THE PICTISH ARTS SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER 75 SUMMER 2015

PAS Annual Conference 2015

Our annual conference this year will be held on 3 October in the Kinloch Memorial Hall, Meigle. Starting at 10am, our speakers will include Victoria Whitworth, Sam Williamson, Chris Grant and David McGovern. The broad themes of the conference will be metal and stone – exciting new ideas in both areas. In addition to the opportunity to spend time with the stones in the museum at Meigle, there will be a field trip on Sunday 4 October to visit some of the stones in south-east Perthshire and Angus. Full cost for the Saturday will be £26, including lunch. Costs for the Sunday trip will be finalised soon. If you are interested in attending and do not have access to the internet, or if you have not given us your email details, please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to:

Sheila Hainey
Torr of Kedlock Farmhouse
Cupar
Fife
KY15 4PY

Please include a note indicating whether you are interested in both the conference and field trip or the conference only, and details will be sent as soon as finalised. If we have your email contact details, we will let you know as soon as the full programme and booking facilities are available on the website.

Spring Lectures 2015

The Pictish Church at Tullich, Aberdeenshire.

Professor Jane Geddes of Aberdeen University delivered our first talk of the Spring season at Brechin Museum. Jane's broad portfolio of interests as Professor of History of Art has included work on the great collection of stones at St Vigeans and on the art of the Book of Deer. On this occasion, she directed our attention to discoveries at Tullich church. The site, with its collection of early Christian carved stones and circular enclosure, has recently been the subject of a limited archaeological intervention by Hilary and Charles Murray.

The roofless church lies close to the confluence of the Calston and Tullich Burns, near where the Tullich flows into the Dee to the east of Ballater. In this area, the narrow valley of the Dee widens to form a fertile floodplain, narrowing again to the east where a hillock (probably the eponymous Tulach of Tullich) rises to close off the view. A geological fault runs from a nick in the ridge to the north, across the plain and underneath the church to the hills to the south, where the Pannanich Wells provided the reason for Ballater's development as a Spa town, and still provide the water for the Deeside Natural Spring Water Company.

The circular churchyard is surrounded by an outer enclosure marked by a large curving ditch, visible on aerial photographs. It also appears on an estate map dated to the 1790s, which shows agricultural activity respecting the old boundary ditch. At the west end of the church, the map shows a font stone and, on the other side of the road, a market cross. To the east of the church, traces of souterrains may be seen on aerial photographs. Now isolated, Tullich Kirk once served a thriving community, superseded by the development of Ballater from the mid-18th century. The church itself was abandoned in 1790. However, the burial ground remains in use, and the excavations carried out in 2012–13 by Hilary and Charles Murray were in advance of an extension of the graveyard to the east in the area defined by the ditch.

Written records confirm the existence of a church at Tullich from the medieval period, with links to both the Knights Templars and the Knights Hospitallers. Evidence of earlier use of the site comes from Tullich's impressive collection of early medieval stones, including a Pictish symbol stone. Many of these were placed in a group beside the church; their find-sites were not recorded. A number had been re-used.

The symbol stone bears a double disc and Z-rod over a Pictish beast, with a mirror below. The discs are concentric circles, with triangles in the bends of the Z-rods. The mirror compares well with those at Dyce, Tillytarmont and Keith Hall, having two concentric circles forming the mirror and two on the handle.

Tullich boasts a remarkable collection of sixteen (so far) cross-marked stones. These are all incised, and mostly of the local stone which splits easily to form flat slabs. However, one is, in contrast, a garnet schist found re-used as a lintel in the church. (Another similar stone, still in place as a lintel, has no marks on its visible surfaces. It would be interesting to know if there are any crosses on the hidden surfaces.) On eight of the crosses, the incision has a U-shaped profile, similar to that on the symbol stone.

There is a great variety in the forms of cross represented at Tullich. The garnet schist slab has three small sunken crosses, similar to the examples at Fortingall, also on a garnet schist. It is possible that these were carved by or for pilgrims to the site. Among the outline crosses on the others stones are found both the equal-armed Greek (seven in total) and the Latin types (nine), with encircled versions of both. Parallels can be found at a number of sites: Tullich 3 and 5 have comparators at Iona, while Tullich 16 resembles one at Kilmory Knapdale and 17 one at Achadh na Cille. Tullich 13 has parallels at Aboyne, St Machars and Dull (possibly skeuomorphs of wooden crosses.) Tullich 8 and 12 are similar to one found at Tarfside in Angus. Given the rarity of incised crosses in Angus, it seems likely that this outlier is linked to Tullich, as there is a convenient pass through the hills linking the two sites. Indeed, as pointed out by John Borland, the currently known distribution of cross marked stones suggests a spread along the valleys of the Earn and the Tay with a gap through Glenshee to Tullich, which is the next good settlement site after the mountain barrier. George and Isabel Henderson noted a regional preference for encircled equal-armed crosses in Aberdeenshire, citing examples at Dyce, Inchmarnock and Barmekin of Echt. Tullich has more than at any other of these sites.

In 1875, Jervise noted a cross-slab to the east of the site, with a cross much resembling that of Skeith. The encircled cross, with arms probably curved and representing the Chi Rho motif is also found at Whithorn (the 'Petrus' stone) and in Knapdale and at other western sites. Ross Trench-Jellicoe has noted the rarity of this form in the east of Scotland, where it is known only at Skeith and the lost East Cross at Tullich.

Jane described the various forms the stones themselves take: some long and narrow, possibly upright or recumbent, some rectangular to roughly circular boulders, others with tapering outline. These may be roughly dressed, but often it seems that a convenient stone has been chosen.

