

Welcome to the new style PAS Newsletter, what with the new Journal this is the place where you get the chance to air your more unusual musings, news and gossip (all the things we'd never dare publish!). It's also the place where we'll keep you informed about future Society meetings and events. Let us know what you'd like us to do, after all it's your Society, so put pen to paper and send in your news and tell us what you're up to.

carnyx echoes rumble around the earn

The third PAS Conference was held over the weekend 22nd-23rd May 1993 in Dumbarney Institute, Bridge of Earn, near Perth. Attendance, by members and other interested parties, was the highest of any of our conferences, and the event made a welcome profit of around £200.

On the Saturday, four speakers gave lectures: **Dr Anna Ritchie** spoke first on "*The Pictish Craftsman - An Archaeologist Looks at the Evidence*", giving a comprehensive introduction to the various media in which the Pictish craftspeople worked - stone, metal, wood, bone etc - and outlining the evidence for surviving pieces and techniques.

The second lecture was by **Prof James Graham-Campbell** of the University College, London, who spoke on "*Pictish Silverwork*", the form of metalwork in which the Picts were pre-eminent in Dark Age Britain. The tragic loss of much of the contents of the Pictish hoards does not retract from the high quality of Pictish achievement in the field of fine metalwork - perhaps a relatively neglected aspect of Pictish art among the amateur enthusiast because of the glamour of the symbol stones.

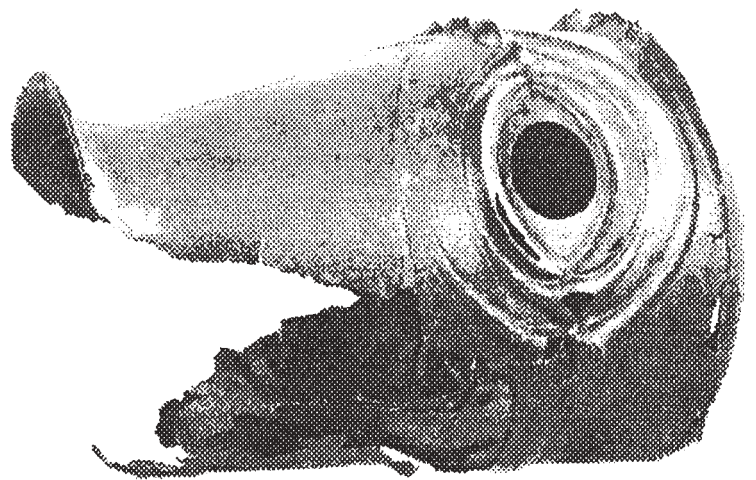
The break for lunch allowed those attending time to inspect works produced by members of the Society on display in the craft fair which ran all day in conjunction with the conference. In the afternoon session two more talks were presented, the first an unusual address by PAS Chairman **Eric H Nicoll** on "*Art Without Epoch - A Woodcarver Echoes the Past in his Sculpture*", in which Eric discussed his own artistic Odyssey in the creation of modern wood sculpture inspired by Pictish and Prehistoric artefacts and themes. The talk was illustrated by both the original works and by slides specially prepared for the occasion by **Tom E Gray**.

The last lecture of the day was "*Music of the Dark Ages*" by **Dr John Purser**, funded by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland Regional Fund as a Buchan Lecture, and introduced by **Dr Anna Ritchie**, President of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. Dr Purser's achievements in bringing forward new evidence on the history of music in this country from the most remote past have been outstanding, and his talk was interspersed with recordings from his radio series "Scotland's Music". The music of the Celtic hand-bells was demonstrated with one of the few surviving examples, the perfectly preserved bronze bell which is kept in Forteviot Parish Kirk not far from Bridge of Earn, and which was kindly brought along to the conference by **Rev C R Williamson**.

However, the most spectacular blast from the past, came when the recently completed full-size replica of the Deskford carnyx, on loan from the museum in Edinburgh, was expertly played in and around the hall by **John Kenny**, an experience no one present is likely to forget.

The conference was summed up and closed by **Stuart Kermack** at around 6.00pm. A ceilidh later in the evening by the lively folk-rock group "**The Seats**" was disappointingly poorly attended. We hope to publish versions of the papers presented at the Conference in a forthcoming volume of proceedings.

cont...



