

**The Northern Picts****PAS Annual Conference****7–9 October 2016**Highland Council Headquarters,
Glenurquhart Road, Inverness IV3 5NX**PROGRAMME****Friday 7 October**Private visit to Inverness Museum
19.30–21.00An opportunity for conference delegates to
mingle and enjoy exclusive access to Inverness
Museum's fine collection of Pictish sculpture.

Advance booking only

Saturday 8 October

Conference & AGM

09.00–09.40 Registration (with tea/coffee)

09.40–09.50 Welcome

09.50–10.30 Candy Hatherly
*Atlantic roundhouses and the later prehistoric
archaeology of the Moray Firthlands*10.30–11.00 Juliette Mitchell
*The early medieval barrow cemeteries of Scotland:
Movement, Placement, Architecture & Chronology*

11.00–11.30 Tea/coffee

11.30–12.10 Daniel MacLean
*Fragments of Significance: Identifying
high status settlement in Northern Pictland*12.10–12.50 Matt Richie
*The Picts: a learning resource. Place-based
learning and Scotland's Archaeology Strategy*12.50–14.00 Lunch (and a chance to look at the
Knocknagael Pictish symbol stone)14.00–14.40 Gordon Noble
*The Northern Picts Project:
Latest Progress and Results*14.40–15.20 David Anderson
and Leanne Demay
*Ploughs, Pictish Stones & Port: Excavations
at Dandaleith 2014*15.20–16.00 Cait McCullagh
*The Cross across the Firthlands and
the making of a Kingdom: Finding Fortriu
in the Cross Slabs of Northern Pictland*

16.00–16.10 Closing remarks

16.30–17.15 AGM

Sunday 9 October

PAS Conference Field Trip

Departing from Highland Council HQ,
Glenurquhart Rd, Inverness IV3 5NX
at 09.30, returning there c17.00.A chance for delegates to visit Groam House
Museum and a selection of Pictish stones north of
Inverness, including some in private ownership not
normally open to the public. Delegates are advised
to bring appropriate footwear, water-proofs and a
packed lunch. Participation in the field trip is by
coach only and spaces are limited so pre-booking
is essential.A **Conference booking form** is included
with this Newsletter. Or book online at
<www.thepictishartsociety.org.uk>**President's and Secretary's
combined Report 2015-16**

The Winter/Spring evening lecture series of 2015–16 drew larger audiences to Brechin Town Museum than in the previous year. Numbers generally ranged between 20 and 30 members and guests. The quality of our speakers has been consistently high, and they have presented thoughtful and informative content for us to ponder and enjoy. The series started in September with David Henry of the Pinkfoot Press proposing a new interpretation of the Farnell stone. October brought Joanna Hambly of Scotland's Coastal Heritage at Risk Project to speak to us on the Wemyss caves in Fife, decorated with Pictish symbols and crosses. In November Dr Rebecca Jones of Historic Environment Scotland (HES) discussed types and locations of Roman camps in Scotland.

Then followed a three-month break which we introduced to make travel to Brechin easier for speakers and members of the audience by avoiding deepest winter. In March 2016 John Sherriffn (also of HES) opened the spring session with his talk on Pictish hillforts. Dr Kelly Kilpatrick provided food for thought in April with a study of the 'Book' in early medieval Insular sculpture. The final lecture of the series was given by David Strachan of the Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust, who presented the work of the Glenshee Archaeology Project excavating Pictish longhouses, as reported in the current issue. We are very grateful to Sheila Hainey, who assiduously takes notes during all these lectures, writing them up as a report for the Newsletter so that no one misses out who is unable to attend in person.

Adding to the pleasure of the evenings are the generous refreshments provided and administered as

ever by Sheila MacTavish. It allows everyone an opportunity to chat and mingle before and after the talk itself. However, we cannot linger long. Like many museums, Brechin Town Museum is under financial pressure and, since feeling the pinch, it has regretfully started to charge PAS for the hire of the space, which requires a staff member to be in attendance. We now keep the event to two hours. The charge to non-members is set to rise by 50p to £3, to help offset the added expense. Lectures are still free to members, with a small charge for tea/coffee and biscuits.

