

## PAS Annual Conference, Smith Institute, Stirling, 29 October 2005



*Speakers lineup – l to r: Peter Yeoman; Anna Ritchie; Alan Nowell; Margaret Bennett; Derek Hall*

Stirling was the venue for this year's PAS Conference, a place (as far as we know) not actually within the boundaries of ancient Pictland. Some 40 Pictish enthusiasts gathered in the lecture theatre of the Smith Institute (whose staff gave us a warm welcome) to hear a series of talks touching mainly on the areas of Pictish belief or folklore. Unfortunately, unforeseen circumstances forced two speakers to withdraw shortly before the conference, and only one suitable substitute was available at short notice. Nevertheless, those attending were treated to a lively mix of papers.

First to speak was Anna Ritchie, who employed her unrivalled knowledge of early medieval archaeology to examine the possible remnants of Pictish shamanism. She gave a masterly summary of the very fragmentary evidence. The few literary sources hint at 'idols' among

the Picts – among them perhaps the so-called 'Celtic' stone heads, and the wooden female statue from Ballachulish, apparently found in a wattle 'shrine'. The possibility that some of the symbol stones show divine or supernatural figures in two dimensions was examined – the Rhynie Man is a strong candidate. Written sources, such as the *Vita Columbae*, record holy wells and other sacred places among the Picts. Many of these will have been Christianised by rededicating them to a saint. Sacred places of other kinds, some recalled in place-names including the element *nemeton*, surviving as far north as the coast of Sutherland, may have included groves, rivers – Dee and Don both mean 'goddess' – forest groves, caves (eg Covesea) and islands. Anna made the intriguing suggestion that Staffa, with its awe-inspiring rock formations, might have been such a sacred

Conference photographs by Joy Mowatt © PAS



*Norman Atkinson in the Chair (the only comfortable seat in the house) gets the conference underway*

island – perhaps the reason the monastery of Iona was founded nearby. Other islands with evidence for important early church sites – for instance, Flotta and Papa Stronsay in the Northern Isles – may have been settled by the monks precisely because of their earlier sacred status.

Structures tentatively identified as pagan shrines have been identified in recent years, largely through Anna's research. Small buildings with hearths sited impractically in their entrances, for instance at Clickhimin and Old Scatness in Shetland, might have served as 'oracles'. Ritual on a domestic scale, and in domestic settings, should be expected in societies where the sacred and the secular were not divided. Wells and other underground structures, such as Mine Howe in Orkney, may have had religious as well as practical functions. The 'block-houses' of the Northern Isles, apparently impractical for serious defence, could have been for ritual warfare.

The Pictish symbols, though appearing on Christian monuments, so not offensively pagan, may on occasion have been used ritually. Symbols on paving stones placed facing downwards have been found in recent excavations at Pool, Sanday and Old Scatness, Shetland. The former's crude double disc and the latter's superb bear – could they have been laid down to 'seal off' the past? Symbols occur too on small, portable objects – stone discs, animal bones – of the kind that in other cultures might have been part of a shaman's 'medicine bundle'. The audience were treated to slides of as-yet unpublished examples. Tiny, perhaps rather sinister, hooded figurines, hitherto assumed to be playing pieces, such as those from Scalloway and Cunningsburgh (Shetland) could equally have been 'magical' paraphernalia. Prehistoric material occasionally found on early medieval sites – carved stone balls at Dunadd and Portmahomack, for instance – might have been invested with a similar significance. Figures apparently half man/half animal (eg the Mail 'wolf-headed' man), or attacked by monstrous creatures, occur in Pictish art, and would certainly suggest shamanic beliefs in other parts of the world. Elements of pre-Christian belief survived in Gaelic-speaking areas into the 20th century, and in the Dark Ages knowledge of 'old gods' would have lingered much more strongly (as it is known to have done in contemporary Scandinavia).

Finally, Anna put forward the suggestion that the shamans themselves may be among those commemorated by the various forms of barrow, often square with corner posts, of which examples have been found from Shetland to Thornybank in East Lothian. Many of the bodies uncovered by the limited excavations undertaken so far have been female.

In the second lecture Peter Yeoman outlined the recently completed revision of the early medieval sculpture at Whithorn, the first of a series of ventures Historic Scotland will be undertaking in coming years to improve its stone collections. The major Pictish caches at Meikle, St Vigean and St Andrews are all due for improvement, both in presentation and in visitor facilities, as is Scotland's largest collection, on Iona.

