

EDINBURGH ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SOCIETY

Scottish Charity No. SC006520

News

Issue 193 – June 2013



Hello there,

I am pleased to help the Society by collating the quarterly newsletter. As one of the newer members, I have always read the “News” with interest. I have to say that it is one of the best of its kind. Believe me, I am a serial joiner of groups and I see many attempts at a newsletter.

This high standing is in no small way down to the sterling efforts of John Urquhart who has done this job for (probably) longer than he cares to remember! Many thanks from all of us, John.

I hope that I can maintain his high standards. No doubt you will let me know!

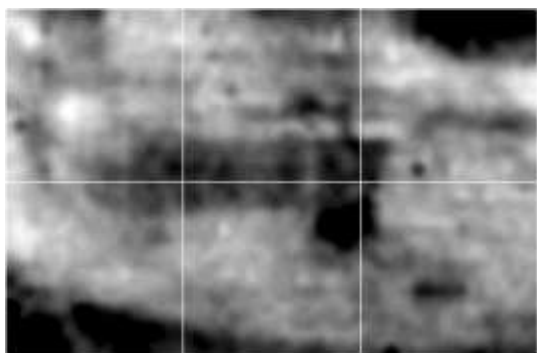
I am looking forward to working with you all as editor. Remember that it is YOUR newsletter. Please send in anecdotes, moans and groans, happy stories and share your love of archaeology with us all.

With best wishes, Graeme H Bettison.

Society News

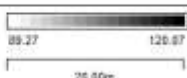
Abbey Mill, Haddington

On 27 April, we surveyed an area of 2,400 sq.m. at the site of St Mary's Nunnery, east of Haddington by the River Tyne. The survey was on an arable field to the south of the site of the graveyard. Results were extremely promising, revealing a large L-shaped anomaly, probably a building, and other possible wall lines. Unfortunately the survey was cut short by one of the tenant farmers. It is not known whether we will be able to return. Thanks to Eric Glendinning of Haddington's History Society for arranging the survey.



The survey area we managed to cover revealed a clear anomaly of an L-shaped building.

Document: AM02View
Grid Width: 240 (60 m)
Grid Height: 100 (40 m)
Orig. Sample Size: 1.00 x 1.00m
New Sample Size: 0.25 x 0.25m



Penicuik House - A 'hands on' learning experience



Photos by Graeme Bettison

Our last lecture before our summer break was on Tuesday 14 May, when James Simpson brought us up to date on the restoration of Penicuik House. Mr Simpson's architectural practice, Simpson and Brown, is supervising the consolidation of the burnt-out shell, familiar to many members from the geophysical surveys we have undertaken beside the house to find the foundations of its predecessor.

Jenni Morrison of Simpson and Brown hosted the training week on site from 13 to 17 May and some of our members attended on various days and times and were treated to a master class in the various aspects of recording an archaeological site.



We assisted in a week long training session involving excavation and recording test pits in the former kitchen areas, vaults and the basement of the main entrance room. Building elevations and plans were recorded in these areas. There was also training in digitisation of plans. It was not all work though, and we were treated to a high level view of the house from the basket suspended from the crane and a trip up the scaffolding as well as tours of the preserved area and a visit to the cellars.

Many thanks to the Scottish Lime Centre for organising the course and use of their facilities and to Jenni Morrison of Addyman Archaeology for guiding and assisting us so well.

Inch House, Gilmerton Road

On 6 May we made a geophysical survey of a garden area adjacent to Inch House for the Greater Liberton Heritage Project. After navigating our way past various raised beds, paths, etc. results were very unclear. No daffodils were harmed in the making of this survey.

Corstorphine Hill Cup-marked Rocks

On Saturday 13 April, members of the Society, under the guidance of Dr Tertia Barnett, created what may be the first comprehensive record of a group of cup-marked rock slabs on the west facing slope of Corstorphine Hill. The existence of these cup-marked rocks has long been known, and they are recorded in Canmore, the RCAHMS database, under ID no. 69897. They are also mentioned in various publications about Corstorphine Hill. However there has always been some discrepancy in accounts of the extent of the cup-marked slabs and of how many cup marks there are. The City Archaeologist, John Lawson (now the Society's Hon. President) suggested that it would be a worthwhile exercise to create a definitive record of the site. Fortunately, the Society has in its ranks one of Britain's foremost experts on prehistoric rock art, Dr Tertia Barnett, and she agreed to lead the recording project. Tertia proposed that we use, for the first time in Scotland, the standardised methodology which has recently been developed for recording rock art in the North of England. This system uses standard forms to record the location, description and environment of the site, as well as potential threats. The site is drawn and photographed in consistent formats. This facilitates the creation of a detailed database of information on rock art sites.

