



TAYSIDE & FIFE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
COMMITTEE
RSCOA

Newsletter of the

Tayside and Fife Archaeological
Committee

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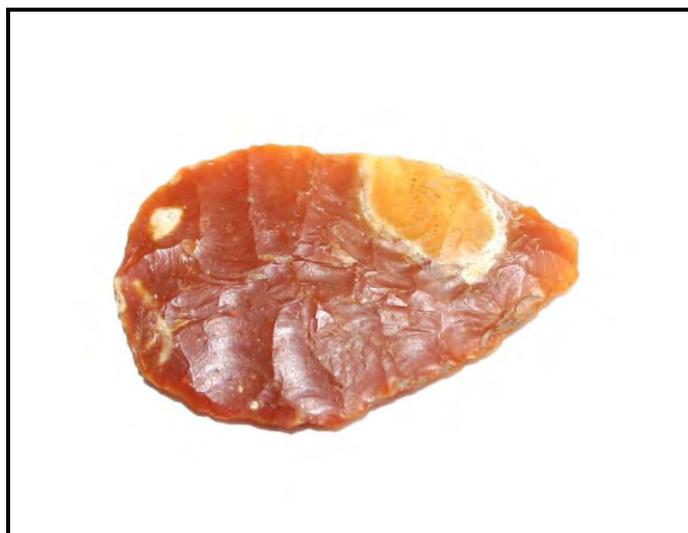
Angus Fieldwalking

This year's fieldwalking programme in Kinnettles parish had a belated start after the planned walk for Sunday 28 February was cancelled because of poor underfoot conditions and the threat of further bad weather. The first walk, therefore, did not take place until Sunday 14 March, when about 18 people walked an area of 18,000 square metres in a field a little to the east of Douglastown. The weather was cool, dry and sunny. The field had been ploughed last autumn, so the weathering of the surface allowed for the finding of lots of artefacts. Most of these were modern finds (china, glass, bone, metal, etc), but there were also sherds of medieval pottery (red fabric) and thirty-two flints.

Most of the flints represent debitage – the waste material from the production of artefacts -- and the wide variety of colours and the presence of cortex strongly suggests that the source of the flint was beach pebbles – probably from the Angus shore in the vicinity of Arbroath. This is entirely in keeping with the results of all the previous fieldwalks.

One artefact that is especially fine is a bifacial leaf-shaped point, probably an arrowhead, which dates to the Neolithic period. Unlike the debitage, which

provides evidence of early prehistoric (Neolithic and/or bronze age) settlement in the immediate vicinity, the point (illustrated below) could have been made some distance away and simply lost at Douglastown.



Leaf-shaped point from Douglastown, Angus.
Length 24mm.

Conference 2010

This year's TAFAC annual conference will take place on Saturday 6th November in St Andrews, probably at the same North Haugh venue as last time, but this has yet to be confirmed. Confirmed speakers so far include Gordon Barclay, who will be talking about his work on the Second World War stop-line defences in Fife and Perthshire.

After her introductory talk on 18th century bridges, Lindsay Farquharson from the Perth & Kinross heritage Trust will provide us with an update on the work of the project this year.



EXHIBITION NEWS FROM PERTH MUSEUM

21 January 2010 saw the formal opening, by Scotland's Minister of Culture Fiona Hyslop, of Perth Museum & Art Gallery's new archaeological exhibition, *Skin & Bone: Life & Death in Medieval Perth*. The exhibition is part of Perth's celebratory year, 'Perth 800', marking the 800th anniversary of the charter granted by King William, the 'Lion', and confirming the town's royal burgh status.

The exhibition charts the archaeology and history of the town from the 11th to the 16th century. The *Life* gallery of the exhibition displays a wide array of material culture under the themes: Origins, Castle & Defences, Port of Trade, Streets & Vennels, Buildings & Rigs, Master Craftsmen, Everyday Pleasures & Pains, Religion and Food & Drink. The gallery is rounded-off with a look at the history of excavation in the town, including archive footage of the Perth High Street excavation 1975-77.

