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## EDITORIAL

One quarter of the year has come and gone and it is that time of the year when I give a resume of past events. Following the usual pattern we commenced the winter programme in September with the coffee Morning. This was a successful event and raised some extra funds for the Society - £300+ - many thanks to all who gave their support.

The meetings in the Tommy Downs Room got off to a slow start, but attendances soon picked up and the penultimate meeting was a full house. The loyalty of the membership was put to the test when we arrived at the Town Hall to be confronted with a locked door (26<sup>th</sup> Feb). Owing to the persistence of Susan Mills, someone from Leisure Services eventually arrived (after 8pm) to open up. No real harm was done, most had waited and the talk by the Rangers was interesting.

The final meeting, speaker Nic Boyse, gave a full insight into stone preservation and repair. A most interesting talk that highlighted how modern repair methods can detect defects and bad practice from earlier repair jobs. The work done on St. mungo statue produced some historical facts, hitherto unknown and uncovered repair work that had been done in the past.

Since the turn of the year the weather has been so unsettled that we despaired of ever seeing blue skies again but the past few days has seen the return of a more settled few days. Can we hope for a repeat of the glorious weather experienced last summer?

The Summer Programme has been issued with the AGM material and I hope many of you will take advantage of the various outings organised. These events are usually of a nature that should suit all abilities.

The venue for the Spring Weekend is scheduled for the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> May, when we shall journey to Banff on the Moray Coast. Twenty three members have booked for this and the programme will be issued sometime in April.

The first of the four Saturday outings is to the ancient port of Bo'ness where we shall have a guided walk led by Mrs. Chris Smith of the Bo'ness History Group. Included also is a trip on the Steam Train to Birkhill Clay Mine. Farther a'field in June is a visit to the House of Dun, home to a branch of the Alloa Erskines who had lived on the estate from 1375 until 1980. The house,

overlooking the Montrose Basin, was completed in 1730 by William Adam for David Erskine, 13<sup>th</sup> Laird of Dun. It was this David Erskine who, along with Lord Grange, brother of John 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of mar, bought back the Alloa estates after the 15 Uprising.

Thirdly CFSS member, Maurice Watson of Falkirk, will lead the group to Rough Castle on the Antonine Wall and later to view the Roman remains at Callendar Park. The final Saturday outing is to Linlithgow Palace and to sites in the Bathgate Hills. Of course there is also the Wednesday Walks held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays of the month. These take in areas not so far afield. I hoe you will be able to attend some of these and look forward to seeing you then.

Sadly, this year, Lindsay Corbett put in his resignation from the Council of the Society owing to ill health. From 1971, Lindsay served this society in many areas with spells as Secretary, Chairperson and Treasurer as well as organising events and outings. His input at Council meetings is greatly missed and in view of his past record it was decided that we would grant him Honorary Membership so that he can still be aware of the doings of the Society.

Lindsay also looked after the sale of our publications but since his illness this work has been taken up by Jack and Sadie Archibald and our publications can be bought at the local libraries, Tourist Offices and Alloa Tower & the Erskines of Mar at Alloa Tower as well as these other venues.

**BETTY ROY.**

# Clackmannanshire Field Studies Society

## Summer programme 2007

Meet at Alloa Health Centre car park –Wednesday 7 pm, Saturday 9.30 am  
(except where otherwise stated \*\*)

### Wednesdays

- May 2 Alloa - Dunfermline link (Bogside) (EKR) Contact: 01259 213954
- June 13 Torryburn salt pans (ES) Contact: 01259 216878
- 27 Tour of Kincardine with Andrew Lumsden (EKR) Contact: 01259 213954
- July 11 Ochil Hills woodland walk & silver mine (M&DS) Contact: 01786 832248
- 25 Devilla Forest (J&SA) Contact: 01259 215873
- Aug 9 Castlehill Reservoir & treatment works (BS) Contact: 01259 214840
- 22 Gartmorn Dam (EKR) Contact: 01259 213954

### Saturdays

- May 26 Boness & Birkhill clay mine by steamtrain  
with Chris Smith & Fraser MacKintosh (EKR) Contact: 01259 213954
- June 30 House of Dun (J&SA) Contact: 01259 215873
- July 28 Rough Castle Roman fort (Maurice Watson, Falkirk / EKR)  
Contact: 01259 213954
- Aug 25 Linlithgow Palace, Bee Craigs, Torphichen (Historic Scotland, EKR)  
Contact: 01259 213954
- Sept 8 Coffee Morning, Speirs Centre, Alloa 10 am -12 noon. Tickets £1

**Weekend Field Trip:** Banff & environs

**Most outings require shared transport, stout footwear and suitable clothing .**  
**On Saturdays bring packed lunches.**  
**Visitors are welcome for most events!**

**Inquiries:** Betty Roy (EKR) 01259-213954 Bob Snaddon (BS) 01259-214840  
Eddie Stewart (ES) 01259 216878 Jack Archibald (JA) Marilyn Scott (MS) Susan Mills (SM)

## **Dates for your Diary**

### **Stirling Field and Archaeological Society**

Not available at time of print.

