



PAST

Peeblesshire Archaeological Society Times
Spring issue / April 2022

Annual Report 2021-2022

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With the kind permission of the individual speakers, Stephen has therefore uploaded recordings of several of this year's talks to our website. As a result, members can catch up with a meeting they may have been unable to attend or listen again to presentations they may have particularly enjoyed.

Chairman's report

Lecture series

Over the past year, our activities have again been governed by the course of the Covid pandemic and this has meant that with the exception of the joint meeting with the Tweeddale Society, our talks have all been delivered online via Zoom.

Once again, we have been extremely grateful to all our invited speakers. Generally our guest speakers are by now well used to the challenges of speaking to remote audiences and since the autumn, we have been treated to another series of informative and entertaining presentations which have ranged widely in time and space, from the Viking Age in the Borders to the Egyptian cult of Horus. Masterminded by Neil, our online attendances have remained encouragingly high with 25-30 members usually present; exceptionally, our talk in September was billed as a free Scottish Archaeology Month event and as a result attracted an audience of over 80 from as far afield as Scandinavia!

Zoom technology has again made it possible to record a number of our talks, apart from one or two instances where this has not been possible due to the need to respect unpublished research or copyrighted material.



Controlled excavation of cable trench on the Clyde Wind Farm (© Headland Archaeology)

Thanks also go to Jeff for his excellent résumés of the lectures: the September and October meetings were reported in the Autumn issue of PAST and his summaries in this issue complete the round-up of this year's series of talks. This is also a suitable point at which to thank Gillian for undertaking the production of PAS, which is now complemented by the monthly e-news circulated by Andy with details of our meetings and other current events of interest.

Looking ahead to this coming autumn, next season's syllabus is currently being assembled by Neil, and starting in September we can look forward to another interesting programme of talks on a wide range of topics from our invited guest speakers. Although we plan to return to conventional 'in person' meetings in the autumn, it is likely that some meetings will continue to be held online in order to capitalise on one major strength of this technology – namely to be able to host talks by speakers who live beyond easy travelling distance of Peebles.

Field trip

As reported in the previous issue (PAST Autumn 2021) the gradual easing of Covid regulations by the summer meant that a group of us were able to enjoy an excellent day tracing the extensive earthworks of the deer trap at Dormount Hope in Roxburghshire.



Dormount Hope field trip (Photo: Graeme Watson)

Fieldwork

Fieldwork also gradually became possible over the year.

As reported by Piers and Joyce in the Autumn 2021 issue of PAST, excavations continued at **Shootinglee** with the primary aim of sorting out the question of the date and nature of the deposits below the 17th century building. Running alongside the final stages of excavation, post-excavation work has been making excellent progress. A short report on the results of specialist analysis of finds and environmental samples will form one of the short presentations at the AGM/Members Evening

Once Covid guidelines allowed, Stephen and Neil undertook a drone survey of several sites at **Winkston Hill Farm** to the north of Peebles, by kind permission of the farmer Stewart Aitken. Their initial aim was to survey a settlement identified on local LiDAR coverage but following a request from the farmer, the survey was extended to include at least two other areas of the farm. These also turned out to contain significant archaeology. With additional input from Trevor and Strat, the results will be fed into the local and national Historic Environment Records; in the meantime, members will have an opportunity to hear a brief summary of the results as part of the series of short presentations at the AGM/Members Evening.



Previously unrecorded prehistoric burnt mound discovered during Glenlude survey (Photo: Strat Halliday)

As reported in the Autumn 2021 issue of PAST, a very successful pre-forestry survey was carried out at **Glenlude** to the south of Traquair. As well as providing useful opportunities for training, these surveys are generating useful funds for Society projects. More recently we have also assessed areas at **Posso** in the Manor Valley and **Bowden Moor** near Melrose (see opposite). LiDAR data is proving invaluable for such surveys.

Outreach activities

Publication of the book arising from our day conference on the *Archaeology of Tweeddale*, held in 2019 is still in the pipeline (for a short report on the day see Autumn 2020 issue of PAST). However after various delays, the final contributions by speakers are expected to be with us very soon, and if all goes according to plan, the aim is to produce the book by the end of this year.



Bowden Moor: medieval linear earthwork (Photo: T Cowie)

Committee

As usual thanks go to all the members of the Committee for helping to keep PAS on track over the course of what has been another challenging year, especially the office bearers, Piers (Vice Chairman) Andy (Secretary) and Brian (Treasurer). As already mentioned, special thanks also go to Neil for masterminding the delivery and recording of the series of Zoom talks, and to Stephen for continuing to maintain and develop the website.

Over the course of the year the committee was greatly saddened by the news of the deaths, following illness, of two long-standing members of the society, Peter Jack and our former Deputy Chairman, Jack Boughey (see Obituary, this issue).

Membership

On behalf of the committee I would therefore like to end this brief overview of the year with a big thank-you to all existing members for your continuing support for the society, and to extend a welcome to our new members. Once PAS can return to holding regular 'in person' meetings, we will look forward to meeting you all in person!