The majority of the items on display have been recovered from excavations in Perth over the past 40 years, including Perth High Street, Meal Vennel (1983) and Horsecross (2003). But there are also significant loan items on display including the Guildry or Lockit Book (courtesy of the Guildry Incorporation of Perth), the Perth Psalter and the Perth Hammermen Book (both courtesy of the National Library of Scotland), the Perth Hammermen's offering box (courtesy of St John's Kirk), a 14th century copy of the 1210 charter (courtesy of Perth & Kinross Council Archive) and several religious artefacts (courtesy of National Museums Scotland). The *Death* gallery airs the theme of people and pets through a display of the skeletal materials of several individuals (children, men – including a murder victim – and a woman) and several fighting, working and pet dogs. This is a rich, colourful exhibition for young and old. Both can try their hand at dressing up or playing a medieval game when they have exhausted looking at the fascinating array of objects.

The exhibition runs until 29 December 2010 and the Museum is open Monday to Saturday 10am – 5pm, admission free

Skin & Bone Events

To coincide with the *Skin & Bone: Life and Death in Medieval Perth* the following free events will be taking place in and around Perth Museum & Art Gallery.

Friday 25 June, 2.00 - 5.00pm: *Medieval Monasteries of Perth.*

For Perthshire Archaeology Month Mark Hall will lead a guided-walk around the sites of Perth's former monasteries. Booking essential please contact Mark Hall, 01738 783414.

Monday 21 June, 2.00 - 4.00pm: *Medieval Perth.*

A guided walk of medieval Perth to coincide with Perthshire Archaeology Month. Booking essential please contact Mark Hall, 01738 783414.

Saturday 26 June, 1.30 - 3.30pm: *A Medieval Fun-day*

---with the 'Fire and Sword' re-enactment group, on the forecourt between the Museum and the Concert Hall and in the Museum. For further details please contact Barbara Hamilton 01738 632488.

Friday 30 July, 1.30 - 3.30pm: *Medieval Games and Crafts.*

A medieval fun-day at Perth Museum. For further details please contact Barbara Hamilton 01738 632488.

Saturday 21 August: A Workshop on NLS Manuscripts: A Closer Look at The Perth Psalter and The Perth Hammermen Book.

Led by NLS staff Olive Geddes and Kenneth Dunn. The workshop will take place at 10.30 - 12.00 noon & 2.30 - 4.30pm. Places are limited and booking is essential, please contact Mark Hall 01738 783414.

Saturday 2 October, 10.30am- 12.30pm: *Medieval Music and Dance.*

Peter and Jan Bull will lead a workshop and demonstration of medieval music and dance. Free admission but booking essential, please contact Mark Hall 01738 783414.

Free Lectures

The following programme of talks on weekday afternoons (free admission) will run between June and October 2010 at Perth Museum & Art Gallery. Their purpose is to introduce the audience to several different aspects of the archaeological evidence for medieval Perth, pitched at an accessible level by acknowledged experts.

1 June 2010, 2.30–3.15 pm Derek Hall: *An Introduction to the Medieval Archaeology of Perth: Excavating the town.*

Abstract: Perth's archaeology is fantastically well preserved, what can it tell us about daily life in a Scottish medieval burgh?

2 June 2010, 2.30 - 3.15pm Derek Hall: *An Introduction to the Medieval Archaeology of Perth: the Pottery*

Abstract: Ceramics are able to give us a feel for the cosmopolitan nature of medieval Perth. This talk will discuss what analysis of the material can tell us about its date, origin and use.

--- Derek Hall is an archaeologist with 34 years experience. Formerly employed by SUAT Ltd, he is now an independent contractor.

3 June 2010, 2.30 – 3.15pm
Julie Roberts: *An Introduction to the Medieval Archaeology of Perth: the Human Remains*

Abstract: The human remains from St John's Church and Horse Cross provide us with a snapshot of society in medieval Perth. The collections were equally fascinating but very different in character, and Julie will discuss what this could mean in terms of who they were, their lifestyles and health status.

