

A warm welcome to all in advance of our 2015-16 season.

After a summer of hot afternoons, sipping Pimms on the lawn(!!!), our thoughts turn inevitably to Archaeology. This Newsletter is a reminder of last year's lectures and an early briefing of the coming attractions for the year. I hope you will continue to support the Society through our lecture programme and other activities.

Annual Report 2014 - 2015

Lecture Summaries

The first talk of the year was on 25th September, from **Dr Chris Burgess** of Northumberland County Council. In an entertaining and erudite lecture entitled "**James Wis Robbed**" he explained how recent ongoing excavations have allowed the story of **Flodden** to be recreated in much more detail than before, resolving many of the unanswered questions about the battle.

James IV invaded England at the request of Louis XIV of France. He led a large force, well equipped with modern artillery, into England, capturing Norham castle, Wark motte and Etal and Ford castles before digging in on Flodden Hill.

He was opposed by England's great general, Thomas Howard. Unable to attack the strong position of the Scots, Howard sent all his troops round them to the North. Not wanting to be besieged, James moved North to meet them on Branxton Moor, again taking the high ground. When the battle began, the English used cannon taken from their fleet to destroy the Scots artillery. Undaunted, the Scots moved forward in four great squares carrying long pikes. The first group backed their English opponents up very quickly, but the geography of the site had a tragic trick to play on the Scots.

The high water table meant a ribbon of land between the forces

suddenly turned into a quagmire when a large force marched in unison over it. The three other Scots squares were left floundering in a bog, and were picked off by guns, archers and foot soldiers. In only an hour or two, the Scots king, 100 of his nobles, and some 10,000 soldiers were slaughtered. What had seemed a likely Scot's victory, based on good preparation and modern tactics turned into a disaster with long lasting implications for the future history of Scotland.

The October talk was given by the eminent ethnologist **Professor Malcolm McLeod**. Entitled "**Theft, Smuggling and Money – Illegal trading in artefacts**" it drew on his experience of working in Ghana and his roles at the British Museum and the Glasgow Hunterian museum.

He explained the extent of illegal excavation and trading in West Africa. This is part of a growing trade in African artefacts, now very important to the local economy. Ghana has become a marketplace for goods from throughout Western and Saharan Africa, and although there are laws to control the items traded, these have proved ineffectual. The national boundaries are often bridged by tribal communities, and borders are very 'porous'.

Examples of artefacts traded included stone tools collected by Tuareg in the Sahara, terracotta figurines from Komaland, Ashanti gold, and terracotta heads from Southern Ghana.

At times when original pieces are not available, fakes are produced – many of which are poor but increasingly are of better quality. The trade to the developed world is highly organised and profits for dealers very high.

This well-illustrated talk showed the attraction of the artefacts, but the lack of provenance for them is a huge loss to our knowledge of the archaeology and history of the area and the people.

In November the talk was given by **Derek Hall**, an experienced medieval archaeologist and ceramics expert. Entitled '**Always chasing the deer – the Scottish Medieval Parks Project**', this was a report on the excavations carried out with an American research student at Stirling University.

While the Canmore record suggests more than 40 deer parks existed in Scotland, and recent work has been done in England and Wales, little has been published for Scotland since the late 1970's.

Derek's excavations at the Kincardine Royal deer park, Durward's Dyke park in Angus, and Buzzart Dykes to the west of Blairgowrie have started what he hopes will be an ongoing project in Scotland.

All of the sites have now had 10 metre by 2 metre trenches inserted over the enclosing banks and their internal ditches. The banks carefully use the existing topography to minimise construction, and the ditches tend to be wide but shallow, but there was some evidence of timber fences, or inward facing timber spikes, or possibly hedges on the bank tops.

Some initial work has also been done on associated buildings, be it the associated permanent castles or possible hunting lodges and viewing platforms. In the banks there are hints of possible entrances which might funnel deer into the enclosures. Although large (the Kincardine site encloses some 3,200 acres!) the parks were not likely to be permanent enclosures. Unfortunately the interiors of the Kincardine site were not listed, and have been recently ploughed out, removing all evidence of the interior uses and landscape. So much is still to be discovered.

A joint meeting with the Tweeddale Society was held in the Eastgate Theatre on 9 December.