In January 2016 an additional event was jointly organised by PAS and the Perthshire Society of Natural Science (Archaeological & Historical Section). Martin Goldberg was invited to Perth Museum and Art Gallery to present 'Celtic Art and Early Medieval Scotland' with particular reference to the collections in National Museums Scotland and the 'Celts' exhibition that was coming to Edinburgh in March.

The Annual Conference 2015 was held in Meikle, Perthshire, and attracted a good turnout of PAS members plus a few locals. Speakers covered a range of topics: Victoria Whitworth was concerned with the hogback (or 'bodystone') Meikle 25, David Henry with the creation of Meikle Museum itself. We were also introduced to a wealth of information on Pictish-era isotopes by Kate Britton, silver hoards by Alice Blackwell, and recreating the past with Martin Goldberg. The afternoon ended with the clash of steel as weapons were flourished by David McGovern, Chris Grant and Paul McDonald in their discussion of Pictish sword production. A copious luncheon provided by a local caterer went some way to make up for the hall's low temperature. After lunch, Anna Ritchie showed groups round the extraordinary collection of Pictish stones in Meikle Museum.

The PAS Committee wishes to thank all those speakers at evening lectures and the conference, as well as the conference chairpersons and our museum guide, who give so willingly of their time. We would also like to thank the attendees, both members and guests, some of whom came a long distance to take part.

The AGM took place in the afternoon. It was quite lively from the floor with impromptu nominations for the committee and questioning of the annual accounts, all good signs of members engaging with the running of their society.

The newsletter continues to go out on time every quarter with, more often than not, the page count reaching double figures. That being said, do please keep the content coming in. If you do not contribute, we have nothing to print. We should once again acknowledge the good offices of David Henry for his work in layout and distribution.

Preparation for the proposed e-journal is well-

advanced and we hope to have guidance notes for contributors up on the website soon. The society's on-line presence continues to go from strength to strength, with the number of 'likers' on facebook now in excess of 5000. Our thanks go to David McGovern for keeping the facebook page and website current.

This time last year we wrote 'After the Committee's success in initiating the transfer of the Glamis fragments from the church floor to full public display in the Meffan, Forfar, we were hopeful of success in our aim of getting the large cross-slab Logierait 2 off the church floor and into a safe vertical position in an armature. We have no progress to report yet. It is still horizontal although there are no local or church objections to the plan that we know of, just no definitive agreement to go ahead.'

One year on and sadly, Logierait 2 is still horizontal on the floor of the kirk. After many months of waiting, we got back in touch with the Kirk Session and it was agreed that a PAS committee member would go along to Logierait on a Sunday to speak to parishioners before or after the service. David McGovern agreed to be our representative and, thanks to a very supportive intern Minister, was actually invited up to speak to the congregation mid-service, giving him a captive audience.

David explained the significance of the stone and our plan to erect it on a specially commissioned stand inside the church, all to approving nods. He chatted to a number of locals after the service and received nothing but enthusiasm for our plan. But just when we thought the log-jam was finally broken, our next communication with a kirk official brought us back to a grinding halt. According to this man, the Kirk Session wants the stone out of the kirk and erected in the graveyard.

There is some lamination on the stone, the result of it lying outdoors for a thousand years and more so exposing it to the elements once more is not really an option. Putting it (and perhaps Logierait 1 also) under some sort of shelter would have a much greater cost and would involve at the very least an archaeological watching brief whilst the supports for such a shelter went into the ground. And of course there would be on-going maintenance costs for the shelter.

It is tempting to give up on this and walk away but I hope that PAS – the other committee members and the membership – will stick with it and hopefully win the few remaining hearts and minds of Logierait Kirk Session.

We would like to end by thanking the rest of the committee for their hard work and you the membership for your continued support. We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our forthcoming conference and lecture nights and to reading your contributions to the newsletter and facebook page.

John Borland & Elspeth Reid

Notice of PAS AGM 2016

The Annual General Meeting of the Pictish Arts Society will be held in Highland Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Rd, Inverness, on Saturday 8 October at 16.30 to consider the following business:

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 Approval of the 2015 AGM Minutes (see Newsletter 77)
- 3 President's and Secretary's Joint Report (see this newsletter)
- 4 Treasurer's Report: Presentation and Approval of Annual Accounts
- 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 at 4.30pm prompt.

