

PICTISH ARTS SOCIETY
annual conference

WAR AND PEACE



Conference Programme Saturday, 4th June

10am - 10.45am Registration,

Tea and Coffee will be provided.

10.45 - 11.00 Introduction by PAS Chairman.

11.00 - 12.00 Dr. Sally Foster,

Inspector of Ancient Monuments.

*"The Evolution of the Pictish State:
was the pen mightier than the sword?"*

12.00 - 1.00pm Ian Fisher, RCAHMS.

*"The Dove of the Church?
- some relics of Columba"*

1.00 - 2.30 Lunch Break

2.30 - 3.30 Elizabeth Marshall,

Author & Folklorist.

"The Kings of Pictland"

3.30 - 4.15 Coffee break.

4.15 - 5.15 Dr. Graham Ritchie, RCAHMS.

"The Picts at War"

5.15 - 6.00 Open Forum and Closing remarks.



Pictish & Celtic Craft Fair

& "Pictish Legacy" Exhibition

Upper Town Hall Dingwall

11am-5.30pm

A display of Arts & Crafts by Society members, including jewellery, leatherwork, pictish stone replicas, knitwear, batiks, stone carvings, prints, cards, t-shirts and a selection of publications on the Picts and the Dark Ages. There will also be an informal introductory exhibition on the Picts and their Art. **Don't miss it!**

Sunday, 5th June

"In and Around Ross-shire" PAS field trip.

Those of you who have booked places on this years field trip should assemble at the Dingwall Pictish stone, St Clements Church, beside the car park at the back of the town hall, around 10.15am. The coach will be leaving at 10.30am sharp.

The route for this year's Conference Field Trip will include the Eagle stone at Strathpeffer, Groam House museum, where there will be a short talk by Doug Scot. Light refreshments will also be available at Groam but those attending should bring their own lunch, as facilities at Rosemarkie on a Sunday are limited. From Groam we will proceed to Tarbat and a visit to the proposed new dig. On our return journey we hope to have time to visit the sites at Shandwick and Nigg before returning to Dingwall not later than 6pm.

A copy of the field guide, produced by Dr J.R.F. Burt, is included in the cost of the trip. Copies of this work, along with other publications, are available from the PAS stall at the crafts event in the Upper Town Hall.

Anyone with any queries regarding the day should contact Eileen Brownlie, or any other member of the committee, who will be glad to help.



pictish slander & new stones

"Villagers claim life disrupted by Picts" read the headline in the Courier, dated Saturday, 21st May. "The Angus village of Letham is bracing itself for the annual invasion of Pictish hordes" the article started. You might well wonder what Society members were up to as they gathered at the Meffan Institute for our summer meeting. What could have provoked such a reaction from the local community? Fortunately it wasn't the PAS visit that had produced the outcry but the nearby annual gathering of travellers at Dunnichen hill, site of the Battle of Nechtansmere in 685 AD. Yes, it was that time of year again, as the residents around Dunnichen near Letham, prepared for the arrival of the travellers.

For many years **Robbie the Pict** promoted a music festival, at the Electric Temple (alias Letham village hall) in celebration of the battle, but for the last few years there have been no organised festivals at Letham. Still, every May, the travellers gather at Dunnichen hill to party. Why? Well, it seems that widespread advertising of "Scotland's free festival" in England is partly responsible, as well as an element of tradition, people have now been going to the hill for over nine years. As someone who has attended both the official and unofficial festivals, I can confidently say that few of those who camp on the hill these days even realise that there was a battle there, let alone who the Picts were.