### **Dollar Civic Trust**

#### **Saturday 5th May Museum of Flight.**

East Fortune Annual Flight Display -Aerobatic Display etc. Access to Museum. Lunch will be arranged

#### **Sunday 20th May Scottish Seabird Centre, North Berwick**

Powerful telescope views of Bass Rock and across the Forth. Lunch will be arranged. Return via Dirleton Castle

#### **Sunday 24th June Holmwood House, Clarkston Road, Glasgow**

Architect Alexander "Greek" Thomson (pre Mackintosh) Paintings, frescoes and outstanding architectural features NTS. View the Glories of Greenbank Gardens NTS.

#### **Sunday 22nd July Isle of May**

##### **Sail from Anstruther 2.00 pm Return 7.00pm**

Seabirds, wildlife, seals. Archaeological finds over 200 years.Lunch at Anstruther. All coach trips are in conjunction with Dollar History Society. Lunches will be available and further details will be advertised.

Any further information from: **C. Baillie 01259 742315**

## **Man & the Landscape Symposium – 18<sup>th</sup> November 2006 Stirling, Scotland's Central City**

**A CENTRAL PLACE** - Stirling's Environment, past and present – Ken Mackay and Mike Thomas, University of Stirling

The first paper was presented by Mike Thomas, followed by Ken Mackay. Both developed the theme of a central place, its important position on the river Forth and also situated at the junction of the lowlands and highlands. The topography as been modified by glaciation, the last of the ice-flows was 12,000 years ago. Throughout history Stirling and its surrounding countryside held an important place in most events. The Romans knew this place and realised that here was an important bridging point to access the lands to the north.

Dominating the space is Stirling Castle, a defensive fortress that differing armies throughout the ages had attempted to conquer. It is reported that Stirling Castle is the only Scottish castle that was never taken by force. To-day Stirling Castle is one of Historic Scotland's foremost tourist attractions.

Professor Thomas then dealt with the changing boundaries of the City, using early maps to illustrate the changes happening at different times. The 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the development of industry, but again change happens and industry is in decline. But 30 years ago, the establishment of Stirling University brought new life into the city and it is now a centre for Education. Will the city's position on the River Forth become a cause for concern – a rising sea level brings with it a threat of flooding, and much of the reclaimed land bordering the river could disappear. However, Stirling is a bustling and thriving place, tourists visit at all times of the year and an influx of students all contribute to supporting a prosperous population.

### **Mike Thomas.**

Ken Mackay's paper concentrated on historical evidence to separate truth from legend.

Well known is St. Ninian's well, a name that was kept alive by travelling missionaries. However, other legends do not have written evidence to substantiate the lore associated with them;- the Battle Stone at Airthrey – no historical evidence to state which battle, again at Airthrey scant evidence to link the area with Kenneth MacAlpine.

Cambuskenneth, established 1150, is well documented, as is the Royal Castle of Stirling (recorded on Pont's map of 1596). From its position on a volcanic outcrop, controlling the Carse and the only major route from the South and the North, the castle commands an excellent strategic position. Here was an important fortress in Central Scotland, one of the first Royal Burghs and afforded residency for royalty.

The great Hall, or Parliament House, dates from the beginning of the 16th century. The speaker mentioned that Henry VIII sent spies to Scotland. His surveyors(?) were armed with measuring tapes to measure up the dimensions of the Great Hall to see if it was larger than the Parliament Hall in London. Henry VIII must have been green with envy to learn that the Scottish one was the greater.

The Palace of 1542 is one of Scotland's Renaissance glories, here for a number of years archaeological surveys and restoration work has been carried out and is now almost complete.

Throughout time the importance of the Burgh grew gaining many symbols of civic pride and here was established a thriving Trades Guild system. Important buildings such as Argyll Lodging, 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, have left a legacy of splendid architectural value that draws tourists to that part of the City.

In common with other Scottish Burghs, Stirling's civic arrangement follows the general rule of a medieval burgh – the Castle on the rock, separated from the Church at the bottom of the slope with the Market Place still further separated from the important factors of the Rule. Stirling's market place in Broad Street continued throughout the centuries until finally closed in 1977.

Situated on the River Forth was Stirling's port and it also played its part in Scottish history – now no longer, closed in 1890. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century a large proportion of the populace worked the land but as time went on industry began to take over. Coal was an important factor in providing work and wealth. The shafts of many pits were discovered when constructing roadways. Improvements in the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the development of piped water, supplied from the Touch Reservoir. A sewage works, gas and electricity production, all factors in making a modern burgh.

**Ken Mackay.**

**BEYOND THE BATTLEFIELDS:** Stirling`s forgotten histories. – Elspeth King.

The next speaker, Dr. Elspeth King, Director, Stirling Smith Museum, ably presented her topic. There are many facets to the history of Stirling apart from glorifying the part battles have contributed to story, legend and fact of days gone by. The social history of Stirling is of equal importance and it is the local museums that have the task of bringing stories of special events and the contribution of ordinary people to the history of an area.

Looking beyond the battlefields, the speaker highlighted the story of Annie Croall. Here was a different type of “battlefield” for many a struggle for survival in a harsh world. Dr. King`s interest in Annie Croall was aroused when she came across a pamphlet detailing the struggle this woman had crusading for the establishment of a home for poor and abandoned children.

