



PAST

Peebles Archaeological Society Times
April 2011

Annual report 2010-2011

Lecture summaries

In September, as our first speaker of the 2010-2011 session, we were pleased to welcome **Alice Blackwell**, who gave a talk on 'The Glenmorangie Research Project on Early Historic Scotland'. The whisky giant has been supporting a 3-year research project for one full-time post based at the National Museum, looking at the period between AD 300–900 [this sponsorship has just been extended for 3 more years -Ed].

Far from being the Dark Ages, Alice's detective work has helped to confirm that the opposite was the case. She has been taking a closer look at artefacts and carved stones, in some cases literally putting them under the microscope, and challenging long-held beliefs. For example, some carved stones with unexplained tenons on them, were probably screens to be used inside churches, rather than in the open, while the drilled eyeholes of fantastic animals on one cross-shaft were analysed and found to contain a tin sheath which would probably have held glass beads.

Alice has also been working closely with a variety of craftsmen, and having reconstructions made of various artefacts such as a wooden throne and leather book satchels in an effort to better understand how they were made and the problems that were encountered.

Another research strand is to understand the use of silver of the period. Massive silver chains, thought to be neck rings, and the heaviest weighing 3kg, and hoards such as the early Christian one Norries law in Fife, will be subjected to detailed analysis. The main outcome of the project will be a book aimed at a general audience.



Alice Blackwell on the reconstruction of a Pictish throne, made by Borders-based furniture maker Adrian McCurdy © NMS.

In October, our speaker was **Andrew Dutton** of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS) who gave a talk on 'Scotland's Rural Past Project'. 2010 was year four of a five-year project run by RCAHMS and funded by The Heritage Lottery Fund to inspire and encourage local communities to research, record, interpret, and raise awareness of their rural heritage. Over sixty community projects have been registered - all different in nature and many more than originally anticipated.

Many of the projects are now approaching completion. Some of the projects have even been featured on Radio and TV. Remains found near Tobermory on Mull were found to be an Early Christian Chapel and featured as a Time Team episode.

The projects are spread across Scotland, and cover Post-Medieval settlement and landscape up to the time of the agricultural improvements, happily a time-frame within which the archaeological and historical record often meet.

Just as we have found at our own project, the RCAHMS's SRP team of four has supported project participants, whose ages have ranged from teens to 80s, with everything from advice and encouragement to training and the loan of equipment. They have run a series of short courses on skills ranging from basic surveying, and site photography to historical document research.

Our Society project is at Kilrubie, north of Stewarton, Eddleston, where there are the remains of a small farmstead of turf buildings surrounded by different types of enclosure and cultivation remains. More information on this and the Scotland's Rural Past Project as a whole can be found on the RCAHMS website (www.rcahms.gov.uk).

In November, we had our annual joint meeting with the Tweeddale Society. Hosted by them and held in the Eastgate, a full-house heard **Tam Ward** of Biggar Archaeology, in sparkling form, give an enthralling talk on *'The Earliest People in Scotland'*, based on his excavations of an Upper Palaeolithic site at Howburn in South Lanarkshire.

For a short article about the discoveries at Howburn see **Current Archaeology** 243 (June 2010)

In January, our first speaker of the new year, was **Dr Rebecca Jones** of RCAHMS, who gave a talk on *'The Roman Invasions of Scotland'*. Rebecca has particular research interest and expertise in the Roman army in Wales and Scotland and recently worked closely with Historic Scotland on the nomination of the Antonine Wall as a World Heritage Site.

Following their arrival in the south of England in 43AD (this time to stay!), the Romans gradually pushed westwards to Wales and northwards to Scotland. Dr Jones focussed on

the three major incursions into what is now Scotland, and the evidence or lack of evidence, for associating particular Roman marching camps with a particular campaign. The first incursion, by Agricola between 77-83 AD, reached the north of Scotland, and it is on this campaign that, for example, the fort at Easter Haprew was built. Thereafter there was a gradual withdrawal to the line of Hadrian's Wall, built in 122AD. The forward policy associated with the second incursion, between 139 and 142 AD was also relatively short-lived, and saw the northern frontier being established along the line of the so-called Antonine Wall, built between Forth and Clyde. The fort at Lyne was built at this time.