Please send nominations for committee, and notes of any matters you wish to raise, to the Honorary Secretary, House of the Glens, Cortachy, Angus DD8 4QF. Alternatively, email <info@thepictishartsociety.org.uk>

Ecclesiastics on Pictish sculpted stones: reflections of reality or symbolic constructs?

An analysis of relevant Pictish sculpted stones that the author has visited in the counties of Perth and Kinross, and the county of Angus
(Conclusions from a MA dissertation)

While a great deal of valuable research has been undertaken on Pictish sculpted stones, the depiction of ecclesiastics thereon has not previously been consistently analysed in detail for a large corpus of stones. The aim of this research is to begin to rectify this omission. The methodology employed departs from the art historical approach hitherto applied when analysing the iconography carved upon Pictish sculpted stones, utilising instead historical and archaeological resources. As a result a number of proposals are made for new interpretations regarding the portrayal of ecclesiastics upon Pictish sculpted stones. The sculpted stones analysed herein are: Aberlemno 3, Aldbar, Dunfallandy, Eassie, Fowls Wester 2, Glamis 2, Kirriemuir 1, Meigle 2, 14 & 29, St Madoes, St Vigeans 4 with 21, 7, 10, 11, 17

and 18. Throughout the thesis St Vigeans 4 with 21 are counted as two fragments of one stone.

In the first instance primary source materials and archaeological reports are examined for evidence regarding the appearance and lifestyles of ecclesiastics during the seventh to the ninth centuries in Pictland. For the purposes of this thesis ecclesiastics are priests (monastic or episcopal), deacons, monks, abbots and bishops. This analysis is used to create a catalogue of attributes of ecclesiastical appearance and lifestyles. This catalogue is then compared against the depictions of human figures on the sculpted stones. This comparison enables a clear distinction to be made between those depictions that portray ecclesiastics and those that do not. This approach results in proposals for the re-classification of figures as ecclesiastics that hitherto have not been recognised as such. Furthermore, all figures deemed to be ecclesiastics are then divided into two groups, those that may be interpreted as reflections of reality and those that are symbolic constructs. For the purposes of this thesis those that are reflections of reality have the attributes listed in the catalogue and only those listed. Whereas depictions that show ecclesiastics as symbolic constructs are those that have attributes as listed in the catalogue plus additional symbols that indicate that these figures represent persons who are not commonplace ecclesiastics, e.g. saints.

In order to utilise an historical and archaeological approach to create the catalogue of ecclesiastical attributes, it is necessary to study primary source materials and archaeological reports appertaining to Pictland for the seventh to the ninth centuries. Herein lies a problem: the dearth of Pictish resources. To date no documentary or manuscript sources for this period have been recognised as Pictish and only one ecclesiastical site of the period has been extensively excavated in Pictland. Therefore, to overcome the problem of this scarcity of evidence sources from beyond Pictland must be used. A detailed argument for the relevance of primary source materials and archaeological evidence from Ireland, Dál Riata, Strathclyde and Northumbria justifying the use of these non-Pictish sources is available upon request, as is a complete list of the source materials analysed.

The list of attributes of ecclesiastics' appearance deduced from analysing these resources is as follows: the carrying of books and/or book satchels; wearing of Petrine tonsures; specific clothing in the form of ecclesiastical vestments (*tunica talaris*, *dalmatica*, *paenula*), hooded cowls, and shoes; the carrying of pastoral staffs and croziers; lack of facial hair; lack of weaponry; and being seated upon thrones, when in conjunction with at least one of the other attributes. The same resources reveal the attributes of ecclesiastics' lifestyles. These are: worship; missionary and/or pastoral work; involvement in church business; undertaking diplomatic missions;

seeking places of spiritual significance; developing an intellectual life; and travelling to churches and monasteries.

When every human figure is compared against the catalogue of ecclesiastical attributes forty-three human figures depicted upon seventeen stones are classified as being portrayals of ecclesiastics. Thirty have consistently been classified as such since the publication of *ECMS*, yet were re-evaluated against the attribute catalogue of this study to validate this interpretation. The remaining thirteen figures are proposed as depictions of ecclesiastics that have hitherto not been recognised as such. Ten of the re-classified figures are deemed to reflect the daily life of ecclesiastics and are on: Aberlemno 3; Dunfallandy; Kirriemuir 1; and St Vigeans 7 and 11. The other three re-classified figures are designated as being within symbolic constructs and are on: Eassie; Meigle 2; and Dunfallandy. The seated figures upon Fowlis Wester 2 have previously been categorised as ecclesiastics, however herein they are re-classified as symbolic constructs representing the Desert Fathers SS Paul and Antony.