The area at the “top o` the Toun” could have been likened to another type of battlefield. With Stirling being a Barrack Town, misery was rife, through hardship women forced into prostitution to survive, children abused and in many cases abandoned, violence and drunkenness were common. A woman found guilty of prostitution would have been imprisoned, and if no one could look after the children they were abandoned. This type of occurrence was common, Annie Croall looked after many of these abandoned children and for years campaigned for the establishment of a childrens` home

This remarkable lady struggled for many years towards this end and eventually signed up enough people to support her cause. The Stirling Childrens Home was established in 1876 and existed until 1980 when it was taken over by the Aberlour Trust.

**STIRLING`S HERITAGE;** a resource under pressure.

Speaker – Colin Tennant, Chief Executive, Scottish Stone Liaison Group.

Stirling, in common with many other towns and cities has a legacy of important and architecturally valuable buildings, badly in need of repair. Under the auspices of the Stirling Heritage Trust funding was acquired by Stirling Townscape Heritage Initiative to restore those 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings in need of some tender loving care.

In cases where privately owned properties are concerned financial help can be given to undertake essential repairs. It is important to keep intact as many of these notable buildings as possible.

Many of the buildings at risk are let out to students and others, something that is not always the best solution. There is also the question of multi-ownership, who is responsible? Neglect of these buildings can cause so much damage and can become very expensive to repair.

A solution has to be found whereby owners become aware of the responsibility incurred when living and owning a special property – it is a case of repairing a fault before it becomes too expensive.

**BETTY ROY**

### **REPORTS FROM WINTER TALKS** (2006/7)

**PLUMBING THROUGH THE AGES**, a talk and slide show given by Andrew Lumsden of Kincardine on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2006.

This turned out to be a fascinating topic ably put over by the speaker. Commencing with the rudimentary drainage system found at Skara Brae, a Neolithic site in the Orkney Islands (circa 2500BC). I never cease to be amazed that a system as such, could be devised so long ago. When you think of it that is 4,500 years ago. Before the pyramids were built.

Moving on to Crete, baths have been excavated belonging to the Minoan period (circa 1500 BC). Certainly a bit further advanced than Stone Age Skara Brae. Metals were now being worked mainly copper and bronze.

It was now then on to the Roman period (circa 200BC – 450AD). They were certainly masters of many crafts and plumbing and drainage was one near the top of the list. Looking at the number of baths and bathhouses and other conveniences that have been found, they certainly knew how to convey water from place to place. All types of pipes, gutters, culverts and aqueducts can still be seen in Italy and the lands they conquered. It is claimed that the Romans used twice as much water per person as is used in this country today.

When the Roman influence disappeared and the known world slipped into the Dark Ages (Medieval Times) plumbing it seemed went into a state of flux. Today looking at some of the Medieval Castles and the customary holes in the walls seems to have been the answer to a lot of the plumbing problems. They were not all used for gun hoops or pouring molten lead on the enemy.

However by the eighteenth century we saw what you could say was the first interpretation of Plumbing as we know it. The first water closet was invented which led the way to the disposal of effluent.

In Victorian times things really took off with the most elaborate of enamel fire clay being used in the making of toilet pans, wash basins and baths. It seems the more ornamentation the better not just in the sanitary ware but also in woodwork that adorned the smallest room in the house. Of course it was not just the inside of the house that was revitalised, massive schemes were afoot to bring fresh water to the community and also take the waste away. It may seem amazing but some of the reservoirs and sewage plants built by the Victorians are still in use today, with upgrades of course.

The Twentieth Century saw further improvements in the whole scope of water engineering, with lead pipes being replaced, firstly with copper and then plastic. Great advances have been made also in central heating.

Plumbing today is such an essential part of every day life we must wonder how our ancestors survived without it.

Andrew also gave an insight into his life as a plumber in a business that was started by his father. How he studied part-time at Lauder College in Dunfermline and lectured in plumbing at the selfsame College. He took over the business from his father and has now passed it over to his son.

Our thanks to Andrew Lumsden on giving a comprehensive insight into a trade that we mostly take for granted.

**Jack Archibald.**

**ROBINSON CRUSOE ISLAND** – excavations at Juan Fernandez Island –  
Dr. David Caldwell, National Museums of Scotland.

On Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November, Dr. David Caldwell addressed the meeting, the subject being “Robinson Crusoe Rediscovered”. Our present day “Castaways” spent 5 weeks in January 2005 on the Pacific Islands of Juan Fernandez, these officially re-named after Alexander Selkirk in 1966. Dr Caldwell was invited to take part in an archaeological expedition to the island to further examine the whereabouts of Alexander Selkirk’s camp. Funding had been granted to the leader, a Japanese named, Daisuke Tukahashi, who had carried out a dig in 2000 and found an early nautical instrument reputed to belong to Alexander Selkirk.

Leading up to the sojourn on the island, Dr. Caldwell gave a short history of Selkirk’s origins. Selkirk, son of a shoemaker and tanner, was born in Lower Largo, Fife, in 1676. He had a bad record, having been summoned to appear before the Kirk Session, but did not turn up, the reason being that he had ran away to sea. Alexander Selkirk’s adventures in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries tell the tale of licenced piracy encouraged by various governments. This appears to have been a way of gaining someone’s treasures without expending too much effort. There were instances of an English stamp overlying a Spanish one, on coinage and other important items.

