

NOSAS AGM

This year's NOSAS AGM, following the Saturday afternoon session at the Highland Archaeology Festival Seminar, was held at the Spectrum Centre in Inverness.

Anne Coombs (Vice Chairperson) thanked retiring post holders and Committee members Emma Sanderson, Trina Wombell, Allan Mackenzie and Paul Humphries for all their hard work and efforts over the past years.

The list of activities, Anne said, sponsored and supported by NOSAS, continues to grow, from practical surveys and field archaeology to joint NOSAS/SRP training events and of course the NOSAS Christmas Dinner and Summer Barbeque. The Loch Hourn and Strathconon projects are now complete and awaiting publication while 2 new projects 'Routes through Ross' and 'Ross-Shire Rock Art' are gathering momentum and a third project centred on the Rosemarkie and Learnie Caves is awaiting funding.

A major highpoint this year was the transfer of the Society's library to the new Community Library in Dingwall, allowing members across the region easier access to the many books in the Society's Collection while also giving the wider public the opportunity to use the same material for reference. Anne was also able to report that preparations for the publication of a Society Journal are well in hand, a long held objective of the Society.

Meryl Marshal (Secretary) announced that there are now 118 members of NOSAS and that the growing numbers of members, together with the demands placed on the society by funding bodies, has prompted the Committee to recognise the changing nature of the society and look closely at its Constitution. The most important issues addressed this year have been those concerned with Data Protection, equality of opportunity and a need to clarify and change the wording of some clauses in the light of current best practice.

As a result of this review some changes were proposed and, having been circulated to the membership, were accepted by the meeting with some minor alterations. The Committee and Officers will keep the situation under constant review in the future and report back to the membership as required. A new "opt out" option has been added to the membership application form so that access to the contact list on the Members' Page of the website can be reinstated, with password protection.

Having accepted the Treasurer's Report and agreeing to maintain subscriptions at the existing level (£12.50 for a single member and £20 for a couple) the meeting then elected the following:

Office Bearers and Committee Members 2009-2010

Chairperson - Anne Coombs

Vice Chairperson - Dave Rendell

Treasurer - David Findlay

Secretary - Meryl Marshall

Committee Members

Brian Duff, Lyn Fraser, Brigitte Geddes, Janet Hooper, Susan Kruse, Cait MacCullagh,
Allan Mackenzie and Alistair Morton

Trina Wombell continues to act as Membership Secretary

Kilfeddermore, Storal and Torseiller

On Sunday October 11th a number of NOSAS members joined the Clyne Heritage Society's guided walk to the cleared townships of Kilfeddermore, Storal and Torseiller, in Strath Brora under the guidance of Nick Lindsay and Jacquie Aitken.

Kilfeddermore, which was to feature in the Highland Archaeology Festival Seminar the following Saturday, is situated in Strath Brora, around 14km NW and inland from the Brora, in SE Sutherland.

Kilfeddermore is the largest township in a string of three on the south bank of the River Brora, between Point (at its confluence with the Blackwater) and Sciberscross to the west. The other smaller townships are Storal and Torseiller.

These townships, in common with the majority of settlements in Strath Brora, are now uninhabited - a direct result of the notorious Clearances instigated by the Sutherland Estate between 1809-21. 95 families were cleared from the townships in this part of Strath Brora in May 1820.

There is a long history of human occupation in the area, dating back to at least 6,000 years to the Neolithic period. The group were to see evidence of occupation dating to the Bronze/Iron Age (up to 4000 years ago), in the form of their roundhouse (hut circle) hill settlements, as well as the upstanding remains of post-medieval and pre-clearance township settlements on the agriculturally rich valley floor.

On reaching the township of Torseiller, the group were shown the remains of buildings with stone footings. Some of these buildings were in excess of 40m long and would have had turf and peat walls with thatched roofs, which have long since disappeared.

These longhouses were very narrow, their width being dictated by the size of the timber roof supports, called *crucks*, which rose from the sidewalls. The longhouses were divided internally and the whole extended family was able to live under one roof with their animals sharing the family's living quarters, especially during the winter months, for the animals' own shelter and the added warmth to the house.