The third, and again short-lived, incursion took place between 208-211 AD and was probably grandest of all, led by the Emperor Septimius Severus himself, accompanied of course by a large retinue. Due to this, the marching camps are extremely large, with the one at St. Leonard's Hill, near Lauder, being the largest in the Roman Empire at 76 hectares.

In February, our guest speaker was **Brian Murray** of the Scottish Mining Museum who spoke about *'Coal Mining in Scotland'*. Brian, who works as a volunteer with the Museum, is now retired but has a lifetime in coal mining behind him, and gave his audience a glimpse of one of Scotland's once great industries. Brian's enthusiasm for his subject shone through, with frequent touches of humour despite the hazards and hardships of the industry. Originating in the 13th century, there were at one time hundreds of pits throughout Fife, the Lothians, Lanarkshire, and Ayrshire.

However by 2001, manpower in the industry had shrunk to 8,600 from 1,200,000 in 1920. There are now no deep pits in Scotland, and although 40% of power generation in Scotland is by coal, most of this is now imported. Brian finished a most interesting talk by introducing the Scottish Mining Museum, Lady Victoria Colliery, Newtongrange, now rated a 5-star attraction by VisitScotland, with facilities for all the family.

In March, the Society was delighted to welcome back a familiar face in the form of **Dr Iain Macleod**, lecturer in oral medicine at Newcastle University. In a talk entitled *'Ancient Medicine'*, Iain, a former Committee member of the Society and amateur archaeologist, gave his audience some insights into the nature of illness and disease in the past - and the efforts that people have made to cure them.

Throughout history and in all cultures people have suffered illness and disease, some of which show in skeletal remains. The early hunter-gatherers were relatively healthy with a nomadic life style, fresh food, low population density, and little exposure to animals. Later, farming communities had higher population densities, which encouraged the spread of disease, were dirtier, and had more contact with animal diseases.

Early people understood *injury* which could be relatively easily treated, but *disease* that they could not see was put down to a variety of reasons, such as evil spirits or making the ancestors unhappy - whereas the actual reason was likely to be less varied diets, malnutrition or cleanliness issues. Cures would have been discovered by trial and error, using herbs, fungi, and other plants that we use today, such as the foxglove and opium poppy. If that failed

there was always the medicine man or shaman, with his charms and spell, often depicted on cave paintings.

Iain took his audience to China where Traditional Chinese Medicine can be traced back 4000 years, and where a statue from 1000 BC has acupuncture marks.

He went on to finish a fascinating talk by looking at Otzi the Iceman whose mummified body was found in the Alps in 1991 complete with toolkit including fungi on laces, which would have used to stem bleeding. He explored the possibility that the tattoos on Otzi's body were for therapeutic purposes as some of them were on the acupuncture point for the knee and Otzi did have arthritis of the knees.

Bob Knox, Secretary



The Scottish Mining Museum is housed on the site of the Lady Victoria Colliery. Named after the wife of the ninth Marquis of Lothian, the pit was sunk in 1890 by the Lothian Coal Company as part of the 'Newbattle group'. It was Scotland's second largest colliery.

The image shows miners beside a hutch carrying the last ton of coal to be raised from the pit at the time of its closure in 1981. Chalked on the other hutch is a summary of the working achievement of the colliery - almost 40 million tons of coal in 86 years. © Scottish Mining Museum.