Boar's head, from the end of a bronze carnyx (war-trumpet) from Deskford, Grampian.

On Sunday 23rd the field-trip round various sites in Tayside and north Fife proved to be the most successful we've ever held. With beautiful weather and an almost full tour-bus followed by several cars, we visited the Bore Stone of Gask in the grounds of Moncrieff House, Abernethy Round Tower and symbol stone, Mugdrum Cross and Abdie Old Kirk, where the Lindores stone is preserved. During our lunch stop at Abdie, two unrecorded Medieval gravestones were discovered built into the ruined C13th kirk. **David McMillan** from Dundee spotted one cut down for building stone high up in the bellcote. It has part of a plain cross-shaft and a pair of shears incised on it. The other I noticed myself, re-used as the threshold of the kirk's south-west door. It is apparently complete, with a cross formed of fleyr-de-lys in relief at one end, partly concealed by the door jamb.

In the afternoon we drove through Perth to visit sites in Strathmore: Meigle Museum, Eassie cross-slab and the stones at Glamis. Here the Minister, **Rev Andrew Grieve**, gave us a talk on Glamis in Early Christian times, and showed us the newly restored St Fergus' Well, where the 8th century Celtic saint is said to have baptised local Picts. Grateful thanks are due to **Dr Jack Burt** for creating a very informative and well-illustrated guide to the stones visited on the field-trip. We also greatly appreciate permission being granted by the owners to visit the Bore Stone of Gask and the Mugdrum Cross, both of which stand on private estates.

Niall M Robertson



romilly allen rides again

Friday 22nd October saw a truly momentous event taking place in the recently re-furbished Meffan Institute in Forfar. This was the launch of a new edition of the definitive work on Pictish Symbol Stones, Allen and Anderson's *Early Christian Monuments of Scotland*. This seminal work has been in short supply from the date of its publication in 1903 due to a print run of 400. This has meant that access to the work has always been limited, where possible. Now all that is to change. **David Henry**, of the Pinkfoot Press has put together a beautiful and extremely practicable two volume paperback edition of ECMS. This is a must for all those interested in symbol stones, the Picts or Dark Age Scotland.

The book is obviously a work of love and the long months David has put into this project have resulted in a book as lovely as it is practicable. Everyone at the launch, including **Dr. Isabel Henderson** who wrote the introduction for the new edition sang the praises of the new ECMS, and its publisher. The event was jointly staged with Angus District Council's new exhibition "*Pictish Images*" organised by Curator **Norman Atkinson**, and was attended by a host of dignitaries and a veritable tribe of Pictish Arts Society members all of whom were impressed by the exhibition which simply and subtly combines casts of stones with the evocative photographs of **Tom Grey**. All in all a braw Pictish nicht oot.

Stuart McHardy

"war & peace" among the picts

The PAS plans to hold its next annual conference on June 4th & 5th 1994 at the National Hotel, Dingwall, Ross-shire. We envisage a lively day with a series of four talks based on the theme "**War & Peace**" (a title chosen by our Chairman Eric Nicoll).

The Saturday line-up, still to be finalised, will include talks by **Graham Ritchie** "*War & Weapons*", **Ian Fisher** "*Tona & Dunkeld*", and **Sally Foster** "*The Pen & the Sword*". There will also be plenty of opportunity during the day to clue up on the many and varied local Pictish sites.

As part of the Society's growing commitment to Arts and Crafts we have decided to expand the conference "shop" by giving it its own separate venue. This will allow a larger selection of craftworkers the opportunity to display their work as well as allowing better public access. There will be plenty of time allowed during the conference for viewing the exhibition. This additional space will also allow us the opportunity to hold an informative exhibition aimed at those who "dinny ken fit or fa a Pict is". We hope to be able to combine forces with Groam House to provide a truly impressive display which we hope will attract local interest as well as catering for the dedicated Pictish fanatic.

