

EDINBURGH ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SOCIETY

Scottish Charity No. SC006520

News

Issue 220 – Autumn 2023



Cammo House canal

SCOTTISH ARCHAEOLOGY MONTH

On the 4th of September, we opened our research at Cammo Estate to a wider audience, participating alongside communities across Scotland to celebrate Scottish Archaeology Month (SAM). The ethos behind SAM encompasses bringing people together to explore their local and national archaeology, history, and heritage. It's a mission that values accessibility for all, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to delve into the rich history of our past.

The day was marked by three comprehensive tours of the estate, led by Nora Carlin, Michael Harris, and Maggie Wilson. These tours showcased the historical and cultural significance of the estate and welcomed a diverse group of participants, including EAFS members, locals, international visitors, students from various universities, and U3A members. Joyce Herriot welcomed visitors and showcased key finds from previous excavations at Cammo. The excavation at the Walled Garden continued with an open invitation to the wider public throughout the day, where Deborah Russell, Norma Johnstone, and Doris Koeck worked alongside volunteers to uncover the 19th-century features of the site. We were also honoured to welcome two representatives from the Dig It! team, who added enthusiasm to our event and generously shared their photos with us.

Our Open Day at Cammo was a resounding success in celebrating Scottish Archaeology Month, and we eagerly anticipate our next Open Day on Sunday, October 22nd 2023. **Doris Koeck**

CAMMO PROJECT UPDATE - AUTUMN 2023

Our second Open Day on the 22nd October was another useful way to get our Society to public attention.

Two walks were taken by Ann Kerrigan and by Norah Carlin with Christine McPherson. The stand at the Lodge with finds and information was well attended and the sun shone. Thanks to all the members who supported our Open Day and made it a success.

On the excavation front another slate tank has been found in the East half of the Glasshouse site. The tanks are set out at regular intervals over the length of the Glasshouse in order that water was available to the gardeners where and when they needed it.

A new site has been set up to the West of the 'Gardener's Bothy'. On the 1895 plan it is shown as slightly longer than the Bothy and glass roofed (shown by the crosshatching on the plan).

So far, with help from the enthusiastic University of Edinburgh ArchSoc members, we have uncovered a central slabbed pathway West/East leading to a more disturbed pathway at the East end leading to the doorway into the Garden.



Gardener's bothy, Cammo

Some Comments on Glasshouses

The glasshouse in the walled garden had two distinct phases. There are the remains of two furnaces/boiler houses behind the north wall. This was a hot wall and the south facing side is brick built with wall plaster still in place. From documentary evidence we know that there was a glasshouse extending to 100 feet built in the late eighteenth century by Charles Watson. At some point in the latter quarter of the nineteenth century, this was replaced by a glasshouse built by Mackenzie and Moncur, an Edinburgh manufacturer of glasshouses, conservatories etc. established 1769 according to their web site. The company based at Slateford Road and Balcarres Street, Edinburgh produced glasshouses for the great and good throughout the British Isles including at Windsor Castle and Sandringham. Mackenzie and Moncur produced a catalogue naming their patrons and using this information Norma, Colin & I decided to investigate similar structures surrounding Edinburgh.

. We visited gardens at Malleny and Falkland Palace where NTS were renovating the glasshouses. We also visited Tynninghame, Portmore and Kailzie Gardens and through discussions with the gardeners more information was gleaned. Many of the glasshouses had several divisions along their length.

During the excavation of the glasshouse large quantities of metal work, pipes and slate boxes had been found and we wished to discover their function.

At Portmore and Kailzie the walkway through the middle of the glasshouses comprised a grating below which pipes ran. Gratings were also used for staging at Kailzie. A small piece of grating has been found Cammo.



The handles used to open the windows of the glasshouses at the sites visited are of similar type to one found at Cammo.



At Portmore a single slate box remains in the glasshouse from the six that were originally there. This is similar in size to the ones that are at Cammo.

More research is necessary to understand the glasshouses of both periods. It is thought that the later one was built for Alexander Campbell, brewer, who acquired Cammo in 1873 as he is mentioned in the list of patrons of MacKenzie and Moncur.

Ann Kerrigan

NTS CULLODEN EXCAVATIONS 2023

A couple of EAFS members were lucky enough to volunteer for a return visit to Culloden Battlefield to take part in a weeks excavation, metal detecting and public open day.

After the severe flooding of the end of the week before, it was a relief to find the roads passable and the soil reasonably workable. The swimming pool trenches from the first day soon drained and for most of the week the sun shone.

A series of one metre test pits were dug every ten metres across a grid at about the point believed to be the end of the left flank of the Government front line. If the plans were correct we should have been near where Barrell's Kings Own (4th) Regiment took the onslaught from the Jacobite charge.

