



The new cross slab from Sanday, Orkney © The Orcadian

Another exciting new find in Orkney

Malcolm and Jackie Sinclair have unearthed a Pictish cross slab whilst digging in a sand dune on their farm on Sanday. Measuring approximately 2.5m long, the stone is decorated with a ringed cross, carved in shallow relief. Below the cross, a considerable length of undecorated stone (not shown in the photograph) suggests a sizable tenon.

The opposite face has not been examined yet.

Spring Lecture Series

21 May 2021 – Dr Anouk Busset

*Carved stones and places of devotion in early Christian northwest Europe:
Pictish perspectives*

Anouk Busset rounded off our Spring lecture series in May with *Carved stones and places of devotion in early Christian northwest Europe: Pictish perspectives*. Drawing from her comparative studies of carved stones in their landscape settings in early Christian Sweden, Ireland and Scotland, she focussed on groups of stones in Uppland, Sweden and in Pictland. It should be noted that the early Christian period in these regions is not contemporary - Christianity came much later to Sweden. However the majority of the carved stones studied were created in the early phases of Christianisation of their respective regions. These comparisons allow us to move beyond natural and regional specificities to look at similar processes in different geographical areas, and to pick out similar patterns in landscape settings and structures.

Anouk began with several groups of stones from Uppland, mostly in the area around Lake Vallentuna to the north of Stockholm. These differ from our familiar Pictish stones of the early Christian period in that the stones are incised and carry runic inscriptions, generally around a central more or less elaborate cross, originally painted so that the messages of both runes and cross were strikingly visible. These mainly date from the eleventh century.

At Gränby in Orkesta, about ten kilometres north of the lake, a spread of five rune stones survives in an area that includes the remains of a Viking Age hall, house foundations and two Iron Age burial grounds. The most westerly stone is inscribed on two faces, the text reading in translation: (side A) 'Thorstein and Ragnfridhr, they raised this stone in memory of Björn in Gränby, (side B) Kalfr's brother.

Vigmundr slaughtered him. May God help his spirit and soul better than he deserved'. This is a Christian stone, commemorating the murder of Björn and incorporating a prayer for his soul, although we are left wondering about the implications of that final "better than he deserved". Several decades later, the largest (and central) stone in the group was raised, bearing a much longer inscription: 'Hemingr and Sjalfi and Jöhan, they have cut (the stone) in memory of their father Finnvidhr and Vargas and Ragnfridhr, and their mother, and in memory of Ingigerdhr and in memory of Kalfr and Gerdharr and [---]. He alone owned all at first. These were their kinsmen. May God help their spirits. Véseti carved these runes.' The reasons for raising this stone seem to include the affirmation of a genealogy and by implication a right to the land originally owned by [---], an ancestor whose name is illegible on the stone. Véseti, the carver, signed a number of other rune stones in Uppland.

Further south in Täby, to the east of Lake Vallentuna, a powerful landowner commissioned at least eleven rune stones. Some of these were part of a row of standing stones that marked a bridge or causeway that led for about 150 metres across marshy ground to a church site - Jarlabanke bro (Jarlabanke's bridge). Two of the stones carried the message: 'Jarlabanke had these stones raised in memory of himself while alive and made this bridge for his spirit and (he) alone owned all of Täby. May God help his spirit.' These stones were set to guide people through a landscape on a bridge built as an act of piety – a bridge that led across difficult terrain and may have been seen as a bridge to heaven. Other of Jarlabanke's stones record that he created a meeting place, and made other bridges – formal acts that at the same time denote both power and piety.

Anouk then considered the stones at St Vigeans. As on the rune stones, the cross frequently appears as the central motif, but the messages borne by the stones are less intelligible to present-day viewers than those on their Swedish counterparts. How did the stones participate in the identity of the site? Although its location, on the hill by the stream, is typical of many earlier foci of ritual, there is little

evidence for an ecclesiastical site here before the 8th century. It is possible that construction began here in the early 9th century associated with the bringing of relics of St Fechan. The original locations of the stones in the collection are uncertain, but the suggestion that the Drosten stone was perhaps placed at the eastern entrance to the site is an attractive one which finds parallels in the use of cross-slabs as entrance or boundary markers elsewhere. Given the largely liturgical programme of the carvings here, it seems probable that some at least of the St Vigeans stones played a part in the organisation of liturgical space, guiding movement and activity around the enclosure and church. For example, in order to read the inscription on the Drosten stone, one has to kneel or bow, an appropriate action at the entrance to the site. In addition to the cross-slabs, there were carved altars and shrines, funerary monuments and grave markers. All these participated in the creation or re-creation of the religious site at St Vigeans.