A number of possible functions have been suggested for simple cross-marked stones. The smaller stones may have functioned as grave markers but they or others may have marked a particular sacred spot, a boundary or perhaps preaching stations. They may have been at the focus of specific liturgical activity, or may have been erected to commemorate a special event.

The East Cross was found near the hillock to the East of the flood plain, the 'Style of Tullich' (the gateway or entrance to the area around Tullich). Broken in pieces by men building the railway, this stone stood by an old estate boundary, possibly at the entrance to the church lands. Jane outlined the three grades of holiness associated with early ecclesiastical sites; *sanctus* (holy), within the church lands, *sanctior*, within the ditch surrounding the church and its precincts, and *sanctissimus*, within the church itself. The Skeith stone, to which the East Cross of Tullich has been compared, stood in a similar relation to St Ethernan's church at Kilrenny, at the entrance to the church grounds. One of the earliest versions of the names for the spot is TULYNATTLAYC, or the Hillock of Nathalan. The top of the hillock provides a viewpoint looking westwards, over the broad valley with its ecclesiastical enclosure, to the setting sun. Jane suggested that, in addition to acting as a gateway to the church lands, this vantage point could have marked Nathalan's place of retreat from the life of the community by the church.

The foundation of the church by St Nathalan has been questioned, as the earliest surviving written record (Tullach Nachlethe) dates to 1284. The St Nathalan of the north east of Scotland has been identified as the same as the Nectain Neir whose death was recorded in the Annals of Ulster as 8 January, 679. The forms of the name: Nechtan, Nathalan, Nachlan, betray a Pictish origin. Both Bethelnie and Tullich held feasts on 8 January. According to the Aberdeen Breviary of 1510, he built the churches of Tullich, Bethelnie and Cowie. His body was taken to Tullich where it was still 'giving health to the sick who come here piously and devotedly' when the breviary was compiled. The incised stones found at Tullich are all earlier by several centuries than the first written record, and sit easily with a foundation around the time that

Nathalan was active. The evidence from the work of Hilary and Charles Murray supports the evidence from the stones. Prior to an extension of the graveyard to the east, they dug several sections across the line of ditch visible on aerial photography and identified on the ground by GPR survey. They were allowed by Historic Scotland to investigate some anomalies within the Scheduled Ancient Monument Area, between the existing wall and the ditch. In this area, they found traces of a possible early building and two more cross-slabs. One of these had been placed upright facing the church, and the other had fallen on its face but had probably similarly been set facing the church. To the south of the graveyard, there was a possible entrance to the enclosure. Three samples of charcoal taken from the ditch fill in this area gave dates spanning the 7th to 9th centuries, agreeing with the evidence from the stones that there was some activity at an ecclesiastical site here in the Pictish period.

Jane turned to the question of the large pink boulder 117cm in diameter with a large hollow complete with drain hole on the top. Such boulders have been noted at Fortingall (114cm diameter), Dull (110cm) and Lumphanan (92cm). Smaller, similar boulders are present at Inchmarnock, Glengairn and Braemar. Large bowls such as these are not known at Irish sites. The Irish 'bullaun' (a stone bearing a small bowl on the top surface in which a large pebble was turned in ritual prayer or cursing at ecclesiastical sites) may be analogous to the example at Inchmarnock. The stone at Glengairn has a spout and is therefore most unlikely to be a bullaun, while that at Braemar may not be ecclesiastical. The stone at Tullich is probably that shown on earlier maps as a font.

The question of whether or not these large bowls were used as fonts remains open. Adomnan seems to suggest that baptism took place in wells or springs – a procedure that would have been impractical for much of the year where winters could be severe. Although this may have been the custom in Ireland, it is quite possible that the ritual would be adapted elsewhere to suit local conditions. While it appears that in the early Roman church baptism was carried out only in important churches, often in dedicated baptisteries, this would not necessarily have been the case in areas where the church had not yet become well established. Jane knew of one Anglo-Saxon font to sit beside the Aberdeenshire group: that at Deerhurst. Members of the audience noted that there were at least two other examples, one at Tintagel and one at Longpreston. Niall Robertson drew attention to the fonts at Balquhidder and Killin – rough bowls of stone which were in the medieval period fitted with covers after the introduction in the11th century of the stipulation that fonts must be covered. These presumably originated at an earlier period. He noted that the Deerhurst example is more elaborately dressed than the Scottish or the Yorkshire examples and questioned whether the Picts, who obviously had the ability, would have refrained from ornamenting their fonts in a much more elaborate fashion. The simplicity of these stones may suggest that they had a more humble function. Jane noted the possibility that large stone bowls of water were set at the entrance to the church to allow the congregation to wash hands and/or feet before entering the most holy part of the site.

One outstanding puzzle is why the crosses at Tullich are all simple, plain incised forms. That the Picts could carve elegantly designed and elaborately decorated cross-slabs is not in question; why not here? Jane pointed out that some sites such as Migvie and Kinnord which do have elaborate crosses are close to important secular settlements. Is it the lack of such an interaction at Tullich which has resulted in the simplicity of the monuments there? Although the nature of the early ecclesiastical site at Tullich is still uncertain, more may be learned from further targeted excavation in the area.

Sheila Hainey

Social Media Update

At the time of writing, PAS is just 23 'likers' shy of the 4000 mark! We continue to acquire 20 to 40 new likes per week – but Facebook takes away around 15 to 30 who show little activity in terms of liking and commenting so we grow more slowly than we should. We set a new record recently with a photo of the Ring of Brodgar that was viewed 7,832 times. Our total reach that week (number of people who viewed, liked and commented) was 13,080, again a new high. By the time you are reading this newsletter, we should have exceeded the 4000 barrier.