Previous work in 2021 and 2022 had investigated 'the field of the English' where the second line of the Government troops had been stationed. A few artifacts were found including musket balls.

The majority of trenches offered little in the way of artefacts. Trench 1 gave up a musket ball and a piece of worked flint. A number of trenches held worked flint and two near the centre of the grid (trench 14 and one other) were more interesting. Not showing evidence of the battle but of much earlier use of the site. Both showed large stones deposited and evidence of burning.

Trench 14 which I excavated was found when the original excavator noticed a small depression with charcoal lining in the corner of the one metre test pit. I made three extensions to the pit to chase the feature. It was eventually shown to be a pit dug into the glacial soil lines with stones and showing obvious signs of burning. A small worked flint was found in conjunction with the feature.

I half sectioned the feature and took samples from the base layer. The feature was drawn and photographed and then we had to fill the test pit in again as it was time to leave. In many ways it was good to leave as the last day had been freezing cold with hail showers – not the best weather for drawing plans.

We await the results of the samples with hope for a date but the signs seem to indicate a Neolithic oven, kiln or (less likely) hearth. The many followers of the Culloden Battlefield, NTS Facebook page were very sure that this was what we had found. It excited much interest and interaction.

On the original object of the exercise, mostly through metal detecting, musket balls, grape shot, buckles and canisters were found. Many visitors came and asked questions a few joined the excavation briefly. Two groups of servicemen and women came for a day and learnt a bit about the techniques used. Most were enthusiastic – especially about the metal detecting...

Looking forward to a return visit next year. **Christine McPherson**



Aerial view showing proposed location for test and 2022

La Hougue Bie JERSEY



This passage tomb has given its name to an archaeological museum in the centre of Jersey.

A 12 metre high mound covers an immense tomb, the passage of which at 9.7 metres long leads to a central chamber with 3 side chambers. The construction is of large slabs with some infilling with dry stone walling. Of particular interest is the fact that the rising sun at the spring and autumn equinox

lights up the passage and the chamber. Compare this to the effects of the sun at Maeshowe and Newgrange in Ireland. The mound is capped with a small twelfth century church which was expanded in the sixteenth century, then in the eighteenth century these religious buildings were converted into a tower which was demolished in 1924. During the occupation of the Channel Islands the Germans inserted a command bunker into the mound which now serves as a museum of the slave labour employed between 1940-1945 on the island. Also at this site is an exhibition of La Cotillon II Hoard of 70,000 silver Celtic coins and some Irish style gold torcs. More information is available online.

Ann Kerrigan

NEOLITHIC STUDIES GROUP SPRING MEETING

ISLE OF ARRAN 8-11 MAY 2023

In May, a group of about thirty academics, professional archaeologists and other Neolithic enthusiasts gathered on Arran for an intensive study of the island's extensive Neolithic traces, under the guidance of Kenny Brophy (Head of Archaeology, University of Glasgow), Dr Gavin MacGregor (Director, Archaeology Scotland) and Angela Gannon (Historic Environment Scotland).

There is an island off the coast of Scotland which contains some of the most spectacular standing stones in northern Europe, a fine collection of megalithic tombs and rich evidence for farming going back almost 6,000 years. It is the source of one of the most magical materials of prehistoric Britain and, for the past few years, it has even had its own fire festival. But this island is not in Orkney, Shetland or any of the Hebrides (Brophy and MacGregor 2018).

The 18 megalithic chambered tombs (inventoried by Audrey Henshall) are one of the defining monument types on the island, conspicuously distributed only around the south of the island - the cultivable part - and used by Renfrew to suggest the Neolithic farming society was split into tribal territories (Renfrew 1973). The group's tour included Auchgallon and other cairns on Machrie Moor, Tormore chambered cairn, the 'Giant's Graves' chambered cairns at Whiting Bay, a Clyde-type cairn at Torrylinn and a possible 'collapsed dolmen' behind the golf course at Shiskine (a lively discussion ensued at the latter between those who thought it was and those who were more sceptical!). The ruinous chamber at Torrylin, at the southern end of Arran, aligns out to sea to the island of Ailsa Craig, while the north of Ireland can be discerned on the horizon in another direction - it is a spectacular setting for a monument. The bones of several humans, both adults and children, were excavated by Thomas Bryce in 1900. More recently, radiocarbon dates were obtained from two skull fragments which came out with exactly the same result - 3650 to 3380 cal BC.