Of the forty-three figures classified as ecclesiastics, it is proposed that thirty-three depictions on fourteen stones are reflections of the reality of ecclesiastical appearance and lifestyle in Pictland during the seventh to the ninth centuries. The catalogue of ecclesiastical attributes describes seven characteristics of ecclesiastical appearance. It is submitted that on all of the stones considered for this thesis every figure classified as an ecclesiastic is depicted: wearing ecclesiastical clothing; having no facial hair; and carrying no weaponry. All whose heads are visible show Petrine tonsures. The heads of the ecclesiastics on St Madoes and St Vigeans 4 with 21 and 11 are covered by cowls. Nine stones show books or book satchels, these are: Aberlemno 3; Aldbar; Kirriemuir 1; Meigle 14; St Madoes; and St Vigeans 7, 11, 17 and 18. Pastoral staffs or croziers are portrayed on Meigle 29 and on St Vigeans 4 with 21, 7 and 11. Thrones are present upon the Aldbar stone and St Vigeans 7 and 11. The attribute catalogue also itemises seven aspects of ecclesiastical lifestyles. Missionary and/or pastoral work is the most frequently depicted aspect of ecclesiastical activity, as it appears on nine out of fifteen stones. These stones are: Aberlemno 3; Aldbar; Kirriemuir 1; Meigle 14; St Madoes; and St Vigeans 7, 11, 17 and 18. Ecclesiastics on four stones are shown travelling on the various journeys required within ecclesiastical life. Five ride horses as depicted upon: Dunfallandy; St Vigeans 4 with 21; and St Madoes. Two are the pedestrians on St Vigeans 11. Two stones portray ecclesiastics engaged in worship, these being Fowlis Wester 2 and St Vigeans 7. Finally, the depiction of an ecclesiastic in a scene or adjacent to symbolism the comprehension of which requires theological training is considered herein representative of the

intellectual life that ecclesiastics were expected to develop; such depictions are extant on Aberlemno 3 and Meigle 2.

In addition to the above classification of ecclesiastics depicted upon the sculpted stones, another result of this research is the development of four proposals for new interpretations of details in the portrayal of ecclesiastics on Pictish sculpted stones.

First, it is suggested that a differentiation can be made between the types of ecclesiastical vestments being worn. A close examination of the stones allows the identification of the standard ecclesiastical vestments: the *tunica talaris*, *dalmatica* and *paenula*. Stones clearly showing the combination of a *tunica talaris* and a *dalmatica* are: Aldbar; Kirriemuir 1; and Meigle 14. The portrayal of richly decorated *paenulae* is apparent on Fowlis Wester 2. Meigle 29 shows the fullness of a *paenula*.

Secondly, it is suggested that the fabric and purpose of ecclesiastical cowls can be deduced. The fabric is weather-resistant and stiff, and the cowls are worn for travelling. These suppositions are evinced by the cowls depicted upon: St Madoes; and St Vigeans 4 with 21, and 11.

Thirdly, it is suggested that activities being undertaken by the ecclesiastics can be recognised (as listed above under attributes of ecclesiastical lifestyle).

Fourthly, it is suggested that the rank of an ecclesiastic within the hierarchy of the Church can be discerned. The rank of bishop or abbot is recognised by the presence of: a crozier or pastoral staff; and/or a *paenula*; and, if in conjunction with other ecclesiastical attributes, a throne. Therefore, ecclesiastics of this status are depicted upon: Aldbar; Kirriemuir 1; Meigle 29; and St Vigeans 7 and 11.