Iona on the Holy Frontier: the space of early medieval crosses

Tasha Gefreh's talk at Brechin Town House Museum on 17 April took us to a sunlit Iona. A graduate of Creighton University, Nebraska with an MSc in Medieval History from Edinburgh University, Tasha based her talk on work she has been carrying out there for her PhD.

Many of us are familiar with the early medieval sculpture of Iona, including the iconic free-standing crosses. In seeking to understand the ways in which these magnificent crosses were viewed by their creators and those who came to the early medieval monastery, we are fortunate in being able to draw on written sources that are close to them in time. The rich survival of texts from Iona is unparalleled at other early medieval monasteries in what is now Scotland. In particular, some of the surviving works of Adomnan, ninth Abbot and biographer of St Columba can be used to give an insight into the thinking behind the planning of the medieval stone monastery.

In his account of St Columba's life, Adomnan makes mention of crosses that marked significant events in the story – where Columba stood by Ernan when he died, and where Columba himself died. However, Adomnan makes no mention of material or style; the creation of elaborate stone crosses may have begun only after Adomnan's own death. It reads as though Adomnan may have expected Columba's remains to lie undisturbed until the Day of Judgement. Perhaps the translation of St Cuthbert's remains in the year 698 (only a few years before Adomnan's death in 704) may have inspired the changes that happened at Iona in the 8th century. The moving of St Cuthbert's remains to a new shrine appears to have been a significant event in the development of his community in Lindisfarne.

In 697, at the Synod of Birr, Adomnan persuaded a great many of the powerful in the west of what is now Scotland and much of Ireland to sign up to the *Cain Adomnan*, also known as the Law of the Innocents. This laid penalties on those who, among other things, failed to respect the rights of named classes of non-combatants in war, with fines levied on the transgressors payable to Iona.

The *Cain Adomnan* may have helped raise the funds for a building programme at Iona that happened after Adomnan's death. Tasha argued that another of Adomnan's works, the *De Locis Sanctis* (Of Holy Places) may have provided the model for the plans of the new buildings. In this work, Adomnan related the account of the travels of a Gaulish bishop, Arculf, who visited Iona. There he told Adomnan about his journey through the Holy Land, Alexandria and Constantinople. Adomnan relates the story of this pilgrimage, describing sites associated with events in the life of Christ. He also tells of Arculf's visits to sites of incidents in the Old Testament which foreshadowed episodes in the New.

In the eighth century, there was a growing emphasis on pilgrimage to local shrines, rather than long and arduous journeys to the Holy Land or to Rome. St Mael Ruain of Tallaght is said to have enjoined his monks to stay at home: there was no point in seeking the Lord in far-off places if he were not already present with them. The walkers depicted on carved stones at St Vigeans, Ballyvourney and Killadeas may represent individuals making such local pilgrimages.

Tasha suggested that this was the background to the developments at Iona. A shrine chapel containing two graves was the focus of the remodelled site. Almost certainly one of these graves held the translated body of St Columba, while the other was probably the burial place of Adomnan. It is clear that Adomnan reckoned St Columba to be a saint venerated throughout the Christian world. His own work, however, was widely known among monastic communities, and obviously held in high regard by Bede. In the medieval period Adomnan was clearly an important figure in his own right and a place for him beside the founding Saint would have seemed natural for the monks who were developing the Abbey as a pilgrimage centre. The layout of the Abbey precinct, with special stations marked by magnificent carved crosses whose decoration was redolent of meaning was designed to enhance the devotional experience of the pilgrims who came to the shrine of St Columba and St Adomnan. By meditating on the images on the crosses as they made their way around the precinct, they could experience a virtual pilgrimage to the Holy Places described in *De Locis Sanctis*.

The free-standing crosses marked the sacred core of the enclosed monastery. Placed in order to create a sustained exercise of devotional enactment informed by Adomnan's description of the Holy Land, their imagery recalls sites noted as being of special interest to the devout.

The late-evening shadow of St John's Cross straddles the entrance to the shrine chapel on St Columba's feast day (9 June). This, probably a close contemporary of the shrine itself, may have been a reliquary cross as there is space on the central boss for a metalwork cover. With its sinuous decoration, it calls to mind the lavishly decorated metalwork reliquary crosses of the period. The base also has a possible space for a container for relics; its flattened surface may reflect the altar which lay at the foot of the cross erected at Golgotha in place of the wooden cross that once stood there. The locations of St John's (represented today by a replica), St Martin's (still present) and St Matthew's (base still present) Crosses show them to have stood within the inner circle of the holier part of the site, close to the most sacred part of the complex. Perhaps this group was meant to recall Christ, crucified between the two thieves. St Martin's and St Matthew's, and the other surviving high cross, St Oran's, all bear scenes related to sites and incidents highlighted by Adomnan in his *De Locis Sancti*s. For example, the sacrifice of Isaac is featured on St Martin's, Adam in Eden on St Matthew's, and the Virgin and Child between two angels on St Oran's. The latter may have stood at the entrance to the sacred space of the abbey precinct.

The location of and decoration on the crosses would have reinforced the use of the *De Locis Sanctis* as a tool to aid contemplation and meditation for the monks of the abbey. Throughout the day and over the seasons, the light that shone on the stones would have varied, clearly revealing certain features at one time, and shadowing them at another. If the stones were painted as well as carved, the effect would have been even more spectacular. These transformations would themselves have provided food for thought. For the pilgrims who came to the island, the crosses may have provided stations in an orderly movement round the sacred precinct, perhaps with homilies based on the imagery represented preached at each stop. The crosses may have been draped in symbolic colours for special feast days: black for Good Friday, white for Easter Day and so on. Festal or penitential processions of the community, swelled in numbers by visiting pilgrims, perhaps accompanied by music and chanting, would have been occasions of heightened fervour.

