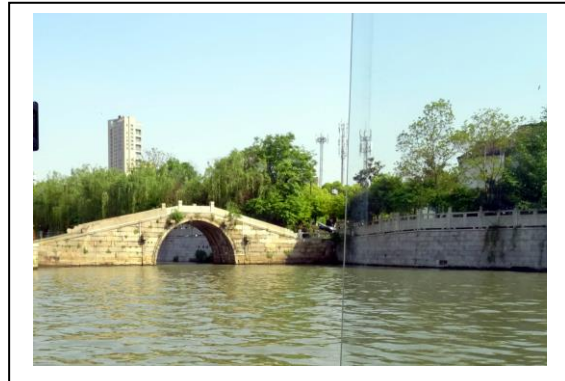
Leaving the hanging monastery as mentioned above we saw sections of the Great Wall which are now sadly degrading lumps of sandstone.



From Datong we headed for Shanghai with its amazing neon lights lighting up the river side at dusk. We visited the Shanghai Museum with its wonderful artefacts, but sadly our time was limited here. We also visited three gardens which emphasised *fengshi*, water with large rocks to emphasize the mountains, two in a town over an hour's ride from Shanghai and one in the centre of the city. To reach the Chinese garden you pass through the home owner's reception room and we were advised about the etiquette of receiving guests, why certain furniture was placed in this room to receive guests. We continued into further sets of rooms before entering the garden. The first garden we visited was near the Pearl River where fresh water pearls were produced. The garden belonged to the Ma Family.



The second garden again at a distance from Shanghai was the garden of the Master of the Nets in Suzhou. Not far from this garden we went on a boat ride on the Grand Canal. The canal is the longest and oldest artificial canal in the world running from Beijing to Hangzhou linking the Yellow and Yangtze Rivers. The oldest parts of the river date to the 5th century BC.



In Shanghai we visited the lovely garden of Yu Uan but as this was in the centre of Shanghai it was extremely crowded.



Bibliography – China Beyond the Great Wall, Andante Field Notes.

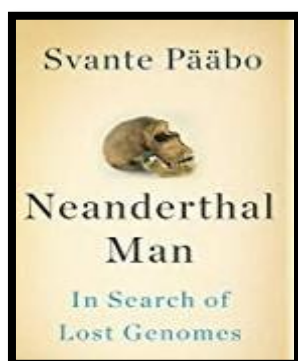
Wikipedia and Chinese China Links Guides

Book Reviews: Ewen Smith.

***Who We Are and How We Got Here: Ancient DNA and the New Science of the Human Past.* (David Reich).**

Recently, I had the good fortune to pick up a copy of Svante Paabo's book "*Neanderthal Man: in search of lost genomes*" (2014) ... as a non-scientist but a fan of detective stories, this was an excellent foundation course to the understanding of human evolution and genome research. And it does read just like a detective novel. A foundation course, too, for a reading of David Reich's new book, "*Who We Are and How We Got Here*" (2018).

The two authors have collaborated over many years, so there is some overlap, but as Reich notes "*We are now producing data so fast that the time lag between production and publication is longer than the time it takes to double the data in the field.*" Consequently, the new knowledge between 2014 and 2018 is truly extraordinary. Reich notes that a 10,000-fold decrease in the cost of sequencing DNA is revolutionary, but still just the tip of the genome research iceberg. However, the work so far has simply increased the number of questions seeking solutions ... with perhaps one exception; their studies appear to show the primacy of migration over mutation in the evolution of modern humans.