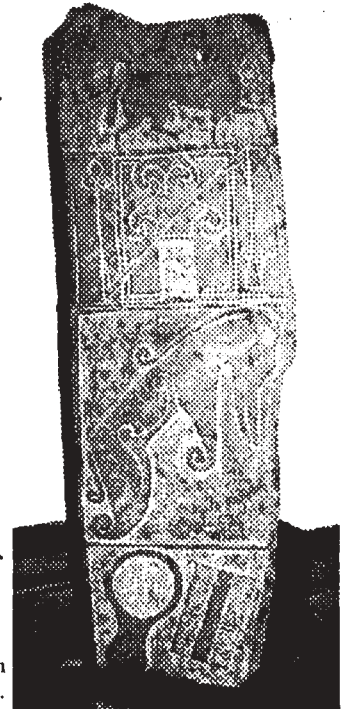
There are rumours afoot about the possibility of organising artists' workshops as part of the conference weekend. All events need bodies to organise and run them, so if you'd be interested in attending some kind of workshop over the weekend please let me know and I'll see what I can arrange.

Nick.S

perth warms to pas artists

The first PAS Arts and Crafts exhibition outside our conference venues showed a fine array of artistry based on Pictish and Celtic motifs which enlivened the Sandeman Library, Perth, during October. The textiles were the most eye-catching, with the waistcoats of **Rick Donnachie** winning the plaudits for striking originality, while the large batik wall-hangings of **Nick Simpson** continue to impress, as do his amazingly intricate prints and posters. **Marianna Lines**, justly famed for her impressions of Pictish stones, has moved on to the production of smaller-scale works of a more derivative nature in various media.

Stones, naturally, continue to offer the principle source of inspiration, and both **Leslie Alan Reid** and **Rob Welsh** execute their works in that medium, while **James Gillon-Ferguson** produces resin miniatures with a staggering precision of detail. In contrast to the three-dimensional approach, **Stuart McHardy** paints designs onto stones, which raises the question - did the Picts do likewise before their craftsmen took up the hammer and chisel? The wonderful Aberdeenshire carved balls seem much in vogue, with examples in keeping with traditional motifs by **James Macaulay** in stone and **Eric Nicoll** in wood (though to call them "Pictish" may be stretching history a little). Eric also showed several love-spoons, a concept borrowed from Wales - while his three-dimensional rendering of the charming water-horses from Aberlemno was one of the highlights of the exhibition. The whole show was enhanced by items supplied by **Heather Richard** of *Canongate Jerseys*, and the much applauded photographs of **Tom Gray**.



Hand carved stone replica of the Maiden Stone, by Leslie Alan Reid.



Original Watercolour "Three Wise Monkeys" by Rick Donnachie

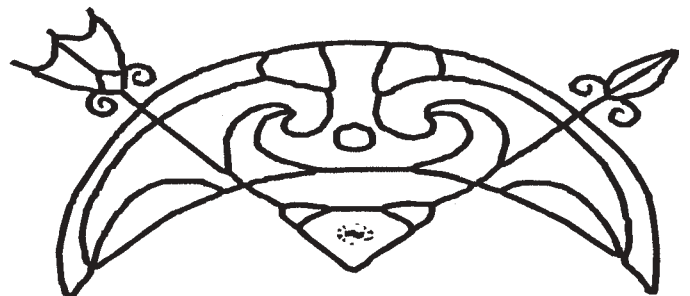
This was a good opportunity to promote the PAS, and a large and very durable album, compiled by the Society, was available to the public explaining the basics about the Picts and their art. The photographs by **Tom Gray** enhanced the presentation, though it is a pity that quite a number of points in the text are, if not factually inaccurate, certainly open to challenge. Another contentious point is the extent to which an artist should adhere or depart from the original. It is usually very apparent, and quite acceptable, when an element of Pictish art is freely adapted, but how about the copy of the Maiden stone, which claims to be a replica, showing the weathered equine creature at the top to be a centaur, and its attribute altered from galloping to prancing? Credit is due to **Nick Simpson** for organising an attractive and stimulating exhibition.

Graeme Cruickshank

out and about

The first field-trip planned for next year will coincide with our meeting with the Renfrewshire Local History Forum at Paisley Library on Saturday 6th April, 1994. Further details to be announced in our next Newsletter.