In 1703 Selkirk joined the navigator and explorer-turned buccaneer, William Dampier, on the Privateer “The Cinque Ports”, as sailing master. In 1704, having quarrelled with his captain, he requested to be put ashore on the uninhabited South Pacific island of Juan Ferandez, 800 miles off the coast of Chile. It was a matter of concern to Selkirk that The Cinque Ports was not a sea-worthy vessel – it sank, less than a year later with the loss of many of the crew. For survival, he took with him a musket, gunpowder, carpenters tools, a knife, a Bible and his clothing. On this remote island, Alexander Selkirk, lived alone for four years and four months. These were dangerous waters and Selkirk would have been at risk if he had divulged his presence. Pirates from many nations often stopped to replenish their water supply. Selkirk was rescued by another privateer in 1709, under the command of Woodes Rogers. In 1712 he returned to Lower Largo and an account of his experiences was published the following year, and more accounts did follow. Here was the story of a Boy’s Own Adventure that was noticed by Daniel Defoe who used these adventures to write “Treasure Island”. (1719). Selkirk returned to sea and gained the rank of Lieutenant in the Royal Navy – he died in 1721.

Now-a-days, Alexander Selkirk Island has been designated a National Park with an economy based on goats, crayfish, lobster and red wine. The population of 500 are mainly engaged in fishing. Around the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the islands became populated. Because of its remote situation those who had settled there had no knowledge of Selkirk. Nowadays supplies are brought in by plane from Santiago.

Where was Selkirk's camp – ruins still remaining are more substantial than what he would have built. What are these remains? – an 18<sup>th</sup> century church, and an 18/19 century Gunpowder Magazine. Selkirk would have built a wigwam type hut, using Pimento wood. They did find a floor of some sorts and beneath found some charcoal and also more charcoal from another pit. For both of these, what did they find? – 1 object, a tiny piece of metal that may have been part of a pair of dividers. The speaker felt that this may have been the point of a pair of dividers, and may have been owned by Selkirk. Archaeological data is very scarce but it is known that Alexander Selkirk was there for four years and four months. More research needs to be done to find out exactly where Selkirk made his camp!!

This was an excellent talk that fired our imagination.

## **BETTY ROY.**

**Pictish Art** – Graham Cruickshank M.A, FSA Scot 27 November 2006  
(apologies for mis-spellings)

Graham Cruickshank was raised in Glencoe during the 50s. His inspiration for becoming interested in the Picts stems from gathering around a log fire in his one-teacher school and being taught about the ancient history of the Picts. At university he did a joint degree in Scottish History and Archaeology.

Distribution of Scotland's people:

Scots	Dalriada
Angles	south east
Vikings	Northern Isles & counties (Caithness & Sutherland)
Britons	South west eg. Strathclyde (similar to native Welsh)
Picts	East & Northern Scotland predominantly

Local reference to the Plain of Manau, west of where two rivers enter the Forth (Avon & Carron R.) may have led to the name of Clackmannan. Bannockburn was also on the fringe of Pictland.

The word Pictae means the ‘painted people’ or people of the design as translated from the Roman. They lived from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> Centuries AD (or earlier) and were mentioned by Eumenius, the classical scholar, in 297 AD but possibly earlier as participants in the Battle of Mons Graupius (the Grampians) against the Romans in 84 AD. Picts were the aboriginal tribe of Scotland after the ice age. They were the descendants of the Caledonii and other tribes named by Roman historians or found on the world map of Ptolemy. Pictland, also known as Pictavia, became the Kingdom of Alba during the 10th century and the Picts became the Albannach or Scots.

They were a mysterious people who left no written record so there are only Mediaeval copies of king lists (was Pictish kingship matrilinear?). We depend on the chronicles of other people eg. Bede, Irish annals or Eumenius the ancient Welsh writer. Most information about them comes from sculpted standing stones of which some are in their original position but many have been moved to churchyards or elsewhere. Approximately 200 have survived 1000 years, but one assumes that there were more in Pictish times. Many have been used as building blocks.

Christianisation took place over a long time. Archaeology is of very little help in deciphering more of the culture. Mounth, an extension of the Grampians divided the population into northern and southern ‘cousins’. Place names beginning with ‘Pit-’ (pettam = a parcel of land and may have been corrupted to “pit”) are indicative of a pictish origin especially around the Dornoch and Beaulie firths, the Don Valley, Perthshire and Fife. Many are obsolete farm names. Examples: Pitlochry, Pittenweem.

The Stones:

There are two types of stone:

- Class 1 – rough, unhewn, with incised symbols
- Class 2 - dressed sheets with symbols and other artistic motifs representing contemporary manuscript art

Noone knows what the symbols mean but the basic symbols are standardised and one assumes that around the 3<sup>rd</sup> century they may have been developed on

wood, textile or human bodies so none survived but by the 5<sup>th</sup> century they were being carved on more permanent objects such as stone.

Symbols were natural, abstract and representational as exemplified by a snake plus Z symbol (or crescent and V-rod) & double disc plus mirror and comb (which might represent a woman although Pictish men had a pointed beard and long, flowing locks). A triple oval might be a bronze armlet. One can have a mirror without a comb but not vice versa and a V-rod always has its crescent.

There is definitely artistry demonstrated and Caithness stone was an ideal medium.

