

EDINBURGH ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SOCIETY

Scottish Charity No. SC006520

News

Issue 203 – Autumn 2015



Members are reminded that, unless membership fees are paid by 30 September, the membership concerned will be deemed to have lapsed.

Society News

Robin Callander

The Society was sorry to learn of the death on 29th June of Robin Callander, a former member of EAFS and Chairman for 1976/77. He was active in the Society's early excavations at Cramond and helped to record a number of the sites. He is seen here (centre) during excavation of the Roman road site in 1979.

When the Midlothian Field Group was formed in 1980 he was an enthusiastic participant along with other EAFS society members contributing to the Archaeological Sites and Monuments of Scotland Midlothian Catalogue published in 1988. He continued his field walking interest and completed the University of Glasgow Certificate in Field Archaeology following which he continued his work identifying and recording an extensive variety of previously unknown sites around Edinburgh, Glasgow and the Borders as a member of ACFA and NAG.

He excavated with Geoff Bailey in the 1990s at the Antonine Wall at Callendar Park, the Scout Hut (Falkirk Fort) and Thane's Hall; he did the planning at Carriden Saw Mill. He also dug with Lawrence Keppie at Castlecary and at Bearsden. Geoff also claims that Robin was the originator of "This is not getting baby blue shoes", the rallying call to return to work after tea break.



Field Activity Updates

Saline Old Grave Yard

Following on from the report in the last Newsletter (Issue 202) about the Society's investigations at Saline Old Grave Yard it remains to report a local event which took place on 27th June, 2015. Saline had an open day to celebrate the restoration of the old grave yard, a task which had taken the Saline and District Heritage Society about 4 years to complete - clearing the site, recording the old stones, setting up some fallen stones, researching the history and erecting a few informative notice boards for visitors. EAFS were thanked for their work in helping to understand the layout of the old graveyard and in particular the location of the old church which was demolished in 1811.

Also, and in conjunction with the opening of the old graveyard, Jean Coker (an American citizen recording and researching early Saline families in particular the Rollands of North Devonside Farm of whom she is a direct relation) and Susan Murray were thanked for their historical researches into family histories and

Susan Murray launched her book: *"The Tyme of Thair Decease Early Wills from Saline Parish c. 1560 - c. 1650."*

Some Small Scottish Islands

Ann Kerrigan has kindly sent in this "postcard" of her recent visit to the Argyll islands.

Raasay A walking holiday there revealed a wealth of history and archaeology of all periods including the chapel of St. Moluag and a Pictish stone in the grounds of the eighteenth century Raasay House, Brochel Castle ancestral home of the MacLeods of Raasay and Dun Borodale, an iron age broch. Perhaps most surprising was the later industrialisation. The island also has literary connections. Boswell and Johnson on their tour of the Hebrides spent several days in Raasay House, rebuilt in 1773 following its devastation by government troops in the aftermath of Culloden. They were very impressed with the island, climbed the



Brochel Castle

highest peak Dun Caan and danced a jig at the summit. We decided to follow suit. In the 19th century there was much enforced emigration leaving several deserted townships scattered in the landscape. Perhaps the best known is Hallaig, so eloquently portrayed in the poem by Sorley MacLean. The island changed hands many times and in 1912 it was bought by William Baird & Co to develop the iron resources. The village of Inverarish was built to house the miners. This industry closed down shortly after WW1 but the remains are still visible in the landscape. Walks along the line of the railway to the pier and the associated works and then along

the track to the enclosure and ruined houses at Hallaig formed an interesting excursion. Our final trip was along Calum's Road from Brochel Castle to Torran and on by path and causeway to the island of Fladday - an immense undertaking by one man to prevent depopulation. The story is narrated in a book of the same name.

The Slate Islands The following month, crossing the bridge over the Atlantic, I visited the Isle of Seil, Luing and Easdale Island whose slate quarries were developed by the Earl of Breadalbane in the 18th century and remained in operation until the 20th century. Apart from the quarries themselves and associated spoil heaps not much of the infrastructure remains except the quarriers' cottages in the villages of Toberonochy and Cullipool, Ellenabeich and Easdale. Many of the quarries are now flooded. A new use has been found in the stone skimming championships held every autumn.



Beehive cell, Eileach an Niamh



Flooded quarry, Easdale

On our trip to the Garvellachs and the Corrievrechan we passed the island of Belnahua whose slate quarries collapsed during WW1. Its ruined houses stand etched on the skyline, a reminder of a lost industry. The history of all the islands is narrated in the museum on Easdale Island and the heritage centre in Luing. From Cullipool we set sail on a beautiful calm sunny day to visit Eileach an Niamh, an early Christian monastic site with many monuments extant. Of particular interest is the beehive cell similar to those found in Ireland. Further information on all sites mentioned can be found on the RCAHMS website.