Norman Atkinson has kindly invited us to the Meffan Institute in Forfar on Saturday 21st of May (with the possibility of a free lunch). We plan this as an away-day lecture event with two talks after which there should be plenty of opportunity for you to visit some of the many local sites.



Following the success of the "In and around Perthshire" field trip organised by **Niall M Robertson** as part of the recent "Ancestral Voices" conference, we have decided to hold a similar event as part of the "War & Peace" conference weekend "in and around" Ross-shire on Sunday June 5th, with the possibility of a visit to Groam House Museum in Rosemarkie as part of the days' tour.

what's on

medieval impressions

One of the Society's founder members **Marianna Lines** is showing some of her work in naturally dyed textiles, water colours and photographs as part of a new exhibition at the Peter Potter Gallery, 10 The Sands, Haddington, East Lothian, October 18th-12th November.

Other exhibits which may be of interest include "*Ancient Stones and Landscapes*", paintings by **Sheena Phillips**. The gallery is open Mon-Sat 10-4.30pm, Thursday 10-1.30pm, further details from the Peter Potter Gallery, tel.062-082-2080

tafac conference

This year's Annual Conference of the **Tayside and Fife Archaeological Committee** will be held in the Rodney Pavilion, Perth, on Saturday, 6th November 1993.

There are several talks which Society members may find interesting. This year's speakers include: **Trevor Cowie** "*The St Andrews bronze age hoard and its curation*", **John Lewis** "*Excavations in Dunfermline Abbey Precinct*", **S.U.A.T.** "*Excavations in Tayside and Fife, 1992-93*", **Peter Yeoman** "*Excavations on the Isle of May*", and **John Sherriff** "*Recent discoveries of cup-and-ring markings in Angus*".

The conference starts at 9.15 am and includes an exhibition and bookstall. Lectures start around 9.45 am after the Chairman's welcome and the event is set to finish around 4.30pm. The conference fee is £7 (£4 for under 18's and students) and includes light refreshments (excluding lunch). John Sherriff the conference secretary has assured me that there will be plenty of tickets on the door, although you may wish to reserve a ticket by contacting him at the RCAHMS, tel 031-662-1456 Ext.221, or at home at Inverkeithing tel 0382-414907.

meffan exhibition

Following on from the launch of the Pinkfoot Press edition of ECMS there remains an impressive exhibition entitled "*Pictish Images*", which features the largest display of Pictish stone casts from around Angus. As part of the display, prints from **Tom Gray's** excellent collection of photographs have been enlarged to give a life like impression of the stones.

The exhibition also features a collection of the Meffan's own printed hangings and a show of work entitled "*Tribal Memory*" by **Aase Goldsmith**, which features a mind stirring collection of photographs exploring our ancient psyche.

The exhibition runs until the 13th of November and is free of charge, so if you're in the area it's well worth a look in.

society programme

Thursday, 11th November, 1993

Dr. Graham Ritchie, NMRS

"Recording Pictish Stones"

Thursday, 2nd December, 1993

Peter Yeoman, Fife Regional Archaeologist

"New Light on Dark Age Fife"

Thursday, 13th January, 1994 - Members Night

Joy Madden, "The Evolution of the Horse"

Jim Macaulay, "Observations on Carving Stone Balls"

Sheila McGregor, "The Pictish Problem"

Thursday, 3rd February, 1994

Dr. Anne Crone, AOC (Scotland) Ltd.

"An Assemblage of Dark Age Artefacts from Buiston, Ayrshire"

Thursday, 3rd March, 1994

Professor Gillies, University of Edinburgh

"The Language of the Picts"

Saturday, 16th April, 1994

Joint Spring Meeting with **Renfrewshire Local History Forum** at Paisley Library, plus field trip, details to be announced.

Thursday, 5th May, 1994

Ian Ralston, University of Edinburgh

"Settlement Archaeology"

Saturday, 21st May, 1994

Summer meeting in **The Meffan**, Forfar details to be announced.