All except one of the sculpted stones relevant to this thesis have singular re-interpretation of figures as ecclesiastics and/or of details within the depictions of ecclesiastics. However, in the light of this research it is proposed that all six of the human figures portrayed upon St Vigeans 11 require revision of their interpretation. All six figures depicted fulfil the criteria for re-classification as ecclesiastics. A detailed discussion of the evidence for this suggestion will appear in a later article. For the present a precis of the revised interpretations are given here. On the front face to the left of the cross stands an ecclesiastic involved in missionary and/or pastoral work. To the right of the cross stands not an angel but an ecclesiastic with a Petrine tonsure and elaborate vestments alluding to the rank of bishop or abbot. On the reverse face the figures to the top of the stone are not indicative of the Trinity but are ecclesiastics possibly of the rank of bishops or abbots with an involvement in missionary and/or pastoral work. The figures at the base of this face are not laymen but ecclesiastics depicted as travelling in order to

undertake any of the various activities outlined under attributes of ecclesiastic lifestyle. Their staffs may imply the rank of bishops or abbots; walking for ecclesiastics of these ranks is consistent with historical sources.

The detailed justification for the proposed new interpretations of figures upon all of the above mentioned sculpted stones will be given in a future article.

It is proposed that the remaining ten depictions of ecclesiastics on six stones are constituent parts of six symbolic constructs that represent the Desert Fathers SS Paul and Antony either as individuals or together at their meeting in the desert. Of these six symbolic constructs, two have been accepted as such since 1903 yet were re-evaluated for this study to validate this interpretation and are on Kirriemuir 1 and St Vigeans 7. The other four have not been recognised as such before and appear on four stones involving six depictions of ecclesiastics in conjunction with other symbols to denote SS Paul and Antony. The pertinent sculpted stones are: Fowlis Wester 2; Dunfallandy; Eassie; and Meigle 2.

It is submitted that St Paul is indicated by an ecclesiastic with one or more of the following symbols: a date palm; a cloak made from plaited fabric; a wolf; and coin stamps. St Antony, it is suggested, is indicated by an ecclesiastic with a crozier as part of his throne plus one or more of the following symbols: a representation of the Holy Spirit; lions; and a centaur. Where figures meeting these criteria are portrayed seated either side of a cross this thesis proposes that the cross symbolises the saints' encounter in the desert. Therefore, based upon this new recognition of ecclesiastics within symbolic constructs, Fowlis Wester 2 and Dunfallandy have carved upon them depictions of SS Paul and Antony in the desert.

This thesis also suggests that these two saints are depicted individually on the sculpted stones. On Eassie the figure in the top right-hand corner of the reverse face is re-classified as St Paul. On Meigle 2 on the reverse face the figure surrounded by lions is re-interpreted as St Antony. The argument for the re-interpretation of Meigle 2 is strengthened by the presence of a centaur in the panel below.

The detailed justification for the proposed new interpretations of figures as SS Paul and Antony will be given in a future article.

As a suggested course of further research outside this thesis' remit, it is submitted that the centaurs on Aberlemno 3 and Glamis 2 are symbolic constructs representing St Antony despite no ecclesiastic being present. Knowledge of the centaur Chiron can reasonably be expected to have been present in monasteries contemporary with the sculpted stones, the illustrations of whom show him carrying axes and branches in likenesses similar to the centaurs

upon Meigle 2, Aberlemno 3 and Glamis 2. This thesis proposes that there is evidence to suggest the remainder of the reverse of Aberlemno 3 would require ecclesiastically trained personnel to interpret it. There would be no impediment to an additional symbolic construct separate from the presence of a human figure being placed upon this face. A full discussion of the re-interpretation of the reverse face of Aberlemno 3 will be in a future article.

On Glamis 2 the combination of a centaur and a lion in the uppermost panels of the front face strongly suggests that this is a symbolic construct for St Antony. The lion does not have a thick-set body like those on Meigle 2. However, it does have the physique of the lions accompanying SS Paul and Antony on the Nigg Cross. Furthermore, it is also proposed that a link to the learning of Irish monastic missionaries with their interest in the Desert Fathers may be signified by the presence of a holy well at Glamis church indicating an early church site; also this site was associated with St Fergus. Ecclesiastics at this site would understand the meaning of this symbolic construct.

It would be valuable to apply the approach developed for this thesis to the Pictish sculpted stones in other areas of Pictland to create a study for the whole of the territory. Such research could establish if the proportions of figures that are reflections of reality and those that are symbolic constructs remain the same; and if not, what might that indicate? The identification of further Pictish ecclesiastical sites may result from the proposition that symbolic constructs appear where there is a community with the theological training to identify their meaning. The research started here on recognising new emblems used to represent saints can be extended; one possible research area would be to look at the incidence of personal symbols in the absence of ecclesiastical figures as illustrated above.