Dr Gordon Barclay gave a talk entitled "**If Hitler Comes – fortifying Scotland 1940 – 41**". Dr Barclay has in recent years become involved with recording and explaining the remains of the fortifications erected in Scotland during the Second World War.

British records are sparse, but the archives of the Polish forces provided a good basis for the book Dr Barclay has published. It details the considerable defences that were first hurriedly prepared in 1940 when a German invasion seemed imminent, and then greatly improved by the Poles over the following years.

Dr Barclay explained the background to the time when defences were erected, stressing that Britain expected an airborne led attack in the North, perhaps at Scapa Flow, but saw this as a diversion to move the RAF North away from a main assault in the SE of England. For most of the war Hitler kept a large number of troops in Norway to give credence to the idea. The British strategy settled on creating defensive lines and a mobile force that could respond wherever an attack came. The concrete cubes we still see today, with the remains of pillboxes,

were once supplemented by steel 'dragons teeth' and masses of barbed wire. Artillery was deployed in carefully laid firing positions, and extensive minefields laid. Where roads pierced defensive lines roadblocks ready to slot or roll into position were prepared, and possible glider landing sites were dotted with a forest of robust timber posts.

Guerrilla groups, many details of which have only become known in recent times as the last survivors died off, were set up and hideouts and weapon stockpiles created.

The January meeting was a presentation **from Dr Natasha Ferguson** on "**Treasure Trove in Scotland - recent Archaeological Finds in the Scottish Borders.**"

Dr Ferguson works in the Scottish Treasure Trove Unit, based at the National Museum of Scotland. The role of the Unit is to ensure objects of cultural significance from Scotland's past are protected for the benefit of the Nation, and preserved in museums across the country. Under Scottish law, any ownerless objects found by chance or through activities such as metal-detecting, field-walking or excavation become the property of the Crown and therefore may be claimed as Treasure Trove. The

object may be of any age, and any material - what matters is significance, not intrinsic value.

In practice the Crown claims only significant items, returning most to finders. Also, the finder of any item claimed is eligible for an ex-gratia payment based on the market value of the object (professional archaeologists not eligible!).

From the 1980s the growth in metal detecting has greatly increased the recovery of objects (95% of chance finds arise this way) and in response the dedicated Treasure Trove Unit was created. The Unit deals with finds, may engage in digs related to the finds, and also spends time in outreach projects raising awareness of Treasure Trove with finds days and visits around the country.

Dr Ferguson then described the wide range of material found with examples from the local area. All periods from prehistory through the bronze and iron ages and the mediaeval period to more recent times are covered with items such as flint artefacts, pots, coin hoards, weapon and horse metal work and everyday items like brooches, belt buckles and weights.

The February lecture was by **Ross Murray** of Headland Archaeology on "**Discovering Edinburgh's lost**

friary: excavations at the Old High School, Edinburgh.

Ross Murray is the senior archaeologist with Headland, a specialist unit working for developers in various parts of Scotland.

The Old High School of Edinburgh dates from 1707, and is now owned by Edinburgh University. It stands on the site of a previous 16th century school, which replaced a 13th century Dominican Friary, destroyed in 1559 on the dissolution of the monasteries.

As extensive building alterations were planned in 2011, Headland were employed to carry out predevelopment archaeological investigations.

Test pits identified 16th C foundation walls. But the planned development needed a rainwater catchment tank of greater depth. On going deeper, the archaeologists started finding human remain from the early friary and its associated graveyards.

In the area proposed for the tank, about 12 bodies and a carved sandstone grave slab were found. The slab showed a round leafed bracelet headed cross, with a sword added alongside. This usually indicates a nobleman or knight. The skeleton most likely to be

associated with the slab was of a young male, about 18 years old. Further investigations will try to identify the man, with isotope readings from teeth, and perhaps documents from the archives of the Dominicans, stored in the University.

Radiocarbon dates confirmed the bodies on the site are from the 12th/13th century. The sword is also dateable to that time.

Although limited in area, the dig found another 83 bodies. It is likely the whole site has hundreds more.

The friary, which served also as a hospital, and the Old High School, which had periods as a surgical hospital and a hospital for infectious diseases, meant this site was a heavily used graveyard. This remains preserved beneath the converted building and its modern extensions. The dig has greatly expanded the known history of the site, and ongoing analysis will greatly add to the data gained from this excavation.