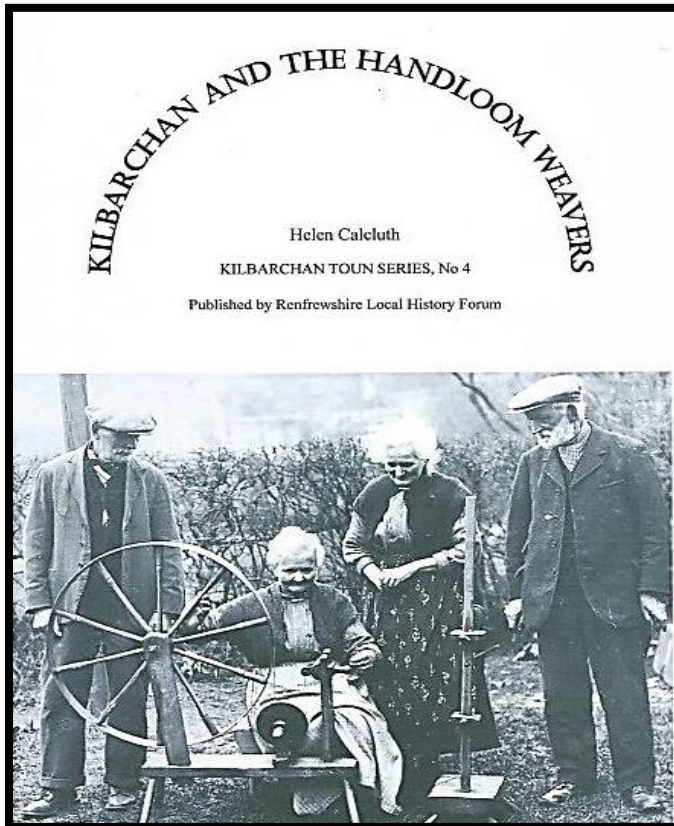


There is too much in Reich's book to do it justice with this brief review, but amongst the highlights are the new facts he provides the interpretations he makes of these facts, and the questions these prompt. For example, taking our inter-breeding with Neanderthals in Europe as a fact, he then speculates on whether there might have been earlier inter-breeding which resulted in a "*pioneer modern human*" which either didn't survive, and/or was replaced by a later band of modern humans who interbred with Neanderthals in the Near East before expanding into Europe AND Eurasia. And if our ancestors interbred with Neanderthals, did they also inter-breed with other archaic humans? Intriguingly, for the future use of DNA research, he turns his attention from past investigation into archaic humans to the gap he sees in our studies of evolution over the period from 2000 B.P. to date, when writing, society, empires, etc. have developed, and arguably contributed to our very recent evolution. In my view, he is on rather safer ground when he returns to unambiguously scientific questions (didn't expect to hear myself say that!), specifically "*whether human evolution typically proceeds by large changes in mutation frequencies at relatively small numbers of positions in the human genome, as in the case of pigmentation, or by small changes in frequencies at a very large number of mutations, as in the case of height*".

My recommendation? If, like me, you don't have a scientific background but are interested in human evolution, Reich's book is a critical "must-read". But read Paabo's first!

Kilbarchan and the Handloom Weavers

Helen Calcluth



For over two centuries Kilbarchan was renowned for the skill of its weavers. *Kilbarchan and the Handloom Weavers* is a history of the Kilbarchan handloom weavers and village life from the seventeenth century. Little has been published on the history of the village since 1902 when the local minister, Rev. Robert MacKenzie, wrote his book *Kilbarchan: A Parish History*.

My plans for *Kilbarchan and the Handloom Weavers* began as a simple investigation into the history of handloom weaving in Kilbarchan from the seventeenth century to the 1950s when the last handloom weaver in the village plied his trade. The aim was twofold – firstly to collate any information available on the types of textiles woven in the village and, secondly, to find out more about the daily life of the Kilbarchan

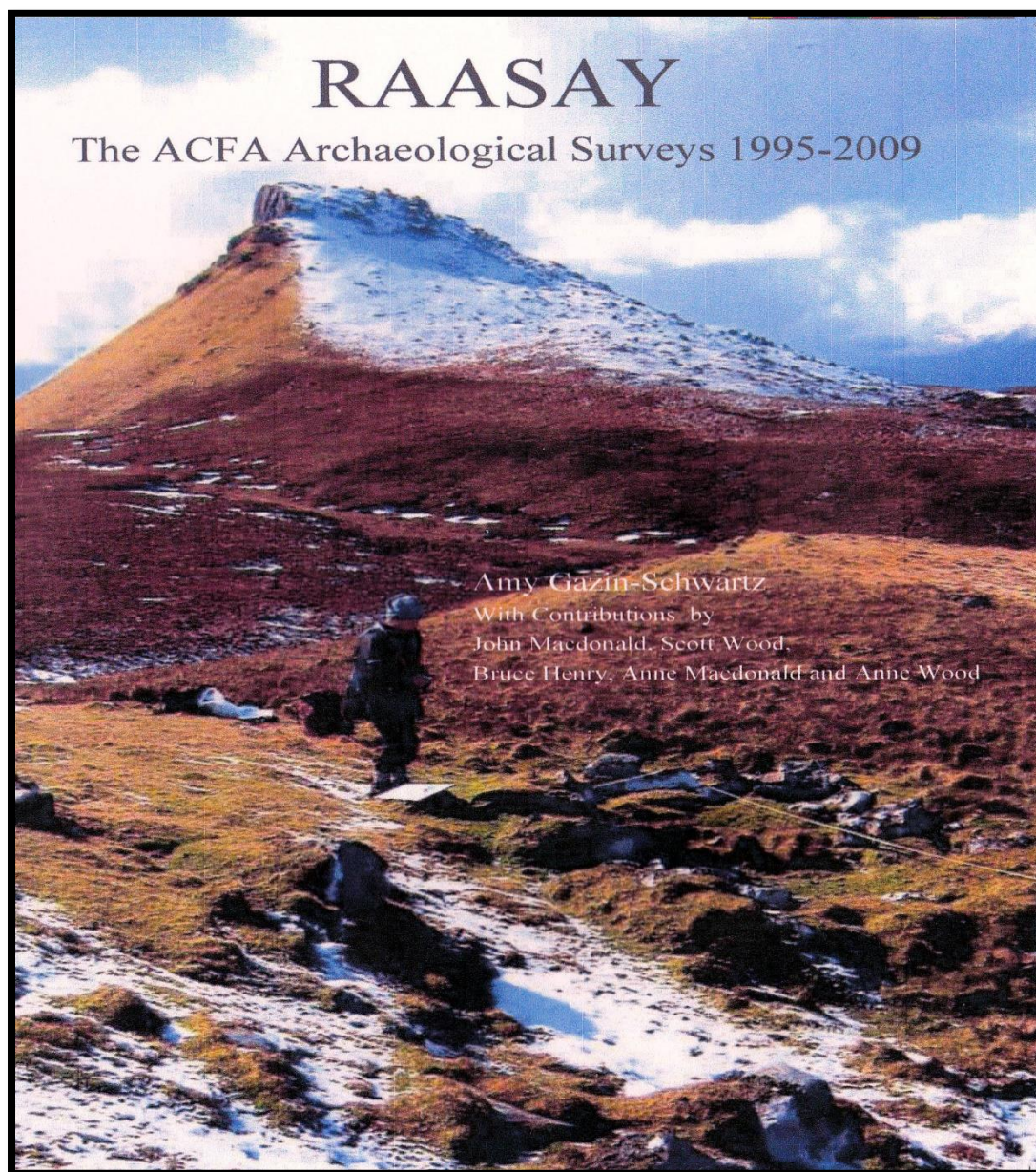
weavers.