So why is it that the police, press and even a few locals still insist on branding these travellers as Picts? As the Events Organiser I must protest. Most of these people don't even remember the original Letham festival. So, like the residents of Letham, we shouldn't even try to associate them with Picts or Robbie's old festival. Nick.S

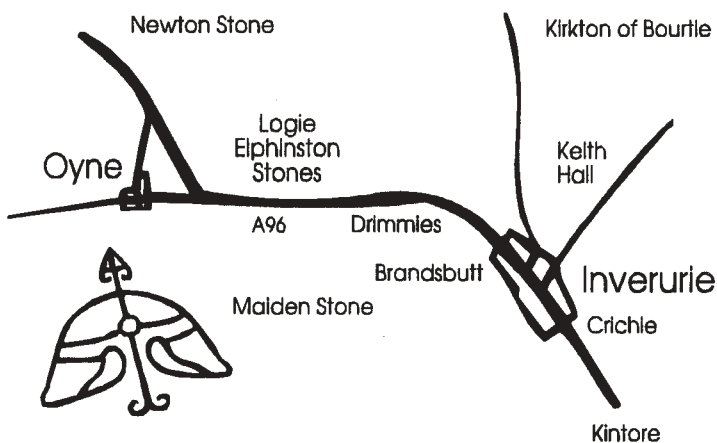
Members who gathered for the Summer meeting at the Meffan Institute, Forfar, in May, to hear talks by **Norman K Atkinson** "The Picts in Angus" and **Niall M Robertson's** long awaited "Reading the stones: a graphic approach to the meaning of the Pictish Symbols", were in for a big surprise. Throughout the talks hints were dropped that there had been a new discovery in Angus and both speakers included slides of a previously undocumented stone. The best was yet to come as it emerged that the new Class II Pictish stone, the first to be discovered in Angus for over 100 years, was at the Meffan, (in the stone, as you'd say). There was an intense sense of expectation as the Lord Provost of Angus unveiled the new, and as yet un-named, Class II Pictish cross-slab to PAS members, Angus District Councillors and a small gathering of museum officials and others connected with the find. The stone, whose original site remains secret but which was discovered somewhere in Glamis Parish, depicts a simple interlace cross on the front, with key

pattern side panels. On the reverse it shows the primitive figure of a woman in a long robe with an interlaced lower hem. The dress is fastened with a large penannular brooch. To her left there is a mirror and comb set vertically and on the right there is an interlaced strand. A more detailed account of this important new find will be published in our next Journal, due out some-time around the AGM.



new age development plans for oyne

For the second time in recent months a small rural settlement in eastern Pictland finds itself at the centre of controversial new plans. In an ambitious move Gordon District Council are leading a £3m development plan which could see the creation of Scotland's largest heritage centre right in the heart of rural Pictland. The residents of Oyne, Aberdeenshire,



recently learned of the plans to create one of Scotland's largest tourist projects, a Neolithic "theme park".

The futuristic plans, submitted by the Archaeolink Trust, will include a time tunnel of interactive displays and videos, showing images from the present to our distant past, which will lead visitors into the main complex, a 900 square metre covered dome enclosing theatres, displays and an exhibition area. Other proposals for the site include the re-construction of Iron Age houses, a Neolithic long house and Roman camp. The project will offer pre-packaged history to an expected 100,000 visitors per year, which backers hope will bring a major boost to the local economy.

An application for European funding is expected shortly, and interest has already been expressed by Scottish Enterprise. The project is aimed at attracting tourists away from the Edinburgh - Inverness - Glasgow triangle into Grampian, where there is a great wealth of ancient history, both in recumbent stone circles and Pictish carved stones.