Whithorn has a unique importance in illustrating remains from every phase of Scotland's Christian development from the earliest known Christian monument, through the early medieval monasteries, the late medieval cathedral priory and the standing 19th-century parish church. Its 60-plus stones are now all on display, and the sheer volume of material – both from Whithorn itself and St Ninian's Cave – is one of its most impressive aspects. The stones have been removed from their concrete bases, and have been placed so that all carved sides are visible. With missing sections reconstructed (reversibly) to demonstrate the original scale, the collection now has more of the feel of a sculpture gallery, an impression enhanced by greatly improved lighting, largely provided by a skylight. Emphasis on their original outdoor setting is provided both by this and by the display of the St Ninian's Cave cross-slabs within a concave alcove on which some of the mural crosses in the Cave are reproduced. The Monreith Cross, the tallest and most elaborate of the Whithorn 'school' of disc-headed cross-slabs, and the only one from a secular site (a court hill), is displayed against a photographic backdrop of its original landscape. Monreith is the only sculpture in the collection carved from sandstone rather than the intractable local greywacke.

To complement the artistic aspects of the stones, reproductions of an Anglo-Saxon metalwork altar cross and a page from the MacDurnan Gospels are included in the exhibition. A choice of commentaries on aspects of the stones via

individual headphones is another new aspect of the display. When the stones were removed to Edinburgh for conservation, the opportunity was taken to photograph and draw them all, and a complete published catalogue and commentary is in preparation.

Derek Hall of the Perth-based Scottish Urban Archaeological Trust was luckily available at very short notice to fill the third lecture spot. He described a recent excavation just beyond the north-eastern outskirts of Dundee in which a church/graveyard site dating back to the early medieval period was uncovered. It is likely to have been the site of the lost medieval parish church of Ballumbie, a church whose earliest record dates only from the 15th century. Archaeologists were called in when human skeletons began to be uncovered by earth-moving equipment on the site of a new housing scheme. Development was suspended while the entire site was hastily excavated. The lowest foundations of a late medieval church, with appended laird's aisle, were uncovered, as well as many contemporary burials. These remains overlay an earlier long-cist cemetery enclosed by a substantial ditch. Most of the long-cist skeletons were fragmentary due to the acidic subsoil, but one un-cisted example, contemporary or earlier than these, was well-preserved, and may have served as a focus for the burials. Unusually, this burial included an artefact (a bronze armllet).

Some thin fragmentary slabs of grey sandstone were recovered in disturbed contexts, bearing carvings which might be contemporary with the long-cists. These included a rough knife-scratched cross that could have served as a simple grave-marker, a circle attached to two parallel lines which might be one arm of a more sophisticated cross, and an incomplete motif, its background shallowly sunken, which can be reconstructed as a cross-of-arcs. It is hoped that the developer can be persuaded to fund post-excavation research, including radiocarbon dates, and publication of the site.

After a buffet lunch, the first afternoon talk was by Alan Nowell, who researches, and participates in, folk-dancing. Alan has a theory that motifs of intertwined men seen on Irish crosses, the Book of Kells, and in Pictland on the side of the recumbent Meigle 26, could represent stylised figures from ancient dances.

After reviewing the widely scattered evidence for dances employing comparable contortions, including Scottish sword dances, some of which survived recently enough to be photographed or filmed by folk-life enthusiasts, the audience was treated to a film of a dance composed by and featuring Alan himself and fellow enthusiasts, which incorporated (as much as humanly possible) the intertwinings seen in several ancient carvings, including Meigle. The result was highly entertaining, though not for the unathletic. A distinctly novel form of inspiration from Pictish art!

The last presentation was more in the manner of a chat, superbly presented, by folklorist Margaret Bennett. A native Gaelic-speaker from Skye, she gave a highly entertaining discourse on various aspects of folk-custom which survived into her childhood (and some of which survive still): customs of marriage, traditional gifts and practices to protect children from being stolen away and replaced by 'changelings' and other topics. Many of these clearly have deep roots, though none can be traced back directly to the Picts (whose own beliefs are of course, as mentioned above, an almost total mystery). A long enduring oral culture, often recorded, if at all, very recently, must have been part of the Pictish experience as it has been of other Celtic-speaking peoples in more recent times. It is tempting to speculate about (though probably impossible to prove) a Pictish origin for such customs as the Clavie ceremony at Burghead. It was fascinating to listen to an accomplished speaker whose knowledge of ancient lore is both so scholarly and so intimate.