Depicted on various stones:

Spey basin	sleeping goose and a salmon
Granton on Spey	reindeer & ? book satchel
Kintor church yard	male salmon, aerial view of ring-handled cauldron
Pabay (Western Isles)	crescent & V, flower symbol, cross (maybe later addition)
Alyth	double-sided stone, disk + Z one side & cross with tennon for mounting in the ground the

others:

Glamis manse

intermediate spans the two classes eg. snake, salmon, mirror from Class 1 and a huge elaborate cross the full size of the stone with 3-D interlacing complex design on the other (there is evidence that part of the design was one by an apprentice as it was not as well executed or refined) + quadruped, centaur, deer head, cauldron, profile cauldron held by forks with 2 pairs of legs sticking out (this may indicate a ritual execution on behalf of royalty who would have captured and killed rivals; also 2 Picts fighting with axes & wearing tunics

Angus

Historic Scotland have roofed over and boxed in a stone with a beast, double disc + Z, tree of life, Adam ?, cattle and on the other side a full-size cross, angel x 2 with 4 wings each, demon with spear, stag, 2 dogs (greyhound type & mastiff type)

Question: were cross decorations coloured as in northern England. In Norway the word for carved stone is the same word for colouring.

### Dunfallandy (Perthshire)

Bosses similar to gemstones, stag, 4-winged angels, squashed camel, fish monster, beasts fighting; obverse 2 monsters, fish tails, human head, other symbols as infill, 2 men in chairs could be St. Paul & St. Anthony, nobleman on horse, anvil (blacksmith)

### Aberlemno

Not rectangular but with a pointy top, design taken from Lindisfarne gospels so maybe both artists worked from a common pattern book; 2 horse heads, fish bodies, knot of eternity

### Kirriemuir

Part of stone obliterated but showing a cow attacked by another animal, boat with oars ? transporting a symbol stone and evidence of a navy although no pictish boats have been found

Another stone had edge decoration. Yet another showed an emaciated figure, possibly a skeleton, holding a knife to a cow's jugular and licking the blood.

It was suggested that the V qualifier signifies a broken weapon like an arrow and the Z with double discs might be a spear on stones commemorating a chief's death. Lesser persons would get a crescent.

In Meigle church yard is Queen Vanora's (Gwinnivere) slab. This has a wheel of glory and on the other side a procession of men on horses in threes indicating a phalynx, centaur with sacred branch, man attacking a cow. It is said that Vanora was devoured by wild animals because after her capture she fraternised with the captor producing an illegitimate child which might explain one section or perhaps it is Daniel in prayer position in the lion's den. Vanora's tomb has not yet been excavated.

At Murthly there is a lintel with 2 humanoids fighting, a bird headed man fighting a long-haired 'mickey mouse' and both have round shields. There are marine horses similar to Aberlemno, a sea monster, a man looking to the rear at a bear. This is now in the National Museum. On another stone in the National Museum is a stone with a vine scroll similar to a bible perhaps suggesting that the symbols were used purely for decoration + a woman and consort, 2 trumpeters, hunting scene (secular).

### Fowlis Wester

High bosses and intricate interlace and the stone has embryonic arms reminiscent of a developing cross.

The Swado stone outside Forres is tall at 15 feet and slender, crowded with figures in sterile rows and looks like an Irish high cross and may be Picto-Scotic. (Seven horizontal human bodies without heads may refer to Kenneth McAlpine's act of treachery when he murdered 7 pictish leaders).

Combs similar to those carved have been found on Orkney. Heather ale may have contributed to the creation of phantasmagoric animals.

Other stones:

Papal stone in Shetland; Rhiney Aberdeenshire figure with a thin shafted axe, headdress, long pointed nose & pointy teeth; Jarelshof in Shetland a pebble with a pict head; wolves devouring men & crosses.

The pictis also produced silver and silver-gilt objects such as a massive chain with symbols on the clasp. St. Ninian's Isle in Orkney is famous for a treasure containing penannular brooches with garnet eyes and Viking like mien to the figures.

The last picture was of the reverse of the Aberlemno stone showing a battle scene of the Picts versus a people wearing helmets and may commemorate the Battle of Nechtanesmere (?Michan), 685.

East Wemyss in Fife has cave symbols..

There was a query of whether the Picts were Celts. Maybe ! they are a variety of Celt as the language is P-celtic (like Manx & Cornish) but they do stand alone.

**Marilyn Scott**

## THE CANALS OF LOWLAND SCOTLAND

At the meeting of the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 07, Jim Leishman of the Falkirk and District Canal Society gave an informative talk on the Canals of Lowland Scotland. Dealing with the Forth and Clyde and the Union Canals including the Falkirk Wheel and the Millennium Link.

Commencing with the Forth and Clyde Canal which was conceived in the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century and as the name suggests it opened a passage from the River Forth at Grangemouth to the River Clyde at Bowling, with a branch to Port Dundas at Glasgow.

Construction of the Forth and Clyde Canal began on the 10<sup>th</sup> June 1768 (after being approved by an act of Parliament), at the navigable part of the River Carron a tributary of the River Forth where the town of Grangemouth now stands. The Canal headed towards Falkirk to its summit at Wyndford Lock (lock 20). Kirkintilloch was reached by 1773 after after problems at Dullatur and Stockingfield on the edge of Glasgow by 1775. Out of money it was left to Glasgow merchants to fund the branch canal to Hamilton Hill to be completed by 1777. Funding to complete the main channel did not become available until 1785. By this time, the original engineers, John Smeaton was too old and Robert Mackell, the man who did supervisory work on the Canal, had died. Robert Whitworth was appointed the new engineer for the project and by 1790 the Canal was completed to Bowling on the Clyde including the building of the Kelvin Aqueduct. The branch canal was completed to a new terminal at Port Dundas.