Saturday, 4th - Sunday 5th June, 1994

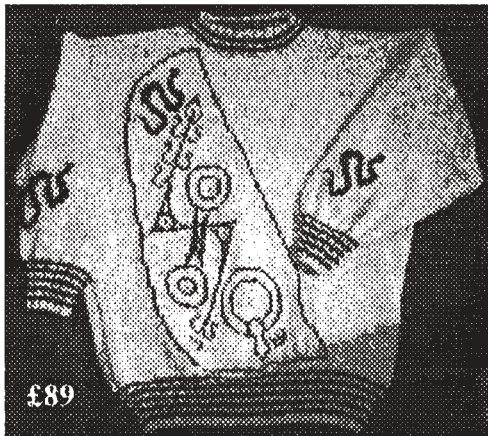
Pictish Arts Society Annual Conference

"War and Peace", with field trip *"in and around"* Ross-shire.



the pictish christmas corner

heather knits



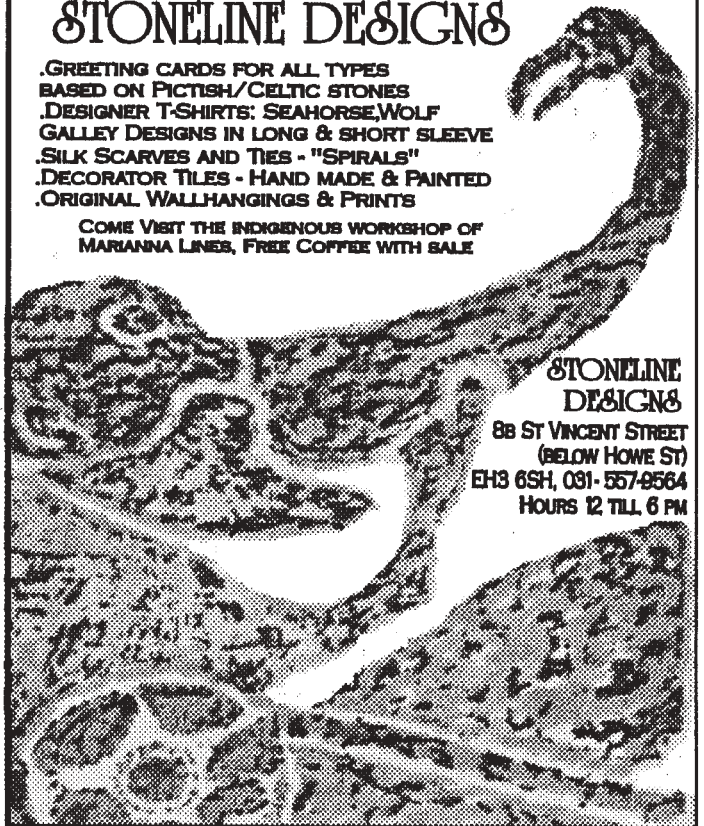
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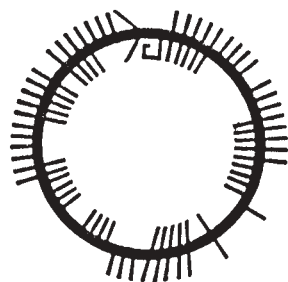
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pictish arts society

T-shirts £9 incl. p&p (UK only)

Featuring, on the front - the Linlathen stone 'beastie' (this stone was recently 'lost', and was chosen to emphasise our commitment to preserving our unique Pictish heritage and culture). The reverse shows the PAS Ogham.

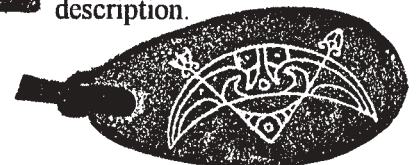
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Contact - Eileen Brownlie, 24 Dean Park Mews,
 Edinburgh, EH4 1ED, tel. 031-332-0277

pictish and celtic designs



A range of miniature Pictish stones 3" high, available in plain or "sprayed finish". Stones available, Aberlemno, Glamis, Rossie Priory, Serpent, Dunnichen and Inchbrayock. Also available - pebble-like pendants. Designs available are crescent + v rod, double disc + z-rod, pictish beast, serpent + z-rod, geometric symbol + z-rod and the Dunnichen flower. All of the above are priced at £5.00 each and are presented in an attractive box which contains an informative historical description.