*Niall M Robertson*

---

## **PAS Annual Subscription**

A reminder that membership subscriptions fell due on 1 September, so, if you haven't already paid, please renew using the form enclosed and send with remittance to the Membership Secretary. Subscription rates remain the same for a further year. If you can recruit friends to membership, please copy the form to pass on. Any queries regarding membership to Eileen Brownlie:

<[Eileencbrownlie@hotmail.com](mailto:Eileencbrownlie@hotmail.com)>

This is the final notification – if your membership lapses you will be removed from the mailing list.

---

## Hilton Second Half

The cross-face of Barry Grove's new Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab was unveiled by his daughter Samantha on the afternoon of Saturday 1 October.

Like a Pied Bag-piper of Hilton, Duncan McGillivray, lead a long procession out from the village to the site of the stone close to the remains of St Mary's Chapel. As a chill wind was raging there, we were thankful for the warming drams provided by the landowners, the Glenmorangie estate, and the traditional music played by local musicians.

Richard Durham spoke about the background surrounding the commission of the stone and its making. He had then intended to introduce Martin Carver, director of the Tarbat excavations, however Martin had been admitted to hospital the day before and was prevented from attending, so his inspiring address was delivered on his behalf by Richard Durham.

Barry spoke next and then assisted Sam to unveil the second face of the stone, which he himself had not yet seen in the open as it had been covered up prior to the removal of the temporary field-studio that had been erected round it while he carved that face of the upright stone.



© Nigel Ruckley

Samantha and Barry Grove under siege from the northern paparazzi following the unveiling; Duncan McGillivray and Richard Durham stand either side of the stone

The wooden structure had been there for three years and in that time over 5000 people had visited it to witness progress on the carving.

The support and enthusiasm of the locals for their new stone is quite amazing to behold. The October issue of *Seaboard Community News* reported:

'It is with joy and delight to all the people who were involved with it. We were supported by all our own at home and abroad, also by people who came from many countries to see this stone rising little by little to the amazing stone it is today.'

They seem to be really proud of the stone and when we went to the site the next day we saw many of them having a good look at the carving and spending time taking photographs of it.

Funding for the project came from the Seaboard Initiative supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Ross and Cromarty Enterprise, Highland Council and the local community.

Meanwhile controversy rages over the fate of the base of the original now displayed in the 'Heritage Café' of the Seaboard Memorial Hall, which has restricted opening times. We were unable to gain access to the stone that weekend, but we did venture along Hilton beach to examine its rock outcrops as an inter-tidal sandstone deposit there has been identified as having the same geological characteristics as the original cross-slab. Unfortunately, without expert guidance, we were unable to identify any rock displaying the distinguishing 'ferrous blebs' of the original, so we resorted to our more usual approach to beach geology – bouncing pebbles off the rocks. DH

---

## Perthshire ?Pict

Perth Museum is looking for funding to carry out further research on a male skeleton, dated to c.AD400–600, which was excavated at Blair Atholl in 1985 (see Alison Reid and Dr S M MacLaughlin 'A long cist burial at Blair Atholl', in *Journal of the Perthshire Society of Natural Science* XV (1987), 15-24. Photocopies available from Mark Hall at Perth Museum & Art Gallery: <mahall@pkc.gov.uk> £2.00 each inc p&p). It is hoped to acquire additional information about the man and his life (eg through DNA sampling and isotope analysis) and to have two reconstructed heads, one for display in Perth and one to go to Blair Atholl.

---

## Books

### The art of storytelling

*Tales of the Picts* Stuart McHardy (Edinburgh: Luath Press, 2005) ISBN 1874820974 £5.99

This small volume contains thirty six tales, collected and retold by the author over many years. In the best tradition of oral storytelling, the origins are mixed: some explain the name given to an individual stone or to a feature in the landscape, others are tales of battle and adventure. Some may be very old indeed, while others, more recent, reflect the way that people have thought of the Picts. From the familiar, (Robert Louis Stevenson's version of the Heather Ale) to the unfamiliar (Hamlet and the Queen of Picts), the range covers tales of courage, intrigue and daring, with a few poignant love stories thrown in for good measure.