Back in Sweden, Anouk described a number of stones associated with wealthy women which reference movement through a wider landscape, and, indeed as far as Jerusalem. At Broby bro, a few kilometres south-west of Jarlabanke bro, rune stones were erected near a group of Iron Age and early Christian burials near the bridge that gives the place its name. One reads 'Ingifastr and Östen and Svein had these stones raised in memory of Östen their father and this bridge and this mound'. Another, raised by Östen's wife, reads 'Estrid had this stone raised in memory of Östen her husbandman who went to Jerusalem and met his end in Greece'. Östen had certainly travelled far, probably as a pilgrim. Did Estrid travel with him? The couple had raised another stone together: 'Östen and Estrid raised the stone in memory of Gagr(?) their son.' Among the early Christian burials here, a woman of about eighty years of age was laid to rest next to the grave of a boy of about ten. At her feet lay a wooden box, whose contents included a coin minted in Switzerland. Was this Estrid herself, returned to Broby bro after the death of her second husband? Evidence for that marriage comes from stones she erected in Hargs bro, to the north west of the lake, and stones at Broby bro

testify to her later activity there along with her family, including her grandson, the powerful magnate Jarlabanke.

At Snättska and Vreta, two stones shed a little light on another wealthy woman as well as on Estrid. At Snättska, 'Inga had these stones raised for Ragnfast her husband. He was Estrid and Gefrit's brother.' The attribution of the stone to Fot, who also carved stones for Estrid's family in Täby, suggests that this is probably the Estrid who married Östen of Täby. Hargs bro, the place to which she moved on her second marriage, is fairly close to Snättsta. Inga raised another stone at Vreta, which tells us that 'Inga raised stones in memory of Ragnfast, her husband. She came to inherit from her children'. From this it seems that Ragnfast inherited his father's property, which then passed to his children by Inga, and that on their deaths, she inherited in turn. About eighty kilometres away at Hillersjö, a lengthy inscription tells us more about Inga and her mother, Gerlög. 'Interpret the runes. Germundr took Gerlög for a wife when she was a maiden then they got a son before Germundr drowned, and then the son died. Then she got Gudric. He (owned) this. Then they got children. And one maid lived; she was called Inga. Ragnfast of Snättska took her as wife. Then he died and thereafter her son. And the mother (Inga) came to inherit from her son. Then she got Erik. Then she died. Then Gerlög came to inherit from her daughter. Thorbjörn Skald carved the runes.' This lengthy inscription illustrates a number of points about life in eleventh century Uppland. Notably, marriage could result in women moving over considerable distances. A woman could inherit her husband's property if he died without children. If her children inherited from their father, the mother could still inherit the property if the children died without living issue. This could result in women owning estates that were separated by considerable distances, as in the case of Gerlög. It also reveals some of the complex relationships between Uppland landowners.

The messages on the Swedish stones are fairly explicit. Can their contents shed any light on the messages carried on Pictish stones? Anouk suggested that we consider the cross-slabs at

Aberlemno. Here we have stones situated near a main route north through a rich arable landscape, a little south-west of the important ecclesiastical site at Brechin, overlooked by the ancient hill-top sites of Finavon to the north and Turin Hill to the south. Chalmers was the first to suggest that the battle site of Dún Nechtain lay nearby (at Dunnichen) and was commemorated by the battle scene on the Aberlemno churchyard stone. (He did, however, also suggest that the battle may have been legendary.) There is a long gap between the date of the battle (685 AD) and the raising of the stone in the ninth century. Furthermore, Alex Woolf has plausibly argued for Dunachton in Badenoch as the location of the battle, which would seem to cut the close link between the battle and the stone. However, it is possible that the stone was erected at a period when Fortriu was expanding its dominance to the south.

Thus it may still commemorate the battle of Dún Nechtain, but a battle fought in the Verturian heartlands to the north. Art historians have pointed to stylistic links between Aberlemno 3 (the road side cross-slab) and the Hilton of Cadboll stone. George and Isobel Henderson raised the possibility that the same craftsman may have carved both. Cynthia Thickpenny's analysis of key patterns has also highlighted the similarities between those found on Aberlemno 3 and Hilton of Cadboll. It is possible that the two main cross-slabs at Aberlemno were erected to emphasise the connections with Fortriu, as the northern kingdom extended its influence over this area. Carved stones, both in Sweden and Pictland had a part to play in the creation or reinvention of a place, and could be seen as enhancing or emphasising the power and prestige of a patron, a faction, or a saint in that particular place. They could guide movement around an ecclesiastical site, or through a landscape by marking newly-built roads and bridges. They can also tell us something about connections between people over long distances, whether by explicit inscriptions as found on the rune stones or by the choice of imagery or decoration as we find on Pictish carved stones.