Remarkably, the plan of building and of raising the crosses was maintained despite a long hiatus after the raising of St Martin's cross. The reason for this gap, be it a shortage of funds, a result of Viking raiding, or some other calamity lost to history, is unknown. What is clear is that when building was resumed, the monks followed the original plan, commemorating the work of Adomnan, casting his *De Locis Sanctis* in stone as a place of contemplation and pilgrimage.

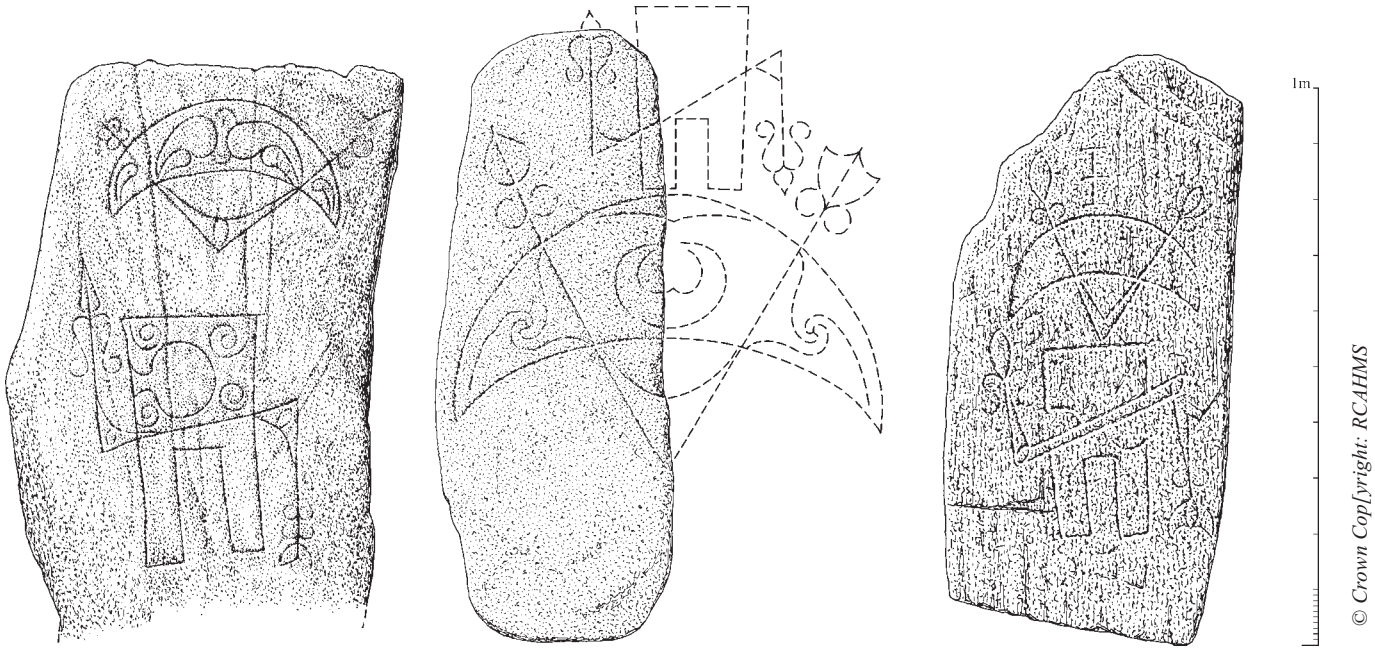
SH

How Old is the Davoch? Symbol Stones and Medieval Land Organisation in Pictish Speyside

Our final talk of the Spring season at Brechin was delivered by Cynthia Thickpenny. A native of California, she began her studies of Picts while reading for a BA in History at the University of California, Santa Cruz. She arrived in Glasgow with a Marshall Scholarship, and after gaining M Litt in Scottish Medieval Studies and M Res in History, she has remained to study key-pattern in Insular art. Her topic on 15 May was a rather different one: the possible origins of the unit of land measurement known as the davoch in the Pictish period.

Cynthia drew on two previous areas of research as background to her work on Inverallan parish, Morayshire. In their chapter on the early medieval landscape of Donside in *In the Shadow of Bennachie* (published by RCAHMS and Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in 2007) Ian Fraser and Strat Halliday examined the relationship between symbol stones and landscape features. These often were sited on locally prominent positions, on knolls or raised open ground, in proximity to the confluence of rivers, or at least to a river. They were associated with a number of possible site types: ritual areas that later became church sites, cemeteries, assembly points, meeting grounds, significant points on route ways or at or near what became parish boundaries. Halliday has suggested that these boundaries may reflect early medieval secular or ecclesiastical land organisation.

Alasdair Ross, currently Reader in History at Stirling University, studied the davochs of Moray while researching towards his PhD. 'Davoch' is a word of Gaelic origin whose meaning was long debated. It was known to have been a unit of land measurement, but precisely what that unit comprised was far from clear.



Ballintomb (SC961059) by I G Scott; Findlarig (SC1073522) and Inverallan (SC1073546) by J Borland

Ross was able to identify the boundaries of a large number of Moray davochs. He showed convincingly that the davoch was a unit of land which contained all the resources needed for the support of a single community; pasture, arable and woodland, access to water and so on. It may then have become a unit for levy of renders to an overlord, of taxes or of fighting men. Davochs could be self-contained, or could consist of scattered areas of land which between them gave access to all the required resources. Thus summer pasturage, for example, could be detached from the rest of the territory and located at some distance from the main part of the davoch. He also believed that davochs became established at an earlier period than they are first recorded in existing documents. These date back to the 12th century, and he was unable to find any changes in davoch boundaries between then and the period of agricultural improvements beginning in the 18th century. Neither was he able to find any new davochs formed between the 1100s and 1900. There is a relationship between medieval parishes and davochs: parishes contain only whole numbers of davochs. Conversely, medieval parish boundaries do not cut across davochs. Parishes with scattered davochs appear to have a high number of prehistoric sites. Multiple davoch lands – where a group of davochs is always held closely together in terms of later ownership – tend to include prehistoric or early medieval hillforts.