Treasurer's Report

The most striking item in the Accounts is the figure for Excess of Expenditure over Income. This is mainly due to the cost of Carbon Dating carried out at Campshiel, although this was partly offset by Grants from Scottish Borders Council and Peebles Museum. We made a donation of £250 towards the cost of purchasing the Militia Uniform and it is gratifying that sufficient funds were raised for this purpose. It is disappointing that subscriptions have fallen again after a modest increase the previous year. You will observe that The Tweeddale Society made a generous donation of £60 being a share of the surplus they made on our joint meeting in November.

Finally I should like to thank Fergus Brown for yet again examining the Books.

Peter Barclay

Analysis of Income & Expenditure | April 2010 – 31 March 2011

	Income		Expenditure	
	2010	2011	2011	2010
	£	£	£	£
Bank Interest	4.73	2.14	Insurance	184.69
Subscriptions	525.00	460.00	Speakers' Gratuities	120.00
Book Sales	4.00	50.00	Hire of room	63.00
Visitors	26.00	36.00	Hire of equipment	20.00
Lottery Grant	7228.90		Purchase of equipment	10.01
Museums & SBC Grants			Photocopying/postage	14.60
re Carbon Dating		500.00	Subscriptions	45.00
Donation Tweeddale Society		60.00	Agricultural Show	36.05
			AGM Expenses	50.37
			Lyne: Adam & Eve Stone	5487.63
			Syllabus	32.00
			Miscellaneous	21.75
			Grant refund	1369.40
			Donation Uniform appeal	250.00
			Camp Shiel: carbon dating	1022.25
Excess Income/Expenditure		739.83	Excess Income/Expenditure	210.94
	<u>7788.63</u>	<u>1847.97</u>		<u>1847.97</u>
				<u>7788.63</u>

Balances at 1 April 2010

General Account	£ 1487.01
Cash Account	55.56
Soc. of Antiq. of Scotland	75.06
Scottish Borders Council	250.00

£ 1867.63

Balances at 31 March 2011

General Account	1049.26
Cash Account	78.54
Excess Expenditure/Income	739.83

£ 1867.63

The Income & Expenditure Accounts and Abstract of Accounts, all for the year ended 31 March 2011, are in accordance with the books and vouchers presented to me and appear to give a fair and accurate picture of the financial state of the Society.

Fergus Brown
Accounts Examiner

Field Work Reports

Kilrubie

We have recently concluded fieldwork and research on Kilrubie, terminating what has been a successful project spanning 15 months, from November 2009.

Back In 2008 we had noted the remains of an early farmstead at Kilrubie. We resolved that we would revisit this at a later date with a view to carrying out a fuller survey. We did this in November 2009, noting the turf footings of domestic structures, enclosures, boundaries, cultivation traces and lazy beds. We decided on a more intensive study and decided to seek the assistance of Scotland's Rural Past Project (SRP). This gave us access to SRP's training expertise and the use of equipment on loan.

The project had two major objectives:-

- To survey and record the archaeology in the area of Kilrubie Hill and to set it in its local archaeological and historical context.
- To engage more of the existing membership of the Archaeological Society in active Fieldwork and/or Research and to attract new members to the society by undertaking a field survey project with training as a key element.

The survey has now been completed, using mainly plane tabling, as well as tape and offset, handheld GPS and a limited metal detector survey. We have also carried out research into various aspects of this early 18th C Farmstead. SRP have been excellent partners and our members have been trained in basic surveying skills on site, have participated in more formal training days at SRP venues including *Presenting Materials to the Media, Photography and Drawing Skills*.

We have also had an opportunity to showcase Kilrubie at the local Agricultural Show (see PAST Autumn issue (September 2010) and hopefully attract local interest and more members.

A final report has been produced on Kilrubie, and has been sent to all who participated in the project. We have lodged the report on the RCAHMS database where the results will be available via Canmore very soon.

It has also been lodged with the SRP website at www.scotlandsruralpast.org.uk where it can be found under Projects - Kilrubie Hill. It will also be available shortly on our own PAS website at www.peeblesarchsoc.org.uk

We are delighted to have participated in and contributed to a hugely popular and successful national project with Scotland's Rural Past (SRP) and express our sincere thanks to them as well as to our own members for all their endeavours.