Sheila Hainey

PAS Newsletter 100?

It is not often that I have to take issue (bad pun!) with Graeme Cruickshank, especially over the early years of the PAS, but I do not agree with everything in his article in the last Newsletter, “PAS Newsletter celebrates its ton-up”.

I joined the PAS in October 1988, and still have the letter I received from the then secretary, the late Marianna Lines, along with my membership card with the line drawing by Niall Robertson of the lost Linlathen stone and of course Newsletter No.1 Autumn 1988. I have carefully kept all the PAS Newsletters and indeed other publications since, and have been aware throughout our history of the sometimes wayward numbering! This collection may be one of the only complete sets of PAS Newsletters. Sadly no set was ever kept in the PAS “Archive”.

Newsletters no. 1-9 from Autumn 1988 to Winter 1991 were all numbered and dated. There then followed three newsletters numbered 1991-92/2, /3, /4, and /5. This last was dated September 1992. For some strange reason, there was no number 1! These were then followed by two Newsletters, numbered No 1 and 2 in March and April 1993 respectively.

The Newsletter which followed was also numbered no.1, dated Summer 1993. This was the beginning of our present numbering, which has been continuous since and with one exception. Again, for some strange reason there was no number 23! The issue which should have been no.31 was not numbered, but this does not affect the sequence. Like Graeme I have accepted the two “Updates” in 1996 as Newsletters. Please note that in this analysis I have only quoted numbers and dates actually printed on the Newsletters.

So, back to the matter of our 100th Newsletter. From no. 1 in March 1993 there have been 99 Newsletters – remembering that no. 23 never existed. However, before that I have demonstrated that there were 15 issues prior to that. In summing up, therefore our “No. 100” was actually our 114th Newsletter!

Norman Atkinson.

Park House symbol stone – the camera never lies?

In responding to Hugh Levey’s second article on the subject (*The ‘Rules’ of Pictish Symbol Usage – the author responds*, PAS Newsletter 98), Graeme Cruickshank raised the matter of the Park House symbol stone and the symbols thereon (PAS News 99).

Graeme refers to a photograph taken by James Ritchie in the early 1900s (fig 1), commenting that it was taken “*under optimum conditions*”. He quotes the photographer’s assertion that the upper symbol is not a notched rectangle and Z-rod, as illustrated by Allen in *The Early Christian Monuments of Scotland*, but rather a so-called flower symbol. This is not the first time this symbol has been so interpreted – the illustration in Stuart’s *The Sculptured Stones of Scotland vol 1* shows it thus (fig 2). That illustration was done by P A Jaztresbski, of whom Stuart was to write “his drawings were often found to be deficient in accuracy”.



Figure 1: Ritchie’s 1908 photograph of the Park House symbol stone.

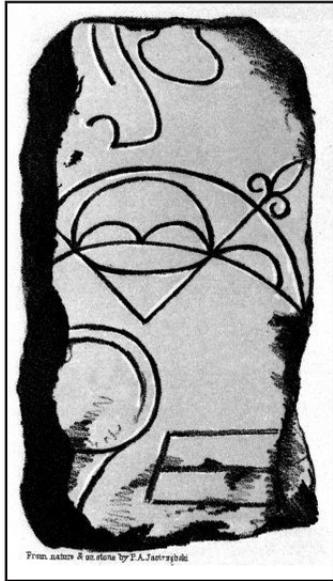


Figure 2: Illustration of Park House symbol stone from J Stuart's *The Sculptured Stones of Scotland* vol 1, scale 1:10

Graeme also mentions my illustration in *The Pictish Symbol Stones of Scotland*, which shows a notched rectangle and Z-rod but comes down firmly on the side of Ritchie's photograph, stating "It certainly looks like the drooping end of a 'stamen' in the photo". Well the camera never lies, or so they say.

Before explaining why I arrived at my conclusion, it is worth considering briefly how a carved surface, specifically an incised one, responds to light. First of all, the light needs to rake across the surface at an oblique angle in order to model the carving. I'm sure we can all recall trying to make out the carving on a symbol stone when the sun is shining directly on to the surface. But if the angle of the sun is just right, the incised carving can appear crisp and clear.

If we take a simple motif – an incised Latin cross – and assume it is lit diagonally from top left by the sun, the raking light will model both the horizontal and vertical lines evenly (fig 3). However the same light source played over an incised saltire would only model one of the diagonal lines – the one lying opposed to the light source. The other incised line, lying at roughly the same angle as the light source, would not be modelled. Instead the light would run down the incision, making it much less obvious (fig 4).

