



Scottish Group Newsletter

December 2012

<http://www.archaeologists.net>

News

Scottish Group Recent Activities

Members of the Scottish Group have attended a number of meetings and conferences in recent months and taken part in consultation exercises including:

- Engaging with the SHEP review, review of Archaeology Strategy, and the RCAHMS/HS merger
- Scotland's Community Heritage Conference
- Highland Archaeology Week Conference
- Regular BEFS Historic Environment Working Group meetings.

Members of the Group hope to be at a number of conferences in the coming year with an information stand and membership application packs – keep your eyes open for us! We look forward to meeting members old and new.

Part of the Group's work is to assist IfA's main office in Reading in responding to historic environment consultations relevant to Scotland and Scottish members. If there are any consultations, or views on consultations, that you would like IfA to include, then please do get in touch.

Charter update

Andrea Smith (IfA) kindly gave a presentation to the Committee at their most recent meeting, to update the Group on the chartership process. The following text is a summary of that presentation and we hope our members find it useful.

Where are we now?

IfA have now revised the draft charter documents in the light of comments received

from the consultation and the workshop held at the AGM. The lawyers now have them for one final check before IfA make an informal submission to the Privy Council.

What are all these documents again?

The *Petition* is a one-off document which describes who we are and what the IfA does.

The *Charter and by-laws* are the equivalent of the current Memorandum and articles: they set out the powers and constitution of the Institute at a high level. Some detail has been omitted at this level on legal advice as, once granted, the Charter and by-laws can only be changed with the permission of the Privy Council and the monarch.

There is a new suite of *regulations* which replace many of the current by-laws, with some new ones. We are taking advantage of the charter process to make some important governance changes to the Institute, so new regulations were needed to cover the Board of Directors and the Advisory Council.

What are these governance changes?

In line with current best practice for professional associations, changes are proposed to move from one large Council to a smaller Board of Directors and a large Advisory Council. Anyone who has served as a trustee or director will know that it is all too easy to be overwhelmed by routine business, with hardly any time left for considered thought and discussion. The Board of Directors will therefore deal with the day-to-day running of the Institute, leaving the Advisory Council free to debate longer term vision and strategy. The Advisory Council will also act as an appeal body, hearing appeals against decisions of the Board on membership, registration and professional conduct.

SGIfA AGM 2012

What happens next?

IfA will make an informal submission to the Privy Council later in December 2012 or in early January 2013, but it is not clear quite how long they might take to get back to us with any comments on matters that need attention before a formal submission. In the timetable we have allowed for 6-8 weeks.

The formal submission of the charter documents requires a mandate from the membership at an Extraordinary General Meeting: our hope is that we can timetable this at or shortly after the Conference in April 2013, allowing a formal submission of the finalised charter documents in late April or early May. There are certain hurdles to clear during the formal submission process: the application will be advertised and any objectors may make their opinions known to the Privy Council. We are led to believe that the formal consideration process will take anything from 9-12 months, so even if all goes perfectly in our favour, we are unlikely to have a formal verdict until early 2014.

When do I get chartered?

The advice we have been given is that we should get the Institute chartered first, and then work out what we think a chartered archaeologist might be. This was probably the most interesting and lively part of the workshop discussion at the AGM, and it is tempting to rush too far ahead, but views at the moment are tending towards making individual chartership something above and beyond current MIfA level; something that will be harder to earn, but consequently more rewarding.

What's in it for us then?

The most important effect of chartership is to raise the standing of a profession in society: increased recognition amongst the public and amongst our peers will have a tangible impact, so that we can sit round a table with chartered engineers, architects and surveyors and be among equals. The grant of a charter would recognise the high standards required of the archaeological profession, the importance of our work in the public interest and the need for practitioners to operate within the framework of a recognised professional institute.

The SGIfA AGM was held on 2nd November, kindly hosted by Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery in Glasgow, at 2pm.

The Chair reported that the Group's 5 Year Plan will shortly be updated, to mesh with the IfA's Strategic Plan, and that the Group will be required to produce a Business Plan as part of Reading's development of the Groups Forum and streamlining of Groups.