Port Dundas grew to be the hub for training with the east coast and European Ports. The Charlotte Dundas the world's first practical steamboat was tried out between lock 20 and Port Dundas in 1802. In 1819 the Vulcan, Scotland's first iron boat, started a passenger service. Passenger services operated from the beginning but declined with the advent of the railways in the 1840's. Pleasure sailings began in 1890 and were quite popular and carried on until 1939.

The Canal carried on with the commercial traffic until after World War 1 but with motor traffic increasing and goods travelling by road the Canal went into a steep decline. The death knell was in 1962 when to save money the government of the day decided to close the canal in order to complete the Denny bypass. The culvert at Castlecary was the first of many to chop the canal into small sections.

In the 1970's a campaign was started to try and restore parts of the canal and the towpath. From then on volunteer organisations and local authorities got together for partial restoration of the canal, this eventually became full restoration with the conception of the Millennium Link.

The Union Canal Edinburgh to Falkirk, with the Forth and Clyde Canal being reached by a flight of locks. Construction commenced at the Edinburgh terminal basin, Port Hopetoun in 1818 and completed in May 1821. Opposition to the Canal had been quite fierce about the commercial viability also the coal merchants and carters of Edinburgh ran a cartel in the price of coal in the city as there was plenty of it in the surrounding area. Thomas Telford one of Scotland's great engineers conducted a feasibility study of the route advising the canal builders on the aqueducts over the Almond and Avon Rivers and the Water of Leith. There was also a problem of a tunnel some six hundred yards long under Prospect Hill to avoid Callender House. The greatest achievement was making the waterway run for thirty-one miles at one level.

When the Canal came into operation it was mainly in the delivery of coal to Edinburgh from the Polmont area and from Monkland via The Forth and Clyde Canal. The cartels were broken and the price of coal fell dramatically. Another basin was opened called Port Hamilton, named after the Duke of Hamilton, to cope with the increasing trade for his participation making the Canal viable. The railway was the downfall of the Canal with the opening of the Glasgow to Edinburgh line in 1842. In 1847 the railway company bought the ailing Union Canal and by an act of parliament was duty bound to maintain it as an ongoing operation.

The Edinburgh terminal basins were closed in 1922 and the disused Falkirk locks were in-filled in 1933 but otherwise the Canal remained intact until closure in 1965. Culverts were installed to improve roads and a mile of canal was filled in to make way for Westerhailes Housing Estate. Campaigners stopped plans for another culvert on the Edinburgh by-pass. Faced with local activity mainly at Ratho and Linlithgow stopped any more filling-in or culverting the Canal and this led the way to complete restoration..

The Millennium Link, a British Waterways led project to regenerate the Canals, began in 1994 when the Millennium Commission published its criteria for Millennium Projects. There were teething problems at the start due to the sheer size of the proposal. So much had to be done to make the project work. It was

in fact building the Canals over again. The list is endless of the things that had to be done, new canal in parts, new bridges, new locks and lock refurbishment, new aqueducts, regenerating the towpaths even a new tunnel and so on. Donald Dewar, First Minister cut the first sod at Blairdardie in March 1999 a five year contract had been reduced to three years the Millennium Link was opened by Her Majesty the Queen on the 24<sup>th</sup> May 2002.

In my opinion the focal point of the Millennium Link is the Falkirk Wheel. The Wheel replaces the original flight of locks from the Union Canal to the Forth and Clyde Canal. It is a great feat of engineering and a wonderful attraction for the local area.

Writing this article brings back pleasant memories of the C.F.S.S. outing on the Forth and Clyde Canal in June 2006.

**Jack Archibald**

**CROATIA – Then and Now.** Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February.

The following has been edited from notes provided by the speaker, Jean Teasedale.

Until I went to work there I had very little knowledge of Croatia. Unless you are a football fan and know that they qualified for the finals of the World cup, which is more than Scotland did, or you are a tennis fanatic and know that Goran Ivanisovich won Wimbledon against the odds. I thought it might be of interest, as the country is in the process of joining the EU, however it will have to improve its infrastructure and its drivers are the biggest hazard on the roads. It was also supposed to surrender its war criminals and I believe it has or the main one has died.

The country has had a chequered history with its borders changing frequently over the last 1500 years. The part that I am interested in was known as Dalmatia and first appeared about the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC and was supposedly named after the Illyrian tribe of Delmata. Illyria was a huge area which included the Adriatic, the eastern alps and stretched as far as the Danube in Rumania. Territory which was constantly being occupied either by the Greeks or the Romans and was peopled by many tribes. Mentioned in Homer's Iliad. Eventually the Roman Emperor, Augustus divided the land into 2 parts and from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD Dalmatia was officially declared a country in its own right.