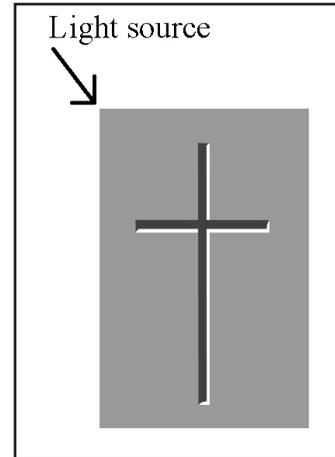


Figure 3: An incised Latin cross, lit by oblique diagonal light.

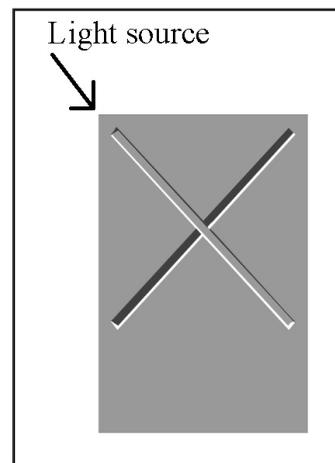


Figure 4: An incised saltire, lit by oblique diagonal light.

So a set of complex motifs, such as Pictish symbols, with numerous curves, circles and straight lines at various angles, would give us a variable outcome if lit by only one light source. That's why my former photographer colleagues at RCAHMS/HES use multiple flash arrayed round any carved stone they are recording. Returning then to Ritchie's photograph (fig 1), we can see that the broken edge at the top left of the stone is catching the light and the right hand side of the stone is in shadow so his light source is indeed coming from top left. This can also be seen on the tree trunks in the background. But the highlights are not bright and shadows not deep so the sunlight is not intense. Rather it is an ambient light passing perhaps through some cloud and diffused maybe by the branches of the trees. Yet the 'shadows' cast in the incised lines – horizontals, verticals, diagonals and curves – are dark and, for the most part, consistent. Something is not right.



Figure 5: Ritchie’s 1905 photograph of the symbol stone built into the churchyard wall at Clatt.

My guess is that the image is enhanced. I do not think Ritchie touched up his photograph but rather prepared the subject by applying a pigment – charcoal probably – into the incised carving to compensate for the shortcomings of his only light source. This is a common feature of Ritchie’s Pictish stone photography: the charcoal “shadow” is evident on the otherwise flat image of the Clatt symbol stone (fig 5). But if he is merely adding clarity to what’s already there, you may well argue he isn’t cheating and that it is still a reliable and objective record. But of course as soon as one makes a mark, be it a drawing on the page or applying charcoal to a carved surface, one is being subjective. That goes for me too.

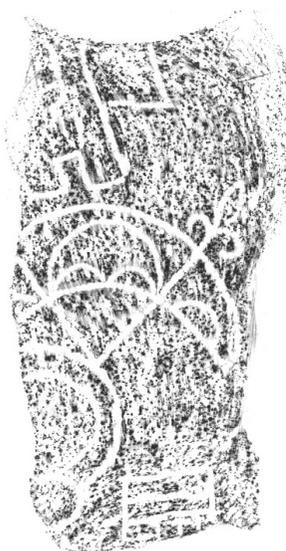


Figure 6: Rubbing of Park House symbol stone, scale 1:10

Before making my drawing of the Park House symbol stone, I made a rubbing of it. This method is a contentious one and is now frowned upon but it can work very well, especially on incised carvings. A sheet of thin paper is held tightly across the surface of the stone and something akin to a black wax crayon is then applied to the paper. Where the paper makes contact with the stone beneath, it takes the wax. But where the stone is incised, it doesn’t make contact and the paper takes no wax, leaving a negative imprint of the carved

design. Thus, my rubbing (fig 6) shows not the curved drooping “stamen” of a flower symbol but the straight lines and acute angle of a Z-rod.

It may well be that Ritchie was influenced by Stuart’s illustration of the stone and thus drew with his charcoal what he expected to see. Some may argue that I was unduly influenced by Allen’s illustration – we are none of us foolproof. Indeed with hindsight I think I can see traces of

the curled terminals on the comb symbol on my rubbing – a feature which I dismissed at the time. However I would hope that my conclusion on the top symbol was based upon sound evidence (fig 7).