Training continues to be very active and the year has seen the delivery of several training sessions, which were well received: Open Source GIS sessions were held in Edinburgh, while a course on Measured Survey techniques was held in Newtonmore. The Chair thanked all of the tutors and committee members who made these sessions possible.

SGIfA continued to contribute to advocacy work in Scotland, by assisting the Reading office with consultations on Scottish matters and through attendance at workshops and membership of BEFS. The Group is also seeking partnerships with other institutions, with the aim of offering member benefits, and mutual support, training and CPD.

The Chair stated that future aspirations for the Committee were to increase membership and to continue to provide training events.

As there were fewer nominations than available places on the Committee, and only one nomination (Matt Ritchie, co-opted onto the committee previously), the nominee was elected to the Committee without requiring a ballot. There are still two openings available on the committee and Group members are encouraged to come forward. The Committee has also subsequently co-opted Andrea Smith onto the committee.

The current Committee members are Mark Roberts (Chair), Melanie Johnson (Hon. Secretary), Mary Peteranna (Hon. Treasurer), Susan Hamilton, Kenneth Aitchison, Cara Jones, Matt Ritchie and Andrea Smith.

The business of the AGM was followed, after a short break for refreshments, by a very stimulating afternoon programme of speakers on

the topic *'The effect of wider policy change on the long-term future of archaeology in Scotland'*. The following two contributions provide summaries of the key themes and the very lively debate which followed, and highlight some of the issues which are of such importance to Scottish archaeology at the moment.

AGM debate summary

Peter Hinton, Chief Executive of IfA

Following the AGM of the Scottish Group, members participated in a seminar entitled *The effect of wider policy change on the long-term future of archaeology in Scotland*.

Luke Wormald of Historic Scotland explained the review of Scotland's Historic Environment Policy (SHEP), Rebecca Jones of Historic Scotland introduced the development of an archaeology strategy for Scotland, and Simon Gilmour of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and the Built Environment Forum Scotland (BEFS) historic environment working group reflected on the opportunities these policy reviews presented. Peter Hinton acted as discussant and SGIfA members engaged in spirited debate: a summary of Pete's comments and the debate is presented below.

Details of the SHEP review

- o <http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/index/heritage/policy/shep.htm>
- o <http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/index/about/corporatereports/corporateplan.htm>

And the recommendations from the archaeology review leading to the strategy

- o <http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/archaeology-review-2012.pdf>.

Luke Wormald's overview of the process for reviewing Scotland's Historic Environment Policy (SHEP) was very valuable, and it was helpful to be reminded that the initiative belongs to the Cabinet Secretary, Fiona Hyslop, and is being carried forward through Historic Scotland's corporate plan. Inevitably, for a review which prides itself on engaging with stakeholders, it is extremely disappointing that there has been no direct consultation of IfA – especially as the workstream involving regulation has no representation from the institute with the strapline 'setting standards for the study and care of the historic environment'. It does seem

that the quick timetable, coupled with a weakness in the stakeholder audit process, has militated against a mature consideration of the role of professional archaeology in devising and delivering the new SHEP, and of IfA's insights from having been involved in similar processes in England and Wales.

The policy review certainly has plenty of work to do. The key issue of significance is now being discussed – as the pre-consultation stage draws to a close – so it will be interesting to see how the possible present misalignment of the SHEP-in-revision (with its welcome broad themes of investigating and recording; caring for and protecting; and sharing and celebrating) with the workmanlike PAN 2/2011 (importance, potential) is addressed.