Trevor Cowie
Chairman

PAS Committee 2020-2021

Trevor Cowie (Chairman)
Piers Dixon (Vice Chairman)
Andy Jepson (Secretary)
Brian Tait (Treasurer)
Gillian Brown
Jeff Carter
Neil Crawford
Joyce Durham
Iain MacLeod
Stephen Scott
Richard Welander



Previously unrecorded prehistoric burnt mound (NT 5284 3210) discovered during Bowden Moor survey, April 2022 (Photo: T Cowie)



Treasurer's Report

PEEBLESSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2022

<u>INCOME</u>		<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	
<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
£	£	£	£
1220.00 Subscriptions	1230.00	557.48 Insurance	278.74
300.00 Forest Direct	1050.00	75.00 Speakers	200.00
0.00 Zoom talk fees	15.00	0.00 Hire of room	40.00
228.00 Donations	5.00	221.83 Website	117.45
25.00 Miscellaneous	0.00	143.88 Zoom	103.28
		0.00 Videoing talks	82.80
		0.00 Kirkland survey	17.13
		0.00 Memory sticks	20.09
		0.00 Subscription	15.00
		350.00 Analysis	0.00
		15.60 Postage	0.00
		0.00 Miscellaneous	22.00
<u>1773.00</u>	<u>2300.00</u>	<u>1363.79</u>	<u>896.49</u>
		409.21 Excess of Income	1403.51
		over Expenditure	
<u>1773.00</u>	<u>2300.00</u>	<u>1773.00</u>	<u>2300.00</u>
		At 1st April 2021	Bank 2715.35
			Cash 25.99
			<u>2741.34</u>
		Add: Excess of Income over Expenditure	<u>1403.51</u>
		At 31st March 2022	<u>4144.85</u>
			Bank 4118.86
			Cash 25.99

TREASURER'S REPORT

A satisfactory set of Accounts given last year's problems. Subscriptions are virtually unchanged while the survey fee for Glenlude from Forest Direct helped the Society to an excess of Income over Expenditure for the year of £1403.51. On the Expenses side, the previous year had two insurance premiums paid caused by the dates on which they were paid. The increased cost of Speakers reflects our return to a full programme of talks. The Committee recommends that membership subscription rates should be kept again at £30 for couples and £20 for individuals.

Brian Tait

Treasurer

06/04/2022

EXAMINER'S REPORT

I have examined the above Accounts for the year to 31st March 2022 and confirm that they are in accordance with the books, vouchers and other records presented to me and give an accurate picture of the Society's financial position.

Colin Bell

Examiner

06/04/2022

Jack Boughey (1944–2022)

At the beginning of February we were deeply saddened to receive news of the death, following illness, of our former Deputy Chairman, Jack Boughey. Until he eventually had to resign due to ill health, Jack had been a very long-standing and active member of the committee. Indeed, his membership of the society extended all the way back to the very earliest years of PAS. Having joining only a few years after its foundation in the mid-1990s, Jack was certainly a member of the society's 'old guard'!

The PAS archives are currently inaccessible but a trawl through the list of attendees on one of our early field trips shows that Jack was among the group of PAS members who participated in the first organised summer field trip of the new millennium - a very successful excursion to sites in Fife in June 2001, held jointly with the members of the Biggar Archaeology Group. Indeed, it was Jack who wrote up the account of the trip for the society's newsletter! Reprinted below, his report on the excursion has all the hallmarks that we came to associate with his contributions to the work of PAS over the next two decades: well-researched reporting, an eye for the interesting detail, and above all warmth and humour.

Also on that trip were Bob Knox (our secretary at the time) and Joyce Durham. Together, Jack, Bob and Joyce took their interest in archaeology to another level of commitment by undertaking the Certificate in Field Archaeology course run by Glasgow University's Department of Adult and Continuing Education. This was a 2-year course, so the years from 2002 to 2004 saw these 'Three Amigos' taking turns to drive over to Glasgow for lectures every Tuesday evenings during term-time. Coursework was coupled with field trips and practical fieldwork in Mugdock Park & Pollok Park in Glasgow and also near Symington, Lanarkshire. The result was a core of trained members, and over the years that followed, PAS benefited greatly from their commitment and enthusiasm. Their skills were put to excellent use in various projects, ranging from walkover surveys and fieldwalking in Eddleston to participation in PAS excavations at Campshiel and then Shootinglee, near Traquair.



Bob and Jack undertaking graveyard recording at St Johns Kirk, Symington, as part of their Glasgow University Certificate in Field Archaeology course (photo: Joyce Durham)

As part of the overall survey of Eddleston parish, In Eddleston in particular, Jack masterminded a survey at Kilrubie, Eddleston, an exercise carried out under the auspices of the Scotlands Rural Past (SRP) project. A memorable training day was organised by the SRP team – memorable at least partly because of the bitterly cold conditions (see photo). Brass monkeys were mentioned more than once in the course of the day.

One of the aims of PAS has always been to promote awareness of the extremely rich archaeological and historic heritage of the region. Under the auspices of Archaeology Scotland's Adopt-a-Monument scheme, PAS has undertaken projects on local sites at the Abbey Knowe, Lyne, on the Adam & Eve stone at Lyne Kirk itself and at Harehope Bronze Age cairn. The aim of this national project is to encourage local groups to get involved in improving the condition, accessibility and interpretation of selected local sites: unsurprisingly, Jack was a keen and regular participant in the work parties required to care for our group of 'adopted' sites.

Another outreach activity to which Jack contributed significantly was the creation of the leaflet and booklet designed to introduce visitors to the history and archaeology of Peebles popular Hay Lodge Park and its environs. Originally developed as a guided walk for Scottish Archaeology Month, the tour would end up under the arches of Tweed Bridge where Jack would regale the party with the story of the bridge, invariably leavening the dry historical facts with a sprinkling of his dry humour.



Underneath the arches: Jack recounting the story of the Tweed Bridge during Hay Lodge guided walk, Scottish Archaeology Month 2010. (Photo: Trevor Cowie)

Jack also deployed those skills when explaining archaeology to younger age groups – most recently in 2019 when PAS was asked by one of the teachers at West Linton Primary School if someone from the society could chat to pupils working on an Early People project. With considerable trepidation, Jack and I prepared a short talk and object handling session for what was to be a combined group of around 36 Primary 1 and 2 pupils. We needn't have worried! As Jack said later, our combined Ice Age Laurel and Hardy performance was a roaring success (as reported in the Winter 2019 issue of PAST). And for my part, I could see that Jack's easy engagement with the P1's and P2's clearly reflected years of practice with his own children and grandchildren!