Jack Boughey

Camp Shiel Project

Fieldwork at Camp Shiel was completed in October 2010. What started off in August 2007 as an investigation of a possible illicit still set on the bank of the upper Camp Shiel Burn expanded into a very successful but challenging survey of the surrounding area; in all, this revealed a number of previously totally unrecognised monuments including two illicit stills, 2 or possibly three retting ponds and two shieling-type structures.

As reported in the last issue of PAST, we obtained a very nice, coherent set of radiocarbon dates from the excavated shieling, indicating construction and use sometime during the 14th to early 15th centuries AD. Well-dated small rural buildings of this period are extremely rare nationally, so Camp Shiel has made a useful contribution to our knowledge of later Medieval Scotland.

We are indebted to Scottish Borders Council (per Dr Chris Bowles, SBC Archaeological Officer and Rosemary Hannay, Tweeddale Museum) for grant aid towards the cost of the radiocarbon dating and to Dr Piers Dixon (RCAHMS) for practical help and advice at various stages of the project. Preparation of the final report is making progress; in the meantime, an interim report on the project has been prepared and copies will shortly be lodged with SBC and RCAHMS. It is also intended that an interim report will shortly be made available on the Society's own website.

Joyce Durham

Out and about: fieldwork notes

In January, Bob and Joyce found half of a bun-shaped quern being used as a coping stone for a dry stane dyke which forms part of the enclosures at the ruined farm cottage at **Greenfieldknowe, Eddleston**. It appears to have been broken when being manufactured, as the central hole has not been finished. Being broken and heavy, it was left where it was (see photo)

In February, Joyce, Gillian and Bob recorded the remains of a rectangular dry stane structure on a sheltered terrace on **Cademuir**, down hill from the larger hillfort and overlooking The Whaum. This measured 8m by 4m, had a possible internal division into two, and was likely to have been used in sheep management.

In early March, a group consisting of Joyce Durham, Jeff Carter, Bob Knox, Peter Jack, and David Drury, recorded several sites on the lands of **Wakefield Farm, West Linton**. David had been contacted by farmer David King, who was interested in some sites on the land he was looking after, and who was keen for us to have a look at them.

These turned out to be ring enclosures/turf stells, which had already been recorded, but in the same general area there were some sites that had not recorded. One of the more interesting was a probable sheephouse, a 'barn' for sheep in which they would be kept during the winter.

This consisted of rectangular turf covered banks approx. 16m long by 6m wide with an entrance at one end protected by an elongated long side. Close to this was an unrecorded ring enclosure/ turf stell, but interestingly we found a small piece of white flint just inside the ring and a flint scraper and a small piece of flint just outside. Close to this again was a subtle linear turf bank approx. 250m long, 2m wide and a few cms high.

Another of the interesting sites was an enclosure surrounding a small knoll overlooking the gorge of the Lyne Water. This consisted of turf covered banks approx. 90m long by 35m wide, with sides curved inwards, giving a waisted appearance, and divided internally into smaller enclosures, suggesting a procedure known as tathing. This is where animals, in this case probably sheep, are kept in an enclosure or fold/fauld, their manure enriches the soil, the fold is cultivated and the sheep are then moved to another. We recorded another enclosure close to this and right on the edge of the gorge, again of turf covered banks and only having three sides.

We finished by recording another two sites slightly inland, a triangular enclosure of turf covered banks and an area where turf/peat had been cut from a bog.

All the above sites have been/will be submitted to the National Monument Record of Scotland, and will appear in print in a later edition of *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*. If required, contact Bob for further details.