Cynthia focussed on the old medieval parish of Inverallan in Speyside, just to the west of Grantown-on-Spey, which later became part of the combined parish of Cromdale, Inverallan and Advie. At the northern end of the parish, the land is very high, and there are few obvious traces of occupation. The southern boundary lies along the Spey. An interesting group of Class I symbol stones has been found in the parish. The Finlarig fragment has a large crescent and V-rod, with a smaller scale notched rectangle and Z-rod. It was dug up on a low hill in an enclosure at the centre of the parish around the same time as a 'font' stone which was lost in the 19th century. At Inverallan itself, a stone with a crescent and V-rod over a notched rectangle and Z-rod was found in the parish church grounds. A stone font and a cross-incised stone were also found in the vicinity. During work on extending the graveyard there, a stone church of some antiquity was reported, but sadly destroyed. Find details are lacking for the stone with a crescent and V-rod over a notched rectangle and Z-rod found at Ballintomb ('farm of the little hill').

In the west of the parish, around the Auchnahannet Burn, there is a cluster of ecclesiastical names. There are at least two hillforts, at Tom a Chaisteil and Lower Craggan, and a possible third at Muckrach. None have been excavated, and cannot at the moment be dated.

Of the nine davochs in the parish, three, 'Ovir', 'Nethir', and 'Mid' Finlarig, first appear together in a charter of Alexander II granted to the Bishop of Ross and later remain together. Nether Finlarig is a scattered davoch which includes Ballintomb. Indeed, it is sometimes referred to as the davoch of Ballintomb.

Thus, the multiple davoch land of Over, Nether and Mid Finlarig includes two (possibly three) hillforts, two symbol stones and a possible ecclesiastical site (the enclosure, still visible on aerial photographs, where the Finlarig stone and the font were found and the local ecclesiastical name cluster).

Cynthia noted that in some cases, Irish ogham inscriptions were set up to lay claim to land and to commemorate several generations of a single family. She suggested that something similar may have been happening here. The symbol stones are different enough to have a non-contemporary feel. The example from Inverallan may be the youngest of the three. Katherine Forsyth has suggested that where rods are drawn with two lines (as at Inverallan), instead of a single incision, we may have the beginnings of a move towards relief carving. This would place the Inverallan stone late in the development of Pictish symbol stones. Perhaps there was a move from the site at Finlarig to Inverallan, where an earlier church was uncovered in the graveyard.

Alastair Mack shows a cluster of the relatively rare notched rectangle and Z-rod in Moray. In combination with the crescent and V-rod it appears three times in Inverallan parish, once at Tyrie, and just possibly on Clynemilton 2 in Sutherland, where the stone is broken above the notched rectangle. In other cases where there are small clusters of stones bearing similar, relatively rare symbol combinations, we have as yet no mapping of davochs. As an example, Cynthia noted Clynekirkton in Sutherland, where both stones carry the crescent and V-rod and rectangle.

In summary, Cynthia has shown there to be a multiple davoch territory around Finlarg, with at least two hillforts. Two symbol stones, found on different davochs within the group were probably originally sited in prominent positions near water, and one at least close to a possible church. Features of symbol stones noted by Fraser and Halliday, and of multiple davochs noted by Ross, come together here. The davoch appears to be an economic unit of land organisation, probably dating back at least to the Pictish period. Here in the old medieval parish of Inverallan, there is a possibility of further examining the relationship between the davoch and ecclesiastical or secular power, and how that may have changed when a possible ecclesiastical centre was relocated from Finlarig to Inverallan, where a third symbol stone was found in proximity to a church also. *SH*

Sheila pictured after the presentation

Heartfelt Thanks!

Those attending our winter/spring talks over the years, formerly in Pictavia and now of course in Brechin Town House Museum have always been assured of not only a warm welcome but also a cup of tea or coffee and a sumptuous array of sweetmeats. The warm welcome is taken care of and shared by our committee members but the catering is all provided courtesy of one person – Sheila MacTavish.

Attempts to formally thank her for her labours at the end of each talk are usually met with Sheila's disapproval, preferring as she does to stay out of the limelight.

So the committee decided to acknowledge her long-standing contribution in another way. Knowing her as we do, we waited until the audience had departed Brechin Museum on 20 March before presenting her with a beautiful silver brooch in the shape of the Roseisle Pictish goose.

Many thanks indeed Sheila! *JB*

Another Strider

Last year the PAS helped with the transfer of Early Medieval sculptured fragments from Glamis church to the Meffan Institute in Forfar, Angus, on loan, where they are now on public display. (See the article by Norman Atkinson in this edition).