Murray Cook of Rampart Scotland gave the March lecture entitled **'Through the Keyhole – the larger picture from smaller holes: excavations at White Castle Hillfort.**

Primarily employed as the archaeologist for Stirling Council,

Murray devotes his spare time to a series of projects using key-hole excavation to answer specific questions about dating Scottish sites, in particular hillforts and enclosures.

The multivallate White Castle fort at Garvald, East Lothian straddles the ancient route through the Lammermuir Hills. Murray described the methodology used to investigate White Castle and the results of excavations undertaken there between 2010 and 2013.

Of 300+ forts and enclosures in East Lothian only 16 have actually been dated. The scheduling of many monuments protects them, but can also limit the amount we know about them. Murray believes much more can be learned using minimal excavation techniques.

Historic Scotland gave permission to excavate at White Castle, provided a full topographic survey was done. The new survey showed the site has the remains of three ramparts and ditches facing the road, but these become only terraces on the side of the fort facing the drop to the

valley. With timber palisades, these would still have been impressive from all directions.

About 40 small holes, dug at critical points, indicate two main phases of construction, beginning about 500BC and about 250BC. About 16 platforms and building remains are identifiable within the walls, though others were visible in the geophysical survey. Most sites were contemporary with the second phase of construction, but one was probably from the 10th century AD and another had 15th century remains.

The survey and excavations showed the 'fort' had been built with several openings, so was probably not a defensive enclosure. It was possibly only occupied during the summer, and may have served as a market point.

Murray hopes to investigate a sample of the East Lothian sites, and by studying them the uses and types of all the sites in this part of Scotland can be better understood.

Jeff Carter, Minutes Secretary

Treasurer's Report 2014/02015

Turning to Income first. There has been a disappointing, albeit small, decline in income from Members' Subscriptions and Visitors. That from the sale of Books is also down but this is an expected trend as the market for the Manor Valley booklet is somewhat saturated.

Over the years this publication has provided substantial funds to the Society. The £500 Grant from S.B.C. has been given for the design and publication of the self-guided leaflet to the history and archaeology of Hay Lodge Park. Considerable progress has been made in its production and this sum will be expended in the coming financial year.

On the expenditure side, the only entry requiring comment is that for Speakers. For some years we have been giving our speakers £20 to cover expenses and at the start of the year under review this payment was increased to £25. While this has been the norm, on occasions for example where speakers reside some considerable distance from Peebles, larger sums have been involved.

Peter Barclay, Treasurer

Analysis of Income & Expenditure 1 April 2014 – 31 March 2015

	Income			Expenditure	
	2014	2015		2015	2014
Subscriptions	£480.00	£450.00	Insurance	£191.92	£191.92
Sale of Books	48.00	32.00	Speakers	200.00	105.00
Visitors	102.00	81.00	Hire of Room	106.00	105.00
Sale of Projector	-----	15.00	Hire of Equipment	30.00	40.00
SBC Grant	----	500.00	Agricultural Show	39.00	39.00
Donations	3.00		Purchase of Equipment	-----	30.94
Agricultural Show	39.00		AGM/Refreshments	50.37	60.32
			Subscriptions	65.00	65.00
			Syllabus	28.00	25.00
			Stamps	12.72	6.00
			Photo Prints	-----	11.00
Excess of			Illustrations for Report		250.00
Expenditure	<u>257.18</u>		Surplus Income	<u>354.99</u>	
	<u>£929.18</u>	<u>£1078.00</u>		<u>£1078.00</u>	<u>£929.1</u>

Balances at 1 April 2014		Balances at 31 March 2015	
General Account	£1063.42	General Account	£1390.60
Cash Account	26.48	Cash Account	54.29
Excess of Income/Expenditure	<u>354.99</u>		_____
	<u>£1444.89</u>		<u>£1444.89</u>

Examiner's Report

The Income and Expenditure Account and Abstract of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2015

are in accordance with the Books and Vouchers presented to me and appear to give a fair and accurate position of the financial state of the Soci

Fergus Brown

Accounts Examiner

Forthcoming Attractions 2015/ 2016

Programme

Maureen has put together an excellent series of talks for next season, a brief synopsis of which is attached.