Inevitably, the opportunities to address policy through legislative reform spring to mind. The 2010 Historic Environment (Amendment) (Scotland) Act brought in welcome improvements relating to the defence of ignorance; penalties; the ability to require reversal; designation of gardens, designed landscapes and battlefields; Certificates of Immunity from listing; urgent works notices and stop notices; but the sector had a much longer list. The Historic Environment Advisory Council Scotland (HEACS), before its demise, drew up a wishlist of legislative reform, much of which still stands and would address the intricacies of curtilage, expansion of the range of assets that could be scheduled, statutory statements of significance, interim protection during consideration for designation, statutory management agreements, and third party appeals relating to designation. IfA would add to the list the revocation of some of the class consents that permit the ploughing of scheduled monuments, and the two (failed) amendments to the Act proposed by BEFS on behalf of the wider sector: a statutory responsibility for local authorities to have access to a Historic Environment Record service (which the RCAHMS and ALGAO work on historic environment data, valuable though it is, does not satisfy), and a statutory duty of care for the historic environment for public bodies. And what about, if the canvas is as blank as we are told, sensible consideration of the pros and cons of the principles of licensing excavation for archaeological purposes, rather than automatic dismissal of the approach based on perceptions

of the adequacy of its application in Northern Ireland and numerous other states?

Rebecca Jones' extremely positive outlining of the plans to develop an archaeology strategy for Scotland, advised by a pan-sectoral Scottish Strategic Archaeology Committee with IfA representation, was well received. One of the early tasks will be to establish the link to the historic environment policy: will the archaeology be delivering a specific archaeology policy or the relevant aspects of the top-level historic environment policy?

It was recognised that Historic Scotland's earlier review of the archaeology function had severely misrepresented the role of commercial archaeologists (no credit for research, for example), and that an important part of the strategy will be finding ways of supporting the commercial organisations and enhancing the benefit they bring to the public – there is an important job here for SGIfA and Historic Scotland, which should involve exploring the potential for a Scottish Southport. Such discussions should look at improving the integration of research, including commercial/academic collaboration (all the more important as structural separation continues), increasing opportunities for participation, greater access to archaeological archives and a wider range of publications, improved benefits for developers and greater recognition of the value of professional accreditation. There was also a strong plea for ring-fencing (and if possible increasing) the archaeology budget, and for aspiring to making the historic environment and its study through archaeology as important as the natural environment and habitat conservation in the eyes of the public and politicians.

Delegates recognised Simon's assertion that this is a time of massive change with huge potential and some risk: the SHEP review, an archaeology strategy, the Scottish Historic Environment Data initiative, changes to the bodies with museum responsibilities, planning policy review, the creation of a successor body to Historic Scotland and RCAHMS, an IfA conference in Scotland in 2014 (as well as the little matter of a referendum), and a Scottish "year of archaeology" in 2015. This is not a time to settle for minor improvements or the status quo – unless we feel that things are pretty much okay as they are. But the appetite for looking at

the potential for radical change seems quite limited.

In response to a question from Andrea Smith on how much carte blanche there really was for legislative change, Luke confirmed that while there is definitely a blank sheet of paper, what is taken off that sheet will be driven by political and resource realities. Timing will be another factor: legislation will be required to effect the Historic Scotland and RCAHMS transition, perhaps as soon as October 2013, and that provides an opportunity for other changes. Robin Turner queried whether the potential cost of parliamentary drafting would reduce Scottish Government's appetite for reform: Pete pointed out that some of the work had been done in preparation of the Westminster Heritage Protection Bill, but Luke reminded us that the driver for legislative reform was better legislation and not more legislation. Rod McCullagh argued the referendum and elections were an important factor and gave us the opportunity to push heritage debates into a political arena, and said that IfA's UK-wide perspective made it a useful resource for Scottish Government in these discussions.

Mark Roberts asked whether IfA should campaign for the introduction of a licensing system: views based on the effectiveness of processes in Northern Ireland and the Republic were varied, and all agreed that such an approach should not restrict work by amateur archaeologists providing they were committed to professional standards: John Lawson raised the important point that without such a provision archaeological work on the undesignated historic environment outside the planning process is completely unregulated – and that puts us in breach of the Valletta Convention.

Cara Jones pointed out how few commercial archaeologists were able to attend the event; Mel Johnson explained that commercial units felt excluded from the debate even though they were expected to incorporate the outcomes into their working lives in what continue to be difficult trading conditions, and that as a major employer it was worrying that their voices were not being heard in the policy debate. It could be IfA and SGIfA's role to canvass the views of the commercial units in particular and feed them into the archaeology strategy process: this is something the committee needs to take account of in planning the next year's work – perhaps it

can co-host a Southport event with Historic Scotland? Rebecca Jones also offered to visit the commercial organisations as part of the strategy development.