Having postponed the visit once due to adverse weather, we were fortunate to have a warm sunny day. Several members of the Society turned out, along with members of other local organisations who were interested to see what we were doing. The sites were cleared of debris, drawn and photographed. Tertia supervised the completion of the fairly extensive recording forms. The drawings are currently being prepared for digitisation. The outcome in due course will be a full electronic record of the site using the most up-to-date methods, cross-referenced to the drawings and photographs.



Photos by
John Urquhart

Rock Art Group

Following on the success of the project to record the cup marked rocks on Corstorphine Hill, the Society is considering the formation of a Rock Art Group to encourage members who would be interested in developing their knowledge of the subject and working on further recording projects using the ERA (English Rock Art) standard methodology. In the first instance we would focus on rock art sites in Edinburgh. Research indicates that there are seven sites in Edinburgh, although in three cases the stones have been removed from the site. We have tentatively identified Tormain Hill, near Ratho, as the next site to be recorded. Any member interested in participating in such a group should contact John Urquhart (john.urquhart1001@btinternet.com or 01592 644710).

The Archaeology Scotland Summer School 17-20 May 2013

Ann Kerrigan reports....

Several members of the Society attended this year's summer school in Nairn and enjoyed the usual successful format of lectures and excursions. To many of us the area was new and after an enjoyable dinner on Friday evening Dr Fraser Hunter (NMS) presented a paper on 'The Iron Age in Morayshire and the Impact of Rome'. This whetted our appetite for what was to come.

Our Saturday excursion included visits to Pityoulish Pictish barrow cemetery, interesting chambered cairns, and the mottes at Mains of Garten and Auldearn. The latter site may be better known to historians who are acquainted with the campaign of the Marquis of Montrose in the mid 17th century. Our Saturday evening lecture after another excellent dinner was given by Iain Anderson (RCAHMS) on 'The Castles and Mottes of Medieval Morayshire and Strathspey'.

Sunday morning started with a stop at the spectacular Sueno's Stone, now enclosed in glass to protect the carvings, followed by a visit to Burghead, famous for Pictish stones bearing bulls, where we viewed the remains of the huge ramparts and the rock-cut well. We then visited Duffus motte and castle, surrounded by a large moat, and then proceeded to Spynie Palace, former residence of the Bishop of Moray.

Kirkton of Mortlach church, built in the 13th century but dedicated to St. Moluag of Lismore, was our first stop after lunch. The church contains a Pictish stone, a medieval effigy and a post-reformation monument. Later in the afternoon, Birnie church was visited. It is a lovely simple Romanesque church dedicated to St. Brenden. There is a possibility that this is an early monastic site. The church is the repository of an early Christian hand bell dating to the 9th century, specially brought out for us to look at. In a nearby field was the area where Dr Fraser Hunter had excavated a settlement site with its roots in the Bronze Age, but which became a place of great importance in the Iron Age with links to the Roman Empire. Later on we had a private viewing at Elgin Museum where we saw many of the finds from the Birnie excavation and also some of the carved Burghead bulls.

On Monday morning we rounded off our visit to Moray with a guided tour of Elgin Cathedral. Our thanks to Geoff Waters, Alison Reid and speakers at all the sites. Roll on next year!!

Thank you, Ann

Forthcoming Field Activities

- 4 June:** geophysics at Greenbank House, Clarkston (for National Trust for Scotland).
- 8 June:** geophysics at Morham Castle, East Lothian.
- 17 - 23 June:** excavation at Bannockburn (run by National Trust for Scotland).
- 29 June:** investigation of coastal feature at Hopetoun Bank, South Queensferry (possible SCHaRP project).
- 13 July:** geophysics at Saline, Fife, looking for site of 12th century church (for Saline Heritage Society).
- 23 July:** excavation of test pits on Corstorphine Hill looking for traces of prehistoric occupation.
- 7 August:** geophysics at North Berwick –part of a community archaeology project at the invitation of David Connolly.