Sarah Louise Coleman

Spring Lecture Series

20 May 2016 – *David Strachan*

The Pictish Longhouses of Glenshee

Our final talk of the season was delivered by David Strachan, of Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust (PKHT), on 'The Pictish Longhouses of Glenshee'. Over the last few years, PKHT has been working together with a range of partners and sponsors to manage a number of community-based archaeological projects. David's talk focused on excavations at Lair, Glenshee, which completed their fourth season this year.

The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland's survey of the archaeological landscape of North-East Perth (published in 1990) included areas of Glenshee and

Strathardle untouched by agricultural improvement. The uplands here had not been ploughed out, and as a result, retained evidence for structures from the Neolithic to the pre-improvement period. As well as stone round houses of the prehistoric period and the rectangular buildings of the pre-improvement fermtouns, there was a number of elongated rounded structures that were obviously neither. The faint remains of these elongated structures show clearly in light snow cover and sometimes have annexes attached or are associated with other outlying remains. Labelled Pitcarmick-type buildings after the Strathardle estate where the type was first recognised, these structures contained very little stone. RCAHMS suggested that they dated to the early medieval period. Excavations of Pitcarmick-type buildings at Cultalonia by Glasgow University in 1993–4 gave evidence for the occupation of these at some time in the 7th to 9th centuries AD, and suggested that the structures were constructed principally of turf.

At Lair in Glenshee, several Pitcarmick-type houses lie in an area busy with archaeological remains, including old farm buildings, a military road of the 18th century, an early ring cairn, clearance cairns and hut circles. Two lie in proximity to the ring cairn and have been the subject of the excavations. The technique of building in turf has long been lost here, but is still alive in Iceland, where it is passed on in order to preserve the country's heritage. David and colleagues studied turf building and building techniques there to guide them in their excavations at Lair. (His illustrations of present day turf buildings in Iceland were spectacular.) The Glenshee Archaeology Project was devised to seek answers to several questions: could anything be learned about the nature of construction? When were these two longhouses built, and were they contemporary or sequential? Were they used as houses, byres or did they combine the function of the two? Were they shielings, in use for only a few months of the year?

The first step was to carry out a geophysical survey of the area. Fortunately, this worked on the acid upland soil. Five longhouses and the ring cairn were identified. The first to be excavated seemed to be a simple structure of turf with very little stone, despite its proximity to the ring cairn. What little stone there was appeared to be at the entrance. A pattern of different coloured soils revealed the wall spread to a metre wide of dark soil against a lighter background. Running off one end of the house, a linear feature showed on the geophysical plots. This turned out to be a shallow charcoal-filled ditch – possibly a burned-out hedge. The structure was built with the long sides parallel to the slope, a good orientation had it been used as a byre house. Radio-carbon dates in the period 7th–9th century AD were obtained, and

a number of artefacts were uncovered, including iron blades and buckles.

Work on the other longhouses over the next few years revealed that some had rather more stone in their construction. The neighbour to the first house, located close to the ring cairn, proved to have a length of kerbing at the base of the turf wall that appears to have been taken from the cairn. It also had a single course of cobbles which ran round the base of the wall – perhaps to designate the layout. Probable hearths were uncovered, and more metalwork together with stone was found. A group of three tiny opaque green beads, possibly fused together were found in the fill of a pit; they bear comparison with Anglo-Saxon examples. A spindle whorl gives the impression of having been scratched with a deliberate pattern (although this has been described as graffiti). Pits and postholes were also discovered. One small building had a neat dwarf wall structure protecting the turf wall, probably from water or ice melt. The alignment to the slope in several cases argues for the possibility that these structures had a byre at one end, like the later blackhouse.

So far, it has not been possible to determine whether or not the buildings at Lair were occupied simultaneously. They have all been dated around AD650–900, but it remains possible that this was a sequential spread of buildings. All are different, each from the other. Although more excavation is planned, there is also a great deal of post-excavation analysis to be carried out. At present, the best idea of what the houses might have looked like comes from Icelandic examples. It is possible that the roofing was also of turf laid over a timber framework. The interiors may also been lined with timber, perhaps making use of post-pads for both.