Excavations at Clyde Cottage, The Pleasance, Falkirk 2015

Excavations are into their second week at the return to Clyde Cottage after the successful 2014 dig.

A further four trenches have been opened to reveal part of a Roman annex ditch and rampart, two sections of cobbled Roman road surface and a possible post hole. Finds have been very good and full details will be available later when Geoff has published his report.



Excavations at Dreghorn WWI Practice Trenches



EAFS members assisted AOC Archaeology Group in a community excavation of the WWI practice trenches in Dreghorn Woods, adjacent to the Barracks over two weekends in June. The trenches, in an area to the North of the Bonaly Burn of around 250m in length were very well preserved, with remains of dug-outs, communication trenches and front-line trenches clearly visible. Two of the larger trenches were fully excavated and a section of an upcast mound was completed. Unfortunately a nearby dug out could not be excavated due to the presence of asbestos from a fallen roof covering.

Other Activities and Opportunities

Cambuskenneth Harbour Dig: Abbots, Kings and Lost Harbours: 7th to 18th September

If you are interested in joining Murray and help uncover Cambuskenneth's lost medieval harbour used by Kings and Abbots please note that booking is essential. For more details and to book a place contact Murray Cook cookm@stirling.gov.uk

Inner Forth Landscape September 2015

The Inner Forth Landscape Initiative (IFLI) is a four-year project, running from 2014 - 2018, supported by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund. The vision is of an Inner Forth where local people and visitors alike value, protect and celebrate this unique landscape at the heart of Scotland.

Events are held daily throughout September. Full details and booking form are at www.innerforthlandscape.co.uk/eventscal

Newhailes

Volunteers would be welcomed at the NTS excavation which is exploring the former flower garden at Newhailes House. Much of the layout of the garden has been revealed so far. Work is being done on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 10am to 12 noon. Future excavation may take place in other parts of the grounds. Help would also be welcomed with cleaning the finds from the current excavation. Once the excavation of the flower garden is complete there are plans to reinstate the paths and flower beds and then to carry out replanting.



For offers of assistance and for more information please contact Emily Sanderson, Outreach Ranger for the National Trust for Scotland, at ESanderson@nts.org.uk or 07860 925 398.

Excavations at Moncreiff Hill, Moredun, 1 – 26 September 2015

If you are interested in taking part in the first archaeological excavation at Moredun Top, one of the most prominent hillforts in the area and an ancient seat of power which may have been occupied over the 1st Millennium BC to the 1st Millennium AD then please contact Andrea on AHudspeth@pkc.gov.uk / 01738 477088.

Other Publications, Events & Exhibitions

Scotland's Urban Past: Discover Hidden Stories of Everyday Places!

Go to sup@rcahms.gov.uk to obtain the RCAHMS handout for more information or read the article in the summer edition (Issue 23) of Archaeology Scotland's magazine (the latter magazine is available to AS members only).

Scottish archaeology & heritage festival (formerly Scottish Archaeology Month)

The Cramond event, hosted jointly by the Society and Cramond Heritage Trust, will be held on Friday 26 and Saturday 27 September from 11am till 5pm at the Maltings, Cramond Village. There will be an ancient technology workshop, guided walks at 2pm to the former iron mills along the River Almond and also around Historic Cramond.

East Lothian Archaeology & Local History Fortnight 29 August – 14 September 2015

This fortnight is part of the Scottish Archaeology and Heritage Festival and details of the events specifically held in East Lothian are now available at www.eastlothian.gov.uk/archaeology

Cramond Roman Fort: 60 years of excavation and research: **Saturday 3 October 2015** Teviot Lecture Theatre School of History, Classics & Archaeology, University of Edinburgh. Bookings at Tel: 0131 529 3952, or email: mairi.marshall@edinburgh.gov.uk

Edinburgh, Lothian and Borders Archaeology Conference: Saturday 21 November 2015, Queen Margaret University, Musselburgh. Bookings at tel: 01629 827408 or email bookings@eastlothian.gov.uk

Other Links

Archaeology Scotland's "Out and About" list of events can be accessed at www.archaeologyscotland.org.uk

The next Newsletter will be issued at the end of October 2015. All Contributions welcomed.

Until then, enjoy your archaeology!

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(Opinions expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Society, its Committee and Members, or the Editor).