Research into the weaving trade expanded and the book includes, in addition, information on early local waulkmills and lint mills, a chapter on the nineteenth century printworks at nearby Locher and a chapter derived from original correspondence between a Paisley manufacturer and weaving agent in Kilbarchan. Research into the lives of the Kilbarchan weavers has resulted in a considerable part of the book dealing with the social history of the village, including some biographical information on individual weavers and others involved in the textile trade.

Kilbarchan and the Handloom Weavers, published by Renfrewshire Local History Forum (RRP £14.99) from the Forum (with package and postage cost of £2.50.) and over the counter in the Weavers Cottage and in Bobbins Coffee Shop in Kilbarchan. It is also available in Abbey Books, 21 Wellmeadow St, Paisley, and through them on Amazon.

Launch of Raasay: The ACFA Archaeological Surveys 1995-2005.

Anne Macdonald.



At the well-attended ACFA lunch held on March 9th, Amy Gazin-Schwartz presented to us her splendid book which brings together the ACFA Raasay surveys from 1995 –2009. Amy gave a brief presentation and the book sold like hot cakes during the afternoon. If any member hasn't got a copy and would like to have one they should get in touch with me and I will arrange for a copy to be available at the member's price of £12.

After the weekend, Amy, Scott, John and I went off to Raasay to present the book to the people of the island. We set off with a large, very heavy roller case full of books. As none of us was willing to drive the distance to the Sconser ferry any more, we went on the bus! We were very grateful for the assistance of cheerful taxi and bus drivers who lifted the case off and on their vehicles! We enjoyed a spectacular drive up to Skye in beautiful sunshine but, by the time we arrived in Sconser, storm Gareth was making his presence felt. Luckily the ferry was able to run over to Raasay where it was tied securely to the jetty and battened down to see out the on-coming storm. Amy, delighted to be back in Raasay again, took a picture just after we arrived to post on Facebook for her friends and family at home to admire. During the night Gareth shrieked around Raasay House, whistling through every crack and crevice in the doors and windows. The following morning another picture shows the change in the scene!



Skye had disappeared and, beyond the ferry waiting-room, nothing was to be seen but grey seas and white horses – and rain! No ferries ran so our proposed trip over to Portree to deliver books didn't take place. We had had a notice put up on the Community News board at the shop inviting people to come along to Raasay House on Tuesday evening to see the book and meet the

author. The weather was so terrible and the hotel is quite a distance from the village so we didn't actually expect anyone to turn up! Imagine our amazement, when walking into the library we found about 40 people waiting for us! The hotel had laid out Prosecco, red and white wine and juices (free of charge) and set up a projector so that Amy could give her presentation. Poor Amy, I suspect she was much more nervous about facing the island than she was about facing ACFA! A really pleasant and successful evening gave us a chance to meet up with many weel-kent faces and hear the gossip of Raasay – it was marvellous! The response from the people of Raasay was heart-warming - Davey from Raasay Stores sold a box of books and by the end of the week he was sold out in the shop and ordering more! All in all, Davey has taken 85 copies and so far has sold 36 of them – he reckons he will dispose of the rest over the tourist season.



I know I'm a bit biased, but I reckon Amy's book to be a real tour-de-force which will contribute considerably to the body of works available on the archaeology of rural Scotland. Scott, John and I are very, very grateful to Amy for having undertaken this book – we recognise our limitations and know we could never have produced such a fine book! I commend it to the members.