Thurs. 17th Sep. Gerard & Sue Bakker talk about their experiences on a "dig" in Turkey
"Alahan – 5th C. Early Christian Monastery in Isauria, Turkey."

Thurs. 15th Oct. Gretal Evans Senior Conservator A.O.C. Archaeology
"All that is gold does not glitter" - lifting the lid on the recent Viking hoard discovered in Dumfriesshire in Oct. 2014.

Thurs. 17th Sept. Dr. Alison Sheridan Principal Curator, Early Prehistory, N.M.S.
"Green treasures from the magic mountains: the amazing story of Neolithic "jade" axeheads."

Thurs. 21st Jan. Dr. Margaret Collins President, Melrose Historical & Archaeological Assoc.
"Old Melrose – past & present."

Tues. 9th Feb. Dr. Nick Fraser Head of Dept. of Natural Sciences N.M.S.
"One small step for amphibians, but a giant leap for life on earth"
- special reference to palaeontological finds in the Tweed basin.
(joint talk with Tweeddale Society at Eastgate Theatre)

Thurs. Mar. 17th Stephen Gordon Head of Applied Conservation H.S.

“Kirkmadrine – conserving & re-displaying the carved stone collection.”

-these Galloway stones are perhaps the oldest Christian monuments in Britain.

Thurs. 21st April AGM & members night.

All talks will take place at 7.30pm in the Community Centre, Peebles, unless otherwise stated. There will be a small charge of £4 for non-members.

Maureen Erasmuson

Fieldwork

Shootinglee

A Progress Report

To recap:

From archival sources it is known that Shootinglee was a stead within Ettrick Forest and was of some importance for a short time in the 15th century - being the administrative centre of a ward or division of the Forest (Registrum Magni Sigilli Scottorum ii 59).

The site lies on the E of the Newhall Burn, 2 miles south of Traquair; it is split into two parts by a dry stone wall to the W of which is a pasture field and to the E a conifer plantation planted in 1976. Several features are visible to the W including the footings of at least one small building and several earthen-banked

enclosures, one of which has been trial trenched and interpreted as a garden plot. Within the forest there are the footings of a row of five buildings all badly damaged by forest ploughing. The southern-most of these, Building 1, has been excavated. Three carbon-dated charcoal samples from the building place the drain in the N end to the 17th century, the clay oven to the 16th century and the interface between the building platform and the turf wall has a surprising date of the 8th century. The search is currently on to find more charcoal samples from secure locations in order to obtain a more certain date for the building.

Recently we moved on to Building 4 in the row and have been very pleased to find that this one is far more substantial than Building 1, having 1.2m wide clay-bonded walls. It is early days yet but the

indications are that this building could be a fortified farmhouse or bastle, of which there are several on both sides of the Border. They are generally dated to around the 16th century. Excavation is, as usual at Shootinglee, hampered by the

forestry ploughing and the trees growing on the site. Among the finds so far are 1 medieval pottery sherd, 2 17th century pipe bowls and a possibly late 17th century coin.



Building 4

Thanks are due to Dr. Chris Bowles and Scottish Borders Council for financing the carbon dating

Joyce Durham

Joyce and Neil have also uncovered (in a brilliant piece of research) some strange goings-on at Shootinglee!

SHOOTINGLEES MAN MURDERED WITH POISONED BULLET!

‘On the 1st November 1580 Alexander Stewart, it seems, had been in a company of Lord Treasurer Ruthven at the marriage of the Earl of Mar, coming home from Kincardine, and passing provokingly near the seat of the Oliphants with whom Ruthven had a quarrel, they were chased by the Master of Oliphant

and an armed band. Stewart, distaining to run with the rest, was shot dead by one of the pursuing Oliphants’. So says Thomas Craig Brown in *‘The History of Selkirkshire, or; Chronicles of Ettrick Forest’* 1886. He gives no indication as to the source of the story.

What is certain is that Lord Oliphant, Arthoure Forbes and forty one others were brought to trial on the 20th December 1580. ‘Dilatit (?) of airt and pairt of the crewall slaughter of umquile (deceased) Alexander Stewart of

Schuittingleis; committit in the moneth ('the first day') of November lastby-past: ('And for invading of Williame Lord Ruthven, Thesaurer, for his slauchter') and vtheris crymes specifeit in the lettres produceit vpoun thame'. The trial was adjourned to the following day.