Bob Knox



Broken quern in dry stane dyke at Greenfieldknowe - a relic of prehistoric settlement in the immediate vicinity

The Peeblesshire Militia Uniform - a 200 year old local treasure

As noted by Peter Barclay in his Treasurer's report, the Society made a significant contribution to the recent appeal set up to raise funds to secure an important local treasure for the Tweeddale Museum - an extremely well-preserved uniform, tailor-made for an officer of the Peeblesshire Local Militia. At the time of writing, it is clear that that appeal has been successful and the uniform will be preserved locally. Great news!

We are grateful to Rosemary Hannay, Curator of the Tweeddale Museum, Peebles, for providing the information on which these notes are based.

The uniform consists of a bright yellow and red coatee and white trousers, apparently tailor-made for an officer of the Peeblesshire Local Militia. The wearer was quite slight by today's standards – a 32" chest, 28" waist and 34" inside leg - or perhaps we should say 'slender and elegant' rather than slight.

The trousers or britches are of calico, and have buttons marked with the name of an Edinburgh maker, G Aubin, then in Hanover Square and George Street. Possibly the whole uniform was made by this outfitter.

All the stitching appears to be hand-sewing, with neat back-stitching along the seams and hand-sewn quilting along the shoulders to keep the shape firm. Around the collar, ruffles of fine but unhemmed muslin had been sewn in with large stitches – presumably so that once dirty, the ruffles would be replaced rather than washed. A piece of handmade lace – possibly Irish – added that touch of class at the neck. The trousers of linen, shiny from ironing; and of fairly loosely woven, thin cloth - hopefully for summer wear as they would be a bit chilly in a Peeblesshire winter!

The coatee and trousers are in incredibly good condition, showing very few traces of wear. But then the Local Militia was only active from 1808 to 1816 and members of the militia were required to serve up to 28 days a year (training or actual duties), so it may well have seen little use. It would have been ordered and probably paid for by the officer himself.

The Peeblesshire Local Militia was a separate organisation from the Peeblesshire Militia, and was created in 1808 by Act of Parliament under George III, at the height of the invasion threat from Napoleon. The local militia was designed to protect the population in the event of invasion, and – as there was no police force – could also be used to contain riots or civil unrest.



The coatee (the trousers are folded under the coat) a typical uniform of the period made of good quality materials. The survival of the ruff is unusual. © Tweeddale Museum

Recruiting was done by ballot. The names of all Peeblesshire males between the ages of 18 and 30 were provided by local officials, and names were drawn randomly from this list. Men who came forward voluntarily were given a bounty of 2 guineas: for this they were expected to carry out up to 28 days training every year, which could include any time that they were deployed.

Men would only be excused from this if they were married and had 2 or more children, or if they could pay someone else to take their place. If they didn't turn up, there was a hefty fine of £10 to £50 to pay.

A small group of researchers has been working with Rosemary Hannay at the Tweeddale Museum to discover more information about the Local Militia, and it is hoped that more local information will come to light soon. The Local Militia apparently used to drill on the old Roman Fort at Easter Happrew, and the arms and accoutrements were stored at Neidpath Castle, under the care of Serjeant Veitch. The Commander from 1808 – 1816 was Colonel Alexander, Lord Elibank.

Source: Rosemary Hannay



The back of the coatee back. The uniform still has all the buttons present – a total of 42 large and six small buttons. Peebles is one of the few town militias that stuck to the rules and did not add an unauthorised “Royal” to the name! © Tweeddale Museum

A date for your diaries...

Field trip to Strathearn Saturday 9 July

Sites and monuments to be visited under the guidance of Mark Hall (Perth Museum & Art Gallery) to include

- St Serfs & Dupplin cross
- Dun Knock hillfort
- Fowlis Wester (standing stones, cairns, medieval church & Pictish sculpture)
- Muthill church
- Ardoch Roman fort

Allan Wilson *Roman and Native in the Central Scottish Borders*, Oxford (= British Archaeological Report 519)

Book Review by Duncan Fraser *Reproduced by courtesy of Trimontium Trust*

William Wordsworth had a view on Roman finds:-

*'How profitless the relics that we cull,
Troubling the last holds of ambitious Rome.'*

Allan Wilson's book gives the lie to that jibe. It is a specialist book costing, after 10% discount with the order form, £32.40 plus £4 p&p from, appropriately enough, Hadrian Books, 122 Banbury Rd, Oxford – but it is unique. It is three books in one.