The largest fragment is numbered Glamis 3 by RCAHMS and No.6 in the Meffan's fine collection of Pictish sculpture (**1**). As it was found in 1967 it is by rights Glamis 4, not 3. The finder, Herbert Coutts, did not specify where he came across it 'at Glamis'. He wrote:

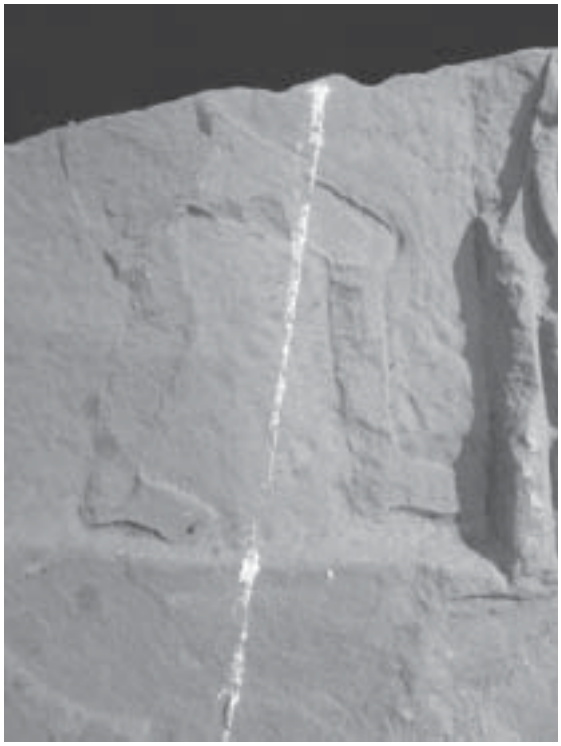
> At one time it must have been built into a wall as it has been roughly squared and its back face bears traces of mortar. It is of grey sandstone but weathering has given the surface a thin red-brown coating. The fragment measures 59 cm high, 55 cm across, and is 13 cm thick.[1]

The front has since acquired a line of white paint.[2]

Much of the relief carving had already been knocked off in the process of turning a cross-slab into a useful building stone, but the shape of what was originally carved in relief is visible, because the rough surface contrasts with the smoothness of the dressed stone that formed the background.

In the left panel we can see the lower half of a walking figure. The knees are shaped and each foot has a curved instep between a rounded heel and ball of the foot (**2**).

1 *Glamis 4, face a*



2 *Glamis 4, left panel, detail of walking figure*

The central panel contains the base of a cross shaft in high relief within a deeply cut border. Each quadrant of the circular design twists and loops in an individual pattern (**3**).

All that remains of the right panel is the hindquarters of a walking animal with a thick tail, such as dog or fox; and directly above is a large four-toed foot, the only vestige of a second animal, making it rather hard to identify (**4**).[3]

Below these carved panels is the roughly dressed surface of the slab's tenon, intended for inserting into the ground or socket stone. The original stone must have been at least 65 to 70cm wide.

Glamis 4, as it is to be called, appears to fit the pattern of those cross-slabs with a large striding figure, whom the Hendersons describe as 'a pedestrian hunter or herdsman', who might be 'a "master of animals" and patron of the chase'.[4] We already know of three other Pictish striders,

3 *Glamis 4, centre panel, detail of cross shaft*

4 *Glamis 4, right panel, detail of animals*

and two are nearby. One was found at Eassie and now stands in the ruined church there, and the other is Kirriemuir 2, displayed in the Meffan. Eassie, Kirriemuir and Glamis form a small triangle in Angus about five miles distant from one another.

Although sculpted by different hands, they share a common format: the large figure dominates the cross side of the slab, to the left of the cross shaft and moving towards it, while vertically arranged animals are carved to the right of the shaft and facing away from it.

Luckily, Eassie and Kirriemuir 2 are complete. Both show that the figure holds a small square shield and spear or staff, and wears a cape. On Eassie the cape flies behind him (**5**), while on Kirriemuir 2 it fits snugly like a plaid (**6**). A close examination of the Glamis 3 figure shows what might be the line of a similar garment.[5]

'Eassie Strider' carries his shield in his left hand and his spear over his right shoulder; so too might the Glamis 4 man, as a spear shaft does not appear alongside the lower half of his body. The figure on Kirriemuir 2 carries both shield and an upright spear/staff in his left hand and something indeterminate (a net, an animal?) over his right shoulder. This is very like the third 'pedestrian hunter or herdsman', found farther north on the great Nigg cross-slab now housed in Nigg church, Ross-shire. He too carries something resembling a bag or animal. Are they

5 *Eassie, face a, detail of figure*

6 *Kirriemuir 2, face a*

trappers? The Nigg version of the walker shares features with the Angus ones, and is obviously the same character.[6]

It is significant that this mysterious character is so large and in such a prominent position next to the cross (in Angus). Nothing else adorns the faces of Eassie and Kirriemuir 2 apart from two angels, top left and top right. This suggests that whatever he embodies, he is in harmony with Christianity, maybe even holy, although we are not able to see how he corresponds with a particular Biblical or Apocryphal being.[7] He must have been well known, but all we can say is that he was very popular in a small corner of Angus, and also found his way on to a major monument at Nigg.

Vigour and movement are decided characteristics. Most other Pictish pedestrians on cross-slabs stand stiffly rooted, feet almost flat on the ground, even when on the move e.g. the procession on Eassie.

There is, of course, another whole band of large solitary pedestrians, such as axe-carrying Rhynie man and weapon-wielding Golspie man, as well as animal-headed Mail and Balblair, but these figures would seem to inhabit some other story.[8] In fact, a solitary figure (51cm tall) on the reverse of Eassie carries some implement over his shoulder – the stone is worn but he may belong to this other category.

In Ireland, the high crosses, being narrow, could not accommodate a broad narrative scene in the way that a Pictish cross-slab enjoyed (Aberlemno 2 par excellence). But the wide stone bases into which the high crosses were set allowed the sculptor more scope. On at least seven bases there is the scene of a man, sometimes two, some with staff or dogs, driving assorted animals in front. These might be later manifestations of the same theme.[9]

The lower section of the Glamis 4 man is all we have. Just how tall was he originally? The space between the ground and where legs meet is 13.5cm. That space on Kirriemuir 2 from ground to where legs meet is 18cm, and he is 48 cm in height, quite realistic proportions. On that basis the Glamis 4 figure would be about 36cm high. However, on Eassie, a much larger cross-slab, the space measures only 17cm from ground to crotch, and yet this figure is 60cm in height, giving him a disproportionally long torso. The Nigg figure also has an over-long torso. So the answer is uncertain: he could range from 36 to 50cm tall, or so.