One longhouse at Torseiller is very unusual in its curving nature, curving through an incredible 30°. It also has a large *outshot* (an annexe off the main building) at its upper, north side and a small separate building lower down, accessed from the interior of the longhouse. These outshots are fairly common in Clyne and parts of East Sutherland, but exceedingly rare elsewhere!

At the lower end of this particular longhouse is a *corn-drying kiln*, in which grain harvested from the fields was dried to prevent germination and rotting, before it was milled. The characteristic bowl form of the kiln is a common feature in most of the deserted townships of the Highlands. The kiln building was of a similar construction to the longhouses, but the rectangular lower end housed a hearth, on which a fire was lit. The hot air and smoke was drawn through a flue to the upper, bowl end, which would have had a latticework of sticks laid across it.

The grain, still attached to stalks was laid on top of the sticks and the hot air dried out the grain, ready for milling or storing. The grain that was dried in the corn-drying kilns was processed in mills, of which there are 12 recorded in Clyne parish.

Other, smaller rectangular outbuildings are found at Torseiller, as well as some potato pits, or *tattie clamps* which were simple holes dug in the ground in well-drained locations, often on a ridge of glacial moraine. The pits were lined with straw, filled with the annual crop of potatoes, and sealed with more straw and turf sods for storage during the long winter.

Occasionally these must have been raided by neighbours and this was regarded as a heinous crime, as documented from another Sutherland parish in the Dornoch Jail Records of April 1819, when '*Hector Munro in Aultanduich of Lone Asdale, accused of Stealing Potatoes from a Potatoe pit, belonging to Donald Campbell in Badinbog, parish of Creech*' was incarcerated in Jail.

Reaching Kilfeddermore the party were able to see the flat valley floor with the distinctive, long, sweeping lines of ridges and troughs. This was the township's area of cultivation known as *rig and furrow*, strips of land that were ploughed and fertilised. Planting took place in the ridges and the troughs allowed free drainage.

The piles of stones, or *clearance cairns*, cleared from the cultivated land remain as visible mounds throughout the Strath, as are the *banks, ditches and dykes* that enclose the townships and their fields.

Kilfeddermore is mentioned as far back as 1360 in a charter in '*Origines Parochiales Scotiae*' - '*William, Earl of Sutherland, granted in free barony to his brother Nicolas of Sothyrland and the heirs of his body, for his faithful homage and service, 16 davachs of land in the earldom of Sothyrland called Thorbol, including among others a davach of Grodybrorak, a davach of Sibysroc, and two davachs of Kylpedre Mekill and Litill, to be held for the service of one soldier yearly.*'

Moving through the lower part of the township, the group examined some of the remains of the fourteen longhouses and other building footings. Outshots are present on some of the longhouses and there is evidence of stone wall-enclosed *kale yards* attached to some of the buildings. The kale yards were small areas where domestic rubbish was thrown to aid fertilisation and in which the staple crop of kale was grown. The interiors of the kale yards are often raised above the exterior, showing how they had built up over the years with the amount of domestic organic midden material.

One interesting feature of the site is a stone-built causeway across a small, wet valley, a relatively rare, but extremely practical man-made structure in a township. Keeping feet dry in those days was clearly just as important as it is today!

The Old Parish Register for Clyne demonstrates how many families were living in Kilfeddermore in the late 18th and early 19th Centuries. The last birth in the township, entered in the Parish Register, was in 1814, a poignant reminder of the time when these people were cleared from their land.

One of the 12 mills, recorded in the Parish of Clyne was at Kilfeddermore. The miller, John McLeod, is recorded in the Old Parish Register for Clyne as having four daughters (Margraet, Isobl, Jean and Elspat) by his wife Isobell McIntosh between 1786 and 1800. The mill was latterly operated by a long-standing resident of the township, George Fergusson, who died in 1817. His wife, Katherine Graham, and six of their surviving children subsequently emigrated to Earltown, Nova Scotia.

This township mill would have been an early horizontal-type mill, or 'click-mill', where flowing water drove paddles on a horizontal wheel, with a vertical drive shaft connected to the millstones, in contrast to the more familiar upright mill wheels we see today. The mill footings here are not easy to make out as they are overgrown with rushes, but the stone banking to the mill lade is well exposed and the group were shown the long, winding lade leading upstream to its source at the River Brora, where there is a V-shaped dam which was used to channel water into the lade to power the mill.