Rod McCullagh called for more active involvement in the development of research frameworks, and speculated whether they had a role to play in correcting some of the unhelpful impacts of the Research Excellence Framework on Scottish universities' research into Scottish archaeology. Andrea Smith made the case for more publication outlets, including at a regional level, to cope with the research output. Simon Gilmour also highlighted the potential impact of the Finch report into Open Access on the sector. Matt Ritchie cited the Highland Archaeology Conference as a vehicle for showcasing new research at a regional level (particularly resulting from development control), and argued that regional archaeologists should be consulted on the priorities for Historic Scotland's archaeology budget.

John Lawson also argued for ironing out existing weaknesses in archaeological provision, as well as increasing the profile of our work with the public, and using HERs as a portal to heritage information. Joe Somerville wondered if it was time to look again at the framework for developer funding: should we continue with the polluter-pays principle on a site-by-site, project-by-project basis or look to a hypothecated tax along the lines of the French model?

Finally, Simon reminded attendees that the economy was going to be a driving force. Cuts, especially to the public sector, were set to continue (Historic Scotland has had a 25% cut so far) and the loss of local authority historic environment specialists was a major concern. Already in England there are authorities that make planning decisions without any access to archaeological advice, so protection of Scottish services is paramount. Pete Hinton pointed out that in the past it had been calculated that each development control archaeologist annually levered in on average 40 times their own salary of developer funding for archaeological research. Matt Ritchie said that we should not underestimate the importance of such services, with an important outreach role (hosting regional conferences and events for example) above and beyond development control; and he pointed out how useful they could be in developing common cause with the natural environment sector, from

whom we could learn so much about advocacy for improved legislation at national and European levels – and in developing regional action plans for conservation.

And with that, IfA members decamped to a reception to mark the opening of the Pharaoh exhibition, to which they had generously been invited by Glasgow Museums, and where the debate continued.

An independent and off-the-cuff view

Dr Simon Gilmour, Director, Society of Antiquaries of Scotland

In Scotland, there are presently no less than six major national reviews or strategies that have the potential to dramatically impact upon the work of archaeologists. The most obvious are the Archaeology Strategy and the policy review, but in addition there is the looming merger of Historic Scotland and the RCAHMS, the Museums Strategy, further Scottish Planning Policy review for the National Planning Framework version 3, and the Scottish Historic Environment Data (SHED) strategy. The impact of just one or two of these pieces of work, such as the Policy review and the merger, are potentially dramatic, but the combination of all of them amounts to a 'perfect storm'!

It is exceedingly difficult to keep abreast of all these developments, and yet all are intimately tied to each other in the web of historic environment management; and the effect is likely to be fundamental change that will affect everyone who works in archaeology in Scotland. However, at present, despite the difficulties, we are being presented with excellent opportunities to engage with these changes, and I would like to particularly thank Historic Scotland for opening discussions on the policy review and the archaeology strategy at a very early stage, pre-public consultation, with a great many in the sector. This early and open pre-consultation follows similarly welcome work on the Historic Environment (Amendment) (Scotland) Act 2011 and the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010. I would encourage everyone to take advantage of the opportunity to engage with these processes and realise the potential of ensuring that whatever changes are made over the coming couple of years, they are to everyone's benefit! While the archaeology strategy is still in its infancy, it has

the potential to better align the many different forces working in the sector, and we wait with interest to see who will be joining her in the SSAC (Scottish Strategic Archaeology Committee) to help guide the development of the strategy.

The SHED strategy is the latest development in a long-running issue regarding the archiving and accessibility of historic environment information that was revitalised during the BEFS lobbying on the Amendment Act, when we asked for a further amendment to include a provision to ensure that local authorities have access, and give due regard to, appropriate information and expert advice on the local historic environment in exercising their duties. In response, the Government said they would set up a group to take this issue forward, but that group were given a specific remit to deal with data and not the provision of advice, or a wider service at local authority level. The work to date has been an opportunity to clarify some of the issues with regard to historic environment data, and solidify the public requirements from those who steward that information, including the need for consistency of information provision across Scotland and the removal of duplication of effort.