Stuart McHardy, himself an accomplished storyteller, deals with a problem that is as old as the first monasteries in Pictland: does committing a tale to print in some way fossilize it? As he points out in his introduction, it is still possible to take these stories, and by retelling them, modifying them to suit the audience, to keep them alive in the old way.

This, after all, is the process by which the tales have arrived at their present form.

Most of the stories in this collection are very short. The book is ideal for dipping into at odd moments, and better still for reading aloud. Throughout, Stuart's enthusiasm for the Picts and the power of the spoken word is very evident. A real gem which should appear in everyone's Christmas-stocking!

### More essential reading

This is the third of a series on books still in print, principally aimed at non-experts interested in learning more about the Picts.

Sadly, no books that can be shown to have been composed by any Pict are known. However, there are several accessible works by neighbours writing in the Pictish period. Chief among these are the *Life of Saint Columba* by Adomnán of Iona and *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People* by Bede. Both are available as translations in Penguin Classics, while Bede is also available in the World's Classics imprint from Oxford University Press.

Adomnán, ninth abbot of Iona after Columba and a member of the Saint's family, wrote about a century after Columba's death in 597. The work is not a conventional biography as we know it, but a series of episodes illustrating the sanctity and power of the founder of Iona and its familia of daughter houses. The work celebrates Columba, but also asserts the prominence of Iona among the various familiae of the church in what is now Ireland and Scotland. Adomnán tells of Columba's meetings with several Picts, as he travelled to the court of King Bruide, or in Skye, or across the 'spine' of Britain. Perhaps we get more of an insight into the commonplace of Adomnán's own time; certainly there is much we might wish to know about his subject that he leaves out.

Adomnán died in 704, Bede completed his Ecclesiastical History around 731. Raised from childhood to be a monk in the monastery of Wearmouth and Jarrow, Bede wrote from the standpoint of one committed to the supremacy of Rome in doctrinal matters. For him, the question of how the date of Easter should be calculated was an issue still very much alive. Some time after the battle of Dunnichen, which he notes as marking the beginning of the decline in Northumbrian influence over the Picts, king Nechtan sent messengers to ask Bede's abbot for help in the matter of dating Easter, and for builders who could create churches of stone. Bede seems to have spoken with these Pictish ambassadors. As with Adomnán's work, Bede gives us some insight into life in northern Britain.

*The Triumph Tree* (edited by Thomas Clancy and published by Canongate) is a splendid collection of poetry of the Pictish age and somewhat later. Translations from Welsh, Irish, Latin, Gaelic, Norse and Old English reveal the artistry of the poets. The collection opens up a world where heroic values co-exist side by side with sophisticated intellectual reflections on religion, and where a mother's tender lullaby is matched by the grief of a poet mourning his much-loved wife. The poets emphasise the essential humanity of the peoples of those far-off times. It makes the failure of any Pictish literature to survive all the more poignant as we catch glimpses of Picts reflected through the eyes of their contemporaries. SH

---

## Mormaers Once More

I'm delighted to be able to announce the launch of our network of Mormaers. For some time I have been concerned that our sculptured stones, for most of us our primary source of inspiration, and indeed the reason we are Pictish Arts Society members, do not get the attention they deserve.

Our committee meetings always have a standing item, 'Care of Stones' on the agenda, and our newsletters carry snippets of news about some stones, but I have been keen for some time to have a provincial framework able to gather local news which could feed directly into the Newsletter and the committee.

It has been a few months since I formally floated the idea, and it has met with universal support.

Mormaer is almost certainly a Pictish term, taken over by the incoming Scots in the late 9th and early 10th centuries, and simply means 'Great Steward' Most of these later became earldoms in medieval Scotland.

Stewards is what we need – our eyes and ears in each province of Pictavia! They will be the first point of contact in each province for anyone who wishes to report any news concerning an existing stone, and if luck prevails, report a new find! Good networking with local members, local history and archaeological societies, local museums and the regional archaeologist will be essential. The system will work both ways, however, and each Mormaer will be encouraged to submit any news from their province to the Newsletter.

We have chosen to go for the ancient seven provinces, although recent scholarly opinion has questioned whether they date as far back as Pictish times, and whether there were only seven.

*De Situ Albanie* lists the seven provinces, all bar one in linked pairs of named districts, which are:

Angus and the Mearns

Atholl and the Gowrie

Strathearn with Menteith

Fife with Fothruff

Mar with Buchan

Moray and Ross

Caithness

As I have suggested before, if we have any boundary disputes, we will look to the sculptured stones of the Picts for guidance!