Many of the older PAS hands will therefore have cause to remember Jack as a regular attender of our talks and field trips, as a participant in our fieldwork and outreach projects and above all as a loyal society colleague and personal friend. As well as dealing with various routine committee matters, Jack was invariably our informal "social convenor" when it came to making arrangements for the "wine and nibbles" at the AGM - and once we can make a full return to 'in person' meetings, we shall certainly raise a glass to his memory! In the meantime, our thoughts continue to be with Jack's wife Kath, their daughters Jill and Lynn, and their families.

Trevor Cowie



Training in plane table surveying at Kilrubie, Eddleston, on a bitterly cold day at the end of January 2010. Jack is second from right.

Down memory lane:

The late Jack Boughey's report on our field trip to Fife in 2001

A torchlit procession of limbo-dancing archaeologists ...

Around thirty members drawn from Peebles Archaeological Society and Biggar Museum Trust set out on Saturday, 30th June for our Annual Field Trip, which this year took in the archaeology of Fife. Douglas Speirs of Fife County Archaeological Service was our guide for the day.

We were met by Douglas at Lochore Meadows Country Park and treated to refreshments and a cornucopia of literature on the archaeology of the Kingdom. Douglas briefed us on the day's itinerary and explained his role in terms of the conservation of Fife's archaeological heritage and some of the practical, environmental and fiscal constraints, which impinge on that role.

Our first point of archaeological interest was only 200m from the Park Centre which was fortunate, since no archaeological trip is complete without a deluge and for 10 minutes Fife treated us to one of its finest examples. Lochore Meadows Country Park is itself the result of seven years of reclamation work on an area disfigured by coal workings. The Park stands on the site of the Mary Colliery which operated from 1902 to 1966 but no trace of that activity now remains except for the massive reinforced concrete Winding Gear Head Frame installed in 1923. This monument has been designated as one of the "youngest" sites of national archaeological importance, being one of the first of its type and also one of the few remaining visible relics of Fife's coal mining heritage.

As we left Lochore the sun came out and the rest of the day was glorious. We made our way to Chancefield, near Falkland to look at the Hollow-Ways. These are a series of five enigmatic ditch-like earthworks, up to 250 yards long and 20ft deep, lying within a coniferous plantation on the estate of the medieval hunting lodge and palace of Falkland. Their exact date, nature or function is unclear. Suggestions include ancient trackways, practice earthworks and military training but the more

favoured explanation might be a "drive-site" associated with medieval hunting.

From there a short drive and a short but exhilarating walk took us to the 424m summit of East Lomond Hill where a Fort commands impressive views across to the Firths of Forth and Tay. The ramparts and ditches surrounding the hill are still quite clear today. Evidence suggests that the Hill would originally have been occupied by an Iron Age community but there is also evidence of later Pictish occupation (6th-9th C AD) and a burial cairn in the middle of the fort indicates a use other than defensive or occupational. It must also be said it was an excellent spot to enjoy the camaraderie of a picnic lunch.

Next on the itinerary was the Balfarg Henge. Now paradoxically surrounded by a modern housing estate, this henge was constructed c2900BC and remained in use for around 1500 years. The site has been partially reconstructed giving a flavour of the original, which consisted of a ditch and earthen bank surrounding a 60m-diameter platform. Within the interior a circle of sixteen massive posts stood upright, succeeded later by two rings of standing stones. Finally a burial pit containing the remains of a young adult were set in the centre of the circle and covered with a two-ton slab.

A short distance away we came to Balbirnie Stone Circle, or at least a reconstruction of same, 150m away from the original site, excavated in 1970 in advance of a road-widening scheme. The original circle of ten standing stones was built in the Neolithic and later re-used as a Bronze Age burial site, with at least sixteen cremation burials being housed beneath a cairn of stones.

A short drive took us to Kennoway Motte, a tree covered hillock on which once stood a very important medieval fortification. Mottes were a Norman invention, introduced to Scotland in the early 12th century. They comprised earthwork mounds with some form of palisade-enclosed residence on top defended by ditches and

earthen ramparts. Three of the outer ditches and ramparts still remain at Kennoway.

Our final destination was the Wemyss Caves where a torchlit procession of limbo-dancing archaeologists viewed caves, which were used as hermitages by Pictish monks and visited as places of pilgrimage prior to the Reformation. We visited the Doo Cave, with its pigeon holes carved out of the rock, the Well Caves beneath McDuff Castle and Jonathan's Cave with its Pictish symbols carved out on both walls.

We returned to Peebles having seen many of Fife's archaeological jewels, and at the same time having developed a greater awareness of the problems of conservation that beset the Regional Archaeologist - the natural erosion of the concrete structure of the Mary Colliery

Winding Gear - the effects of commercial forestry on the Falkland Holloways - the erosion of East Lomond Hill Fort by walkers (and archaeologists!) - the demands for housing and road widening projects which impact on Balfarg and Balbirnie - the natural erosion and ingress of the sea that threaten the Wemyss Caves - and finally a budget that has a finite limit and requires difficult decisions and prioritisation.

Our thanks go to Douglas Speirs and Fife Archaeological Service for a superbly structured day and also to Andrew, our coach driver who took us to places where no coach has ever been before - although the Wemyss Caves were a little tight for headroom!