Full details will be provided by e-mail alert in due course.

News from Others

Flodden 1513

Flodden 1513 is the project to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Battle of Flodden. There is a host of events in the Borders, on both sides of the Tweed, throughout the year. For full details see www.flodden1513.com.

There will be an evening lecture in the NMS at 1830 on Monday 9 September by Dr David Caldwell: "Flodden 1513 - How Unlucky Were the Scots?" Price £6 (Concessions £5), now booking at www.nms.ac.uk/our_museums/national_museum/whats_on/adults/talks.aspx or 0300 123 6789.

Dirleton Green Survey

Bill Nimmo of the Gullane and Dirleton History Society reports that East Lothian Archaeology Service and the History Society are planning a digging workshop on the site on Friday 13 to Tuesday 17 September. He is currently recruiting people from the local community to take part before it is opened up to all comers when the promotional materials for the Archaeology Fortnight come out in June/July. If any of our members would like to take part they will be very welcome. You will remember [News 189 and 190] that we carried out geophysics on the site. Bill says our results will be very useful when planning the details of the dig.

Whithorn Trust

The Whithorn museum and exhibition centre run by the Whithorn Trust, which focusses on St Ninian and the early Christian archaeological site at Isle of Whithorn, is due to close because of a shortfall in funding from Dumfries and Galloway Council. An online petition to save the centre has been organised. If you would like to sign the petition please follow the link <http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/save-the-whithorn-trust.html>

National Collection of Aerial Photography <http://aerial.rcahms.gov.uk/>

A new batch of 19,000 aerial images has been uploaded to the NCAP website and more imagery will be uploaded in June 2013. The new batch includes:

Luftwaffe aerial photography <http://aerial.rcahms.gov.uk/database/record.php?usi=006-000-001-201-C>

Camera clearing shots <http://aerial.rcahms.gov.uk/database/record.php?usi=006-000-001-187-C>

A new batch of 5,300 images has been released to the NCAP website. This batch includes:

- Dams attacked during the Dambusters raid, 70 years ago on 17 May 1943
- Saumur Tunnel, attacked by 617 Squadron using Tallboy earthquake bombs
- Suez - another 2 sorties of Port Said flown during the Suez Crisis
- Survey-standard 1950's aerial photography of southern Germany, Austria and Libya

To see more, see <http://aerial.rcahms.gov.uk/news/news130508.php>

Falkirk Community Trust

Our friend Geoff Bailey, updates us on "Work on old digs"...

As usual work is proceeding in the background on a number of our previous digs. Back in 1998 we dug at the Dorrator ironworks, Camelon, and found a nice rim sherd of a BB1 dish. It was only when I was drawing the pot that I noticed a graffito and Roger Tomlin has kindly provided the following note on it:

"**Camelon** (?*Colania*, NS 8667 8078), Dorrator Ironworks site. Rim sherd of an Antonine black-burnished (BB1) dish with lattice decoration, found in 1998. Scratched outside after firing: SVTTO, *Sutto*.

The first two letters are of exaggerated size. The Celtic name *Sutto* is already attested at Binchester and can be deduced from the feminine form *Sutta* and the derived nomen *Suttonius*. Perhaps also a variant of the well-attested *Satto*".

Other Events, Exhibitions Etc.

National Museum of Scotland

Members may be interested in the exhibition Amazing Amber currently on at the MMS:

http://www.nms.ac.uk/our_museums/national_museum/upcoming_exhibitions/amazing_amber.aspx

Pictish Studies at Glasgow University, Friday 7 June, 2013.

A showcase of current research in honour of Dr Isabel Henderson on the occasion of her 80th Birthday

To register on-line: <http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/event/6559478577>

Further details from: Michelle Nicholl, School of Humanities michelle.nicholl@glasgow.ac.uk

Tel: 0141-330-5690 or from the Centre for Scottish and Celtic Studies web-site.

"Chapels in the North" Conference 10 and 11 June 2013 - Aberdeen University.

The rationale for the Conference is the ongoing research at the Centre for Scandinavian Studies on the function, legal and ecclesiastical status and use of chapels in medieval Scotland, Norway and England. The conference aims to bring together some of the leading experts on chapels and medieval religious practices from the British Isles and Scandinavia in

order to discuss what was a medieval chapel. The papers will range from the archaeology of early medieval chapels, the function and role of later medieval chapels and the legal status of chapels.