December 21st. 'The Justice Depute, in respect of the alledgeance proponit be aithir of the parties preloquitouris (advocate,pleader), and that ane Assyse (trial by jury) could nocht be obtenit to my Lord Oliphant, for objectiounis; ordanit (ordained) the mater to be continewit quhill the morne, xxjj day of November, &c'.

VERDICT (Dec. 22) 'The Assyse, be their delyuerance, pronunceit and declarit be the mouth and speking of George Symmer (Somer) of Balzairdie, Chancillar, stand and delyuerit the personis enterit on panel (the accused) and persewit, to be clangeit (found not guilty), innocent and acquit, of airt and pairt of the crewall slauchter and murthoure (murder) of umquile Alexander Stewart of Schuittingleis, schot with and poysonit (poisoned) bullet:* And of the convocatioun (?) of our souverane loirdis liegis, bodin (prepared, furnished for fighting) with culveringus, pistolettis, jakis (?), speris, steilbonnettis (steel bonnets)and vtheris wappinnis (weapons) *invasiue*,

incontrair the tennour of the Actis of Parliament: And siclyke, of vmbesetting of the hie way (highway) to William Lord Ruthvene, Thesaurer, invading of him and his seruandis (servants) being in his companie, for their slauchteris: With the haill circumstances thairof libellit (specified in the libel), committit vpoun the first dat of November lastbypast, vpoun fett (set) purpois, provisious, auld feid (feud) and foirthocht fellonye.'

On December 23rd William Lord Ruthven (Lord High Treasurer of Scotland), and 52 others were accused of the 'crewall flauchter' of umquile Johnne Buchane (servant to Laurence Lord Oliphant) and other crimes. All, as before, were found innocent and acquitted.

The above is an abridged account of the trials resulting from the fracas taken from transcriptions of original records by Robert Pitcairns '*Ancient Criminal Trials in Scotland 1542-1584*' Volume 1 Issue 2 p89-92.

*This is the only instance in the Record of poisoned bullets having been made use of in Scotland. Pitcairn Vol. 1 Issue 2 p90.

Joyce Durham & Neil Crawford

Hillforts Atlas Project PAST

As members will be aware, PAS has agreed to contribute to the Hillforts Atlas project run jointly by Oxford and Edinburgh Universities. Although hillforts are a diverse set of monuments, the aim

of this project is to record a standard dataset of measurements and observations for sites across the UK and Eire. In time, it is hoped that this dataset will form an interactive online database

that can provide information for analysis at scales ranging from the single hillfort to the whole collection.

The members of the PAS are particularly well placed to make a valuable contribution to this project as the uplands of Peeblesshire are home to a concentration of some of the best preserved hillforts in the entire country.

However, it is also the sheer number of hillforts in Peeblesshire that poses the largest logistical problem for the Society. We are a small group with presently only two members, Neil Crawford and Stephen Scott, carrying out the recording. With this in mind, and to make the task more manageable, Neil and Stephen have produced a list of 20 hillforts local to the Peebles area that will be tackled in the first instance.

So far, the team has recorded data for five hillforts including two on Cademuir Hill, two in the Meldons and one the summit of Whiteside Hill. The next target scheduled for August 2015 will be the Milkieston Rings near Eddleston.

Given the scale of this project, we would be delighted to hear from anyone who would like to become involved. Full instruction will be given on the recording methods which are fairly simple and non-technical. However, as many of the monuments are situated in remote areas, volunteers should be physically fit and possess appropriate boots and clothing for a day out on the Border hills.

If you would like join us please email Stephen at: stephen@scottinternet.com.

Lyne

The Archaeological Society has responsibility for the maintenance and cleaning of the structures at Lyne, namely the 'Adam and Eve' Gravestone at Lyne Kirk and the Early Christian Graves at Abbey Knowe.

Maureen describes her recent experience with the

'Adam & Eve' stone

It had been decided that this year, the Adam & Eve gravestone at Lyne

churchyard would benefit from a spring-clean.

On an unfortunately blustery morning, 3 hardy members of PAS, complete with buckets, water, brushes, sponges & other cleaning materials set forth to do the necessary.