Analysis of peat cores samples by Richard Tipping has revealed that there were few trees, although some dwarf shrubs in the area. Significantly, pollen evidence points to the growth of wheat, oats, barley and rye in the vicinity, suggesting permanent rather than a seasonal occupation.

In response to questions from the floor, David referred us to the Highland Folk Museum at Kingussie for examples of turf buildings. He noted that closer to the Tay, Carse of Gowrie clay had been used until modern times as a major construction material.

It is possible that there are Pitcarmick buildings still to be found in Angus – Glen Isla or Glen Clova would be target areas to search. However, these were never surveyed in depth by RCAHMS. It is regrettable that wherever ploughing has been frequent, the evidence for turf structures has been lost: we cannot tell whether or not the uplands were favoured for occupation over potentially boggy valley floors.

Sheila Hainey

Alastair Lindsay Mack 1934–2016



Alastair was a loving father and grandfather who had latterly moved to Wiltshire to live near his daughter and family. It is with sadness that we learned of his death earlier this year on 6 March, and his funeral in Salisbury on the 24th of that month.

Alastair was born and brought up in Glasgow, where his father was professor of sociology at Glasgow University. He attended Glasgow Academy where, aged 13, he made an early start to his military career by enlisting in the Combined Cadet Force. At 17 he joined the Territorial Army and, the following year he left school and joined the regular army, serving as a commissioned officer in the Highland Light Infantry from 1952 to 1958, in England, Germany, and Cyprus. On leaving the regular army he again joined a Territorial regiment.

After the regular army, he went up to Oxford as a mature student to read history at Balliol, which led to a second career teaching history back in Glasgow. It was at Oxford when his interest in the Picts first came to the fore and he started writing in earnest about the Pictish symbol stones. His tutor, Christopher Hill, described him as ‘an idiosyncratic pupil’ who had ‘the good sense to work on what interested him, rather than on what the syllabus demanded’. Alastair’s single-minded obsession with the Pictish symbols remained a passion for the rest of his life and led to his authorship of several significant publications. Throughout, he was unperturbed that, by concentrating exclusively on Pictish symbols – for instance as a sub-group of early medieval carved stones in Scotland – others could regard his view as somewhat blinkered. However, as the literature attests, it is a perfectly legitimate subject and he was certainly not alone in pursuing it, although he held little truck with most of the published theories, exhibiting a talent for ruthlessly disassembling those interpretations that most infuriated him.

Alastair attended ‘The Picts: a new look at old problems’, the ground-breaking conference held

in Dundee in 1985, thereby meeting many other enthusiasts who shared his interest. Subsequently, he participated in the activities of the Pictish Arts Society from its early days, his membership continuing until his death.

He acquired an original copy of the *Early Christian Monuments of Scotland* which he had discovered in use as a pattern-book at a stonemason’s yard in Glasgow and, later, kindly lent this copy to the Pinkfoot Press for use in preparing their facsimile edition of 1993, leading to a long association with the press.

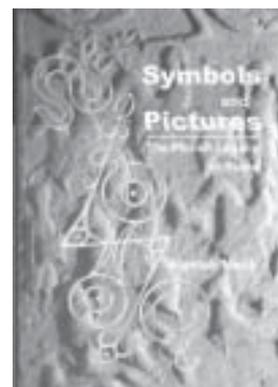
By this time, Alastair’s own study of the Pictish symbols was written up in a lengthy typescript. One of its ten appendices – ‘Stones to See’ – contained descriptions of some notable stones and instructions on how to find them. It was this material that inspired the concept of a practical handbook, culminating in the creation of the *Field Guide to the Pictish Symbol Stones* which appeared in print in 1997 (see *PAS Newsletter* 35, 6).



Being of the old school, Alastair took time to appreciate that his often prolix prose had to be modified to a more economic style for this publication; reluctant at first to cut his work, he persevered with the task and ultimately delivered suitably concise descriptions and clear instructions for the copy, along with the information necessary to construct the many maps which form an integral part of the guide.

His examination of the findspots of symbol stones and subsequent analysis formed the subject of a further most useful study, *The Association of Pictish Symbol Stones with Ecclesiastical, Burial and ‘Memorial’ Areas*, published in 2002.