There is, however, opportunity to revisit the original issue of strengthening service provision at a local authority level in legislation through the wider policy review. Billed as a fundamental review, this is in my personal consideration critically hemmed-in by the preferred timetable – aiming for a potential October 2013 window of opportunity to introduce legislation to parliament – which will likely lead to a dual approach of setting out a series of requirements that can be fulfilled by the October 2013 legislative timetable, and a separate set of longer-term goals. To my mind this is unsatisfactory because it will, by necessity, no longer allow a fully holistic view, with critical debate and discussion. For this reason, the Society and BEFS have written to the Cabinet Secretary to ask her to consider a slightly longer timetable, to allow the full range of views and ideas to be fully considered and a holistic framework for all these various but interlinked strands. The scale of the work involved is large, but we shouldn't allow difficulty and expense to be obstacles to getting the best for the historic environment, or archaeology specifically in this context, in what are extremely challenging environments. If we

get it right then benefits will flow further down the line.

One of the biggest changes to the management landscape of Scotland's heritage is now, in my view, inevitable – the merger of the RCAHMS and Historic Scotland. It is this, and the likely need for legislation to set up a new heritage organisation, that is driving the timetable for the wider policy review. We should, however, be very glad that the view is already swinging in favour of a new organisation requiring legislation, as suggested by the Cabinet Secretary in Parliament, since this should help to allay fears of Historic Scotland simply swallowing its smaller partner and the crucial functions of the RCAHMS being either immediately lost or suffering a death by a thousand cuts further down the line. The development of a business case is already well underway, and is to be influenced by the wider policy review, but in order to take into account some of the wider implications and more radical suggestions this is where my feeling develops for a need to pause and reflect on the process.

We shouldn't lose sight of the fact that the merger is being fundamentally driven by financial pressures: with a reducing public purse the question must legitimately be asked whether the status quo is a sustainable and efficient mechanism for a country with a population of 5 million, many of whom are based in the central belt? However, it is these same financial pressures, and the potential of a looming triple dip recession, that also highlight the vulnerability of some of our most critical archaeological services. Times are difficult for third sector organisations such as the Society, but we must maintain our vigilance, and continue to advocate for the enhancement of Scotland's heritage through all these processes: in particular, it is time to dust down the lobbying made in previous Bills for an independent national collection (the Culture (Scotland) Bill 2007), a responsibility on all public bodies to protect, enhance and have special regard to Scotland's historic environment in exercising their duties (Culture Bill and Amendment Bill) and a provision to ensure that local authorities have access, and give due regard to, appropriate information and expert advice on the local historic environment in exercising their duties (also the Amendment Bill); and just perhaps ask about enacting part two of the Ancient Monuments Act...

Finally, I would reiterate - get in touch, make your voice heard, and take advantage of the opportunities afforded by once in a generation change!

Training

The Scottish Group have again been busy organising training events. Look out for news bulletins about courses as they are finalised. Courses are designed to provide CPD opportunities for Scottish members, and we also aim to get away from Edinburgh-centric delivery wherever possible.

Most recently, *Introduction to Digital Photography for Archaeologists* was held in Glasgow Museum Resource Centre, where participants had the opportunity to photograph archaeological features outside and artefacts indoors, as well as learn tips and tricks, composition and editing.

A workshop on *The Illustration of Archaeological Measured Survey* was held on 14th December at RCAHMS, which will be focused on skills sharing for archaeologists involved in the design, execution and presentation of measured survey. This course is run in partnership with Forestry Commission Scotland, RCAHMS, and the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.

As always, the Group are working on the programme for next year and welcome ideas and requests from our members, so please don't hesitate to get in touch!

The IfA bursary scheme in Scotland

For several years IfA has run a very successful scheme of 'workplace learning bursaries', funded jointly by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the host organisations. The fifth and final round of bursaries has recently been advertised, with eight available in total. Potential hosts also have to apply to IfA and HLF to be accepted on the scheme. This time round, Scotland has done rather well and placements will be hosted by four different Scottish heritage organisations – Historic Scotland, RCAHMS, Scottish Canals and Northlight Heritage.