We have little to go on as far as the animals in the right panel are concerned. On Nigg, a deer leaps above two racing hounds. On Eassie, a stag walks above a stationary solidly-built dog/'lion' above a running hound. On Kirriemuir 2, the stag lies dead, judging from its legs and hovering crow, above three running hounds. Glamis 4 shows one beast standing, with another above, and perhaps one can conclude that, above both, the uppermost animal would have been a stag.

Glamis 4 is not displayed so that you can view the reverse. There is a drawing on the RCAHMS Canmore website, and Herbert Coutts wrote:

> The only sculpture to be seen on the other face are two pairs of legs in the top left-hand corner. It is not quite clear whether these represent the legs of two human figures standing close together or an animal.

This tiny glimpse of the reverse is tantalising. (See figure **2** opposite.)

Given the current Pictish canon, we can say that the strider was favoured in one corner of Angus and in East Ross-shire. This fragment provides us with another example.

Notes

1 Herbert Coutts, 'A Pictish Cross-Slab Fragment from Glamis, Angus' in *PSAS* vol.103, 1970-71, pp.235–6. Chronology requires the earlier fragment reported by J Stirton in 1911 to be numbered Glamis 3. See Norman Atkinson's article in this newsletter.

2 Ibid. See Plate 29b at end of volume.

3 Ibid. Coutts saw it as 'part of a wing'.

4 George Henderson and Isabel Henderson, *The Art of the Picts: Sculpture and Metalwork in Early Medieval Scotland*, 2004, p.125.

5 See Canmore ID 32072.

6 Not placed on the cross side, but near the top of the reverse. He also bears a sword attached to a baldric. Another example from near Nigg might be the over-sized man walking across the Shandwick cross-slab, centrally placed within a panel crowded with animals and men.

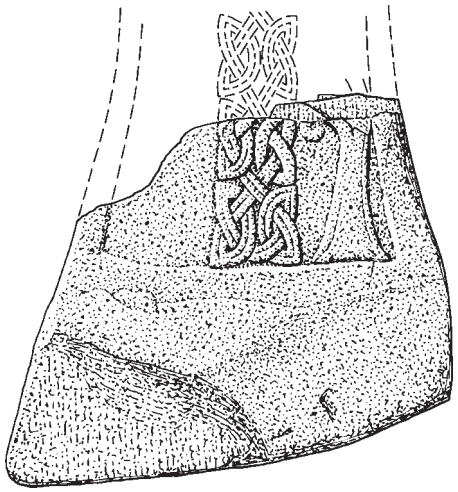
7 Op.cit. The Hendersons are reminded of St Christopher, p.125.

8 See Kelly Kilpatrick's prize-winning discussion of animal-headed humans, 'The iconography of the Papil Stone: sculptural and literary comparisons with a Pictish motif' in *PSAS* vol.141, 2011, pp.159-205.

9 Irish examples are: South cross Castledermot, Scripture cross Clonmacnois, South cross Clonmacnois, Market cross Kells, cross of SS Patrick and Columba Kells, St Muiredach's cross Monasterboice, Ogulla cross. (Peter Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 3 vols.)

Glamis sculptural fragments

While the Glamis Manse Pictish stone, Glamis 2, is well known, and has been for a long time, having been first mentioned in 1726, Glamis has turned up a number of sculptured fragments over the years, and these are less familiar.



1 *Glamis 3 (SC1097266) scale 1:10*

At the 2003 conference, *Able Minds and Practised Hands,* Isabel Henderson drew attention to the importance of sculptural fragments, and excavations at Kirriemuir and Tarbat, for example, have uncovered many fragments which revealed how much more important these sites were than the few previously known sculptures had indicated.

The Pictish Arts Society has long recognized this, and has therefore been supportive of local efforts to protect such stones and to encourage local museums and local organisations to play their part in this. I am grateful to the PAS for all the assistance it gave me during my Angus museums career, and my paper at that 2003 conference charted the part Angus played in this regard.

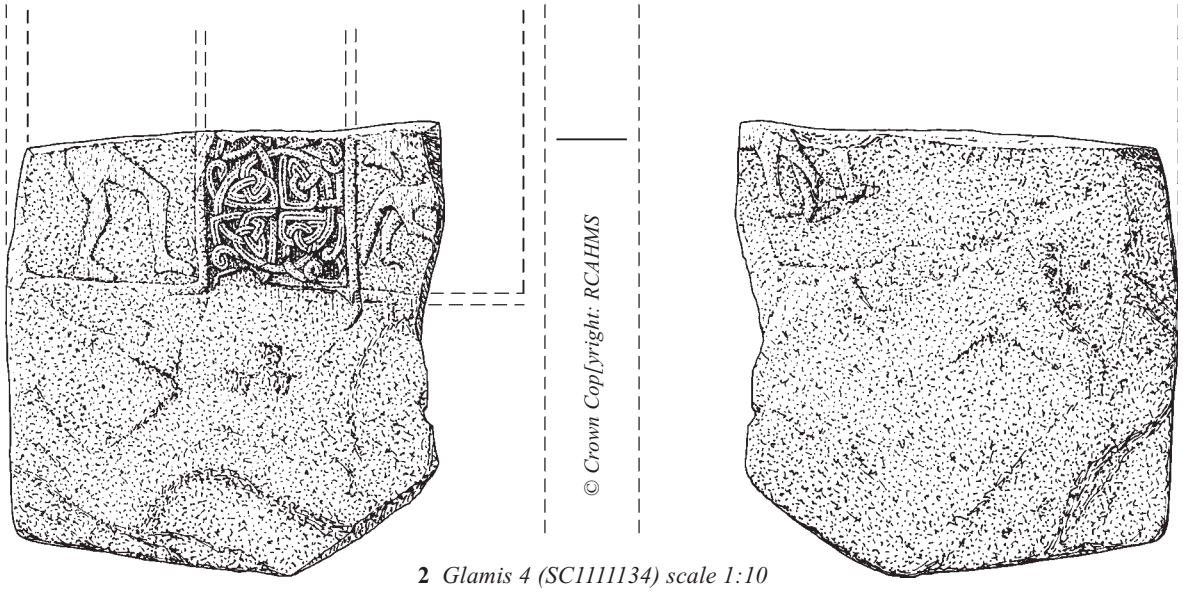
Returning to Glamis, however, matters were not ideal, and, for a long time, grudging access to the Manse stone was about as good as it got. Access to the rest of the garden, especially the old rockery was pretty well denied.