The next stop was at the footings of a building that is being actively eroded by the River Brora and has been the focus of an archaeological excavation undertaken by the Clyne Heritage Society. The building will undoubtedly be completely eroded away by the river, so the Society had taken the opportunity with the permission of Sutherland Estate, the landowner, to excavate before all is lost.

Amongst the Hearth Tax Records of 1694, there were 8 hearth owners in Kilfeddermore, including an Angus Gow, a smith, who had two. During a visit in 2006, iron slag had been discovered in the eroded riverbank below this building – and this seemed to be good evidence that this building was indeed, the smiddy.

Volunteers Joan Baxter and Steve Clarke explained the uses to which the buildings had been put and what had been discovered so far. The building on the riverbank is thought to be the smiddy workshop and Steve showed the group a large piece of slag which had been recently uncovered on the floor of the workshop.

The group was shown the major finds which had been discovered so far, including several more pieces of slag, several pieces of late 18th-early 19th Century pottery and glass and several rusty nails. One of the pottery sherds has been identified as imported Chinese porcelain – an unusually fine and high status piece for a smiddy workshop! Most intriguing, however, has been the discovery of a number of incomplete pieces of used mill-stone, both used as flagstone flooring and as loose blocks in the walls and, as the group had already seen, there was a mill very close by.

There is more to this site than just the smiddy 'workshop' building – it is merely one feature in a self-contained, stone-walled enclosure, set on a well-draining river gravel ridge, bounded by the river to the North West and boggy ground to the South East.

Adjacent to the 'workshop', there is a longhouse with outshot, which was probably the living accommodation and there are several other smaller grassed-over ground-level features within the enclosure that have also been investigated.

A circular feature, about 3m in diameter, to the SE of the smiddy building, proved to be a raised stone platform area, on which it is thought was placed a stack of drying hay or corn. Several pieces of a late 18th-early 19th Century green glass wine bottle have been found amongst the stones of this stacking platform, as well as 6 more incomplete pieces of used mill-stone.



HAF Participants inspect the hay stacking platform at Kilfeddermore.

Excavation within the longhouse itself revealed the smallest and, perhaps most beautiful and poignant find of the whole dig so far – a tiny, pierced blue glass bead, 5mm in diameter – from the burnt and ashy topmost layer just under the thick turf. As this uppermost layer represents the last event in the building's history, it is speculated that it was a bead from a necklace or bracelet broken and dropped during eviction in May 1820, before the building was torched by the Estate men.

One of the most intriguing questions so far has been why so many millstone fragments had been discovered in what was supposed to be a smiddy complex? It is possible that the smith may have been the maker and re-grinder of millstones for his neighbour, the miller.

Fragments, which show no wear, have been found, and these may represent stones that broke during manufacture. Fragments which do show wear, however, may also have broken during a re-grinding operation, or may have just become so thin with wear that they were no longer suitable for use in the milling process – or they may have actually shattered during milling itself, all having been re-used as flooring or walling.

After having taken in a great deal of information and having seen many wonderful sights during the day, the weary group sauntered back towards the cars at Point.

Nick Lindsay

Strathconon

An exhibition of the results of our Strathconon Project has been on display throughout September and October in the Village Hall at Milton and, judging by the entries in the Visitors Book, there has been a good number of visitors.

Certainly over the 4 “manned” days we met about 150 people. The Village Hall is quite “a treasure” having been built by Colonel Christian Coombe at the end of the 19th Century. Even though the Hall is in a remote location it seemed a fitting setting to display the results of our project and it had the added advantage of being open at all times, so that folk could come and go over the 8 week period.



The Strathconon Exhibition in Milton Village Hall

The four days when we arranged to “man” the exhibition were advertised locally. On these occasions we spread the exhibition out a bit, provided additional information and handouts and were on hand to answer questions and discuss our findings. This seems to have worked well as it generated more information and a few more contacts. I have now a few visits to make with the NOSAS voice recorder!! I will be approaching the Dingwall Auction Mart to see if we can transfer the exhibition there and set it up along side the Drovers exhibition over the next few months.

The exhibition was also intended to coincide with the two NOSAS Walks at Scardroy on October 4th and 21st. The HAF walks on the 4th were favoured with the most perfect weather.