Following conservation work on this stone, it had been carefully re-instated in 2008 within a display case of toughened glass. With a special key, the back glass panel was removed & all was cleaned to

perfection inside & out. However, replacing the heavy glass panel in a strong wind proved to be a nightmare, but with a bit of ingenuity & the use of 2 toothbrushes (don't ask!) the glass was safely returned!

Sadly, pride in our hard work did not last for long. A few weeks later, we were contacted by the council to say that during grass cutting, a stone had been thrown up with such force that it had shattered the back glass panel. Fortunately, the council has agreed to cover replacement costs, but another cleaning session will be required.

Anyone for Autumn cleaning?

Maureen Erasmuson

I can perhaps add my own experiences around the

Early Christian Graves

I was part of the workparty mentioned by Maureen above, and moved on up to Abbey Knowe, resplendent in my 'marigolds', to do battle with the poo-besplattered Interpretation panel. Being a humble male however, I was diverted to weeding and grass trimming duties, which I of course accomplished with a certain panache.

A week or so later I decided to take my granddaughter to see our handiwork. Unfortunately she couldn't reach the Knowe because of the height of the nettles in the approach field. OK, she's a

whinge - but I suppose she is only 6, bare-legged and not even nettle-high.

And so, the following week, I returned to do battle with the nettles, accompanied this time by my trusty grandson. To cut nettles in a field you would ideally use a petrol strimmer. I don't have one! However I did have an old whippy saw (top tip, Gillian!) which I could use as a scythe.

I started on some thistles, and soon they were falling before me - well, they weren't really thistles, they were a band of marauding Roman cavalry, the pesky 59th Batavians - but they were no match for Excalibur and I was only a few scything strokes away from capturing their standard.....

A shout from 11 tear-old Robbie, alerted me to the fact that he had cut a very neat metre-wide path through the nettles with my gardening shears. I think it's important to instil a sense of responsibility into the young!

Jack, Scourge of the 59th

Other Activities

We are in process of putting together a number of other activities over the next few months which will include the following:-

October 18thA Visit to the new Biggar and Upper Clydesdale Museum

As you probably know this new museum has just opened its doors at the beginning of August. It brings the former Moat Park, Gladstone Court and Green Hill Museums together under one roof.

We hope to organise a visit on Sun. 18th October (Biggar Little Festival), when we will also get to see the Gas Works operating, as well as Biggar Motte, and Gladstone's cottage (ruin).

<http://www.biggarmuseumtrust.co.uk/>

November 23rd.....A visit to the RCAHMS, Edinburgh.

You may remember we had organised a visit last year to the Royal Commission (now Historic Environment Scotland) at Bernard Terrace, Edinburgh, which unfortunately had to be postponed. We are now in process of reorganising that visit, thanks to Lesley Ferguson of

RCAHMS. This will now be on a Monday in November which will be announced later. Members will have an opportunity to see the extensive research facilities - library, Parish Name Books, County Box files and photographs, Aerial photos, Estate maps and online searchable records, maps and archives. <http://www.rcahms.gov.uk/>

Spring/Summer 2016.....A visit to the Highland Folk Museum at Newtownmore.

We hope to organise a visit to the above next year. This large open air museum gives a flavour of how Highland people lived and worked from the 1700s up until the 1960s with over 30 historical buildings furnished appropriate to their time period. The site is a mile long from the 1700s Township at one end, through to the 1930s working croft at the other. There is an onsite cafe and gift shop. <https://www.highlifehighland.com/highlandfolkmuseum>

The Bad News!

Annual Subscriptions

It is now 10 years since our last increase in subs, and for the last few years we have been running an operating deficit. We are struggling to meet our core costs of speakers fees, hire of hall and equipment, insurance costs etc from our current subscription levels. We are reluctantly forced to increase fees from 2015 - 16 onwards, as under:-

Individuals.....£20 (was £15)

Couples.....£30 (was £20)

Visitors.....£4 (was £3)

Visitors will also pay a fee of £4 to the Society for attendance at any Society-organised field trip or activities.

Can I ask those of you who pay by Standing Order, to amend same before payment is due.

I hope you will agree that these new subscription levels still represent very good value for money, and we look forward to your continued support.

Jack Boughey

Can I take this opportunity to apologise for the 'not up to usual standard' presentation quality of PAST. We all look forward to Trevor being back in the driving seat soon, and me going back to scything Batavians!