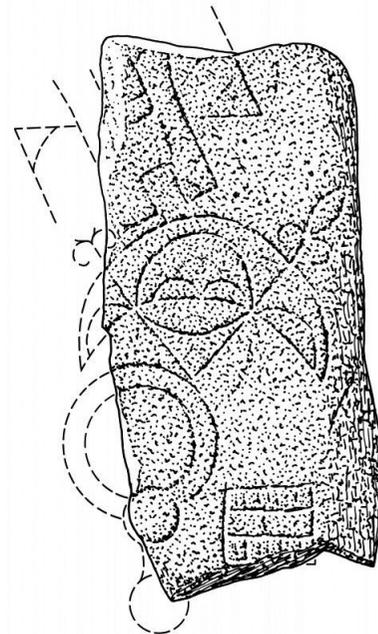


Figure 7: Park House symbol stone by John Borland, scale 1:10

Either way, it’s worth making your own judgement, if you can. If not, use what you believe to be a reliable source and be wary of the antiquarian record. It is a rich resource of material which enhances our study but often the drawings and photographs are ‘of their time’. At the very least, beware staring endlessly into photographs from the comfort of your study. Cameras do lie.

JB

It’s membership renewal time!

Membership renewal time is upon us – reminders will be sent out by email soon. Please renew your membership and please do so promptly. In fact you can do so now by visiting <http://www.thepictishartsociety.org.uk/> - and selecting Join/Renew Membership.

St Boniface

Having read the article 'From Angus to Easter Ross and Beyond' by Anna Ritchie in the 100th edition of this newsletter, I thought that readers might be interested in a few additional details about the saints named in the article. First, I must stress that my researches on the subject have been done as an interested amateur who was lucky enough to have access to relevant sources. To find out what other information I have gathered, go to the 'Northern Saints Trails' section of the website www.northernpilgrimsWay.co.uk (run by a group re-establishing the medieval pilgrimage route between St Duthac's, Tain and St Magnus', Kirkwall, of which I am the secretary).

The article suggested that the movements of the 7th century bishop Boniface/Curitan could be traced using the evidence on carved stones. It mentions some dispute over whether Curitan (Boniface was his religious name) was of Pictish or Roman descent. The legend that Boniface/Curitan travelled from Rome does not necessarily rule out his being Pictish as it was not uncommon for men to receive their priestly training in Rome before returning to Scotland (e.g. Ninian). However, one of the marked features of Curitan's influence was his habit of dedicating, or re-dedicating, holy sites to St Peter. It is said that this was because he believed that he was descended from Peter's sister, Radia. Could he have had both Pictish and Mediterranean ancestry?

In addition to the sites mentioned in the article, dedications linked to Curitan can be found at Glen Urquhart, Avoch, in a fair at Loth called Carden and perhaps at Eyartan in Braemore, Latheron. Other lesser-known Northern sites are the church of Clyne, which was a supersession; a chapel at Olgrinbeg, Halkirk; the church and fair of Thurso; the church of Kirkiboll, Tongue, which shows the Norse form *kirkin-boll*, indicating a foundation during the Norse period. Kilpheddar is a church of St Peter in the Strath of Kildonan, which lends its name to Kilpheddar Moss and the burn of Kilpheddar in the parish of Latheron.

The article links Curitan with the Skinnnet stone. As the bishop's palace was just up the river from Skinnnet at Braal, it is probable that the site at Skinnnet was the cathedral church until Bishop Gilbert built St Peter's Kirk in Thurso. The only known dedication of the Skinnnet site is to St Thomas. This is quite possible, as Thomas a Becket had been a friend of King William (1165 to 1214), when the king was in exile in England

and the king encouraged dedications to him. Gaelic speakers referred to the site as An Abair, (Abbey), showing a superseded Celtic foundation. The article goes on to mention Triduana as a companion of Boniface/Curitan. Of the 33 saints associated with Caithness that I have listed, Triduana is the only female. There are legends of Triduana coming from Greece with St Rule (4th century) and with St Boniface. She settled at Rescobie, Angus. She is associated with Edinburgh and the Highlands. A legend of her plucking out her eyes to repel an unwanted suitor is very similar to that of St Bridget. She is famed for curing eye diseases. She is mentioned in the Orkneyinga Saga as curing Bishop John, who had had his eyes plucked out but had them restored when he was taken to her resting place at a graveyard at Ballachly, Achavanich near Loch Stemster. Part of the adjoining land was known in ancient times as Croit Trolla, the croft of St Triduana. This resting place would have been the site of a relic, not her grave, which has been excavated at Restalrig, Edinburgh. It used to be a place of pilgrimage and has recently been restored. There are dedications to her at a chapel in Kintradwell (Loth, South of Helmsdale), the House of Peace at Dunbeath (possibly!) and Papa Westray, Orkney. The article places Croit Trolla near Dunbeath but I suggest that the Loch Stemster setting is more accurate and the confusion with Dunbeath is caused by the place-name of Ballachly being used for both the graveyard at Loch Stemster and the House of Peace site at Dunbeath.