Meryl Marshall explaining a feature in the landscape

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John Wombell and Anne Coombs led Walk 1, which had the title of “Stills and Shielings”, visiting at least 10 shieling sites and 4/5 still bothies in Coire Mhoraigan. They obviously had a good day because they didn’t come off the hill until 4pm.

I, with the help of 7 NOSAS members, led Walk 2 on the low level route around the townships in the vicinity of Scardroy. 44 people in total took part in the walks.



Anne Coombs in action on Walk 1

The Walks on the 21st were part of the Highland Homecoming Festival, a fringe event associated with the “Scotland’s Global Impact” Conference held at Eden Court in Inverness and were re-runs of the October 4th walks and again they were well attended, with a total of 45 people participating. The weather, however, wasn’t quite as kind to us on this day.

John Wombell was well prepared though, with a temporary bridge for crossing the first burn and a megaphone for communicating with the large numbers that we were expecting. 40 delegates were expected on Walk 1 alone but the forecast must have put some folk off!!

Fortunately the depressing drizzle which had been with us since the early hours stopped just as we were starting the walks and, apart from another 10 minute shower, it stayed dry for the rest of the day. In the afternoon we made our way down the Glen to the exhibition and a late lunch of soup and sandwiches, served by the local community in aid of their Hall Fund.

The day had been thoroughly enjoyed by all involved and there was much interest in the archaeology and many compliments and the soup and sandwiches was the “icing on the cake”.

M. Marshall



Ross-shire Rock Art Project, an Update

There is an entry in the Historic Environment Record that reads:

'Cup Marked stone, A Clach Phollach'. Situated by roadside about half way up brae to Achterneed is a Cup marked stone 'A Chlach Phollach' (Clach Thollach or Clach Pollach (ISSFC 1898)) having on its surface about a dozen cup marks, 2 inches or so in diameter (D MacDonald, A Polson and J Brown 1931) WJ Watson 1904; N Macrae 1923. Then a later entry: 'no trace of this stone could be found. Visited by OS (RD) 20th January 1965'.

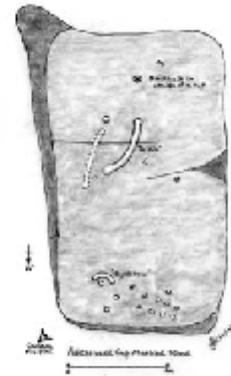
Another later entry by the OS (JB) dated 16th November 1976 relates a story of another visit and conversations with a local crofter. JB then decided that the only known cup marked stone being the Fairy Stone at the Bottacks, A Clach Phollach must be one and the same stone as the 1898 stone. When I first read all this I must say I was rather dubious, as the Fairy Stone is covered in cup marks. JB of the OS counted about 145 cups and when I went to visit it I gave up at 160 as there were more below ground level on 3 sides of the stone. The idea of a stone with 'about a dozen cups on it' being confused with one with over 160 cups on it I cannot imagine, unless JB of the OS was on the Aqua Vitae or something similar.

About a month ago Trina and I were making a survey of the old woodland at Achterneed, below the railway line, and within 10 minutes Trina had found a large smooth slab of schist with 'about a dozen cup marks on it'. We also discovered a possible standing stone in the same wood further east.



Cup marked stone at Achterneed

The decoration at first sight is nothing spectacular and I had to use a mist sprayer to highlight what detail there is on the surface. After all the 'eyebrows' being found on Orkney this year, we hoped to find one in Ross-shire and sure enough there is one on this boulder. There is also a distinct and very substantial bridle, though the cup at its upper end is extremely eroded and there is another possible bridle close to. There is a 1" diameter drill hole driven in the centre of a cup mark. For whatever reason the would-be quarry men gave up and abandoned the hole at about 2" deep.



Completed sketch of Achterneed stone

There is an old, disused track through the wood that winds its way down in the direction of Inchvannie, and the cup marked stone is only about 20m away from this track. I think it is highly likely that we have re-discovered the stone recorded in 1898. The newly 're-discovered stone' and the Fairy Stone are about 1 km apart. There are 2 more large boulders nearby, one possibly with a single cup and one with 2 cups.