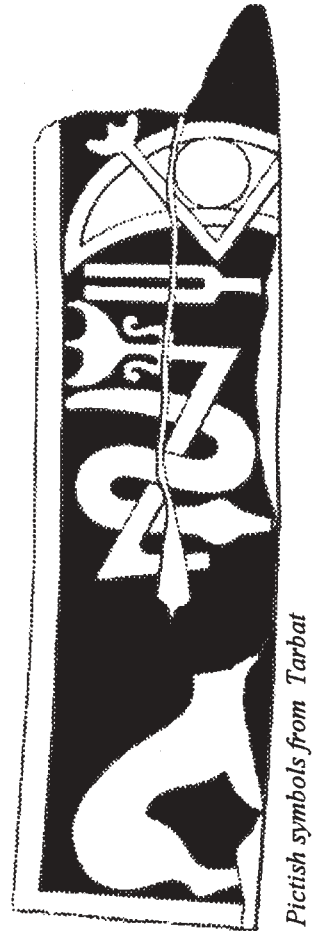
major dig at tarbat old

No, it's not more Conservative Party propaganda, but news of the major dig planned at Tarbat Old Church, in the Easter Ross village of Portmahomack. Back in early spring of this year, Professor Carver of York University led a foray to the Old Church where he believes we may be on the verge of a major archaeological discovery, a 1300 year old Pictish monastery, the first to be discovered. It's thought that this important site lies buried at Old Tarbat where the 18th century church is built on top of a Medieval crypt. The area around Tarbat is renowned for the numerous fragments of Pictish stones it has yielded and of course the elaborate cross-slabs found nearby at Nigg and Shandwick. Many of the Pictish stones recovered from around the site are now in the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh, and a dig in 1991 showed evidence of a nearby settlement from around the Pictish period. Work on the dig, which will be funded by York University, Ross and Cromarty Enterprise, Highland Regional Council and the local Ross and Cromarty District Council, has already started, with a recent geophysical evaluation of the site, and there are plans for a trial excavation, around the fields next to the church, in early September. If this shows interesting signs of the monastic settlement a full scale excavation is planned for the summer of 1995.

No little is known about the Picts and the influence of the Early Christian monastic settlements, founded by St Columba and other early holy men, that any insight into the lives of our early ancestors that this project may offer will be more than welcome to those interested in Pictish Studies.

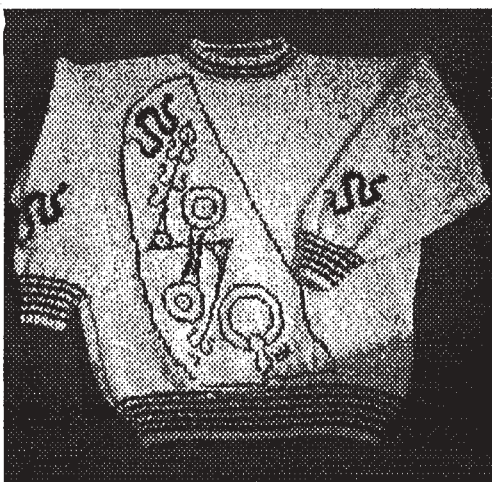
The Tarbat Historical Trust, who acquired the Old Church in 1980, have already raised over £12,000 towards the restoration and building costs needed to convert the property, which has been disused since 1946, into the space needed for a museum, heritage centre and community hall. The trustees have also secured 50% grant aid from Historic Scotland for the project which they believe will heighten local awareness of this important site.

Anyone attending the field-trip on the Sunday after the PAS Conference will have the chance to see Tarbat Old, where there will be someone around to guide us over the various aspects of the site as it now stands.



Pictish symbols from Tarbat

heather knits



Original Designs based on Traditional Celtic, Pictish and Fair-isle patterns. 10% discount to society members.

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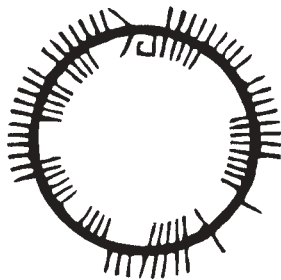
where to next

This last year has seen the PAS at it's most active ever, with our usual range of informative talks, two away meetings, three exhibitions, several field-trips and the Conference, which has become an annual event. Organising these events throughout Scotland is becoming an increasingly time-consuming task, especially being based in Edinburgh. Perhaps the time has come for members in other areas of Scotland to become more involved in organising local events. If the Society is to continue to grow and expand its range of meetings outwith our base in Edinburgh (which is one of our hopes) then we will have to rely more on members outwith the capital to organise exhibitions and away meetings. We would gladly organise speakers etc. Perhaps you could arrange a field trip or other visit to sites of local interest. The PAS has now over 300 members, mainly in Scotland, so it should now be possible for small groups to arrange away meetings for local members. There's no point in grumbling that the Society doesn't hold meetings in your area....do something.