Part One gives a detailed Borders history from pre-Roman times and through the Roman period to post-Roman times and the spread of Christianity. Part Two is a detailed inventory of finds from all the sites, Roman and non-Roman - over 200 of them - your local site must be there - with a description of each find and a note of every learned article – with the exact title of the book or journal (even the page numbers) - ever written about it. Part Three contains the site maps, object lists and professionally-drawn illustrations of a selection of finds and explanations of the author's working, plus a detailed bibliography.

How valuable is such a book to the general reader? It is a bible – and just as few people ever read the Bible from end to end this book is a mine of reference to be dipped into, brimming over with information. It also has the advantage that the reader is not being preached at. He or she is given every point of view (not the author's own particular hobby-horse on its own) and then left to make up his or her own mind. Archaeologists are not so inclined these days to be as dogmatic as the big men of the past could sometimes be. Allan Wilson plays fair with the reader.

Homer nods occasionally, of course. Curle's 107 pits are now up to 111 since Dr Jones' excavations (and when is *his* long-delayed report coming out?); the genitive plural of *Ananiovensens* on an inscribed stone is *Ananiovensium*; and Stichill always has two 'l's. But that is mere carping, compared to the

multiple typographic errors which disfigure the pages of so many modern books.

Allan Wilson has done Borders archaeology a favour. Dip in – and you'll be drawn into the byways of local lore – he has spoken to many a local historian and archaeologist and noted what they told him. If you want to follow something further the details are there to take to your local library.

[See below for order form - Ed]

Cross Kirk Anniversary Service 9th May

Monday 9 May 2011 marks the 750th anniversary of the finding of the cross which led to the foundation of the Cross Kirk in Peebles. To commemorate this occasion, **Peebles Churches Together** are planning an all-age, open-air Joint Service to be held among the ruins of the Cross Kirk at 7.00 p.m. that evening and the organising committee has written to draw the attention of Peeblesshire Archaeological Society members to this event.

The Service will be led by Barry Hughes (current Warden of the Cross Kirk) and one of the readers will be Sir Cameron Rusby, whose grandfather, Dr Clement Gunn, was responsible for bringing the Cross Kirk back into occasional use.

The organising committee for the event hopes that as many PAS members as possible will be able to join in this celebration.

Ample seating will be provided (although please note that reserved seating will only be available for the youth organisations and a few specific individual guests).

**Peebles Churches Together Cross Kirk
Anniversary Sub-Committee**

Lecture Programme 2011-2012

15 September 2011
George Haggarty
National Museums of Scotland
'From Acorn to Oak Tree: Scottish Pottery c1750 to c1850'

20 October 2011
Tertia Barnett
Hon. Fellow, Edinburgh University
'Rock Art'

17 November 2011
David Caldwell,
National Museums of Scotland
'The Lewis Chessmen'

19 January 2012
Speaker from The Hawick Hub (Scottish Borders Archives)

16 February 2012
Alistair Hackett
'Metal Detecting'

13 March 2012
Angus Miller
'The in-between Land: Clues to a Lost Ocean and the Collision of Continents'
Joint Meeting with the Tweeddale Society

19 April 2012
AGM followed by **Members Night**

A taster for next session!!



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...and a reminder from the Treasurer

The Treasurer would be pleased to receive your subscription for 2011-2012
by 15 September

£15 - individual membership £20 - joint membership

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New members always welcome

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Peeblesshire Archaeological Society
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Peebles
EH45 9DS**

Thank you.

PAS Committee

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