The position of this stone in the landscape is also rather exciting as it is near enough in a straight line with the Fairy Stone across the north side of the valley. Travellers to and from Strathpeffer would have crossed this line and it must be likely that there are more cup marked stones to be found in and around Achterneed and the Bottacks.

I am preparing for a block of 4 days field work on the Ross-Shire Rock Art Project later in November and another 4 days in early December with the specific intention of reconciling the confused entries in the HER, similar in many respects to the story above. I shall be contacting everyone on my list of interested volunteers very soon.

The Project has been awarded a grant of £300 by the Catherine Mackichan Trust and we also have a grant from the CBA Challenge Fund, giving the RRAP a working budget of just over £1,000.

John Wombell

Surveying and Recording a Cairn at Boat of Garten

A small team consisting of Anne Wilson, Ann and Edwin Wakeling visited the site, which is already recorded as “*Site MHG 51140, Cairn, undated. Possible burial cairn in woods S.W. of Boat of Garten.*” in March 2009 and got permission from the Ogilvie-Grant Estate to make a detailed survey of the Cairn in its present state.

The cairn lies on a low ridge, probably of glacial origin, running North to South, dropping steeply to the East and even more steeply to the West of the cairn. The site lies in a forest of well-grown pine, with an understory of heather, blaeberry and moss, which covers the outer edges and parts of the cairn. There are also several tree stumps on the edge of the cairn. The central part of the cairn is covered by a number of moss and lichen covered boulders and four pits. Some of the stones arranged around the edge of the pit giving an impression of greater depth.

The pits on the top of the cairn could have been made by treasure hunters long ago or trees that have now rotted away completely. The stones vary from fist size up to 0.50 x 0.50m and 0.80 x 0.20m.

The team spent six days de-turfing the site to determine perimeter of the cairn, two days producing the profile and plane tabling, and two very long days replacing the turf, a total of at least 55 man-hours. This was accomplished on fine days between 2nd and 14th April

Beneath a layer of decaying vegetation the soil was found to be a red/brown silty loam, (peat) and beneath this a grey very fine sandy loam.

Having cleared the turf off the cairn the team then began the process of surveying the site in detail. The cardinal points were marked preparatory to making the profile

A cord was stretched and levelled between two trees as near North-South and East-West as possible, and profile drawn by measuring down from the cord, and distance along the tape.

The plane table was set up on the East side of the cairn, the plan made and a series of photographs taken starting at the West point and progressing clockwise around the cairn.

A distinct line of stones, many of red granite, was noted at the West side, running up into the cairn. (a – a’ on the plan). A large boulder (0.50 x 0.50m) was noted at the foot of this line, which looks like a buttress.



The team also noted that a band of large stones crossed this line, which could be significant if it continued around the cairn but it would not be possible to determine this unless all vegetation was removed.

A curving line of stone tumble extending from the cairn was noted on the East side of the cairn

The flattish top of the cairn was found to be a jumble of loose rocks with four pits and one low depression.

After the work was completed the peat and vegetation were reinstated as far as possible and a final set of photographs was taken 22nd May 2009

Ann Wakeling



The Boat of Garten Cairn

The 'Pits'

Evidence of an economic depression?

The Strathconon Project has occupied my thoughts for a good bit of the time recently, with the exhibition and the two walks. But as the project comes to a conclusion I have been thinking about what we have found.

One of the many things that have exercised my thoughts is the distribution of storage pits in the Upper Glen. 78 have been recorded in 6 different locations. They are always situated in airy, well-drained positions and are generally between 1-2 metres in diameter and 0.3-0.8m in depth – some have a raised bank around the perimeter. Although these features are widespread in the Highlands, no research seems to have been done on them. Their purpose is uncertain, but it is generally suspected that they were used for storing potatoes on the other hand they may also have been for storing grain or turnips.



Storage pits at Blar na Beithe

Potatoes were introduced into Scotland about 1750. They had several advantages over the usual crop of oats in that they had a bigger yield per acreage of ground and would therefore feed 3 times the number of people. They were also well suited to the damp climate of the Highlands and readily cultivated on any type of soil.