Ever an assiduous researcher, Alastair travelled throughout mainland Scotland and to the Northern and Western Isles visiting all the Pictish symbol stones, the majority many times over. To aid his field work he acquired a small camper van and, as if to advertise its main purpose, had its door panels tastefully adorned with a dull-gold Pictish beast symbol.



His *magnum opus*, which he had worked on for over 20 years, went through many versions and revisions and was eventually published in 2007 as *Symbols and Pictures: The Pictish Legacy in Stone* (reviewed in *PAS Newsletter* 45 (Winter 2007), 7–9).

Alastair was always alive to the consequences of the effect of new symbol discoveries on his data and interpretation and was constantly reviewing, revising and updating his published work. An example of this is his discussion of a recently discovered stone in 'The Mail symbol-bearing fragment: which way up?' (*PAS Newsletter* 54 (Spring 2010), 6–7), which led to publication of his further thoughts on the symbols in the Northern Isles in an article: 'A reappraisal of the Northern Isles symbol stones' (*PAS Newsletter* 64 (Autumn 2012), Part 1—Shetland, 4–11; Part 2—Orkney, 12–16).

In tandem with his symbol studies, Major Mack pursued his military interests throughout his life. He was Chairman, and a long standing supporter of the HLI Association in Glasgow and for many years edited *The Journal of the Royal Highland Fusiliers*. A regimental comrade writing of Alastair's death stated that he should be remembered in typical HLI fashion – 'with fondness, respect, and a dram in his memory'. We too should raise a glass to his memory and salute his particular achievements as a Pictish scholar. DH

A New Forteviot Cross

Those who visited the excellent SERF 'Cradle of Scotland' exhibition at either the Hunterian Museum in Glasgow or Perth Museum will be interested to note that the Pictish stone fragments from Forteviot have now returned to the village for display in Forteviot Church. The display and lighting of the fragments, including pieces of the destroyed Invermay Cross, were excellent in the two museums and the Tay Landscape Partnership plan to replicate this, using the same display equipment in Forteviot.

In addition to the conservation and permanent display of the stone fragments, the Tay Landscape Partnership has also commissioned our very own David McGovern of Monikie Rock Art to design and carve a new 9-foot tall Pictish monument for Forteviot. Taking pride of place in the village square, the new monument will commemorate Forteviot's past as a royal centre and should be erected by September 2017.

Taking the form of a cross-slab, one side of the new stone will be dominated by a carving of Cinaed Mac Alpin who died at Forteviot in 858. The cross will contain elements inspired by the surviving cross fragments in Forteviot Church. Measuring 9 feet by 3 feet and weighing in at 2 tonnes, the sandstone slab will be quarried in Fife and transported to David's workshop in Monikie, Angus in time for work to begin by the end of September 2016.

The project enjoys widespread support from the local community and David is running a series of stone carving workshops on Dupplin estate and Forteviot village green in conjunction with the Tay Landscape

Partnership as part of the larger 'Cradle of Scotland' project. The local community, school and Perth College will also have some input into the design, particularly the 'spaces' around the cross. The final design will incorporate images representing the turbulent political background to Cinaed Mac Alpin's accession to the throne of Pictland, together with symbols of his Pictish and Dalriatan background. Representation of local artifacts such as Forteviot's bronze hand-bell may also make it onto the stone.

You can follow the progress of this exciting project to design and produce a new stone on the 'Cradle of Scotland – A Stone for Forteviot' Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/cradleofscotland

A clip of a recent STV News piece on the project can also be viewed on the same Facebook page.

PAS members are very welcome to contact David through the Facebook page. He is happy to discuss the project and visits to his workshop to follow progress are also welcome!

Autumn 2016

Forthcoming lectures at
Brechin Town House Museum

Friday 16 September

Norman Atkinson

Curator of the Last Resort

Norman looks back at curating
Pictish and early medieval sculpture
in Angus Museums.

Friday 21 October

Alex Woolf

Rethinking the Pictish East Midlands

Friday 18 November

Adrian Maldonado

Class IV revisited: new work on
simple cross-marked stones in Scotland

Doors open at Brechin Museum at 7.00 pm for a 7.30 pm start. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available before and after the talks, which are free to members and £3.00 to non-members. All are welcome.

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The deadline for receipt of material is

Saturday 19 November 2016

Please email contributions to the editor:

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