Jane Coll

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Notice of PAS AGM 2021

The Annual General Meeting of the Pictish Arts Society will be held online via Zoom on Friday 19 November to consider the following business:

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 Approval of the 2020 AGM Minutes (see this Newsletter)
- 3 President's and Secretary's Joint Report (see this newsletter)
- 4 Treasurer's Report: Presentation & Approval of Annual Accounts (to be circulated)
- 5 Appointment of an Independent Examiner
- 6 Other Honorary Officers' Reports:
 - a) Membership Secretary
 - b) Editor
- 7 Election of Honorary Officers:
 - a) President
 - b) Two Vice Presidents
 - c) Secretary
 - d) Treasurer
 - e) Membership Secretary
 - f) Editor
 - g) Events Organiser
 - h) Archivist
- 8 Election of Committee: minimum six, maximum twelve
- 9 Any other competent business

Note: Business will begin immediately after that evening's online lecture at approx. 20.30. A link to join the Zoom lecture & AGM will be sent out to members beforehand.

Please send nominations for committee, and notes of any matters you wish to raise, to Honorary Secretary, Jennifer McKay, 119 David Douglas Ave, Scone, Perth PH2 2QG. Alternatively, email: info@thepictishartsociety.org.uk

We would strongly recommend you to contact anyone you intend to nominate beforehand so that they are not called upon out of the blue.

Joint Report from the President and Honorary Secretary

The last 12 months have been challenging for all but we are pleased to report that despite the world being turned upside down, PAS goes from strength to strength. When we transferred our monthly autumn 2020 and spring 2021 lectures online, we imagined Zoom to be a stopgap measure. However, it has brought our membership together in a way no one foresaw. From the humble beginnings of the September lecture, which attracted 40+ members, the number logging on jumped dramatically and we were topping 130 by November. It was amazing to see members from all over Scotland, England, Wales and Ireland logging on. Even more so to have some of you join us from mainland Europe, Canada and the United States.

Another advantage of Zoom is the opportunity to have speakers from far and wide. In March of this year we had the pleasure of listening to Dr Oisín Plumb speaking to us from across the Pentland Firth on Orkney. The following month, our Zoom link took us over the Atlantic to Dr Benjamin Hudson, speaking to us all the way from Pennsylvania. And immediately before our online AGM this November, we look forward to welcoming Professor Roger Stalley speaking to us from across the Irish Sea in Dublin.

Work on conserving the Conan Stone carried on throughout 2020 and it was delivered to and installed in Dingwall Museum in November. Lockdown restrictions prevented a proper formal unveiling but an outdoor ceremony in December marked the event. Dingwall Museum finally opened to the public in May of this year and the Conan Stone can be viewed until the end of September, when the museum closes for the winter. It remains a source of great satisfaction that PAS played such a pivotal role, along with our partners, the North of

Scotland Archaeological Society (NoSAS) in rescuing this magnificent piece of sculpture. Your membership fees go towards the cost of our Zoom licence, book tokens for our speakers, printing and posting the newsletter etc.....and, when the opportunity arises, saving Pictish sculptures for posterity.

We are pleased to be helping Elgin Museum acquire a small fragment of cross-slab found on the shore near Findhorn in 2017 (see this issue). Even more exciting is another new find, as yet not in the public domain, which PAS is helping to cover the cost of lifting. Keep your eyes peeled for news of that!

The *Conan Stone in Context* conference, organised in conjunction with NoSAS and the Scottish Society for Northern Studies (SSNS) and originally planned for Inverness in May 2020, was held online in March of this year. It's true that we missed the social aspect of an in-person conference; we also missed the planned fieldtrip around the Tarbat peninsula and an opportunity to see the Conan Stone 'in the flesh'. But the event, co-organised with the Scottish Society for Northern Studies, was a roaring success with 240+ delegates attending over the 2 days, far more than would have travelled to Inverness in person. Again, Zoom brought us together.

The 2020 PAS conference, organised by Jane Geddes, was another casualty of the Covid pandemic but thankfully all the speakers agreed to participate in the online 2021 version. Full details of the conference are in this issue – book up now! And of course the conference is open to non-members, so tell a friend.