It is clear that the introduction of sheep c1800 had a big impact on Strathconon and that the people, once so reliant on their cattle economy, were shifting from place to place. Cultivated land in the Upper Glen was at a premium and sheep occupied many of the prime positions. There was a boom period, however, from 1790 to 1815 during the Napoleonic Wars. Agricultural products from the Highlands were in great demand; cattle prices were high, illicit whisky had a good market, people could find seasonal work on the Black Isle and in Easter Ross and men were needed to serve in the overseas conflicts.

The population in Strathconon grew until it was said to be one of the most congested areas of the Highlands. When the Napoleonic Wars came to an end, however, this inflated population was left without a means of supporting itself

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How did this population survive? It is difficult to determine whether people migrated away from the glen, if they did it was probably to a minimal extent, since the population remained high throughout the next decade. According to the Old Parish Registers, most families seem to have crowded into two or three settlements. Almost certainly the practice of distilling illicit whisky continued; a good number of court cases and charges of “deforcement of officers of revenue” between 1818 and 1832 are documented. And inevitably the potato must have become a means of subsistence. The population would have relied heavily on the crop and almost certainly stored it for the winter months.

It occurred to me that an interesting exercise would be to explore the relationship between the population numbers (signified by OPR births between 1815 and 1832) and the number of pits at the different settlements. The known sheep farm lets and occurrence of sheepfolds would also be relevant. First impressions appear to be that there is a correlation between the pits and the population numbers at certain of the settlements; Achness has 19 births and 22 pits and Invermeinie has 35 births and 17 pits, whereas Inverchoran has 1 birth and no pits and Backlinan has 2 births and no pits. But it is not as simple as that. There are lots of anomalies, Blarnabee for instance has 4 births and 12 pits, this could be explained by the fact that there was a sudden expansion of the population there in the 1841 census to 54, but yet Corrieuic which has a population of 64 in the 1841 census has only 8 pits. There are other factors coming into the equation too; some of the pits for example may have been swept away by later agricultural activity or some of the written records may be “suspect”. My research continues.



Storage pits at Achadh an Eas, near Scardroy

What we have been recording in Strathconon are almost certainly pits for storing potatoes, possibly at a time when the population was heavily reliant on the crop for their subsistence. It is perhaps unfair to make light of the situation by using the pun in the title of this piece. The people of Strathconon must have been going through a very difficult time.

Meryl Marshal

Assynt's Hidden Lives Project



Historic Assynt has just received funding from Highland Leader and HLF for a six-month community archaeology survey project. Walk over surveys will be conducted alongside the main routes through the parish and followed up with more detailed surveys of selected priority sites using a wide range of techniques from Plane Table to Laser.

The project complements the work that has already been done at Clachtoll Broch and will provide a much fuller picture of the archaeological context of that important monument. Within the next year or two they hope to launch a much more ambitious project to investigate, consolidate and interpret the Broch and other selected sites throughout Assynt and make them more accessible.

There will be plenty of opportunities for all sorts of involvement in these projects and Historic Assynt's Gordon Sleight will keep NOSAS members informed.

Gordon Sleight

Hut Circles on Skye

There will be a 'hut circling' weekend on Skye in November. Martin Wildgoose has generously offered to show us the locations of hut circles in the Strath area on Saturday November 7th and Sunday November 8th and we hope to record as many as possible.

We plan to start work early on Saturday 7th at 9.00am (ish), to make the most of the short daylight.

I am camping at the Lochside Caravan and Camping site and there is still room for a few more campers.

Please get in touch with me if you are interested in joining the group for the weekend on 01854 612647 or by email annawelti@btinternet.com

Anna Welti

North Of Scotland Archaeological Society

RCAHMS/SRP

Historical Document Research Training

A reminder that the next historic document training course is set to take place in January 2010 at the new Highland Council Archive Centre in Inverness.

The course will introduce participants to the many archaeological, documentary and historic sources available to help research historic rural settlement sites. Details of this training course are on the SRP website *What's on* page.