The remarkable landscape of Machrie Moor was a major element of the second day's itinerary, with at least six stone circles in a roughly east-west line across the moorland and the iconic sandstone monoliths of Machrie Moor 2. However, the Neolithic and Bronze Age landscape also includes cairns, cists, roundhouses, field boundaries and clearance cairns across a raised island in what was a waterlogged Shiskine valley in prehistory. Complex timber settings that preceded Machrie Moor 1 and 11 were excavated by Burl in the 1980s and then Haggerty (1991) - concentric rings of timber posts and a u-shaped 'cove' central setting - and connect this site to timber monument traditions in lowland mainland Scotland and beyond.

In 2018 a possible cursus monument was identified during HES lidar survey at Drumadoon on the west coast of Arran. Two seasons of follow-up excavation and a geophysical survey have confirmed its potential, with the latter identifying possible pits or postholes which suggest a preceding timber version of the cursus may have existed. We were fortunate when visiting the southern end (and possible terminal) of the 'cursus' that felling of the forestry in this location had made visual identification of various features possible, such as stretches of the banks and possible internal divisions. The fieldwork project is continuing, including a programme of environmental sampling. If confirmed, Drumadoon would be the first cursus identified on an island.

On the final day, the meeting closed at the Heritage Museum, Brodick, where we were fortunate to be able to examine the Neolithic artefacts not on display to the public but first the group visited the nearby Stronach cup-and-ring marked stone, originally documented by Somerville (1901, 315). This is

one of only seven recorded rock art sites on Arran (recorded by Scotland's Rock Art Project) and by far the most elaborate. (The group had visited the King's Caves earlier in the week, a location famous for its wide range of wall carvings dating back to the Iron Age, but there is no evidence as yet of Neolithic use). The impressive motifs on the large Stronach sandstone panel are unusual, having several cup-and-ring marks with gutters running down the slope of the outcrop ('keyhole' motifs) as well as other cups-and-rings and cupmarks. Dr Neil Carlin (Assistant Professor, University College, Dublin) commented on the similarity between the keyhole designs and some motifs in Irish rock art, another reminder of the proximity of that country to Arran, the latter's important position socially and economically throughout prehistory between Ireland and mainland Scotland and its key location in the Clyde estuary.

Referring back to Brophy and MacGregor's 'campaign' to rebrand Arran as *the* prehistoric island, this meeting certainly gave the participants a deeper understanding that, if not *the* prehistoric island, Arran is certainly one of the most significant Neolithic centres in Britain.

Deborah Russell, with acknowledgement to Kenny Brophy.



Machrie Moor - sandstone monolith



The group at the Giant's Graves



Two different areas of keyhole cup-and-ring motifs at Stronach rock art site

CRAMOND MESOLITHIC REPORT

Scottish Archaeological Internet Report (SAIR) 103 (2023)

A TIME OF CHANGE: MESOLITHIC OCCUPATION AT CRAMOND, EDINBURGH, DURING THE 9TH MILLENNIUM BC

The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland recently published the above report as, by Lawson, J A, Saville, A & Engl, R.

The EAFS excavations at Cramond led to the identification of the Mesolithic site. The Society had been requested by the City of Edinburgh Council's Archaeology Service (CECAS), to excavate a series of trenches running in a northerly direction from the north rampart of Cramond Roman Fort towards its Bath House. These were hand-excavated between 1988 and 2001 under the direction Val Dean.

Former member, the late Charlie Hoy, had first drawn attention to the presence of such lithics at Cramond and it was in 1993 and 1994 that two of the above trenches revealed a scatter of microliths and fragments of carbonised hazelnut shells. As specialist excavation of such deposits was required, this was carried out by CECAS and EAFS.

Radiocarbon AMS dates obtained from the shell samples showed that Cramond was occupied around the middle of the 9th millennium bc (8630-8210 cal bc, making it the earliest dates for a Mesolithic presence in Scotland. Examination of the narrow-blade microlithic assemblage by Alan Saville, in association with these radiocarbon dates, potentially makes this the earliest location in Britain of such technology.

OTHER REPORTS AND RESEARCH

While working as a Volunteer/Research Associate at National Museums Scotland, Val was responsible for the production of reports on Scottish Medieval ceramics held in the Museum. Several of these have been published by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. Other reports have been included in various excavation reports such as those on The Hirsell at Coldstream, Finlaggan on Islay, Traprain Law and the Throsk Pottery Industry

SILLER HOLES, WEST LINTON: A MEDIEVAL LEAD-MINING SITE

SAIR 81 (2019)

Author: Valerie E Dean

Contributors: Carol Christiansen, Thea Gabra-Sanders, Anita Quye, Clare Thomas and Maureen Young

Lead ore (galena) had been extracted from the site of Siller Holes, West Linton (NGR: NT 145 533), from medieval times if not earlier; there, according to tradition, silver was refined from the lead. While the pond at the foot of Lead Law was being dug out, large quantities of textiles, leather and pottery were recovered. These could be dated to the 12th to 14th centuries, making this an important site. Lead, slag and ore were also present. Former member, the late Thea Gabra-Sanders, had commenced the examination of the textiles but, sadly, was unable to complete it. This task went to Carol Christison in Shetland. As other specialists had already written reports on the leather items and the dye analysis, Val undertook to research the mining operations and to pull the reports together for publication.