Nick.S (Events Organiser)

more news

Niall M Robertson was glad to report that there have been several other new stones discovered. The first piece of news came from Ian Fisher of the RCAHMS. Ian has recently returned from fieldwork in the north-west where he has confirmed the existence of a Class I stone in the old kirkyard of Inverewe, not far from the other west coast symbol stone at Gairloch. The stone, now very worn, is a long recumbent slab and has a crescent and v-rod decorated with spirals and dots at the top. There is no evidence of a second symbol remaining; no doubt the expected second symbol has been broken off at some time. Ian also found fragments of a plain free-standing cross at Inchnadamph, in the old kirkyard of Assynt, the most northerly example yet found in the west. Niall was also glad to report the discovery, by Dave Henry, of a small cross-slab at Tarbat Old Church, Portmahomack, where within five minutes of their visit Dave had discovered the simple cross set into the inside south wall of the kirkyard; a narrow pillar about a foot long with a Latin cross in relief on one side. The cross, being in a vulnerable position, was removed and presented to Ian later in the day at a talk he was giving in Edderton Hall.



pictish arts society T-shirts £9 incl. p&p (UK only)

Featuring, on the front - *The Linathen Stone 'beastie'* (this stone has been 'lost' and was chosen to emphasise our commitment to preserving our unique Pictish heritage). The reverse shows the PAS Ogham, the circular design being unique to Pictland.

White T-shirt with dark green print, 100% cotton.
Available in S/M/L/XL sizes.

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

what's on



50

COUNCIL FOR SCOTTISH
ARCHAEOLOGY

an archaeological extravaganza

The highlight of CSA's 50th anniversary celebrations will be a one day "Fair" on Friday, October 21st at the Assembly Rooms, George Street, Edinburgh. The event, timed to coincide with the school holidays, will feature displays from local societies, archaeological units, local museums as well as the national bodies.

In bringing together the majority of small organisations connected with CSA, it hopes to broaden public awareness of Scotland's past as well as providing a fun day out. So far, the day will include quizzes, showings of the popular series "Dirt Detectives", a display of archaeology and computers, and an opportunity to handle original archaeological objects. There are also plans for a "Simulated Dig", which will be run by Lanark & District Archaeological Society and Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society.

The event is open to the public and is free of charge. A more up to date programme of the days events will be announced as soon as details become available.



finds from the peat

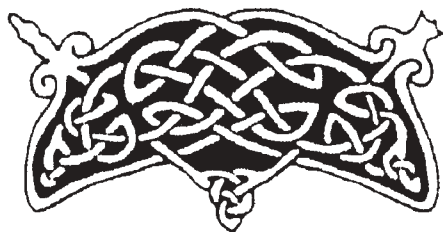
If you're out on the Western Isles this summer, then the Museum nan Eilean in Stornoway may be worth a visit. Their exhibition "*Finds from the peat*" runs from August till the end of October.

highland archaeology week

Ullapool Museum is to run two archaeology weekends, organised by Dr Robin Hanley, on the *Theory and Practice of Archaeological Surveying* on 2nd-3rd September and 16th-17th September. For further details contact Dick Poor (Curator Ullapool Museums) on - 0856-621751

highland extravaganza

As part of the Highland Archaeology week, there will be a tour of the 'Pictish Trail', around Ross-shire, on September 10th. The coach trip, which will feature visits to the majority of sites in Ross-shire, will also include a ferry-trip over the Cromarty Firth, a pub lunch and, in the evening, a meal followed by a talk by Anna Ritchie. The cost for the full day will be £20 (£15 concession), for further details and advance bookings contact - 0349-63381 ext.486.



groam house museum

Groam House Museum, Rosemarkie, which features displays of the many stones found in the area, will be open daily from 10am-5pm and from 2-4pm on Sundays.

finlaystone celtic arts & crafts fair 3rd & 4th September

Now well established as a successful and enjoyable event, the Finlaystone Celtic Arts & Crafts Festival will take place on the weekend of September 3rd-4th. As well as the usual high standard of crafts on display there will be a rich and varied programme of attractions including music, story telling and various activities involving the local schools. So, if you're looking for a day away, why not join us.