*Norman Atkinson*

Our Mormaers are:

### **Angus and the Mearns**

Norman Atkinson  
5 Tolmount Crescent  
MONTROSE  
Angus  
DD10 9DQ  
01674 675956

### **Atholl and the Gowrie, Strathearn with Menteith**

Niall Robertson  
22 Letham Road  
PERTH  
PH1 2AP  
01738 621172

### **Fife with Fothruff**

Marianna Lines  
Lomond View  
Collessie  
CUPAR  
Fife  
KY15 7RQ  
01337 810283

### **Mar with Buchan**

Dave Moir  
2B Rosebank Gardens  
ABERDEEN  
AB11 6WH  
07949 108602

### **Moray and Ross**

Ron Dutton  
Tigh na Fraoch  
AVIEMORE  
Inverness-shire  
PH22 1QB  
01479 810924

### **Caithness**

Emma Sanderson  
Caithness Archaeological Trust  
Old School House  
DUNBEATH  
Caithness  
KW6 6ED  
01593 731269

---

## Sweepings frae the flair o' Fife

The recent TAFAC conference held in Dundee on 5 November included a round up, 'What's Happening in Fife Archaeology', delivered by Steve Liscoe, Fife Council Archaeology Service, on behalf of Fife Archaeologist, Douglas Speirs. Steve told of new finds, most exciting, of two carved stone balls which have turned up this year – one near Pitmilley Law, found by a guy picking brussels sprouts, and a second from Leven, found in a drawer in an old house. There are only seven carved stone balls in Fife, but many more elsewhere. These objects are unique to Scotland, but their true function is unknown. As all good modern Picts know, the balls are almost all the same size – 7 cm diameter.

Also, a carved cross-slab of the 10th century has been found again at Leuchars. The sizeable fragment was actually discovered in 1948 on the Castle Knowe and deposited at nearby Leuchars parish church, but, despite its publication in 1950,<sup>1</sup> it had remained in a cupboard and ignored until its rediscovery and display this year. It is carved on both sides, and on its edges. It has been described as being of the Albanach period, and very similar in design and execution to the cross-slab no.24 in St Andrews Cathedral Museum. The important fact is that the fragment is on display now at Leuchars Church, a most delightful place to visit (open daily Mar–Oct 9.30–6.00; entry free but donations encouraged).

There was lots more Pictish delights in the TAFAC conference, including a talk by Christina Donald of the Dundee Museum, about a project to investigate and reconstruct the head of a female skull from a Lundin Links burial – a woman of the Pictish era. (See *PAS News* 36, 6)

A significant event has taken place at Wemyss Caves. The completion of the coastal path which gives secure and safe access to the caves at East Wemyss has now been opened, a section which takes the walker over the hill near MacDuff Castle over and down to Jonathan's Cave, saving one from the depths of the concrete walk across nowhere, which has been a hazardous access for years. The event, organised by the path's funders and organisers SWAC (Save the Wemyss Ancient Caves Society), was held on Wednesday 10 November, with Michael and Charlotte Wemyss of Wemyss Castle there to officially

cut the ribbon. The grant of £24,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund enabled the new improved coastal path and steps to be constructed.

Although SWAC is often boasting of 'Viking drawings' over 1000 years old as well as Pictish markings in the caves, it is not generally accepted that Vikings were ever carving their mark around the Firth of Forth. What SWAC likes to call a Viking ship is probably more likely to be much earlier, even Bronze Age.

Further rumblings around the central belt focused on the lack of a Pictish presence in Edinburgh – evidenced from recent attendance at the Society of Antiquaries meeting in November in Edinburgh, when a number of PAS members gathered to bemoan the lack of PAS meetings in Edinburgh. It was thought that perhaps a social gathering might be of interest, should someone in the area like to organise this.

A recent sighting of Robbie the Pict was also of interest, seen in the capital on the same excursion south from the Kingdom of Fife.

*Marianna Lines, Fife Mormaer*

<sup>1</sup> Norman Johnson 'Part of a cross-slab from Luchars, Fife' *Proc Soc Antiq Scot* 82 (1947-48) 99, pl lv, 1–3

---

## Fresh Pict: Fifty Years of Pictish Studies

is the subject of two sessions at the 41st International Congress on Medieval Studies to be held at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, from 4 to 7 May, 2006.