Jack Boughey, July 2001



Jack admiring his handiwork after cleaning the display case for the Adam & Eve stone, as part of a work party to maintain our 'adopted monuments' at Abbey Knowe and Lyne Kirk, November 2017 (Photo: Trevor Cowie)

Summaries of talks

For Jeff's reports on our September & October talks see [Autumn 2021 issue of PAST !](#)

Julie Franklin: 'Past Lives of Leith'. 18 November 2021

At our online meeting in November, we were delighted to welcome Julie Franklin of Headland Archaeology to talk on the subject of 'Past Lives of Leith'. Julie is finds manager and a post-excavation project manager with Headland. She has over 25 years' experience in commercial archaeology and extensive specialist knowledge of artefacts. As well as having published reports on finds from numerous medieval urban, monastic and castle sites across the UK, Julie was one of the authors of *Past Lives of Leith: Archaeological work for Edinburgh Trams* published by Edinburgh Museums and Galleries in 2019.

The Edinburgh Tram project has seen a series of digs take place in advance of or alongside the various phases of its construction.

Over the course of a logistically challenging six-month excavation in 2008 and 2009, Headland Archaeology's work along Constitution Street in Leith revealed nearly 400 medieval and post-medieval burials associated with the cemetery of South Leith Parish Church (originally the 15th century Chapel of St Mary).

Radiocarbon dating showed that the burials here began about 1380, nearly a century before St Mary's was established, so probably relate to an earlier smaller chapel. While the burials along the churchyard wall were all disturbed by modern services, those that were actually under the road were untouched. Few of these burials were in coffins, most having been being wrapped in shrouds, judging by the arrangement of the skeletons. Some of the coffins had only open slats as a base – a local peculiarity presumed to have been in order to reduce their cost.



Aerial view of excavations in progress in Commercial Street, Leith, next to the Parish Church
(© Headland Archaeology)



Analysis of the well preserved human remains from the site provided a fascinating picture of life in Leith from the 14th to the 17th centuries (© Headland Archaeology).

Once excavated, the skeletons were studied in detail to estimate age, sex, stature, dental and general health, and as noted above, samples were also taken to provide radiocarbon dates. The findings have provided important insights into the lives of Leith's medieval and post-medieval inhabitants.

Lives were hard and generally short: only three of the excavated individuals appear to have lived more than 45 years. The general stature was about 5' 7" for men, 5' 1" for women, about ½" and 1½" less respectively than the medieval average. There was evidence of many minor injuries. Isotope analysis was used to discover more about where the people buried were from and what they ate. The results indicate six of the adults were incomers, while about 17% of the diet was marine based. Julie noted that at the time a Christian might observe almost one third of all days as meat-free days.

There were some multiple burials, usually of a woman and a child, but there were some instances of up to 4 people interred together.

There were three examples of North/South burials, often interpreted as being pagan, but at some other sites in Leith this practice seems to have been associated with plague victims and that may also be the case here. One female was buried fully dressed, another possible indication of a hurried plague death. Leith endured many periods of plague following the Black Death in 1349 to 1350 – in fact, about two in each generation - and in 1645 about half the local population was estimated to have died in one episode. Julie provided some striking examples of the measures employed to counteract plague, from 1456 including

- Quarantine of the infected
- Burning or fumigation of dwellings
- Restriction of movement
- Closing down of trade
- Wool, skins and hides impounded and burnt
- Markets and schools closed
- Children, dogs and pigs kept off the streets
- Ships quarantined and cleansed by being deliberately sunk then refloated
- Special cleaners employed to undertake and bury the dead

All of these came with penalties for non-compliance that included death for concealing cases! That apart, there is obviously much that resonates with the current pandemic!

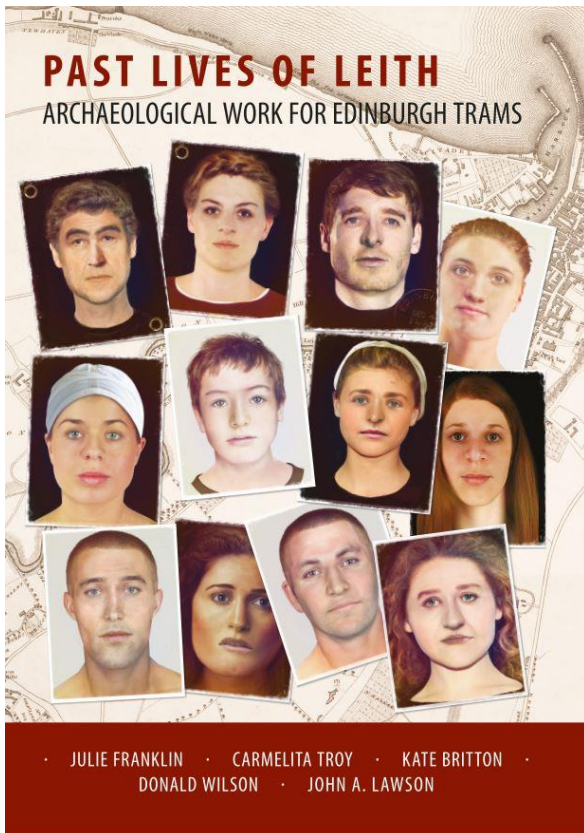
Julie also provided the background to other deaths and lives by running through the wars and sieges affecting Leith – particularly the Siege of 1560 as the associated defensive rampart and ditch are known to have followed the line of what was to become Constitution Street. The Headland excavations revealed the edge of a ditch apparently relating to the early walls, and its construction appears to have disturbed some burials. One woman died of syphilis, another adolescent was buried face down, something which appears to have been done with victims of fires.

Bringing a fascinating talk to a close, Julie explained how a selection of the burials discoveries were brought to life through the process of forensic facial reconstruction, carried out by the Centre for Anatomy & Human Identification at the University of Dundee.