Contact us at the following address:-
 James Gillon-Fergusson and Linda Watson,
 11 Cleghorn Street, Dundee, DD2 2NQ
 Tel. 0382 645738

crichie development

The henge monument and Crichie Pictish stone at Druids Field, Port Elphinstone by Inverurie have come under threat from an application by local farmers **M. Davidson and Son**, Crichie, who wish to build 54 flats and houses near to the site. Planning director **Bob Tinch** has recommended that the application be refused due to the developments' proximity to the henge site. The decision of the full planning committee is expected shortly.

new age picts ?

In a blinding fit of inspiration the Tayside constabulary have branded all latter-day Picts as "*New Age travellers*". The allegation came to light at the launch of the ECMS reprint, locals from the Letham area reported that during meetings between police and residents over festival plans the police had considered the Picts to be synonymous with the New Age traveller movement. This explains the unusual visits we've experienced from the Tayside police at both the Dunnichen and Bridge of Earn conferences. I've always wondered why they showed such a keen interest in our activities, well now I know, We're aa Hippies ye ken !

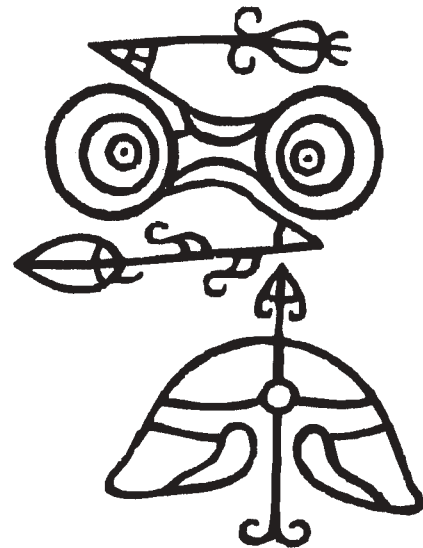
It seems the confusion arises from mistaking the large numbers of revellers who gather at Dunnichen Hill on the 20th of May each year with the Picts. While many of those who gather there appreciate the significance of the Battle of Dunnichen I'm sure there are at least twice as many who don't have a clue and are only there because it appears on the annual free festival listing. It may be worth noting that many of the locals around Dunnichen in no way consider the current revellers as Picts having remembered the good nature of the early festivals, organised by **Robbie the Pict** and held in the Electric Temple (alias the village hall).

Nick.S

a maiden grown up

The future of the Maiden Stane near Pitcaple in Aberdeenshire seems uncertain as plans for a new town in the area have been revealed. The plan proposed by architectural agent **Norman Lawie**, Oyne, includes the provision of 3,300 houses, industrial land, town centre and recreational areas covering 550 acres of farm land from the Maiden Stane down across the A96 towards Durno. Understandably, locals are fearful of the implications that such a large development could bring to the environmentally sensitive area around Bennachie.

At this time no planning application has been submitted and Mr Lawie dismissed claims of secrecy surrounding the proposed Pitcaple new town plan. Locals claimed that Gordon District planning committee have only recently seen the proposals and were waiting for more details of the plan before deciding what action to take. The Maiden Stane is in a poor condition through continuous weathering and the risk of further damage from such a development should be avoided. Perhaps Society members in the area could keep us informed of any future developments.



I hope you found the new Newsletter both informative and interesting. We plan to issue Newsletters between Journals so that you'll be fully informed of what's happening and when. One of the problems of being a rapidly growing Society is the distribution of members (we now have members in most areas of Scotland as well as several abroad and in England) so if you know of talks, exhibitions or events in your own area that may interest others please let me know. **Niall M Robertson** has asked me to remind you that contributions for the next Journal should be sent to him at 28 Fairies Road, Perth, PH1 1LZ, not later than the 20th of December. We are always concerned that there aren't enough meetings outside Edinburgh which is why the conference has become a roving event. If you have any suggestions for future events or can help in running existing projects please contact:-

Nick Simpson, Events Organiser, 5 St.Peters Place, Viewforth, Edinburgh, EH3 9PJ

Tel. 031-228-3812