The first fragment, Glamis 3 (**1**), was discovered in the kirkyard prior to 1911, and, sadly, other fragments found at the time were not recovered. It disappeared in any case, and it was not until 1983 that it was rediscovered by John Sheriff, incorporated in the manse rockery! It then disappeared again, but eventually I was able to rescue it in 1994!

The second fragment, Glamis 4 (**2**), was discovered by Herbert Coutts of Dundee Museum in the kirkyard in late 1967. It had traces of mortar on it, indicating that it had recently been built into the wall. It was placed inside the church for safe-keeping, and when I first saw it lay on the window sill in the porch of the church.

The third fragment, Glamis 5 (**3**), was first noticed in the manse rockery in 1984 by Strat Halliday, but it too disappeared, and despite exhaustive searches it was not until 1994 that I rediscovered it in the manse rockery.

Fortunately the arrival of a new and very sympathetic minister, Andrew Grieve, made all the difference, and I was positively encouraged to rummage in the rockery and other parts of the garden. Andrew decided that the rockery



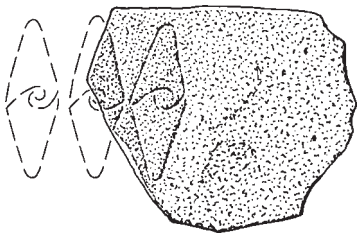
2 *Glamis 4 (SC1111134) scale 1:10*

was to go, and this also brought about the discovery of the fourth fragment, Glamis 6 (**4**), as well as a number of later medieval fragments.

All the Pictish/early medieval fragments were, with Andrew's agreement, moved into the porch of the church in 1994, which at least protected them from the weather. Longer term plans to move the stones into purpose-built indoor displays were discussed, but unfortunately did not materialize. While the stones were under cover, they were on the floor in a very confined space, and were still at risk by over-keen photographers and visitors who did not appreciate how easily damaged they could be.

Early in 2006, I was planning an exhibition 'PICTS!' in the Meffan Institute in Forfar, and a number of less well known stones, including the Glamis fragments, were secured on loan. A plinth was designed to display all four fragments, kindly funded by PAS, and it was agreed with Glamis Kirk Session that after the exhibition, the stones would be returned with the plinth and that space in the church would be made available to accommodate it. Sadly, this never came to be, and the stones once more ended up on the porch floor.

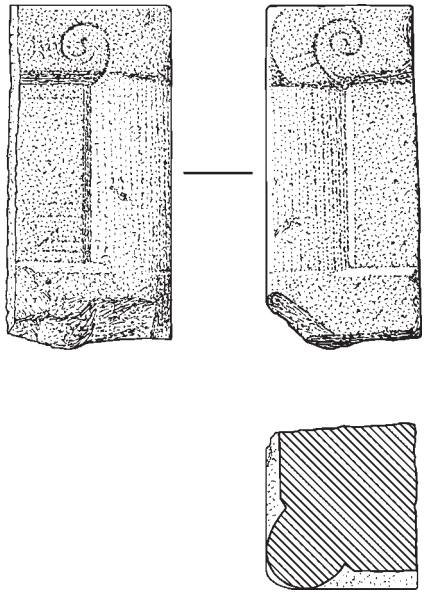
This situation was, however monitored by PAS, and late in 2013 the committee contacted Glamis to bring the importance of the stones and their



3 *Glamis 5 (SC1081220) scale 1:10*

plight to the notice of the community. The success of the Inveravon stones project was very much in our mind and our hopes were high.

The first meeting was with the Community Council, and a three-strong PAS contingent of John Borland, David McGovern and myself gave of our best but left somewhat deflated! Without leaving myself open to a libel case I shall just leave that episode there! We then went to a meeting of the Kirk Session, and made our case. The Kirk Session listened to our concerns,



4 *Glamis 6 (SC1110129) scale 1:10*

asked questions and came to an agreement that we would take the stones into the care of the Meffan in the meantime. They would look into the possibility of creating adequate display space at Glamis, and if they could achieve this the stones would return to Glamis. We left the meeting to a round of applause, and congratulated ourselves in the car park on a job well done!

One of my last acts for Angus Council was then to write to the Session Clerk outlining the agreement, and then leave it to my colleagues to carry out the work. This they have done, and all four fragments are now on display in the Meffan, alongside two Strathmartine fragments (Nos 3 and 8) which were returned to Angus from the Borders in the same exhibition in 2006.

Well done PAS – this is another fine example of using our knowledge and enthusiasm to benefit our heritage and to ensure that it will be there for future generations.

Norman Atkinson

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The deadline for receipt of material is **Saturday 15 August 2015**

Please email contributions to the editor:

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Pictish Arts Society

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