Biographical sketches of these individuals were then created using the knowledge gleaned from the skeleton while historical events from around the time of their life and death were also woven into their imagined life stories – resulting in a

great deal of history and archaeology being imparted in a very readable and understandable way.

Jeff Carter



Cover of *Past Lives of Leith* published by Edinburgh Museums and Galleries, 2019. The discoveries were brought to life through the process of forensic facial reconstruction, carried out by the Centre for Anatomy & Human Identification at the University of Dundee.



Memorably, one character born about 1438 was nicknamed the 'big bruiser'. By the time he was 18, he stood 6ft tall - a good 5 inches more than the average height for the time. Imagined as having worked in the docks at Leith, he appears to have become involved in some sort of affray, evidenced by several broken ribs.

For those of you who missed the talk or wanted to watch it again, the recording is now available to view here -> <https://vimeo.com/651190638>. When prompted enter the password Cademuir29.

If you would like to purchase a copy of the *Past Lives of Leith* book it is still currently available from the ArtUk online shop at the following address:

<https://artuk.org/shop/gifts/books-stationery/product/past-lives-of-leith-archaeological-work-for-edinburgh-trams.html>

Price £30.

Professor David Breeze 'The Antonine Wall: The Creation of a World Heritage Site', 14 December 2021

On the occasion of the **annual joint meeting of the Tweeddale Society and the Peeblesshire Archaeological Society**, our distinguished guest lecturer was Professor David Breeze who spoke on the topic of 'The Antonine Wall: The Making of a World Heritage Site'. A graduate of Durham University, his own research has focussed on Roman frontiers and the Roman army. After serving as Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Scotland from 1989-2005, David led the team which successfully nominated the Antonine Wall as a World Heritage Site and helped create the Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage Site.

In the course of his fieldwork, he has excavated on both Hadrian's Wall and the Antonine Wall and has published widely about both. He has served as chair of the International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies as well as president of several British archaeological societies. He is an honorary professor at the Universities of Durham, Edinburgh, Newcastle and Stirling. In 2021, David was the recipient of the British Academy's Kenyon Medal for his outstanding international contribution to the archaeology of the Roman Empire.

The Antonine Wall was the Roman frontier in Scotland from AD 142 for a period of about 20 years. Named after the Emperor Antoninus Pius, it was the most advanced frontier construction of its time. Constructed by the Roman army, it ran from modern Bo'ness on the Forth to Old Kilpatrick on the Clyde. It consisted of a turf rampart fronted by a wide and deep ditch with forts at regular intervals connected by a road running behind the wall. Civilian settlements clustered outside a number of the forts. In introducing us to the Antonine Wall, David alluded to some of the key sites and finds, not least the spectacular distance slabs, some 19 in all, carved to record the work of the legions responsible for building sections of the wall.

In 2008 the Antonine Wall was inscribed as a World Heritage Site (WHS), joining Hadrian's Wall and the German frontier in the 'Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage Site'. In his lecture, David explored the process of making a monument a WHS. Rome's frontiers run from Scotland across Europe through the Near East and across North Africa. Given the breadth and scale of the Roman empire, its frontiers cross numerous modern states. As a result, the process of creating a series of transnational World Heritage properties involved a great deal of politics and international co-operation with multiple partners across Europe. Much work is also required to develop and maintain this hugely important designation for the premier Roman monument in Scotland.

Jeff Carter/Trevor Cowie



For a period of some twenty years in the mid-2nd century AD, the Antonine Wall was the NW frontier of the Roman Empire. This aerial view shows the Antonine Wall at Rough Castle, near Falkirk (© Historic Environment Scotland).

Stephen Cox: 'The Archaeology of the Clyde Wind Farm', 20 January 2022.

In January, we were delighted to welcome Stephen Cox of Headland Archaeology to speak on 'The Archaeology of the Clyde Wind Farm'. Stephen is a Project Officer for Headland Archaeology. A graduate of Sheffield University he has some 14 years of experience of projects varying in date from the Mesolithic to the Victorian period and ranging from rural locations to urban settings such as St Andrews and Newcastle.

Stephen set the scene with a brief introduction to the Clyde Wind Farm itself, in particular emphasising its scale – a total of 206 wind turbines generating 350 megawatts and spread over an area of 47 square kilometres. Headland Archaeology had been involved in the development from the initial stages of planning application and environmental impact assessment in 2003 and then right through the process of construction from 2008 to 2013, culminating in a final extension in 2016. By providing an Archaeological Clerk of Works service - the first such appointment for a wind farm development in Scotland - it had been possible for Headland to shape the decision-making process throughout the project from design and mitigation strategies and construction.

In view of the scale of the project, involving a wide range of sites and finds of many periods, Stephen concentrated on three areas of particular interest to convey their scope: the Camps Valley, the Midlock Valley and finally two sites in the Clyde Valley itself.

In Camps Valley, the principal archaeological sites known before the wind farm development included the Neolithic henge at Normangill and two burial cairns dug into in the 19th century. As a result of the archaeological work associated with the project, evidence of human activity has been uncovered right from the agricultural land on the valley floor up to the slopes of the surrounding unimproved upland. Out of some 48 features encountered, over 30 turned out to

be shallow pits around 1-2m in diameter – the highest being found at around 425m). The C14 dates obtained from the pits range from Mesolithic to Late Neolithic; finds included Early Neolithic carinated bowl sherds, Middle Neolithic Impressed Ware and Late Neolithic Grooved Ware and a range of lithics. Interpreting the purpose of such shallow features was not straightforward, and possible interpretations range from domestic settlement debris to deliberate ritual deposits. However what was intriguing was that across the whole of the rest of the Wind Farm area only three such pits were found, suggesting the Camps Valley may have had some special significance, maintained over many generations. Might the location of Normangill henge at the mouth of the valley have been a reflection of this specialness of the place?