--- Julie Roberts is a forensic anthropologist and archaeologist employed by LGC Forensics. She has around 15 years experience in the excavation and analysis of human skeletal remains and prior to joining LGC she worked at GUARD.

4 June 2010, 2.30–3.15 pm
Catherine Smith: *An Introduction to the Medieval Archaeology of Perth: the Animal Bones*

Abstract: The dirt and smells of the medieval middens are evoked as Catherine describes some of their skeletal contents, and how they help in understanding the livestock, environment and economy of the medieval town.

--- Catherine Smith has been studying Scottish animal remains for many years. She has a strong interest in the role of dogs, cats and horses (alive and dead), and the attitudes of their owners in the medieval town.

7 June 2010, 2.30–3.15 pm
Mark A Hall: *An Introduction to the Medieval Archaeology of Perth: the Objects*

Abstract: An overview of Perth's story as seen through the huge array and variety of objects recovered by excavation in the town

--- Mark Hall, has direct responsibility for the care and study of these objects in his role as History Officer at Perth Museum.

7 July 2010, 2.30-3.15
Hilary Murray: *An Introduction to the Medieval Archaeology of Perth: the Buildings*

Abstract: The exceptional survival of wood on many Perth excavations gives a rare chance to look at medieval buildings.

--- Hilary Murray is a field archaeologist with a lifelong interest in excavated timber buildings and their reconstruction.

4 August 2010, 2.30-3.15pm
Alison Cameron: *An Introduction to the Medieval Archaeology of Perth: Aberdeen, a comparative case-study*

Abstract: Aberdeen, like Perth, has fantastic waterlogged deposits as well as local and imported objects. This talk will bring a view from this northern burgh.

--- Alison Cameron was Assistant Archaeologist for Aberdeen City Council for 24 years and now owns and runs Cameron Archaeology.

19 October 2010, 1.00 – 1.45pm
Mark A Hall: *An Introduction to the Medieval Archaeology of Perth: medieval games*

Abstract: Amongst the exciting objects excavated in Perth are several pieces of board game equipment. This talk briefly looks at the range of games played in medieval Perth and further afield.

--- Mark Hall has made a special study of medieval board games and looks after the Perth examples in his role as History Officer at Perth Museum.

Church Heritage

Scottish Church Heritage Research (SCHR) is celebrating its tenth anniversary in 2010 and this note offers members of TAFAC a summary of our activities. SCHR was set up following the disbandment of the CSA Churches Committee, with one principal aim --- the completion of the Inventory of Scottish Church Heritage - to which many of you contributed information. Other aims include organising conferences, training sessions, tours, talks, promoting interest in the archaeology of the early church, in churches archaeology and history in general.

Derek Hall, Chairman of the former Churches Committee, became Secretary of SCHR and Edwina Proudfoot, a former President of CSA, became Chairman. We had many discussions of how to develop the new Charitable Trust before we set up a Committee and were able to begin work. We were fortunate in being given a start-up grant by the Russell Trust, which enabled us to begin planning our role.

Our first activity was a Training Day, in Falkirk, which attracted 25 participants. Many of them are still assisting with the Falkirk Historical Society, compiling a record of churches there and this will feed into the website in time. Our second Training Day, in Aberfeldy, was also successful, but in a different way. Only a small group attended as there was a fund-raising event in the church. However, when we went out for a training session, we found a 'tin' church - Aberfeldy Catholic Church, looking very sad. It had been closed and was to be demolished in order to build a new church. At first we were informed it was not Listed, but later found it was A-Listed. Negotiations took place and eventually the dismantled church was taken by a local farmer, who was willing to store it. Although we photographed the exterior, at that time we had not begun to think of the importance of interiors. However, two local members were able to take a small number of interior images before the building was totally demolished.

Our first Conferences were held in Stirling and Perth, but have been in Edinburgh recently; several joint events have been held with like-minded groups, such as the Scottish Stained Glass Symposium and the Society for Church Archaeology, whose members are mainly from England and Wales. The early meetings were combined with a study session, for example - Holy Rood in Stirling and the Episcopal Cathedral in Perth.