The recruitment process is underway and all of the successful candidates are expected to be in

post from January or February 2013 for up to a year each. The placements are paid according to IfA minimum standards for PlfA or AlfA members and offer really good learning opportunities for the successful candidates.

The scheme has been extremely popular, both with host organisations and those on placement. Historic Scotland reports that it received 80 applications for a 12-month placement based mainly in its Scheduling, Marine and Battlefields Team.

With thanks to Olwyn Owen, Historic Scotland, for information.

Once all of the Scottish bursary holders are in place, we'll invite them to update us in this newsletter on how they're getting on during the year. Below we have contributions from Sabina Strachan, who explains what advantages the bursaries will bring for placements at Scottish Canals, and a report from the first of this batch of bursary holders to be in post, Mari McKee who is Trainee Historic Building Surveyor at RCAHMS.

Scottish Canals and the Scottish Waterways Trust

Sabina Strachan, Senior Heritage Advisor, Scottish Canals

Our two placements will make a real difference to what we can achieve next year and more than double our heritage team! Canal heritage is rich and includes historic engineering, buildings, buried archaeology and intangible heritage. Our remit is broad to ensure that Scotland's canals contribute to the environmental, social and economic health of the country.

The 9-month placement in heritage management will contribute research and advice to project teams, learn how to write impact assessments and statements of significance, and develop our existing relationship with the Antonine Wall WHS. The 6-month placement in buildings archaeology will audit our archaeological sites, create detailed records of key assets, and work with Archaeology Scotland on strategic community projects next summer.

Both placements holders will learn how to record sites for HERs and upload these onto Canmore through Scottish Canals/RCAHMS 'SURE'

partnership. They will also gain a firm grounding in GIS and asset management databases. The individuals will bring considerable skills and experience with them to our organisations and help to deliver the Year 1 objectives of Scottish Canals' heritage strategy.

To find out more see <http://www.scottishcanals.co.uk/draft-heritage-strategy>.

Trainee Historic Building Surveyor

Mari McKee, Building Survey Trainee, Architecture and Industry, RCAHMS

I joined the Royal Commission of Ancient and Historic Monuments as a Trainee Historic Building Surveyor in October 2012 and I feel I have already done so much! I came from an architectural background having studied a BA (hons) in Architecture and an MSc in Architectural Conservation. After working at the Heritage Lottery Fund for the last nine months I was ready to get back to the drawing board and this is exactly what this IfA bursary post has provided. The post aims to train me in graphical building survey, hand drawing and illustration. There is a set programme for the training; however, it is also really flexible, allowing me to tailor my learning so I can gain more experience and training in other methods of building recording, such as laser scanning and photography.

In my short time here I have already assisted in the ground floor survey of a large A-listed castle with phases dating from the 11th century, and the scanning and drawing survey of a 1950s church, through which I have been learning many surveying techniques and methods of interpreting a building. I am also in the process of producing a drawn survey of the church furnishings and details to be added to the RCAHMS archive along with the plans, sections and elevations.

So far almost 50% of my time has been out of the office on fieldwork. When I am back in the office I am getting to grips with Adobe Illustrator, tracing the ground floor plan of Delgatie Castle to produce a digital copy which can be used in publications. In the upcoming months I hope to spend some time with the photographers at the RCAHMS to gain knowledge and experience in this method of building recording, but in the

meantime I am really enjoying having a pencil in my hand again.

Events/Courses

Trafficking Culture

Trafficking Culture is a research project based at the University of Glasgow, currently funded by the European Research Council from 2012-16, which aims to produce an evidence-based picture of the contemporary global trade in looted cultural objects.

The website (<http://traffickingculture.org>) includes links to project team members, publications, and an ever-growing Encyclopaedia of terminology, methodology, theory and a variety of case studies from around the world. Keep checking back as the content will be regularly updated.

You can also follow the project on Facebook at www.facebook.com/TraffickingCulture and on Twitter @CultureTraffic.