Controlled excavation of cable trench on the Clyde Wind Farm (© Headland Archaeology).

In the Midlock Valley, where a new substation was built involving a lot of underground cabling, three areas were excavated. On the north slope of the valley, evidence of prolonged human activity was once again found, including a scatter of features and finds of Neolithic to Early Bronze Age date; a Middle Bronze Age platform settlement; and a medieval settlement.



Excavations in progress on the site of a Bronze Age settlement in the Midlock Valley, Lanarkshire (© Headland Archaeology).

The Middle Bronze Age platform settlement was of particular interest, revealing evidence of house construction and internal features in the form of stakeholes (indicative of wattle fences) and post rings, paved areas and hearths.

As well as pottery and lithics, the finds from the platform settlement included an unusually interesting assemblage of cannel coal. Although no intact cannel coal artefacts were found, analysis of the debris has enabled the whole manufacturing process to be reconstructed, indicating that the workshop was making a distinctive type of ornament known as a napkin ring type fastener (possibly for a cloak). This is a regional type found in N England and S Scotland but with a local concentration in Lanarkshire (the source of the raw material being in the area of the Douglas Coalfield). Pottery included a barrel-shaped vessel associated with a C14 date of 1495-1300 cal BC.

Also on the slopes, the traces of the Medieval settlement included part of a possible cruck-framed building, while associated ditches produced Scottish Redware pottery (c 13th-15th

centuries AD), in line with a C14 cal AD 1280-1390 from a possible soakaway ditch within the building, possibly indicating its use as a byre. Remains of a barrel lock (an early form of padlock) were found. The building may have been associated with Crawford Castle only a few kilometres away.



Bronze Age flint scrapers and arrowhead (© Headland Archaeology).

On the planned site of a substation on the valley floor, excavation revealed an Iron Age settlement comprising a round house with what was interpreted as a possible annexe on the SE.

No artefacts were found; however a C14 date gave a range 130-320 cal AD. Near this were two enigmatic long enclosures defined by very shallow gullies c50m long x 5m wide. These are undated and defied any ready interpretation.

At Woodend, on the east bank of the Clyde, limited excavations were carried out in advance of construction of an access road and a site compound on the site of fortified enclosure identified from the air. Excavations shed light on the defences while features in the interior produced some evidence for iron working and a C14 date of 60-220 cal AD. Finally at Newton Plantation, monitoring during the project revealed a previously unknown settlement site on the flanks of Arbory Hill. Metalworking is attested by unidentifiable fragments of bivalve clay moulds. As at Woodend, a C14 date of cal AD 7-132 suggests the settlement was broadly contemporary with the Roman occupation of Scotland.

John Borland: 'The Conan Stone in Context', 17 February 2022

As our speaker in February, we were delighted to welcome John Borland who gave an online presentation on 'The Conan Stone in Context'. John is a retired archaeological surveyor, having worked for the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland and latterly Historic Environment Scotland. Over a period of 36 years he recorded monuments of every type and date, but he took a special interest in Pictish remains. That interest continues and he is currently President of the Pictish Arts Society.

In February 2019, Ann MacInnes of the North of Scotland Archaeological Society (NoSAS) was carrying out a routine survey of the burial ground at Logie Wester, near Conon Bridge in Easter Ross. Whilst probing for stones just under the surface she uncovered a series of previously unrecorded medieval recumbent cross slabs. However she also found a stone with distinctive Pictish symbols: this proved to be the face of a Pictish cross slab which had been reused in the 1790's as a grave marker. Used like that it could not be declared Treasure

Interpretation of the overall results has not been straightforward: constraints included the logistical challenges of a large construction project often in very poor weather conditions and across a very large area and the limited finds and environmental evidence. However, against these limitations, could be set the opportunities offered by being able to study whole valley transects and to tease out some long-term trends.

As many of the issues raised by the Clyde Wind Farm project are directly relevant to the archaeology of our own area, Stephen's talk offered much food for thought. In the discussion which followed, it was noted in particular, how little of the archaeological evidence uncovered in the project had been apparent on the surface – and with that in mind, concern was expressed at just how much is likely to be lost due to the spread of forestry.

Jeff Carter/Trevor Cowie

Trove, so there was no automatic right to recover it and no funding to do so. At this point, John was given permission to go and record the stone, and when he saw it he realised its significance. Eventually, under the co-ordination of Highland Council Regional Archaeologist Kirsty Cameron, the local landowner gave permission for the stone to be removed provided that a replacement was laid over the grave. NoSAS and the Pictish Arts Society covered the cost of recovering the stone and raised £20,000 by crowdfunding to cover the cost of its conservation and eventual display in Dingwall Museum.

Having set the scene, John went on to consider the stone and its carvings in detail. According to the conventional classification system used for Pictish stones, the Conan stone falls into Class 2, defined by the presence of both a cross and a selection of the usual symbols. What is interesting, however, is that this stone has much more in common with stones to the south in Perthshire and Angus than with the well-known concentration of Pictish stones found on the coast in Easter Ross.