In consequence, the land is steeped in Roman history and there are many Roman remains still being uncovered today. I was actually involved in the excavation of one of the Villas on the Danilo plain in 2005. Its most famous Roman Palace is that of the Emperor Diocletian who reigned from 284-305 AD and was born in the area and built his lasting memorial just outside the Roman city of Salonia. This palace has now become the centre of Split which was for a time the Capital. In the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD, the country came under the jurisdiction of Byzantium. It was then ruled over by the Eastern Goths before returning to Rome under the rule of Justinian in the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD. By the 11<sup>th</sup> century it had its own dynastic rulers and the most notable of these was King Kresimir, however the Venetians made constant inroads into the territory and finally in 1409 the Croatian/Hungarian King Ladislav of Naples sold the country to Venice for 100,000 ducats. They continued to control Dalmatia until the Napoleonic wars saw the abolition of the Venetian Republic. By the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, first the Austrians and then the French had been the administrators but by the end of WWI Dalmatia found itself within the confines of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. However this was to last only until the end of WW2 when the new state of Yugoslavia was formed and became part of the communist regime of the USSR.

In the latest wars for the independence of the Republic of Croatia, from 1991-1995, the country has suffered heavy damage to some of its beautiful cities mainly the city of Zadar in the north that has lost many of its fine Roman architecture. However its main claim to fame is its University, which happens to be the oldest in the world, has survived intact. There are many fields around the borders of Serbia and Bosnia that have yet to be cleared of mines so it is best to stick to the main roads when travelling in the hinterland where we were excavating.

The foregoing has given a flavour of the many cultures that have influenced its architecture and heritage. (The speaker went on to illustrate the many historic buildings in the various towns and cities.)

In 2005 we spent seven weeks in the Danilo plain with a group of students from America, Britain and Croatia, as part of an International project covering the Anthropology, Geology, Hydrology and Archaeology of Dalmatia. The project was funded by America's National Science Foundation and the National Geographic. As archaeologists we were under the directorship of Professor Andrew Moore and Professor Tony Legge looking to find out the earliest move to domestication and farming in the region.

Professor Moore also was looking to prove his own theory that there had never been Mesolithic people in this part of the world, but that immigrants from further east had arrived bringing with them the Neolithic package. This would have included domesticated animals and seed packs of emmer wheat and einkhorn as well as other pulses. The most important thing that they brought was, of course, the technology to reproduce and harvest both the animals and the crops.

The first year we dug five trenches and found numerous artefacts of Neolithic origin including a very rare figurine of a bird which would be classed as of religious/ritual significance. As you are probably aware whenever archaeologists have doubts about the use of an artefact it will be classed as ritual. The excavations also revealed the foundations of a rectangular house which was also unusual as most houses of this time were round.

In the course of the seven weeks we found over 1500 artefacts, included were stone tools, flint blades and masses of pretty poor pottery amongst the odd Roman and medieval remains. I suppose the saddest thing that we excavated was the skeleton of a toddler buried in what was the kitchen midden.

The second year we were digging in a village called Pokrovnik, local people were employed which helped to boost the economy. A similar amount of artefacts were found, highly decorated classic Danilo pottery, animal bones in plenty and even the skull of a horse but no human bones, a great disappointment as DNA would have given a clue to their ancestry and origins. However, animal bones will certainly provide dates.

**JEAN TEASDALE.**

## **On The Banks of the Allan Water – Ken Gray, Stirling**

Ken Gray gave what can only be described as an excellent talk “ On the Banks of the Allan Water”.

Beginning at its source near the Gleneagles Hotel it flows westwards through the valley of Strathallan, which was formed by two ice sheets moving in opposite direction during the last Ice Age. Remains can be seen in the valley of deposits of rock formed when the ice melted.

Legend has it that there was once a loch at the top end of the valley that was a place of recreation for one of the chiefs of the Caledonian Tribes. During one of his visits, his wife, who was crossing the loch was drowned. Frantic with worry he had his men dig the bank away to drain the loch to recover her body. There is a mound in the valley reputed to be the burial chamber of his wife but modern archaeology has confirmed the mound is a deposit from the Ice Age. So it remains a legend.

On its way towards Dunblane it passes a manmade stretch of water known as Carsebreck Loch, which was commissioned in 1852, by the Royal Caledonian Curling Society, to enable them to play their matches, twenty-five were played from 1852 to 1935. It is no longer viable to use it as a curling pond as it is weather dependant. We now have indoor facilities making it possible to play all the year round.

Further downstream the roman road from Camelon to Ardoch near Braco crosses the water. Ardoch is the finest example of a Roman Fort in the Country. Slides of the village of Ashfield were shown. Ashfield, built by the Pullar family for their workers at the bleach works, is a fine example how in the Victorian era employers built villages to house their workers.

The Cathedral City of Dunblane was next on our journey with the first major crossing of the Water, originally built in the early 15<sup>th</sup> Century in the time of Friar Finlay Dermont of the Cathedral and has an association with Avingnon in France home of the Pope at that time. Looking at the bridge from the river you can see the various stages of construction 15<sup>th</sup> Century to the present day, distinct bridges one on top of each other.

We were also shown other mills on the Allan mainly at Bridge of Allan, no longer in use. One had a water wheel that supplied the power and a lade into another, that was Pullar's Bridge of Allan bleach works.

Further on, the cave on the bank and the black pot a large pool where two sisters were drowned in 1832, now known as the Ladies Pool. The Centenary Walk on the banks of the river, was a favourite place of Robert Louis Stevenson (RLS) when he was a boy on holiday, also the three islets at the mouth of the Allan made famous in Kidnapped. The Cave mentioned is said to have given R.L.S. inspiration for "Ben Gunn's Cave" in Treasure Island.

Ken's talk contained an amazing amount of information and was very professional in presentation.