We were pleased to be able to increase the output of our normally quarterly newsletter during 2020 and our thanks go to all of you who sent in copy. It would not have been possible without your contributions. It did of course mean a lot more work for those involved in

producing the newsletters but at a time when most of us were shut off from the outside world, it seemed like a good thing to do. We give special thanks to David Henry for stepping up to the plate. The 100th edition of the newsletter saw us bidding farewell to David, who “retired” as our designer, printer and postmaster general. Once again, we give special thanks for his many (many) years of service. If you find all that free time weighing heavily on you David, just give us a shout.....

Our Facebook page, run by vice president David McGovern, continues to be well-frequented with almost nine and a half thousand followers. And new committee member Lily Hurd's recently launched Instagram page already has over 600 followers. (Lily is based in the USA and once again we have Zoom to thank for making it possible to have a committee member on another continent.) Keeping the PAS website up-to-date has been more problematic of late, thanks to access issues with the platform supplier. We are assured these issues are being addressed and hope to have the website up to speed very shortly.

So that's what we've been doing but how can you help? Please renew your membership and continue to support PAS. Doing so online, via the website is best but you can still pay by cheque if you wish. Please renew promptly – sending out numerous reminders is time-consuming and, frankly, tedious. Please continue to support the newsletter by submitting articles for publication. Please continue to log on to our autumn/spring lectures and sign up for the conference. And if you would like to offer your services to the PAS committee, the President would like to hear from you. Please intimate your interest to:
johnborland60@aol.com

John Borland & Jennifer McKay

Minutes of PAS AGM 2020

Held online, Friday 20 November at 9.15 pm

1 Apologies for absence were received from Elspeth Reid.

2 The minutes of the 2019 AGM (circulated via Newsletter 93) were approved as published, proposed Hugh Coleman, seconded Jane Geddes.

3 The President's and Secretary's Joint Report, published in Newsletter 97, was accepted by the meeting. The President expressed his satisfaction that PAS had been integral in saving the Conon Stone by funding, in partnership with the North of Scotland Archaeological Society, its initial rescue from the ground. He suggested that this project may have been the most successful undertaken by the Society since its inception. The stone has undergone a challenging and complex conservation process and is now in Dingwall Museum.

4 The Annual Accounts were published in Newsletter 97. There were no questions. The Treasurer expressed his confidence that the Society would break even in the current financial year. New expense has been incurred in paying for a Zoom licence but that should be off-set by savings in rental and insurance costs. The accounts were approved, proposed by John Borland, seconded by Sheila Hainey.

5 It was agreed to continue with the current Independent Examiner.

6a Membership Secretary Elspeth Reid reported an upsurge in numbers over recent months, with membership currently sitting at

205, our highest ever total. This is probably due to greater social media coverage and the accessibility of our lectures online. There are now members in the USA (10) France (2) Australia (1) Canada (1) Norway (1) Belgium (1)

6b Newsletter Editor John Borland informed the meeting that the quarterly newsletter output had been increased to bi-monthly during lockdown in the first half of the year, in part to compensate for the lack of talks at Brechin. He thanked those members who had answered his appeal for content and who had made this increase in output possible. He asked for their continued support. The final bi-monthly issue will appear in December and quarterly publication will resume in 2021.

7 Election of Office-bearers. President John Borland was re-elected unopposed, as was Vice President David McGovern. Jennifer McKay was elected as Honorary Secretary. Hugh Coleman was re-elected as Treasurer and Elspeth Reid as Membership Secretary & Archivist. John Borland was re-elected as Newsletter Editor and Kelly Kilpatrick as Events Organiser. David McGovern was re-elected to oversee the Website and On-line Presence. Jane Geddes' role as Conference Organiser was carried over.

8 Election of Committee. Sheila Hainey, Barbara Thomson, Nigel Ruckley & Sheila Fraser were re-elected to the Committee. (Lily Hurd was subsequently seconded on to the Committee during the December committee meeting.)

9 AOCB. There was no AOCB and the AGM concluded.

2021 Pictish Arts Society Annual Conference Online Programme

Saturday 2nd October

- 13.30-13.40 Log on
 13.40-13.50 Welcome remarks
 13.50-14.30 Professor Gordon Noble: *Northern Pictish Project update, season 2020-2021*
 14.30-14.40 Q&A
 14.40-15.20 Christine Cowart-Smith: *Free-standing cross developments in Pictland*
 15.20-15.30 Q&A
 15.30-15.50 Break
 15.50-16.30 Dr Elizabeth Alexander: *Old Testament iconography in Pictland*
 16.30-16.40 Q&A
 16.40-17.20 Professor Jane Geddes: *Gravemarkers and corporate identities at St Andrews*
 17.20-17.30 Q&A
 17.30-17.35 Closing remarks