Siller Holes - 'Pits and spoil heaps litter the slopes of lead law'

CERAMIC VESSELS ASSOCIATED WITH LATE 13TH- EARLY 18TH-CENTURY COIN HOARDS

Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, 137 (2007), 433-460

Over time, at least 30 ceramic vessels which were associated with coin hoards have been found across

Scotland. In times before the existence of banks, burying money in some sort of container was a common form of security. For a variety of reasons - such as war, plague or death - many were never recovered until disturbed by ploughing many years later.

For those studying medieval ceramics, the deposition date of an associated coin hoard is of particular value by providing a date for the vessel itself. Reports on the coin hoards have been published by our former Honorary President Nicholas Holmes. **Valerie Dean**

OBITUARIES

Dr HUGH DINWOODIE

The Society regrets to announce the passing of Dr. Hugh Dinwoodie on 21st August following a bad fall at home. Hugh joined the Society in 1990 and was Treasurer of EAFS for six years. Hugh took part in all Society activities and was very much involved in the post excavation work for Fast Castle. His wife, Doreen, predeceased him in 2020. He was appointed an honorary member of EAFS in 2022.

An appreciation Hugh's involvement with EAFS and other archaeological activities will appear in the next Newsletter with contributions from his associates.

ROBIN SCOTT

Robin will possibly be remembered as the extremely tall guy who attended lectures down at the Cine Club in years gone by. Never really a digger, Robin's interests lay in more lofty things such as celestial alignments in association with landscape features. Unfortunately his enthusiasm nearly led to his undoing on St Kilda where he unfortunately slipped on a grassy slope and only just managed to stop at a cliff edge - he had to be rescued by helicopter. Nearer to home, his garden was the site of one of EAFS's earliest Geophysical Surveys.

KATHLEEN DODS

It is with profound regret that we have to inform members of Kathleen's death on Saturday 14th October. We were stunned by the unexpectedness and suddenness of this tragedy.

Kathleen had been Convener of Cramond Heritage Trust since 1992 until earlier this year. She was a staunch supporter of EAFS and our activities. On many occasions, CHT joined forces with EAFS to provide activities and walks during Scottish Archaeology Month. Along with husband John they were responsible for the ideas and presentation of exhibitions at The Maltings. A regular churchgoer, she served as an Elder for many years.

ESTHER DAVIDSON

A member of the Society who was strongly supportive of the work at Cammo who died suddenly. The funeral in September was attended by members of EAFS.

COMING EVENTS

Scottish Local History Forum

AGM, Monday 30th October 2023

Contact to attend - <https://www.slhf.org/event/2023-slhf-agm-zoom-online>

TAFAC annual conference 'Recent Archaeological work in Tayside and Fife',
Saturday 4th November 2023 at University of Dundee and on ZOOM. Booking required!

First Millennia Studies Group, FMSG.

Tuesday 7th November 2023 at University of Edinburgh

"Dress Fasteners from the Iron Age to the Viking Age"

'Cultural Interactions and Identities'

Forth Naturalist and Historian

Saturday 11th November 2023 at Stirling University

"Aspects of Extractive Industries - History, Impact and Recovery"

Edinburgh, Lothians and Borders Archaeology Conference

Saturday 18th November 2023 at Queen Margaret University, Musselburgh

EAFS lectures for 2023 and 2024

Held at

The Augustine United Church, George IV bridge, Edinburgh

Dr. Alison Sheridan NMS	Supernatural power dressing In prehistoric Scotland	Wednesday 1st November
Society Members	2023 project update and social evening	Wednesday 13th December
John Lawson	TBD	Wednesday 10th January
Derek Alexander	Pioneering Spirit (Whisky)	Wednesday 7th February
Committee	AGM	Wednesday 6th March
TBD	TBD	Wednesday 10th April
TBD	TBD	Wednesday 8th May
Cath Payne	TBD	Wednesday 9th October
Tony Pollard	TBD	Wednesday 13th November
Geoff Bailey	TBD	Wednesday 11th December

This Newsletter was compiled by Alan Calder, member of the EAFS Committee, with contributions from all Committee Members.

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

Next Newsletter will be issued later this year. All Contributions welcomed.

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