The face of the Conan stone which had been concealed in the ground contained the cross and intricate interlace patterns, now mostly very worn. On either side of the upper part of

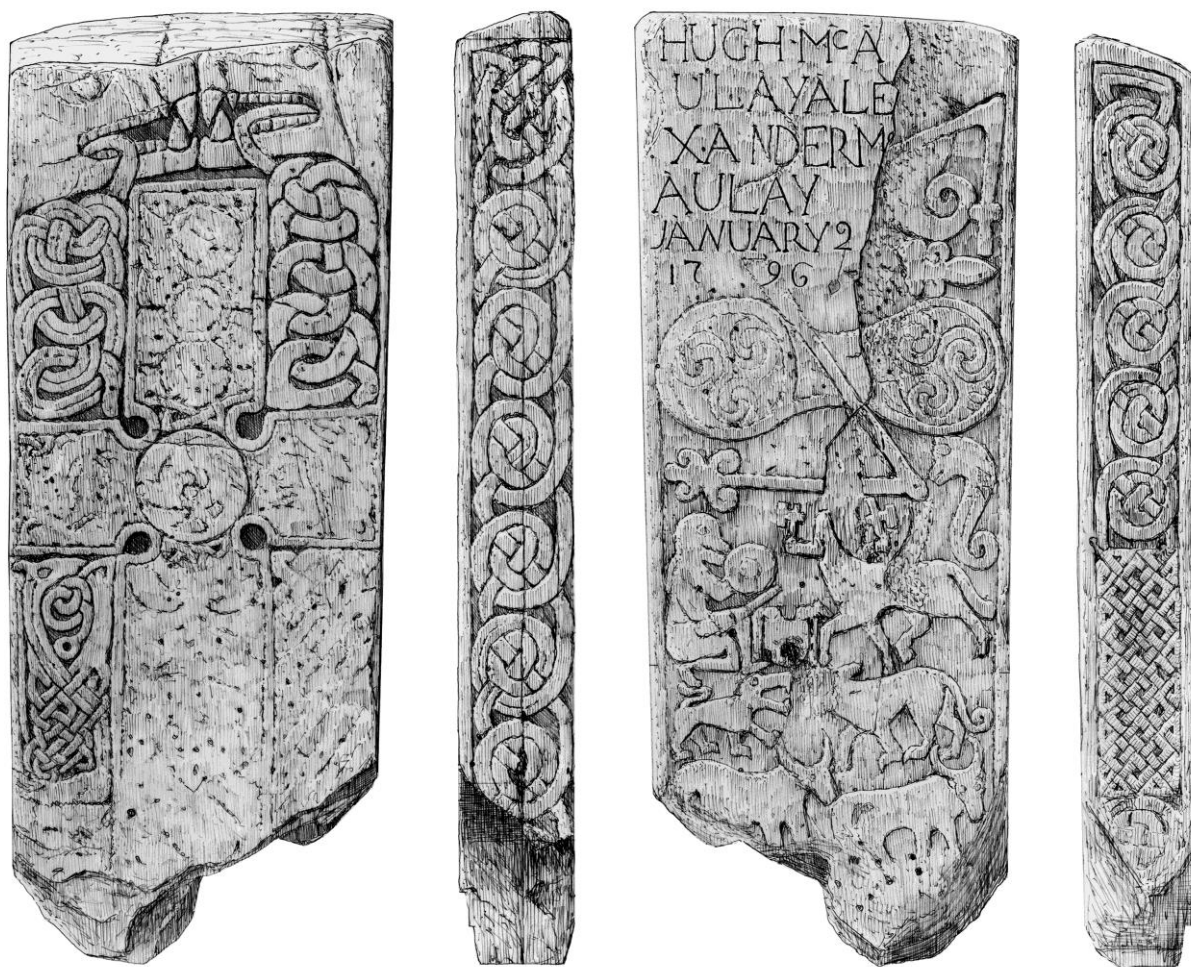
the cross, intertwining snakes emerge from the mouths of two monstrous heads facing each other across the top of the slab (each with a set of well-defined canines, incisors and molars!).

By contrast the opposite face had two Pictish symbols and a rich array of figurative motifs. Alongside the 18th century inscription to Hugh and Alexander McAulay dated 2 January 1796, are the defaced remains of what is probably the symbol known as the serpent and Z-rod. Below that are two double discs, each with three interlocking spirals and another Z-rod, and a figure known as a hippocamp (or sea monster). Underneath these is a kneeling warrior with a possible animal head and bearing a shield and sword; this is a mirrored version of a very similar figure from a stone in Murthly, Perthshire, and these are the only two known. Beside the kneeling figure is a centaur, wielding two axes, again not known in the North but with examples

known from Glamis and Meigle. There is also what is interpreted as a representation of a cauldron, two beasts (possibly a wolf and a lion) and two oxen. Furthermore, and very unusually, down each of the narrow sides of the slab were fine interlaced designs. Although the base of the stone is missing, an original height of about 2.4 metres can be inferred on the basis of comparison with other stones.

Discovered by chance, and probably dating to the 8th century AD, the Conan stone is one of the most significant recent finds of Pictish art and, as John explained with such enthusiasm, a wonderful addition to the overall corpus of early medieval carved stones from Scotland. As noted above the Conan stone is now on display in Dingwall Museum while a fine explanatory leaflet with text by John is available online.

Jeff Carter



The Conan stone (© HES; drawings by John Borland).



Detail of the two facing beasts at the top of the cross face (© HES)

Emily Freeman 'The Peebles Hoard: an update'. Thursday 17 March 2022

As our final speaker of the 2021-2022 series of lectures, we were delighted to welcome Emily Freeman (Scottish Treasure Trove Unit) who gave us an excellent presentation in which she discussed the discovery and excavation of the site, and provide an update on the progress made so far as the hoard is taken through the Treasure Trove system.

Emily Freeman is the Manager of the Treasure Trove Unit, based in the Department of Scottish History & Archaeology, NMS. She has a background in Ancient History and Museums Studies, with a focus on material culture. Before joining the Unit, Emily volunteered with the Staffordshire Hoard project team at Birmingham Museums Trust and spent a year with the Portable Antiquities Scheme in the West Midlands as a Finds Recording Assistant. Her

own primary research interests are numismatics and how coinage developed in Scotland.