Sunday 3rd October

- 13.30-13.40 Log on
 13.40-13.50 Welcome remarks
 13.50-14.30 Hugh Levey: *Towards Establishing the 'Rule-book' of Pictish Symbol Usage*
 14.30-14.40 Q&A
 14.40-15.20 Dr Kelly Kilpatrick: *Pictish Myth and Religion*
 15.20-15.30 Q&A
 15.30-15.50 Break
 15.50-16.30 Ruth Loggie & John Borland: *Sueno's Stone-recent research and recording*
 16.30-16.40 Q&A
 16.40-17.20 John Borland: *Tullich-A major ecclesiastical site in the heart of Pictland:
But where were the Picts?*
 17.20-17.30 Q&A
 17.30-17.45 Professor Jane Geddes: *Tullich-a virtual video tour (TBC)*
 17.45-18.00 Closing remarks

Tickets £12

For online booking visit:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/pictish-arts-society-annual-conference-tickets-167307825209>

To pay by cheque, send to:

John Borland

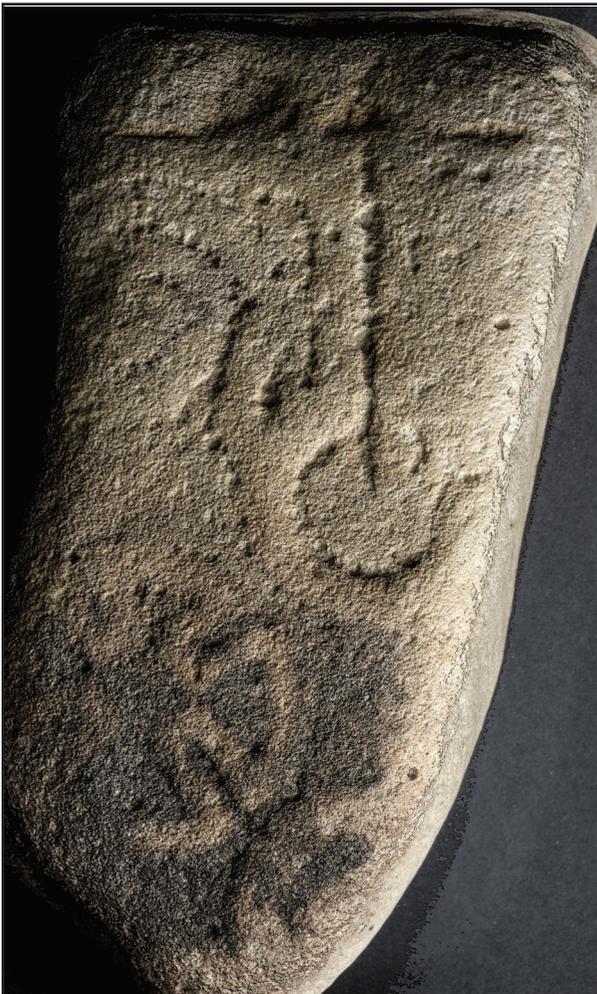
Little Craighall

By Ceres, Cupar, Fife KY15 5LB

Cheques payable to Pictish Arts Society



The Conan Stone in Dingwall Museum
© ARCH Highland



The fragment from Findhorn © Michael Sharpe

The Conan Stone is finally open!

The wonderful Conan Stone is finally accessible to the public now that Dingwall Museum is allowed to open. Discovered in the early months of 2019 by NoSAS member Anne MacInnes, the cost of lifting the stone was covered by PAS and NoSAS. The subsequent crowdfunding appeal went on to raise enough money to cover its conservation and display. The Museum is still operating on limited opening hours but can be visited 10am to 4pm, Thursday-Saturday until the end of September.

PAS to assist Elgin Museum

The Pictish Arts Society has agreed to give Elgin Museum financial assistance to acquire the small fragment of Pictish cross slab found on the shore near Findhorn back in 2017. The fragment is currently being processed by the Treasure Trove unit but will hopefully be allocated to Elgin ere long.

Forthcoming events

Lectures will continue to be delivered online via Zoom until further notice. Details of how to access the lectures will be circulated by email to members prior to each lecture.

PAS Autumn Lecture Series 2021

Friday 17 September – Dr Guto Rhys
The Pictish Language

Friday 15 October – Jennifer Wallace
A new look at the Dupplin Cross: a comparative approach

Friday 19 November – Professor Roger Stalley
Irish high crosses and the art of the Picts

PAS Newsletter 102

Deadline for receipt of material is

Saturday 20 November 2021

Please email contributions to the editor:

johnborland60@aol.com