Scotland's Rural Past Conference 14th and 15th November 2009

Gordon Sleight, Historic Assynt

Changing buildings in Assynt

John Dye, Ken and Jean Bowker, Moidart History Group

High Mingarry

Glyn Jones, Glen Muick SRP Group

The Glen Muick SRP project, Aberdeenshire

Maggie Hancock and Jennie Hynd, High Mathernock Project, Renfrewshire

The mills of Mathernock,

Dave Walsh, Kinnettles & District Heritage Group

A multitude of mylnis in Strathkerbet, Angus

Neill Malcolm, Appin Historical Society

Discovering Cuil

John Barrett, Strath Avon Survey

Doing a lot with a little: SAS Mission creep, Moray

Susan Walker, Sleat Historical Society

Rediscovering the lost turf townships of

Baravaig and Camuscross, Isle of Skye

Dave and Carol Godwin, Bostadh Archaeological Group

Rediscovering the abandoned township of Bostadh,

Isle of Lewis

Bill Patterson, Mull Historical & Archaeological Society

Teaching, Learning and doing -cascading the SRP way at

Antium and Kildavie

Workshops and events on:

- Site photography
- Woodland archaeology and your SRP project
- Living history with Walking Theatre

Optional guided walk to a local rural settlement site with specialists.

Fort William

Conference details and booking forms

on

www.scotlandsruralpast.org.uk

The Essence of Archaeology

Martin Biddle, the excavator of Nonesuch and Winchester, talking to a group of sixth formers, many years ago, described archaeology as 'an activity that takes place in the rain'. HAF 2009 lived up to that definition!

Looking back through the photographic record of the Festival one has to be struck by the number of pictures of people in waterproofs and wellies in the pursuit of archaeological clues in the landscape.

But central theme of the Festival was the sharing of archaeological expertise and enthusiasm with a wider public underlining the mystery, romance and excitement of delving into the past, the very essence of the process of archaeological research itself.



Meryl Marshall shares information about Strathconon with local residents.



Anne Coombs describes the working of a corn-drying kiln at Rogart.



Highland Ranger/Shaman Duncan MacDonald, at Clava, has read *Britain BC* and is now inviting Festivalgoers to cross into the Domain of the Ancestors.



Anne MacInnes interprets the pre-crofting landscape at Lonemore



On the slopes above the Lettie River a party listens, in the rain, to John MacDonald outline the various local stories relating to the settlement of Leataidh and Lettie's Grave.

North Of Scotland Archaeological Society



NOSAS Christmas Dinner

Saturday, 12th December 2009

Essential to be seated by 6.00 pm sharp

in

The Red Poppy Restaurant
of Strathpeffer Pavilion

£22.95 per person

Thai Style Tiger Prawns

Sautéed in garlic, ginger, coconut & coriander

Chicken Ballotine

Chicken breast rolled and filled with asparagus, sunblazed tomatoes & winter mushrooms and served with oatcakes & our own chutney

Haggis Pakora

Placed on a bed of clapshot with a whisky cream sauce

Deep Fried Brie

In a pear cider batter on a pool of spiced redcurrant jelly

Lightly Spiced Butternut Squash Soup

Finished with swirls of cream

West Coast Scallops

Rested on a chorizo risotto

Gin Fizz Sorbet

Roast Turkey

Served with traditional Christmas trimmings

Salmon Steak

With a pistachio nut crust and surrounded with a fresh orange & cranberry sauce

Wild Venison Fillet

Rested on clapshot with a beetroot & raspberry jus

Vegetable Patia

Authentic Indian curry served in a crisp basket with Pilau rice

Chicken Roulade

Chicken breast rolled and filled with haggis coated in a whisky sauce

Pork & Apricot Stroganoff

Served with wild rice

Ross-shire Sirloin Steak (£2.95 supplement)

8oz sirloin served with homemade chips & pepper sauce

Hot Poached Pear

With a sticky caramel sauce

Cheesecake

Passion Fruit & Lime

Christmas Pudding

Served with Cointreau sauce

Ice Cream

Luxury ices served in a brandy snap basket

Booking with payment direct to

David Findlay

Holly Cottage

Fearn

Tain

Ross Shire

IV20 1TJ

(by Tuesday, 9th December)

After our dinner we will meet upstairs
to watch a video of work undertaken by NOSAS
Further details and queries to Brigitte Geddes

01863 766 106 (answer phone)

study@allezweb.co.uk

Next NOSAS Newsletter
Deadline, 22nd January 2010

Copy, as usual, to Dave Rendell
01349 867006 or email: dacamacsys@btinternet.com