Finlaystone, set within its beautiful woodland and garden, is a well established all year visitor attraction about 20 miles west of Glasgow off the A8.
Finlaystone, Langbank, Renfrewshire, PA14 6TJ
Tel 0475540-285

stones, symbols & stories

Aspects of Pictish Studies

Proceedings from the Conferences of the Pictish Arts Society, 1992



We have now published the proceedings from the first two PAS conferences, held during 1992, at Dunnichen and Aberdeen. This illustrated edition includes papers by Dave Clement, Ingvál Maxwell, Graeme Cruickshank, Stuart McHardy, Isabel Henderson, and Anna Ritchie. Copies are now available at £8.50, including P&P, so if you missed the Conferences here's your chance to catch up on who said what. To order your copy contact -

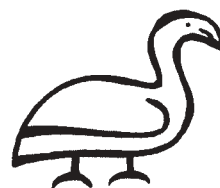
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pictish arts society
occasional papers

pas field guide no.1-

Includes detailed descriptions and illustrations of Pictish stones at Gask, Abernethy, Lindores, Mugdrum, Carpow, Meigle, Glamis manse and Eassie.

Produced by Dr Jack R F Burt 1993.

£2.50 Inc. P&P

pas field guide no.2-

Produced for the Society's Field-Trip In and around Ross-shire. Includes detailed descriptions of Pictish stones at Strathpeffer, Rosemarkie, Tarbat, Nigg and Shandwick.

Produced by Dr Jack R F Burt 1994.

£3.50 Inc. P&P



Clach Tiompan, The Eagle Stone,
Strathpeffer by J.R.F. Burt

perceptions of the
PICTS:

from Eumenius to John Buchan

by ANNA RITCHIE



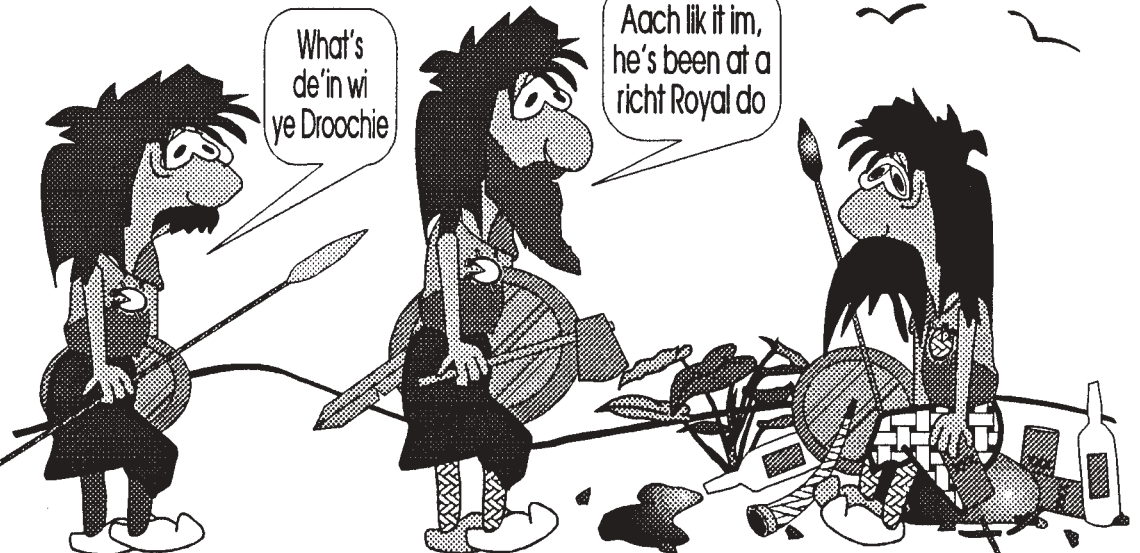
Dr. Anna Ritchie delivered the Annual Academic Lecture for Groam House Museum in 1993. Dr. Ritchie explored the ways in which ideas about the Picts have evolved over the past seventeen hundred years. Her starting point was a poem by Eumenius in AD 297, with a progression via John Buchan to the present day.

Dr. Ritchie's illustrated text has now been published and is available from -

Groam House Museum, High Street,
Rosemarkie, IV10 8UF,
price £4.50 (including postage).

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....somewhere in ROSS



What's
de'in wi
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Aach lik it im,
he's been at a
richt Royal do