If you wish to attend the conference, please contact Dr Sarah Thomas at s.thomas@abdn.ac.uk by 7 June 2013 to confirm attendance.

Archaeology Scotland - Time Tour - 29 June 10.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Tour the length and breadth of East Lothian in the comfort of luxury bus and travelling back through 10,000 years on this all-day excursion organised by Archaeology Scotland. Our on-board guide, David Connolly, will be describing the sites and giving insight into the lives of our ancestors as we visit heritage ranging from Scotland's oldest house to hillforts and standing stones; remnants of Roman occupation and Early Christian saints; sites famed from turbulent medieval times and witch hunts through to the enlightenment and farming improvements right up to World War II defence structures. AS members £25, non-members £28. For reservations e-mail development@archaeologyscotland.org.uk or call 0845 872 3333. Please bring your own lunch and refreshments.

Plantations Amidst Savagery? 9 July to 12 July 2013 - Stirling University

In 1113, David, youngest son of St Margaret of Scotland, founded a colony from St Bernard of Abbeville's abbey of Thiron-Gardais at Selkirk in the Scottish Borders. This community was the first of any of the reformed Benedictine or Augustinian monastic orders to be founded in the British Isles. To celebrate the 900th anniversary of this event, the University of Stirling, supported by Historic Scotland, is hosting a multi-disciplinary conference (9-12 July 2013) which will bring together scholars from across Europe and North America to explore the monastic impact on the culture and society of northern Europe from the 12th to 16th centuries and its modern legacies. For more information and to register for the conference please visit <http://plantationsamidstsavagery.wordpress.com>

Flodden Illustrated Book Lecture 31 August at 7pm - Linlithgow Palace

For further information please contact - hospitality2u@talk21.com

Scotland's Community Heritage Conference 9 November 2013

Birnam Arts and Conference Centre, Birnam, Perthshire. You can book online at

<https://archaeologyscotland.workwithus.org/Booking/Event.aspx?id=106769> (members)

<https://archaeologyscotland.workwithus.org/Booking/Event.aspx?id=106766> (non-members)

Essential Web Sites

Historic Scotland and RCAHMS

Sign up for their must-have joint News Letter at www.historic-scotland.gov.uk or www.rcahms.gov.uk

Archaeology Scotland

The fully comprehensive what's on and where guide is available from volunteer@archaeologyscotland.org.uk.

Miscellaneous

Castles in Spain anyone?

This quite charming e-mail came to our chairman, quite unsolicited, and it deserves repeating in full.

Dear friend, knowing the activities of your Association, refer it information of the course of Archaeology's field which we will celebrate in Castelflorite, in Spain, in a Medieval and Iron Age archaeological site, which I pray we help to its disclosure.

The field school is aimed at students or graduates of archaeology who wish to gain hands-on experience in the archaeological excavation. There will be complementary activities and lab classes, although the major component of the course is fieldwork, with students spending an average of 7-8 hours per day on site. The focus of the fieldwork will be on excavation techniques and documentation methods. The archaeological site where we will work contains remains of medieval and iron age. It is a highly representative and spectacular set.

Session Dates:

Session 1.- 1 to 14 july.,

Session 2.- 17 to 31 july.,

Session 3.- 5 to 18 Aug.,

Session 4.- 19 to 31 Aug.

Accommodation: Board and accommodation will be provided. All necessary facilities are provided and it is located a short walk from the site.

Cost: The cost per session (14 days) is 850 €. This includes board and accommodation, tuition, lectures and transport from Zaragoza / Huesca to Castelflorite.

Zaragoza is a city of one million inhabitants, is well connected by train and airport.

Application deadline: Until all spaces are filled.

It would be a pleasure to offer a 10% discount to all attendees who register from your organization.

Also a 10% discount if you register in more than one course, and finally a 10% total discount for registrations for groups of at least four students.

Please do not hesitate to let know me any questions or doubts that you consider appropriate. In case you are interested in participating please me tell you as soon as possible, explaining those aspects of the excavation where you would like to participate or influence with greater intensity.

Kind regards

Hugo Chauton hchauton@proesza.com

If anyone goes, send us a postcard!

Until the next issue, enjoy your archaeology!