If you would like to find out more, or would like to discuss possible postgraduate research with them, please contact them on info@traffickingculture.org.

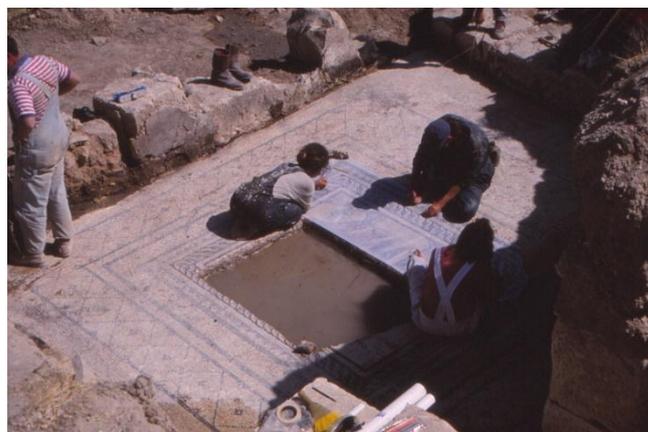


Photo shows 1993 excavations at Zeugma and shows how the Metiokhos and Parthenope mosaic was found by the archaeologists, with the central section already removed by looters. Image courtesy of Phil Freeman, and more such images at: <http://traffickingculture.org/data>.

Vikings

The National Museum of Scotland is the only UK venue for this exhibition of more than 500 objects from the world-renowned collections of the Swedish History Museum in Stockholm. By bringing together unique objects with new research and hands-on displays, the exhibition reveals who the Vikings really were, and creates a vivid picture of how they lived more than 1000 years ago. 18 January 2013 to 12 May 2013.

http://www.nms.ac.uk/our_museums/national_museum/exhibitions/vikings.aspx

Members' News

Perthshire's Pictish Longhouses – the Glenshee Archaeology Project

Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust and Northlight Heritage

Glenshee in north-east Perthshire boasts a remarkable wealth of upland archaeology, such as prehistoric ritual monuments, later prehistoric roundhouses, and the later *fermtouns* and *sheilings* of the 17-19th centuries. Perhaps one of the most interesting type of site, however, are the so-called 'Pitcarmick buildings'. They appear as low earthworks of elongated longhouses with distinctive rounded ends and take their name from two excavated examples in neighbouring Strathardle, which were found to be of early medieval date.

Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust in partnership with Northlight Heritage this year began a new research project, delivered through Perthshire Archaeology Month, to excavate a second Pitcarmick building at Lair. This engaged a team of over 30 volunteers from the local community and further afield and also included activities for the visiting public and local schools.

Year 1 Results

The site at Lair is located 7km south of the Spittal of Glenshee and, like Pitcarmick, is a multi-period site which consists of a relatively dispersed settlement of longhouses on a prehistoric settlement of roundhouses of probable late Bronze Age date, themselves set around an earlier prehistoric ring-cairn of probable earlier Bronze Age or late Neolithic date. The aim of the excavation was to establish

a date for one of the longhouses and to confirm whether its construction was similar to the excavated Pitcarmick buildings in Strathardle.

Geophysical survey and detailed topographic surveys were followed by a series of trenches across the longhouse. These confirmed a suspected entrance to the building, revealed a large posthole at one end similar to those found at Pitcarmick, and showed that the walls included almost no stone at all, either as a foundation or in the wall make-up. A well-preserved section of turf bank produced several metal objects and was found to sit above a buried ditch full of burned round-wood, possibly representing the remains of a fence destroyed during clearance prior to construction. Other finds included a barbed flint arrowhead and prehistoric pottery, probably from the nearby roundhouses, suggesting Pictish re-use of these earlier monuments.