The Inventory was renamed as a gazetteer, since that implied illustration as well as short descriptions and it soon became obvious that the only way to handle the information was on a web database. We were fortunate that we had an offer to develop this without cost and by the time we were starting the Pilot project in 2007 this was ready to use. We realised that we could not continue to refer to a *Churches* database; we live in a multi-cultural country and there are many religious buildings other than churches and therefore the project was renamed the Places of Worship in Scotland Project - and our journey began.

We were awarded a *Your Heritage* grant by HLF and we also secured additional funding from Leader+. We developed a *pro forma* for recording information and we hired a staff of three, to work with volunteers on a pilot project in Fife, from 2007-08. This was input to the web as the project developed and can be seen on www.scottishchurches.org.uk .

During the Fife project it became clear that, for many reasons, interiors were more under threat than most buildings. Our Fife volunteers have helped to revise the *pro forma* and they designed one for interiors, which they have trialled. Now we are ready to move the rest of Scotland.

This project has been planned to have a mixed team of professionals, with volunteers integral to the programme.

Local people, both from congregations and members of local history societies, and others know a great deal about their local places of worship and we wish to work with all of these. In addition, we have been working recently with unemployed people, who can contribute a great deal from their own experience of other work. Volunteers help with fieldwork, but there are numerous other jobs- cataloguing, inputting, research, newspaper cuttings, processing images, and more.

We will start the next phase of the project in April, with financial support from HS, from Leader Fife, and we have applied to Leader Angus. Results of other applications will not be known for some time, and we are still seeking other funds. We are also seeking more volunteers - so do let us know if you think you can help.

CONFERENCE 2010

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The editor thanks Mark Hall for the information on the Perth Museum exhibition and lecture series and Edwina Proudfoot for the information on Scottish Church Heritage Research

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Beveridge Exhibition

Readers may be interested to learn of a recently opened exhibition at the Andrew Carnegie Museum in Dunfermline, which highlights the work of Erskine Beveridge (1851-1920). Inheriting his father's very successful linen manufacturing business, Beveridge was a highly accomplished photographer who spent much of his time in the late 19th and early 20th centuries taking photographs all over Scotland, including Fife.

Last year saw the publication by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS) of examples of his work in a book entitled *Wanderings with a camera in Scotland*, written by Lesley Ferguson, Head of Collections at RCAHMS.

The images in the book and the exhibition derive from a collection of 750 glass-plate negatives rescued by RCAHMS in the 1960s from a building that was about to be demolished. The exhibition, which includes two examples of glass-plate cameras from 1920, is supported by *Celebrating Fife* and is free-entry. It runs until 3 May 2010.

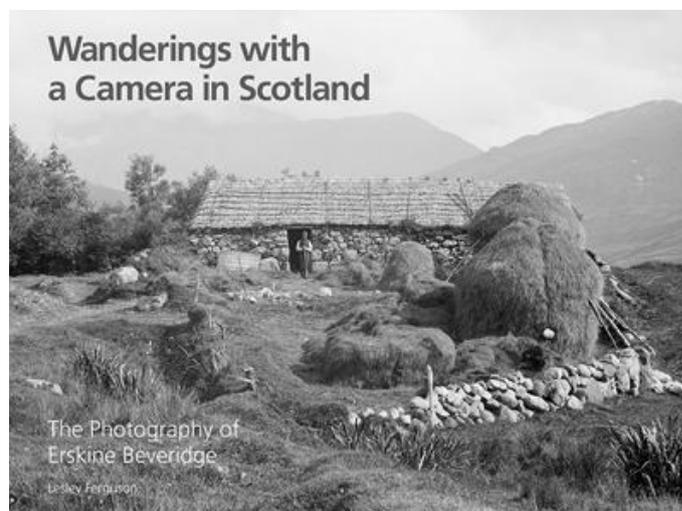


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Wanderings with a Camera in Scotland is available from RCAHMS via BookSource (tel 0845 370 0067 (Mon – Fri, 9am to 5pm) and many leading book retailers. It is a hardback publication containing 170 pages and 170 illustrations.

PRICE £25.00