[www.wmich.edu/medieval/congress/41cfp/](http://www.wmich.edu/medieval/congress/41cfp/)

The year 2005 marks the 50th anniversary of the publication of F T Wainwright's *The Problem of the Picts*, the seminal work marking the first collection of modern archaeological and historical studies of the Picts in Scotland. The Northern World book series is sponsoring two sessions devoted to summarising the state of research in Pictish studies. The goal of these sessions, and others to be sponsored at the International Medieval Congress, Leeds, will be the publication of a collection of proceedings as a fifty-year follow on to *The Problem of the Picts*. Further info contact: David M Edsall, Iowa State University, 291 Durham, Ames, IA 50010. email <edsall@iastate.edu>

---

## Picts and Bobs

Where have the Picts popped up recently? Formed in February 1997, 'The Picts' have quickly become one of the most popular live bands on the folk rock and concert scene. They have reached out with their unique brand of Celtic Rock and captivated hundreds of audiences both at home and abroad. There is a considerable influence of original material combined with the traditional. The sets are upbeat and irresistible for dancing. The songs (both original and traditional) are powerful and rocky, yet retain their original sentiment, feeling and intimacy.

Recently the band has been the subject of great interest in Argentina and, as a result, all the songs from the albums have been translated into Spanish! Plans for a third album are indeed in the 'pipeline'. – 'Picts' go to Argentina! Brilliant. Earlier this year 'Pictavia' was in third place. 'Pictavia' is a three-year-old horse with numbers next to her name like 8-1 and reportedly 'ran well when finishing seventh in the 1,000 Guineas at Newmarket'. I wonder if her bridle has Pictish symbols on it?

I went to see Ruth Black's exhibition in Ross and Cromarty and also managed to view the complete collection in the Highland Council building – her work in tweeds, embroidery and felt really brings out aspects of the stones' designs. My favourite was her interpretation of the Ardjachie stone with the wheel (my favourite stone as well). This embroidery now has a sold sticker on it – for guess who!

Archaeoptics have been scanning the Peterhead (Gleneagles) stone and its goose symbol. They have also recently completed a 3D-scanning of Callanish stone circle, Isle of Lewis. See their web site: <[www.minotaur.archaeoptics.co.uk](http://www.minotaur.archaeoptics.co.uk)>

Another web site worth a look is: <[www.rockart.ncl.ac.uk](http://www.rockart.ncl.ac.uk)> an archive of prehistoric rock art in Northumberland with lots of tips and hints for photographing stones. The motif section shows all the spirals and keyhole shapes.

I started with 'The Picts' going to Argentina but have ended a bit nearer home – I do fancy exploring the carvings in Northumberland some time.  
*Sheila Fraser*

---

## Diary Dates

### PAS Winter Lecture Series at Pictavia

**16 December** Marianna Lines

*The intertwining of cultures: Pictland and Easter Island/North Sea/South Sea*

**20 January** Ruth Black

*Embroidering the Past: A textile tour of the Pictish stones of Ross and Cromarty*

**2006**

**17 February** James Fraser

*Pictish Warfare: some preliminary thoughts*

---

### Marischal Museum, Aberdeen

**28 February** Fraser Hunter (£2.00)

*Archaeology from the ashes – new light on Traprain Law*

**14 March** David Dumville (Free)

*Britons, Gaels, and Picts in a ninth-century Northumbrian 'Book of Life'*

---

### Sheila Fraser's Rock Café

**29 January** 2–4pm

Meeting in an Edinburgh café to chat about stones. Bring a picture or article to discuss. Also an opportunity to plan activities or talks in the Edinburgh area. If you are interested in joining this informal group email: <[Sheila.fraser@btinternet.com](mailto:Sheila.fraser@btinternet.com)> or tel: 01506 650 953. Proposed date for the following Rock Café meeting is 12 March.

---

## Ninian and the Picts

is the title of the Whithorn Lecture 2006, to be delivered by Professor John McQueen, on **16 September** at St Ninian's Priory Church, Whithorn. The lecture begins at 7.45pm and details of local accommodation and published lectures are available from: The Hon. Secretary, Friends of the Whithorn Trust, Mansefield, Whithorn, Wigtonshire DG8 8PE

---

## Contributions

The deadline for receipt of contributions to the next newsletter is **18 February**. Email to <[pasnews@btconnect.com](mailto:pasnews@btconnect.com)> or post to: **The Editor, PAS News** – at the Pictavia address.