What it means...and plans for the future

In future years the intention is to develop a landscape archaeology project, looking from the building at Lair at the surrounding landscape and studying how it sat both in its immediate

environment and in relation to existing sites, both contemporary and non-contemporary. While, as a group, their date and function is still very poorly understood, their relationship to existing prehistoric sites remains elusive. Their location near much earlier settlements, already ancient monuments by the 8th century AD, may simply indicate a pragmatic re-use of resources in areas shown to be worthy of arable farming both in terms of the buildings and field systems themselves and their constituent materials. In recent decades, however, it has become clear that important Pictish sites, such as Forteviot and Scone, were located close to prehistoric ritual landscapes in order to appropriate some legitimacy from 'the ancients' and therefore, it is feasible, that cultural factors are also at play.

The story of understanding the site has only just begun. Follow our progress online at <http://www.glenshee-archaeology.co.uk>.

Iona Abbey Excavations

Peter Yeoman, Historic Scotland Head of Cultural Heritage

Historic Scotland has just completed a major historical and archaeological research programme on Iona Abbey. This data is now informing a major re-presentation of this iconic site to the visitors and pilgrims who come to Columba's isle from all over the world.

From May 2013 visitors will access a much greater understanding of the amazing contribution that the Iona monastery made to European scholarship, monasticism, creativity, law making, as well as to the development of society in Scotland, over a long 1000 year span. Historic Scotland will be including material on the continuity of significance which Iona has in Gaelic culture from the time of the Lords of the Isles up to the present day.

The project will include new permanent exhibitions of archaeological finds, as well as of the most significant collection of early medieval carved crosses and cross slabs in Scotland. Other exhibits will focus on the Benedictine phase, as the focus for the cult of the saint, as well as the place of burial of the Lords of the Isles and their warrior elite. The afterlife of the abbey will also be presented in the story of the restoration and the Iona Community.

Key to the success of the research programme has been the rich ideas aired at the Conference held at the Abbey at Easter 2012. This has been further bolstered by expert contributions to the research made by Dr Kate Forsyth and Dr Adrian Maldonado of the University of Glasgow, Dr David Caldwell ex of the NMS, Derek Alexander of the NTS, Dr Cormac Bourke, Dr Heather Pulliam, Kirkdale Archaeology and many others. This is resulting in tremendous advances in our knowledge of Iona and its influence within early medieval Scotland.

The suite of new permanent exhibitions and interpretation at the Abbey is due to be opened at Pentecost in May 2013, as part of the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the foundation of the Iona Community, as well as the 1450th anniversary of the arrival of St Columba on Iona.

Book Award

An Historic Scotland book, which helped bolster the international status of Stanley Mills by highlighting new archaeological discoveries and unprecedented research, has received a national award.

Force and Fabric. Archaeological Investigations at Stanley Mills (Historic Scotland Archaeological Report No.5) was highly commended at the Association for Industrial Archaeology (AIA) annual conference, where the book by Michael Cressey (of CFA Archaeology Ltd) and Ron Fitzgerald was recognised for its report on one of the world's finest surviving cotton mills.

The findings from more than twelve years of research revealed the remarkable evolution of Stanley Mills, transformed through the 18th and 19th centuries from a simple corn mill by inventor and cotton spinning pioneer Richard Arkwright.

Membership of the Scottish Group is free for IfA members, and attracts a small fee for non-IfA members. Please feel free to circulate this newsletter and we would like to ask you to encourage your friends and colleagues to join the Scottish Group.

For more information on the IfA's Scottish Group please see our website, where you can download copies of meeting minutes and past newsletters, and keep up-to-date with the work of the Group and training course:

<http://www.archaeologists.net/groups/scottish>

Keep in touch with us via the Scottish Group's Facebook page, where information about events and the work of the Group will be publicised. Search for 'Scottish Group of the Institute for Archaeologists' and 'like' us or go to:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Scottish-Group-of-the-Institute-for-Archaeologists/118919181526150>

The next committee meetings are 7th February, 9th May and 22nd August 2013 - please feel free to get in touch if there any items you would like to see included on the agenda, or members are welcome to attend the meetings, normally held in RCAHMS at 3pm.

Newsletters are published 3-4 times a year and all contributions from Scottish members are welcome (news, events, new discoveries, project roundups, books, talks, staff news etc). To make a contribution to forthcoming editions of the Newsletter please email:

mel@cfa-archaeology.co.uk