**Jack Archibald**

## **A visit to Dunimarle Castle**

We had an excellent visit to Dunimarle Castle, just west of Culross, on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> August. It was the first visit for a number of years by the Society. Our guide was the custodian Stewart Fisher. As the organiser of the visit, up until the last minute I did not know whether we would be allowed into the castle itself, as Mr Fisher had been non-committal about this, so it was a huge relief on meeting him to find that he was quite happy to show us around everything (perhaps he wanted to give us the 'once over' first!).

Dunimarle Castle is a curious building, a castle-villa built on a wonderful site overlooking the Forth. It was built between 1839-45 and designed by R & R Dickson. The owner was Miss Magdalene Erskine (1787-1872), who bought the estate and house, at that time just a small, 18<sup>th</sup> century mansion, for £5,000 in 1835. Some time afterwards, when well into middle age, she married a former lover, Admiral Sharpe; the marriage lasted only three days, after which they separated, but thereafter she bore the name Mrs Magdalene Sharpe Erskine and created the new Dunimarle Castle. She lived there for the rest of her life.

The original driveway to the Castle from the north (on the A985 to Dunfermline) has long been closed; the end of the avenue still exists with large gates, kept closed, with an old dairy on the left and a lodge on the right. Beyond the gates is the forecourt/terrace area, below which the former gardens

fall steeply away down to the road to Culross. The approach is now from the south-west, off the road to Culross.

The former single storey conservatory had a glazed roof, but this was removed c 1960 when it was converted into a house for the custodian. The main block is a solid and imposing three-storey building. It has a corbelled and crenellated parapet with animal gargoyles at each corner. It is dominated by a projecting four-storey round tower under a machicolated parapet. The first floor windows have a continuous corbelled and crenellated balcony and the upper windows have individual stone balconies.

We entered the house via a Romanesque style doorway, the stonework of one side very blackened and the other so clean that it looked as if it has been replaced or restored – the difference was due, apparently, to the prevailing weather conditions. Tucked into the angle with the 18<sup>th</sup> century house is a taller, slim circular stair turret.

The original idea of altering the earlier house never happened, apart from the addition of a crenellated parapet. The outbuildings, including kitchens built onto the rear of this house, were demolished c1960.

The Castle has been empty since c1996, when its entire contents were moved to Duff House in Banff. Mrs Sharpe Erskine was the youngest child of the large family of Erskines of Torrie House in Fife. She outlived her entire family and eventually inherited their ancestral collections, including family portraits from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, Old Master paintings, sculpture and Napoleonic furniture, as well as the collections of two of her brothers. She also supplemented the collection herself. When she died in 1872, she left all her property to Trustees to found and maintain ‘an Institution for the promotion of the study of the Fine Arts – the collection of paintings and other vertu made by herself and her brothers, Sir James and John Erskine, being made the commencement of a fine Art Gallery’. For over a century, the Trustees maintained the collection at Dunimarle, which was open to visitors as a museum and place of research. Eventually the house developed dry rot and other problems, the museum was closed and the collection packed up. The present Trustees eventually agreed to place the entire collection on loan for twenty-five years to the National Galleries of Scotland, on condition that it would be conserved, displayed and kept secure at Duff House, Banff. The paintings on display at Duff House include two works by David Allan – a ‘conversation piece’ of Sir William Erskine of Torrie and his Family, painted in

1788, which includes the then one-year old Magdalene Erskine, and his well-known *A Highland Wedding at Blair Atholl*.

The house is in much better condition than I had feared, mainly due to the diligence and care of the Trustees and in particular the indefatigable Stewart Fisher, who has single-handedly managed to eradicate the extensive dry rot and other problems.

The entrance hall is surprisingly small and modest, with an amazingly elaborate knot-ended rope moulding over the original fireplace, now occupied by an ancient stove. The plastered ceiling incorporates heraldic panels, with ribs borne on corbels modelled on animal heads. Beyond the hall, the stairhall rises to the full three-storey height to a hammerbeam roof. The huge window on the landing illuminates what would have otherwise been a very dark area. You can look down on it all from the second floor balcony, over an oak balustrade. A tunnel-vaulted corridor once led from the first floor landing to the balcony of the conservatory. A similar passage on the ground floor is now blocked off. The former boudoir is reached from the first floor corridor; it still has a good plaster ceiling and scars on the walls where displays of the collection were once hung. There is a similar ceiling next door, in the tower room, which has a white marble chimneypiece. The tower rooms are all D-shape in plan. A short passage leading into first floor of the 18<sup>th</sup> century house still bears Green Chinese wallpaper. The rooms here were joined together in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century to make a U-plan library.

There is an octagonal room on each of the tower's upper floors, once the print room and studio. We went onwards and upwards onto the roof via the turnpike stair, surprisingly unworn, and were treated to some glorious views of the Forth on a lovely evening. The roof has been well repaired and is in very good condition. Stewart Fisher's work has clearly been a labour of love and devotion.

Leaving the building Stewart then guided us along the wonderful Yew Walk, an avenue flanked by rows of tall yew trees. It has taken him twenty-five years to clear this area and restore virtually the entire length of the walk, pruning the trees into their current impressive state. To the north of the walk is the site of the original walled garden, now just grassed over, while only the foundation walls of the glasshouse survive in an overgrown area of trees. The gardens were once wonderful, but the site's location has meant that flooding