Emily set the scene with a brief summary of the discovery of the hoard. In June 2020, and with the landowner's permission, Mariusz Stępień and two friends were metal detecting in a field not far from Peebles when he discovered some unusual bronze rings. Recognising they might be of some significance, Mariusz resisted the temptation to explore further and immediately contacted the Scottish Treasure Trove Unit based in the National Museum of Scotland.

The unusual nature of the rings was confirmed and despite the difficulties posed by the Covid pandemic at that time, a team from the museum immediately undertook a small excavation with assistance from the finder and the kind permission of the landowners. Over the following weeks, often in poor weather conditions, methodical excavation gradually revealed the outline of a pit containing what proved to be a hoard of Bronze Age artefacts dating from around 1000-900 BC.



Excavation in progress: due to the complex nature of the discovery, the whole deposit was eventually lifted as a block of soil and transferred to NMS for investigation under laboratory conditions (© Treasure Trove Unit / Crown Copyright)



Some of the bronze objects from the hoard: the horse gear includes rings and strap ornaments - some of types not previously found in Scotland (© Treasure Trove Unit / Crown Copyright)

The hoard consists of a sword which would have been placed in the pit over along with what seems to be a complete set of horse harness including buckles, rings and strap ornaments, some of them of types not previously known from Scotland.

To the delight of the archaeologists, the painstaking excavation revealed vestiges of leather and wood preserved in the soil fill of the pit, actually allowing them to trace the remains of the sword scabbard and even the straps that once connected the rings and buckles of the horse harness.

Owing to the complexity of the find – and especially the fragile organic remains – the decision was taken to lift the whole pit in a block of soil for ‘micro-excavation’ in the NMS Laboratories. The stony nature of the soil made this difficult but eventually the heavy block was safely lifted, protected by a wooden framework and taken to secure storage in Edinburgh.

A great deal of conservation and research work still remains to be done but already it is clear that this amazing local discovery will eventually provide unparalleled insights into how Bronze Age horse harnesses were assembled. To aid the detailed excavation it was decided to CT scan the block, and it was recently transported to a suitable facility at Southampton University. Although the process of preparing the block for CT scanning was nerve-racking for the team, the results will greatly help to inform the process of revealing the contents of the pit. The images show that one of the ornaments appears to be a rattle pendant - only two of which have previously been found in Britain.

After delays due to the Covid pandemic, the process of excavation and conservation is now underway, and we certainly look forward to hearing more about this very significant Bronze Age find from the Borders in due course.

Jeff Carter

For further information on Treasure Trove in Scotland see

<https://treasuretrovescotland.co.uk/>

Grave concerns: a 19th century discovery at Kingsmeadows, Peebles

Early newspapers are a rich source of archaeological information and fascinating results can turn up in unexpected places! Tucked away among the miscellaneous news items in the *Falkirk Herald* for 13 May 1858 is the following report:

DISCOVERY OF SKELETONS IN PEEBLESSHIRE. *On Saturday, while the workmen were employed in cleaning the gravel walks within the pleasure grounds of Sir Adam Hay, Bart., Kingsmeadows, they dug up a projecting stone, which proved to be a flag covering part of a neatly-formed stone coffin. In this coffin was found a full-sized skeleton, the skull and larger bones being in a partial state of preservation. On making this discovery, one of the workmen struck his mattock into the walk, not a yard from the spot, which resulted in the discovery of another grave, lined and covered with flags in the same fashion but of less dimensions, and containing but a few vestiges of bones. The place where these graves have been discovered is upon a rising ground, not above 50 yards from the margin of the Tweed, and lies upon the northern extremity of what in former times was a common called the Kingsmuir, once the scene where those interesting revels, celebrated by James I, as "Peeblis at the Play" were held.*

Before the advent of digital resources, mining for information like this used to involve laborious searches through often fragile print copies or grainy microfilms: nowadays, the *British Newspaper Archive* makes it possible to undertake such research and unearth such historical nuggets from the comfort of your own armchair!

So what can we say about this 19th century discovery at Kingsmeadows? Unfortunately the bones can no longer be traced so we may never know the whole story. However, the newspaper report is remarkably informative for its time, enabling us to at least hazard a guess at the date of the find. It is quite likely that if the skeleton had been found in a so-called short cist in the distinctive crouched position typical of Bronze Age burials, then that would have been

remarked upon. Instead, the reference to the 'full-sized' skeleton, the proximity of the two burials and their implied method of construction might suggest the much later type of slab-lined graves known as long cists.

Long cists, ranging from just one or two graves to sizeable cemeteries have been found at a number of sites in the Lothians and the Borders. Constructed to hold an inhumation burial laid out full length and usually aligned east-west, such burials are generally associated with the increasingly widespread adoption of Christianity by communities in southern Scotland during the 5th to 7th centuries AD.



Artist's impression of burial in a long cist
(© PAS; drawing by Alan Braby)

Despite being 'old news', the 1858 report is topical in view of current local interest in the future of Kingsmeadows House and proposals for housing development in its grounds. In an area like Peebles, which has been settled since earlier prehistoric times and which continues to expand, this old newspaper account is a useful and timely reminder of the potential for discovery of archaeological remains almost anywhere along the haughs of the Tweed.

Trevor Cowie

Acknowledgement

The British Newspaper Archive is a partnership project between the British Library and *Findmypast*. Searching the site is free, but in order to view the newspapers it is necessary to

pay a fee, a variety of subscription or pay-as-you-go packages being available. For full details see their website at:

<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>



In 1998, three long cists were discovered and excavated at the Abbey Knowe near Lyne Kirk. Their small size strongly suggests that they were children's graves. (© PAS).